

ONE MAN SHOWS
IN THE SHOWER WITH ZUMA
(2010–2020)



Pieter-Dirk Uys

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The One Man Shows series includes problematic elements, as well as some lighthearted references to a shocking era in our history and apartheid. The volumes do include some representations of unacceptable practices, racist and stereotypical depictions, as well as troubling themes, characterisations, language and imagery.

The performance texts included in the volumes remain true to the original in every way and are reflective of the language and period in which they were originally written. The author believes changing the texts to reflect today's world would undermine the authenticity of the original and he has therefore chosen to leave the texts as originally performed. This does not, however, constitute an endorsement of the characterisations, content or language used.

First published in 2025 by Missing Ink
PO Box 15509, Vlaeberg, 8018, South Africa
Email: missingink@iafrica.com

© 2025 Pieter-Dirk Uys
www.pdu.co.za

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical or electronic, including photocopying and recording, without written permission from the publisher.

Applications for performance rights, both professional and amateur, should be addressed to: PD Uys Productions at email: productions@evita.co.za

ISBN 978-1-0672335-4-9 (print)
ISBN 978-1-0672335-5-6 (ePDF)

Photographers: Stefan Hurter, Arks Smith

Thank you also to Brent Meersman, Arks Smith, and Jo-Anne Friedlander

Typesetting by User Friendly
Set in New Baskerville 10.25 on 15.5pt

Contents

Our story thus far	5
Evita's letter to Jacob Zuma	8
Leading to the Desperate First Ladies	14
Is a FIFA Joke now a criminal offence?	18
2010 <i>FEE-FA-FO-FUM</i>	23
Meanwhile in the real world	50
'So what do you do?'	54
2010 <i>DESPERATE FIRST LADIES</i>	57
Comrade Evita joins the ANC	100
'The President has a problem with his penis!'	107
2012 <i>ADAPT OR FLY</i>	109
Meanwhile in the real world	160
2012 <i>AN AUDIENCE WITH PIETER-DIRK EISH!</i>	161
Meanwhile in the real world	176
2013 <i>FIFTY SHADES OF BAMBI</i>	177
Evita's other letter to President Zuma	225
Nelson Mandela dies	232
Meanwhile in the real world	235
A 70th birthday	237
One Man Shows at The National Arts Festival	239
2015 <i>THE ECHO OF A NOISE</i>	249
Meanwhile in the real world	290
April Fool's Day	291
2017 <i>EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT & THE KAKTUS OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT</i>	295
A personal memo to a new president	342
The millionth death of satire	346
2018 <i>WHEN IN DOUBT SAY DARLING</i>	351
No vote from me!	383
Prelude to a Hashtag	387
2019 <i>#HETWO – UNMASKING EVITA</i>	391
The Hashtag Q&A	419
Evita's 2020 Luthuli Housekeeping Report	431
'Meanwhile outside in the real world ...'	435



Ixha Xiixxo i – the ancient Khoisan greeting that means 'happy days'

OUR STORY THUS FAR

WIKIPEDIA WILL PUT US IN THE PICTURE

Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma is also referred to by his initials JZ and clan names Nxamalala and Msholozzi. He was a former anti-apartheid activist, member of uMkhonto weSizwe and president of the African National Congress (ANC) from 2007 to 2017. He was born on 12 April 1942 in the rural region of Nkandla, which is now part of the KwaZulu-Natal province – the centre of his support base.

Zuma joined the ANC at the age of 17 in 1959 and spent 10 years on Robben Island as a political prisoner. He went into exile in 1975, ultimately becoming head of the ANC's intelligence department. He was deputy president from 1999 to 2005 under President Thabo Mbeki, then dismissed after corruption charges. In 2006, he was acquitted on rape charges after a highly publicised trial. He stated that he had not used a condom while having sex despite knowing that the young woman involved was HIV-positive. He testified that he had showered afterwards, claiming that reduced the risk of HIV transmission. Comedians celebrated! Political cartoonist Zapiro lampooned Zuma for his testimony; the former president now always appears under a showerhead in Zapiro cartoons.

In spite of all that drama, Zuma managed to retain the support of a faction inside the ANC, which allowed him to remove Mbeki as ANC president in December 2007 at the ANC's Polokwane elective conference. After chapters of intrigue, he then became the fourth president of South Africa in 2009.

I have always thanked the government of the day for creating my material for me. I thrived on the fodder from the National Party and its apartheid high jinx. I celebrated the other cheek thanks to the leadership by example of Nelson Mandela. I sharpened my pencil to keep up with the HIV denials of Thabo Mbeki. And now Jacob Zuma opened his lucky packet of delights.

His extraordinary features celebrated comedy. Zuma also laughed a lot, allowing an explosion of mirth to soften brutal verbal blows. He often toyi-toyed in the wrong parliamentary shrines, while presenting a speech haltingly in the Queen's English. His difficulty expressing numbers was charming.

The president would sing and dance to the delight of his followers, calling for his *umshini wam* – 'bring me my machine gun!' That song echoed through the passages of Parliament on many occasions, causing the few portraits of past apartheid broeders to fall heavily to the floor.

He also presented me with his cluster of wives: the aged Sizakele (Ma) Khumalo (1973); the political Nkosazana Dlamini (1982), who he divorced in 1998; Nompumelelo Ntuli (2008), Thobeka Madiba (2010) and Bongi Ngema (2012), as well as about 20 acknowledged children, including rising superstar twins Duduzele and Duduzane. More about them later.

His homestead compound in Nkandla soon became more than just a cluster of holiday rondavels. Millions of taxpayers' rands were siphoned off and diverted to refresh and enhance the president's residences, kraals and what looked like a paddle pond, described belatedly for tax purposes as a 'firepool'. And here's what was spent on Zuma's Nkandla home after R71 million had already been spent on 'security installations': a further R135 million on a 'security upgrade'. These included the perimeter, entrance gate, guard hut, security control room, various illuminations, bulletproof glass, two helicopter pads, an elevator, an underground bunker known as 'the safe haven', power generators and a clinic, as well as elaborate paving, roads and garages. Electronic detection systems, accommodation facilities for police and the defence department and swimming pool, as well as the relocation

of neighbourhood families. The relocation of Ma Khumalo's tuckshop, the retaining wall of the amphitheatre, a chicken run, cattle kraal and culvert, water reservoir and a visitors' waiting room are also listed.

Compare this with former President Nelson Mandela's residence in Qunu, Eastern Cape, to which he retired once he left office. Those additions, contained in a Public Works document, were billed as security upgrades: the electrified palisade fencing, an elevator, guardhouse, automatic gates, security cameras and an alarm system.

Truly, my satirical cup did runneth over!

So a confidential letter to the president soon emerged from the Luthuli House kitchen of the most famous white woman in South Africa, now a junior member of the ANC, cooking for reconciliation. Evita Bezuidenhout's advice for the new president and his Nkandla paradise was leaked to *Huisgenoot* and *You* magazine. The nation held its breath!

KEEP IT ZIPPED, MR PREZ

The Gogo of the nation Evita Bezuidenhout tells
'Mshowerlozi' Zuma what she thinks of the example he's
setting.

– Evita Bezuidenhout, *You*, 18 February 2010

President Zuma,

I won't address you as father of the nation as I know you don't like formalities. For all the years we have passed each other in the passages of power, you have always treated me with great respect. Granted, I've never been alone in a room with you for more than a minute, but I treasure your allowing me to still call you by your Zulu name: Innocent.

People have come to me in the last few days and said: 'Evita, talk to him. Make him realise he is not just a song and dance man.' Of course you're not. You were a major player in the struggle against apartheid and let the world now know that you have been responsible for extraordinary things during the last 30 years. Nothing as extraordinary as your personal collection of wives.

Liewe aarde, Innocent, what competition are you

trying to win here? How is it possible that a man who is so involved in politics as president of a young democracy that needs as much supervision as a 16-year-old delinquent child finds so much time to share with not just one wife, but four? At what time of day can you get to your office if there are so many wives to kiss goodbye in the morning? And you have to be fair and kiss them all, otherwise we will sit with a never-ending television series called *Desperate First Ladies*!

But then, when you should be addressing the problems of poverty, xenophobia, Zimbabwe, presidential pardons – to mention but a few – you spend those moments creating yet more Zumettes. They say already 20 children from your own loins, and maybe we can add one or two for those who slipped out without you noticing? *Maggies, man*, carry on like that and you will have your own football team to win the cup for South Africa in 2018!

There is an Afrikaans word to describe your carnality, but I won't use it because I don't use words like that. I don't need to because you know what I mean. Innocent, I like you. I respect you. I want you to be the best president we have had since Nelson Mandela decided to hand over to someone else. There is no reason for you to fail. You came to power as our fourth democratically elected leader in spite of a nightmare audition, months of court actions and trials, miles of media bla-bla reporting every rumour and gossip.

Freedom of speech is sacred in our land and while some of the press went too far and showered you with accusations, were they that wrong? Is

that why today you protect freedoms of speech, but you want terms and conditions to apply? You have apologised and I'm also sorry you waited so long to say sorry. Barack Obama came to power in the USA a year ago on that great slogan to his young people: 'Yes we can!' I, as a proud citizen of South Africa, must be as passionate when I say to you: 'No, you can't!'

I am a bit older than you and yet you make me also feel like a schoolgirl at your feet. You smile at me. You laugh at my words. You sing for me and you dance round me. It is captivating. Even the media have been neutralised by your genius. When they ask you a very pertinent question about lack of service delivery to poor comrades living in abject poverty while your ministers race by in new BMWs, what do you do? You smile that smile. You start to sing. You move into a dance. And when all that is over, the media have forgotten what their question was.

Thabo Mbeki gave us nothing and we waited for more. You give us nothing and yet we feel overfed. The window of this shop called South Africa is glittering with your promises and your commitments, but the backyard is in a mess. There our people are poorer than ever before. There is sickness and despair. Corruption has become policy in spite of your promises to stop the first and entrench the second.

I look at where we are after 20 years since apartheid was abolished officially and I sit with no words in my mouth. Of course I have a lot to say but I don't, because every time I as a white woman

have an opinion about the foibles of your government, I am called 'racist' and told to either shut up or emigrate. Well, I won't do either! I will build up enough courage to write you this letter, because it's time that we stood up and spoke. Not as whites. Not as men and women, but as citizens of a magical country that was given a second chance to make its dreams come true.

I see you and other leaders pooh-pooh FW de Klerk's celebration of his legendary speech of 2nd February 1990, which led to the freeing of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC, the SACP and other minor irritations. You say it happened only as a result of the struggle. *My skat*, most of the ANC elite were sitting in Swedish hotels, sipping whisky paid for by the anti-apartheid movement. The last thing they expected or wanted was to take over the nightmare of a bankrupt, blood-soaked South Africa. We gave it to you and now it's yours, Innocent. Not to hand over to your multitude of children as a heritage, but to protect as a democracy for all the people of South Africa.

I'm on your side. I have no problem with your traditional cultural weapon of marriage. All your Zumamas are beautiful, elegant and a joy to behold. I remember seeing them at the opening of parliament last year, when you made your first State of the Nation address as president. They were all asleep in the gallery. Thanks to that we know there are no power-hungry Hillary Clintons among them. No overambitious Winnies or scheming Margaret Thatchers who will rip your attention to shreds in order to make their demands policy.

What is my problem with you? I have no problem with you. I have a problem with what the people see in you. My son De Kock does AIDS-awareness talks to schools. Recently he was at a school in Soweto, demonstrating safe sex through the use of condoms. After the talk, a group of senior learners approached him. They liked his presentation. 'But must you go on about condoms? We know,' said one. De Kock said he was pleased they were informed, but there were many others who needed the information.

'Why?' asked the other young man. 'We don't need condoms. We have a shower.' De Kock laughed loudly as we all would. There were no smiles on the faces of the young men. 'Why do you laugh?' the one asked angrily. 'Well,' said De Kock, 'you refer to Jacob Zuma having a shower after unprotected sex?' 'So? What's funny? Are you calling our president a liar?' De Kock realised there was no joke here. 'Jacob Zuma is our president. We follow his example,' was their parting statement.

Innocent, you lead by example, like it or not! Last week my two granddaughters Winnie-Jeanne and La Toya-Ossewania Makoeloeli, respectively 13 and 10 years old, were in tears. They had been frightened by what their friends had told them at school. 'Jacob Zuma will want you to have his baby,' they said. 'Jacob Zuma will marry you,' they taunted. 'Will he?' they asked me tearfully. I said I'd talk to you.

Innocent, will you stop frightening the children? Will you stop compromising the schoolgirls? Will

you stop sacrificing innocent cows for your libido. If there is one thing you need to impregnate, it is our country. Give us the benefit of your strength, your humour, your wisdom, your compassion and your focus. We need you. You might say: 'Why must I listen to this Evita Bezuidenhout?' If you listen to Julius Malema, I have a right to your ear. And let me tell you, I passed woodwork at school with a B+.

So *vuk'uzenzele*, Mshowerlozi!

(And please, put your love in a plastic bag!)

Sincerely

Evita Bezuidenhout

(Gogo of the Nation)

LEADING UP TO *DESPERATE FIRST LADIES*

It cost South Africa at least R54.6 million to support the country's first ladies during President Jacob Zuma's first term in office. The average annual splurge of the Presidential Spousal Support Unit for the last four years of former president Thabo Mbeki's administration from 2005 to 2008 was R7 million. In Zuma's first term the average rose to R11 million.

The specifics of the costs that are covered by the state, according to the presidency, included personal support staff (a private secretary and researcher), domestic and international air travel and accommodation for official visits approved by the president, cellular phones for spouses and their secretaries, IT equipment such as laptops and prompters, and a special daily allowance for incidental expenses during official journeys.

There were four recognised first ladies: Bongi Ngema, Sizakele (Ma) Khumalo-Zuma, Nompumelelo Ntuli-Zuma and Tobeka Madiba-Zuma. The unit also provided services to Dr Tshepo Motsepe, wife of Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa. One can only imagine what snippets of conversation could be heard outside the presidential mansion.

'Eish! Who's got the pink handbag?'

'Hau! It's my turn with the queen this time!'

'Aikona, I didn't fire the maid! I just gave another comrade a chance!'

The first ladies of South Africa have their days full of careful diplomacy around each other. Once polygamy became the new post-Polokwane buzzword, the most delightful image of our first family emerged at the opening of Parliament and the new president's first State of the Nation address. President Zuma arrived with three of his elegant wives, perfectly matched in bright colours, hats and smiles. The picture appeared in newspapers and on social media.



Evita with Zuma's first ladies

Halfway through their husband's painfully articulated oration, there they sat in the parliamentary gallery fast asleep. What a relief! Not a Hillary Roddam Clinton among them. No political ambition; just three first ladies there to please their first man. It was now time to conjure up some of these first ladies in my chorus line.

Evita Bezuidenhout was still the most famous white woman in South Africa, a first lady of her own 'right', who had miraculously navigated the rapids of political change and upheaval to perch on the 'left' branches of the tree of democracy. 'Democracy used to be too good to share with just anyone in those bad old days. But today everyone has a chance to equally make a fool of themselves. We must just be sure to protect our little democracy on a daily basis. It's the only one we've got,' she said.

Desperate First Ladies would pay tribute to the women of our land – old, young, black, white, happy, sad, but always a farce to be reckoned with. And in the chorus line of legendary ladies, some of them would have memorable things to say.

Nowell Fine, that white liberal of the past, Jewish-African princess and maybe the last real white kugel still resident in this country, had adopted a black orphaned baby living with HIV. ‘When will our president realise that he doesn’t need to spend part of his day making more babies,’ she kwetched. ‘Just adopt one of the thousands of little ones that need to be looked after and cared for. Lead by example.’ She sighed and added more lipstick. ‘But then again, in a healthy democracy, the people must lead and the government can follow.’

Mrs Winnie Madikizela-Mandela needs no introduction and frankly refused to speak to the hungry media. Across the river in a neighbouring land, Grace, the wife of the old dictator, polished her collection of diamonds while singing: ‘Old Mugabe wants that farm, e i e i o ...’

Down in Cape Town, exhausted after the successful municipal elections, Mrs Petersen would have loved to have been able to attend the comedy, but could not leave her shop. ‘No, I would love to laugh at all the jokes. And that Pieter-Dirk Uys makes jokes about everyone: the blacks, the whites, the Coloureds, the Indians, the Catholics, the Jews, the gays ...’ She adjusted her doek. ‘But I notice he doesn’t make any jokes about us Muslims. Why? We’re feeling left out. Don’t tell me it’s because he thinks we Muslims can’t take a joke? I think it’s because comedians don’t want to take the chance to find out. Just in case?’

Evita Bezuidenhout’s sister had become more than a murky rumour in the CV of our famous tannie. Bambi Kellermann was now running a so-called wine cellar in the Boland which offered specials over weekends. ‘With condoms of course,’ she laughed, her German accent still making her sound like a boere Dietrich. ‘Ja, darling, I was born in Bethlehem in the Orange Free State. But I left South Africa in 1956 because of the politics. I couldn’t live in an apartheid state.’ Then she laughed. ‘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.’

Not all the ladies in the show will be desperate. Some are straight out of the front pages. A Libyan lady might be on her way with camels and husband. Among all the first ladies familiar to South Africans came none other than the saintly Mother Theresa. Sadly, angels cannot be quoted in print. They have to be heard live.

Meanwhile in real life, Evita se Perron was on the international map as a must-see experience for visitors and audiences from all over the world and South Africa. Situated on the West Coast in the Swartland town of Darling, the Evita Bezuidenhout Boulevard can be found on GPS and Google Earth. And believe it or not, we also hosted the 2010 Soccer World Cup!

The *Cape Times* Arts Page

24 June 2010

Is a FIFA joke now also a criminal offence?

by Pieter-Dirk Uys

Cartoons of The Prophet must be avoided, but will those of The Profit (also known as Sepp Blatter) be allowed? If we wear orange tutus with a rival beer logo imprinted, will we be branded as criminals? What's happened to our sense of humour? Some on our Mother City arts mafia were very vehement about their plans for June and July 2010.

'We're closing down during the World Cup. Just put on some kiddies show for the little ones on holiday and a bunch of stand-ups to keep our bars going at night. Who's going to come to the theatre during a Soccer World Cup tournament?'

For every husband and son who wants to see a match, there might be a mother and a daughter who don't – well, not every match. Everywhere there are the flags, merchandise, balls, vuvuzelas and poor little snot-nosed urchins tearfully smiling in wait for that treasure the Father Christmas from Fifaland promised.

I'm sorry we don't have 'District Six' or a 'Kat and the Kings' on in Cape Town to show our visitors more than just the squatter camps and poverty that now go hand in hand with stadium frenzy and vuvuzela celebrations on international newscasts. Poor people are not victims, beggars or disadvantaged. They're poor, yes, with no money

to buy food, or afford housing. But they enjoy close knit families, have dignity, self-respect, a sense of humour, talent and tolerance. That's no disadvantage. Our stages should be showing this passion with pride.

'What will you do in Darling?' they glumly asked. 'Isn't it too far off the beaten track?'

If 450 000 people can venture down the spine of Africa to the most southern patio of luxury, what's 63 minutes up the R27 and down the R315? Besides, a visit to Robben Island before a match is complemented by a visit to Evita se Perron after the game.

We have business as usual over weekends with 'Icons & Aikonas', 'Elections & Erections' and 'Tannie Evita Praat Kaktus', with an occasional 'Koeksister for Zuma' with a three course meal from Evita's Kossie Sikelela. My appreciation of this venue, now in its 12th year, is rekindled every weekend, knowing that three 60-minute entertainments have been brought up to date and made topical every seven days. Using humour to entertain an audience about things that aren't funny: racism, prejudice, hypocrisy and corruption. But then, as my character Nowell Fine would say in her nasal kugel voice back in the 1980s: 'There are two things about South Africa I can't stand. Apartheid. And the blacks!'

The balance of 49% anger and 51% entertainment has always been the ideal recipe. Let everyone be offended once, but not all the time. Equal opportunity. Democracy incarnate. A soccer-free zone

seemed a logical red card against the bizarre tsunami of FIFA demands. To have survived 16 years of democracy and now to see how easily a bunch of white, middle-aged European men take over the government of South Africa somehow defies an appalled reaction. We can just shrug and watch them move the goal posts of our constitutional rights to the edge of a playing field that few of us can afford. Why? Because we want to see the game, that's why!

Our soccer-free zone was tentatively announced to see how the public would react and awaited the welcome lawsuit for defamation of product from the ball boys of Zurich. The reaction was inspiring. It doesn't mean that the greatest sporting event of a lifetime being played down the R27, beyond the bridges that don't come down, is ignored and demeaned. The excitement and reconciliatory embrace of the beautiful game is also celebrated at Evita se Perron, but only with one token virgin vuvuzela (meaning not yet blown!), one soccer ball (which Evita refers to as a rugby ball!) and one SA flag (and not condomising a car's side mirror).

Our special show till 11 July is called 'Fee-Fa-Fo-Fum' (and not spelt FIFA-FO-FUM!). Catering for an international audience who are both as fascinated by us and as mystified by what we turn out to be is a challenge. Their perceptions must not be further confused. Eleven official languages won't work on the Serb or the North Korean. But will they be there? Or will the German, Dutch,

British, Scandinavian, Nigerian, Ghanaian, American or the few exhausted local Tamboerskloof landladies have snapped up the seats first?

If government has proved itself to have been my best scriptwriter since 1975, our present sporting mafia has become the cherry on that *grootkoek*. If hypocrisy is the Vaseline of political intercourse, bullsh*t-promises have been seen to oil the rails from FIFA HQ Zurich to ANC HQ Luthuli House. One aspect of being run by the humanitarian-loving Swiss pirates is that Interim President Blatter and his politburo have totally silenced the barking mutts of our ruling elite. Julius Malema is quiet. JZ (Mshowerlozi) is working at his reputation as Father of the Nation and FIFA rules rule OK.

Their huge profits are tax exempt. They can move foreign currency in and out of our country freely. In fact, whatever we have never been allowed to even consider, they can do. And they do! What material for a good laugh. One sketch focuses on Our Fuhrer Sepp, laughing till the tears run while promising to alleviate our poverty, disease, housing issues and employment. It can only end with the words: 'So kick high! Kick high! Kick high!' becoming a cartoon-echo of a Nuremberg rally.

They say South Africa will never be the same again. We found that out after 27 April 1994. We're 16 now. A teenage democracy with great dreams of a future filled with good things. With teenage pimples and smelly socks. Careless and

arrogant. Helpless, and yet instinctive. And if we as a nation can reconcile with each other as we have done, anyone in the world can reconcile. As Evita Bezuidenhout ends the show: 'So take note, welcome guests. South Africa is not following a blueprint for democracy. We are the blueprint.'



2010 FEE-FA-FO-FUM

SOCCERfreeZONE SOCCERfreeZONE

TAKE
YOUR
PICK



EVITA se PERRON
6/11 - 7/11
SOCCERfreeZONE

freeZONE SOCCERfreeZONE SOCCERfreeZONE

EVITA se PERRON

A SOCCER-FREE ZONE

6/11 to 7/11 PROGRAMME

JUNE

Fri 11	19h00	a KOEKSISTER FOR ZUMA
Sat 12	14h00	ICONS & AIKONAS
	19h00	ELECTIONS & ERECTIONS
Sun 13	14h00	TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS
Tue 15	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Wed 16	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Thu 17	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Sat 19	14h00	ICONS & AIKONAS
	19h00	ELECTIONS & ERECTIONS
Sun 20	14h00	TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS
Tue 22	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Wed 23	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Fri 25	19h00	a KOEKSISTER FOR ZUMA
Sat 26	14h00	ICONS & AIKONAS
	19h00	ELECTIONS & ERECTIONS
Sun 27	14h00	TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS
Tue 29	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Wed 30	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE

JULY

Thu 01	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Fri 02	19h00	KOEKSISTER VIR ZUMA
Sat 03	14h00	ICONS & AIKONAS
	19h00	ELECTIONS & ERECTIONS
Sun 04	14h00	TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS
Mon 05	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Thu 08	14h00	EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE
Fri 09	19h00	a KOEKSISTER FOR ZUMA
Sat 10	14h00	ICONS & AIKONAS
	19h00	ELECTIONS & ERECTIONS
Sun 11	14h00	TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS

(From here 'XMAS IN JULY' every weekend till end of July)

11 JUNE 2010 TO 11 JULY 2010
THE MONTH OF THE INVASION
- Refugee status for all in Darling -

Soccer fever is upon us. They say there is no choice. Everything is geared to the game, like it or not. Balls will be kicked throughout the land. Wherever you go, you will be booed onto the team, vuvuzela in hand. And at a price.

EVITA SE PERRON in Darling will be the exception. The most famous white woman in South Africa has declared her cabaret/restaurant at the old railway station a SOCCERfreeZONE.

"For every husband and son who want to watch soccer, there is a wife and a daughter who might not want it as badly," says Mrs Bezuidenhout.

"Let them come to Darling and share time and laughter with me. Check out our events on www.evita.co.za and book with

Beryl at 022 492 3930 / bookings@evita.co.za

- Enjoy unique satire with Pieter-Dirk Uys in ICONS & AIKONAS and ELECTIONS & ERECTIONS every Saturday after LUNCH and before DINNER
- Discover the revisionist history of the Afrikaner in TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS every Sunday with LUNCH
- Share in special weekday performances of EVITA'S SOCCERfreeZONE after a special lunch and look at the world beyond the stadiums
- Feast on recipes from Mrs Bezuidenhout's best-selling recipe book EVITA'S KOSSIE SIKELELA
- Taste superb wines from the district
- Buy momentos, books, DVDs and koeksisters
- Visit BOERASSIC PARK and the APARTHEID MUSEUM/NAUSEUM as well as the ELSIE BALT ART GALLERY
- Discover the work of THE DARLING TRUST

A unique experience celebrating the best of South Africa and the magic of the West Coast. The only SoccerFREEzone in South Africa.

You won't need a visa
just a Visa card!

www.evita.co.za



Fee-fa-fo-fum

Performed exclusively at Evita se Perron in Darling from 11 June to 11 July 2010

THE CHARACTERS

PW Botha

Sepp Blatter

A homeless person

Bambi Kellermann

A soccer hooligan

Mrs Petersen

Pik Botha

Nowell Fine

Evita Bezuidenhout

(PDU enters as PW Botha)

PW BOTHA: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Evita se Perron in Darling. Let me point out that you are no longer under the jurisdiction of FIFA. Their rules and regulations do not apply here. You have crossed the border into a soccer-free zone. This is the last time you will hear the S-word mentioned. Kicking balls will never be the same again.

(PW exits)

(The Perron staff come on stage and sing a welcome song)

PERRON STAFF: Old Sepp Blatter has such charm

E i E i O

And for that charm we have to pay

E i E i O

New stadiums here
New airports there
Here a bribe
There a gift
Give it all or they'll be miffed!
Old Sepp Blatter has such charm
EiEio!

Welcome to Darling
Let's have a party
Put on your dancing shoes
Darling welcomes you



Welcome to Evita
Let's have a party
Put on your soccer boots
Evita welcomes you
Evita welcomes you
Evita welcomes you
Yeah!!!

PDU: It was extraordinary how a handful of middle-aged white European business-men could convince a democratically-elected government to hand over control of our country for a five week sporting jamboree. For which we pay, while the foreign organisers don't even get taxed on their huge profits. Sounds like Wall Street meets the Pentagon in Disneyland. But to be fair: huge benefits have been promised for South Africa and its people, as the leader of the pack keep telling us. Guten Tag mein Führer!

(PDU into Sepp Blatter)

Guten Tag, hello, sayibona.

Ja, ja, we are all very excited for what is happening here at the southern tip of Africa. No one ever thought it would be possible for us to make big money in this poor continent. But South Africa put themselves forward; filled in all the forms; gave us all the information. But not enough incentive. Ja, they offered diamonds and gifts. Also big donations to our favourite humanitarian charity run by my nephew. We said no, we want Mandela!

So he came to Zurich and we were on CNN, BBC and all the news and so we thought: give them a chance. They're paying for everything! And here we are in Cape Town to help the disadvantaged and victims of apartheid. This is FIFA's mission to shape a better future for all. *(He laughs)* We are so happy that as a sporting body we could change the lives of so many people. As we have promised the people of South Africa, millions of jobs will be created ... *(He giggles)* ... thousands of

people will be housed ... (*He snorts*) ...everyone will make money. (*He laughs; then threatens*) Just remember we also have rights. Every time you mention our name, you must send us \$10. Every time you blow into your vuvuzela, \$15. Every time you kick a ball, \$16. Every time you use the S-word: \$100. (*Then sweetly*) You see, we are not here to make money. We are here to help the people of South Africa. (*He mutters*) Diese blüde Idioten glauben doch alles ... Let the games begin. Kick up high! Kick high! Sieg high!

PDU: Cape Town will never be the same again. In order to beautify our city, the organisers of the soccer ... ah, that's \$100! ... they have ordered the relocation of the botanical gardens of Kirstenbosch

from against the mountain, now to border the N2 freeway from Cape Town International Airport ... so now, visitors driving to town will pass 3500 colourful indigenous plants, while 20,000 indigenous people of colour are suddenly nowhere to be seen!

(*PDU into a homeless person*)

HOMELESS PERSON: The overseas TV cameras were here this morning. They talk to me. They want to know about my life.

They call me a homeless person.

No man, I told them Cape Town is my home, there in the Joe Stalin



PDU as Sepp Blatter

informal settlement on the Cape Flats. Me and 20,000 other citizens of the Mother City.

They moved us all on that day in the rain.

They say we can't be here. We say we have always been here.

They say no, we are too close to the N2 where people from overseas will arrive for the thing that's happening, and we are an eyesore. So they move us far away, man, where no normal person will come and take films of us.

They give us rusty containers to live in. Some of us are still sleeping under sticky plastic. It says on it: 'Feel it. It's here!' Feel se moer!

And that pisspot they erected in Green Point?

Man, that's where I once could spend the summer, sleeping under a tree on the old golf course. I was in no one's way. But now I can't go near it because it's a high security zone. It's easier pissing against the wall of the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station. I think I need a passport and a visa, if not a visa card, to use one of the fancy toilets in the new stadium.

And my income is also gone.

I used to carve little dogs and horses from pieces of driftwood and sell it there by the flea market. No one complained. But now the sport people say, no, I must apply for a licence. I must comply with the rules about trade and advertising. Hey? Me? And not even mentioning the words World Cup, or even South Africa 2010 without paying them in dollars. God, are they mad?

Man, I just carve little dogs who don't say anything.

The TV reporter gave me this blanket.

Ja, those TV people from England said horrible things about us that I didn't know ... that South Africa will get none of this money paid out to the sports people ... that our unemployment is 40 percent ... that a male's life expectancy is 49 years old ... and that millions of our children are malnourished.

Ja, maybe ... but we just call it life.

Well, they did promise us nice housing after the thing is over. The Green Point Stadium will become a white elephant, then we can turn it into the Sepp Blatter Informal Settlement!

PDU: The world knows we have lions and rhino and elephants, but did anyone have the foresight to warn our visitors that there is a poisonous snake in the grass? Yes, what about our HIV issues? Our AIDS problem? The organisers of the SWC ... shit, another \$100 ... they have banned all distribution of health-related information and condoms at their events. But our government, led by a president who understands the need for protection, has showered us with one billion condoms during the 2010 SWC ... oops, that's a \$100 from me ...

Hang on, who's good with sums? Anyone here from Enron? Lehman Brothers? The SABC? No, Mr Malema, you better stick to woodwork. One billion condoms? That's nine zeroes after the one, Mr President. Let's say they expect 350,000 visitors during the \$100? So each tourist ... I suppose men and women ... will each get 2875 condoms for a 30-day event. Imagine arriving at the airport, having your passport stamped and then being given a huge box to transport to your hotel? Full of 'plastic bags'!

Just to lighten their load, our visitors will have to use 95 condoms every day. Has anyone got some ideas here? Four condoms per hour; one every 15 minutes! No wonder they're importing 40,000 sexworkers from all over the world to 'come' here! And I mean it when I say: lie back and help!

Meanwhile everyone will be pretty hysterical, because the teams will be playing great and beautiful games to no spectators, because everyone is so determined not to waste all those free condoms. They'll be fucking for Africa! Knowing the wily Swiss, they will probably trademark them and sell them world-wide as another World Cup. Or in this case, a World Sock! I think we need some professional help here.

(SOUND: Marlene Dietrich sings as PDU gets into Bambi Kellermann)



PDU as Bambi Kellermann

BAMBI KELLERMANN: Hello, I am Bambi Kellermann and the fact that I am Evita Bezuidenhout's sister should not in any way inhibit you or me. I was approached in my 'wine cellar' in Paarl to import a few thousand girls to assist in the servicing of randy tourists, mainly men, who will 'come' here for the next few weeks. And so because the organisers refuse to allow information to be shared with these thousands of visitors ... just imagine how many lives will be infected because of that stupid embargo? I have assembled a FIFA-KIT which stands for Free-Information-For-All ... so don't sue me for breach of FIFA copyright.

1. Photocopy your passport and lock the real one up in the hotel safe if you think the hotel safe is safe which it usually is.
2. Keep a contact number of your next of kin just in case ... well, just in case you die.
3. For all tourists who will sit in stadiums watching the sport, please remember your anti-vuvuzela earplugs, or you'll go deaf. (*She mouths some words*)
4. For all men, and some women, who drink too much before and after sporting occasions: Guronsan C! And drink a lot of water in your hotel bathroom which I can promise you should be safe.
5. As we all know the S-word (fuck the fee) and beer can often lead to

a messy confrontation with the opposite sex, which will be an easy way for my girls to make a lot of money with very little input, because we all know: while the will might be there, the willy will be weak!

The safest sex is no sex. Okay, this is not a musical. The only alternative is the use of condoms. So ...

1. Practise how to put them on in the light while still sober, because it will probably happen in the dark while you are pissed.
2. Condoms don't go onto bananas as you might remember being demonstrated at school. Men and boys who like the sport do not have bananas between their legs.
3. This is a penis. (*She shows a rubber toy*) It's a white penis, which you will find amongst most of our visitors, even the North Koreans. This the local colour among most of the people in our country. (*She shows a black one*) Call it black or Barack-Obama-Beige. The fact that the white penis here is bigger than the black penis is just an urban legend that needs clarification. Over to you.
4. There is also 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 sportsmen will be drunk, protect yourself wherever you can!
5. Ladies, putting half a brick in your bag is also a good protection. A man with sore balls cannot chase you and mug you.

So keep your underage girls off the streets.

Keep your underage boys off the streets.

Keep your husbands off the streets.

And remember how to say the word 'no' in all the visiting languages: No. Non. Nyet. Nein. Nee. Or just use the two words that everyone will understand: fuck off!

PDU: They tried to get into our country by all means, fair and foul, but mainly foul, slipping in through flights from Dubai or Namibia. The

scourge of sport; not coming here to enjoy themselves, but to terrorise everyone else with hooliganism, roguery and major skolliness. Do we need more hooligans on our streets? It's school holidays!

(PDU into the football hooligan)



PDU as football hooligan

FOOTBALL HOOLIGAN: I'm an English football hooligan and I'm proud of it.

And my brother is an English football hooligan

And my cousin is an English football hooligan

And we all got into South Africa with false passports and through Zimbabwe

to trash the World Cup so fuck you all.

I'm an English football hooligan and I'm good at it.

I've hooligand in France and Belgium,

smashed windows in Bonn and Denmark,

kicked police dogs in Spain and pissed in a church in Portugal.

And that's why I go to football matches, because I can be a hooligan and get onto TV and be famous.

Because who wants to go and behave like any old twat and wave a flag and shout and cheer, when you can show your arse and fart and vomit and be an English football hooligan?

So wa wa wa wa wa wa wa wa wa wa!

I'm an English football hooligan and I'm proud of it.
And I hate going back to the UK
because I got to live next to Muslim immigrants
who is stupid like baboons
and can't even behave in public like decent human beings
covering their faces with veils and behaving like foreign shit!

So now we're going to see if we can find a pad here in Cape Town
or maybe buy a house up the West Coast in Darling
because my brother won the UK Lotto
and we're stinking rich
and we're here to stay
so fuck you all!

PDU: But some Capetonians can't afford to have a nice time. They have to try and get on with their lives and earning a living. Even though so many have been told to close down their businesses during the SWC unless they paid FIFA a big big fee. Like Mrs Petersen in her bric-a-brac shop in Woodstock.

(PDU into Mrs Petersen)

MRS PETERSEN: Soli? Daar's iemand in die winkel! Soli? God, waar is daardie klong ...

Oh, Pieter, it's you. I haven't seen you for a long time. How did you get here today? It's impossible. They've closed off all the roads towards the city. Ai, I now just sleep at the back. Will I ever see my home in Athlone again?

No, I was thinking about you last night when we got some nice Art Deco chairs that came in. Just in time before the police confiscated the entire estate of that associate of Brett Kebble. Better buy them now before they get used as evidence in the Jackie Selebi trial.

En jy onthou mos daardie kas? It's now been sold, shame. I'm in two minds about that cupboard. It belonged to my grannie. Did I tell you



PDU as Mrs Petersen

my grannie was a maid? A 'domestic supervisor' back there in the 1950s? She worked for the Rabinowitz family in Kenilworth. Daardie Mrs Rabinowitz was klein, maar bedonnerd! Always keeping up with the neighbours. So one day the neighbours got Scandinavian furniture? The next day Mrs Rabinowitz decides also to put in Scandinavian furniture. So she throws out all her old things. *Soos die kas!* This cupboard that came all the way to South Africa from Lithuania, when Mrs Rabinowitz and her family were running away from Hitler or the Russians or someone horrible. Now she gives this cupboard to her coloured

maid, dis nou my grannie, who for the rest of her life couldn't work out how you could run away from someone horrible with a moerse bleddie kas onder jou arm.

So it comes to our little house in Athlone. It stands in the middle of the lounge. Dit staan die hele bleddie lounge vol! We have to squeeze past the cupboard to get to the front door. Squeeze past to get to the kitchen. Crawl under the table to get to the bathroom. But my grannie loved her fancy cupboard. We were not allowed to touch it. Dit was haar eie Taj Mahal!

'O nay, dis die witmense se kas! Oppas vir julle hande? Dis vol vet van die kerrie! Oppas vir my kas!'

So we never touched the cupboard!

Then grannie dies and we think: 'Thank God, the bleddie cupboard can now go!' But no! My mother is now sentimental and the bleddie cupboard stays. Just moves a bit to the side against the wall so there's a

passage to get through. Then my ma dies and it takes over two months for me and my brothers and sisters to agree: 'Ja, hierdie bleddie Joodse kas moet waai!' So here it is in my shop.

But you will not believe this. Last week I hear people come into the shop. I'm making kocksisters. I call: 'Okay, look around. I'm coming.' I hear them talk. South African accents with an overlay of American. I realise these are returned exiles, or ex-South Africans coming for the World Cup. That's good. They still have a lot of money here in the Nedbank. Man, Pieter, they see the cupboard and buy it without even bargaining! So I write out the invoice and look at their Canadian passports: the name is Rabinowitz! I swear they were the great-grandchildren of the same old Mrs Rabinowitz who owned the cupboard! Haai, man, they're so negative about us. What is it with exiles? The moment they leave the place they love, they start hating it.

'Your new South Africa is going down the drain! Your standard of living is going down the drain. Your World Cup will go down the drain!' I just wanted to say to them: 'Ag, shut up man, at least it's our drain!' No, truly, I had to bite my tongue. I was so tempted to say: 'Canada? You now live in Canada? The next bird-flu pandemic will start in Canada! A Kentucky Fried Chicken sal snies en julle sal almal vrek! Ja, anyway ... No, Pieter, sit a bit and let's talk. No, don't sit on that chair. You'll break it and have to buy it. No, sit on the box. Ja, let me tell you, I'm so upset, man. You know my husband Basil is a very good engineer. Remember how he applied for a big job with the building of the soccer stadium in Green Point. Man, for the Soccer World Cup the money was growing on trees and I so hoped he would get it so that I don't need to do this selling of other people's rubbish like now, but what can I tell you. But FIFA turned him down for the job. Not because his credentials are questionable, not because his testimonials were bogus. Not because he's lazy or stupid. Or late for the appointment. No, my dear, Basil is turned down for the job, because FIFA said he was not black enough.

Ek skuus vir my? Is hulle mal? Not black enough? Where were they in 1982, in the days when he couldn't even get a job as a mechanic because he wasn't white enough? And now this? Come on, this is 2010! We are

supposed to be in a nonracial, nonsexist democracy! Equality for all? It's racism in reverse! This bleddie Swiss Mafia invading us and taking over our government!

Of course we took the whole mess to the Arbitration Court, but they're also just a bunch of ANC comrades. All you hear is Xhosa Xhosa Xhosa, FIFA FIFA FIFA. Or those fancy British laa-dee-daa accents from those returned exiles, who now have to take extra classes to sound Xhosa Xhosa Xhosa!

'No,' they now say, 'blacks must get preference over coloureds and other ethnic groups as far as affirmative action is concerned, because blacks suffered the most under apartheid.'

Ag, fok hulle, man! Haai o nee, waar kom daardie woord vandaan? Ag sorry man, that word slipped out. I never use language like that. It shows how traumatised I am! What do these sports people know about what suffering me and my husband and our family had to go through under apartheid? We were moved out of our homes by the Group Areas Act, because we was not white. We were humiliated by the Immorality Act, because our Uncle Salie was caught one Friday night by the police, naked with a common white hoer in the back of a Toyota station wagon! Can you believe it? Why didn't he do it in a Mercedes? But no, the backseat of a Toyota station wagon! Tipies Oom Salie. Hy was altyd so jags soos 'n slang!

We were forced into jobs beneath us, because job reservation kept all the best work for whites who didn't even finish their schooling! And in those days the whites didn't open their front doors and say: 'Oh, you're Coloureds? Come in, come in. Let's keep the Bantus out!' 'No, we were kept out too with everyone else. And now my husband, who was beaten by the boere cops till he bleeds, is not allowed to enjoy the benefits of affirmative action in our rainbow democracy because he's not black enough? No, I'm sorry. This is not what the struggle was all about. To swop one racist baas for a racist Klaas?

Ag, but Basil really tries to cheer me up. Tells me jokes, but oh, he's so bad at the jokes. Starts at the end and then works backwards. No man, you can't laugh first and listen later. But I love these soccer jokes. I need

jokes. And you're so naughty with your jokes. You make jokes about everyone: the blacks and the whites, the coloureds, the Indians, the Catholics, the Jews, the gays, FIFA ... but I notice you don't make any jokes about us Muslims. Why? We feel left out. Don't tell me it's because you think we Muslims can't take a joke. I think it's because you comedians don't want to take the chance to find out, just in case ...

I was so depressed. I said: 'Basil? What are we going to do? Here we are in the 16th year of this miracle democracy. Mandela gave us all a second chance to make our dreams come true. We have so much to offer. I want to be optimistic, but now the colour of the skin has come back again.' 'Never mind,' says Basil. 'If we're not black enough for affirmative action, let's just cut off a leg.' I said: 'Wat?'

'Yes,' says Basil, 'cut off a leg and be part of that protected minority!' No, there's a train driver on the Metrorail from Cape Town to here in Manenberg. He's only got one leg, but he must be employed by them, because he's protected by the Constitution. And he's not even black! He's a white, racist AWB Afrikaner, still got the old orange, white and blue flag tattooed on his arm. And when he drives his train, all he sings is 'de la Rey de la Rey de la Rey!' But he has to be employed by Metrorail, because with only one leg, he belongs to a protected disadvantaged minority.

'Ja, imagine,' says Basil, 'if he was a woman with one leg, he could have been minister of transport!'

PDU: They say only the business and political elite will get tickets for the final Waterloo on July 11th. 7/11? Even a politician whom we might remember as our minister of foreign affairs during those dark years when no one wanted to play sport with us. Roelof F Botha pleads with his fellow comrades in the African National Congress ...

(PDU into Pik Botha)

PIK BOTHA: Baie dankie, thank you, umbulelo comrade chairman, for allowing me the platform from which to address the comrades of the



PDU as Pik Botha

party. All I am here for is just to ask: has anyone got a spare ticket for the final match? I'll do anything, even apologise for apartheid. But before I do so, let me state here most categorically: Nkosi Sikelele Afrika. You see, I know the words of the national anthem. So how can anyone blame me for what happened all those years ago? And why should I not be given a ticket for July 11th? I should be entitled to one as a member of the ANC. Amandla awethu Bafana Bafana!

We have recently celebrated the 16th year of our democracy and apartheid has unofficially been dead since 1990. And yet after 20 years there have been so many

questions and so few answers. Yes, yes and yes, in 1986 a plane crashed and Samora Machel was killed. And yes, the president of Mozambique died mysteriously. And yes, when I heard the news in Pretoria, as minister of foreign affairs, I cried. And no, he and I did not agree on anything.

In the language of the time, Samora Machel was a communist and a terrorist and committed to the destruction of the Afrikaner way of life in South Africa. However in the talk of today, he was a great hero of the struggle and so I pay tribute to him accordingly: Amandla Samora! Viva Machel! Kunjane la Cucaracha!

The reason I cried in Pretoria when I heard the news was because for the first time I realised that I respected him for being a man, and just another black enemy terrorist etcetera. But I can assure you there was no involvement by the South African government of the time in that heinous crime. There were no apartheid agents involved, and if there

were, I want to know who they were. I can assure you, comrades, I was never ever introduced to any apartheid agents.

In fact, if I had known anything about this plot, believe me, I would have warned President Machel. I would have phoned him and said: 'Comrade Samora, off the record, don't fly on Friday. Fly on Saturday when most of the apartheid agents are watching rugby at Loftus Versveld.' Now of course, these apartheid agents are spreading vicious rumours that I was personally responsible for the plane crash that killed Comrade Samora Machel in 1986, just so that I don't get offered a ticket for the final match on 11 July! No! Nee! Hyai! Nyet!

Let me state here most categorically and I'll repeat that with conviction: yes! Yes, I was a member of the government of the day. Everyone knows that; it's on google.com. No, I knew nothing of a third force; I didn't even know there was a second force. And thirdly: I was not there. I was not even here. As minister of foreign affairs I enjoyed all my affairs in foreign places.

So to qualify for a ticket, comrade chairman, let me as a member of the party apologise for any wrong doings of the past. If the Blue Bulls can go to Soccer City Soweto, surely I can also go? And so now I hope my colleagues here will stop throwing names at me. Names like DF Malan, JG Strydom, HF Verwoerd, BJ Vorster, PW Botha. Who the hell were these people? I've never heard these people's names before in my life. But now I realise who they were: they were all airports!

So let me underline: apartheid is dead. Apartheid is nou behoorlik in sy moer. We can no longer blame apartheid for bad and careless government. So let us move forward. Let bygones be bygones. And therefore as a proud member of the ANC, I should be entitled to a ticket. Like all of you here, my conscience is clear – because I've never used it. Amandla and kiss the boer!

PDU: You'll never know this, but life does go on in spite of the turmoil and celebration. People still have to go shopping. There is life beyond the SWC!

(PDU into Nowell Fine. She does her make-up throughout)



PDU as Nowell Fine

NOWELL FINE: No, I won't be drawn into this conversation. What has colour got to do with it. I am not a token white in the ANC. The ANC is a nonracial, nonsexist and sometimes nonsensical government. But the ANC is working. They have delivered on so many promises, mainly to them-

selves. Affirmative action is working. It pays to bend over backwards. And look at Black Economic Empowerment?

BEE is a great success. We're catching up with Russia as far as oligarchs go! I have never seen so many rich black people. And now with the World Cup? You can't find parking anywhere. They say the earning power of our new black elite has tripled in the last five years. What an inspiration that must be to the other 97% of black South Africans who are poorer than ever before. But that's just the legacy of apartheid!

Oh no man *sis*, look at my hair! I can never get to the hairdresser because of all the housework. I wished Dora was back. (*She calls*)

Dora? Dora! Come back! Madam needs you! Oh Nowell, don't be so mashuganah! Dora hasn't been here since 1994! In those old days when I called for Dora, my maid would come running. Now I call and call and call and nothing happens, because she's in Parliament!

Oh my God, I'm absolutely finished! I used to be able to go to the hairdresser twice a week thanks to Dora. She was the most wonderful domestic supervisor. She would then go to the supermarket with my spare cell phone and phone me at the hairdresser from the delicatessen counter – and I could order all my nice kosher things on the phone.

Nowadays I must do all the shopping myself. What a schlep. I have to set the burglar alarm, which is so complicated I have to phone my son in Toronto to find out how. I must feed the Rottweiler in the back garden in case he bites me on my way to the front door. I reverse my car out of

the drive, hoping the Nigerian burglars don't run in while I drive out. Then I take my life in my hands and survive in the soccer rush. Cape Town has become a cul-de-sac! What a nightmare. I am so frightened I will become a racist in the traffic. Not difficult. But I refuse to become one of those typical Cape Town whingers making white noise. I love the idea of the world coming to visit us and I want to show them how far we've come in 16 years of democracy. So instead of getting a ticket to watch a match, I've had a baby!

No, it's true: I've adopted the sweetest little black AIDS orphan baby! Many people have said: 'Nowell, don't call him an AIDS orphan because many of the babies born to people who died of AIDS don't necessarily have AIDS.' I said: 'You might be quite right, but I'm not taking any chances.' (*She puts on her rubber gloves*) His name is Sipho-Mervyn Fine and he's so beautiful and black. I've always been crazy about anything black, as long as it matches.

Anyway, I'm so sick and tired of meeting my liberal friends at La Perla every Wednesday for coffee and all they do is moan: 'Nowell, you better get the hell out of here, because in 10 years we will have five million AIDS orphans!' Now I can say to them: 'You're wrong. We'll only have 4,999,999 because I've taken one!' Of course, now I have to meet them for coffee in Simonstown because La Perla is in the no-drive area. Oh, wake me when it's over!

It wasn't easy. Look, I'm far too old to adopt a child. In any normal society they would have given me a cup of tea and chocolate chip cookie and sent me home. But this is not a normal society. As we know, because of AIDS there are hundreds of thousands of children out there who need love and homes. And my arms are empty, because my grandchildren are in Canada and Australia. But I had to look younger to convince child welfare. So I phoned my doctor.

'Hello Cyril? This is Nowell Fine. Listen, I need you to make me look 45.' He said: 'Can we try for 52?' So he used Botox. I looked outstanding. I swear to God, for two weeks I looked like Sharon Stone. Never mind my face felt like stone. Then it all sort-of slipped. I looked more like Shelley Winters. Now I've got three tits. Let's not go there.

I must say child welfare are very professional, but they're so damn inquisitive! Asking me all these horrible personal questions: 'Mrs Fine? Were you a good mother? Were you a good wife? Where you a good white madam to all your black maids?' I thought: 'Oh my God, if I answer these questions truthfully, they won't allow me to adopt a cat!' (*She looks in the mirror*) Oh my God, where's my mouth? I can't think straight without a decent mouth. Hang on . . .better. . . .better. I swear to God that's the longest my mouth has been closed since Nelson Mandela was freed from prison!

Of course my political credentials are impeccable. In the 1960s I was arrested for being a member of the Black Sash against apartheid. In the 70s I was tear-gassed by mistake at the hairdresser. In the 80s I was hit on the head by an empty beer can at one of Helen Suzman's PFP rallies. So I could say to child welfare: 'Listen comrades. I've really suffered. I've always been in the struggle. I treated my maids like decent human beings. God, it nearly killed me, but I'm glad I did.'

Child welfare really made me laugh. They asked: 'Mrs Fine, what religion will you be raising your son in?'

I said: 'Hey? You're asking me what religion? I mean hello ... shalom?' No, my son Sipho-Mervyn Fine will choose his own faith one day. Except I did have him circumcised. It's got nothing to do with being Jewish. It's being practical. President Jacob Zuma is snipped and he says it's a way to prevent HIV. Anyway I don't want my 18-year-old son one day to have to stand in a queue in some township at a witchdoctor's house.

Waiting there with some other teenagers who all have to be circumcised because of their African traditions and culture. These poor boys are terrified, because they know in that hut sits the sangoma, and the only thing he has to do the operation with is a dirty, rusty blade with which he will circumcise 20 healthy young men and condemn them to early death by the HI-virus? Not with my child.

So I phoned my doctor. 'Hello Cyril? This is Nowell Fine. Listen. I'm bringing my child to your rooms. I want you to circumcise him. Okay? And while you're about it, clean his ears and cut his toenails. And you

might as well give him the HIV test. They say it's just a small prick.' And isn't that what the posters say? 'Have your HIV test today, know your status and get on with your life!' And I'm so glad we did that, because this morning Cyril phoned me and said his little blood test was fine. HIV positive! No, hang on, is that right? God, I'm so confused. Once 'positive' meant good, now it doesn't. So did he say HIV negative? That sounds even worse. Shit, I don't know what's going on. *(She puts on the gloves)* I'll just keep the rubber gloves on for the next six months. Maybe find a pair of matching shoes and a nice yellow handbag. Tomorrow is the big match! I'll watch it on television! *(She looks in the mirror)* Outstanding.

Right. Now I'm ready for bed.

(PDU exits and gets into Evita costume)



Evita in Darling

(SOUND: Hello 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 am 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 with a rugby ball)

EVITA: How sweet, someone left a rugby ball for my grandson. What a time we are having! So many people from all over the world, here in Cape Town. And each one

has an opinion ... not about the state of the world or their own countries, but about South Africa. The negative always seems to lead.

‘Yes, you are a democracy, but for how long?’

‘Are these the last days of white life in your country?’

‘Will Julius Malema become president and do to you as Mugabe did to Zim?’

I have to just take a deep breath and not lose my temper. Not raise my voice. Not blame them for knowing nothing. And why should they? I mean look at the mess they called home? The French, the Germans, the Greeks, the Canadians, the Americans, the Brazilians, the Paraguayans, the Japanese, the Koreans, North and South, the Mexicans, the Argentina people, the Uruguayans, the Danes, the Cameroonians, the Dutch, the Congolese, the Spanish – and if I’ve left out some, it’s because I saw them in time and made a quick getaway! I must just remember my diplomatic legacy, my sense of fairness and balance, and speak to them as one does to children who think they know everything but know nothing.

So I tell them: my South Africa officially houses 45 million people of all colours, creeds, religions and genders – male, female and convertible. If we include the unofficial tourists from Congo, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia and Sussex, it might be closer to 55.3 million for all we know.

My South Africa today has more than 50 shades of black and a bleached-out rainbow that needs urgent reinventing. But then again, my South Africa is blessed with the gifts of communication. We have 11 official languages. No one can ever say they did not know what was going on. Someone will eventually say it in their mother tongue.

My South Africa has not changed its name with the birth of its democracy, although many of our roads, streets and towns need to reinvent their addresses. How long can the majority drive down Hendrik Verwoerd Boulevard, John Vorster Avenue or PW Botha Street without throwing up?

My South Africa is definitely not the United States of America. Once they inspired us with their Indian reservation systems on which we then

based our apartheid black homeland policies. Now we've moved on; they still have them. At least now we Afrikaners can proudly claim to be an inspiration for the American people. In 1994 we elected a black president. Recently they did the same. Who would have thought we would watch an African-American family go into the White House by the front door?

My South Africa is not Cuba, even though we also have a Communist Party with plans for the future, waiting to give the brothers Castro political asylum in Pretoria if McDonalds and the Big Mac invade Havana. We once locked up our political prisoners on Robben Island without trial. Today, Barack Hussein Obama does the same thing on the island of Cuba.

My South Africa is not Europe no matter how hard some of us try. Black people were once referred to as 'non-Europeans', which ironically meant that many Australians and Californians were reprimanded for using the toilets meant for blacks only! And were arrested too!

My South Africa is not Holland, where they think they understand Afrikaans and don't want to be reminded that Hendrik Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, was one of them and not one of us.

My South Africa is not Russia, although most of our ANC Politburo scraped through Moscow University or Leningrad College, and now hide their Stalinist bent under frothy quasi-liberal chit-chat, futile gesture politics and very expensive cars.

My South Africa is not China, but there's a new China shop opening every week on the main streets of our country towns, giving truth to the old rumour that by the end of Robert Mugabe's 100-year reign, the Chinese might rule the world from Harare.

My South Africa is not Australia, even though so many South Africans emigrated to that far-off colony that the average IQ of both our countries went up. What we really have in common with them is the fact that Australia was started by convicts and South Africa is being ended by convicts.

My South Africa is not Israel, where they have built an eight-metre-high concrete wall of separation to keep their neighbours out, while we

created a democracy to try and keep everyone in. And while they might deny it, we thank Tel Aviv for the loaned nuclear bombs our apartheid regime needed to show some muscle against an unfriendly democratic world.

My South Africa is not blood-drenched Iraq, which has now imported all our ex-South African security police to do service; we probably have our biggest army there. Just ask for 'n lekker dop and you'll get it!

My South Africa is not Afghanistan, even though we have as many SUVs clogging the roads, not driven by tough soldiers clutching loaded machine guns, but by politicians, the nouveau-riche and anorexic blonde mothers with cellphones pressed to their ears.

My South Africa is not Germany, although once the German people set us Afrikaners a very high political standard. It would have taken us whites a long time before we had killed six million blacks.

My South Africa is not the United Kingdom, because happily many of our racist white youth have left our rainbow shores to create their own De la Rey-style blankostan homeland in the London suburb of Richmond.

My South Africa is not Zimbabwe. Yet.

My South Africa still has the greatest Constitution in the world, which protects our freedom of expression. We still have a Bill of Rights. We once had an unbelievable Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We are still inspired by Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu. And what do the rest of world have? The Kardashians, the Taliban, Wall Street, volcanic ash, a BP oilslick and the Greek deficit. We just sit with Julius and his double-G in woodwork.

Yes, my South Africa has the greatest incidence of HIV/AIDS in the world. We still lose one thousand people a day thanks to a former government that did nothing for 10 years. And while we might be moving in the right direction, we hope all our FIFA guests are sensible enough to put their love in a plastic bag!

Ignore our Number One's leadership in the shower after unprotected sex.

(SOUND: 'Nkosi sikelele' under voice)

My South Africa is the blueprint for hope where everything once looked hopeless. It must now build that promised future in the fading footprint of despair.

My South Africa has not forgotten the past while looking forward to the future.

My South Africa is a 16-year-old teenager on the edge of adulthood with all the confusions, expectations, demands, fears and fantasies of youth.

My South Africa is exciting, frightening, hot, cold, dry, wet, hilly, flat, crowded, empty, arrogant, friendly, dangerous, gentle, nonracial, racist, wealthy, poor, healthy, sick, hopeful, corrupt, unbearable and addictive.

My South Africa is our home.

(SOUND: 'Nkosi' fade to full. then fade out)

PDU: And while we talk about it, write about it, pay for it, discuss it, watch it on TV, cheer for it at the venues, are engulfed by it and often numbed by it, other people are born and die, they dream and hope, they try and fail, they try again and succeed. They laugh and cry – and there will always be a tomorrow without the S-word. But thanks to a soccer ball, we as a nation are one. And with the rest of the world, we can all be excited about tomorrow ... when we are bankrupt. But at least we have nice things to wear!

(PDU adds FIFA paraphernalia as the staff come and sing their farewell song, with vuvuzelas)

Welcome to Darling
Let's have a party
Put on your dancing shoes
Darling welcomes you

Welcome to Evita
Let's have a party
Put on your soccer boots
Evita welcomes you
Evita welcomes you
Evita welcomes you
Yeah!!!

THE END

MEANWHILE BACK IN THE REAL WORLD ...



Nkandla homestead

John A Forbes, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Common

Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi admits some irregularities at Nkandla, or doesn't: 'Let us upfront state that the private Nkandla residence of President Zuma, like the residences of former presidents and former deputy presidents, have been declared national key points in terms of the National Key Points Act 1980. Therefore any information relating to security measures undertaken at a national key point is protected from disclosure in terms of this act. In May 2009, after the inauguration of President Zuma, the department of public works, in line with its obligation to effect security measures at the president's private residence, which is regularly used by the president, became involved in the Nkandla residence. The president is not involved whatsoever in this matter. There's an assessment by security departments and then it is for the department of public works to implement.'

Business Day

21 October 2010

ACTION IS ALL THAT MATTERS AS '1984' LOOMS

This week there is a special focus on the freedoms of the media in a democratic society, especially if those rights are being threatened. The successful result of the total onslaught against truth and opinion can be seen in the actions of the apartheid government this week in 1977, with the banning of newspapers and arrest of journalists and editors.

Today's newspaper readers share their opinions. Some are critical of the freedoms enjoyed by the media. Some move to the internet. But the general comment is: I don't want to be depressed; there is nothing I can do. I don't think this is unique to the media. Theatre has the same problems. Personally if I have to look for criticisms of the media, they are small and are mainly based on irritation: sensational headlines to attract attention that take the adult media down to the level of the Daily Voice and other rags; sloppy editing that takes the urgency and importance out of reporting.

All we can do is bring the issue to the public domain as clearly as possible. If the proposed laws controlling free speech become a reality, we will be back in a time of thought control and confusion. Under apartheid there was a moral high ground beyond the struggle. Today there is not. Then, while Nelson Mandela was locked away for 27 years, we were not allowed to see his picture, hear his voice, discuss his case. Today too many people feel a sense of relief to be spared the need to form an opinion. The right to know is as important as the right to life.

Black Wednesday in 1977 was no different to a Black Tuesday or a Black Thursday. Then black people died and all South African children were being lobotomised by the acid of apartheid propaganda. On that fateful Wednesday October 19 1977 newspapers were banned. Some people sat up and took notice, which underlines the visibility of the media and the hope that an injury to them is an injury to society. However, let us not drag in old blueprints of the struggle. Whatever action from the government against free speech lies ahead will not be

neutralised by what actions succeeded then. Banning the media is a T-shirt slogan.

It cannot work in 2010. With the internet and mass communication available, nothing can be hidden. The media must find ways to take the high ground and attract young readers. They are the issue here. Without their support and interest, our future Black Friday (or whenever the iron fist comes down) will just slide into the files as just another hiccup that changed nothing. Protest without an audience is pointless. Protest theatre during apartheid made its point within a minute and then filled the next hour with propaganda. Any protest today must be entertaining enough to attract the attention of the majority, who usually just sigh and turn the page.

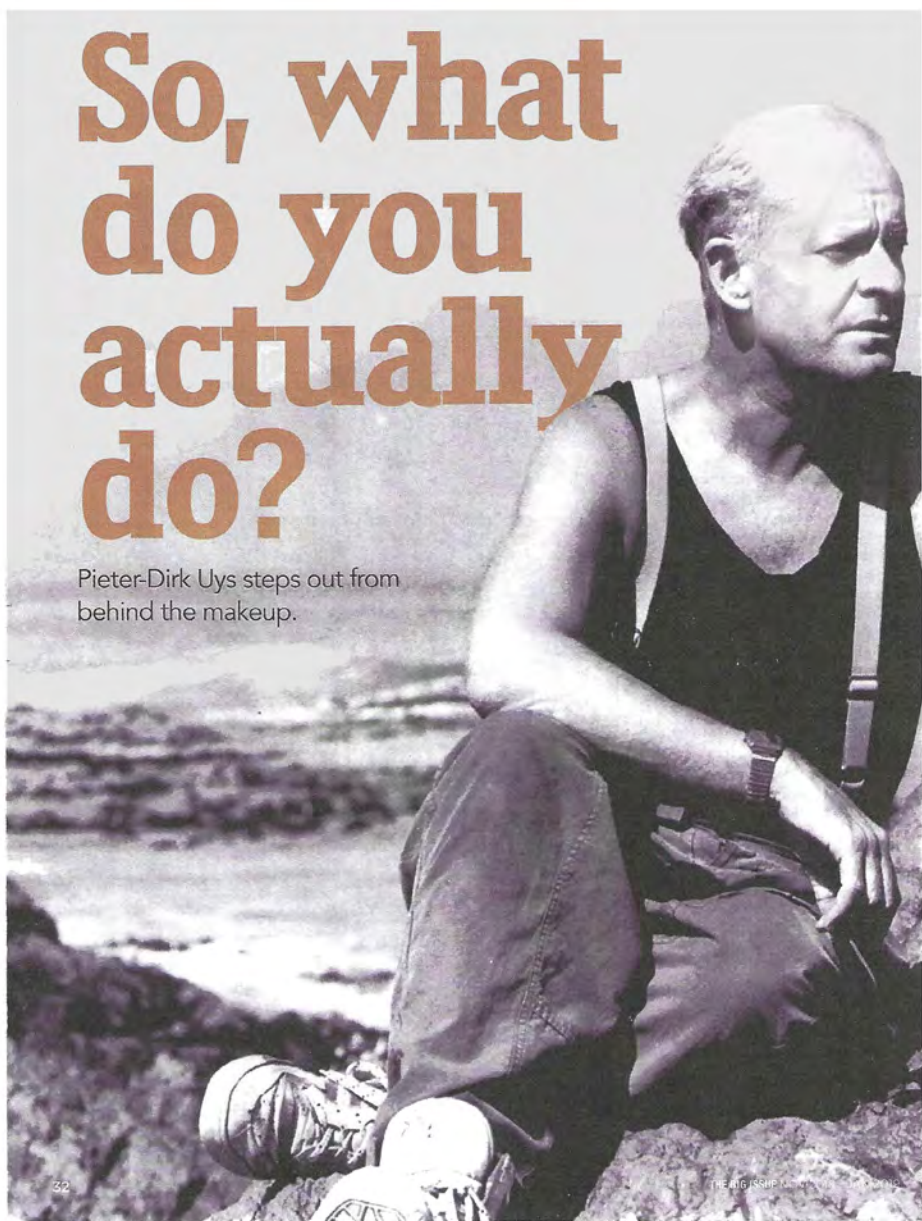
Reinvent. Use humour. Offend. Maybe even loudly welcome all those draconian laws, so that the media can once again go underground and bring a rotten government to book. That will surprise enough people to take notice and maybe care. An array of notable signatures has been collected to protest against the proposed Media Appeals Tribunal and Protection of Information Bill. How many of us who signed are prepared to lose our lives to protect our freedoms? Action is all that matters. So let us act: let us keep writing, finding the targets and the truth; respecting our standards and our intentions. Surprising our readers with new ways to illuminate old evils.

Sensationalism deadens response. But let us not fall into a trap here. It is possible that all the threats and innuendo are a successful diversion from the real issue. We are losing our democracy to mediocrity, lies and fear. The tripartite alliance is falling apart. The opposition is divided. The nation is suspicious and tired of being shocked by bad leadership. Half our population is poor, the rest are half-educated and know their dreams can't come true.

This all happened in Germany during the celebrated Weimar Republic. It imploded very quickly, opening the space for the Third Reich. If we laugh at Julius Malema's double-G in woodwork, remember Adolf Hitler had a double-G in art! George Orwell's 1984 can still happen here next year. And so can Mao's Cultural Revolution. It's one minute to midnight ...

So, what do you actually do?

Pieter-Dirk Uys steps out from
behind the makeup.







PIETER-DIRK UYS

— LIVE AT —

THE BAXTER THEATRE

DESPERATE FIRST LADIES



SEPTEMBER 2011
BOOK AT COMPUTICKET



Connecting Cape Town.



PDU on the set of Desperate First Ladies

2010/2011

Desperate First Ladies

Performed during 2010 and 2011 at the Grahamstown Festival *
Baxter Theatre Cape Town * Johannesburg * Port Elizabeth *
a tour of Holland * a show at the Jewish Museum in Berlin * a few
weeks at the Tricycle Theatre, London * then at Evita se Perron,
Darling

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

Errol, the dress designer

PW Botha

Mrs Petersen

Nowell Fine

Winnie Mandela

Grace Mugabe

Bambi Kellermann

Angela Merkel

Mother Theresa

Evita Bezuidenhout

Mrs Gaddafi

THE SETTING

Sixty-five gowns and dresses from Evita Bezuidenhout's wardrobe made up the stage decoration for the production of *Desperate First Ladies*. Some of the costumes were also used by the characters during the performance. Some costumes hanging as decoration, some to be used in sketches.

THE TEXT

(Errol the dress designer enters)

ERROL: *Desperate First Ladies?* Excuse me, who calls them that? There's nothing desperate about them. I create their ensembles, their looks, their fashion. They love my outfits, my suggestions for makeup and hair. My makeover, okay? Anyway, they don't like being called 'first ladies'. They're the wives of our president. Show them respect. And remember they pay in advance. Or should I say, the taxpayer pays in advance.

Okay. Let's sort out Wednesday's African Union opening at Gallagher Estate. Who's on this call? Bridget? Ready with shoes? Allison? Accessories? Okay, let me find the file on my iPad. Oh Lady Gaga, go Gogo. Shame poor Amy Winehouse, no *Nono*.

Let's take one Mrs Zuma at a time. Oh, by the way, you have all signed a confidentiality clause? Hope no one's got a close friend at the *City Press*? We have to work with codenames for each of them. Top security; stick to the codenames. This call might be hacked by the *Sowetan* or Wikileaks!

Okay: the first Mama. Code name 'Hippo Pool'. I like her. She's easy to please. Loves pastels. I suggest something faded, pink or menopausal mauve? We'll need a lot of fabric. And flat shoes, Bridget. No, forget heels, doll. Flat flat flat shoes. And please God a flat earth under the flat shoes! I know, Allison, she always appears in a doek! For heaven's sake, no doek! Make her more Madam and less Eve.

Right: Mama number two? Code name 'Tinkerbelle'. She's into bright colours. Nothing black or white. I suggest the red and blue ensemble. Skirt above the knee? No, half on calf. Knees multi-dimpled. Okay Allison, good, a Gucci bag for the BlackBerry. Hey? And for the gun? What gun? Why does she need a gun? She's being protected by the entire police force. Oh, she needs a gun to protect herself against the entire police force. Oh *sis*, bad girl. You're obviously not black, you white racist capitalist imperialist bloody agent. Get thee to Australia and watch thy Vietnamese neighbours eat thy dogs!!

Okay: Mama number three is the new one. Code name: 'Morning Glory'. Not bad-looking figure after those three kids. She's a wow in yellow. Take up the hems. Good legs. Give her the Alexis Carrington/Joan Collins look. Shoulder pads. And big sun glasses. Please, those early-morning meercat eyes don't look good!

Okay, get to work. Remember they'll be there together and live on TV. Don't forget what happened at the opening of Parliament, when the prez made his first big speech. All three first ladies in the gallery fast asleep! So I suggest leaving a few pins in the hems to keep the Mamas awake.

Hey? There's a wife number six? He's married another one behind my back? When does the beast rest? Does he have a sleeping bag in Luthuli House to catch up? Her code name is 'Cobra'? This sounds great. Must be a Russian? A Chinese? A Brazilian Bric-Princess? Grace Mugabe? Evita Bezuidenhout? Are you serious? As the sixth Mrs Zuma? Is he that desperate? But that tannie will suit me fine. At least I'll have one desperate first lady who can enter a room without going sideways. OK bitches get to work! Aluta continua!

(Light change)

PDU: Only in South Africa can a fictitious character be rumoured to become the sixth wife of a polygamist resident who really exists. Although sometimes one wonders. A polygamist marries all his mistresses at the same time; a monogamist doesn't tell his wife about all his mistresses. Now who would have thought that we would have a gangbang of three first ladies? And a president who is a cross between Silvio Berlusconi, ET and Fred Astaire. Jacob Zuma is just showering me with so much inspiration! When in doubt, fuck, shower, sing and dance!

(He shows the dance)

And so again let me say thank you to all our politicians, black and white, right and wrong, for giving me a career for the last 37 years. Where would I be without them? They put the words into my mouth. I don't have to make anything up. That's why I still don't pay taxes; I just pay royalties.

I must always first thank the apartheid government for having given me so many Bothas! PW Botha, Pik Botha, Fanie Botha. Bothalesi. And then also thank the ANC government today for never letting me down. Who could make up Julius Malema. Juju. Or as someone named him: Kidi Amin! He is a non-returnable gift! And probably a DA mole in the ANC. Every time he opens his mouth, another substantial vote moves to the opposition or New Zealand.

All these years of a democracy that no one ever thought would happen. Well, it did happen and it is still happening pretty successfully. Then why do we always so quickly forget what it feels like to be winners? Only a year ago the 2010 Soccer World Cup brought everyone to South Africa and they fell in love with us and left with our vuvuzelas and their lives intact. 'We thought we'd be murdered as we leave the plane!'

I said: No, man, you get murdered in the car park!

Someone asked: 'Has South Africa changed in the last 25 years?' It's a lifetime; in Zimbabwe a lifespan. Things have changed so radically they're nearly back to where they started. 25 years ago? 1986. Who remembers? I was 40. Not a nice place. Fear, violence, corruption, racism,

lies, arrogance, press control. Do I have to explain? No, I can show you my Bread and Botha:

(SOUND: 'Die Stem van Suid-Afrika')

(Light change)

PW BOTHA: Revolutionaries may stamp their feet! The communists in the West may scream their lies! Our enemies world wide may try and undermine us! But here is the reality.

PDU as PW Botha



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 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 freedoms? 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!

As far as the Protection of Information Act and our proposed media tribunal is concerned, my mind is made up. Don't confuse me with facts.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Famous last words. When I started doing PW Botha in *Adapt or Dye*, or 'Desperate First Man' in 1981 I wore quite a lot of makeup. Now I even look like the old fucker. Of course, today our president doesn't need to make a speech. When the media asks a pertinent question about poverty, unemployment, failure of service delivery, lack of discipline in the ANC Youth League, what does Jacob Zuma do? And when he's finished singing and dancing, the media has forgotten what the question was. So what has changed in the last 25 years? PW Botha didn't dance.

It's also wonderful to be legal for a change. Being a democrat used to be illegal.

'Hey Pieter-Dirk Uys, you bleddy communist! You terrorist!'

If I'd been a communist and a terrorist I would've been minister of education today. Sex was illegal unless you stuck to the colour-coding. Being gay was illegal too.

'Hey Pieter-Dirk Uys, are you gay?'

'Yes. I am a homosexual on Mondays and Wednesdays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays I'm a heterosexual. On Fridays I'm bisexual. On Saturdays I do it myself – and on Sundays I rest!'

Doing Evita Bezuidenhout during the 1980s was also against the law. It was illegal for a man to wear woman's clothing. How mean that a husband couldn't put on his wife's prettiest dress and say: 'See, darling, how nice you could also look in this?'

Laughter has changed too. White people now first look at black people and then they laugh. Black people look at white people and just have to laugh. Performing for corporates is another story. When the managing director laughs, everyone laughs. When he doesn't ...? Recently I did a set for a banking concern, all the top brass and the new black CEO. Not a chuckle, not a smile.

When it was over, I changed back into me in the men's toilets. Some of the bankers came in. 'It was great,' they said out of the corner of their mouths and rushed out when the BEE boss came in. And what did he say? 'Eish! I've not laughed so much in my life. I love Evita. She's very pretty. You're good at all that makeup and hair and drag. You should

stick to that, my brother, and stop criticising the ANC government. It's not funny. Be funny. Do drag. That's funny. Ha ha!

Maybe he's right. There's nothing funny about a democratically-elected, corrupt, arrogant, careless government. So let's not waste time laughing at them. Tonight we're going to laugh at ourselves. Now that it's legal for me to wear woman's clothing, let's enjoy a tribute to our first ladies, desperate or not. Here are the shoes – the basis to successful impersonation. And no one can say I have nothing to wear.

Some of those dresses were seen on stage during the '80s when I did the first ladies of the National Party, Mrs Vorster (wife of Prime Minister John Vorster). The Voortrekker dress of Mrs Verwoerd (wife of the architect of apartheid) and the three big frocks for Tannie Elize Botha (PW's wife). All their clothes were made in South Africa. Today everything, including the Springbok jersey, is made in China. And that dress up there I am keeping for Julius Malema. If he is expelled from the ANC, he can come and join the chorus line as our tea lady.



My first lady is here from the Cape Flats. Mrs Petersen is an optimist. She has all the reasons not to be an optimist. Apartheid destroyed her life, turned her into a second-class citizen – and yet there is no bitterness, no revenge. Just this love for where we are and who we are. 'O Pieter, I love South Africa. I want things to go right. Must they always go left!' I also like to visit her because her samosas are the best in the world.

(Light change)

PDU as Mrs Petersen

MRS PETERSEN: Soli? Daar's iemand in die winkel! Soli? God, waar is daardie klong ...

Oh, Pieter, it's you. I haven't seen you for a long time. No, I was thinking about you last night when we got some nice Art Deco chairs that came in. Just in time before the police confiscated the entire estate of that crooked cabinet minister who stole all that money. Better buy them now before they get used as evidence in any future trial of our police commissioner.

En jy onthou mos daardie kas? It's now been sold, shame. I'm in two minds about that cupboard. It belonged to my grannie. Did I tell you my grannie was a maid? A 'domestic supervisor' back there in the 1950s? She worked for the Rabinowitz family in Kenilworth. Daardie Mrs Rabinowitz was klein, maar bedonnerd! Always keeping up with the neighbours. So one day they got Scandinavian furniture? The next day Mrs Rabinowitz decides also to put in Scandinavian furniture. So she throws out all her old things. Soos die kas! This cupboard that came all the way to South Africa from Lithuania, when Mrs Rabinowitz and her family were running away from Hitler or the Russians or someone horrible. Now she gives this cupboard to her coloured maid, dis nou my grannie, who for the rest of her life couldn't work out how you could run away from someone horrible with a moerse bleddie kas onder jou arm.

So it comes to our little house in Athlone. It stands in the middle of the lounge. Dit staan die hele bleddie lounge vol! We have to squeeze past the cupboard to get to the front door. Squeeze past to get to the kitchen. Crawl under the table to get to the bathroom. But my grannie loved her fancy cupboard. We were not allowed to touch it. Dit was haar eie Taj Mahal! 'O nay, dis die wit mense se kas! Oppas vir julle hande? Dis vol vet van die kerrie! Oppas vir my kas!' So we never touched the cupboard!

Then grannie dies and we think: "Thank God, the bleddie cupboard can now go!" But no! My mother is now sentimental and the bleddie cupboard stays. Just moves a bit to the side against the wall so there's a passage to get through. Then my ma dies and it takes over two months

for me and my brothers and sisters to agree: 'Ja, hierdie bleddie Joodse kas moet waai!' So here it is in my shop.

But you will not believe this. Last week I hear people come into the shop. I'm making koeksisters. I call: 'Okay, look around. I'm coming.' I hear them talk. South African accents with an overlay of American. I realise these are returned exiles, or ex-South Africans visiting. That's good. They still have a lot of money here in the Nedbank. Man, Pieter, they see the cupboard and buy it without even bargaining! So I write out the invoice and look at their Canadian passports: the name is Rabinowitz! I swear they were the great-grandchildren of the same old Mrs Rabinowitz who owned the cupboard!

No, Pieter, sit a bit and let's talk. No, don't sit on that chair. You'll break it and have to buy it. No, sit on the box. Ja, let me tell you, I'm so upset, man. You know my husband Basil is a very good engineer. Remember how he applied for a big job with the building of the soccer stadium in Green Point. Man, for the Soccer World Cup the money was growing on trees and I so hoped he would get it so that I don't need to do this selling of other people's rubbish like now, but what can I tell you. Basil was turned down for the job. Not because his credentials are questionable, not because his testimonials were bogus. Not because he's lazy or stupid. Or late for the appointment. No, my dear, Basil is turned down for the job, because they said he was not black enough.

Ekskuus vir my? Is hulle mal? Not black enough? Where were they in 1982, in the days when he couldn't even get a job as a mechanic because he wasn't white enough? And now this? Come on, this is 2011! We are supposed to be in a nonracial, nonsexist democracy! Equality for all? It's racism in reverse!

Of course we took the whole business to the arbitration court, but they're also just a bunch of ANC comrades. All you hear is Xhosa Xhosa Xhosa. Or those fancy British laa-dee-daa accents from those returned exiles, who now have to take extra classes to sound Xhosa Xhosa Xhosa! 'No,' they now say, 'blacks must get preference over coloureds and other ethnic groups as far as affirmative action is concerned, because blacks suffered the most under apartheid.'

Ag fok hulle, man! Haai o nee, waar kom daardie woord vandaan? Ag sorry man, that word slipped out. I never use language like that. It shows how traumatised I am!

What do these returned exiles know about what suffering me and my husband and our family had to go through under apartheid? We were moved out of our homes by the Group Areas Act, because we was not white. We was humiliated by the Immorality Act, because our Uncle Salie was caught one Friday night by the police, naked with a common white hoer in bleddie Goodwood. A slum like Goodwood? *Sis!* Why doesn't he get caught in the luxury of Constantia! Tipies Oom Salie. Hy was altyd so jags soos 'n slang!

We was forced into jobs beneath us, because job reservation kept all the best work for whites who didn't even finish their schooling! And in those days the whites didn't open their front doors and say: 'Oh, you're coloureds? Come in, come in. Let's keep the blacks out!' No, we were kept out too with everyone else.

And now my husband, who was beaten by the boere cops till he bleeds, is not allowed to enjoy the benefits of affirmative action in our rainbow democracy because he's not black enough? No, I'm sorry. This is not what the struggle was all about. To swop one racist Baas for a racist Klaas?

Ag, but Basil really tries to cheer me up. Tells me jokes, but o-he'e, he's so bad at the jokes. Starts at the end and then works backwards. No man, you can't laugh first and listen later. And I love jokes. But you're so naughty with your jokes. You make jokes about everyone: the blacks and the whites, the coloureds, the Indians, the Catholics, the Jews, the gays ... but I notice you don't make any jokes about us Muslims. Why? We feel left out. Don't tell me it's because you think we Muslims can't take a joke. I think it's because you comedians don't want to take the chance to find out, just in case ...

I was so depressed. I said: 'Basil? What are we going to do? Here we are in the 17th year of this miracle democracy. Mandela gave us all a second chance to make our dreams come true. We have so much to offer. I want to be optimistic, but now the colour of the skin has come back again.'

Never mind,' says Basil. 'If we're not black enough for affirmative action, let's just cut off a leg.'

I said: '*Wat?*'

'Yes,' says Basil, 'cut off a leg and be part of that protected minority!' No, there's a train driver on the Metrorail from Cape Town to here in Manenberg. He's only got one leg, but he must be employed by them, because he's protected by the Constitution. And he's not even black! He's a white, racist Afrikaner. But he has to be employed by Metrorail, because with only one leg, he belongs to a protected disadvantaged minority.

'Ja, imagine,' says Basil, 'if he was a woman with one leg, he could have been minister of transport!'

(*BLACKOUT*)

(*Lights*)

PDU: Not all our first ladies are desperate. One of my great heroes is the first lady of the white struggle against apartheid: Helen Suzman. For 13 years she sat in the South African Parliament, the only member of a white opposition to the National Party government, and just said the same thing over and over: 'Free Mandela! Get rid of apartheid!' She drove the Broederbond crazy. 'Free Mandela! Get rid of apartheid!' Like a chihuahua on crack. Eventually President FW de Klerk couldn't take any more.

'Helen Suzman keeps on saying: Free Mandela. Get rid of apartheid! How do we shut her up!'

'Just do what she says,' they suggested. And so he did.

De Klerk stood up in Parliament and freed Mandela and ended apartheid. Shows what one woman can do to help change the history of a nation!

Helen Suzman would challenge the Nats with their own regulations. Every year she would ask the same question pertaining to the Population Registration Act, one of the worst of the laws of segregation. And

because she asked it in Parliament, it had to be answered in Parliament. We still have to get there in our democracy. The answer she got each year became the backbone to virtually all my shows during the 1980s.

(PDU as an National Party MP)

‘In answer to a question from the 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.’

You notice that no blacks became white and no whites became black. I couldn’t have made that up if I tried.

My first illegal lady appeared in 1975 at the Grahamstown Festival. Her name was Nowell Fine. Her audience were Nowell Fines. After one performance a lady stopped me in the foyer and said: ‘Excuse me Mr Uys, but I don’t know why you keep doing that kugel character, because I don’t know anyone who talks like that, I swear to God!’

Then, like them, Nowell was blonde, but also having an illegal affair with her black garden boy Nimrod. She’s still with me, older, I don’t know about wiser, still the white liberal, always the kugel. And as for

Nimrod? I saw his name on the *Sunday Times* list of richest South Africans last month. See, garden boys can become millionaires and shepherds become presidents. And Nowell Fine? The old Jewish-African princess has just been overseas for the first time in years.

(SOUND: *Airport noise*)

(*Light change*)

NOWELL FINE: As true's God, I'm having a nervous breakdown. I'm absolutely finished. I've just seen all the girls who were with me in matric back in Sea Point in 1961. Yes, our 50th matric reunion! Here in Canada. So here I am in the Toronto International Airport waiting to get flights back to Cape Town.

I've been up since 4 a.m. this morning. My plane only leaves tonight at six, but I don't want to take the chance to miss it. It was too early to have the hotel breakfast, which I've paid for in advance let me tell you! Eish! I'm so hungry. Everything here's so expensive. The cheapest

thing I could find here was a halal hotcross bun, but no, I couldn't. And don't ever convert anything from dollars to rands! You'll want to hang yourself in the toilet!

Class reunion in Toronto! Oi. I was the only real South African here. Some are now Canadian, some Australian, Gloria still has her old passport, but travels under New Zealand protection. Renee is getting her US citizenship at last. Greta is Dutch thanks to her dad and Tessa is a Brit. Just silly old



PDU as Nowell Fine

me, Nowell Fine, schmuck with a bona fide South African passport that every junior Al Qaeda terrorist gets in his suicide bomber do-it-yourself kit!

No, I didn't go to the previous class reunions. New York? London? San Diego? Perth? Do me a favour! But I wanted to see Toronto to surprise my grandchildren, but they're still on holiday somewhere in Alaska. Never mind, I won't email them. I believe over 100,000 South Africans live around here, they say. The Mall on a Saturday sounds like Durbanville. All those Afrikaans doctors.

And that reunion dinner? A braaivleis! Horrible. Anyway, I didn't recognise any of my old friends. It was like a Muppet convention full of Botox babies and silicone sisters. I looked like everyone's grandmother. Me, who was once the youngest in the class. I remember how we used to make jokes back in 1961 when we became a Boer republic about having to emigrate. They weren't funny, but we laughed loudly hoping it would not happen.

I remember: 'I'm not going to Australia. Final proof that there's death after life!' And: 'Forget about New Zealand. My husband went to look at it, but it was closed.' No, the best was: 'London? No way. You can't get a decent maid in London. Give me Cape Town any day. I'll rather be killed in my own bed than get up and make it myself!' And now no one wants us! That's a sick joke!

I tried the joke about so many South Africans emigrating to Australia that the IQ of both our countries went up. Maybe someone laughed, but nothing moved. I gently reminded them that we South Africans have now been warned by our government not to travel to England, because of their recent rioting and violence. Ha ha? No one remembered the vice versa.

Oh sure, they all still go down to Plett for their summer holidays, with all that money in the Nedbank account and old mothers in frailcare somewhere in Newlands. God, they're all such racists! I just said that we're doing okay, with a few speed bumps along the way. They don't want to hear good news from home. 'South Africa is going down the drain; your standard of living is going down the drain; that Soccer

World Cup of yours should have gone down the drain.' I was so tempted to say: 'Oh shut up, bitches, at least it's our drain.'

Of course when they're in Cape Town, they all go to the University of Robben Island for a refresher course in commitment and were quite shocked when I said: 'Call me a spoilsport, but I don't like visiting an Amandla Disneyland.' The Shi'ite hit the fan! Excuse me, dolls, don't forget I was there when it all happened. You were safely in Canadian hotel sipping whisky and waiting for our blood bath on TV.

I would go on my balcony in Sea Point and do my struggle aerobics, shouting across to Robben Island every morning: 'Walk across the water now, damn it! Woza Mandela!' It took longer than we thought, but he came. For what do I have to schlep over now and be part of a tour, crowding past Mandela's cell, Sisulu's cell, Kathrada's cell? With all those British, French, American, Dutch, German, Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese and Russian tourists. All in tears.

In tears? For what? I wanted to shout 'Why are you crying here, you schmucks? Between you lot you murdered millions of people during the last three centuries and now you come here and cry for the ones we kept alive?' Wake me when it's over.

I better start. Boarding at Gate C45. It takes a 30 minute walk. Okay, step by step, Nowell doll. Get on the plane, economy class hell. Change in New York, crap takeaways. Change planes in London, for which I needed a visa that cost R600 for a three hour visit! Then to Joburg, to find your case is so much lighter. Then the link to Cape Town is three hours delayed. African Time. Bliss. Thank God, a nervous breakdown in the safety of my own fortress. Then I'll Skype my grandchildren in Toronto and they can help me reset my burglar alarm, which is so complicated.

Give me Cape Town any day. I'd rather be bankrupted in my own city, than sit in foreign lands and listen to kak out of the mouths of ancient kugels. Stay there, dolls. Your new countries deserve you. Okay, Comrade Fine, up, up, and away.

(She gets up and walks off with difficulty)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(Optional interval here if needed)

PDU: One thing that has changed in the last 25 years is our public holidays. Before 1994 they were so political: Republic Day. Kruger Day. The Day of the Vow. Sixteen December has always been an uncomfortable public holiday for many South Africans. It was called Dingaan's Dag, Geloftedag, Bloedrivierdag, The Day of the Vow – the vow being the one the Afrikaner Voortrekkers made when in 1838 when they were confronted by the Zulu nation at Blood River. One hundred and sixty-eight Voortrekkers with guns and 250,000 angry Zulus in their ostrich feathers, rare and protected animal skins, assegais and shields.

Imagine, a quarter of a million Jacob Zumas without cell phones. The moment the Afrikaners saw so many of them, they got on their knees and prayed to God, because in those days God was an Afrikaner. And they promised their God that if He would allow them victory over the blacks, they – we – would celebrate the 16th of December as a sacred day forever more. So every year we celebrated our racism. Until 1994, when it all changed, because the ANC decided to celebrate a special occasion on 16 December.

It was their first National Congress as a democratically-elected, non-racial, nonsexist government. And where did they decide to have their party? Not Soweto; not New Brighton; not Langa – but Bloemfontein! Either the ANC has got a hell of a sense of humour, or a terrible sense of direction! Cyril Ramaphosa was still the secretary-general of the ANC and he asked me to do the cabaret for them on that 16 December. I thought this is a good way to find out if God was still an Afrikaner. So there was Evita Bezuidenhout on stage with 3000 members of the new government watching her. And she said: 'Bloemfontein O Bloemfontein! They said I'd find the ANC in Bloemfontein and I thought how would I ever find the ANC in Bloemfontein? Then I saw all the

new Mercedes cars and here you are!’ And they laughed because it was true! Then I did President PW Botha and they laughed because they knew it to be true. I also did Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was there and laughed louder than anyone else.

And then obviously it was time to do the superstar of my chorus line, because in 1994 she was still the wife of our new president. Yes, it was time to do Mrs Winnie Mandela. In 1994 Winnie was our first lady, the Mother of the Nation. Few wanted to remember what people said that she said during the 1980s, when they said that she told her bodyguard-football team to put petrol-soaked car tyres round the necks of spies and traitors and set them alight in the necklace method of execution. No, not here! This was a celebration of democracy.

(PDU adds costume, wig, turban and jewellery)

So out came my Winnie costume. The women screamed their excitement, because this was the exact copy of the outfit Winnie wore the



PDU as Winnie Madikizela-Mandela

week before when she'd appeared in court on corruption charges. The women screamed 'Viva Winnie', 'Amandla!' Ag fok off! ... if they only knew what an impossible costume this is to put on. Thank God I have no tits, or I would have strangled myself by now! Then the hair – and let me thank Winnie for starting this fashion in knitted hair. Since then I have used the same wig to do at least 20 women in politics. We can now safely say that they all tend to look alike.

Then the turban that looked so good on page three of the world media showing our first lady's impeccable ethnic taste. Then came the \$2000 sunglasses Winnie bought in New York, where she was raising money for the ANC Youth League. And finally Winnie Mandela's very own costume jewellery! (*Add tyre-ashtrays as bangles*) And then I froze and stopped in my tracks. There she was, sitting right in front of me. Winnie, the mugger of the nation.

What could I do? I was wearing everything. The tyres, the handcuffs, the earrings of matches and cigarette-stompies. Behind a small decorative palm at the side of the stage, I saw Cyril Ramaphosa and Thabo Mbeki convulsed with laughter and cutting their throats! I had to stop. Time to go! 'Amandla!'

Suddenly out of the applauding crowd appeared Winnie's personal bodyguards. Her Xhosa Nostra. 'Hey Pieter-Dirk Uys, that was very good!' Hey? 'We know you do Winnie in your show, with the tyres and the matches and the stompies. We know! And we took a bet that you would not have the guts to do Winnie here tonight. But you do have the guts!' Do I keep the guts? And what did Mrs Mandela say? 'No, Mama loved it, man. She said it was great!' But I make her out to be a murderer. 'Ja. Everyone makes her out to be a murderer. But you make her out to be a beautiful murderer.' So I had passed that audition on 16 December 1994 and the Day of the Vow became Reconciliation Day!

On the 24th of this month Winnie is 75 years old. On Heritage Day nogal. Winnie, the black cat with nine lives. Tokyo Sexwale has given her a special job to go around townships and informal settlements and check on the state of their sanitation. Never thought after all these years that we can once again say: Winnie's in the poo! She's not white

people's cup of tea, but then our taste in tea doesn't really count for much any more.

No matter what some people think, she is still a remarkable South African politician. Many fear and hate her. But more respect her and love the legend; a legend who has done more than a virtual president. While Thabo Mbeki was flying around the world, Winnie went to all the funerals of the hundreds of people who have died of a disease that has no name, because the president and his minister of health decided there was no real problem.

Once we had an apartheid government that killed people. Under Mbeki we had a democratic government that just let them die. But Winnie was there. And she held them and wept with them and prayed with them, wearing her Gucci and her Armani, with a new Mercedes-Benz in front of every door. And the people love her for it! An eternal first lady who now supports Julius Malema, whom she has called 'the new Mandela'.

So while waiting for Juju's voice to break, Mama Winnie could be the sort of acting president we now need: someone who understands violence and crime and killing and loss. She will stop the rape of our children. Winnie would take the first rapist of a 10-year-old child into the TV studios and shoot him dead, live on the seven o'clock news! Beware the power behind the throne. The first lady behind the first man. Which brings me to Zimbabwe.

How can a country on our doorstep dissolve in front of our very eyes and no one does anything? We sure know how to choose our friends: Gaddafi. Mugabe. Not the Dalai Lama. Octogenarian Robert Mugabe is still going strong with a young wife and Viagra. Maybe it's more about erections than elections? Grace Mugabe, the second wife of the Pol Pot of Africa. You will see her on television, just behind him.

Tall, elegant, icy, Darth Vader in drag. Grace Mugabe, with diamonds dripping blood, sitting at her dressing table, having spent millions on herself at the expense of her dying people. French Queen Marie Antoinette once said: 'If they don't have bread, let them eat cake'. Grace Mugabe just laughs: 'Cake? Fuck 'em. Let them eat shit!'

(She sings the children's song as she gets ready)

(Light change)

(PDU adds wig, jewellery, lipstick to create a monster figure)

GRACE MUGABE: *(Sings the familiar song)*

Old Mugabe wants that farm –
eicio
But on that farm live Joan and
Dick – eicio
Send a gang in here, troops in
there
Here a vet, there a thug, rape and
pillage, burn and mug
Old Mugabe wants that farm –
eicio



PDU as Grace Mugabe

Comrade Thabo was our friend –
eicio
For Bob he went round the bend – eicio
Giving us a million bucks, this was mine
Now it's thine, never worry, you'll be fine
Julius Malema is our friend – eicio

Who says a secretary can't be queen – eicio
After giving Bob a blowjob behind the scene – eicio
When his first wife died, oh how we cried!
Poor old thing; dead old thing
Now it's my turn; church bells ring
Amazing Grace is now the queen – eicio

But I'm not feeling very well – eieio
Amazing Grace got no white cell – eieio
No one else must know; neither friend or foe
Take more drugs, take more pills, the people they can foot the bills
I'm not feeling very well – eieio

I'm just bored with what have I got – eieio
This fucking land has gone to rot – eieio
With Morgan Tsvangirai here, and The Elders there
Cholera, starvation, HIV, inflation ...
(Now Gaddafi's banging on our door! Where do we go?
Zambia? South Africa? Aristide's house is still empty.
Ah Stellenbosch ... is that a farm? Bobby?)
Gracie baby wants that farm – eieio
Gracie baby wants that gown – eieio
Gracie baby wants that town – eieio
Eieio – eieio – Go Bobby Go!

(She gives a Hitler salute)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: A new addition to my chorus line of ladies is the sister of Tannie Evita Bezuidenhout. Bambi Kellermann was born Baby Poggenpoel and left South Africa in 1956 – not because of political reasons, but because she didn't want to die a virgin in Bethlehem. She became a stripper in Europe and sex was the name of her game. She is back in South Africa again and runs a wine-tasting cellar in the Boland town of Paarl. Under the shadow of that erection known as the Taal Monument. You can imagine what snacks she serves with the chardonnay.

BAMBI KELLERMANN: (*During her song PDU adds the blonde wig, eyelashes and lipstick*)

Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuss
Auf Liebe eingestellt
Und dass ist meine Welt
Und sonst garnicht.



PDU as Bambi Kellermann

Don't look so nervous, darling, I won't tell your wife you tasted my best Merlot last weekend. My name is Bambi and I am your Evita's sister. That's why she's not here, because she hates me. She and I will never be seen in the same place at the same time. Because I could have a master's degree in sexual survival, I started getting involved during the Soccer World Cup – because as we know, soccer plus beer leads to sex. But happily there was so much beer that even if the flesh was willing, the Willy was weak.

Trevor Manuel mentioned the fact that HIV infections among our young people has doubled in the last year. So tonight is a unique opportunity to focus on the details of survival that most South Africans avoid out of embarrassment, fear or plain stupidity. We need to practise safe sex. We need to know what we are doing to prevent. That's the keyword: prevention is better than cure.

(She holds up a condom)

I want you to see the national flower of South Africa. This is a dead one that we find in parking lots, at bus stops and everywhere on the beach and picnic areas. It's a lethal weapon. We must learn to dispose of them

carefully. Every man who uses a condom is in charge of getting rid of that condom. Don't just drop it on the ground. What happens? Children play, children pick things up, ooooh, ooohhh, balloon, oooohhh cold drink, cool drink, mmmmmmm. Bury it. Throw it down the toilet. Make sure it's gone. Discipline, respecting other people.

Of course, condoms come in different sizes. Our free condoms say very clearly: one size fits all. In Africa? Hell? There are different sizes. Shop around for the condom that suits you like you shop for shoes. You go into a shop and you don't say: 'I want shoes!' You say: 'I want a size nine, a size 12, size 14.' Then you try the shoes on and walk, and if they don't fit, you get another size. Some condoms are made for Jacob Zuma; some for Julius Malema. If your condom is too small, it will break. If your condom is too big, it will fall off. Make sure you don't overestimate your potential.

Practising safe sex means just that. Go to your room and practise. Fathers? Talk to your sons. Mothers? Talk to your husbands. Go into your room. Take your condom. Lock the door. Switch on the light. Draw the curtains. Drop your broeks, whip out your penis. Think of someone sexy, male, female or convertible. Get it to stand to attention. Then you open your silver package and you take out your condom and put it on. In the light so that you will know what you are doing when it's dark. Practise with your eyes closed. You can't make a mistake here.

(Demonstrate)

Before you tear open the package to take your condom out, push it to one side. You don't want to tear it with your nail. It's made of latex. One tear and there's a hole. Not good. Dangerous. Now this is a condom we get free from our government. Thank you. Pity our president never seems to use one! The problem is they don't open easily. Not helpful when you need it in a hurry. How long is a man going to stand with his trousers around his ankles, trying to get the damn thing open? 'Okay hang on, *wag, wag, wag, wag, wag*. I'm coming ...'

(Demonstrate)

Well, I'm not coming, but hopefully when I've got this damn thing out and on I will be coming etcetera and so forth. So if you have a condom,

make sure it will open easily. If it's a free one, make a little snip with a scissor. Don't keep a condom in your back pocket, or in your bag for three months or three years as I used to do, because they don't last forever. Recycle the unused one with a fresh one.

(Demonstrate)

Okay, it is now open. You must know what's going to come out of here. Don't be surprised, because it's a sticky snotty thing. Don't touch this for the first time on your date. You will drop it on the carpet or in the grass and there you are again with your naked arse in the air. That's when the man says: 'To hell with it. I won't wear a condom. It can't happen to me.' If you were a computer you would flash the words 'fatal error'.

(Demonstrate)

Okay, now there is only one correct way to use this. It rolls onto the erect penis. Not this way. Nothing will happen and you will have a Basuto hat on the penis all night. There are many well-meaning people trying to educate youth on condom use, but they are too inhibited to call a spade a spade. They will say: you roll the condom onto the penis. Now this is not a penis. It's a banana. Be careful. The kids listen and believe what we tell them. Why should they think we're using a banana because we're too ashamed to use a real penis?

(Demonstrate)

They say: 'Oh, you put the condom on the banana! Then you put the banana on the bedside table with the condom on it. So it's okay to have sex without a condom!' Boys and men do not have bananas between their legs. Boys and men have got penises between their legs. This is a penis. Darling, next time keep the light on so you know what's coming! And you, my dear? Don't look so shocked; yours will grow.

(Demonstrate)

And it goes on a very specific way, you roll it on, and then there's a little balloon on the top, which you've got to keep free of air because that has got to be filled with the stuff no one wants. Semen. I know this penis is not very representative of South Africa. It is a European penis, a Eurocentric organ. The majority of the penises in South Africa are this colour. Black or coloured – I prefer to call them Barack-Obama-Beige.

I know the white one is bigger than the black one. I have been called a racist. Size does not matter. That's your urban legend to sort that out.

(Demonstrate)

I want to just address the women of all ages from nine to 90. Please keep one of these with you at all times to protect yourself against rape. But women have another choice here, the femidom, the female condom. Impressive package. Then you open it up, and your heart stops. How does this thing work? You could catch a fish in this thing. Just think for a moment how many millions of women, millions of women, women that you are and women that you know, could live – if they had access to female condoms.

If women knew they could protect themselves with confidence with a femidom, and not expect men to protect them. Because men don't do that successfully, or easily, or willingly. It's not perfect. This still needs a lot of work. It's like swimming in a raincoat. But this is an answer to the question: what can we do to protect our women? For goodness sake, instead of sending the King of Swaziland two billion rand for pocket money, let's spend it on perfecting the femidom. I hope you talk to your children, to your grandchildren.

Why didn't you bring them here tonight. You would have had some wonderful questions in the car on the way home. What are your kids doing while you are here? Watching TV? Doing their homework? No darling, they're fucking. They're young and sexy and inspired by what we show them. Talk to them. Warn them about the dangers of being sexy and young and careless. While you are sitting here, your kids might be out there having unprotected sex with a Zuma! A condom a day keeps the virus at bay. If it's not on, it's not in!

I'm so glad to see you are shocked. Let me entertain you with my impersonation of a desperate first lady, someone who would gladly sacrifice every Euro in order to solve her problem! The chancellor of Germany, Mrs Angela Merkel!

(Bambi resets her wig to the Merkel style)



PDU as Angela Merkel

ANGELA MERKEL: Das ist schrecklich! Ich bin desperaat! I am desperate. I will give all Germany's euros for a new hairdresser. Look at my hair. It's full of Greece! Greece! Greece!

(She pulls a familiar Merkel face)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

MOTHER THERESA: *(On the phone)*

Hello??? *Pronto??* I can't hear you ... yes, hello, you've come

through to heaven. This is the managing director's office ... No, his secretary is not here. Marilyn Monroe is on strike ... I'm standing in for her; the name is Mother Theresa. Nobel Peace Prize winner, Catholic saint, Albanian icon ... What you mean: you want to talk to the blonde! ... hello?

(The call is over)

As I was telling Elizabeth Taylor, the showers here in heaven are an absolute disgrace! The hot water only gets switched on after confession on Sundays and then the women are all bundled together in the same cubicle to shower. No, is this what I stayed celibate for all my life on earth? I'm in heaven: I want to watch Heath Ledger in the shower! Or at least see Gregory's peck! But no, I'm in the same cubicle with Queen Victoria, Leni Riefenstahl, Betsie Verwoerd! Even naked I feel like a beauty queen compared to them.

Then little Marilyn calls me this morning and say she is going on strike and would I take messages. And gives me this phone! Primitive! Where is the BlackBerry? The iPhone? And the damned hot spot keeps moving!

(The phone rings)



PDU as Mother Theresa

Hello? Hello! Yes, this is heaven ... my name is Mother Theresa, can I help you? ... no, I'm sorry, judge. God's busy ... yes, my dear, I'm sure He talks to you, but nobody cares ... so tell me what's your problem? Where are you praying from? Ah, Africa, that figures ... there's a flood in your front garden and a drought in the back. You have diseases, viruses, famines, Geldorf, Gaddafi, Mugabe ... darling, you have come through to heaven! If you want someone to help you, you must go to hell ... no, I'm sorry, I can't put you through to hell. We only share a telephone line on Sundays, after they send us the hot water. *Moegoe!*

(The call is over)

Even the municipal angels are on strike. I have to clean up the place.

Even St Peter needs my help. 'Keep an eye on the Pearly Gates,' he says. Why? 'South Africans come and steal it.' Everyone tries their luck. Apartheid Minister of Defence General Magnus Malan's been sitting out there for weeks wanting to get in. 'Do you know who I was?' Yes, go to hell. Other politicians try and bribe. Pinochet. Milosevic. 'I was on the stamps and coins.' Go to hell! Then someone says: 'I am a member of the African National Congress.' Come straight in, my dear. Fresh sushi at reception.

No, someone was not being very straight with me back on earth. 'Mother Theresa, suffer in life. Don't worry what you look like because one day you will be rewarded in heaven. You will look like Sophia

Loren!' Hello? I've been here for 14 years, waiting!! Does this saint wear Prada? No! Tea towels from Clicks and sometimes green Crocks! I look like a Zapiro cartoon!

Heaven is also not what you think it is, darling! They tell you it's peaceful? Gentle? With angels singing and lots of ice cream? Do you know how many millions are in heaven? Since the beginning of time? All the most boring people who were too scared to do anything in life, in case it counted against them up here. You think artists, painters, actors, dancers, comedians, drag queens? None here, my dear! They're all down there.

No, this is like Cairo Airport during a never-ending strike. Toilets overflowing, no running water, no air con, being sexually-harassed by angels still high on the few bottles of communion Chardonnay left after Amy found the wine house. And those Muslim suicide bombers who think they own the place? They are so stupid. What do they expect? You blow yourself up in a crowded supermarket? Sure. You get to heaven, bit in little pieces. And yes, there are 27 virgins waiting for you, but each one just gets your smallest piece!

Big drama happening up here today. Major strike. A go-slow. What can one do if the son of the Boss pulls rank? He won't go back as the Book promised. Half of the angels say: yes, stay here – the others say: no, go! I say nothing. I'm a two-star angel. But I saw Him in the canteen yesterday: 'JC, don't go. They'll blame you for everything!'

He said: 'Okay.'

The Father said: 'We promised.'

The Son said: 'I was not consulted.'

The Father said: 'But you're the Son of Me.'

The Son said: 'I will not go back. How do I convince them who I am? Do I have to go on Oprah with Lady Gaga? Do I tweet. Open a Facebook wall? I will not go!'

The Holy Ghost flies in through the window. 'Oi oi oi, go go go! How will they believe you're the Son of Us? Go! The Rolling Stones are more popular. Nelson Mandela is more convincing. For God's sake, go!' So now we sit with all this divine kaka! Believe me feeding the millions in

Calcutta with three sardines and five prego rolls was easy in comparison. But I look at you and realise you are all still alive.

Darlings, enjoy every minute of your life. It is precious. It is unique. You can find heaven on earth. Don't waste your life waiting for something to happen one day because someone promised? It might not even be there and then it's too late! When you're alive, you're alive. When you're dead, believe me, it's not the same. Now where's that fucking hot spot?

(She makes a call)

This is a recording. You have reached heaven. There is no one to take your call. Please leave your name, religion, and cause of arrival. If you want The Father, press one. If you want The Son, press two. If you want The Holy Ghost, press three to 25 and hope for the best. If you want to leave a personal message for Marilyn Monroe, press hashish. And if you're a Muslim suicide bomber, I have good news and bad news. The good news is: yes, there are 27 virgins waiting for you here in heaven. That's the good news. The bad news: they are all Jewish kugels and there's not a virgin among them.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: And so here is my ultimate First Lady, the most famous white woman in South Africa and someone I am very pleased never ever to meet face to face!

(Add the Evita wig. Then as Evita while doing the make-up)

EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT: Winnie-Jeanne? Turn down that horrible music? Gogo's got a headache.

(She adds base)

Not my type of music. 'Umshini Wami'. It sounds different when Jacob Zuma sings it. Reminds me of his state visit to the UK. I was also invited

by the Queen to bring the bobotie recipe. She loves it; Prince Phillip calls it moussaka. *Ou Griek!* And President Zuma's second wife looked lovely in an outfit we got her from Mr Price. And President Zuma got up and sang and danced for the Queen. Umshini wami. She asked me what he was singing about. Do I say: he wants a machine gun? Here in Buckingham Palace? I said he wants a glass of water. So Prince Charles got Camilla to fetch one. Then Jacob Zuma was invited to spend the night in Buckingham Palace. I did SMS the Queen once I got back to the Dorchester Hotel: 'Lock your door'.

(She adds powder)

Who would have thought we would get here? After the traumas of 2011? The Malema scandals? Then the invasion of Swaziland last year? And now our dreaded general elections are over and we are still here. And me, Evita Bezuidenhout, in this new position – chairperson of the media tribunal.

(She adds rouge)

And people thought I would become the next Mrs Zuma. Please! Mshowerlozi's got enough wives. Besides I'm still married to my husband Oom Hasie and he is not a polygamist. He's a Nationalist! But I like Jacob Zuma. He has always treated me with great respect. Well, I've never been alone in a room with him for more than a few minutes ... but he still allows me to call him by his Zulu name: Innocent.

(She adds false eyelashes)

I like all his wives. The Zu-Mamas. Dierbaar. And then there are all the children? Some journalist recently referred to them as illegitimate. I had to tactfully point out that in President Zuma's case the phrase was 'affirmative breeding'.

Forty-one little Zumazelas. They don't yet all have names but numbers. Last week I babysat for number 39 and number 41. Number 39 is a little girl and she was eating chocolate. You couldn't see it on her hands, but when she hugged me, my white blouse was so spotted I looked like a leopard! Number 41 was a little boy who stared at me for a long time. I think I was his first Afrikaans lady. Then he put out his hand and grabbed my hair. I said: 'Aikona, haai sukka, oppas dis nie Zoeloe hare nie!'

(She adds eye shadow)

I am very honoured with my new position as chairperson of the media tribunal. I know it is a great responsibility, but then I was a member of the censor board in the old South Africa, so I know where all the pitfalls are.

(She looks in the hand mirror)

Ag nee, sies, I think I still put on far too much makeup. These new TV cameras are so sensitive. At least they don't smell my perfume and say I wear too much! Without that I am truly desperate. It's my own perfume. It has a French name that evokes Paris in spring: *L'Amour, Je t'aime*. It's called Jeau Mour. Perfume for the woman who is. We also have a fragrance for men called Jeau Mour Homme, and we're working on a perfume for older women called Jeau Ma se Mour'.

(She is ready)

Winnie-Jeanne? Are you ready? Nelson-Ignatius? You can't bring your gun. And La Toya-Ossewania? No cameras allowed. I want my three grandchildren present on this very suspicious occasion. Right. I'm off to see the new president of the Republic of South Africa.

(Evita exits; gets into a new Evita outfit)

(SOUND: Desmond Tutu introduces Evita Bezuidenhout)

Hello 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 am 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 Bezuidenhout enters)

Thank you, dear Archbishop Desmond Tutu from your retreat in Tibet. Tonight we are celebrating yet another fair and free example of a healthy democracy. Our recent general election is over. We can all heave a sigh of relief. We are still here. Helen Zille has gracefully stepped aside and accepted the ambassadorship to South Sudan, while

Lindiwe Mazibuko is now leader of the opposition. The DA controls four of the nine provinces if we also count in Lesotho. The Protection of State Information Act has been active for two years and we still have a free press. The *Cape Argus* and *Cape Times* have merged with the *Voice* and are being handed out free on all MyCiTi busses. The *Mail & Guardian* is still available on Wikileaks.

But today we are here to say welcome to our newly-elected president and farewell to our former President Jacob Zuma and our first ladies, Mrs Zuma, Mrs Zuma, Mrs Zuma, Mrs Zuma and the next Mrs Zumas. But it is our new president that this press conference is about. As the newly-appointed chairman of the media tribunal, I would like to welcome you, Mr President, and my question to you is focused on the freedom of speech as protected by the constitution ...

(SOUND: Julius Malema's voice – a previously controversial recorded press conference: Evita in conversation)

MALEMA: This is the building of a revolutionary party and you know nothing about the revolution.

EVITA: This is the Union Buildings ...

MALEMA: We will get them to take you out

EVITA: But, Mr President ...

MALEMA: Either you behave or else you jump

EVITA: Please, you can't be serious ...

MALEMA: Here you – don't laugh! Chief, can you get security to remove this thing here?

EVITA: I have just asked a question ...

MALEMA: If you're not going to behave, we will call security to take you out.

EVITA: The freedom of expression ...

MALEMA: This is not a newsroom. This is a revolutionary house. And you don't come here with a ...

EVITA: With respect, Mr President, on behalf of the media tribunal ...

MALEMA: Don't come here with that wise ...

EVITA: I am here to welcome you ...

MALEMA: ... you can do it somewhere else. Not here.

EVITA: I respect many black people...

MALEMA: If you've got a tendency of undermining blacks even where you work. Here you're in the wrong place!

EVITA: ... my daughter is married to a black man ...

MALEMA: You can go out ...

EVITA: ... and I have three black grandchildren ...

MALEMA: Ja, you can go out ... rubbish is what is covered in that trouser. That is rubbish.

EVITA: My outfit is by Errol Arendz ...

MALEMA: What you have covered is rubbish.

EVITA: As far as I am concerned ...

MALEMA: You are a small boy; you can't do anything.

EVITA: Who is he talking to?

MALEMA: Come out ... go out!

EVITA: Please, President Malema!

MALEMA: Bastard! Go out! You bloody agent!

(Evita leaves the stage)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU enters)

(In kaftan and turban; into Mrs Gaddafi who speaks her own gibberish-language; the voice-over is prerecorded)

MRS GADDAFI: (#\$%&^ ^%)

V/O: The first lady of Libya wants to thank everyone in Cape Town for their kindness.

MRS GADDAFI: (*&%%\$# ^%)



PDU as Mrs Gaddafi

(Lights)

Curtain call

THE END

V/O: Mrs Gaddafi is happy to be here ...

MRS GADDAFI: (*& ^ %\$ \$ #)

V/O: ... and is sure her husband's camels will also enjoy eating Kirstenbosch.

MRS GADDAFI: (*& ^ ^ %\$ \$ #)

V/O: ... and so the desperate First Lady of Libya wishes to say good-night to you all.

MRS GADDAFI: (\$#%) FUCK OFF!!!!

(BLACKOUT)

MEDIA REACTION (South Africa)

Uys is fearless, often biting, and invariably hilarious. He turns edutainment into an adult art form. He poses the question that if the Media Protection Bill is passed, would he then not be allowed to continue with his shows on the basis that he's disclosing state secrets? He is passionate about his country and will do whatever he can to keep its people from all walks of life in a positive frame of mind. As gales of laughter greet many of the jibes he makes at political ignorance and social stupidity, he shrugs: 'You couldn't make it up!'

– *Artsmart* (Durban) September

Tannies and tyrants all come alive in Pieter-Dirk Uys's new show. The show features a chorus line of a dozen well-known women and those whom Uys encountered and then made famous through his interpretation of them. But the moments that stand out are when we see this veteran of the stage transform while talking about certain issues, into the character whose era he is discussing. If you're too young to know those references, then some allusions will definitely fly over your head. Others though will fly right into your brain and come out of your mouth in the form of laughter.

– *Argus Tonight* (Cape Town) September

The new show features all the trademarks of an Uys performance – a piercing and sometimes even unsettling commentary on various aspects of South African society (and further afield), barely disguised underneath a seemingly harmless sense of humour and colourful costume changer. This suggests that, at times, Uys feels even his brand of satire is not adequate to express his frustration and anger. Still there is no doubt that Uys is disillusioned by the turn of events in post-1994 South Africa. There are glimpses in his new show of Uys at his best: the acerbic wit and the effortless changes in costumes and hairpieces, all pulled off with impeccable timing. These features are what makes Uys such a master of satire, yet he skilfully avoids relying on past glories to carry the show. Uys is still a much-needed social commentator on South Africa. Not only does he provide a safe environment in which we can confront our fears and prejudices. He also helps us to make sense of what is happening in South Africa. And at least for now, we can do so by shaking with laughter rather than by trembling in fear.

– *The Cape Times* (Cape Town) September

Op 66 jaar dop Uys nog rats in en uit karakters soos Houdini wat in en uit 'n harnas klim. Sy ontkleding is so flink en in die pas met die varste nuus – jy herken dit oombliklik; jy lag soms met ongemaklike herinneringe dan bulderlag jy hulpeloos. Met 'n fladder van 'n vals wimper kan Uys sweerlik 'n diktator koudsit. Dankie tog vir sy binnegoed, daarsonder sou die dag se nuus waarskynlik ondraaglik wees.

– *Die Burger* (Kaapstad) September

While many comedians have come along over the last two decades who have made audiences sit up and take notice, few have sustained the ability to keep their social commentary relevant, honest and yet optimistic. Pieter-Dirk Uys, in all his

many guises on stage, is one of the few that still has the ability to make you cringe, crack up, cry and above all, think. In as much as we have all become used to Tannie Evita, Nowell Fine and Bambi Kellermann, we still don't quite know what to expect when you walk into an Uys show and his latest offering, *Desperate First Ladies*, is no different. And that's what you like about Uys. There are no holy cows. As loudly as he spoke out against the NP government, so too does he merrily dish it out to the ANC government and quite rightly so, many would say. In typical Uys fashion he doesn't spare anyone's blushes. *Desperate First Ladies* is not for you if you are not politically aware. While taking a circuitous route through the past, the show captures our politics for the day with humour that is quick, sharp, funny and thought provoking

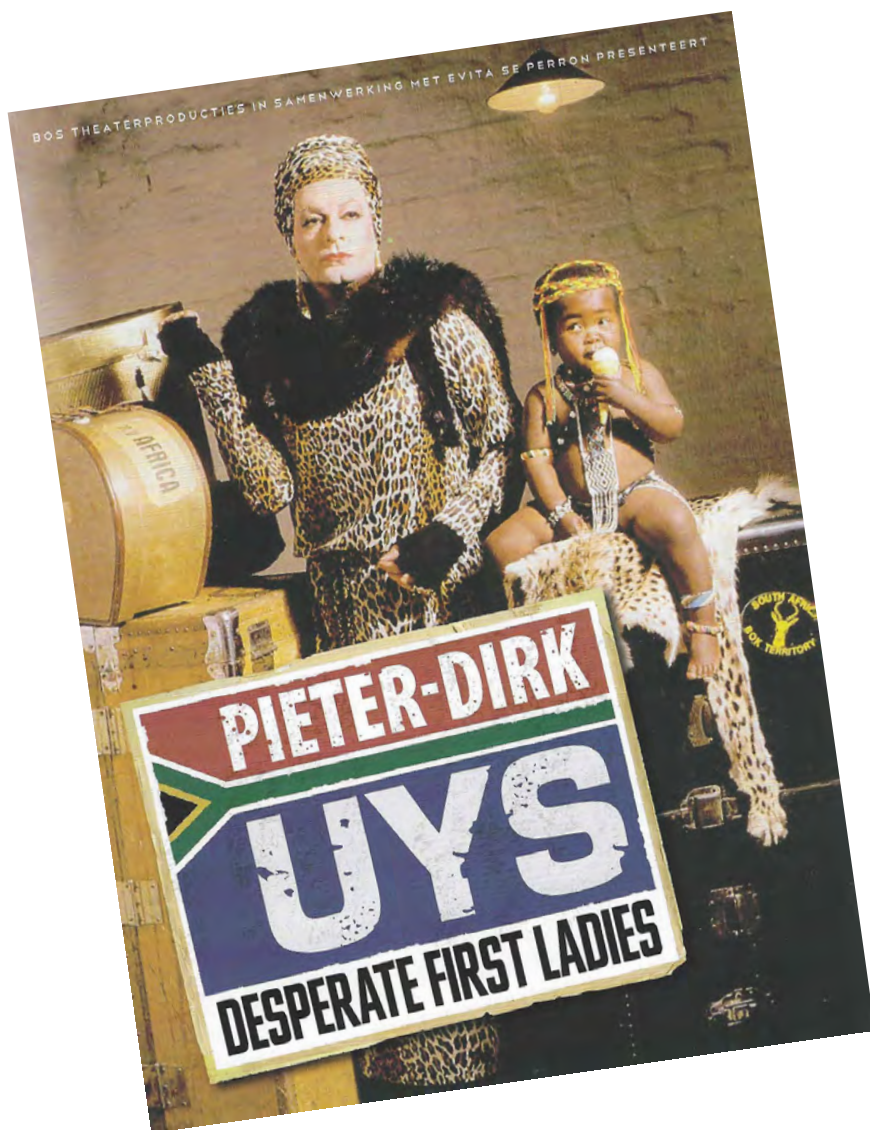
– *VOK-FM* (Cape Town) September

Tremble, politicians! Pieter-Dirk Uys is on stage turning any current political drama into a festive, funny, fabulous moment. Don't be fooled, for under the unbearable lightness of laughing, he opens a world of paradoxes. The show is a firework of laughter, gnashing, wonder and inconvenient truths. And the man behind the women, make-up and fake eyelashes, is a rather improbable teacher. Pieter-Dirk Uys is an iron fist in a velvet glove.

– *Daily Maverick* (Cape Town) September

Desperate First Ladies presents PDU at his lightest and most charming. He is almost incapable of ignoring politics altogether, though. Instead of invoking outrage or concern on the part of the audience, he instead invites us to take pleasure in the absurdity of the South African landscape of power and personality and makes us realise anew how far a few laughs can go to making media-saturated everyday life a lot more tolerable.

– *48 Hours* (Cape Town) September



THE TOUR OF HOLLAND: November 2011

BOS THEATERPRODUCTIES IN SAMENWERKING MET EVITA SE PERRON PRESENTEERT

PIETER-DIRK UYS DESPERATE FIRST LADIES

De pers over zijn vorige programma's:

"UYS IS EEN FENOMENAAL
ACTERENDE SATIRICUS WIENS
GRAPPEN VAAK DE KRACHT VAN
EEN AFORISME HEBBEN."
NRC HANDELSBLAD

"AMUSEMENT MET EEN
OPENGELAPT SCHEERMES"
HET PAROOL

"HIJ HEKELT, SNIERT EN SPOT
MET EEN PUNTIG GEVOEL VOOR
HUMOR EN ABSURDITEIT..."
DE TELEGRAAF

De Zuid-Afrikaanse cabaretier Pieter-Dirk Uys komt met zijn nieuwe voorstelling *Desperate First Ladies* naar Nederland om iets te vieren: zijn 30-jarig (one-man-show) jubileum! In *Desperate First Ladies* geven allerlei bekende wereldvrouwen uit het rijke oeuvre van Pieter-Dirk Uys acte de présence, zoals 'de bekendste witte vrouw van Zuid-Afrika', Evita Bezuidenhout. Maar ook Grace Mugabe, Winnie Mandela, Moeder Theresa en Nowell Fine. Uys doet opnieuw zijn lipstick op en aan zijn beroemde vrouwen. Hij bespreekt niet alleen de Zuid-Afrikaanse politiek en de wereldproblematiek, maar ook wat ons bezig houdt in Nederland!

Nelson Mandela prees Pieter-Dirk Uys met de woorden: "I mean it when I say: you are my hero".

NOVEMBER 2011

d 1	20:00	AMSTERDAM	Het Parool Theater	020 5584200
do 3	20:30	AMSTELVEEN	Cultuursentrum Griffioen	020 588 0033
vr 4	20:30	NIJMEGEN	LUX Theater	0900 5894636
za 5	20:15	LEIDEN	Leidsche Schouwburg	0900 900 17 05
d 8	20:00	UTRECHT	Stadsschouwburg Utrecht	030 230 20 23
vr 11	20:15	HAARLEM	Stadsschouwburg Haarlem	023 512 12 12
do 15	20:15	DELFT	Theater de Veste	015 212 13 12
vr 16	20:00	ROTTERDAM	node Loxor Theater	010 184 33 33
za 19	20:00	GRONINGEN	Stadsschouwburg Groningen	050 368 03 68
zo 20	20:15	APELDOORN	Schouwburg Orpheus	0900 123 0 123
ma 21	20:00	DEN HAAG	Theater Dilemma	070 361 0540
ma 21	20:00	AMSTERDAM	Koninklijk Theater Carré	0900 25 25 255

*Première © Bos Theaterproducties 2011. Wijzigingen voorbehouden.

www.evita.co.za

twitter @TannieEvita

www.thedarlingtrust.org

bos
theaterproducties

Bos Theaterproducties
Nieuwe Keizersgracht 25-27
1018 VA Amsterdam
T. (020) 4211221
F. (020) 4211222
E. info@bostheaterproducties.nl
www.bostheaterproducties.nl



(Amsterdam, Amstelveen, Nijmegen, Leiden, Utrecht, Haarlem, Delft, Rotterdam, Groningen, Apeldoorn, Den Haag and ending back in Amsterdam)

Uys een fenomenaal acterende satiricus wiens grappen vaak de kracht van een aforisme hebben.

– NRC Handelsblad (Nederland) November

Amusement met een opengeklapt scheermes.

– *Het Parool* (Nederland) November

Hij hekelt sniert en spot met een puntig gevoel voor humor
en absurditeit.

– *De Telegraaf* (Nederland) November

The performance for Holland started the show with Hillary Clinton:

(VOICE OVER: *Ladies and gentlemen, the secretary of state for the United States of America, Hillary Clinton.*)

(*Hillary Clinton enters*)



PDU as Hillary Clinton

God bless Holland. God bless Europe and God help Greece! And God remember America! As the president of the United State once said: 'Yes we can!' And yes we did! We made the impossible the inevitable. We ended eight years of our Bush war peacefully. We found Obama and killed him ... sorry, that should read Osama. We found Osama and we killed him. With the 2012 presidential election coming up sooner rather than later, we remember the last

primary campaign four years ago which set the first African-American candidate against the first woman candidate for the presidency of the United States of America. Barack Hussein Obama then won the White House and I, Hillary Roddam Clinton, won the world.

As secretary of state I have been very involved with the Arab Spring, now turning into the Arab Summer. Tunisia, Egypt and Libya are now free of tyranny. And to all the other states still fighting the American

way of life, let me say this: be nasty to us and we will come and force you to be democratic. We don't usually change regimes; we just enrich them and then they change themselves.

And as for Holland, we are happy to know you are still here, hanging onto the outer reaches of Europe, still brave, quaint, free and fair. We know what a recession feels like. We know how depressed you must be seeing all your pensions go to Athens, but don't lose heart. Washington has changed too. Our pensions go to Wall Street. If Holland needs help with trade, with tourism, with dykes ... oh, that should read ... 'with the reclaiming of valuable land', phone me at the state department. I take all calls from The Hague personally. The password is easy: just say CLINTON!



PDU as Bill Clinton

(Hillary morphs into Bill; his wig is in her wig)

BILL CLINTON: Hi, my name is Bill; his name is Dick.

My wife, the first lady of the state department should be at the hairdresser. She tweets me and I tweet her back. And I'm back. Maybe after eight years of lies from that son of a Bush, you're even glad to see me back. At least when I lied, no one died.

(He takes out a fat cigar and winks)

PDU: That was in the big wide world where Bill, the monogamist, is the husband who does not tell his wife about his mistresses. Now come with me to South Africa and meet Jacob, the polygamist, who is our president who marries all his mistresses at the same time. And we pay for all those first ladies.

(Now back to the rest of the text)

1st April 2012
ON APRIL FOOL'S DAY
EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT JOINS THE ANC

I was born into the National Party in 1956 when I married my husband. I voted. I took luxury for granted. I never asked questions. Then the National Party disappeared. I still voted. I still took everything for granted, but I started asking questions. I got very few answers. So I have decided to join the African National Congress as a bonafide member to find the answers.

I have not been invited or coerced. It is a logical progression for me after a lifetime in active politics and careful diplomacy. I will not be another white Afrikaner sitting on the sidelines with AfriForum and FF+ and criticising. Didn't the ANC invite us all to join them and be part of the solution?

My three grandchildren have no understanding of the past struggle against communism and terrorism because former communists and terrorists are now their god-parents. In fact my oldest granddaughter Winnie-Jeanne Makoeloeli wants to be a future president of the ANCYL. My son De Kock and his partner Moff de Bruyn have also made me realise that the party in power, no matter how different their methods and focus might be, has allowed the Constitution to protect all people, in this case, my son and his friend and their adopted little child, Sipho de Bruyn Bezuidenhout.

There is so much the ANC can learn from the experiences of the past. I was there, firstly as the wife of the National Party MP for Laagerfontein who then became a cabinet minister. I was appointed to the diplomatic corps and saw the inner workings of

power, local and international. Since retiring as ambassador to the homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti, I have spent my time since 1994 in the kitchens of power, first as the cook ... the affirmative chef for President Mandela, and then in various positions in the kitchens of Parliament, during the presidencies of Thabo Mbeki, Kgalema Motlanthe and Jacob Zuma.

Cooking for the comrades has convinced me that in spite of what they want us to think, they are like us and also enjoy good food, big motorcars, five-star hotels and the best that taxpayers' money can buy. They have now also learnt, as we had in the National Party, that this is nothing to do with corruption. You must just call it policy. We know how hard it is to be a government for the people, by the people, in spite of the people. But it is so much harder today.

We had no television at first and when we did allow it in 1975, we kept responsible, editorial control of it at the SABC, through good governance, and we didn't spend all the money on embroidered dressing gowns and first class airtickets to the Olympics.

We kept 12% mild criticism of government versus 88% support through silence. It was unnecessary in those days to have secrecy bills, because we knew where the secrets were. There was no internet, no Facebook, no YouTube, no twitter and tweet. No cell phones with video cameras or spying facilities now in the hands of anyone and everyone. And no Wikileaks except for some pathetic graffiti writings on the walls. Blackberry was merely the name of a trusted garden boy.

It is now 2012 and our honeymoon with democracy is over at last. Let's be honest, it went on for far too long. When we all woke up, we had slid from a Mandela miracle to a Mbekivellian dream often deferred. The

cracks are not just visible but wide enough to squat in. The firing of ... no, the cadre deployment of Thabo Mbeki was so embarrassing. And totally unnecessary considering how the ANC could have learnt from the way we in the National Party replaced our leaders: ill health in the case of DF Malan and JG Strydom; unfortunate employment of a parliamentary messenger in the case of HF Verwoerd; an info scandal in the briefcase of BJ Vorster, and Valiums in PW Botha's orange juice. All without a whisper of any coup d'etat. Then there was FW de Klerk, with his policy of Pretoriastroika, his own coup d'etat, in which he lost the state but kept his head.

Since the gracious embrace of power by the old ANC warriors who spent their lives in prison or exile, a new generation of cadre has emerged. It is now politics as usual. The gloves are off. I have decided it is therefore time to lend an experienced hand for the sake of the future of our country. I have decided to become a member of the ANC so that I can assist in the transition from struggle sentiment to professional delivery. Here follow various crisis points in ANC governance that have come to my attention:

* Millions of illegal blacks are in South Africa as amakwerekwere. They need to be repatriated to their homelands of Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Somalia, and especially Nigeria to just name a few. We in the National Party successfully moved millions of illegal blacks to their homelands of Venda, Ciskei, Transkei, Bophuthatswana and Bapetikosweti. I know now it is going to be very challenging because we have sold all our railway lines to China, but where there is a will, there is a shortcut.

- * We no longer need the Group Areas Act as the ANC already privatised it by creating gated communities to protect investments and lives.
- * We no longer need a Mixed Marriages Act because many of our marriages are no longer mixed, the couples are both female or both male.
- * As for an Immorality Act, immorality and sexual carelessness fuelled by drink and drugs do no longer need punishment through laws. The HI-virus is doing a very satisfactory job in that area.
- * I totally support the secrecy bill, even now with all the changes that have watered it down. In the old days if you knew the threats we faced and what was going on, you would have been frightened out of your wits and very depressed. We must be able to keep such things secret for the country's health and safety. If politicians told people the truth, you wouldn't vote for them, so we have to classify information. Trust us. It is really for your own good.
- * The first transition of our democracy turned chalk to cheese. Now 18 years later, the ANC have realised it is time for a second transition. I'm so excited because I see many familiar passions reflected in the ANC policy documents that will help us turn the cheese back into chalk.
- * Allow the party to brainwash your children. It makes everything so much simpler and more pleasant in the interests of social cohesion. If we all think the same, we'll get on along much better. Let us inspire parents to expose their newborns to the ABC of the ANC, as we did with our NP doctrine, which was also Christian and democratic within reason.
- * The judiciary! I could have told them a judiciary separate from the executive will never work. It was

- a constant irritation in the side of the National Party, with judges constantly twisting our laws and us having to follow behind and patch up all the holes. I mean with people like Justice Didcott and that awful Greek lawyer Bizos, we couldn't govern. You put someone in jail who is a threat to the security of the state and they would let them out!
- * As a Christian I'm also encouraged to see that the ANC is giving up on this communist nonsense of no unity of church and state. Did you know that was the big irreconcilable difference between us in the National Party and the communists: their atheism. Economically we were not that different. We also believed in nationalisation, central planning, one party, political schooling (and for everyone to be equal, we preferred that to be separate), but even that was negotiable. But we wanted religion and now it seems Jacob Zuma has at last seen the importance of God, especially now that we know God is no longer a white male Afrikaner.
 - * That in all aspects of governance the word 'illegal' is never used to hint at censorship and control but is replaced by the phrase 'politically incorrect', which immediately makes all critics feel guilty and counter-revolutionary.
 - * Re-embracing Thabo Mbeki's African Renaissance vocabulary by describing all South African blacks as 'African', while only referring to the other citizens as 'white', 'coloured', 'Indian' or 'other'. Chinese must of course be allowed to call themselves 'black' purely for the sake of trade and industry.
 - * We also had job reservation and even reservations for jobseekers, so it is quite unfair after all that Afrikaans affirmative action, not to let poor Africans

now have the same system, while the rich Africans enjoy their own Bhutibond. It's only fair. Let's be honest; white people have enough money, almost all the money. We've had our chance. We survived British imperialists and the Soviet threat. We can look after ourselves. And because this is a majority government, we must practise policies based on race and be politically correct at the same time. It's a big advantage we never enjoyed in the old days.

- * Education is the key. As we did through Bantu education, we no longer train people to read and write but rather give them skills that will make them useful. As with our Christian Nationalist education, do not encourage opinion or questions unless they have been discussed and processed in committee.
- * The focus on the need for provinces can also be solved by learning from the past. Dust off the National Party blueprints and convert the present nine provinces, eight of which are critically dysfunctional, into 11 homelands, if we count in Swaziland and Lesotho. If you call them homelands and not provinces, then the problem goes away.
- * Disband the ANCYL and encourage them to form their own political party and fight for power through elections and the ballot box, using their own money as we did with Andries Treurnicht and Eugene Terre'Blanche. They were once our angry youth league. I now see our young commando corps has come back, this time held together by acne.
- * Then there are the intelligence services. It has finally dawned on the ANC what we knew all along in the National Party. Democracy and security do not go together. It is not safe. The government wants

to know what you have to say, so we must tap your cell phone and read your mail. We are your government. How else can we protect you? So with the General Intelligence Laws Amendment Act we are bringing back BOSS, the Bureau of State Security, except now we have just kept the SS for state security and added an A for Agency.

* I can hardly believe it has taken the ANC this long to realise that civil society is an absolute pestilence. We also had to put up with these noisy NGOs, foreign agents and troublemakers always stirring up the blacks, who were perfectly happy with their government until people from overseas come and tell them otherwise.

Now that I am a member of the ANC, I can hereby accept President Zuma's generous offer of the position of chairperson of the proposed media tribunal. This is an area of democracy I understand, as I was a member of PW Botha's Publications Control Board, unkindly accused of being a censor board. As chairperson of the media Tribunal, I will guarantee freedom of speech in South Africa. It is just after speech that freedoms will go.

Finally, on a personal note: I believe a comedy show is opening next week at the Joburg Theatre called *Adapt or Fly*. I am told that I am being satirically lampooned in this show, along with most of the honourable leaders of the land. As a member of the ANC I will therefore not be attending until instructed by the NEC to do so. Comrade Jimmy Manyi will keep an eye on that show to see how much racism is being used as cheap comedy.

Viva ANC Viva. Amandla / Vrystaat

BREAKING NEWS!

The Guardian

Tuesday 29 May 2012

The president has had a problem with his penis

'Thousands of supporters loyal to South Africa's President Jacob Zuma have marched on an art gallery to protest a satirical painting that showed him with exposed genitals. Filling the streets of Johannesburg with the black, green and gold colours of the African National Congress, the demonstrators gathered on Tuesday outside the Goodman Gallery, eye of a political storm since it displayed Brett Murray's work *The Spear*.

The march feathered with ANC flags, songs and toyi-toying - the dance associated with the struggle against racial apartheid - shirts and placards with declarations such as 'President Zuma has a right to human dignity and privacy' and 'We say no to abuse of artistic expression!' Riot police and vehicles were waiting outside the gallery. The mood was generally peaceful despite a few homemade placards that referred to the racial dimensions of the furore, stating 'Whites hate

blacks' and 'Draw your white father naked, not our President'.

The gallery, which previously displayed a part of Murray's exhibition in its windows, had removed the works and put up a big slogan instead: 'The Goodman Gallery respects your right to protest.' A series of leaders from the ANC and allies addressed the crowd, denouncing the painting as racist to loud cheers and calling for it to be placed in a 'museum of shame'. By late on Tuesday afternoon Murray's disputed painting *The Spear* was still visible on the website. The ANC called off its boycott of the *City Press* newspaper, which had published an image of the painting, but had agreed to remove it on Monday. Before Monday, red paint was splashed across the painting.

Zuma is asking a regional high court to issue an order saying the display of the now-defaced painting violated his constitutional right to dignity. A reporter tweeted: 'It is not a penis designed to titillate. It is a penis that is part of a political statement.'

PIETER-DIRK UYS **ADAPT OR FLY**

30 YEARS AFTER
'ADAPT OR DYE'



BOOKINGS

WWW.JOBURGTHEATRE.COM

OR 0861 670 670

THE FRINGE THEATRE, JOBURG THEATRE COMPLEX

THE FRINGE @ JOBURG THEATRE

3 - 29 APRIL 2012

2012

Adapt or Fly

Performed in Durban * Johannesburg * Cape Town * Grahamstown
* Windhoek * Darling between 2012 and 2020.

CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

Adolf Hitler

Dr DF Malan

Adv JG Strydom

Dr HF Verwoerd

BJ Vorster

PW Botha

FW de Klerk

A National Party MP

Mrs Petersen

Pik Botha

Hendrik Barend Swanepoel

Nelson Mandela

Jacob Zuma

Nowell Fine in 1985

Evita Bezuidenhout

SETTING

A screen on stage with a poster of the show: a photo of PDU holding a camera with a blacked-out lens to underline press censorship. The show's curtain call will end when Evita Bezuidenhout enters, sees the poster, takes a tin of red paint and a brush and splashes a red cross over the entire picture – reflecting the similar attack on the Zuma painting in the Goodman Gallery.

THE TEXT

(PDU enters as Adolf Hitler holding up a local newspaper)

ADOLF HITLER: On my way here, a few people asked for my autograph.

I said: 'Do you know who I am?'

They said: 'George Clooney?'

I said: 'No, Adolf Hitler.'

'Ah,' they said, 'We remember you from that movie.'

Oh yes, in 3-D. I called it *The Third Reich*.

Forgive the whiff of sulphur. No matter what I do, the smell of hell remains like a Chanel No 5. I call it Chanel Triple-Six. Ja, today there is so much excitement down there in the hot place. (*Refer to news and add details*). So I thought I'd slip away for a few moments.

(*Looks through the newspaper*)

Where is he? Why is he not mentioned in today's headlines? Out of sight, out of print? This ... Juju? I now realise it is not Jew-Jew! I watch him with great interest now that he has been expelled into the so-called political wilderness. He might have time to read my book *Mein Kampf*. I would like to speak to him. I would say: 'Juju, don't worry if they call you a has-been lunatic on the political fringe. They called me that too. A financial recession is a gift from the gods.

I had it in 1929 and within five years I was the chancellor of Germany. You will have financial chaos in a few months from now. Form your own party. Focus on the poor, who will be even poorer. Promise them everything. They are the majority of the voters. Use them to be democratically elected like I was in Germany. That's the first step to your destiny.

Then make irrational demands. Frighten your opponents. Say you will take their land without compensation. I called it Lebensraum. Blame the whites for controlling the economy, as I did with the Jews. Be patient. It won't happen overnight. It has taken Robert Mugabe since 1980 to show his true colours. And don't worry if they laugh at you. I had Charlie Chaplin's film *The Great Dictator*. It helped. They knew who

I was when I bombed Poland and Holland and France and Britain. So let them say: 'Ha ha, Julius Malema had a Double-G in woodwork!' Don't forget: Adolf Hitler had a Double-G in Art.

(He studies the audience)

You want me to go? It's easy. Just shout: Go to hell. *(No reaction)* I can't hear you. Use your free speech. Shout it! *(They do)*

Sieg Heil!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: I thought we'd start with a *Sieg Heil* and work towards an *Amandla Awethu*. And so it came to pass at the end of the turbulent 1970s, that the new Christian Nationalist leader of this land called PW Botha wagged his finger, licked his lips and said: 'Adapt or die'. Some of his frightened supporters adapted, while many of the angry suppressed died. And I just said thanks for the title: 'Adapt or D-y-e'.

Today, over 30 years later, in the same land now transformed into a rainbow nation, the fear is back after threats to nationalise mines and banks, confiscate white land without compensation and encourage regime change in neighbouring Botswana, branding white citizens as 'criminals' and demanding a future Julius-Malema-leadership in government.

Then a spokesperson for what is still known as the ANC Youth league soothed fears with the calming words: 'Fuck off! If you don't fucking like the fucking idea that we the fucking youth will fucking rule this fucking land, then fuck off!' And then he added: 'Adapt or fly!' I just say thanks for the title.

It has been noticed that when history repeats itself, it sometimes can take tragedy and turn it into farce. So join me here on our long tiptoe to freedom, a 30-year trek from *Adapt or Dye* to *Adapt or Fly*!

(SOUND: 'Die Stem')



PDU as National Party prime ministers and presidents

PDU: In 1945 a first child was born to Nelson and Evelyn Mandela, living in the township of Orlando in Johannesburg. I was also a first child, born in Cape Town in 1945. My father, Hannes Uys, an Afrikaner from the Boland town of Paarl; my mother, Helga Bassel, a German Jew from Berlin. So that makes me a Jewish-Afrikaner. Or an Afrikaner-Jew. At least I belong to both chosen people.

After the 1948 general election for whites only brought the National Party to power, Nelson Mandela led a faction in the African National Congress to demand direct action against the policies of apartheid. At the same time a cousin of my father was no longer called Oom Daniel. He was now Dokter DF Malan, the first National Party prime minister of the Union of South Africa. I was three years old.

(PDU into DF Malan)

DF MALAN: Uit die blou van onse hemel
 Uit die diepte van ons see
 Waffle waffle NP NP
 God is on our side
 Babbel babbel no more trouble
 Die nuwe Suid-Afrika is hier
 Apartheid! Apartheid!
 Pass Laws – lekker lekker
 Group Areas Act – heerlik
 Ons sal lewe, ons sal sterwe
 Ons vir jou, Suid-Afrika
 Oor na u, Advokaat Strydom



PDU as DF Malan

PDU: 1954: In Johannesburg the law firm of Mandela and Tambo had been in operation for over a year. I was nine years old. The new prime minister's wife, Tannie Susan Strydom, would drive her children to our house in the Cape Town suburb of Pinelands where we lived to have piano lessons with my mother. The first lady of South Africa sat outside in the street in her car waiting for her children, alone – with no flashing blue lights, no bodyguards, no guns. She sat in her maroon Nash sedan, smoking filter cigarettes and reading American magazines. I was upstairs in my room reading books about Biggles and the Hardy Boys. I had not yet been introduced to the joys of the Countess Angelique. Meanwhile Prime Minister JG Strydom, Oom Hans, was in full swing in Parliament.

(PDU into JG Strydom)

JG STRYDOM: Ja-nee, oor ons ewige gebergtes
 Waar die kranse antwoord gee
 Waffle waffle NP NP
 God is one of us

Babbel babbel Leeu van die
 Noorde trouble
 Bring my sweep, laat hul suffer
 Hotnot koelie ditto ditto en ook
 kaffer
 Ons sal lewe; ons sal lewe!
 Ons vir jou, Suid-Afrika!
 Oor na u, Dr Verwoerd



PDU as JG Strydom

PDU: 1958: Nelson Mandela and other so-called terrorists in the ANC were on trial for treason in Pretoria. I was 13 years old with a boy soprano voice that just wouldn't break. I would stare at myself in the mirror at home and shout: Breek jou bliksem breek! But in spite of already having met the Countess Angelique, the voice would not break! We would sing in my father's children's choir on Sundays in the NG Kerk in Rondebosch where he was the organist, looking down from the organ loft to our Prime Minister Dr Hendrik Verwoerd and his wife Tannie Betsie, who looked up at us with such love in their eyes, because we were their dream come true: young white Christian Afrikaans kinders singing 'Die Stem van Suid-Afrika'. Of course it had nothing to do with politics. In those days politics was a dirty thing. As my father would say: 'Ons praat nie politiek aan tafel nie want dis 'n vuil ding!' And as a result, we never auditioned those old bastards who eventually appeared on the stamps and the coins. But Dr Verwoerd was far above politiek. Dr Verwoerd was a gift from God. I had a picture of Dr Verwoerd up on my wall of my room at home. This was before I discovered that Sophia Loren had better legs than the Architect of Apartheid.

(PDU into HF Verwoerd)

HF VERWOERD: Uit die blou van my twee oë
 Uit die diepte van my hart

Waffle waffle NP NP
 All in the name of God
 Babbel babble hier kom trouble
 Sharpeville Sharpeville
 Die Nuwe Suid-Afrika is hier
 Republiek Republiek
 Immorality Act? Mixed Marriages
 Act?
 Love your neighbour, but don't get
 caught
 Jy moet jou naaste liefhê soos jouself
 Maar onthou, 'n naturel bly maar
 'n bantoe ...
 Ons sal lewe, ons sal nooit sterwe
 Ons vir jou Suid-Afrika



PDU as HF Verwoerd

Ah, Parliamentary Messenger Tsafendas.

Good afternoon, Dimitri, do you have something special for me?

(He is stabbed) A knife?... ahhh ...ooohh ... grrrr... hrrrrggggg

PDU: 1966: Prisoner 466/64 was now imprisoned on Robben Island in a cell seven feet by eight feet. I was 21. The assassination of Hendrik Verwoerd by Dimitri Tsafendas was not as exciting as the assassination of Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare. I was by now a student at the UCT Drama School, just up The Avenue from Parliament. I remember walking down to the station on that warm fateful afternoon, passing the Houses of Parliament, not realising that just a few hours before, parliamentary messenger Dimitri Tsafendas had stabbed the prime minister to death in the House of Assembly with Evita Bezuidenhout's fruit knife. I just remember seeing the coloureds and bergies in the Gardens laughing, singing and dancing, and I thought: Ja-nee wragtig, die donnerse bergies is altyd dronk! Little did I realise that they were only celebrating the death of the Architect of Apartheid. It would still take them 30 years before they could vote in their own country. The

new prime minister of South Africa, Mr John Vorster, did not find his picture up on my wall at home. By now my wall was full ... of Sophia Loren.

(PDU into Bf Vorster)

BJ VORSTER: Uit die donker van ons tronke
Uit die selle van ons land
Waffle waffle threaten threaten
God is one of us
Babbel babbel info trouble
Skiet skop en donner
90-day detention without trial
180-day detention without trial
Steve Biko laat my koud
Ons sal lewe; hulle kan sterwe
Ons vir jou ...
O die wêreld word nou baie kil
Oor na u, Ou Krokodil



PDU as BJ Vorster

PDU: 1978: In his seven-foot by eight-foot cell on Robben Island, prisoner 466/64 turned 60, but no one in South Africa was allowed to see what Nelson Mandela looked like, or what he sounded like. I was 33, already back in South Africa, having spent some time in London where I tried to be English, until I found out it was as impossible as trying to be black. I was known to the new prime minister, because PW Botha's children also used to sing in my father's choir. In fact, some years before when I was drafted into the South African Army to do my nine-month training military training, I was sent to an army camp outside Potchefstroom to fix army trucks. I wrote to the then minister of defence: 'Oom PW? Help!' He did help: he had me transferred to the South African Navy.

By 1973 I had my own illegal banned picture of prisoner 466/64 hidden under my mattress with my collection of illegal banned 'Physical Pictorial'

magazines. I joined the Space Theatre in Cape Town and came face to face with my future public relations department, also known as the Publications Control Board. Soon the government censors had banned all the plays I had written. At the time it felt like being Linda Lovelace with lockjaw. Then Prime Minister PW said the magic words 'Adapt or Die' and I knew that, at last, I had found my bread and Botha!

(PDU into PW Botha)

PW BOTHA: Uit die blou van Tannie Elize se hoedens
 Uit die diepte van ons kwaal
 Waffle waffle PW PW
 Wag the finger, lick the lips
 As far as I am concerned
 Babble babble riots and trouble
 Quo Vadis: so where to, Soweto?
 Die nuwe Suid-Afrika is hier
 A new tricameral parliament is born
 One man one vote
 I am the man and mine is the vote!
 Testing testing
 State of emergency one, emergency two, emergency
 three
 I will keep law and order in South Africa
 and no one in the world is going to stop me
 O God hier kom de stroke
 En de Klerk! De Klerk? De Klerk!
 E tu, FW, e tu?

PDU: 1989: I was 44 years old and had heard the rumour that prisoner 466/64 had met up with President PW Botha in his office in Tuynhuis. Six weeks later FW de Klerk took over from PW Botha. What was the difference? They looked exactly the same. Same bald head, same glasses, virtually same initials, definitely same problem. Little did

I realise that FW de Klerk would soon pension off my faithful scriptwriters in the National Party and replace them with dazzling copywriters in a new new New South Africa.

(PDU into FW de Klerk)

FW DE KLERK: Uit die blou van ons demokratiese hemel
Uit die diepte van ons demokratiese see
Nkosi Sikelele iAfrika ensovoorts etcetera
Waffle waffle New NP New NP
All in the name of Pretoriastroika
Babble babble TRC trouble
shred the papers; burn the facts
for I knew nothing nothing ditto ditto
apartheid is dead, apartheid is dood, apartheid
est mort
never too late to say amandla

Over to you, Mr Mandela

PDU: 1994: At the age of 76, former prisoner 466/64 was now undoubtedly the most famous person in the world. I was 49 when for the very first time in my life, I was legally allowed to queue up with everyone. On 27th April millions of South Africans queued up to vote for the very first time – and many of them voted many times. The rainbow nation was born. A new national anthem was sung. Nelson Mandela freed me from my jail of prejudice and fear. It was now no longer politically-correct to be a racist in South Africa. In fact, I was no longer just a white Afrikaner; I was now a South African. At last. Who said life can't start at 50?

Now there was much to do. We could no longer call them Terrorists; they were now government. It was also important to learn some words of greeting in at least 10 of the 11 official languages. And to learn the words of our new national anthem: *Nkosi Sikelele Afrika...* la la la la la

la ... *Uit die blou van onse hemel* ... But don't feel bad for not knowing the words. Those words were banned for most of our lives. That anthem was banned for most of our lives. In fact, everything was banned for most of our lives! Nelson Mandela's words and motivations were banned. Even his picture was banned.

For the 27 years while he was in jail, they wouldn't even allow us to see what he looked like. We didn't even know why he was in jail. Some thought he'd stolen a car! If you smuggled a banned image of Nelson Mandela through customs at Jan Smuts Airport during those days of the 1980s, and they found the banned picture in your suitcase, you would go to jail. They would keep the *Playboy*, but you would go to jail. During the 1980s I was inspired by the politics of what we all called our democracy. Blacks, whites, coloureds, Indians; English, Afrikaans; Jews, Catholics, Methodists, Muslim, Hindu, Scientologists; Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, Sotho, Venda, Chinese; honorary whites; British immigrants, Rhodesian refugees – 27 million of us lived in South Africa; of which about four million were white; of which about three million had the vote; of which about one-and-a-half million used the vote; of which about 700,000 voted for PW Botha's National Party government in that 1981 general election. Seven hundred thousand out of 27 million? That's not a democratic government; that's a small town council.

Even then some were wondering how a small political elite could rule the country on behalf of only 2.6% of the population. Not difficult – if you know how to censor your newspapers and media. Not difficult – if you are in control of your state broadcasting corporation, radio and television. Not difficult – if you have the support of the most powerful military force on the continent, being strengthened through secret arms deals. Not difficult – if you have a loyal police force who shoot to kill because you have told them to – and they do.

Then just ignore the corruption, the nepotism, the racist innuendo and the lack of service delivery, and there you have the South African government that ruled us from 1948 to 1994. Forty-six years is a lifetime, but at least the National Party didn't rule till Jesus Christ

comes back. That we leave to the ANC ... although I doubt if the ANC would give Jesus a visa.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: It wasn't just the inspiration of the National Party, which gave me those gifts of a PW Botha, a Pik Botha, a Fanie Botha, a Bothalesi. There were also inspirations among those few white South Africans who fought the system from within the system. Especially an unlikely freedom fighter called Mrs Helen Suzman. She showed what one woman could do to help change the history of her country. For all those years, 13 of them alone, she sat in the South African Parliament, the only member of a white opposition to the apartheid government. Meanwhile *Adapt or Dye* made way for *Total Onslaught*, another title given me by PW Botha.

1985: I was 40 years old. We were in a state of emergency paralysing the country with fear and bloodshed, and Helen Suzman invited me to Parliament to have lunch with her. I thought: 'Ag no man, can't we rather go to La Perla?' The last place I wanted to go to was Parliament. It was like visiting Chernobyl set in North Korea. Plus you had to wear a suit and a tie, and I didn't have a suit and tie. So I thanked Helen and said I couldn't have lunch because I didn't have a suit.

'Yes, dear, you do,' she said. 'I saw you on the stage of the Baxter Theatre last week doing PW Botha in a suit and a tie.'

I said: 'That's my costume.'

'Yes,' she said, 'we wear them here too. Come to Parliament in your PW suit and tie. Just be careful not to give yourself away.' (In those days when I did PW Botha I used quite a lot of makeup. Now I even look like the old fucker!) Helen gave me my ticket to the visitor's gallery and said: 'If you're going to do them on stage, watch them at work!'

I took up my seat and looked down, and there sat all my scriptwriters, the entire apartheid government. And alone at his desk sat PW Botha,

making copious notes on a pad, or signing death warrants. Busy. Then he put down his pen and looked up up up, right into my soul ... my scrotum disappeared!

Helen Suzman had a legendary brittle sense of humour. She would challenge the apartheid regime with their own parliamentary rules. One of these rules allowed MPs to ask questions of the government, which was obliged to answer those questions in Parliament, sight unseen. (We still have to get there in our present democratic structures.) To add injury to insult, Helen Suzman asked the same question in Parliament each year, a question pertaining to the Population Registration Act, the foundation to all the worst of the apartheid laws: 'Mr Speaker? Would you please tell us how many South Africans were racially reclassified during the last year?' Here is the answer she forced out of them in 1985:

(PDU as the National Party MP)

MP: 'In answer to a question from the Honourable PFP (Progressive Federal Party) 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

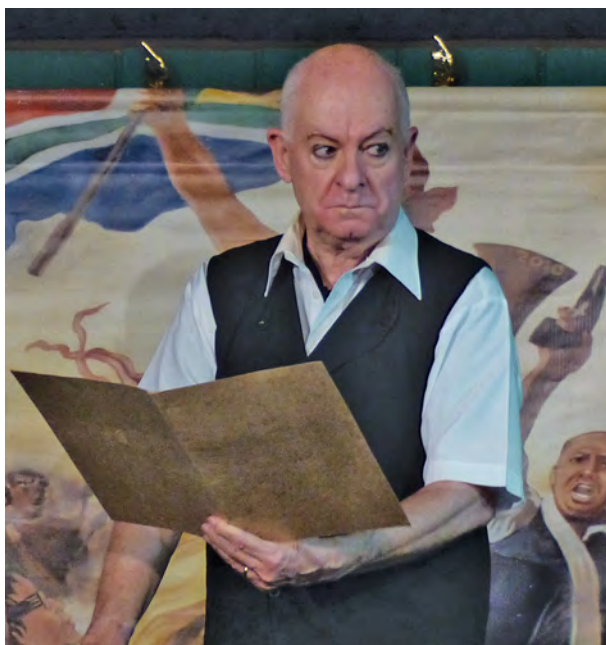
17 Indians became Malay

4 coloureds became Chinese

1 Malay became Chinese

89 blacks became coloured

5 coloureds became black.'



PDU as National Party MP

You notice that no blacks became white. And no whites became black! They hated her for this!

‘No *sis*, Mrs Suzman, why do you ask such an embarrassing question every year?’

‘It’s not the question that’s embarrassing, dear; it’s your answer!’

I suppose one expects this sort of obscenity from an apartheid government in 1985. But remember the discomfort when in the seventeenth year of our nonracial, nonsexual and in many ways nonsensical democracy, that same bad smell returned. With census 2011. There was that question again: ‘What is your race? Black, white, coloured, Indian, Asian or other?’

I didn’t know what to fill in, as a few months before they did a DNA test on me for a television show, and the DNA test proved that I originated in the Congo. So obviously I’m black. For 49 years my Book of Life assured me that I am white. Then I did some research into my father’s family background and found that we had a great-great-great grand-

mother who in 1791 plied her trade on the road between Cape Town and Paarl. Her name was Wilhelmina Opklím. So that means I'm also coloured. I don't know about Indian, Asian or other, but hell, that's three out of six? I'm truly South African!

Today when we hear rubber bullets being fired on television news, sirens and shouts, we know it's just thugs, drunks and skollies in the townships demanding so-called service delivery. Boring. So we just switch over to *The Bold and the Beautiful*, now that *Generations* is gone. Mrs Petersen loves watching her soaps on TV. She still lives in the same house on the Cape Flats where she grew up as that little girl who threw stones at the police. Now she is very involved with the vibrant politics of the Cape Flats, but today she has a problem. Her grandson Solly has just told her that a truck has arrived to unload a big stinkwood table and six matching chairs.

(PDU into Mrs Petersen)



PDU as Mrs Petersen

MRS PETERSEN: *Solly?* Slaan af die teevee! Ek kan nie so kyk nie. Nay man, where does all this come from? I'm sorry, I didn't order a table and chairs? How am I going to fit those things into this house? A stinkwood table with six chairs? Die huis is so klein. En wat gaan ek maak met my grannie se tafel. Please people, I don't need six chairs. I don't even have six friends. Solly, you must be at school. Solly? You can't bunk school and demand refugee status! O nay man, waar is daai klong?

Let me sit a bit.

I am still so tired. Since Ramadan. Haai, a whole month of Ramadan? No man, I nearly starved to death. They should put in a lunch break! Ja, here on the Cape Flats there's never a dull moment. On top of everything, a by-election! Can you believe it? In the last general election in May our candidate won. He did a good job with service delivery. We didn't know he was a drunk. He drove his car into a tree. *Vrek op die plek*. So we have to do it all over again. Sometimes democracy can be a real pain. Anyway, the by-election was free and fair. O ja, the Cape Flats is always full of surprises.

No, this used to be a very nice coloured township in the old days until the ANC moved in. In those days we didn't throw poo around! Ekskuus vir my! Now it's so black and so political. The squatters just come in here from the Eastern Cape and use every open space for a toilet. There behind that bush! Every day someone using it as a toilet. And then they complain that there is not a wall around the bush! In the old days I knew everyone by name. They would greet me. But now I don't even go to the corner shop that used to be run by those friendly coolies. Where did they go? And as for the green grocer? Now it's been taken over by a family of Nigerians. They are illegal. I can see it in their faces. Their fat child has a bad cough; it might be Ebola! He also wears T-shirt that says Viva Robert Mugabe! No, *sis*, you got to draw the line somewhere.

I'm not even talking about those Somalis who sell things cheaply from the back of a lorry. Aren't they supposed to be starving to death up there? Where do they get the strength to come all the way down here? And what about the Chinese that all look the same? They don't even talk any of our 11 languages? And yet they call themselves black! Hoe werk dit dan nou? How come the Chinese are black and we coloureds are still coloured? You look at an empty house and suddenly there's a little Chinese face looking at you through the window? Ek gril my dood! Not that I'm xenophobic. It's just that I'm against ...

I mean take the Jews that used to run those shops in the old days. We even miss them nowadays, shame. But you can't blame Jews for leaving South Africa and going to America where they hid all their

money. Ja, as we used to say: when the Jews start packing, it's time to go; when the Portuguese start packing, it's too late already. And those few Jews that are still here, because they say they have about as little as me – which I doubt, because they're too sly to be poor – they were the first people to vote for this ANC/Communist Party government back in 1994. Just to make more money. Not that I'm anti-Semitic. It's just that I'm against ...

Take the desecration of the Jewish graves in the cemetery down there by the station. First they say it was the AWB. Then they say it was the Tik gangs. Now they say it's Al Qaeda. Waar? Al Qaeda hier op die Vlaktes? Is hulle blerrie mal? No man, it's the Jews! They are doing it themselves just to make us coloureds look bad. Just because some of us are Muslims doesn't mean we're all Arabs. But then I don't know any Jews anymore, so it's got nothing to do with me. And now this stinkwood table with six chairs? My grandson asks if the stinkwood really stinks? Haai, what do they teach them in matric?

No, I really understand the politics of the Cape Flats. That's why before the by-election I was up at 5 a.m. before the sun rose, putting DA pamphlets into people's letterboxes and under doors. Nice and early in the dark so that no one can recognise me and then throw a stone through my window. Because politics turns some people into animals around here, my dear. Now they still shout at me in the street: 'No, sis, Mrs Petersen, how can your support the Democratic Alliance? It's a whites-only party.' *Wat?* How can they say that? Look at that DA poster on the pole? Zille, de Lille en hulle? Does that look like a whites-only party? Helen Zille's Botox is making her look coloured. Patricia de Lille's hairspray is turning her off-white. And Mmusi Maimane is now playing the DA Prince William in Parliament.

Listen, I was in the struggle, so they mustn't come and preach to me about racism and all that. We Cape Coloureds also suffered under apartheid, just like the blacks did. Some of us even more, because we've got brains. Who's going to look after us coloured people in the Western Cape if it wasn't for Zille and de Lille? It won't be the ANC or the communists. But it's not against the blacks I am, *per se*. It's against this

whole system of proportional representation. Look, democracy can never work in South Africa because there are just too many natives.

Maybe I can sell four of the six chairs and just keep two? Maar waar kan ek hulle sit? Shame, I'm quite emotional. It's my grannie's furniture, after all these years. Why don't they just give us her old house in Newlands? I didn't know grannie because she was already passed away when I was small. But ma used to tell us how grannie died of a broken heart. Starting there in 1976 when the school kids rioted and burnt down their schools. Grannie was a teacher and she stood in front of the school and said: 'Please don't burn down your school! Your future lies here!'

'No,' the kids screamed, 'liberation before education!' Said Grannie, 'You will never be liberated without education.' But they burnt down the school, shame, and that's when Grannie started to die of a broken heart.

Oh, but it was those riots here in 1982; three times in a week there was a fire at the school. En ons het geskree: brand jou bliksem, brand! And I remember the police barricade over there, near to where they parked all those yellow Casspirs. And my brother in his police uniform was so cross with me. And we would throw rotten tomatoes at them. Ons het so gelag! Then PW sent in the army. Why? Afrikaans boys in army uniform with their guns, shooting at us with real bullets, and we would throw them with real stones. We were not scared, because we knew we were right and they were wrong. Ja, that's the difference with today: then we knew we were right and they were wrong.

Many of us are very nervous of this general election due in a few months' time. What is going to happen to us when this new generation of born-frees takes over the government of South Africa? And they're 23 years old! Already they vote! They were born after Nelson Mandela came out of jail. They have no sentiment about the struggle. For them it all still lies ahead: jobs, tenders, Breitling watches, big cars, Johnny Walker Blue and sushi sushi sushi. They know their dreams won't come true, because the ANC government doesn't give them proper education to go to university. So now they all listen to bleddie fools like Julius

Malema, who promises each of them a gold mine at the end of the rainbow. And there we go on the short walk to Zimbabwe.

But I'm not supporting the Democratic Alliance here on the Cape Flats because I'm against the blacks in the ANC, or the communists in the SACP, or the Indians in the IFP or the others. I'll voted for the DA here because ... rather the devil you know than the devil you don't.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: When the Second World War ended in 1945, Adolf Hitler had the decency to commit suicide, and most of his general staff also killed themselves. When apartheid ended officially in 1994, not a single member of the National Party government killed themselves. They rushed off to the Oriental Plaza to buy the latest Nelson Mandela ethnic shirt. They were going to adapt and not die. They got their BEE partners to help them pronounce all the right words correctly: amandla, awethu, viva la cucaracha.

They even joined the African National Congress, the liberation movement they had turned into our version of Al Qaeda for all those years. They were now proud members of the once-banned ANC, proving once again that hypocrisy is the Vaseline of political intercourse. Which brings me to Pik Botha.

Who could make up Pik Botha? As long as I can remember, Pik Botha was foreign minister of South Africa. He was the orange on my aerial, the fur on my steering wheel, the St Christopher medallion on the dashboard of my sports car of satire. In *Adapt or Dye* I even did Pik Botha as the Hamlet of Westdene: 'to be or not to be in Namibia, that is the question.' Then when Evita Bezuidenhout became the South African ambassador in the independent black homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti, Pik Botha was her boss. So we spread the rumour that Pik was having an affair with Evita Bezuidenhout ... the trouble was, he started believing it!

In 1994 Nelson Mandela formed his government of national unity and invited Pik Botha to join the cabinet as Minister of Minerals and Energy Affairs. Still don't know how Pik managed to mix his minerals with his energy affairs. And then in 1999 President Thabo Mbeki didn't want a Botha in his government and suddenly Pik was a retired politician, the nice way to say: a 'has been'. Sitting next to his phone in Pretoria, waiting for a radio station to phone for his opinion. But the phone just never rings for the old Hamlet of Westdene.

(PDU into Pik Botha)



PDU as Pik Botha

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 that's why I'm not here. But because you are here, I have to be here. So let me assure you, that is the truth. So now see if you have it in your heart to blame me for apartheid.

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 political history of South Africa. And being in charge of foreign affairs meant that I was there. So how the hell could I have been here?

I never knew nothing about anything. All I saw about South African politics was on overseas television in the 1980s, and I recognised that

as typical leftist communist-inspired anti-South African propaganda. And because propaganda was the name of my game, I recognised 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 about anything. In fact, like millions of South Africans who suffered under the apartheid regime, I was also a victim. They spied on me; they had a security file on me; my phone was tapped. Ask anyone who phoned me; they could hear the tap running. My personal mail was tampered with; ask any male. Believe me, I didn't know about these things. How could I know? They always kept me in the pitch dark. *In die pik-donker*. And now they even accuse me of being involved with a third force. I didn't even know there was a second force! So I wish my colleagues and comrades would stop throwing those names at me: names like DF Malan, JG Strydom, HF Verwoerd, BJ Vorster, PW Botha. Who the hell are these people? I've never heard these people's names before in my life. But now I realise who they were: they were all airports.

But still I'm very happy to participate in this presentation, because I think it is time that I had a chance to explain in detail how I fought apartheid from within the system year in and year out! Believe me, I never supported the policy to chase the blacks into the sea. To protect them, I wouldn't even allow them on the beaches! But I have been muzzled. The people here say I may not make a speech. They say the only reason I am here is to announce the interval. Ag, what the hell, I don't care. I am now retired and don't have to take the blame for anything. My conscience is clear, because I've never used it.

So if the ANC won't give me a nice honorary diplomatic posting, in appreciation for all I did to bring about a peaceful transition to democracy, I might leave the ANC and form my own party. Everybody else seems to be doing it. Yes. I'll call my party Pik's Party. Anyone can join Pik's Party. Just bring your own bottle. Ja, ek sal dit sê. Ek het gesê, ek sal dit sê en as ek sê ek sal dit sê, sal êk dit sê!

Dames en Here, ladies and gentlemen. It is now interval!

(Interval)

(PDU enters with two boxes and a CNA carrier bag)

Thirty years ago in *Adapt or Dye* I used cardboard boxes on stage. Then came *Total Onslaught* and *Beyond the Rubicon* and the boxes eventually made way for plastic crates. Theatre critics have remarked on the presentation of my shows since 1981. 'A unique style,' they said. 'Minimalist,' they remarked. 'Truly Brechtian,' they praised. No, just cardboard boxes and plastic crates.

'In the style of Becket and Ionesco,' they trilled. No. Cheap! There will never be a *Phantom of the Opera*. If there are any chandeliers in my show, I will be wearing them as earrings. But in those days of terror, these boxes were essential.

(PDU puts boxes upstage centre)

(SOUND: Police sirens)

(Light change)

It's the 1980s. There might be another state of emergency. Police action outside. Sirens through the nation. Words are banned. It's illegal to wear women's clothing. But you're on stage here at the Market in Joburg. Neutral territory? Everything you say can be proved to be illegal, subversive, libellous, blasphemous, obscene. Making fun of the sacred cows of Afrikaner politics 'is teen die wet'. Voices have been stilled with censorship. Quoting banned words is a crime. Even putting the colours green, yellow and black together in a tribute to the banned ANC flag was a terrorist act. I kept those three colours entwined like a subversive koeksister in my underpants. Let the cops look there! But I'm alive because I'm white. If I was black supporting the ANC I would

have been long dead, or assembling AK47s in Lusaka. Besides, there were many other ways to remind an audience.

(The CNA packet is turned to ANC)

There was only one way to adapt and not die. Put all the props, wigs, shoes, costumes in the cardboard boxes you find outside the stage door in the alley. Stay on stage. Don't have blackouts. Today they might be deemed politically incorrect, but a blackout in the '80s could give the enemy a chance to invade your space and black you out. Even having an interval means you leave the stage. No. Don't. They might be waiting in the wings.

They were. In 1984 after performing *Total Onslaught* in the Pretoria State Opera – it was like performing *Fiddler on the Roof* in Nuremberg in 1933 – in the car park under the complex, I was confronted by three angry Afrikaans security policemen:

'Pieter-Dirk Uys, *jou donner*, you go too far. You mess with the Afrikaans culture, you muck around with the Afrikaans language, you make us Afrikaners look like Nazis – but hell you've got nice legs!' Thank you, Evita. They didn't check my underpants and find the banned ANC colours, but seemed happy with an autograph. No, two autographs: mine and hers.

(Light change)

(SOUND: Paul Simon's 'Graceland')

Paul Simon came to Johannesburg and gave a concert and we knew we had won. And there I met my friend Benjamin again. He 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 States. But then in 1990 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. Mandela, the Tambo kids, Winnie's kids, us from the Market Theatre. Also Benjamin. And then he heard a voice from his past.

(PDU into Hendrik Barend Swanepoel)

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?

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 terrorists! 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.

Remember all those names we called you when you were 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.

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 ... 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! 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.

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, 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 ... jisis 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 in a democracy? 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.

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. 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 for 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 Benjamin. No more barbed wire, no more guns, no more kaffirs falling out of the top floor windows. It's like bleddie McDonalds. 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!

Okay Benjamin, see you around. And comrade? Shalom. And viva Mandela!

(He laughs and gives a middle finger)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: What happened to security policeman Hendrik Barend Swanepoel? Was he eventually part of a Nuremberg trial? Was he hung like Saddam Hussein for crimes against humanity? No, like so many of us, he got away with apartheid. He applied for amnesty from the TRC and got it. And now, having collected his pension and golden handshake, Swanepoel has a job as a senior security advisor in Iraq. There's talk of promotion to Guantanamo Bay. But why go there? Swanepoel would laugh if he saw today's headlines of a suspected death squad in the SA Police. He'd feel proud and so at home.

Who would have thought that we whites would get away with apartheid? Suddenly George Orwell's 1984 became Nelson Mandela's 1994. White people's houses were full of tins of tuna, stocking up for the total onslaught. The Afrikaanse Nasionale Kongres made way for the African National Congress. And my life changed forever. I had new scriptwriters, new inspirations, more reasons to not pay taxes, just royalties. My easy struggle was over, just needing to do Oom PW with a bit of makeup, a hat, a finger and glasses. After 27 April 1994 there was a hero in the Union Buildings. The end of satire?

How does one make fun of Nelson Mandela? It's like doing Mother Theresa with a dildo! But thanks to his great sense of humour, there came the Madiba ethnic shirt, made in Beijing. Can we speculate that President Mandela was the first ANC cadre to sign an exclusive contract with a Chinese shirtmaker! Not going there. But the relief: no more Broederbond *pakkie*-suits. No tie. No rosette. No carnations.

(PDU gets into Mandela costume)

Start with the black hair which rapidly went white. Out with the Takkie White. Every time he just heard the name Winnie: Takkie White! Because his eyes are sensitive to flash photography and bright sunshine gave me the excuse to add the geography of sunglasses. Then the cap with the AIDS ribbon on the front, assuring us that there was at least one member of the ANC who believed that HIV led to AIDS. But where was his voice? It took weeks to pinpoint the Madiba Sound. About here. 'We ... we ... we in the ANC'. A cross between Donald Duck and a hadeda.

(PDU into Nelson Mandela)



PDU as Nelson Mandela

MANDELA: Uit die blou van onse hemel – yebo!
 Nkosi sikelele 11 times
 Viva, viva, Xhosa Nostra
 Never, never, and never again whites only
 Waffle waffle rainbow rainbow
 A new South Africa for all the people
 Babble babble Winnie trouble
 We are a collective amandla-amandla
 We are a collective awethu-awethu
 Very good... very good ... over to you, Cyril ...
 Ah, where is Comrade Cyril ... ah, MacDonalds ...
 very good.
 You! Mbeki! See what you can do, Thaboo?

(PDU in rap mode)

PDU: Nineteen ninety-nine; I'm 54
Madiba-blessed and ready for more
This Mbekivellian man called Thabo the Wise?
Why difficult to do in such a small size?
Collecting Voyager miles and so never here?
A virtual president quoting from King Lear
Intellectual cadre who dazzled the plebs
With words too deep in their flows and ebbs
And yet 'Yebo comrade!'viva'd the chorus
As he plucked from Shakespeare, Woolworth and Thesaurus
Giving confusion to the simplest fact
Does HIV cause AIDS? How does the ANC react?
With garlic, African potato, beetroot – all bleddie fake
Manto's fatal salad? Oh for God's sake!
An apartheid government killed people; that's no lie
Our democratic government now just lets them die?
Three hundred eighty thousand funerals later? Please end this farce!
Yes, at Polokwane Comrade Dear Leader sees his arse

Coup de'tata to Thabo
 Waffle waffle near and far
 Amandla awethu; who is the next czar?
 Malema in the playpen throwing wooden toys
 Our new leader depends on the will of those boys?
 Enter a blank face as yet with no real fame
 Hang on ... I need to learn how to pronounce his name
 Kgalema Kgalema ... emma-koelema-sê-maar-vir-jou-grênma ...
 Kgalema Motlanthe ... second name Petrus?
 How's that for bleddie mad
 Bet you Tannie Evita will be very very glad.
 Now how does he look?
 How does he sound?
 Is his *cirCUMstance* flat?
 Are his *caTAGories* round?

(PDU into Kgalema Motlanthe)



Can I do him after my bread and
 Botha and that free Mandela?
 Black hair. High forehead. Use
 the beanie ... and rose-coloured
 glasses not to notice what his part-
 ner Gugu is up to ... the silver
 beard!

A Louis Trichardt Voortrekker-
 leiersbaard? (And for those too
 young: a Steve Hofmeyr bok-
 baard!) And hey presto, President
 Kgalema Motlanthe!

PDU as Kgalema Motlanthe

Then suddenly he's gone without making a mistake.

What do I do now? Hey, I can hear that! Now that doesn't sound fake!

Uit die blou van onse hemel,

Dis die toekoms wat roep!

Dr Verwoerd? Oom PW help!

Daar's 'n Zoeloe op my Stoep!

A cross between Berlusconi, ET and Fred Astaire

Called *Mshowerlozi* with a rhythm so rare

Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma – always very calm

'Bring me my machine gun, my umshini wam!'

(PDU into Jacob Zuma)

JACOB ZUMA: They say that I said to have a shower after unprotected sex. I did not say that. I did that.

They now call me corrupt. They demand that I resign. They say I must go to jail. Why? I did nothing wrong. I did not steal anything. It was given to me for security reasons by my friends in Saxonwold.

They say I said that the ANC will rule till Jesus Christ comes back.

No, that is fake news. The truth is: I will rule till Jesus Christ comes back and that will never happen, because I will not give him a visa.

PDU: So viva viva viva my beloved rainbow nation! Once again I'm being showered with inspiration! Soon President Zuma will pass into the law the secrecy bill, the Protection of State Information Act. A media tribunal will exist. In a few months it might be illegal to do a show like this. Even describing our present ANC government as corrupt, careless, arrogant and inept could be regarded as disclosing a state secret. By 1975, the censor board had banned so much of my work, the publicity had made me world-famous in Cape Town. So I did a show about censorship, a revue called *Strike up the Banned*. The censors came to see it – and banned it. I hope the secrecy bill will be as much fun. Back to the future?

Everything used to be illegal in the '80s. Even doing Evita Bezuidenhout

was unlawful. How mean that a husband could not wear his wife's prettiest dress and say: 'Darling, look how nice you could also look in this.' Intercourse was illegal unless you stuck to the official colour code. Being gay was a criminal offence.

I was trapped in 1985 by a journalist from an Afrikaans newspaper who said: 'Hey Pieter-Dirk Uys, are you gay?' I said: 'Yes, I am homosexual on Mondays and Wednesdays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays I'm heterosexual. On Fridays I'm bisexual. On Saturdays I do it myself – and on Sundays I rest.'

My first lady, illegally in drag, was Nowell Fine who started life in my chorus line in 1975 ... (*In her accent*) ... my Jewish African Princess, my kugel, my white liberal! She has been in every show since, adapting and dying her hair blonder. In *Adapt or Dye* she was having a thing with Nimrod her garden boy while thinking of the future with her maid Dora. After that first performance in 1975, a woman stopped me in the foyer of the theatre and said: 'Excuse me Pieter-Dirk Uys, but I don't know why you do that character Nowell Fine, because I don't know anyone who talks like that, I swear to God!' And so with all the boxes in place and the costumes at hand and in the light, there was only one way to get into Evita Bezuidenhout. This how it happened in *Adapt or Dye*.

(*Light change*)

(*PDU into Nowell Fine*)

(*She calls*)

Dora? Dora! Where is that girl! Dora? Madam's calling!

Oh my God, I'm having a nervous breakdown on the spot, I swear to God. I'm absolutely finished. I scarcely slept at all last night. My husband Herbert and I stayed up and watched President PW Botha make his Rubicon speech on TV. Listen, I knew 1985 was going to be difficult, but not see the rand become a cent!

(*She calls*)

Dora? Dora? Now where is that maid? Dora? Are the kids ready for



PDU as Nowell Fine

supper? Kids – are you ready for supper? Okay kids, get in the car. And Dora? Take the dogs – get them some Kentucky Fried Chicken, they love it.

Those dogs really freak me out, but I suppose that's what you get when you cross a Rottweiler with an Alsatian – at least you get a white neighbourhood!

(She calls)

Dora? Don't take the master's Mercedes or my BMW – take your own shopping Honda. And Dora, don't give the kids Irish coffee, hey – I don't want my kids spoiled!

(She starts adding makeup)

What would I do without Dora? She's been with us since she was R15 a month. Let me tell you, now that Dora's got her driver's licence, she's taken such a weight off my shoulders. She drives the kids to dinner every night. Aren't I a lucky mother? All I have to make for supper are four reservations. Anyway, most steakhouses around Joburg are multi-

racial and international, or just don't care, which means Dora can also eat something at the same table and keep an eye on the kids. Except suddenly she's become a vegetarian. Can you believe it, in a steakhouse and just eating salads and vegetables?

So much for cannibals in Africa! Hang on, I must do my mouth.

(She adds lipstick)

I swear to God, that's the longest my mouth has been closed since 1976. Cannibals in Africa? Reminds me of a joke I heard the other day. They say there's a local South African version of Russian roulette that you play at Sun City. It seems a white man goes to bed with four black girls and one of them turns out to be a cannibal ... I also don't understand it, I swear to God.

Anyway, Herbert doesn't understand jokes. The other night he said to me: 'Nowell, why do you always keep your eyes closed when we have sex?' I said: 'Herbert, God forbid I should see you enjoying yourself.' No sense of humour at all.

(She adds a false eyelash)

That terrible Rubicon speech! We thought Botha would bow to international pressure and make the right moves, but oh no! It gave me such a nightmare last night. Did I have a nightmare last night? I can't tell you. I'll tell you! I dreamt it was the future in South Africa. Black majority rule. They freed Mandela. No one in the world wanted us. So we whites had to evacuate South Africa and take refuge on the moon. The moon? My God, that place has got *no* atmosphere!

(She adds another false eyelash)

Hey, do you like my hands? Got them from my mother. You won't believe how many people stop me in the street, or at the video shop, or at the gynie and they say: 'So tell me, Nowell Fine, what do you *do* to keep your hands so nice and soft and smooth?' Nothing.

(She adds mascara)

Anyway, Herbert never relaxes like me. As a prominent white liberal, he's always wheeling and dealing, on the golf course with the government on the one hand, and then secretly in Lusaka with the ANC on the other? Wake me when it's over! S'true's God, if I knew the

road to the airport was safe, I'd emigrate. Let's face it, there are two things I just can't stand about South Africa: apartheid and the blacks!

(She adds eyeshadow)

Anyway, I don't want to talk about politics. I just want to say that if it wasn't for Dora, I'd have a nervous breakdown, I swear to God. So, things being what they are, I said to Herbert the other day: 'Listen doll, maybe it's about time we were seen putting our money where Dora's mouth is.' I thought to send her to the spa for a few days, something nice and easy. But let me tell you what Herbert decided. 'Let's build Dora her own little house in Soweto!' Brilliant!

(She tidies her hair)

Listen man, it's a bargain. They've thrown around so many stones, you don't have to buy bricks. A nice kosher little pad with a patio where she can entertain. There's place for a pool, but Herbert said: 'For God's sake, wait with the pool – Rome was not built in one day!' Of course Herbert would know. But she's got a nice little jacuzzi in her bedroom and a bidet in the bathroom to wash that hair. And a sunken lounge like Alexis Carrington's got in *Dynasty*? Oh yes, and a spare room for her family.

(She looks in the hand mirror)

Well no, actually they don't yet have electricity in all of Soweto except for show, where Tutu lives and where Winnie hides. So Herbert has fitted her with a nice generator, so that she can have the important things: hair dryer, microwave, deepfreeze, a new home computer, you know, the usual. And of course a video machine and a TV set. And there's the whole point: if things go from worse to worst from one state of emergency to another, and we can't get out of this damn country because of United Nations sanctions, or civil war, or whatever's waiting round the corner? And if we whites are forced to hand over South Africa to a black majority ANC government? Herbert and me will just move out of our place in Lower Houghton and into our house in Soweto. Not only does it have all the modcons and full security, it also has a nice spare room for the maid.

(She looks into the mirror again)

Outstanding. Right. Now I'm ready for bed.

(Nowell exits)

(SOUND: Desmond Tutu introduction for Evita)

Hello 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 am 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!

(Light change)

(Evita Bezuidenhout enters)

Thank you, dear Archbishop Desmond Tutu, for those words of introduction from your retreat in Tibet. Comrades, citizens, South Africans: it is always important to celebrate success. And that is what we are doing here today. We are celebrating yet another fair and free example of a healthy democracy.

Our recent 2014 general election is over. We can all heave a sigh of relief. It was free and fair. We are still here. Helen Zille has gracefully stepped aside and accepted the ambassadorship to South Sudan, while Lindiwe Mazibuko is now leader of the opposition. The DA controls four of the nine provinces if we also count in Lesotho.

I have received messages of congratulations from our ambassador in the Democratic Republic of Palestine, Patricia de Lille, as well as from Prince Charles, formerly from the UK and now king of Greece. The Protection of State Information Act has been active for two years and we still have a free press. As the chairperson of the media tribunal, I can only once again promise that South Africa will always enjoy freedom of speech. It is just after speech that freedom goes.

But today we are here to say welcome to our newly-elected President and farewell to our former President Jacob Zuma and our first ladies: Mrs Zuma, Mrs Zuma, Mrs Zuma, Mrs Zuma and the next Mrs Zuma.

But it is our new president that this celebration is about. Politics is a funny thing. Sometimes it is here today and gone tonight. But sometimes comebacks are made and today sees that as a reality. As the chairperson of the media tribunal, I would like to welcome you, Comrade President, and I look forward to working with you to protect the freedoms as enhanced by our unique Constitution ...

(SOUND: Her conversation with Julius Malema – his voice is from the famous media row at his State of the Nation address; Evita has a conversation with him here)



PDU plus the Red Beret

MALEMA: This is the building of a revolutionary party and you know nothing about the revolution ...

EVITA: Yes, I realise that ...

MALEMA: We will get them to take you out ...

EVITA: But, President Malema ...

MALEMA: Either you behave or else you jump!

EVITA: Please, you can't be serious ...

MALEMA: Here you – don't laugh!

EVITA: I'm not laughing ...

MALEMA: Chief, can you get security to remove this thing here?

EVITA: I have just asked a question ...

MALEMA: If you're not going to behave, we will call security to take you out.

EVITA: The freedom of expression ...

MALEMA: This is not a newsroom. This is a revolutionary house. And you don't come here with a ...

EVITA: ... with respect, Mr President, on behalf of the media tribunal ...

MALEMA: Don't come here with that white tendency ...

EVITA: I am here to welcome you!

MALEMA: You can do it somewhere else. Not here!

EVITA: I respect many black people...

MALEMA: If you've got a tendency of undermining blacks even where you work. Here you're in the wrong place!

EVITA: My daughter is married to a black man ...

MALEMA: You can go out ...

EVITA: ... and I have three black grandchildren...

MALEMA: Ja, you can go out ... rubbish is what is covered in that trouser. That is rubbish.

EVITA: My outfit is by Vedemme...

MALEMA: ... what you have covered is rubbish!

EVITA: Met wie praat hy?

MALEMA: You are a small boy; you can't do anything!

EVITA: Hy gaan nou te ver!

MALEMA: Come out ... go out!

EVITA: Please, President Malema!

MALEMA: Bastard! Go out! You bloody agent!

(Evita leaves the stage)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU enters. He has the juju doll in one arm and a glass in his other hand.)

PDU: Will Tannie Evita adapt? Or will she fly? They say in a healthy democracy, the people must lead and the government will follow. And so I have adopted a little orphan baby boy. Shame, no one wanted him in Limpopo. All he has is his little watch and the tea-cosy on his head. But he already knows a word in English: *Nationalisation*. And *fuck you*. So let us toast tomorrow with a glass which is always half-full. As Tannie Evita has said: 'We don't need a crystal ball to see what will happen in our country. The future of South Africa is certain; it's just the past that is unpredictable.'

(PDU exit)

Curtain call

THE END

MEDIA REACTIONS

Adapt or Fly is an enlightening, thought-provoking offering. Touching on everything from the fathers of apartheid to the success (or is that failure?) of the TRC, to politicians and their shenanigans, through the absurdities of apartheid race classification laws and the Juju generation of leaders and more – the show balances all this weightiness with a highly entertaining performance by Uys and his hilarious alter egos.

– *The Daily News* (Durban) March 2012

Clever impersonations and clever repartee after sailing fearlessly close to the wind. Uys loves his country with a passion and has done more to educate in the complexities of the country's politics than any television or newspaper coverage. The lesson remains stark. It happened under Hitler. It happened under apartheid. Could it be happening yet again, as Uys skips forward to the elections of 2014 and the threat of Juju politics? Pieter-Dirk Uys is moving on, but he remains ever relevant. *Adapt or Dye* shone a light on the horrors of apartheid. *Adapt or Fly* reminds those of us who were around at the time and serves to shine a light into a dark past for those who were born into democracy. Lest we forget.

– *Artsmart* (Durban) March 2012

It's not for nothing that Pieter-Dirk Uys is a national treasure, a mischievous master of all things political and pertinent, an icon as much as a part of the South African psyche as *sonskyn* and *suikerbos*. A social activist, a clever performer with many moods and masks, and an old hand at sharp observation delivered with wit and wisdom, he has deservedly become the darling of satire. *Adapt or Fly* suffers from being a little too long. There were also overheard remarks, perhaps warranted, that a lot of the 'golden oldie' characters are lost on many of the younger generation, however much Uys tries to reel them in.

– *The Mercury* (Durban) March 2012

Uys uses his satirical and comedic strengths to take the audience through South Africa's political evolution – the highs, the lows, the good, the bad, the successes and particularly the socio-political failures – with no holds barred. With subject matter that could easily be offensive, I feel Uys has taken care to ensure that rather than be an in-your-face offensive rant, *Adapt or Fly* is an enlightening, thought-provoking offering.

– *The Star* (Johannesburg) March 2012

Adapt or Fly makes it clear that Uys is worried that history is in danger of repeating itself. This is especially true of the Protection of State Information Bill, which he says could impact heavily on freedom of speech. God forbid that happens, because we need Uys's biting political commentary and witty satire to help keep those in power on the straight and narrow. *Adapt or Fly* is without question one of Uys's best shows, so whatever you do, don't miss it.

– *The Witness* (Pietermaritzburg) March 2012

The barbs are biting, the puns politically incorrect, the satire scathing and wit intact. It's funny stuff.

– *Sunday Tribune* (Durban) March 2012

Pieter-Dirk Uys celebrates 2012 as a year of radical change in SA through political paralysis. Thirty years ago Uys started his total onslaught against careless and corrupt politics, turning tragedy into farce. His new show is a personal political comedy trek along a tightrope to freedom, through the minefields of racism and sexism that have always made up the tarmac of our political freeway. Laughter at fear has always been Uys's trademark, from his dark first one-man show in 1981 to the dazzling kaleidoscope of rainbow colours in his latest piece.

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) March 2012

In its day *Adapt or Dye* shook our world. It was current, incisive and delivered with razor-sharp and original wit by a righteously angry, talented man who understood how to deliver satire generously coated in humour. *Adapt or Fly* has a gut-wrenching opening and a disturbing, utterly brilliant closing that is made more harrowing by its use – and abuse – of our most beloved Tannie Evita. Sandwiched between is an older, gentler and nostalgic ramble through the past – and it's well worth the engagement. But it's the flashes of the old PDU – the parts where you feel punched and tickled at the same time – that I'd have loved to have more of.

– *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) April 2012

It's weighty issues balanced by entertaining and gripping humour that only Pieter-Dirk Uys can deliver. And he's very optimistic and positive about the future of this country.

– *Star* (Johannesburg) April 2012

None of our famous comics even dabble in satire. They impersonate, belittle and poke fun for the laughs. For Uys the laughs are a means to an end, a way of getting us to take a long hard look at who we allow to be our spokespeople and spend our money. And to take back control if they are found wanting. Uys may be 30 years older than when he opened *Adapt or Dye*, but his material is as fresh today as it was then. The players may have changed, but the game has not.

– *City Press* (Johannesburg) April 2012

Watching *Adapt or Fly* means never knowing for sure what will come your way. It might be a political comment you disagree with, or a funny jibe that not everyone appreciates. But overall this is a necessary show that – perhaps one day – our leaders will listen to and change their ways.

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) April 2012

I enjoy Pieter-Dirk Uys's South African satire and admire the talent and creative wit of the man who brings it to us. I salute the artist who was not quiet about the political wrongs in this country 30 years ago, and the artist who is not silent about the political wrongs today.

– *Artslink* (Johannesburg) April 2012

Adapt or Fly is a humorous journey into the sometimes dark alley of South Africa's political journey, from apartheid right through to the present. I would recommend the show to anyone who is even mildly interested in the politics and the politicians of South Africa. *Adapt or Fly* is not for the faint-hearted though, nor is it for those who have no sense of humour because some of the jokes are highly sensitive and could upset some people.

– *The Sowetan* (Johannesburg) April 2012

Uys still has us rolling on the floor after 30 years. That's enough to keep you laughing at (his) unique brand of satire, to keep you moved, hooked and, at times, in awe too.

– *The Sunday Independent* (Johannesburg) April 2012

Adapt or Fly besit gelukkig menslikheid, maar wel een met 'n rapier se lem. Uys (is) genial en dalk profeties. Ironie bly sy sterkste wapen.

– *Beeld* (Johannesburg) April 2012

Dotted with moments of shuddering truth.

– *Business Day* (Johannesburg) April 2012

In a rapidly-changing South Africa, Pieter-Dirk Uys remains a master exponent in the art of satire. He slickly blends the old with the new in a sublime display of artistry, something from which the younger generation of satirists can learn.

– *Artslink* (Johannesburg) April 2012

To paraphrase Pieter-Dirk Uys quoting someone else: history doesn't repeat itself as much as it rhymes. Also when it repeats itself, it turns tragedy into farce. In his latest production Uys raises the chilling spectre of similarities between our present and previous government. Sad then, that almost two decades later into the new South Africa, Uys is angry enough to do it all over again. Between the suggested security bill and the controversy around Brett Murray's painting *The Spear*, there's more than enough material just begging to be interrogated. Using biting wit, dark sarcasm and totally un-pc entertainment, he enlightens us, challenging us to pay attention to what is happening right under our noses.

– *Cape Argus* (Cape Town) June 2012

The man is once again in incendiary form, perhaps the stakes are higher this time around. There is no mistaking the message: South Africa needs to get its act together, rediscover its moral core or risk making history as its farcical bitch. It's as if no one is as brave as Uys is, but the way he riles one up, you might just believe you are. This is an artist that is still integral to our local cultural sphere, even at the age of 66, and I hope for one he never stops telling truth to power.

– *The Next48 Hours* (Cape Town) June 2012

In a rapidly changing South Africa, Pieter-Dirk Uys remains a master exponent in the art of satire. He slickly blends the old with the new in a sublime display of artistry, something from which the younger generation of satirists can learn. He still has that acute eye, that wonderful gift for wordplay and that amazing talent for getting beneath the skin of a personality. In an era when so many new, roughly-hewn comedians are coming to the fore, it's important to still recognise a true master, one who is trained in theatre arts and who uses these techniques to captivate his audience.

– *Artslink* (Johannesburg) June 2012

Uys pulls no punches. From his first portrayal of Adolf Hitler with his chilling parallels to Julius Malema and politics of past and future, there is an undercurrent of foreboding. Are we doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past? Tragedy or farce? Witty one-liners, pithy insights, outrageous comments fly and sting like mosquitoes on a hot night. Uys keeps his audience rocking with laughter and rueful identification. At the start he tells us that the only thing to do with corrupt politicians is to order them to 'go to hell'. Enthusiastically the audience shouted Hitler off the stage.

– *Artslink* (Johannesburg) February 2013

In die *Christelike Kernensiklopedie* word so oor Uys geskryf: ‘Sy satire is soms skerp, partykeer banaal, en hy dans meermale op en oor die grense van heiligskennis. Maar Uys kap na alle kante en het ’n geregtigheidsin wat in die Suid-Afrikaanse opset belangrik is.’ Ek stem in hoofsaak saam met hierdie waarneming, en was bly dat Uys die keer nie so ‘op en oor’ die grense van heiligskennis gedans het soos ek hom al by vorige geleenthede sien doen het nie. En glad nie soos sommige van sy mede-satirici wat soms eenvoudig afstootlik is nie. Hy is sonder twyfel ’n kunstenaar van besonder formaat wat jou laat huil oor onse nons-dinge – terwyl jy ook kliphard saam daaroor lag.

– *Die Kerkbode* (Kaapstad) September 2012

Pieter-Dirk Uys’s *Adapt or Fly* is deeply educational. In his inimitable style, Uys takes his audience through the dark days of apartheid, through the heady days of our new democracy under Nelson Mandela, then the beetroot days of Thabo Mbeki up to our modern obsessions, Zuma and Julius Malema. It’s a laugh a minute. It is also a weep-a-minute. Uys is still as sharp and witty and brilliant as ever.

– *Business Day* (Johannesburg) October 2013

It’s all about entertainment as he holds the laughter from beginning to end while twisting the dagger deftly and slyly to never dim the truth. Nothing escapes his gaze as he trips the times horrific from the early days of apartheid, rolling from one prime minister to the next by donning the ubiquitous hat and rearranging the squint to suit a particular politician, which he embodies perfectly ... shining a searing light on people who should be paying attention to what they struggled for. It’s the perfect storm as you rock with laughter while reaching for the hanky to hide the pesky tear.

– *The Star* (Johannesburg) October 2013

Adapt or Fly is aangrypend, vermaaklik, ontstellend en 'n tydige waarskuwing dat onreg nie noodwendig tot die verlede behoort nie. – *Beeld* (Johannesburg) November 2013

Adapt or Fly – a development from the title of his first work *Adapt or Dye* – sees Uys once again using the powers-that-be in government as his scriptwriters, but also with a vulnerability and an urgency we've not seen in him before. This tightly-conceived, well-constructed piece will keep you on the edge, laughing at things that scare you most. With the swagger induced by a hat, rosettes, a gesture of the finger or the tongue, the remarkable Pieter-Dirk Uys does it again, in a more thoughtful, sinister version of a work we feel like we've seen before. Only we haven't. While many lines that get the big laughs reach back into his established repertoire, *Adapt or Fly* might be his darkest work yet. Arguably it's one that gets audiences laughing the most.

– *SA Jewish Report* (Johannesburg) November 2013

Right from the start, it's clear this politically incorrect show isn't for the sensitive. Fortunately master satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys doesn't pick sides. Former rulers are parodied alongside new ones. The generation old enough to remember the apartheid leaders in action laugh the loudest. But as someone too young to remember apartheid, I was a little lost through parts of the two hour show. And yet *Adapt or Fly* isn't just about getting laughs from the people who were there; it's a history lesson for those who weren't. Uys is making sure we are all aware of what happened so it never happens again. *Adapt or Fly* isn't just cheap humour for a good night out; it offers a timely and truthful message about where we were, where we are and where we could go if we don't wake up.

–*The Times*(Cape Town) January 2014

The notion of undercover security police embedded in an audience seemed ludicrous when one looks around the patrons in the theatre at Camps Bay. That is the type of surveillance that the seasoned performer has endured in his career spanning the rise and fall of apartheid. This bizarre tactic is one of the many revealed in Uys's current show which is retrospective of both his career and the country's to 2014. This adaptation of *Adapt or Fly* has been developed since the death of Mandela and the parallel stories of Uys's life and that of the international icon provide an interesting perspective. His life as a white, Jewish Afrikaner gay man in counterpoint to a black lawyer who brokered freedom for South Africa, could not have been more different. The moments that Uys has chosen to highlight both, amplify the differences and show how hard life was under apartheid. While the actor regales the tales of the absurdity of the previous regime, he highlights the importance of citizens participation in an active democracy now. Uys eschews the notion of being politically correct and there are no sacred cows. His scorn is delivered with equal measure on the hypocrisy of the National Party and the current prevalence of corruption. He admonishes us to never underestimate the 'inventiveness of bad politics' and refers to hypocrisy as 'the Vaseline of political intercourse'. His cutting remarks on the dual tragedy of poverty and an inferior education are one of the many uncomfortable truths which elicit both a laugh and a wince. As we celebrate 20 years of freedom *Adapt or Fly* is an apt review of the years of apartheid, the struggle against it, its demise and the growth of a fledgeling democracy. Uys's memoir is recalled through a sardonic and wry eye – a harsh reminder of the price of complacency and a cautionary warning that democracy should be guarded vigilantly.

– *The Cape Times* (Cape Town) January 2014

Pieter-Dirk Uys at his satirical best. But beneath all the humour was a more sorrowful tone of the lives of people during apartheid. What was more sad was the sense of how much cannot be reclaimed. Uys explains that the show is not a history lesson, but more a personal interpretation of political affairs over the years and how the show has evolved ever since its first run over 30 years ago (*Adapt or Dye*) when the former South Africa was not as accepting and how it was deemed by many to be outrageous. Uys warns that apartheid will happen again, not as a form of criticism, but in the form of educational hierarchy, class and language barriers. This is a prediction that I feel is already trickling its way into the present. The depth of his content is a rich source of food-for-thought dunked in sickly-sweet humour, not to solely entertain or to look how far post-apartheid South Africa has come. Instead it looks at where we are going.

– *What's On* (Cape Town) January 2014

Vintage Uys is what this feisty one-hander has to offer audiences as its seasoned performer hustles us through the history of South Africa from 1945 to the present day with autobiographical commentary on the side. The show opens with a chilling analogy between Germany in the early 1930s and South Africa in the run-up to this year's elections. Herr Hitler, perfectly impersonated by Uys, has taken a break from hell to offer Julius Malema advice and encouragement on his path to power and glory. And there is nothing fanciful in the scenario. Thereafter Adolf returns to his eternal habitat, and a series of brilliant caricatures follows as we are taken back to the mid-20th century, reviewing the politics and personalities, the insanity and idiosyncrasies that sharpened this country's history over 50-odd years. As one has come to expect, Uys captures the accent, body-language and mannerisms of the people he portrays in magisterial

fashion, and although some on the material is not new, it is refreshed through the evergreen satirist's zest and acerbic humour. Uys remains a master of disguise and mimicry to the end, relying on the minimum of costumes and props. As an exercise in intelligent, thought-provoking entertainment, *Adapt or Fly* is hard to beat.

– *The Cape Argus* (Cape Town) January 2014

Adapt or Fly is a deliciously humorous yet compelling approach on South African political culture and it challenges our ability to laugh in the face of tragedy. One of the most successful controversial shows on the South African stage, it deserves to run for years and years, adapting as it flies.

– *What's On* (Cape Town) January 2014

This is a worthy show from a freedom fighter, patriot and all around warm and wonderful human being. I would recommend it to both the young born frees and those born before 1994. It shows the evil absurdity in the ghosts of our past and harsh reality of our present. It inspires the future. This is a future we are fighting for, to ensure we all have one. Take heed.

– *On The Planks* (Johannesburg) February 2014

éénmalig in Nederland - exclusief in Carré

ADAPT OR FLY



'delivered with a razor-sharp and original wit'
- Sunday Times -



- The Daily News -



- The Post -

- Cape Argus -



CARRÉ MA 1 JULI 2013 - 20.00U
0900 25 25 255 - CARRE.NL

MEANWHILE IN THE REAL WORLD ...

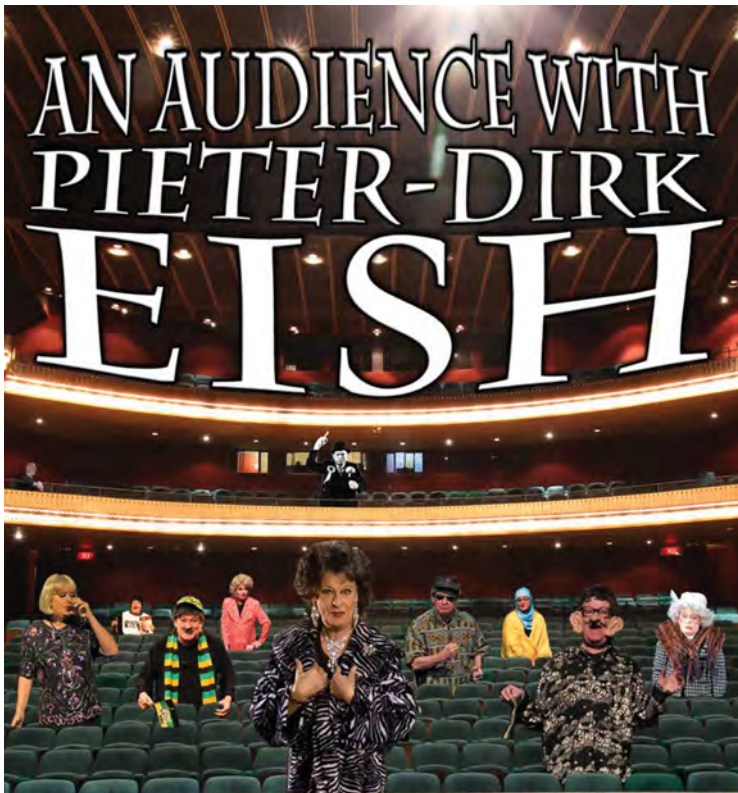


Nkandla homestead

John A Forbes, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Common

State Security Minister Siyabonga Cwele admits some irregularities at Nkandla, or not: ‘The private residence was being built by the Zuma family and there’s no evidence the state has spent anything on that. On the ethics where we have determined there was wrongdoing, it’s only ethical to take steps because there are public funds. There’s nothing unethical on our behalf reporting and admitting that there were irregularities and steps will be taken, as Minister Nxesi has said.’

2012



AN AUDIENCE WITH PIETER-DIRK ELSH

17 CHARACTERS 17 BOXES YOU CHOOSE THE ORDER



BAXTER THEATRE

29 OCT - 17 NOV
BOOK @ COMPUTICKET



**BAXTER
THEATRE
CENTRE**
at the UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



Here are some of the satirical cluster who might people the stage in
An Audience with Pieter-Dirk EISH!

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT IN THE BACK ROW:

A **female figure in black**, reputed to be the Saudi Arabian princess to become Wife #5 (or is it #6?) to President Zuma so that his billion-rand homestead / compound / palace / kraal / Nkandla in KZN can get Saudi oil at a discount

Mother Theresa sits in penance about the fact that Jesus is determined to wait till the ANC is out of power before He comes back

Ageing kugel **Nowell Fine**, one of Uys's favourite friends, coming on this road from Mangaung not just for the ride

Big Issue seller **Bennie** holds up his edition with Trevor Manual punted for a future president

German Chancellor **Angela Merkel** wondering if the job as a bank manager in Athens wouldn't be easier

Archbishop Emeritus **Desmond Tutu** – all singing, all dancing, all wonderful

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT IN THE FRONT ROW:

Retired Nationalist Minister **Pik Botha** brushing up on his Madiba Magic

Evita's sister **Bambi Kellermann** loving every moment of the limelight

Pieter-Dirk Uys blissfully unaware of the trouble he is in for

Evita Bezuidenhout holding her adopted little noisy baby is furious to be in the same set-up with her sister Bambi and the 'third-rate comedian' next to her

PW Botha still in a state of shock realising that, while he crossed the Rubicon, he just ended up in the Wilderness

An Audience with Pieter-Dirk *Eish!*

After its 2012 world premiere at Evita se Perron in Darling, seasons lie ahead in Johannesburg, Cape Town and London. The audience has the choice of which number out of 20 boxes they choose. A different show every performance, and not just a parade of the old, the new, sometimes borrowed, occasionally blue icons and *aikonas*, but also a celebration of 45 years of entertaining real people in real time, and paying tribute to live theatre.

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys



THE SETTING

Two ladders; three shelves; 10 boxes with numbers; three plastic crates as table and chair

(SOUND: *The announcement*)

Ladies and gentlemen, comrades and cadres, honourable members. Welcome to the theatre. Now listen: your cell phone signal might look jammed, but it is not jammed. Just a technical glitch and will be seen to by us as soon as possible. When your signal returns, do not switch off your cell phone, your Blackberry or your iPhone. Just put them on silent, but keep them alive so that you can Google anything you don't understand, especially those in the audience under 25 years old. And those of you over 60? Don't worry people, you won't remember anything anyway, so just sit back and enjoy the show. It's all over to you now. And so let us welcome the performer to meet his audience.

(*PDU enters*)

The only reason I am standing up here, is because once upon a time I sat down there. My first experience of live theatre as a member of the audience. Back in 1961. I was in Standard 7 in an Afrikaans school – Nassau Hoërskool, Main Road Mowbray. Some said Main Road Observatory. We were appalled. For us it had to be Main Road Pinelands-North.

Our English teacher, Miss Nel, took us to the Little Theatre in Cape Town to see our set-work play, Shakespeare's *King Lear*. My first introduction to The Bard was an Uys Krige translation into Afrikaans. So I thought Shakespeare was Afrikaans: Willem Wikkelspies. My mother said: no, she grew up in Germany and had seen plays by him in Berlin and so he must have been German. Wilhelm Blitzkrieg! Imagine my surprise when I found out he was Zulu: Shake Spear!

Back in 1961 I don't think I understood anything in *King Lear* except maybe the Fool, who came across as the only familiar character. And I liked Goneril's dresses. But it wasn't just the play; it was the whole experience. Sitting in the soft chairs, then the lights went down into darkness and the red velvet curtain hissed up into the heavens. And there was the most beautiful world I had ever seen! The lights were

brighter, the colours glowed redder and bluer and greener. And the actors ... no, they not people; they were gods and goddesses in their costumes, telling us this story of King Lear, in a language I didn't understand, but I knew exactly what they meant.

There were lords and ladies, counts and countesses, sirs and dames, kings and queens – lots of queens – and even when they left the stage, I knew they were getting onto their white horses to gallop off to the castle and the next battle in this great epic called *King Lear*. I didn't know then that when actors left the stage, they'd sit on a chair, light a cigarette and mutter: 'Darling, what a *kak* audience.'

Then eventually I went to the University of Cape Town (after nine months in the navy) to get a degree to fall back on. Do they still say that? What about saying: get a degree to fall forward on? Always the retreat mentality. 'Your dreams will never come true, so get something to fall back on!' So I eventually graduated with a BA Drama degree from UCT, probably the most pointless, useless thing I have. Because when you're up here on stage, no one ever asks for a degree! You can either do it; or you can't do it! No affirmative action in the theatre. No BEE; just do – D-O. Or as Sir Noël Coward would say: 'Dear boy, speak clearly and don't bump into the furniture.'

The place where I learnt the most was not in the library or the lecture hall, but in the whites-only Hofmeyr Theatre in Cape Town, where during the mid-1960s I was an usher for two years, tearing the tickets of the whites-only patrons, selling them programmes and pointing them to the whites-only toilets ... because it was a whites-only world then. And when the lights went down, I stood at the back of the auditorium and watched the play.

The same play ... every night ... maybe for a four week run ... and yet it was never the same play, because every night had a different audience. So the laughs were different; the timings different. I watched every performance – 21 of Bernard Shaw's *Heartbreak House*, 38 of *The Lion in Winter*, 16 of William Shakespeare's *Richard III* – 'My horse, my horse, my kingdom for a horse!'. Actually it was nogal in Afrikaans. 'n Perd, 'n perd, my plaas vir 'n perd!

Something must have stayed with me because here I am! Life imprisonment without parole. I've been on stage alone over seven thousand times, and yet every time is the first time and the last time. Why? Because you are here. If you weren't here, there'd be no reason for me to be here.

So welcome to something that will only happen tonight. On the stage you see 15 boxes. In each one is a character, maybe two. Each number represents a sketch and a story. And you will choose the number and I will do for you what's in the box. It's called democracy! Can't say I'm not a bit nervous. I usually decide what happens here. There is no democracy on my stage. I am the Vladimir Putin of satire! Start in trousers and end up in a dress. But this show could bring forth anything, because you will decide what happens.

An Audience with Pieter-Dirk Eish!

So what's in the box? Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue. Of course Tannie Evita is among them but where? It's like being in Parliament looking at all the MPs and wondering: which one has got the brain? Who remembers the Springbok



PDU with the JuJu puppet

radio show *Pick a Box*? Well, as many of these boxes here are filled with our politicians, we might as well call this show *Kies 'n Doos*! I'm not going to open the floor to questions; it will be like Parliament on a Tuesday afternoon. I just want to know how many of you came here tonight for the first time? (*Reaction; choose someone*) Do want to choose yourself a present? Which number? (*Reaction; the member of the audience chooses a number*) You have chosen Number X to start with ...

(*Into the chosen sketch*)

Some of the sketches and characters in the boxes were the following (this was for a 60 minute show)

#2 Pik Botha

#3 Cape Town: A tribute to an old tart

#5 Mrs Petersen and the DA on the Cape Flats

#6 Nelson's Warder remembers

#7 Desmond Tutu celebrates

#8 Nowell Fine in Canada for class reunion

#10 Winnie and the ANC Congress in 1994

#12 Mother Theresa In Heaven

#13 Evita Bezuidenhout and the ANC

#14 Helen's Population Registration List

#15 Madiba is transparent

#18 What Zuma said he didn't say

#19 PW Botha's real speech

WHEN THE TIME IS UP:

Eish! Time's up! Thank you, clever audience. I couldn't have done it better myself. I would never have had the guts to put all these characters together in the order of tonight. And I didn't even allow you an interval to go and have a drink, a pee or check your email. Never mind, I'll come out with you now and we can do a selfie if you like ... to send to your kids in Australia?

We have so much to look forward to. The arms deal inquest has reached a dead end. The Marikana inquest is stranded. The Protection of State Information Act has just to be signed into law by number one. Maybe he did it 10 minutes ago, which means that if I end this show by saying that in spite of all the promises and hopes, we still have an ANC government that is corrupt, inept and careless, I will get into terrible trouble because I've just given away a state secret.

So this has to be the year of not just the born-frees. It's a year for all of us! Soon we will have our municipal elections which will show that if the people lead the government will follow. Strong municipalities are the foundation to strong government. Apartheid will never ever come back again under same name. But do not underestimate the reinventiveness of bad politics. We must know where we come from, so we can celebrate where we are going.

Just know how much we on stage need you and enjoy being with you. And we know what a sacrifice it is for you to come to us. You have to leave your home with all those DVDs of the best movies ever made. No, you can't settle down with a whisky and watch them. You have tickets for the theatre. So first you have to set the burglar alarm, load your gun and feed the Rottweiler on the back stoep otherwise it will bite you on the way to the front door. Reverse your 4×4 out carefully hoping the Nigerian burglars don't slip in as you back out. Risk your life in the city traffic, where the township taxis turn you into a racist within 40 seconds. Get to the theatre. Park your car. Kiss your car goodbye. Sit in your expensive seat. And I hope when the lights dim down and that red velvet curtain hisses up into the sky, like me back in 1961 in the Little Theatre, you will have a wonderful life-changing experience that will bring you back over and over and over again – because this the THEATRE. And ...

IT IS LIVE!

(BLACKOUT)

THE END

AN AUDIENCE WITH PIETER-DIRK EISH!

BOX OFFICE: 021 438-3300

BESURE TO GRAB A SELFIE WITH PIETER-DIRK UYS AFTER EACH SHOW



THEATRE ON THE BAY

18 Feb - 14 March / Mon - Sat 8pm / BOOK @ COMPUTICKET

MEDIA REACTIONS

Five Stars ****BEAR THE BRUNT OF GENIUS

There is simply no one better than Pieter-Dirk Uys for the time we find ourselves in. In this time of load shedding, a weak rand, political corruption, incompetence and the devastating Springbok loss, we desperately need humour – more specifically, Pieter-Dirk Uys’s special brand. He is the only comedian who can still make us laugh at the problems that beset our country, although it may feel as if you are swallowing barbed wire.

I have seen several versions of this show before, and the opening night I attended, Pieter-Dirk was in top form. To be honest: I have never attended a show of his where there wasn’t a standing ovation and this one was no different. I was also privileged enough to have attended his earliest groundbreaking shows in the Space Theatre in Cape Town in the early 70s, so I have indeed witnessed the evolution of his genius as a comedian.

Like his previous shows under the same name, there are about 15 boxes on stage with numbers on them. Pieter walks onto the stage, nonchalant, charming, smiling and energetic in spite of his 70 years and asks the audience to choose a box. But beware if the house lights go on. He will spot you if you try to hide! On the particular evening I attended he

suddenly asked: 'Who here is proud and out and gay?' Interesting enough several hands froze in mid-air with only one brave gentleman in the front row putting up his entire hand to choose a box.

The success of Uys's performance lies in his wit and ability of improvise and keep the show in line with what is happening. Heaven help the Springboks in his forthcoming shows! One by one Pieter pulls out costumes and changes into well-known characters in front of our eyes. But it is tannie Evita that is his and the audience's favourite. She comes off spectacularly, to say the least. So if you are in the doldrums for whatever reason, this brilliant show will console, entertain and invigorate you.

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) September 2015

Four stars **** YOU CAN'T PUT PIETER-DIRK UYS IN A BOX!

Like a precious red wine, Pieter-Dirk Uys is maturing magnificently. He is as sharp, searing and to the point as he always was, but add to that a sensibility that hits the sweet spot in ways that jog your memory to make you both laugh and cry. To navigate your way through our political landscape as a white male performer is only for the brave. He cunningly tells stories that reflect on and revile the past, while constantly pointing to the future lest we forget how easily one can go down that slippery slope. That's part of his brilliance as he disses the painful past, to prevent that we ever forget.

This is his show yet he invites the audience to decide on the chronology by playing pick a box ('if as in most instances we're referring to politicians, *kies 'n doos!*'). The show is 90 minutes and no one show is ever the same. He doesn't let go of all the control though. There are a few extras he slips in unexpectedly, of which the most poignant and piercing is his

Mandela reflection as he wonders what the man in the picture was thinking while put on show during Zuma's recent visit. It's a masterful dismantling of exploitation as we witness the frail man who first led our democracy and his possible private thoughts.

Uys clearly has his finger on the pulse of the nation as he plays with fear and the way people look at the world. He doesn't dwell there, though, as he takes us back and reminds us of what was and where we never want to return to. Guptaстан is tackled on many occasions and he has many suggestions of how The Family can spend their money to benefit the people best. He also has fun with Noelle Fine, his liberal kugel. Or he wanders down memory lane with a Polish Jewish pensioner who still lives in Hillbrow where she teaches the Nigerian drug lord's children computer literacy. Some old favourites re-emerge but the familiar stories are updated with new punchlines as he looks to the future while regurgitating old frenemies such as the security policeman, Mandela's prison warder and a quick glimpse of PW who kept him going through the 1980s.

On the night, the mood because of the boxes picked was almost melancholy. Even when funny (and he always is), it was often impossible to escape the horror. But that's the Uys genius. He will get you giggling while hitting you hard and making you think. Please remember to safeguard the future. That's what people died for. And he gets this across while his audience dies laughing. *Eish!*

– *The Star* (Johannesburg) May 2015

See a national treasure perform and experience a history lesson that is funny, uplifting and sad at different times – always conveyed with honesty, tongue in cheek humour and a twinkle in the eye.

– *CT Today* (Cape Town) March 2015

Eish! What a ride Delicious conspiracy of positive thoughts. There are sly jokes about contemporary politicians and barbed quips fly quick and fast. The whole show is like that: funny until you realise he is not really making a joke because he is trying to get you to laugh at what you don't take seriously enough. Uys manages to imbue his performance with a positive message without being corny. He does it with his usual aplomb.

– *Cape Argus Tonight* (Cape Town) March 2015

Uys's love of the theatre is contagious. His clarion call to guard democracy with vigour is delivered in sharp sound bytes. Uys is as rich a source as any of relevant commentary on both the historical and current political situation – a timely reminder of the relevance of theatre, and satire in particular, to the political and social fabric of society.

– *The Cape Times* (Cape Town) March 2015

Intimate, thought-provoking and spellbinding. Pieter-Dirk Uys's raw and brutally honest opinions give us the freedom to laugh at ourselves, but also force us to take a good, long look at what is happening around us.

– *Die TygerBurger* (Cape Town) March 2015

MEDIA REACTION THE SOHO THEATRE LONDON

I left the theatre thoroughly entertained, uplifted and proudly South African. Long may this national treasure continue to help us laugh at ourselves and see the many positive aspects of our country. I'm tempted to go again.

– *The South African* (London) July 2014

He 'dons false eyelashes and presidents listen', the *LA Times* has said of Pieter-Dirk Uys. Indeed, there are powerful double edges in the South Africa satirist's work. The show is anecdote-rich, so not always a gag a minute, but Uys, who won a Truth and Reconciliation Award in 2001, has earned the luxury of time, and his subject deserves to be wrapped in context. His spirit is often optimistic, but sometimes there's a heartbreaking wallop as Uys surveys how far democracy has got to his country and concludes: not far. Uys is like a Shakespearean jester, conveying cutting truths through wit. Intelligent, visceral, theatrical and fun: let's hope the satirists of tomorrow are watching.

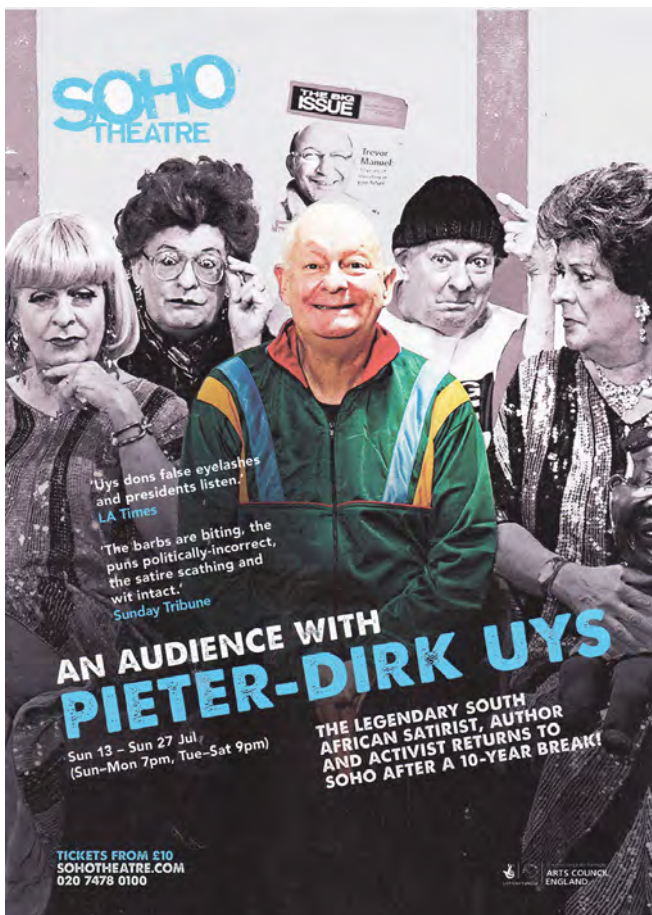
– *The Times* (London) July 2014

At 68 the South African could play Lear, but instead he has conjured up a striking character-based showcase with a twist. The mood shuttled from chilling to farce with topical gaps offering added relevance. Uys remains a terrific mimic.

– *Evening Standard* (London) July 2014

Uys unites the country not by rewriting its dark history but by inspecting it closely, taking stock laughing about its absurdity, and moving on to champion the issues of tomorrow

– *ThinkAfricaPress* (London) July 2014



MEANWHILE IN THE REAL WORLD ...



Jacob Zuma

© European Union, 2025, CC BY 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

Justice Minister Jeff Radebe admits to some irregularities at Nkandla or doesn't: 'The money that was spent by the state was for the security upgrades at his private residence. Was the president involved? The answer is no. No money of the state was used for the upgrade of the private residence of the president. There were irregularities; in this instance, the manner in which officials in the department of public works procured these services. All those implicated officials ... the law enforcement agencies are going to take its course to find those people involved in order to be accountable for that.'

2013

FIFTY SHADES OF BAMBI





Fifty Shades of Bambi

Putting a square peg into a round hole, Bambi Kellermann and Godfrey Johnson tell it all in words and song * 2013: The Fugard Theatre, Cape Town * 2014: Theatre on the Square, Sandton, Johannesburg

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys as Bambi Kellermann

Godfrey Johnson at the piano



THE SETTING

Washing line with toys / grand piano / barstool

THE TEXT

(Godfrey enters)

Into 'Children will listen'

Careful the things you say
Children will listen
Careful of the things you do
Children will see and learn
Children may not obey but children will listen
Children will look to you for which way to turn
To learn what to be
Careful before you say: listen to me
Children will listen

(Godfrey into 'These Foolish Things')

A cigarette that bears a lipstick's traces
An entrance ticket to some dingy places
And still my heart has wings
(Oh Bambi ...)
These foolish things remind me of you.

My tinkling piano in the same apartment
My stumbling words that tell you what my heart meant,
A dungeons' leathered swings,
(Oh Bambi ...)
These foolish things remind me of you.

(Bambi enters from audience)

BK: *(Off)* Godfrey, where are you? Wo bist du? Goodness me, I've come through a side door.

(She enters)



PDU as Bambi Kellermann

The whole place is red – red everywhere. I feel like a virus in someone's bloodstream. Es tut mir leid... I'm sorry I'm late, darling. I got to the hotel, but they said you had already left. (*The audience claps*)

No, please don't applaud! I'm still in my crocks! Godfrey, I told you I had to be in Cape Town. It's my mother's birthday. She's in the old age home down in Darling. She's 107 years old ... dear God, make up your mind ... I think my sister Evita again alerted the police. They were outside waiting for me. You know Evita will do anything to make my life hell. The police stopped the taxi and breathalysed me. I said: I'm sitting in the back!

Anyway, I managed to get away and rushed back to Cape Town Airport – and how did I know it was Cape Town Airport? Someone threw poo at my windscreen! Then the flight up here to OR Tambo. They lost my luggage. I think the lovely snakeskin suitcase Joan Collins gave me is now in Tanzania. I hope it's not in Uganda. Your friends collected me at the airport. We rushed here via the freeway through all those e-toll gantries without an e-tag! I am now a criminal and a fraud. I should be

running the SABC. And here I am ... late. Let me put on my shoes and take my ARVs. Is Hildegard backstage? Ach Hildegard, du bist schon hier ... liebchen ...

(She exits off)

(Godfrey returns to the song)

GJ: You came, you saw, you conquered me
 When we did all that for free
 I somehow knew that this had to be.

The popper sniffs that make my heart beat faster,
a cell phone rings but damn it who's to answer,
oh how the ghost of you clings,
all these foolish things just remind me of you.

(Oh Bambi),
Will you never let me be?
(Oh Mrs Kellermann),
Please set me free?
These ties that bind us
are again around us
There's no escape that I can see
And still these little things remain
to give us passion and pain

(Lights: Colour change)

(Bambi has entered, studies the washing line. Then into 'These Foolish Things')

BK: Your cigarette that bears my lipstick traces
 My hand of cards without any of those aces
 And when my courage drops

Oh Godfrey
These useful props don't remind me of you

Your tinkling upright in that small apartment
My slurring words that show you where my art went
Strip for a buck?
then a quick f ... NO!
No, no. no....
Those foolish things do not remind me of you ...

BK: ... hello darling ...

(Godfrey becomes the judge in the courtroom)

GJ: Silence in court! You will state your name.

BK: Bambi Kellermann.

GJ: Your real name.

BK: Baby Poggenpoel.

GJ: Do you plead guilty or not guilty for living a life of uncontrolled sexual desire?

BK: It's natural, Your Honour. I'm an Afrikaner; ek is 'n Afrikaner. Ich bin ein Afrikaner!

GJ: Stick to the facts.

BK: That's the problem. I had to find out all those facts. No one told me anything. And I am not alone. So many of us even today are trying to find out the facts about f ... factsing.

GJ: Bambi Kellermann, you have 50 seconds to tell the truth.

BK: I left the Orange Free State in 1956. I didn't want to die a virgin in Bethlehem. I went to Europe. I used my Afrikaans sense of rhythm. I became a stripper in Hamburg. Eventually one of the grand horizontals of the Northern Hemisphere. I graduated from the University of Sex, cum laude. I've done it all. Twice. I am now over 70 and I can still enjoy a good f ... fact.

GJ: You see? You will just again offend people with those f ... facts.

BK: I hope so, but maybe not all the time. That is too exhausting.

GJ: You're not supposed to enjoy everything so much.

BK: You're right. That's too exhausting as well. The revenge of the gods. They gave us the nicest thing we can enjoy with each other, or on our own. But making sure we'll always feel guilty.

GJ: You are guilty.

BK: Yes, yes, yes! I am guilty – of life!

(They go into song: 'Hier's ons weer')

BOTH: Hier's ons weer
Hier's ons weer
met ons goeters voor jou deur
jy wil ons hê en jy sal ons kry

BK: Hier's ek weer
Hier's ek weer
Sit terug, dit maak nie seer
Ek gaan jou vat,
Op 'n sexy pad

GJ: Al slaan jou man jou driemaal op jou kop
dan staan jy op
want hy wil dit weer

BK: Al slaan jou man jou driemaal om te stop
Trek aan jou leer
en doen dit weer

Twenty shades, 40 shades, 50 shades
from love to AIDS
I'll share with you
the whole night through

And when your husband looks you in the face
and says lie down, undo your gown
And when he takes a belt to hear you hiss ...sssss
give him a show, pretend it's bliss ...ssss

Make your choice
use your voice
you're the boss of your domain
He wants it now, so have a row

Ja ja ja it starts just grey
that's quite true
Then it turns from black to blue
I'm telling you
Don't overdo

BOTH: Hier's ons weer
Hier's ons weer
met die waarheid voor jou deur
Jy wil ons hê en jy sal ons kry.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General / colour change)

(Bambi takes the audience on a tour of the washing line)

BK: Godfrey and I wondered how we would start this show tonight. Should we do a dramatic courtroom scene like you saw? I said: No, these people are so sick and tired of a courtroom scene! It hasn't got legs, Godfrey! So we decided to open with my list of 50 shades of Bambi. I have had so many shades in my life: blue, green, yellow, red, pink, purple, silver and gold. But because this is Sandton, we know what your priorities are, so let's start with shopping.

I have three favourite shops that I want to share with you: a toy shop, because I work with children twice a week. Tuesday morning at the crèche where the little ones sit like small gonks and believe everything I sing and share with them. My heart breaks when I realise that soon someone will tell them what lies ahead in their lives. Then on a Thursday afternoon I am at the orphanage with teenagers who are still called children but have the 46-year-old eyes of victims. They don't believe stories about happy endings and good fairies, so I rather bring them presents from the toy shop. Yes, I bribe them to prepare them for life in the future South Africa. And I buy them new toys. That helps. I know charities are so generous in giving secondhand toys to poor kids. But don't. Broken toys are broken dreams. You give a child a golliwog with one eye – that's not a toy; that's a relative!

Then I love the pet shop where I get nice treats for my two little cats. Catnip! That's legal feline dagga. And sometimes a funny little electric mouse for them to torture and beat up and treat like a best friend. Then of course I visit the sex shop to see what you people are buying behind each other's backs. So you see, here in Sandton you can keep your kids happy, your pet happy and yourself happy. And all in the same mall!

So we've put some of those things on the washing line to really confuse you! Now you don't know what thing came from which shop! That's life: you start with all those different compartments, but when you live your life, everything is mixed up. You have to learn how to make up your mind! Yes, what might look as something from the toy shop could very well come from the sex shop.

That's why there has been no announcement to ask you to switch off your cell phones. I'd rather spend a few moments explaining what's here, so keep open your phones so you can SMS your children at home what you're being exposed to. On the other hand, knowing what they're up to at home while you're here means they won't answer their phones. So put yours on vibrate. It can only enhance your evening.

Here's your supermarket of choice. First let me introduce one of my favourite mascots. This is a little sheep. Nice little face. The hole is at

the back. I have a suitcase full of these, so that every time a friend decides to emigrate to Australia, I can give him one of these at the airport. Here, darling, bon voyage and practise on Quantas!

This I don't know what this is called in polite company, but I can assure you that if you tug at it very hard, a servant from Downton Abbey will not bring you a nice cup of Earl Grey tea!

Here are two objects that look very similar and they are even though one is from a pet shop and one from a sex shop. One is for your dog, and one is for your boyfriend. Don't mix them up. You'll have a very unhappy dog and a most satisfied partner who won't be able to sit through that long Mandela film comfortably.

Now to my two parachutes of survival. This is a used condom. A big one. They come in sizes, so don't overestimate your potential, gentlemen. This one is for Jacob Zuma; this one for Julius Malema.

This is a penis. Yes, darling, next time leave the light on so you can see what's coming. Not a real penis! Heavens, it would take me a long time to make a real one look as happy as this one. This is what you use when you demonstrate to young people how to roll a condom on to an erect penis. Don't use a banana. Stop being prissy when explaining the facts of life. Yes, you might be embarrassed by the word penis or a rubber shaft that looks like penis, but kids believe what we tell them – that a condom on a banana will do the trick.

(Bambi unpacks her basket)

My little doll. I will add her to the washing line as a favourite. I never had dolls at home when I grew up in the Free State. We were very poor. Not just Afrikaans, but poor. I was always barefoot because we thought only English people wore shoes.

Godfrey, I brought this little drum from the toy shop. I don't know if it will help. I do a telephone helpline every Friday afternoon. This mother phones me every week and every week the story is worse. Her son is a drug addict. I think he's only nine. But he steals all her things to sell and buy more drugs and now even threatens to kill her for money. She

cries and asks if I can suggest something that could focus his energy, maybe divert his attention. Like the drum? (*GJ makes like drums*) Oh no, that sounds like gunshot in Orange Farm. But help me here, darling. I know so many answers but I seldom understand the questions.

There are many of you who think this presentation is based on this book. Fifty shades of grey? Darling, this book takes a long long time to reach a climax. I read up to page 12 and then stopped because really, I've seen the real thing. S&M is not for amateurs. It's the playground of professionals. Don't mess about here. S&M does not come out of the cage like a Persian cat; it jumps out like a tiger and you'll be sad and sorry. By all means read this book and enjoy the nonsense and the fantasy, like you would the Bible.

Here is my late husband, Joachim von Kellermann. I put a blue tape on this so I don't mix it up with my martini shaker. I remember when we were married in Austria and I stood in front of the altar and said: yes, I will love and obey this man till death us do part. Eventually I sorted out the second half of that promise, and now I can know that he will always be with me. Joachim von Kellermann can't go anywhere without me. Schlafst du schon, Liebchen? Schweinehund?

And here is Evita. Will your sister ever come and see your show, Bambi? No, darling, never. She hates me so much that she and I will never be seen in the same place at the same time. So I brought her head with me. I left the body of the cut-out behind at Exclusive Books. It's to promote Evita's cookbooks. You know what? She can't cook! She always had foreign cooks in her kitchen – from Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana. Now I believe her cook is from Zimbabwe and there's one from Ukraine on the way.

And then, my medication. I am so cross. I didn't realise the budget would add such an expense. Now I pay R4.80 more on each bottle! How cruel the government is to so punish us poor pensioners. Remember Godfrey? How whisky brought us together for the first time, 20 years ago with the help of Kurt Weill? I was in Melville looking for accommodation and passed this cabaret venue one evening and heard the piano playing Kurt Weill and a voice singing Noël Coward and went

in and met Godfrey Johnson. And we talked over a glass of medication and decided to try a little cabaret together – and this was the first song we did. Kurt Weill with a touch of local flavour. Whisky and Wit Blitz! Shall we do it for them?

(Lights: Colour change)

(Bambi into ‘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

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 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: General)

Someone said something so careless to me today. 'Bambi, did you realise apartheid is back?' Quatsch! I said don't talk nonsense! It's after 20 years of democracy! Don't blame apartheid for corruption, carelessness and confusion. Blame this government for the people, of the people and definitely not by the people. To blame everything on

apartheid in 2014 is like in the 1960s blaming Adolf Hitler for the miniskirt! But I thought about it and yes, maybe apartheid is back between parents and children. In communication. Parents don't know how to talk to their kids and children don't know how to talk to their parents. Fatal error. It takes me back half a century ago when we kids were in the same boat. How come still today with all this freedom of expression, with all this information, there is still so little knowledge? I'm talking to you as consenting adults or confused idiots because here you are either with your husband, your wife or your partner. You are in a relationship and I wish you well. I hope it's good. And I hope the sex is wonderful. And I hope you talk to each other about it. Tell each other what you like – and please tell each other what you don't like. Do not be polite. If it's not nice, don't do it again. But my point is, if we adults don't talk to each other about sex, how will we talk to our children? And if we don't talk to our children, someone else will talk to the children – and you might even lose your children.

It always seems to start with the birds and the bees. Ridiculous. How does a bird fuck a bee? I was once Baby Poggenpoel, a little Afrikaans girl from Bethlehem in the old *Oranje Vrystaat*. There was no talk of sex when I grew up. In fact no knowledge of putting square pegs into round holes. Just a few words: Sies. Vuil and Die Here sal jou straf! The closest I got to the facts of life was as an assistant hairdresser in Salon Angelique in Makoustraat. Listening to the Christian Nationalist tannies gossip. I would wash their hair and just listen. They loved that. It was like safe sex on a Saturday morning. But then every now and then someone said *sies* and *vuil* and Die Here sal hulle straf, and I knew that somewhere a bird was *pomping* a bee.

I like to think that I was an ordinary child. There was a boy in my class called Herman Botha. He asked me to go to a dance. My mother said: Nee, dis die voorportaal van die hel! You didn't argue with a Calvinist mother. She was also the organist in the NG Kerk and every Sunday she would play her organ twice! And on a Wednesday evening there would be choir practise with all those tenors and basses – the four policemen, the two firemen, the traffic cop, the seven soldiers and all

the boereseuns, singing while Mama played the organ, sometimes till 2 am. She would come back so tired, even with her lipstick smudged from all that singing. Maybe now I can wonder which of those tenors was my father?

So I slipped out of the house barefoot with my party dress in a packet. Had no shoes; stayed barefoot like most of the kids. I was scared. I didn't know how to dance. It was *sies* and *vuil* and Die Here sal my straf. So Herman gave me a sip of his cooldrink. It was not cooldrink. It exploded in my mouth like a storm, went up my nose, made my eyes water and right down into my tummy and I suddenly knew: I can dance! I said: give me more cool drink! I swallowed it and could feel the dancing shoes grow around my bare feet – and I danced. Everyone watched. 'Kyk! Baby Poggenpoel kan dans!' Then Herman Botha took me down a small passage where it was dark and I thought we would dance some more. But then he pushed me up against the wall and came closer to me, his face right up here and his mouth open and his tongue coming out like this. I thought: why is that mouth open? There's nothing here to eat! And then I looked down and saw it! A horrible shiny pink snake with one eye looking up at me! But before I could even scream and just in time I vomited all over Herman Botha. Saved by the Bells. Still my favourite medication, thanks to the advice of an old nun in Stuttgart in 1959. She said: 'Bambi, before you eat aeroplane food or give a blowjob, gargle with whisky!'

(She gargles with whisky)

Of course I had no words to describe what I'd been through. Not that I would have dared to talk about it. Until one of the girls in my class who had always laughed at me and been horrible to me, came to me and said: 'You were with Herman Botha?' Ja, I said. 'Het jy sy voël gesien?' Voël? I don't remember any feathers on that horrible pink snake. Then I realised how we were using ordinary words to describe extraordinary things that had no words. The voël up there was now a voël down here? And what about where I kept my pencils? *My doos*? Now it meant ... what? So I had to also make up words for those *vuil en sies* things. His was called a woewie and mine a ding-dong. When I

eventually heard the word penis, I thought it had to be a small town in Peru. Then of course vagina could only be the cousin of syphilis and her sister 'GAnorrhea!'

And so here we find ourselves back at square one? The kids who look 12 at school act 19 on Saturday night. Becoming sexually active without the essential schooling is like Grade 12s passing matric with only 30%! So what's the solution to that terrible fear of being discovered. That you're a virgin? You mean you don't know???? Get drunk? Get high to live and to learn? Or just pass out and hope for the best? It starts with a glass of cooldrink ... of wine, then a little puff here and a snort there. And soon you don't know if you're coming or going ...

(Bambi sings 'Fever')

(Ecstasy!) Never know I much I need you
(Dagga!) Never know how much I care
(Whisky!) When I put my hands around you
I get a fever that's so hard to bear
you give me fever
(Cocaine) Fever when you lift me
Fever when I feel so light
Fever – in the morning
Fever all through the night

Even children want this fever
that is something we should know
Fever isn't such a new thing
Fever started long ago

BK: So there I am on a Thursday afternoon with these children with no sentiment about life. They know if they leave the place of safety and go into the world, they will be raped at nine, murdered at eight, kidnapped at seven, and no one will care. The world only reads about famous rich murderers on page one! How do I warn them about the minefields

without making them even more frightened? So I don't tell them stories of princesses and goblins, of Father Christmas and the Easter Bunny. I point at the clock against the wall. Sometimes the one hand is five minutes from midnight, I say. It shows there is very little time left. So you must make up your own mind. You must listen and learn. All the clock says is tick-tock. Tick-tock. Tick-tick-tick ... tik-tik-tik-tik ...

(Lights: General to 50% + piano special)

(Godfrey sings 'The Tik Song')

I'll wreck your home, tear your family apart
Take away the kids – and that's just the start
More costly than diamonds, more precious than gold
The sorrow I bring is a sight to behold

If you need me, remember! I'm easily found
The video arcade, in schools, the malls and around
I live with the rich; I visit the poor
I live down the street and maybe next door

I'm made in a lab, but not like you think
I can easily be made under the kitchen sink
In your child's cupboard, down far in the wood
If this scares you to death, well it certainly should

I have many names, crystal meths is just one
But tik is the one that promises more fun
My power is awesome; try me – you'll see
And if you do, you'll never break free

You'll lie to your father; you'll steal from your mom
You'll laugh at their tears, call them stupid and dumb
Forget your good morals and how you were raised
For I'll be your conscience, I'll teach you my ways

I take kids from parents, pull parent from child
Turn people from God, make them violent and wild
I'll take everything from you, your looks and your pride
I'll be with you always, right there by your side

You'll give up the lot, your family, your home
Your friends, your money; end up all alone
I'll take and take till you've nothing more to give
When I'm finished with you, you'll be lucky to live

The nightmares I'll give you while lying in bed
The voices you'll hear from inside your sick head
The sweats, the shakes, the visions you'll see
I want you to know, they're all presents from me

I'll be your master; you will be my slave
I'll even stay with you till you go to your grave
Now that you've met me, so, what will you do?
Will you try me or not? It's all up to you

That look from you says more than words can tell
You don't believe I'm that devil from hell
Not heroin, not cocaine, I'm nobody's fool
Just a tik of me and you'll feel oh so cool

So take my hand and say goodbye
As you fly and fly and fly and fly
And fly and fly
And then just sigh
Bye.

(Lights: General to full)

BK: ... tik tik tik tik?

And when that clock strikes twelve,
no one could live happily ever after.

Now you've listened to this story
Here's the point that must be made
Tik is sold to give them fever
Be it homemade or first grade
It gives them fever when they take it
Fever to live and learn?
No, fever till they sizzle
What a fatal way to burn
What a familiar way to burn
What a local way to burn
Fever ...
tik tiktiktik ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General)

BK: Maybe I was just too stupid, too shy, too innocent to do any of those things ... then. The most daring thing I ever did at school was to put blotting paper under my tongue so I would faint and not have to play netball. It didn't work. Now suddenly the other girls at Salon Angelique took an interest in me. 'Baby Poggenpoel? What do you want from life?' 'I want to have a boyfriend who will marry me and become my husband. And I want to have children and a family and live happily ever after, like all the people here in Bethlehem.'

They smiled and said: 'Then you must learn how to make a man happy. And we will teach you. We are sophisticated women in Bethlehem. And we are hairdressers. Listen to what we say. Stop being such a meisie van die plaas.' Little did I know that my education would come well before my liberation.

(Lights: Colour change)

(Bambi into 'Hoe ry die Boere')

Hoe ry die boere sit sit so, sit sit so, sit sit so
Hoe vry die boere druk druk so, druk druk so – hoera
Die oulike tannie voel 'n tingelingeling 'n tingelingeling – o ha
Die oulike nooi voel sy tingelingeling klein tingelingeling – o a!

(Godfrey underscore)

They then told me there were many ways to make a man happy. I said: Do I cook him a nice meal? Will that make my man happy? They said: ja. I said: And if I pour him a cold beer, will that make my man happy? They said: ja.

I said: And if after our date, I let him kiss me on both cheeks before he goes home, will that make my man happy? No one said anything. Then one of the girls whispered something in my ear. I didn't understand what she said. So she whispered it again, slower. It was the same thing she'd said earlier, which I still did not understand. I said: I want to make a man happy! Explain what you mean. And they explained in detail. I said: What? You want me to ...? What? I screamed, you want to do what??

Hoe suig ons die boere sit sit so, sit sit so, sit sit so
Hoe blaas ons boere druk druk so, druk druk so – hoera
Die besige nooi sê mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm – o ha
Die besige tannie sê mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm – o aah

(And don't call it fellatio, you might frighten the lead out of his pencil. And even calling it oral sex could make them think you intend to talk it all night. In fact, when I heard them call it a blowjob, I spent my first date just blowing ... phew ...)

Hoe naai die boere sit sit so sit sit so sit sit so
Hoe kom die boere o o o ja ja ja o o o – hoera
Die tevrede ou tannie lag tingelingaling tingelingaling hoera!
Die gelukkige nooi lag tingelingaling tingelingaling hoera!
Hoe lag die boere ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
Hoe lag die boere ha ha ha hee hee hee hoera!
(Dit sal vyftig rand wees, Oom ...)

(BLACKOUT)

(*Lights: General*)

BK: I think I detected some nostalgic laughter from this part of the audience? Mothers? I love mothers. I admire mothers. You are the bravest in the world because there is no textbook. You just gotta get on and do it. Good luck to you. I hope you don't make mistakes. Like my mother. She meant well.

'Dogters? Julle moet mans vind en trou en kinders hê. Finis en klaar.' Let me translate for those of you from Bryanston. 'You must be happy when a man asks you to marry him. You must love and obey him. And that first night after your marriage vows, you must let him do with you as he wishes, because he is the man in your life, your husband. Lie on that bed and just close your eyes. And pray *bid my dogters, bid* – en na nege maande sal 'n engeltjie vir julle 'n present bring!'

I didn't believe a word; I didn't understand a word. I just knew: it was time to get the hell out of this town, this place, this Bethlehem with no wise men! No more: Uit die blou van sy groot woewie, uit die diepte van my ding-dong! A miracle happened. My sister, the one you call Evita, went to Johannesburg with the school choir to sing in a competition. And there she met a talented young Afrikaans soprano called Mimi Coertse who was going to Vienna and sing in the opera – and she asked my sister to go with her. When I heard about this, I pleaded, I begged: 'Please let me also come? I'll be very good. I'll carry your bags overseas.' I thought overseas was down the road, not even as far as Bloemfontein.

But I was wrong. Overseas was a universe far beyond the planet Jupiter.
So I swapped the gravel dusty roads of Bethlehem, the potjiekos and
melkert for Strudel, Schnitzel und viel Spass!

(Lights: Colour change)

(Bambi into 'Wien Wien')

Wien Wien nur du allein
Sollst stets die Stadt meine Träume sein
Dort wo die alten Bäumen stehn

Dort wo die lieblichen Mädchen geh'n
Wien Wien nur du allein
Sollst stets die Stadt meiner Träume sein
Dort wo ich glücklich und selig bin
Ist Wien, ist Wien, mein Wien

(Godfrey underscore as Bambi tells the story)

No sex in that Viennese song. Just schmaltz. The sex happens after the
schmaltz. After visiting the Kaffee Alt Wien, Bäckerstrasse 9 and after
the Millirahmstrudel, Punschkräpfen und Lizentorte, your tummy
might be full but your lips taste sweet. There, with my first boyfriend,
my first real date in Vienna. He was not an Austrian guardsman, or a
German yodeller, or a Hungarian streetsinger, or even one of those
rough gypsy boys that kept rubbing the front of their bulging lederhosen.
My date's name was Jan Brand and he was from Rustenburg *in die*
Transvaal!

Speaking Afrikaans in Vienna was for me more important now than
finding Sigmund Freud's house, or getting to see the horses at the
Spanish Riding School. I was so homesick. Jan Brand had some money.
He was studying to be a doctor. I think his father was a broeder in the
South African Embassy in Vienna's Sandgasse. Jan took me for koek-

en-koffie. Ja, sy koffie; my koek! And then in his green Volkswagen with a sticker on the back window which said *RUSTENBURG BLY WIT*, on the back seat of a Volkswagen, my dear, back in 1956 he put his woewie in my ding-dong. Schlepping 6,000 miles from Mirreweg Bethlehem to Vienna to find my boerepiel!

(Bambi sings)

Dort wo ich glücklich und selig bin
Ist Wien, ist Wien, mein Wien!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General)

BK: I never saw Jan Brand again. Maybe I didn't make him very happy. But I was happy! At last, I was free to just be me. I was in the Northern Hemisphere, in Austria, in Europe, in the real world. I didn't have to explain who I was, apologise where I came from. I could just enjoy this new life of magic and mystery. That's how I met the man whom I married. He was an elegant man, an older man, a German man: Joachim von Kellermann. He made me feel so special. He treated me with such respect, like a long-lost daughter. I loved him like a long-lost father. Sigmund Freud would have paid for this. The wedding was so beautiful. I was the centre of attraction. Me, Baby Poggenpoel, now a married lady like all those girls in Bethlehem. I would live happily ever after. The 'ever after' lasted four days. Then he became the monster he really was. General Joachim von Kellermann: Nazi. Nazi? How could I have married a Nazi? Listen, how could I even know what a Nazi was? I was from the Orange Free State. I only fell in love with him because he reminded me of so many ooms in Bethlehem! He hurt me. He hit me. I cried. I bled. I screamed. He laughed. He did things to me in the dark that I didn't think animals did to each other. To stay alive I had to over-educate myself in many things I shouldn't have known at all.

He gave me a new name: Bambi. Bambi? Like that poor little deer in the films, crying because her forest had burnt down? Joachim von Kellermann was burning my forest and would hunt me like a deer and take off my head and mount it on the wall in the library opposite the sneering portrait of his beloved führer!

‘And it is time you spoke properly!’ he screamed.

‘Mein Herr, ich bin ein Afrikaner!’

‘No, you will not speak German with that Austrian accent! You will speak English with a German accent, because if we had won the war that is what they would have sounded like today!’

Excuse me, Charlize Theron isn’t the only clever boeremeisie to get rid of her South African accent. She sat and watched American soap operas in LA and now when she acts on the screen so beautifully, in her American accent you can hear how she started in *Dallas*, went through *Dynasty* and ended up in *The Bold and The Beautiful*. My life was not that simple. I was sent to the cinema to watch the movies of Marlene Dietrich. I didn’t even know who she was. We never saw her in Bethlehem, only Piet Pompies en Frederik Burgers.

Marlene Dietrich fascinated me. She had sex but no gender. She would dress in men’s clothes and kiss women on the mouth and then also kiss the man and laugh. Could one do that? And her voice was deep and purring. And her eyes? I think her first director Josef von Sternberg taught her how to act. ‘Marlene, when you are cross, look up/down up/down up/down. When you are happy look down/up down/up down/up.’ So I did everything I could to bury Baby Poggenpoel forever. The doors opened for me.

‘Frau von Kellermann? So genau wie Marlene Dietrich ...?’

‘Ja ja, mein Herr. Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuss auf Liebe eingestellt. Und das ist meine Welt und sonst garnicht ...’

It’s a long story and we don’t have time. Just know I found the courage to run away from the monster. Either he would have killed me, or I would have murdered him. I got to Hamburg where my Afrikaner sense of rhythm opened more doors. I became a stripper on the Reeperbahn, then in Amsterdam, even in London at the Paul Raymond Revue Bar

for two days before the police closed us down. Then to Paris where I joined a great famous nightclub – here we'd call it a brothel in Saxonwold, but there it was my world stage. I loved it. I revelled in it. I was not a sex-slave or victim of circumstance. I chose it.

One day on the Champs Élysées I saw a poster: 'Marlene Dietrich is coming to Paris with her show!' I had to see her! My mentor, my Svengali. But the price of the tickets was far more than I could afford. Unless I did overtime at the club. So I did three weeks of that and could afford a ticket, albeit with a very sore jaw! I sat in the third row and watched the red velvet curtains part – and there she stood: the Blue Angel glowing in the golden lights in a full-length white mink coat that brushed the floor. The next day one of the girls told me that Dietrich would arrive at the theatre every afternoon in her jeans and scrub that floor so that her coat would not be dirtied: her coat, her floor. No servants. She was the Deutsche hausfrau!

The roar of the crowd, the screams of love, the applause of adoration seemed to dim and die away. All I could hear was my heart beat. She looked out in my direction. I could hear her breathe, I could feel her touch. And then the orchestra started the introduction to one of her famous songs that I already knew by heart as I had seen and sung it so often.

(Lights: General to mike special)

(Bambi into 'Lilli Marlene')

Bei der Kaserne
Vor dem grossen Tor
Steh't eine Laterne
und steht sie noch davor
Da woollen wir uns wiedersehen
Bei der laterne woll'n wir stehn
Mit dir Lilli Marlene
Mit dir Lilli Marlene

She was singing to me! And then she laughed at me and sang:

(Lights: Colour change)

(Bambi sings 'I can't give anything but love')

I can't give you anything but love, baby
That's the only thing I'm thinking of, baby
Dream awhile, scheme awhile and you will find
Happiness and I guess all the things you've always pinned for

(Godfrey underscore; Bambi tells the story)

Then I knew that every woman needs a girlfriend. Not a sexual partner, although we should be so lucky. I mean a girlfriend who is there when you need to talk. A girlfriend who will listen without judging. A girlfriend who is there only for you when you have come to the end of your life.

The Nazi husband found me in Paris and I was back in hell. Living with his demands, his cruelty, his celebration of the deaths and murders, being the bottom to his top! Lying awake trembling every night, trying to think of ways to end it. Kill him? Yes, wait for him to get up in the middle of the night and go to the toilet and then shoot him three times through the closed door! Please. No marriage needs to end like that. Do what I did in Paris when it all gets too much – usually by a Thursday at 5 p.m. – put on your small mink stole, or just a nice warm scarf, and go have a martini at the Café Deux Margot on the Left Bank of Paris. And there she will be waiting at the usual table smoking her Gauloises cigarette like Simone Signoret, the one person who doesn't want anything in exchange. She knows that she will not have to say anything for an hour because you will not stop talking. You whisper, you shout, you cry, you hit the table as you describe and act out how you will kill him, shoot him, boil him – and suddenly it's all out and all you both can do is laugh. It's so stupid!!! It's so pathetic ... ja, but only once

you've got it all out of your heart. Keep it in and you die of the cancer of hate. Then she takes your hand and whispers:
'Bambi? Bambi! Bambi ...'

(Lights: Colour change)



(Bambi sings)

Gee, I think you're really looking swell, baby
Diamond bracelets Woolworths doesn't sell, baby
Till the day you're free you know darn well, Bambi
I can't give you anything but love
Just love ...
Just love ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General)

BK: Do I now turn 40? I turn 40! Believe me, when you're a famous superstar of the art of total exposure and you turn four—oh, your career is over. You take off your glittering diamante top and your tits hit the floor! They don't even bounce back, but stay there like two ostriches picking up nuts! I had to again reinvent myself, this time working backstage with the young ones, helping them become total professionals and not just randy amateurs. Luckily I was also greatly helped by my girlfriend in the chorus. Her name was Dominique le Clos – her real name was Carmen Gonzales. She was no longer an active entertainer on stage. When she hit 40 ... 'No more tits, dear, do the box office.' But what a star she was in her day with her trick pelvis. And a clitoris like a chihuahua. They say even Picasso painted it. She could light a cigarette with her ... oh, never mind.

Well, Dominique gave me the shake-up I needed.

'Bambi, you must always come first!' she said.

'No, Brigitte, I always fake it!'

'Bambi cherie,' she said, 'you must now protect yourself. You have always fallen for younger men, the wrong men. They hurt you, they hit you, they steal your savings. They punish you for being an independent woman. So become independent. You're now 40! Bravo! The audition is over. The disease to please has been cured. Declare yourself a banana republic!'

And she gave me a present – a box tied with pink ribbon. I looked in it. 'What is this?'

Dominique just laughed. 'Let me explain ...'

(Lights: Colour change)

(Bambi into: 'Manana')

My client's nose is dripping
and his pants are falling down
My pocket needs some money
so I must go back to town

I really don't like working
and I really do not care
I have no bike, no motor,
so I can't go anywhere

Banana Banana Banana is good enough for me
Banana Banana Banana is good enough for me

Poor Bambi's always stripping,
she's working very hard
But every time she looks for me,
I'm tanning in the yard
Dear Bambi calls me lazy
and maybe she is right
I'll do my job tomorrow
but tonight I'm sitting tight

Banana Banana Banana is good enough for me
Banana Banana Banana is good enough for me

So Bambi, take away the men and boys,
get rid of all that crap
Us girls must also have a break,
not always take the rap
Don't worry you don't look your best,
don't wear your sexy gown
Just lie back with your fantasies
So who needs a whole damn town?

With Banana Banana Banana is good enough for me!
Banana Banana Banana is good enough for me!

(Bambi speaks)

BK: It was Dominique le Clos's advice and her present that gave me the courage to go it alone. And so there I was in 1995 at what was still called Jan Smuts Airport. I was back in South Africa after 40 years. There I stood with my suitcase in the queue at customs, when I heard a sound that made my heart stop. Coming from the suitcase, it was like a cry for help!

(She makes a buzzing sound)

Luckily thanks to African time, by the time I reached the customs man, the batteries were flat! I went to Bethlehem and stood in front of our little house. And I knew it at last: Baby Poggenpoel was home. This time with spare batteries too. That struggle was over!

Uit die blou van ons hemel
Uit die diepte van ons see
Oor ons ewige gebergtes
Waar die kranse antwoord gee
Oor ons ver verlate vlaktes
Met die kreun van ossewa
Ruis die stem van ons geliefde
Van ons land Suid-Afrika

(Bambi sings)

Amandla! Amandla! Amandla is good enough for me
Amandla! Amandla! Amandla is good enough for me

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General)

(Bambi has the vibrator)

BK: Of course there is wear and tear. So you get the latest model. Look: last year's grande prix. This year Cape Town is the design capital of the

world. I will be able to check Facebook. Already this one can make smoothies – and if you were in the front row I would come and let it take a selfie. We will crash Twitter, especially with this colour! Reminds me of the language monument in Paarl.

Joachim? Are you awake? Let me introduce you to my new boyfriend. His name is Manuel. Sometimes they say: the party is over. Ja, but the hangovers remain. The photos, the faxes, the SMSes, that final tweet. Like memories they also fade as the Guronsan C kicks in – and the Valium and the herbal morphine, the health heroin and the early morning Bloody Mary. But in spite of the muti, the pain doesn't go. It won't go. So give it a name like a pet. Call it experience. And remember where it came from. Your carelessness losing a chance to make love work for more than a night before it became lust. Too much numb indulgence before it becomes habit. The disappointment when you're all alone.

'Bambi Kellermann, after such a life, look at you today. All alone.' Quatsch! I'm not alone. I'm on my own. That's something I worked for all my life. I love being on my own. You are only frightened of being alone if you can't stand the sight of yourself. So stand naked in front of the mirror every morning and say: 'Ah! There you are!'

My life of stardom in that underground spotlight has prepared me for the loneliness of old age, maybe better than married life prepares husbands or wives. I'll always be surrounded by many people who mean so well, but within myself, I'll always be the only one around:

(Lights: General to mike special)

*(Bambi speaks; Godfrey underscores.
Bambi into 'Is That All There Is?')*

... and as I stood there in Mirreweg looking at the little house where I was a child, I remembered how our house caught on fire when I was nine. I'll never forget the look on my mother's face as she gathered me up in her arms and raced through the burning building out onto the pavement. I stood there with my sister, the one you call Evita, shivering

in our pyjamas, watching our whole world go up in flames. And when it was all over, I said to myself: 'Is that all there is to a fire?'

(Bambi sings)

Is that all there is?
Is that all there is?
If that's all there is, my friends,
Then let's keep on dancing
Let's break out the booze and have a ball
If that's all there is.

(She speaks)

And then there was my 12th birthday. There was no money for a party, but our neighbour Oom Jannie Swanepoel came to take me to the circus, the greatest show in Bethlehem. There were silly clowns and an old elephant that looked like the dominee and four dancing poodles wearing dresses – and a beautiful lady in pink tights who flew high above our heads like a flamingo. As I sat there watching that marvellous spectacle on my birthday, I had the feeling that something was missing – I don't know what, but when it was over, I said to myself: 'Is that all there is to the circus?'

(Bambi sings)

Is that all there is?
Is that all there is?
If that's all there is, my friends,
Then let's keep on dancing.
Let's break out the booze and have a ball.
If that's all there is.

(She speaks)

And I remembered how I fell in love with the most wonderful boy in the world. We would take long walks by Bosman's Rivier, or just sit for hours gazing into each other's eyes. We were so very much in love. Then one day he went away without even telling me and I thought I would die. But when I didn't die, I said to myself: 'Is that all there is to love?'

(Bambi sings)

Is that all there is?
Is that all there is?
If that's all there is, my friends,
Then let's keep ...

(She speaks)

I know what you must be saying to yourselves. If that's the way she feels about life, why doesn't she just end it all? Oh no, not me! I'm in no hurry for that final disappointment. For I know just as well as I am here talking to you that when that moment comes and I'm breathing my last breath, I'll be saying to myself: 'Is that all there is?'

(Bambi sings)

Is that all there is?
Is that all there is?
If that's all there is, my friends,
Then let's keep on dancing.
Let's break out the booze and have a ball.
If that's all ... there ... is ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General)

BK: Pity we can't say that about politics? Is that all there is? Some say politics is here today and gone tonight. I don't think so. Look, I'm not a political animal like my sister, but I lived in Europe long enough to hear those stories of loss and regret. And about the Weimar Republic, a democracy that bravely stood among the ruins of the First World War with freedoms of speech, choice, expression. A free judiciary. All the things we enjoy here today protected by our constitution. If same-sex couples in Weimar knew they could marry, they would have been able to. And the citizens of Weimar, like us, thrived in their freedoms and, like us, took them for granted and, like us, didn't bother to protect them. And so they lost their democracy to the man in the red beret ... I mean the man with the swastika.

Soon we will face a general election. Who said elections above erections? Or was it the other way round. A second term for our Jacob? Business as usual? I feel a song coming on.

Our inspiration, Kurt Weill, wrote 'The Saga of Jenny' for his Broadway show *Lady in the Dark*. Tonight the words are mine with apologies to the original lyricist, Ira Gershwin. Entschuldigen Liebchen, bitte nicht auf mein Kopf kotzen!

My tribute to Jacob Zuma, our number one, who seems to spend most of his time in number two!

(Bambi and Godfrey into the story of Jacob)

(Bambi sings)

There once was a man called Jacob
Whose virtues were easy to make up
Excepting he always declined
Ever to make up his mind
Now Jacob points a moral
With which you cannot quarrel
As you will find

Jacob made his mind up when he was six
He alone his country and his party would fix
Polokwane lit the candles
Tossed the tapers away
They all wanted him as president the very next day

CHORUS: Poor Zuma, careful of the rumour
The truth will be hard to find
Was acquitted, doesn't worry
Many reasons to be sorry
But he couldn't make up his mind

Jacob made his mind up at 22
To get himself a first wife was the thing to do
So he got himself all dolled up in his takkies and furs
And she called him 'my dear husband'
But he wasn't just hers

CHORUS: Poor Mrs Zuma, purring like a puma
Polygamy is quite a bind
Hoped for a bed of roses
But history discloses
Jacob couldn't make up his mind

Jacob made his mind up at Mangaung
To bow down to Beijing with a Ching-Chang-Chung
Which means: always in your service
And the comrades agree
Zuma was the one to start good cadre policy

CHORUS: Poor Jacob, time for you to makeup
With comrades so cross and so kind
No, Nkandla's not the answer

Yes, you are the champion dancer
But it won't make up our mind!

Jacob made his mind up at 75
That he'd remain the sexiest Zulu alive
But Umshini wam and toyi-toyi all play funny tricks
So poor Zuma lost his marbles at 76

THE ENDING: Zuma points a moral
with which you cannot quarrel
Makes a lot of common sense
Jacob and his saga
prove that you are gaga
If you just keep sitting on the fence
Zuma and his story
point the way to glory
To ANC man and womankind
But anyone with vision
comes to this decision

Please make up
You should make up
You must make up
Oh always make up

Anyone with vision
comes to this decision
Jacob, please make up your mind!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General)

BK: I am always grateful for the 50 shades of me that I got from somewhere. Maybe up there. Maybe down yonder. But some have greater talent. My voice? Darling, I use it very well to keep the ships off the rocks at Mouille Point, but Godfrey makes music with his voice, with his hands. And he gave me the confidence not to worry about the noise I make. He said: 'You don't have to sound like Barbra Streisand in order to tell a story. Just tell your story.'

So I clap my hands for Godfrey Johnson. Well, it's nearly time to go home and feed your Rottweilers. And hug your children. By the way, where are you kids? Why didn't bring them tonight? Imagine the questions in the car on the way home. That's one way to start a difficult conversation. Let me put on this coat.

It's not a costume; it's a reminder. This leather coat belonged to my husband General Joachim von Kellermann when he was commandant in the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen. His Iron Cross was here, one he received personally from his hero Adolf Hitler. He also had an autographed copy of Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*.

OK, let me make this story short. Let me put it to you this way: I got cancer. Here. Probably not surprising as we Calvinist Afrikaans kids were always told never to touch ourselves. It was *sies, vuil, en die Here sal jou straf!* We didn't check ourselves until it was too late. So girls, do yourself a service. Run your fingers round them once a week to make sure there are no lumps. Don't leave it to the boyfriend; he has a different agenda.

Anyway, I had my operation in Harley Street London because I could afford it. It was the night of the moon landing. While the surgeons were busy on me, they were also peeping out of the window to look up at the moon in case they saw something different – and as a result I ended up with cross-eyed tits! Bad for business.

I went to recuperate on the Island of Ischia in the Bay of Naples and there I met Prof Dr Christiaan Barnard. What a sexy man, charming, captivating – and that Beaufort West accent! He just ordered the Camparis and I ovulated! He had my clothes off in two ticks – not for sex, but to show him what they had done to me. He gave me the contact

of a Japanese plastic surgeon in Istanbul and that's where I get back to this coat.

My husband was also in Istanbul with his CIA minder. In spite of Joachim von Kellermann's war record of murder, torture and genocide, he was being protected by the CIA and MI5 to get secrets about the Soviets. Business as usual. I needed a signature from the husband I swore to love and obey. So I went to the restaurant where I knew he would be. The moment he saw me he screamed insults. I just stood at his table knowing everyone was also watching. I lifted my silk blouse and displayed my new golden globes. He choked with fury.

'Where did you get the money to have that done?'

I smiled a wife's smile. 'Joachim lieblich, I sold your Iron Cross and your autographed copy of *Mein Kampf*!' So every time before I spit hatred on the Nazis, I have to say: 'Thanks for the new tits, boys!'

(Godfrey starts the intro)

(She puts on her coat)

So let's not be gloomy, let's not be sad. Remember, there's a world out there just waiting to be had! *(She sits)* And oh, how nice to also sit for a moment. I'm over the age of being polite. No more stripping; no more apologising. Next time I do a show, it will be horizontal.

I looked at the papers today, trying to find a mention but there was again nothing. The world has moved on. I just can't help thinking about them now, those young men, those frightened men, terrified of the crash on the door when the police storm in with their guns and the right to beat up, to torture, even to kill because Uganda has declared homosexuals non-human. Like in the late 1920s when the Nazis started killing Jews, and the world just said: 'It will blow over. It's an internal political issue.' Ja? Six million internal issues later? We must do something. We owe it to our Constitution and our children.

'What did you do when homosexuals were being hunted in Uganda, daddy?'

So think. There must be something you can do? Anything? But in the meantime, let's just pretend ...

(Bambi into: 'One for the Road')

Pretend it's quarter to three
There's no one in this place
except you and me
But before you all go
I've got a little story you outa know
I'm drinking, my friend,
to the end of our brief episode
so make it one for your lady
and one more for the road
Godfrey? I've still got the routine
so drop another five rand in your piano machine
The world has gone mad
You'd better make your music dreamy and sad
Could still tell a lot, but I don't want
to add to the load
So make it one for the ladies
and one more for the road.

You'll never know it,
but I'm also a kind of poet
and I've got a lot of things to say
And when people are gloomy,
They don't wanna listen to me
And so I just drink it away

Well ... that's how it goes
And Daphne, I know you're getting anxious to close
So thanks for the cheer
I hope you didn't mind my bending your ear

This torch that I've found
must be drowned
or it soon might explode

So make it one for me, baby
And, boys? One more for the road.
Always one more for the road
Just one more for the road...

(She throws condoms out at the audience)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights: General)

(Curtain call I)

*(Godfrey to piano and into 'these Foolish Things'
while she repacks the basket)*



Oh! Will you never let us be?
Oh! Will you never set us free?
The ties that bound us are still around us
There's no escape that I can see.
And still those little things remain
That bring us happiness and pain.

(Bambi into finale of 'Saga of Jacob')

Bambi made her mind up at 25
That she'd become the sexiest stripper alive
But sex and drugs and rock 'n roll play funny tricks
So Bambi's at the Auto & General at 76

Bambi points a moral
with which you cannot quarrel
makes a lot of common sense

Bambi and her saga
prove that you are gaga
If you just keep sitting on the fence

Bambi in her glory
must try to share this story
with audiences cruel and kind
where anyone with vision
can come to this decision

You can make up
You should make up
You must make up
Oh please make up

Anyone with vision comes to this decision

For fuck's sake, make up your mind!

(BLACKOUT)

THE END

MEDIA REACTIONS

Fifty Shades of Bambi is a double whammy in that Godfrey Johnson joins Pieter-Dirk Uys, lending his inimitable showmanship as he accompanies Bambi in renditions of some well-chosen songs, lyrics often rewritten to fit the story line. The intimacy of the Fugard Studio suits this cabaret-styled performance. It's as though we are in one of the many tiny clubs on the Reeperbahn. Among the many satirical jabs, there is in the life of Bambi Kellermann a poignant sadness. Never bitter, she regales us with tales of her life, regrets and the excitement of sexual discovery.

– *The Monday Missile Dot Coza* (Cape Town) August 2013

50 Shades of Bambi is 'n kabaret wat aanklank sal vind by enigeen wat al ooit verlief (of lus) was, gevoel het daar is meer om te sien in die lewe van 'n klein dorp waarop jy gebore is, of grootgeword het onder sê goed soos 'sies', 'vuil' of 'die Here sal jou straf'! Om die pad na vryheid van spraak in hoë hake te kan stap is geen maklike taak nie. As iemand dit egter kan doen, dan is dit verseker Kellermann. Sy is 'n formidabele vrou met baie kleure op haar artistieke palet, nie een daarvan ooit grys nie.

– *Die Burger* (Kaapstad) Augustus 2013

Uys is so utterly convincing in his transformation to the weatherworn stripper that one doesn't doubt that you are listening to the weary and slightly tragic tale of a melancholic woman recollecting her past. The cabaret is not entirely comedic and the serious and life-threatening threat posed by drugs in the Western Cape in particular, is dealt with in a cynical burlesque number which lingers after the final curtain call. Johnson is a musical maestro and works with absolute synchronicity with Uys. In addition to playing the role of musical director, he sings and plays a keyboard and piano with sizzling talent. *50 Shades of Bambi* will give you pause for thought, as well as hearty laughs.

– *Cape Times* (Cape Town) August 2013

There is no shortage of humour in this show, and the quirky array of adult toys pegged on the clothesline in the background confirms spectators' suspicions: this revue is not designed for an innocent audience. However, lighthearted is not an adjective that springs to mind with regards to *50 Shades of Bambi*. On the contrary, the show has a pervasive, latent melancholy akin to the weariness of the late 19th century. The jolliest element of this show is the interaction between Uys and his musical accompanist Godfrey Johnson, a co-performer of long standing with whom the satirist clearly enjoys a warm relationship. Johnson plays two keyboard instruments with effortless proficiency and on occasion sings the savage lyrics devised by Uys to familiar melodies. Highlights have to be Johnson's rendition of a song about tik and Uys's final offering, a ballad about a non-committal man named Jacob. Ultimately the laughter rings as hollow as the drum Uys plays to accompany Johnson, and the prevailing shade of this evening with Bambi is grey going on black.

– *Cape Argus* (Cape Town) August 2013

As Bambi, Uys tempers the character's crude sarcasm with a personable and intimate relationship with the audience. Even when Bambi dishes out comments to the audience, there is no fear of victimisation as there is in less sophisticated drag shows ... Bambi comes across as though she is a real person, fully-fleshed out and never falling into the dangerous traps of stereotype and caricature.

– *Broadway World* (Cape Town) August 2013

Fifty Shades of Bambi is part memoir, part glitzy cabaret. Led by musical director and melody master Godfrey Johnson, Bambi takes us on a whirlwind tour through her life. Pieter-Dirk Uys has always been known for pushing the envelope and we expect nothing less of Bambi. With her raunchy background, she sheds some interesting light on our resistance to talk frankly about sex. She is a captivating storyteller with a sharp tongue. Her humour hits well below the belt and lingers there to fondle a while. Go for some laughs, go for some lyrics, go because you'll leave the Fugard feeling more introspective and, darling, much sexier.

– *WhatsOn* (Cape Town) August 2013

It's hard to believe that a man of 76 in a long blonde wig can project such a compelling and believable female personality on stage. But this is Pieter-Dirk Uys and that's exactly what he does. It's a war-weary Bambi this time around – old, disillusioned, tired, knocking back the brandy, but still capable of rousing a feisty spark or two. And she has a serious message for parents and children. Spending time with Bambi is definitively time well spent. She'll supply the condoms, but don't forget the brandy.

– *Saturday Star* (Johannesburg) March 2014

Oh, what a treasure Pieter-Dirk Uys is and how fortunate we are to enjoy him on our stages. At last he brings the baby sister of his Evita Bezuidenhout to Johannesburg. *50 Shades of Bambi* takes the popular sex-focused novel of a similar name and gives it a run for its money, offering a considerably more nuanced understanding of how entreating sex can be. The show is a revue, bruised around the edges and tawdry in the extreme, but hilarious and tragic in equal proportions. It's some of the finest burlesque you can find in this city. And while the show is a bit long, you leave with an enriched sense of respect. Uys is accompanied by the inimitable Godfrey Johnson on piano; together they lend the show a definite elegance, made hilarious and wild with crudity. This is a show not for the easily offended; it's vintage Uys at his heartfelt best.

– *SA Jewish Report* (Johannesburg) March 2014

It's the day-to-day political onslaught that the artist hopes to counteract. And it's even more heavy-handed than usual because of the looming election. Take it away, Bambi, he seems to say, and she does as she launches her promiscuous lifestyle, yet wonders through the innocence of youth which is often extremely dangerous because of the silence that surrounds their lives. 'Speak to the children' she warns. 'They need to know and if you don't, someone else will.' ... But if you're pulling out your hair because the politics are so overwhelming, the silly stuff dominates as Bambi tells of her life and her loves and even her long-deceased husband who still accompanies her as an accessory, even if she sometimes thinks of leaving him behind. What you're seeing is not only *Fifty Shades of Bambi*, but rather *Fifty Shades of PDU*, an artist who knows how to speak to the hearts of his audience. And this time he does it in both stilettos and song.

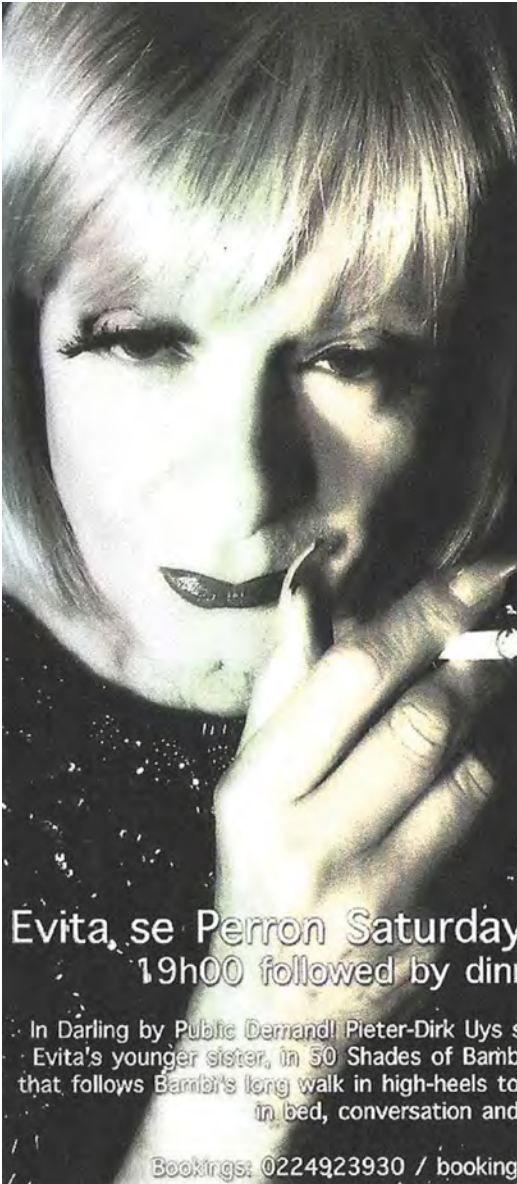
– *The Star* (Johannesburg) March 2014

Not so much a cabaret as a *boere*-burlesque, Pieter-Dirk Uys's show *50 Shades of Bambi* revels in being as salaciously sexual as its literary counterpart. But this is no cheap, pseudo-erotic sleazefest: it is a bittersweet fictional musical memoir of one of Uys's alter egos, former stripper Bambi Kellermann, which also pokes fun at *verkramp*te attitudes to sex and sexuality. The Marlene Dietrich of the platteland, she channels a torch singer of the decadent Weimar era in a blonde wig and black leatherette pants-suit, clutching a whisky glass and lit by red lights. It's an intimate show about personal and sexual liberation, about banishing that old Afrikaner guilt that caused so many people (including, no doubt, the youthful Uys himself) to view sex as shameful and dirty. So immersed does he become in his character, that the audience occasionally forgets that it's Uys in costume. Several shades away from ordinary, the bold and bodacious Bambi is anything but grey.

– *Business Day* (Johannesburg) March 2014

If you're a fan of Evita Bezuidenhout, you'll fall in love with Bambi Kellermann. Despite being polar opposites, the ladies – both later-egos of Pieter-Dirk Uys – have a way of highlighting sticky topics. Uys plays the role of Bambi with great precision and behind the superficial tastelessness, there's an important message. Bambi exposes the tragic effects of a generation's reluctance to discuss sex openly with their children and talks about the destructiveness of the HIV pandemic.

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) March 2014



Fifty Shades of Bambi

Pieter-Dirk Uys

stars as

Bambi Kellermann

Musical direction by

Godfrey Johnson.

Evita, se Perron Saturday 21 September
19h00 followed by dinner at 20h15

In Darling by Public Demand! Pieter-Dirk Uys stars as Bambi Kellermann, Evita's younger sister, in 50 Shades of Bambi, a raunchy new cabaret that follows Bambi's long walk in high-heels to the freedom of expression in bed, conversation and song.

Bookings: 0224923930 / bookings@evita.co.za

A LETTER FROM EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT TO JACOB ZUMA

**CONFIDENTIAL: for the President's eyes only.
THE RECENT NKANDLA REPORT AND OTHER IRRITATIONS**

Dear Comrade JZ,

I've been thinking about what you said to me yesterday and I can only repeat that I am very happy with the lawn mower you bought in Moscow for Nkandla. I'm sorry for all the trouble it put you through having to fly there with three jets and a Boeing 747, when that was all I needed. If only Tina Joemat-Pettersson had gone with you, all the planes could have been filled with 'secret' things. And what are Boeings other than a big 'shopping trolley' for the first ladies to take a quick trip to the US or Hong Kong. Again I write to you in confidence, knowing that as a member of the ANC, I am restricted in my opinions and comments. So I write here in my personal capacity as a citizen of South Africa and a grandmother, and hope that this discussion will stay between us.

When I said to you last month to free yourself from the text of your speech and talk to the people, to

us, to the cameras, I didn't mean you had to branch out into musical comedy! *Liewe aarde*, honourable President, I expected you to sing and dance in the National Assembly last week and even though your pithy comments were very funny for all our comrades in the ANC benches, they will never be understood as satire, because satire is only against a leader and not from a leader. Nkandla will not go away, so let us focus on what is needed here. A sense of humour is the last thing on my list.

Do you remember our chat on the way back from the conference in Beijing with that lovely coffee machine for Ma Khumalo's tuckshop? When as a joke you hinted that all the troubles round your homestead would evaporate if I became an ambassador of goodwill for Nkandla? Of course, I have experience as a former member of South Africa's diplomatic corpse back in the 1980s. But what a brilliant suggestion: we could call it Nkandlakosweti!

Look at the success we had with the homelands of Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana, as well as my Bapetikosweti. None of them had a firepool or an amphitheatre and yet cost the taxpayer billions - or as you would call it 'nine hundred and thirty-six millions, three thousand and sixty thousand'. Believe me, sire, once you are protected by the international respect for independence, no one can point anything at you. Which brings me to this firepool.

Who advised you to give it that name? What's around it to burn? And who will carry those full buckets from there to the flames? Why not just say the pool has been prepared for the multitude of small children in the neighbourhood, many of them very close to you, who might not have fresh water to drink or toilets to

flush, but can come and sit on the edge of the pool and dangle their little feet in the cool of your compassion. Any senior member of cabinet who casually refers to the firepool as 'an open water source' will not make friends with the millions of potential ANC voters who are still after 21 years waiting for clean water on tap in their homes.

I have seen bigger amphitheatres in the gardens of your fiercest critics, and yet once you invite them to share a *chop-en-wors* there with you, they will become your fiercest supporters. Use it as a venue for the latest KZN-Idols TV presentation. Leading by your example of dancing at the drop of a scandal can only encourage most politicians in the party to brush up on their tunes and then the spirit of Las Vegas will swirl around the homestead. I believe one of the Mrs Zumas sings very well too? An independent production of the opera *Aida* with her as the lead will attract good publicity from the world media who realise that criticising a meagre black talent is akin to a racist attack on a defenceless child.

The Citizens Waiting Area we all know is there to accommodate the many women who audition for the parts of Wife #5 to #8. Let us keep it out of the media. Turn the other cheek and admit that you are looking into the future when tourist buses will flock to Nkandla as a monument, and will need some place to refresh themselves and recharge their Blackberrys.

I don't understand the reference to fence technology. Of course the fences that 'enlaager' the entire compound must be well electrified. Few know that the 24/7 electricity for your use comes directly from a confidential source which even I cannot speak of. But the wiring is lethal. Anyone who touches this North

Korean fence when activated will be shocked a few hundred kilometres away. Yes, an easy way for locals to get to Durban, but not ideal.

I have never been happy with the kraals for your cattle. I don't think they are large enough. It's a personal gripe. We Afrikaners always set great store by our oxen. How do you think we conquered the entire country in veldskoene and with popguns? Your cattle have as much spiritual and cultural value for you as they had for Piet Retief, Andries Pretorius, or my husband's forefather Bloubaard Bezuidenhout. I have seen those films that show the plushness of the kraals of Zulu kings Shaka and Dingaan. Their cattle were their tender: a Zulu man is counted as supreme, thanks to the moos and milk of his team. However, the less said about the kraals, the better.

The whispered idea of a morning kraal for the rising sun and an evening kraal for the sunset is charming and has appealed to many beasts. But the fact that the R56m tunnel that joins the two kraals, meant to go under the entire erection, is a confusing maze. I know the architect is your friend, but I think he made a miscalculation by still counting on his fingers. Two prize bulls were recently found in the bedroom of one of your wives and a small sheep was found on its way to your room. Luckily it was stopped in time and eaten.

I love Ma Khumalo's tuckshop. I have ordered special curtains to be made in order to shield her chocolates from the morning sun. The fact that no one can buy anything from her because of the tight security measures means that she eats most of the sweets and can no longer risk wearing high heels to the opening of Parliament.

We cannot ever allow these details to be mulled

over by a restless populace and a media enriched by their entitlements of constitutional freedoms. The people are in search of a Bastille to burn. I thought the attacks against motionless and meaningless statues would satisfy their need for quick publicity, but they have all cooled down. Oom Paul Kruger stands alone in Church Square. Not even Steve Hofmeyr bothers to protect him, as no one is there to paint him green. Louis Botha and Queen Victoria are still loitering around Parliament. Diversion tactics away from Nkandla are essential. Congratulations on the leaking of Mbeki-era bribes to FIFA for the 2010 World Cup! No one can throw that poo at you.

All those sweet rondawels called Nkandla remind me of a retirement village outside Hermanus. Let us keep it like that. If anyone realises that they are just liftshafts going down five floors, we will never be able to divert attention with something more fruitful. Linking the USA's FBI with irritants like you-know-her and I-know-him won't explain away the fact that each Mrs Zuma lives on her own floor. This we know is obviously needed as none of them will even share a lift together.

When I mentioned to the new leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA) in confidence that the basement of Nkandla, five floors into the earth of KZN, was a copy of Johannesburg's Montecasino with its own ethnic hair-dressers, pedicurists and gyms, as well as with 12 diverse restaurants, he pointed out that you will be able to treat each wife to a different menu every night so that, G-d forbid, they don't bump into each other during the starters. Viva DA!

We should never have allowed the hashtag #PayBackTheMoney to have developed so far and create

so many problematic issues. Surely, Mr President, if 247 members of the inner circle of the ANC who in 2009 couldn't even pay for their DSTV rental, and who now each are worth millions, and in some cases billions of rand thanks to your generosity of patronage – if they each presented you with a million rand (which soon will be only \$1,200), the irritating and trivial expense of R246m would vanish before deadlines. They at least owe you that much and they know it.

Remember how we laughed about the stories I told you of old National Party tricks to disguise debts and doubts, and how the party managed to move millions thanks to the darkness of media control and our separately developed moral high ground? There is still a lot you can learn from us, my skat! So don't be cross with me when I, as a member of the African National Congress, sometimes refer to my old alma mater as die Afrikaans Nasionale Kongres. As they say, it wasn't a long walk from apartheid to tripartite, from Amandla to Nkandla!

I know you are still reading through the Marikana Report. Of course you need to take your time and make up your mind carefully. You are the democratically-elected leader of the land, but as I remember saying to another in the same position: 'Meneer Botha? Oppas! Die vet is amper in die vuur!' There are just too many pimples on the face of our motherland: the boils of corruption, the rash of carelessness and arrogance, the festering scars of self-empowerment and greedy entitlements.

My three grandchildren are very demanding, as I am sure the hundreds of yours are too. 'Gogo? What will you do to protect democracy, so that one day when we

need to use our vote freely and fairly, democracy will still be in full working condition?' My answer was: I will join the ANC and change things from within. I did it in the National Party, the NG Kerk, the Laagerfontein Library, but I gave up with the SABC.

Not all is lost. Lead by example. Sarcasm, like corruption, is a Western thing. Stop making silly jokes in Parliament. Leave that to third-rate comics in forgotten cellars. Please, surprise us all.

Amandla/Vrystaat

Evita Bezuidenhout

IN MEMORY OF MADIBA

WHO DIED ON 5/12/2013

NELSON MANDELA IS FREE

Today is 11 February 1990 and Nelson Mandela is free.

After all those years, he came out of jail today with a dazzling smile. Can you believe it? After 27 years of hell, the man has no sense of revenge.

He embraces everyone. He will form a government with those who locked him up. He speaks Afrikaans. He loves his enemy and so ruins his reputation. Either he is a National Party mole in the ANC, or this man is more than anyone could imagine. Let's face it: Jesus Christ will have quite an act to follow.

So now, everything is possible. Nelson Mandela will form a government of national unity after he has won the forthcoming election with a landslide. He will reconcile former enemies and make them feel like friends. He will change the way everyone who watches our first democratic election day feels about voting. He will be the most famous person in the world. All our dreams can now come true.

Imagine 25 years from today on 11 February 2015. Our children have had the benefit of two decades of decent education, formulated by those who were in exile for so long and who saw how important schooling is. It will be flawless because there is no reason for it not to be. We will have houses for all the people who were denied a roof over their heads by apartheid, with fresh water, sanitation and safe electricity.

We will have a great unique constitution, which will be treasured and protected by future governments as a covenant of hope and security.

We will have an honest police force that would never shoot to kill and so sink to the depths of degradation of the apartheid SAP. We will dismantle the weapons factories and cut the arms budget to a bare minimum because we will have no enemy and therefore do not need a huge navy, air force or army. We will encourage our neighbours to follow our blueprint of reconciliation and see the emergence of democracy and human rights flourish across our borders in Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland.

We will confront the scourge of HIV and AIDS with honesty and without denials and hypocrisy, with the help of a world-class department of health, which will eventually guarantee universal healthcare for all our people. We will nurture our official languages and make each child look forward to starting school with three languages to learn at the same time. We will guarantee jobs because we will create jobs and not destroy the workforce with political infighting, while dividing to rule. We will overcome inflation by saving our money in banks, which will compensate for the past by making saving easy and profitable, even for the smallest saver. We will stop exploiting our labour.

We will prevent our workers being sidelined by greed and contracts for cheap produce from other countries. We will never allow any invasion by a sports entity, which would take our laws and negate them for their own financial greed and gain. All those things that the apartheid government did with such sinister success we will reject, because we have been given a second chance on this day, 11 February 1990. We won't need a third chance, because we will make this miracle work and be an example to all.

And in 25 years, a new generation of young South African voters, who were born after this day, will look back and see that we never diverted from our commitment to liberate our people and improve their existence. On 11 February 2015 everyone will look back and say: Thank you for my life.



Madiba and Evita | Photo: Dirk Visser

MEANWHILE IN THE REAL WORLD

Although in 2008 Jacob Zuma had said that he would prefer to serve only one term as president, he became the ANC's sole presidential candidate in the 2014 General Election. In January he was heckled and booed at Nelson Mandela's memorial. But the ANC retained its majority and on 21 May 2014, the National Assembly elected Zuma to a second term as president.

Business as usual.



Nkandla homestead

John A Forbes, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

Justice Minister Jeff Radebe admits to some irregularities at Nkandla or doesn't: 'The money that was spent by the state was for the security upgrades at his private residence. Was the president involved? The answer is no. No money of the state was used for the upgrade of the private residence of the president. There were irregularities; in this instance, the manner in which officials in the department of public works procured these services. All those implicated officials ... the law enforcement agencies are going to take its course to find those people involved in order to be accountable for that.'

A 70th BIRTHDAY ON 28 SEPTEMBER



A favourite title for a PDU talk is *No one's died laughing*. And so far, after 7,322 one-man performances throughout the world, no one has! Is this possibly a bad reaction? I see laughter as the result of two things: the joke and the truth. But the truth can often be funnier than comedy.

Humour is seldom the belly laugh – the great roar of ha-ha-ha that greets the stand-up comedian. I use this image: you go into a room. Someone is standing behind the door. They go: boo! You get a huge fright, but then see it is your best friend playing silly-buggers. You laugh! Not because it is funny, but because you are relieved to find out that it is not a threat. It's a joke.

Laughing at fear can also make that fear less fearful. It may remain

lethal, even life-threatening, but at least you've focused yourself on it. Keeping your eye on that fear and it will never become taller than you. It's when you look away out of fear that it can become so overbearing you will never allow yourself to confront it. That's when fear wins.

What's this got to do with a show with twenty different characters in all three genders spanning over forty years of entertainment? We come from a South African past that was littered with hatred and horror, and yet humanity prevailed. We live in a South African present that is a minefield of corruption, confusion and chaos – and yet compassion and optimism survives. And ahead of us lies a future struggle that could make the past look tame in comparison. So to laugh is the therapy we all can use to prevent ourselves from going numb and dumb.

Turning 70 that year was a crossroads between the choices of being inspired by the high road, or depressed by the low path. As a terminal optimist I believe that to remember where I come from can help me celebrate where I am going. To look back with amusement, to glance into today's mirror with acceptance and to peer ahead with less caution than before, can only happen when you allow the heartbeat of a 12-year-old excitement to lead you on. It is a levelling moment to, for the first time, identify your sell-by date.

With good health maybe 20 years lie ahead? Hopefully a full ten? Once my year was made up with 365 days. Now my year only has two days: today and tomorrow. All my focus and energy is on the *Now*, knowing that within 24 hours, the *Then* will happen, but only enriched or poisoned by what happens at this present moment. Now too often people gasp: 'Darling, how do you remember everything in your shows at 70?' Well, I do, touch wood. I have heard Dr Alzheimer knocks on many ageing doors. I just hope he forgets where mine is!

So the audition is over, the disease to please is cured. No need to prove anything, just improve. No one else might notice, but constantly striving to make things better could happily add fire and light to the so-called twilight years. So no retirement, no stopping just because someone asks: 'Why do you still keep going?'

It's simple, darling. Because I'm still here.

ONE MAN SHOWS AT THE 2015 NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL

Twenty of my one man shows have been performed at the Grahamstown Festival, renamed the National Arts Festival (NAF). Then in 2015, the National Arts Festival decided to celebrate my 70th birthday with a trilogy of one-man performances: *Tannie Evita Praat Kaktus*, *Bambi Sings the FAK Songs* and *The Echo of a Noise* in the 1000-seater Memorial Theatre, and my new play, *African Times*, starring Ntomboxolo Makhutshi, Peggy Mongoato, Sue Pylar, Zoliswa Kawe and Stefan Hurter for three performances. Willem Oelofson and his crew were also present filming moments for a PDU documentary, *Nobody's Died Laughing*.

The first solo saga was called *A Part Hate A Part Love*, which was a theatrical, political, historical collage of Evita Bezuidenhout's life as celebrated in *Tannie Evita Praat Kaktus*. That performed on the Sunday at 7 p.m. On Tuesday there were two productions: at 3p.m. *Never Too Naked*, with the Kurt Weill music and Marlene Dietrich songs from Bambi Kellermann with Godfrey Johnson at the Steinway Grand, and then at 8.30 p.m. *The Echo of a Noise*. The first two shows were familiar territory. The theatre was sold out for Evita and Bambi. However, the Tuesday evening sell-out show was quite a surprise as it was for something that I'd never attempted as a one-man show before – a memoir.

I had tried it out at Evita se Perron as a work in progress, linking some of the most familiar sketches from previous shows with humorous life experiences. *The Echo of a Noise* was a title that had been pending

for some time – the noise of my life being an echo of the past. What emerged on the Memorial Theatre stage that evening was very little of the Perron works-in-progress but more a collection of highlights from my life, with colourful references to my difficult relationship with my father. When the evening premiere was over, the standing ovation from 1000 people convinced me that there was more to this ad-lib than just a one-off celebration. The film crew had filmed all three performances. I studied the copy of *Echo* and found a logical structure that started in Pinelands with my Dinky Toys and Sophia Loren scrapbooks, through our lives in 10 Homestead Way Pinelands with Ma and Pa and Sannie in the kitchen. Then growing up through a BA (Drama) at UCT and falling head first into the theatrical rest of my life, which meant studying

in London, returning to The Space Theatre, fighting censorship and eventually finding a friendship with Pa.

The story was told in 90 minutes, with me just sitting on a barstool in a spotlight without other theatrical diversions. *The Echo of a Noise* is still in repertoire, still capturing the audience with its humour, truth and memory and is possibly my best work. The subsequent tour of South Africa and Europe shared a foyer exhibition of photos with captions describing my family: Pa Hannes, Ma Helga, Sannie, the two grannies, Sophia, The Space and much laughter through some tears.

Here are the photos.



1. STAGEMANAGING THE ECHOES OF A NOISE

It is said that censorship can cripple, inhibit and destroy, but in forcing artists to invent, it can also liberate. After I joined the Space Theatre in 1973, the Publications Control Board banned most of my work and gave me more publicity than money could buy. It was time to do a tango in front of the firing squad. The National Party Government became the best scriptwriters I could wish for. My plays could not be performed, so I had to reinvent myself. And so, inspired by the words of PW Botha, I had to 'Adapt or Dye!' Thirty-five years later, I am now in the 2016th episode of that same one-man show format: writing, presenting and performing males, females and convertibles, and realising that the secret to success is being the stage-manager first and the rest comes afterwards.

2. AN AFRIKAANS OUMA FROM THE ECHO OF A NOISE

The small me with Ouma Gertie Uys, my father's mother, a born actress. A formidable Afrikaner and deeply religious Calvinist, she was also the cousin of the first National Party Prime Minister, Dr DF Malan. She passionately mixed her metaphors in both official languages and always announced a solution before there even was a problem. Ouma Uys shared her life philosophy with me when I was ten. 'Pieter tjie, onthou net dit: die Engelse is jou aartsyande, die Katolieke is die antichrisen, die Jode is almal diewe!' She never mentioned the blacks. Where I grew up, the blacks were never the problem. It was always the English, the Catholics and the Jews!



PDU with Ouma Uys

3. A PORTRAIT OF NOT A QUEEN BUT A MOTHER

My father's writing desk stood in the corner of the sitting room in 10 Homestead Way Pinelands. Our lives depended on that top drawer which was full of all the important documents, insurances and mementos. As he would constantly remind us: 'If something terrible happens, grab the top drawer and run to the neighbours.' There were moments when we nearly did that. On the desk in an elegant frame was this photograph of my mother. I could never understand why our English friends gasped when they saw it. Or why our Afrikaans family huffed and puffed and muttered:

'Sies! Dis 'n skandel!' It's because they all thought we had a picture in our house of Queen Elizabeth II. With the British monarch at 90 years old, the documentaries on her life were filling the screens. When they showed the young Queen on horseback, laughing with her family, walking her Corgis – even opening Parliament wearing her state crown – I saw someone else.



PDU's mother Helga

4. SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL FROM ROME

I was 70 and she 81, but once upon a time I was 16 and she was 27. As with so many other things in South Africa, it started with Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd. At school and even in the Kerk it was made obvious that this great man was not just our leader, but a gift from God. So I put up a picture of him on my bedroom as did my friends. Unlike me they added pictures of rugby players. Then I found this beautiful face in the

weekly *Stage and Cinema* magazine. I cut the picture out and stuck it carefully on the wall next to the stern unsmiling architect of apartheid. The next day Dr Hendrik Verwoerd fell off my wall. I think he realised that her legs were better than his. Sophia Loren saved my life.



PDU with Sophia Loren

5. A SIGH WEARING LONG PANTS AT LAST

In Adderley Street there were always photographers who snapped your picture and you could collect it a few days later for R2. This was my first photo as a young man and not a child: I was in long pants! I hated having to wear short pants. In my class at school most of the boys wore long pants, but my father said I was too young! I knew that he was scared that if I wore long pants my voice would break! And then I wouldn't be able sing on the radio or at those weddings for one guinea: that was one pound one shilling. (Pa kept the pound I got the shilling). I remember standing in front of the mirror at home in my short pants and shouting at my image: 'Breek jou bliksem breek!' Eventually the bliksem brecked! No more guineas.



PDU in Adderley Street

6. SURPRISING LAUGHTER FROM PARENTS

It was always there, even at moments of sadness and shock. Laughter. My father was not just the strict Pa with whom I constantly fought. He was also Oom Hannes – the life and soul of the party, the jazz player and the joketeller. He would even use words we were not allowed to breathe – like poephol! And yet those waves of laughter seemed to heal many things, certainly in my life and eventually in our family. The suicide of my mother can never merge into memory. It is as shocking now as it was then. But at least time has brought back those wonderful explosions of giggles when she sat



Ma and Pa

on a man's hat in church and we had to leave because we were all laughing hysterically. This picture taken on holiday in Hermanus in the early 1950s shows a man and a woman enjoying each other's company with laughter. I wish I knew what was so wonderfully funny.

7. A WHISPER FROM A CAPE FLATS MA

I had two mothers: Berlin-born Helga and Athlone-raised Sannie. Sannie Abader was part of the family for as long as I can remember, ruling us from her kitchen with discipline and humour. She taught me how to speak real Afrikaans – not the language they used in Church to reach God's ears, but the sexy Cape Flats dialect that made the angels laugh. She and Pa eventually angrily parted ways and it was like a death in the family. But Sannie came back bit by bit, visiting and drinking tea, and so through the years broke down those invisible walls of prejudice

that encased us all. In the last years of his life, Sannie came back home and looked after Pa till the end and helping me through the new silence. Taking her to that queue on 27 April 1994 to vote for the first time in her life will always be a moment to cherish. Never mind she voted for the National Party!

8. A MOMENT FROM A JEWISH MOTHER

My mother Helga Bassel was already 40 when I was born in 1945. She grew up in Berlin and became a noted pianist, performing throughout Germany until she was sent an official letter by the Nazi regime to stop playing in public because she was a Jew. She didn't stop. Eventually her friends convinced her to take her piano and go to Cape Town where her parents already were. Her first engagement as a pianist was with the Cape Town Orchestra in the City Hall playing a Mozart concert for two pianos. The other pianist was an Afrikaner called Hannes Uys. So, besides those two pianists who became my parents, I have to thank two other people for me being here today: Amadeus and



Sannie Abader



Helga and PDU

Adolf. I still have that official letter from the Third Reich to remind me whenever I write anything, how fearful words can so easily kill fearless dreams. I am still so sorry I never had the courage to talk to my mother about so many things once I grew up. It was only after she died that we were told she was Jewish! After having to leave Berlin for that very reason in 1937, Helga Bassel obviously didn't want to go through any similar prejudice in Cape Town. So now whenever I can, I love saying that I am a Jewish-Afrikaner: I belong to both chosen people!

9. FANCY DRESS AND SHOPPING IN PINELANDS

The mature Pieter-Dirk Uys will be on stage 'unpowdered' in his latest show opening. But here is little Pietertjie Uys showing a hint of things to come: me with a granny's hat and a granny's bag, ready to go shopping like any suburban housewife from Pinelands. My sister Tessa and I always enjoyed giving house-concerts on Sundays after lunch. We'd sing and dance. Tessa would play the piano and I would be silly. Then, being cat-people, we'd collect coins from the parents and the grannies for the SPCA. When I had my appendix out at the St Joseph Memorial Hospital (now the Vincent Palotti), I fell in love with the nurses who were also nuns. So the money – R3 – collected the next Sunday would go to them! Ouma Uys took back her coin in a huff. Nee, magtig, she was not going to support 'die Katolieke Gevaar'!



Pietertjie in concert

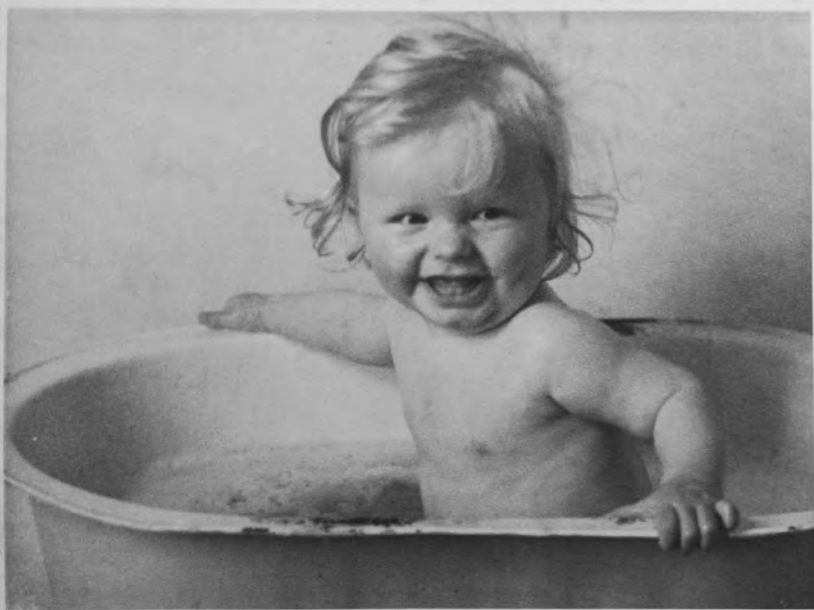
10. 'SONSKYN'

The house in Pinelands where we lived: No 10 Homestead Way. Pa called it *Sonskyn*.



'Sonskyn'

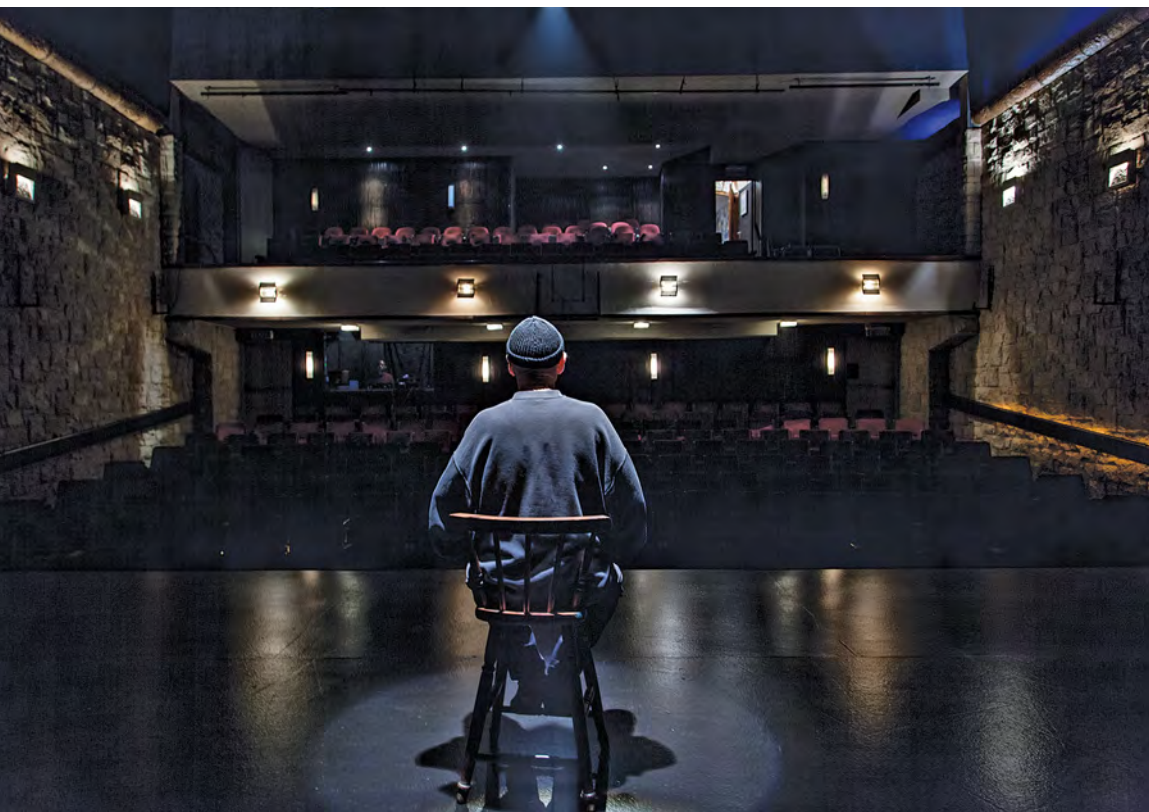
10 months old



Bathing Jean

2015
THE ECHO OF A NOISE

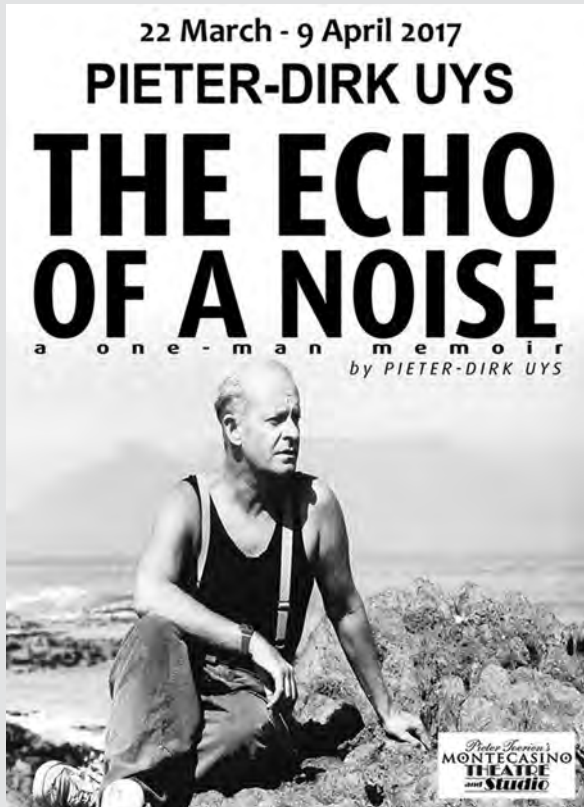




The Echo of a Noise

First performed at the 2015 National Arts Festival, Grahamstown

* Then in Cape Town, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, East London, Johannesburg, Pretoria * Soho Theatre, London



THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

THE SETTING

A barstool

SOUND – A RADIO ANNOUNCER: *En nou gaan ons luister na die oulike stemmetjie van Pietertjie Uys. Hy is van Pinelands in Kaapstad, en hy word hier op die klavier begelei deur sy vader Hannes Uys. Pietertjie Uys sing nou 'Maria se Wiegelied' van Max Reger ...*

(As boy sings PDU enters and sits on barstool)

Pa? Ek wil 'n langbroek dra! Pa? I want to wear long pants! All the boys in my class at school have long pants. I'm the only one still in my short pants. Pa? I am nearly 14!

I know why Pa won't allow me to wear long pants. Because then my voice will break and I wouldn't be able to sing on the radio, or every Saturday afternoon at those weddings. For that I got paid one guinea – that's one pound, one shilling. Pa kept the pound and I got the shilling.

I hate those short grey pants and the grey socks up to my knees, the white shirt, the blue tie. And my hair always the shortest in the class, except for the front. The blonde curl flipped up like a frozen wave, cemented crisp with La Pebra hair gel. The times I sat glassy-eyed in class and church and crunched that concrete hair with my fingers, crunching it into a style I couldn't have, a style that went with long pants.

As iets verskriklik gebeur, gryp die boonste laai en hardloop na die bure!
Ag, Pa! What terrible thing can happen to us here in Pinelands? You mean if the thatched roof catches fire? Or if there's a flood? An earthquake? Or if the Martians land in the back garden. Ha ha, Pa!

Pa's writing desk was downstairs in the sitting room against the wall, under the famous Maggie Laubscher painting, the one she gave Pa back in the days when they were still friends. A no-go area. 'Don't touch my desk! Just remember: if something terrible happens, grab the top drawer and run to the neighbours. Our lives depend on the valuable things in that top drawer!'

Ja, Pa ...

Of course Pa knew everything and if he didn't know it, he just made it up. And I believed every word he said, because he was Pa. Every

Sunday morning I would go with him all the way from Pinelands to the suburb of Parow, where he was the organist in the local Dutch Reformed Church. I had to come for the service and the Sunday school. Two things made it happen. Stopping at the booms, the railway crossing next to the Maitland Cemetery and waiting for the steam train to pass. The lokomotief, smoke exploding from the engine and the passengers hanging out of the windows, tired white faces with morning smiles. They saw me; I waved at them; they waved at me. I waved back. It was so exciting! Then we went to church.

On the way back to Pinelands after church, Pa stopped at a café and bought me something special. So why did I happily go to church every Sunday for the service and Sunday school in my short pants? Because I was bribed with lokomotief and a rum and raisin icecream. I wanted to be a steam-train driver for a long time. Then I decided I'd rather be an NG Kerk dominee, because they always got new cars free every year. And yes, of course, dominees also went straight to heaven. Our Sunday school teacher promised us that all good white Afrikaans Christian children would also go straight to heaven. And that, of course, all the good black Christian children would also go *their* heaven. And what about my cat? Will Boeboe would also go to heaven. 'Nee Pieter, katte gaan nie hemel toe nie!' What? My cat wouldn't go to heaven! Maybe that's when I decided that I also didn't want to go. I want to go to where the cat goes – and also curl up in front of that raging fire.

Boeboe was a real cat! He loved Sunday lunches because then we always had fish. He loved fish; I didn't like fish. Too many bones.

'Pieter! Eat your fish!'

'No. It's full of bones.'

'Ja, of course, it's a fish! *Eet!*'

'Nee!'

'Sannie?'

'Ja, master?'

'Keep that fish in the fridge. He will get it for every meal from now on: fish for breakfast, fish for lunch and fish for supper. Do you understand, Sannie?'

‘Ja, Master.’

Of course Sannie would always say Ja master, because master was master and Sannie was the maid. But it didn’t always happen as master said, because master was at work during the week and then Sannie was not the maid; Sannie was the boss. Ruling us from her fortress kitchen. Today you’d need a pin number and a password! You had to knock on the door to be invited in! Of course, Sannie put that fish in the fridge as she promised master, but then allowed Oma Bassel, my German granny, into the kitchen to make me something special for lunch: Wiener schnitzel. So fuck the fish! (I don’t think as a kid I never used that f-word as punctuation. Maybe the first time I actually used it, was when I asked for it ...)

Sannie wasn’t just the maid; Sannie was my best friend; my Cape Coloured Ma. When she suddenly left us after years, it was like a death in the family for me. Sannie had been part of our lives for as long as I can remember: Sannie Abader, the elegant Malay woman from Athlone on the Cape Flats, always with a doek, smoking her Cavalla cigarettes in the garden, two steps ahead of everyone. The stage manager of the household, and the only person in the family who understood Ma’s love for that raw mince – steak tartare – and the stinky Gorgonzola cheese. Even Sannie also laughed with me and my sister Tessa when we opened the fridge and said sies sies sies!: ‘Ja, o halieha, that Gorgonzille kaas smells like kak.’ Sannie taught me the ‘real’ Afrikaans. Not the fancy language we used in church to reach God’s ears, but the sexy Cape Coloured slang that made the angels laugh.

Pa and I seldom laughed. We fought all the time. Forget about loving each other; I don’t think we even liked each other! But Pa wasn’t just Pa; he was also Oom Hannes. Now I didn’t know Oom Hannes. Everyone loved Oom Hannes. He was the life and soul of every party. Playing jazz on the piano; telling wonderful stories and laughing the loudest at his own jokes. My friends were so jealous of me: ‘You’re so lucky having Oom Hannes for a Pa.’ ‘Ja, you don’t know Pa like I know Pa.’ Those angry ice-blue eyes, that furious thin mouth ready to put me on my place.

‘Pieter, your hair is too long. Pieter, get dressed for church. Pieter, stop making that noise. Why must you always make so much noise? Pieter, did you water the garden?’

‘Ja, Pa.’ Well, no, not properly watered; just casually sprayed the top soil and then back to playing with my Dinky Toys and Pa would come back from the office and scratch the soil and it was dry ...

‘Pieter, did you practise the piano?’

‘Ja, Pa.’ No, not properly either. Anyway, why should I practise? Everyone said I had a perfect ear and could transpose everything to middle C. It was easier just sticking to white notes and not bothering the black ones! Mozart was part of the family. Amadeus was my best friend: I couldn’t believe he was dead; his music was so alive!

The problem was: there were just always too many people in our house making noise – morning, noon and night: Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Schumann, Schubert, Scarlatti, Mendelssohn, Haydn, Brahms, Liszt. Because there were also just too many pianos in 10 Homestead Way Pinelands. In the music room was Ma’s Blüchner grand that she brought all the way from Germany, and the upright Yamaha so that she and Pa could play two piano pieces together. And in the sitting room was Pa’s smaller Fuerich babygrand, so that when he got back from work, Pa would give lessons at his piano in the sitting room; Ma would give lessons on her piano in the music room, while practising Scarlatti in the evening and playing Schumann in the morning. And my sister Tessa became pianistically brilliant at the age of 12 and played with the Cape Town City Orchestra. Never mind, I also played – with my Dinky Toys in the garden. After watering it properly, of course.

Pa and I were pretty mean to each other. Like father, like son? He would also tease me about my love for a film star. Actually it all started with Dr Hendrik Verwoerd. Everything in those days started with Dr Hendrik Verwoerd. At school and in church we were reminded that he was not just the architect of apartheid, not just our prime minister; Hendrik Verwoerd was also a gift from God. So I had his picture up on the wall of my room. Not that we ever spoke politics at home. Pa said: ‘No politics here in my house; it’s a dirty thing!’ But most of my friends

at school also had Dr Verwoerd's picture on their walls. They added pictures of rugby players; I didn't go that far.

Then I found a picture of a beautiful Italian actress in the weekly *Stage and Cinema* magazine. She went up on my wall next to the prime minister. Within days Oom Hendrik fell off the wall: I think he realised that Sophia Loren had better legs than he did. Verwoerd stayed off my wall permanently; Sophia stayed on my wall forever. I think she saved my life.

'Ja, Pieter, how can you be in love with Sophia Loren? Sies! Kyk net daardie dik lippe? Jou Sophia Loren is 'n meid!' No, Pa, how can you say that? She's not coloured; she's Italian! But every time I just looked at that beautiful face on my wall and her smile with those red ... full lips, I knew I had committed a terrible sin. I'd broken God's commandment; I was in love with a coloured!

One day Pa even sneaked into my room with a Koki pen when I was at the library and drew moustaches on her pictures on my wall. That's when I thought: I'll burn the house down ... no, I'd empty the cat's sandbox into that top drawer! 'If something terrible happens, grab the top drawer ...' What was he hiding from me in that top drawer? Eventually it just got too much. Pa had a late choir practice at the church, Ma and Tessa were playing duets in the music room, and so I took a deep breath and opened that drawer. Hey? No *Lady Chatterley's Lover*?

Just insurance documents and other bulky envelopes tied with the pink string, the red tape Pa brought from work. Of course music was his first love, but being a senior clerk at the Cape Provincial Administration was a full-time job with a full-time salary, so that Tessa and I could get new shoes and have a good life. We never knew how much he hated that job, but he did it. Every weekday morning after a quick breakfast, he would cycle to Pinelands Station, leave his bicycle in the shed there with the other bicycles and take the train to Cape Town, walk up to Wale Street en die Kantoor.

So while he was there, I could get back from school and have my world of fantasy. While Ma would be teaching piano in the music room,

Tessa would be practising piano in the sitting room, I would be playing in the garden with my Dinky Toys, climbing trees after the squirrels, or just up in my room reading books about Biggles and the Hardy Boys. That's before I started locking my door after I was introduced to the joys of the beautiful French Countess Angelique!

(SOUND: *The Mozart Triple Concerto*)

I knew every note of that Mozart concerto off by heart and could play it in middle C. And there we were on that special Thursday night at the City Hall. The auditorium full of Capetonians coming to hear the three Uyses: Hannes, Helga and Tessa, each at their own grand piano, play the Mozart Triple Concerto with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra conducted by David Tidboald. There were white people, coloured people, black people, old, young. No one for a moment thought that very soon the National Party government would pass a law that would turn the City Hall into a place for white people only, so that anyone who was not white would have to come through a separate entrance, go to a separate toilet and sit in the last two rows under the gallery where the sound was terrible. But not yet on this night.

I was in the front row of the gallery in my short pants with my two formidable grandmothers, German Oma Bassel and Afrikaans Ouma Uys. (Hang on, here's the part where Pa always made a mistake and had to start again ... O liewe Jesus help vir Pa ... O dankie liewe Jesus ...) When the concert was over, everybody bravoed and clapped, even though I could feel Pa's nerves in my tummy. Oma Bassel nudged me to have another chocolate: *Noch eine Schokolade, mein Liebchen?* Ouma Uys just sighed deeply with tears in her eyes, and took my hand: 'Ag, Pietertjie, my kind? Wat gaan eendag van jou word?'

Ouma Uys, always in her church clothes with hat, veil and fox-fur collar, a great actress in the Dutch Reformed Church and the National Party, because her cousin Dr DF Malan was the first apartheid prime minister. My liewe Ouma who shared her life philosophy with me at a very early age: 'Pieter my kind, jy moet altyd onthou: die Engelse is jou

aartsvyande; die Katolieke is die Antichris– en die Jode is almal diewe.’ She never mentioned the blacks. Where I grew up, blacks were never the problem. The problems were the English, the Catholics and the Jews!

Before the concert I went backstage to wish them Hals- und Beinbruch. There they were in the green room: Pa in his dress suit and bowtie, Ma in a long dress and Tessa with her hair up for the first time – all three catatonic with terror. I thought: why are you scared? Mozart lives with us in Pinelands! Maybe that’s when I decided that I would never allow fear to destroy my fun. Even today they still ask: ‘Pieter, are you nervous before you perform?’ Yes ... no, I’m excited. Excited means you can do it; nervous means you can’t. The feeling is the same: you want to kak and poep, vomit and run.

But then Tessa and I had a lot experience of nervousness and performance at Cape Town’s two annual eisteddfods: one English; the other Afrikaans – tactfully separated by six months. Tessa would play the piano; I would sing in my short pants. Pa was very insistent that we win. ‘See that you win the medals and we’ll put them into the top drawer with all the valuable things.’ Ja Pa. Ma just smiled: ‘Now enjoy yourself. And remember, if you win, you get an ice cream; if you don’t win, you get two ice creams.’

Of course Sannie made the best ice cream at home when people came for supper, usually on a Tuesday night. Lots of unique people came to 10 Homestead Way with their musical instruments. German friends of Ma who had survived their Third Reich; Afrikaans friends of Pa who were trying to survive their First. And talked about it – with humour. There was no television then; just conversation. Overseas people, travelled people, telling stories of snow at the Salzburg Festival and Herbert von Karajan conducting an opera with Leontyne Price as Aida. And we kids were allowed to listen to everything as long as we didn’t interrupt. And if we were bored, to go and do our homework. Which I did; not to do homework, but to listen to Springbok Radio. In secret.

No radio after five was the rule from Pa. But Oma Bassel didn’t like Pa either and gave me a small portable radio in secret. So I got under

the blankets and with the volume down soft, absorbed my university of the imagination: *Lux Radio Theatre*, the *Goon Show* (I laughed at the laughter), my favourite serial: *Mark Saxon* – and the spooky programme: *The Creaking Door*.

So bunking school was essential so that I could listen to the radio serials in the morning with Sannie. *Portia faces life*, *Dr Paul*, *Mary Livingstone MD*, *Wie die liefde nie het nie*, *Die du Plooy van Soetmelksvlei*. Now to convince Ma that I was too sick for school: 'Ma, I don't feel nice ...' Just the tone of that whinge gave the game away. But Ma would not tolerate illness whatever disease it was. She just said: 'Nonsense, it's hayfever. Drink some water and go to school.' I wouldn't give up. 'Alright, stay in bed, but no radio.' No radio!?

So there I was on a Monday morning lying in bed, healthy and bored, when I heard the doorbell ring. Ma went and opened the door. Voices in German. Not unusual. Then I heard crying. Ma crying? Why? Sannie came up with a worried face and said a German friend of Ma was visiting and she wanted to meet me. In the music room Ma introduced me to a frail pretty lady. It turned out they had been at school together in Berlin all those years ago. They had lost touch because of the war, but now she had come all the way to Cape Town to find her best friend, Helga Bassel. And here she was in our music room.

Ma and Sannie went out to the kitchen to get the marmor kuchen and coffee – and a cooldrink for me. I was a very polite Deutsche Knabe. 'Guten Tag gnädigen Frau. Wie geht es Ihnen?' Then I noticed some numbers written on her wrist. She saw me look and showed me. 'Is that a telephone number?' I asked. She laughed. 'Why don't you call it and see who answers?' My first hint of that concentration camp hell: with humour.

Ma never talked about that Germany. She told us wonderful stories of growing up in Berlin in the 1920s and 1930s with so much music and laughter and happiness, living in Charlottenburg Neue Kantstrasse 16, next to the Liezen Zee where they swam in summer and in winter skated on snow and ice. We didn't know snow; Ma said it was like heavenly ice cream.

That Berlin world was Weinachten und Würstchen, Wiener schnitzel und pretzels; reading *Max und Moritz* and *Strubbelpeter*, listening to the songs of Richard Tauber – *Wien Wien nur du allein* – and a lady called Marlene singing *Ich hab' noch einen Koffer in Berlin*. Until Oma Bassel, who always seemed to have a long invisible pin at the end of her finger to puncture any balloon of imagination, showed me the money they used in Berlin: one note that was worth 50 million Deutschmark. She said they put all the money in a big basket and brought the bread home in a purse.

So I saved my watering-the-garden pocket money and the shillings from the guineas and bought Ma the perfect birthday present: *Unser Berlin in Bilder* – a book to remind her of the things she loved. I also bought lovely wrapping paper and ribbon, because Ma loved anything wrapped; it could be a brick. As she unwrapped it, Pa said: 'Helga, don't tear that paper; we can use it again at Christmas!' She opened it on a double page picture of Berlin in 1945: burnt, bombed, destroyed. And then she changed the subject and everyone talked about something else and that book stayed there open on that page for a week, untouched. No one said anything. What had I done wrong?

Of course I knew that Berlin: the Berlin of Hitler and Himmler, Goebbels and Göring. I saw it at the Savoy bioscope every Saturday morning, after swapping my Superman comics in the foyer. The Hollywood war films about D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge and submarines and Spitfires. The North African desert battles with Rommel and Monty. And the Americans came and saved the world: Burt Lancaster as a colonel and Marlon Brando in uniform. And of course there were also some British.

The only people who always died, were those thin frightened people behind barbed wire ... those thin frightened people behind barbed wire in camps ... those thin frightened people behind barbed wire in camps with yellow stars on their clothes. It was only after the Berlin-born mother of Pietertjie Uys died, that I found out that Helga Bassel was Jewish. So I always enjoy adding to my CV: Jewish-Afrikaner; belongs to *both* chosen people.

I have kept two letters close to me. One was typed in Berlin in 1935 on official swastika letterhead from the Reichsmuzikkamer, addressed to Frau Helga Bassel, 16 Neue Kantstrasse Charlottenburg Berlin, stating in deep official German that she would no longer be allowed to play her piano anywhere in the Third Reich because she is a Jew. I keep that letter close to me when I write, just to remind me how easily fearful words can kill fearless dreams. But Helga Bassel ignored that letter and played her piano wherever she liked, even giving a recital of the banned decadent Jewish music of Felix Mendelssohn in Berlin in 1936 – and her friends were terrified. They weren't even Jewish, nor was her fiancé, Dr Franz Michels.

He was the professor of geology at Berlin University and probably knew more details about what was happening behind the scenes, because two years earlier, he had sent Ma's parents to Cape Town. What could be further away from Nazi Germany than South Africa? He just said: 'Helga, I can't protect you anymore. Take your piano and go and visit them. This thing will blow over soon.' This 'thing' being the noise of Adolf Hitler. So Helga Bassel took her Blüchner grand on the ship to Cape Town and the first concert booking she got there as a professional pianist was at the City Hall, playing a two-piano Mozart concerto with the orchestra and a South African pianist called Hannes Uys. Pa meet Ma! So I must thank two people for being here today: Amadeus and Adolf.

The second letter is a carbon copy of the letter she wrote and posted in 1948 to her best friend in Germany, Franz Michels. They had lost touch during the war and had now found each other through communication. In one paragraph she explains where she is, no longer as Helga Bassel, but as Mevrouw Hannes Uys. 'I am here on a beautiful sunny day in De Waal Park in Cape Town. Table Mountain is looming over me like a huge wall. My little blonde boy Pieter is three and playing in the grass with the dachshund Fritz. I am sitting on a bench which has a sign on it that says *Whites-only/Slegs Blankes*. How did I get here from a place that said *No Jews/Juden-Raus?*' I never knew that woman. She committed suicide before I had the courage to ask.

'If something terrible happens, grab the top drawer and run to the neighbours.' It fitted easily into that drawer: a folded page torn out of a small notebook with fifteen words scribbled in pencil: 'Hannes Pieter Tessa, I love you. I don't want to be a burden. Forgive me.' Today there is a name for it: bi-polar; today there are trusted medications; today people talk about it. Today it's part of life. But on that day – 26 May 1969 – it was the end of a life. Tessa and I knew that Ma was taking pills; she called them her 'vitamins'. We didn't know they were to fight her depressions. Then her doctor said he had found better, stronger pills that would help. She went to fetch the new medication, but the doctor was away playing golf and his young assistant forgot to tell Mrs Uys that these new pills would first take her down, before they helped her up.

So on this Monday morning she was ready to drive to the SABC studios in Sea Point to record a piano recital for radio of Scarlatti, Liszt and Schumann. Before she left 10 Homestead Way, she sat at her piano to go through a few pieces, but her fingers wouldn't work. Without her realising, the two pills she'd taken had made her nightmare come true. She couldn't play. So she did not drive to Sea Point, but to Hout Bay. Then even further up to the top of Chapman's Peak where the view is the best with the waves crashing on the rocks below. She stopped the car and got out, took off her coat, folded it up and left it on the back seat. She opened her handbag and took out her small notebook, tore out a page and with a pencil wrote 15 words, folded it and left the note on the front seat of the car.

You never recover from something like that. And sometimes you don't want to recover, just in case you forget – the smile, the giggle, the love. There will always be an empty frame in the centre of my memory where her face used to be. At least her music is still with me, every day: Mozart, Schumann, Scarlatti, Liszt, Brahms. But there was no music at the funeral. Why? The crematorium in the Maitland Cemetery, just yards away from where Pa and I would wait for the steam train, was packed with all our friends. Friends who laughed with us, made music with us, ate and drank at our home, now sitting there with us in that terrible silence also thinking what ... has ... happened ... here?

Someone must have gone to the people in charge and said: 'Please find some beautiful music. Helga Bassel was a great musician, a wonderful pianist. Please help her with piano music.' And so a cassette tape of organ music by Frederick Handel was found and put into the cassette player. Maybe the tape had been in the sun too long, because it was warped. The music was just noise. I think if Ma had been sitting next to me at someone's funeral and that terrible wailing sound happened, she would get the giggles. That little squeak would set us all off. We needed that so badly, but she wasn't there to help. That sound will probably be the worst noise I will ever hear in my life; that at Ma's funeral? For me it was the end. I just ran out of the chapel into the South-easter wind, among other people's tombstones. Then I heard it: a steam train was passing ... but no one waved.

The one person I could talk to was gone. But I had an address far away. So I wrote a letter: 'My mother jumped off Chapman's Peak and is dead. I don't know what to do.' I posted it airmail. A few days later, by express post, a letter came back: 'You must help your father and your sister. You can't cry now. You will cry one day, but not now. Now you must be brave. Be brave. I love you – Sophia.'

'Come on Pieter-Dirk Uys? You're can't be serious? Still in love with a movie star? You're not 12 years old anymore!' I know I'm not 12 years old! I'm 77 and she's 88. But once upon a time I was 16 and she was 27. I finished school and Ma gave me the best present to celebrate my freedom: a return ticket to the Northern Hemisphere. 'Here, Pietie, go and see where I come from.' And so I sailed on the Union Castle ship, 14 days to Southampton. Then British Rail to London in the coldest winter I could not even imagine, passing houses with funny chimney pots and ... what was that? A TV aerial? Yes, I saw television there for the first time in London. Ma's friend, Betty Jones, showed me around. She and Ma met when they were both teaching piano at St Cyprian's in Cape Town.

She took me to the Old Vic Theatre to see a production of *Othello* by William Shakespeare. And on stage, playing a black man, was their greatest white actor called Laurence Olivier – to me his name sounded

very Afrikaans: Lourens Olivier. Then to Germany, but not Berlin because they'd put a wall round it. To Wiesbaden where Onkel Franz Michels was living with his young wife Tante Friedel. She made me her special Wiener schnitzel: 'Ja Peter, meine Wienerschnitzel ist am besten in ganze Deutschland.' 'Ja, danke Tante Friedel'. I didn't have the courage to tell her that Sannie's Wiener schnitzel in Pinelands was better! Then to Paris to see the Mona Lisa (I was shocked to see she was very small) and then to Italy, to Rome, because she lived in Rome!

I had a black and white picture cut out of *OGGI* magazine of young, beautiful Sophia Loren leaning out of the window of her apartment in Rome, waving at the camera. In the background was a very ornate lamp post and a Roman ruin. And as you know, Rome is full of ornate lampposts and ruins. So for the next three days, with the picture in hand, I looked for the right lamp post and the right ruin and found them both in the shadow of the Victor Emmanuel Monument. I looked up: there's the window of Sophia's apartment. So I wrote my letter: 'Dear Sophia Loren/Mrs Ponti. I am in your beautiful city of Rome and I love it. And I love you and your work. I have all your pictures in my scrapbooks at home and on the wall of my room. Much love from Pieter Uys (U-Y-S pronounced A-C-E') – in case she thought it was a spelling mistake.

There was no security in those days, so I went up to the first floor and knocked on the door. A woman opened. 'No, Mrs Ponti is filming in France, but I will give her your letter. Caio.' So I left the letter and carried on my adventure in Ma's hemisphere, then by boat all the way back to 10 Homestead Way Pinelands – and there was a letter addressed to me with an Italian stamp from Rome, and on the back in her own handwriting, from Sophia Loren! What? This great film star has bothered to write a personal letter to a little poepgat from Pinelands? So I wrote back to her and she wrote back to me and there started our penfriendship that included the letter that changed my life with the words: Be brave.

And so in 1975 I eventually met her in Paris. I was back, not to revisit that small Mona Lisa, but to take presents to my famous

penfriend. I knew she lived on Rue George V on the fourth floor of a luxurious apartment because it said so in my scrapbook. The presents for her and her two little boys were wrapped and ready. I just added a note: 'Dear Sophia Loren, I am here in Paris staying at the Hotel de la Paix on the Left Bank and want to drop these presents for you with love, much love and always love love love ...'

In the foyer stood the concierge in his uniform and cap, unsmiling. I stumbled in arms, full of gifts. 'Bonjour mon General. Pour Madame Ponti?' 'Non.' 'Oui!' 'Non!' I opened my passport. Next to the small official snap of moi was a big colour cutting of her. I showed him. 'Sophia Loren?' 'Non Sophia Loren,' he snapped. I reverted back to mother tongue. 'Ag nonsens man! Ek weet sy woon hier, want dis in my scrapbook. Hier is die presente. Neem hul op na die vierde vloer, asseblief en dankie. Verstaan jy wat ek sê?' And he said: 'Oui ...!'

So I left the presents in his capable hands and went back to the Left Bank hotel. I dreaded it. The woman behind the desk was like a KGB spy in a James Bond film. She'd been so rude to me earlier that morning. I didn't speak French and she wouldn't speak English, except after a projectile vomit of French consonants and vowels, the verdict: 'and-you-will-not-be-allowed-to-use-the-bathroom'. As I got closer to the hotel, I saw Rosa Klebb on the sidewalk. She looked towards me, saw me and waved. And smiled! 'Monsieur Arse? Monsieur Arse! Sophia Loren ... she phone for you in my hotel! I love Sophia also. And you can use the bathroom ...!' My Oscar-winning penfriend had phoned the hotel and left me a message to come to her apartment for a drink at 6p.m. And I was ready by two!

When I was ushered into the lounge by her secretary, it was the most familiar room in my life, because I had pictures of everything in the scrapbooks. The Francis Bacon painting to the right; the thing she got from the Vatican to the left. Her Oscar for *Two Women* on a plinth. All the Bambi Awards she had from Germany in a row. Even the black dress she wore on that evening with the big red rose across the front? That picture was on the wall of my room, right next to where I opened my eyes in the morning. So when she walked into the lounge wearing

that same dress, it was as if the picture had floated off my wall with the most familiar smile in my world – and it spoke to me! ‘Hello Pieter!’

So there we were sitting on the carpet and sorting out all the South African stamps I had brought her two little boys. They were also there in their pyjamas, excitedly pointing out the buck and lions and elephants. The stamps with animals on them were easy to sort. Then Sophia picked up one of the long political ones and showed her sons. ‘Edoardo? Chipi? Look: an elephant’s tooth.’ ‘No, Sophia,’ I said, ‘you have it upside-down. That is the Afrikaanse Taalmonument.’ ‘What does that mean?’ ‘It’s a monument to the Afrikaans language.’ ‘Why?’ asked Sophia Loren, ‘is it dead?’ I should have taught her her first Afrikaans word: Ja-nee.

If you grow up in a relatively small city at the southern tip of a very large continent, and realise that your cultural DNA is trapped in a northern hemisphere, you learn to adore from afar. Which I did. And yet my imported adorations found me in Cape Town: Sophia on the covers of Italian and German magazines; Marlene’s LPs that had me singing with her the Berlin songs I’d learnt from my grandmother. There were plays by Noël Coward and Tennessee Williams produced locally. But my greatest inspiration came from the people around me in Cape Town. Talented and unique and there was laughter and success and originality! And those stories round our dinner table, that to this day make me believe that dreams can come true.

So it was obvious where my road ahead would go: from school via the zig-zag into Ma’s hemisphere, then nine months military training in the navy. (I never put my foot on a ship, but had a hell of a time). Then to the University of Cape Town to take a BA degree and become a teacher, like Miss Nel, my English teacher at school. When Miss Nel asked the Afrikaans class to write a poem in English, I said: ‘No, Miss I can’t,’ She said: ‘Yes, Pieter you can do anything. If you believe in it and work towards it, you can do anything!’ I also wanted to be the teacher to share those words with a frightened child.

Pa was thrilled with my decision. ‘Ja, get a degree to fall back on. Then we can keep it in the top drawer with all the other valuable

things.’ So what went wrong? Instead of registering for that, I decided to do a BA (Drama). Pa hit the roof: ‘Drama? What nonsense! You’ll never get a job!’ The good times were over; ice-blue eyes were back. Ma was calmer. ‘I thought you were doing a teacher’s degree?’ ‘Yes, but I decided to do Drama.’ ‘To be an actor?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Do you think you can act?’ ‘I don’t know ...’ ‘You better find out! And no one can do it for you. Find out! If it works, it will be wonderful. If not? Well, there are always two ice creams.’

So I did my four years at the UCT drama school, and every day I learnt something so important that I couldn’t explain it to anyone. I just knew that theatre was a window to the world and every play reflected the lives of people – in comedy, tragedy, farce – and it was completely confusing. I just didn’t know what was real? This 2000-year legacy of drama? Or my life outside in my world of apartness and separate developments. So after four extraordinary years of being on first-name terms with Becket, Ionesco, Brecht, Osborne, Pinter, Wilde and The Bard, with a sideways glance at Fugard, I graduated with a BA (Drama) degree, probably the most useless thing I own. When you’re on stage, no one will ask you for a degree. You can either do it, or you can’t do it!

I had experienced some performances during my studies and believed the embraces and the ‘darling-you-were-wonderful!’ The next step was to extend my studies by going back across the sea to London. If Lourens Olivier could do it, so could I. Pa wouldn’t even discuss it with me. ‘Don’t come to me for money! I’m not giving you a penny!’ I wasn’t that surprised when Ma gave me an envelope. ‘Here, Pietie, some money to help. Now go and find out what you want to do. Whatever it is, I’m excited for you. Hals- und Beinbruch.’ I never saw her again.

The Union Castle ship docked in Southampton. The British Rail train was there to take me to London, not as a wide-eyed tourist, but as someone who was trying to find the rest of my life. Happily Tessa was already studying at the Royal Academy of Music and so we could share a flat in Kilburn. The moment I reached London I knew: the work

starts now – look, listen, learn. See every play you can. Very expensive to even consider buying tickets, but there was always a queue on the day of performance for standing room entry. I think I saw most of Shakespeare standing for the hours which felt like a few minutes. Even managing the treat of a restricted view seat at an Old Vic matinee. I think I saw half of John Gielgud's face.

They were all there for me to devour, all my heroes from *Plays and Players* magazine: Laurence Olivier, Michael Redgrave, Alec Guinness, Edith Evans, Maggie Smith, Geraldine McEwan, Derek Jacobi: all speaking English. Comedies in English. Dramas in English. English spoken as only the English can. Very soon I realised: I can't compete with that! So I managed to get into the London Film School thanks to the funds Ma sent me.

Then suddenly Tessa and I had to go back to Cape Town to bury our mother and me to a bank to borrow money to study further. (Jy kry nie 'n penny van my nie ... Ja, Pa.) Coming back to London after that was probably more than anything the beginning of the rest of my life. Back for the next four years in the centre of the crossroads of the world, exposed to music, theatre, art, film, languages, cultures, colours, smells, sex. Nearly all legal; definitely all available. The shock to realise that freedom wasn't just a word; it was the oxygen of life. Everyone around me could choose their separate developments: freedom of choice, freedom of speech, freedom of expression. Homosexuality was still a crime, but I was used to that twilight zone.

Three of my friends at the film school were communists; for me a bigger shock. 'Hey? Are you really a communist?' I whispered. 'Yes,' they said. 'Don't say it so loud!' I hissed. 'You're a white South African?' I nodded. 'You should whisper.' The BBC screened documentaries about South Africa shot just down the road from where I lived in Pinelands. Familiar black and white images. Langa, Guguletu, the Cape Flats. Young white men like me in army uniform with guns in their hands shooting young blacks in the back. 'No! Never! Lies! Communist propaganda! It can't be true!' I told my friends, 'I live there. I knew nothing. How could we have allowed that to happen? We're decent

people. Christians. It's the communists.' My communist friends just smiled. It didn't take long to realise that this was not propaganda. Slowly I accepted that I couldn't go back to that; wouldn't go back. Anyway, why should I go back? I now had a life in London.

I wrote my first play and asked the principal of the London Film School if I could put it on in the cinema during the summer vac. There were no seats. 'If you can get me seats, you can do the play.' So I wrote 32 letters asking for assistance and two answers came back. The Duchess of Bedford sent 100 pounds and Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton also sent 100. That's 200 quid which paid for the seats! The opening night was full: Janet Suzman from the RSC, Geraldine McEwan from the Old Vic, Fenella Fielding from the Carry On crowd. A telegram from Sophia and a letter from Marlene.

I forgot to invite the critics! The next performance only had two members of the audience. They stayed; us four actors did the show. The man was a Texan who took us to have supper at the Angus Steak House – and the woman was a literary agent who said: 'Darling, I think you're mad. Phone me.' I did and today Patricia MacNaughton is still my literary agent and best friend.

After two years, I qualified at the film school. I even had a job there. 'Shouldn't the school have a library?' Yes. 'I'll run it.' OK. 'Shouldn't the students be given inspirational talks by actors so that they know how to direct actors?' Yes. So I got Glenda Jackson to come and talk to the students. I asked Ingrid Bergman, who said 'thank you but I'm frightened of students' and Alfred Hitchcock said 'I hate students.' I was already spelling the U-y-s of my name as A-c-e. And I was saying the word 'darling' beautifully. Then a postcard from Cape Town arrived with that familiar view of Table Mountain from Blouberg which didn't help. The card was from Brian Astbury and Yvonne Bryceland, two of my best theatre friends from those old days. They were starting a nonracial theatre in Cape Town called The Space.

'We're going to break every apartheid law in the book and get into fantastic *kak*. Come and join us.' Yes! This was exactly what I wanted to do! Here I was wearing 'Thatcher, Thatcher, milk-snatcher' T-shirts

and lying in front of bulldozers to Save Covent Garden, but there I could ... but no, I've been a legal alien for four years. This is now home. This is my life; I'm English! Yes, darling, of course you are. Until you realise that for an Afrikaner, trying to be English is sometimes as impossible as trying to be black.

And so it came to pass that in the new year of 1973 I was back on a Union Castle liner up and down the waves for all those days, with my life in three trunks in the hold and my dreams in a plastic bag, back to 10 Homestead Way Pinelands and Pa. Just me and Pa. No Ma. Tessa stayed in London. No Sannie. No Boeboe. But the Space Theatre! 'Oh no!' said Pa, 'You're not going to waste your time with those hippies and liberals! This is not what you're coming back to after all those years of study in London. You must get a proper job. Go to Johannesburg and join the SABC. Television is coming. You need to earn money to pay back what you borrowed in order to study. I'm not helping you! But see that you pay back the money!' I couldn't convince him that I would get a cheque at The Space for R20.50 a week, money we never could spend, because we were too busy surviving against all the odds!

We wrote plays, directed them, performed in them, built sets for them and hid the illegal black guests behind those sets when the security police raided. I started writing dramas that reflected the legally segregated world around me. My homophobic, xenophobic, multi-phobic, befokte-phobic South Africa. And then I met the great love of my life, an embrace that made me world famous in Cape Town: the Publications Control Board. They were also turned on by me; wouldn't leave me alone. In quick succession they banned my first two plays. *Selle ou Storie* you could see but not read; *Karnaval* you could read but not see. It was a marriage made in heaven. The censor board became my public relations department.

Letters in brown envelopes arrived from Pretoria typed on official letterhead with the apartheid government paraphernalia, addressed to Pieter-Dirk Uys, Space Theatre, Cape Town – informing me in deep official Afrikaans that I was not allowed to perform my work anywhere in South Africa, because I was setting the racial groups in disharmony

with each other and depicting Afrikaners in leadership with ridicule and contempt. And then giving lists of words deemed obscene and offensive. I never knew I had so many swearwords in my vocabulary. But there they were on three A4 pages, carefully listed by a typist: *kak poep drol moer stront fok tiet hol gat poes!* My eternal delight and gratitude to that Mevrouw van Staden who after typing out the long list of obscene and unacceptable words and phrases, added to the bottom of the four page letter in her own writing: *Meneer Uys, u spel die woord 'fok' met 'n F en nie met 'n 'V' nie.* But Pa was not laughing.

'I told you not to get involved with these hippies! Now the security police are at my door! The censors! Those swearwords!' 'Pa, the only swearword I use at The Space is the word "apartheid"'. That didn't work. 'Moenie jou vieslike politiek in my huis inbring nie!' He wasn't just angry; he was frightened. For me, and rightly so. Everything we did at The Space Theatre was illegal! It was against the law to allow black and white people to sit together; we broke that law. It was against the law to have black and white actors performing on stage together; we broke that law. It was illegal to focus attention on invisible prisons like Robben Island and banned terrorists called Nelson Mandela; we broke that law. It was a criminal offence to be homosexual; we broke that law. It was illegal to be naked on stage; some of the others broke that law! And so Pa threw me out of 10 Homestead Way. 'Neem jou kommunistiese liberale gemors uit my huis!' All I could afford was a small room in Long Street. From the frying pan into the delicious fire!

Now I was right in the heart of the Sodom and Gomorrah of the Cape! The Space was off Long Street next to the café on the corner. Every morning I would check the front page of *Die Burger* to see what they were up to. There was a report that Dr Connie Mulder ... (Who remembers Connie Mulder? I did a joke about him in a later show and got into a lot of trouble: 'Why does Dr Connie Mulder have such a skew mouth? Because when he goes through the kitchen, he says to the maid: "See you in the garage!") ... Dr Connie Mulder, the Minister of the Interior, was looking for vooraanstaande Afrikaners — prominent Afrikaners to join the censor board. Now there's a job for Pa. So

I phoned him. Wat is dit nou? I suggested he apply. He could see uncut movies – free! He was there like shot. It changed everything. Imagine: while the censors were censoring me, my Pa became one of the censors! After a few weeks he left a message for me at the Space office. ‘Tell my son to come and have lunch with me on Sunday. Remind him that we will be having fish!’

And so I went back to 10 Homestead Way and for the first time Pa spoke to me, not at me. ‘Are you frightened of them?’ Of course, the National Party government is all-powerful. ‘No, not them; the censor board.’ What’s the difference? ‘They are idiots! Senile old fools. Last week they cut a Fellini film to pieces. Don’t be frightened of them. Make fun of them. Maak hulle belaglik.’ Okay, Pa, maybe it was now time for a different noise?

The clever National Party government. Using censorship as the ultimate diversion that kept important liberals like Van Zyl Slabbert, Helen Suzman, Athol Fugard and Nadine Gordimer wasting their anger and creative energies to fight for my right to say *kak* and *poep* on page two of my play. And while that was entertaining an amused white nation, the SADF marched through South-West Africa into Angola and parents lost their sons. A civil war exploded in every black township and families lost their children. The Christian-Nationalist education system lobotomised generations, while our führer, PW Botha, took so-called parliamentary democracy and stuck it up his expletive-deleted! And a new F-word joined my vocabulary: finance.

That’s always the bottom line: money. It’s a great thrill to march with banned banners and wear banned T-shirts and illegally fight for the right to fight. But when a theatre produces a play and it’s banned, the doors of that theatre close and do not reopen. I wrote two new plays for the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, one focusing on censorship and the other on interracial relations. I was ready to start. It didn’t happen. Mannie Manim, the director of the theatre, knew that putting on a new play by Pieter-Dirk Uys was too much of a financial risk because it would be banned.

‘Do you understand, Pieter,’ said Mannie Manim, ‘I love the plays,

but I can't take the chance. Say you understand!' I said: of course I understood ... but no, I didn't! A new virus had entered my life called self-censorship, the most toxic of all the alternatives. I was living in Melville in Johannesburg in a small house that needed a monthly rental paid. There was also a big grey hungry cat in my life called Eschel. Like the disgraced NP politician he was named after, that cat would definitely not go to the great white heaven. With banned plays and no prospects ahead, there was no income. Prime Minister PW Botha was on my borrowed black and white TV set, wagging his finger and licking his lips while announcing the 1981 general election. Furiously I mirrored his actions and his words. And Eschel the cat laughed!

I always thank the National Party for giving me the gifts of a PW Botha, Pik Botha, Fanie Botha, Bothalesi. They were the best script-writers in the world. I couldn't make it up: from the racist laws through the homelands to the daily lies. Nothing was funny about apartheid, and yet the hypocrisy and fake news of the day made the politicians ridiculous and laughable. 'Pietie? Maak hulle belaglik!' The echo of Pa's words started a new chapter for me. If I couldn't have my plays produced for all those obvious reasons, what about a political revue? Short satirical sketches that would reflect topical issues with dark and hopefully illegal humour. Would the censors be crazy enough to ban themselves?

I'd do Prime Minister PW Botha with his wagging finger and forked tongue. Swipe at Minister of Cooperation and Development – nice sounds for black affairs – Dr Piet Koornhof with his big ears and long nose, looking like a reject from the Walt Disney shop, as he busses illegal blacks out of white areas. Not funny, but hilariously hideous and true! And I would create an Afrikaans matron called Evita Bezuidenhout who would demand that I be locked up because apartheid was a gift from God. It was also illegal for men to wear woman's clothing, so I could tick that box as well. The hypocrisy and small mindedness of our local politics could make up an entire show. So I adapted and did not die.

PW Botha even gave me that revue's title. On television he told his tense white electorate to 'adapt or die'. So *Adapt or Dye* started in a

small venue at the Market Theatre as a late night show, starting at 11.15 p.m. We hoped that the security police were either drunk, or who knows, even in bed with the censors! The revue ran for three weeks there, preaching to the converted in the middle of the night and, against all logic, extended its run and even toured the country. It was the right moment to stop hiding behind fear. Maybe those in politics and the media who encouraged me to carry on didn't want to just laugh at jokes. They wanted to react to the absurdity of the obscenity of separate development.

We did one-night stands here, there and even in Bloemfontein. Soon I was playing in Cape Town's Baxter Concert Hall with its 667 seats. Every night it was a full house. The three-week season there inflated my weekly income from R20.50 to R15,000! And Pa said: 'Pietie! Come home!' So I went back to 10 Homestead Way Pinelands. The house looked dusty and dilapidated. The thatch was falling out in clumps. Pa was reusing teabags. 'It's the squirrels,' he said, 'they do it on purpose. But I can't fix the roof, because there is no money. Can't afford to fix the car; can't afford to replace the leaking tap ...'

I said: 'Pa, stop now with the "can't-afford". We can afford. It's OK. I've got the money. I'm not in jail. I'm not poor. I'll pay for a new thatched roof, a new car, a new tap. I'll give you a return ticket to anywhere in the world. You can go up the Andes and down the Amazon. Just one thing: please don't throw those names at me like you used to: liberal-communist-terrorist-bla-bla. I know it's your freedom of speech, but I'll just take my chequebook somewhere else.' Pa was all-smiles. 'Pietie, it's a deal.' Once upon a time he could bribe me with a steam train and a rum and raisin ice cream on a Sunday morning. Now I could do the same every day!

Pa was now my number one fan. And PW Botha never let me down with titles. *Adapt or Dye* made way for *Total Onslaught*. Nineteen eighty-five saw another new one-man show at the Baxter Theatre with a PW title: *Beyond the Rubicon*. By now we had won at least one small battle: theatres but not cinemas were declared open to all. My audience was now legally nonracial at last. So Sannie and her family could be seen at

the opening night. Not like in the past when they appeared in the foyer with duster and cloth, swabbing here, wiping there, playing the part of maid and cleaner to perfection. Then when the show started, she and her family would slip into the dark auditorium. I always warned them not to smile, because the security police could then see the whites of their teeth. Sannie just laughed and said: 'I'll somaar take out my teeth!'

Pa was always in Row E15. He had the perfect laughter to start the audience off, usually seconds before anyone else's. It was a good sign. Then on that opening night after five minutes it stopped. Was Pa dead? When I got back to 10 Homestead Way, he was sitting, waiting for me, a glass of wine in hand. He didn't speak Afrikaans. He spoke in English, a very bad sign. I knew I was in trouble. Of course it was my swearwords as usual. 'Ag Pa, for heaven's sake! I only use words like *kak* and *poep* to make the Afrikaners feel at home! Besides, Afrikaans swearwords are more like poetry: poësie met twee dotjies op die e.'

Pa was not to be calmed. 'Every time you use those disgusting words on stage, people will think I taught them to you! It's as if you stick your finger in my eye within five minutes. I don't want to see you; I don't want to hear you. Why don't you rather use that finger to tickle me behind my ear, and when I am having such a nice time and turn to see what is making me smile, my eye will find your finger!' This was coming from Pa? 'Don't always be so obvious, going for the jugular. Don't always try to shock. Don't assault me with your message. It's entertainment! Be inventive and theatrical. Use weird and wonderful ways to make me laugh at something I don't even want to think about!' So thank you, Pa. Of course, Sannie would come backstage after the performances and take full credit for every swearword. 'O ja, die boere het vanaand in hulle broeke ge-Ah!'

Why did Sannie so suddenly leave 10 Homestead Way under a cloud? I never found out. I remember the day so clearly. I came back from school and the moment I walked into the house, I knew something was wrong. Where was Sannie? I looked into her kitchen; no Sannie. In her room outside? No Sannie. Ma said nothing. I was too scared to ask Pa. Was it my fault that Sannie went away without even saying goodbye?

Of course today it's so clear. Susanna Abader, the coloured maid, and Pa, the white Afrikaner, both warped by their separate developments. Hannes Uys wouldn't take cheek from her, and she wouldn't take shit from him. But she didn't stay away from me.

After six months there was a knock on the kitchen door. I opened it and there was Sannie. And that became the plan: that Sannie would always make sure that Pa was not there when she popped in. Ma and Tessa and I were so pleased when Sannie came for tea and chocolate cake. We could talk and laugh together. It took a long time through months and years to neutralise prejudice and diminish our fear – Sannie drinking tea; Sannie having tea and a rusk; Sannie at the dining room table enjoying a piece of Ma's marmor kuchen, the marble cake Sannie baked even better. And eventually Sannie with me, Tessa and Ma in the sitting room, celebrating her birthday with presents and a cake. And that's when master walked in unexpected!

We three Uyses nearly died of shock, but Sannie didn't allow any hiccup. She turned to him with a wave: 'Hello Master! Just in time for tea. Come. Sit.' And he did, always polite, but with ice-blue eyes flashing through and that familiar tight-lipped smile pretending nothing was amiss. Sannie cut him some cake and poured the tea just as he always expected it. She then sat back on the couch with us around her, telling stories of her family in Athlone, a world a million miles from Pinelands, because we were separated by a fence, a train line and apartheid. And eventually Sannie came home.

Nineteen ninety was the year for coming home. Nelson Mandela came home. Tessa came home; I came home and Pa came home after a complicated heart operation at Groote Schuur Hospital, something that could have been avoided. He had a pacemaker for years that worked very well. Maybe eventually he outpaced the pacemaker. Then someone told him about an even better one that would give him another 100 years of life. He was there like a shot! The new one was put in and the old one removed. But they left in the wires that connected it with his heart and during the process septicaemia moved in. Which needed another complicated operation to remove the wires and the

infection. The doctor was worried: 'At his age ...?' I just said: 'Do what he says. He always knows best.' So the operation happened and Pa survived. In intensive care the nurses didn't survive, but he eventually could come home to 10 Homestead Way.

Tessa came back from London; I came back from Johannesburg so we could look after him – dress the wound, feed him, wash him, clean him, be with him through the difficult nights. I suddenly believed that we were a family again ... nearly. But Tessa had to go back to London for a piano recital; I needed to return to the Market Theatre for a new play, but decided that I couldn't leave Pa. As weak as he was, he made it very clear that I needed to go back to my work. 'You have a new play! And we need a new roof! I'm OK.' I could scarcely hear him speak. 'You've just had a massive operation, Pa!' 'No, I've just got hay fever. Give me a glass of water and I will be fine.' I didn't know what to do. Phoned Tessa in London. She just said: 'Where's Sannie?' I phoned Sannie. The first thing she said was: 'You forgot my birthday.' I couldn't even think up an excuse. 'Sannie, we need you ...' 'Darling, I'm on my way.'

Now I could go back to Pa with good news. He was lying on his back, eyes closed. Small. Old. Maybe I should tease him and say he looks like Greta Garbo in *Camille*. He'd smiled at that a few days ago. 'Pa, I've got good news. I've found someone to look after you.' 'No, it won't work, because they will steal everything.' 'No, Pa, they won't steal anything. Sannie's coming back.' Ice-blue eyes open. 'What? Sannie? Is she still alive? Coming here?' Then a few seconds of noisy thinking. 'At least she won't steal.' 'No, Pa, she won't steal.' 'But she'll have to go home every afternoon and then leave me alone at night. And what happens if I need someone?' Pa sounds frightened. 'She won't go home, Pa. She will stay here for the nights as well.'

Pa gives a long sigh of relief. 'Ag, bakkie, that's wonderful. Thank you. Now just go into the garden and take the lawnmower and the hosepipe out of the shed, find a bed for her and turn it back into her room again.' 'No, Pa, she's not sleeping in the old maid's room outside. She'll be in my room which is next to your room...' Blue eyes open with dragons crossing them at full speed. '... so that if you need her in the

night, she will be here for you.' More noisy thinking. 'But is she strong enough to go up and down the stairs when she needs to use the outside toilet?' He just won't give up! 'No, Pa, she is not using the outside toilet. She is using our bathroom and our toilet because she is now part of our family here to look after you. And if you don't like it, I have the money to find you the best old age home in Cape Town!' That made up his mind. 'Bokkie, bel vir Sannie!'

And so Sannie came home. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, Sannie was there, the guardian angel of 10 Homestead Way Pinelands. There, with Pa, with dignity, with respect, with humour, with discipline, with hope. With his pills, his slippers, his favourite food, watching his favourite TV show with him. With Pa, right to the end, and even beyond: helping me through that new silence. And still in that fortress kitchen. I still had to knock to enter! And on that specific day, I needed my car keys that were in her kitchen.

'Sannie, I'm in a hurry.'

'No wait ...'

'Damn it, Sannie.'

'OK, you can come in.'

I opened the door and there was Sannie – in a pinstriped suit with new matching shoes and handbag. A new doek. And the pearl necklace and earrings Ma gave her all those years ago. 'Sannie? You're dressed for a wedding?'

'No darling, I'm going to do something I've never done before in my life. I'm going to vote for the very first time.' It was the 27th April 1994. Sannie and I were going to vote together in the Dutch Reformed Church hall in Pinelands. I helped her into the car. 'Before we go there, just go down Homestead Way and pick up Antie Leen.' Her best friend, also working a kitchen down the road. There she is on the pavement, wearing a hat and gloves, like the Queen Mother hailing an uber! We get to the hall, park the car and walk towards the already legendary election queue. Sannie stops. 'Maar waar's onse queue? Wat gaan hier aan?'

'Sannie, this is the New South Africa. The rainbow nation; one queue fits all!'

‘O haliha,dit gaan nie werk nie ...’

Suddenly Antie Leen gasps.‘O God, I forgot my teeth!’

I say: ‘No, it’s alright, Ant’Leen, you don’t need teeth to vote.’

Sannie gives me a look of utter disgust. ‘Toemaar, Leentjie, you can borrow mine.’

So after Sannie went and voted, she just slipped her teeth to Antie Leen, now with a toothy smile. She went in to draw her cross and came out with an even bigger toothy smile, because she’d just voted for the National Party! What a day! Sannie had prepared me for this moment through the years, slowly breaking down the barriers of fear and superiority that I took for granted, and made it easier for me to stop being just ... white. I drove these two new citizens back to their respective kitchens, and returned to sit on the curb and watched this revolution of laughter and smiles. We actually got away with it; democracy has arrived!

I see two pregnant women in the queue, one white, one black, comparing their baby bumps; these two soon-to-be-born-frees who will not have to suffer the fingerprints of separate development. Imagine those two young South Africans getting ready to join one of great universities our country is famous for; having spent their schooling in a system of education regarded as the best in the world – because there’s no reason why it shouldn’t be. Everything we start here today can only be perfect, because we know how easily corruption destroys and we will never never never allow that to happen again.

And everyone will have a house with fresh water, sanitation and safe electricity. We will have a great unique Constitution, which will be treasured and protected by future governments. We will have an honest police force that would never shoot to kill like the SAP of apartheid. There will be freedom of speech, freedom of expression and no censorship. Oh? No censorship?? I will really miss my PR department!

‘Pieter-Dirk Uys, who do you think you are?’

I know who I am!

‘Are you trying to be funny?’

Yes ... oh yes! But not now ... not now. Pa’s dead.

84 is 84 ... but Pa was never old. The septicaemia won. And on that day 23rd December 1990, Tessa was arriving from London the next morning and we would have our family Christmas that evening: *Alte Deutsche Weinachten*, like when Ma was there – the Xmas tree with the silver *Lametta*, the carved wooden angels and their instruments, the *Pfefferkuchen* Sannie made, like Ma baked them. But Pa was not doing well at all. He was getting colder and colder. Sannie kept adding a blanket, a beanie, gloves, a scarf. He coughed all the time, wheezed for breath. Didn't move.

I phoned the doctor and found out that he had been seeing Pa twice a week for the last few months. Even taken him up to Groote Schuur Hospital once a week to spend the night and be made more comfortable in his breathing. Pa had said: 'Don't tell my children. It was important for us to have our family Xmas.' And so the doctor suggested I take Pa up for the night. '... then you'll feel so much stronger tomorrow when your daughter arrives from London for the Christmas Tree?' Pa wheezed: it was a very good idea.

Sannie packed his overnight bag. I helped him into the car. We reversed out with Sannie in the driveway in her slippers waving: bye bye. And as we reverse out of the driveway of 10 Homestead Way, he looks at the thatched roof of the home he named *Sonskyn*. He says very softly: *Bokkie, dis my einde*. I pat him gently on his cold hand and hear my perfect drama school voice: Don't worry, darling, we all love you ... Noël Coward would have slapped my face.

The drive to Groote Schuur Hospital from Pinelands is a short one, but this felt very long, because Pa started crying ... no, more of a sob from this small bundle of person, scarcely making a dent in the seat where Hannes Uys had sat, robust and so full of life and himself. We got to the hospital, parked at the entrance, struggled to the lift, got to the first floor, then slowly shuffled down the passage to the ward – a familiar route for Pa.

Then I saw them. They were waiting for him! Doctors and nurses, excited because Oom Hannes was coming to spend the night. 'Hello Oom Hannes.' Suddenly I saw Pa become Oom Hannes in front of my

eyes. He stopped shuffling; he didn't wheeze; he looked taller; he sounded younger as he greeted and remembered everyone's name. 'Pa? Is everything alright?'

He turned to me. 'Oh yes, this is Pieter my son. Sometimes he also acts.'

I felt like the taxi driver who sings in the shower. 'Are you okay, Pa?'

'Ja, remember Tessa arrives tomorrow at 11. Don't be late. Then we'll have our Christmas tree together.'

And he left me to join his fanclub. They'd found a single room for Pa, because they knew Oom Hannes was back and Oom Hannes would entertain them all night as Oom Hannes always does. And I went back to *Sonskyn*.

The next morning the phone rings at 8. 'Come now. Hurry.'

'Kom Sannie.'

'O, ek het nog my slippers aan.'

'Pa sal nie omgee nie.'

We get to the ward. The moment I see the nurses in tears I know: this is it. The sister takes us into the room. His eyes are closed. I hold his hand, determined that this is the one time I will not look away. Suddenly his hand squeezes mine, so hard I thought he might break my fingers. And then suddenly he's gone ... as if he'd gone through an open door into another room where people were waiting for him, leaving us behind with the props and the costumes. And so we packed up the props and the costumes and went back to *Sonskyn* ... Pietertjie Uys and Ant' Sannie.

I stand in the music room next to Ma's piano that she brought all the way from Germany, surrounded by the music and the books and the magic of our lives: the tree with Lametta, the Pfefferkuchen... and Pa's slippers from yesterday. And I just thought: why? Why didn't I ask him more questions about his life? Why didn't I ask more questions about Ma's life? Why was it always only about my life! How is it possible that I know more about Sophia Loren's family than my own family? Then I hear Pa's voice so clearly in my mind: 'As iets verskriklik gebeur, gryp die boonste laai en hardloop na die bure!'

I go into the sitting room to his writing desk and open the top drawer of the desk. On top of the important clutter is an envelope addressed to me. 'For Pieter when I am dead.' I open it, the writing scrawled and uneven. 'Pieter my seun, as jy dit lees is ek dood; nou doen jy die volgende:' And there were 20 things for me to do to end his life with dignity: contact Meneer Olivier at the undertakers (Human & Pitt – isn't that wonderful?), the insurances are here; the will is there; also phone numbers of people to contact. All those untidy things that have to be sorted out, always at the worst, saddest time, Pa had done it all for me. It took two hours and 10 phone calls and it was all sorted. And we could celebrate a fantastic life with love, with tears, with Pa. What a wonderful Christmas present he left me: make your list; fill your top drawer; sort out your legacy. Make sure you flush before you go.

The second-to-last time I was with my Cape Flats' mother was the weekend I invited Sannie to visit me in Darling in 2004. Getting my house ready for her was like preparing for a visit by Sophia Loren. Everything had to be perfect. I wanted Sannie to be proud of me and to see how much she had taught me. I planned, sorted and cleaned. Not pink flowers; Sannie liked white ones. A Dunlop not-feathers-pillow because of her hay fever. A small step so that she can climb up into the bed easily. Her favourite pudding. We'll drive to Yzerfontein and take a boat into the bay. Maybe we'll even see a whale having a baby. I'll do a show specially for her at Evita se Perron. I planned every meal around the food Sannie enjoyed, such as spaghetti Bolognese. I found a recipe for it in Sophia's cookbook. Sannie would be the guest of honour, surrounded by the silver and crystal that this time around I had cleaned and polished.

Friends of mine had recently bought a brand new Jaguar and I asked them to fetch Sannie in Athlone and bring her to Darling in style. I waited in the street in front of the house – nervous. Well, let's rather say: excited. The Jaguar purred up to the gate. Sannie was in the back, looking grand in her pearls, smart suit, doek, new spectacles. I opened her door. She was in a fury. 'Nay, o haliha! Daai boys ry soos mal mense! We could have been killed! I told them, stop speeding! And they smoke

in the car. Cigarettes. I have asthma ... I couldn't breathe!' My friends looked helpless and fled with a wave. I took Sannie by the arm and slowly we went up to the house: one, two, three steps. We stopped in the passage; Sannie slightly out of breath at 86. What if she found dust in the house, I fret.

'Darling, where's your TV?' she asks.

'In the TV room, Sannie ...'

'I don't want to miss my serials ...'

She walked into the TV room and plonked down on the sofa. She didn't move for the next three days. So much for Yzerfontein beach and whales giving birth. Even the dining room with the silver I had burnished didn't feature. A sit-down dinner didn't feature.

'Do you have a TV-tray? I can't miss the next episode. Bring me my food on a tray!' And so we sat, me in my shorts and flip-flops and Sannie in her finery, with trays on our laps. Just like the old days: Pietertjie Uys and Ant' Sannie and their favourite serials. A few months later at her funeral, her family ask me to say a few words. There was so much I wanted to say, but I didn't want to intrude. 'No, how can you think that? Mammie always talked about you as her "favourite child",' said her daughter.

So I never became a steam-train driver, even though I did have my very own railway station, darling. I didn't become an NG Kerk dominee to get a free motorcar every year and go straight to heaven, because you don't need to be an NG Kerk dominee to get such things – you just need to be a member of the ANC. I didn't become a teacher, because the theatre hijacked me: life imprisonment without parole. And so, as Noël Coward might have said: 'This dear boy knows nothing about anything, and everything about something.'

I still have Pa's writing desk in my house in Darling. It looks so much smaller now. And yet, every time I open it and take a deep breath, I am instantly transported back to 10 Homestead Way Pinelands ... the smell of the thatched roof that gave me hay fever ... the smell of Pa's musty, well-thumbed books that gave me hay fever; and Pa's favourite Old Spice aftershave lotion that gave us both sneezing fits.

It also made the ideal Christmas present: one year the bottle of Old Spice was wrapped: 'For Pieter from Pa'; the next year it was: 'For Pa from Pieter'. I'll still have it under the little Christmas tree glittering with Lametta: last year it was for 'Pieter from Pa'. And every time I open it and have a sniff of Old Spice, I know: Oom Hannes Uys is in the room. But don't worry, I've outgrown the hay fever.

(SOUND: *The boy soprano sings: fade out under voice*)

At last, I've got my long pants. Now my voice will have to break. I've got the latest Angelique book from the library. I've read them all, twice: *Angelique*; *Angelique and the King*; *Angelique and the Sultan*; *Angelique in Love* and *Angelique in revolt*. Sophia is on this week's cover of *Stage and Cinema*. Tomorrow is my 14th birthday; I don't know what's going to happen next. Listen, Ma and Tessa are playing duets ... but where's Pa? (Call) Pa? (Again) Pa? ... hang on, maybe ... maybe if I just make a noise ...?

(SOUND: *Evita anthem – it fades in. During this add Evita Bezuidenhout's red lipstick*)

Evita, Evita, Evita Bezuidenhout ...

Evita, Evita, Evita Bezuidenhout ...

Evita, Evita – Evita Bezuidenhout!

(Lights: *A slow blackout on her smile*)

(PDU *leaves the stage*)

THE END

PIETER-DIRK UYS in
**THE ECHO
OF A NOISE**
a one-man memoir



"This is the first time I tell the story behind the stories. Maybe turning 70 has given me the thumbs-up to share the secrets and let the cat out of the bag." - PDU

31 May - 18 June

For more info visit: www.pietertoerien.co.za



**THEATRE
ON THE BAY**

PIETER TOERIEN PRODUCTIONS

MEDIA REACTIONS

The poster hints that this will be a personal, intimate and very philosophical visit with Pieter-Dirk Uys. Here is no outrageous Evita, or other personalities. Just a man comfortably seated on a high stool and chatting. He lifts the curtain with empathy on his childhood days and focuses on the complex relationship with his father. At the same time, the audience is captured by his politically incorrect humour, inexhaustible energy and optimism, as well as the relaxed way in which he involves the audience by making them feel personally involved, even though some stories lead through minefields. His conversational style makes you feel like a visitor in his home, passionately identifying with his memories – from that first song on an old LP to his present day sold-out performances. Those who know the Uys's history will even find more rewards in his style of storytelling, because he takes you by the hand. Or if you don't know Uys from Adam, or attend his latest performances in wonderment, one thing is certain: he is the only person who can make you sadly smile at life and our present confusing politics. Bravo. – *Rapport* (Johannesburg) April 2017

The Echo of a Noise is the most honest and wonderful performance I've ever seen him give. He's a magnificent raconteur. – *Daily Maverick* (Johannesburg) March 2017

Watching this intimate performance was like having a one-on-one conversation with Uys.

– *The Witness* (Pietermaritzburg) February 2017

Pieter-Dirk Uys has a knack of knocking life into perspective. Even as we laughed, we left *The Echo of a Noise* much wiser, with thanks for the gift of this teacher/philosopher/actor/satirist/humorist. Long may Pieter-Dirk Uys remain our moral signpost.

– *OnChisholm* (Cape Town) April 2017

For me the show was a revelation of Pieter-Dirk Uys's considerable courage, humanity, endurance and loyalty.

– *The Times* (Johannesburg) July 2017

This is an amazing glimpse into what created one of the most influential performers in South Africa. Uys is a master storyteller whose characters are always entertaining and at the same time often poignant. This wonderful trip down memory lane is a treasure and definitely a show not to be missed.

– *Livewire* (Durban) July 2017

A national treasure, a theatrical legend, a master craftsman, a constant inspiration: Pieter-Dirk Uys delivers his most poignant and gripping work to date with *The Echo of a Noise*. He is simply superb.

– *Sosuterbill* (Durban) July 2017

The experience of a great comforting hug is perhaps the best way to describe *The Echo of a Noise*. That hug is an ode to storytelling in service of the theatre and life that helped shape Uys as an all-round creative artist. He's engaging, dramatic, poignant, biting satirical and hysterically funny – performing the most riveting two hours without an interval. But you barely notice the time. Don't miss it.

– *Artsmart* (Durban) July 2017

He shared his personal history with such a profound sense of honesty that at times I was moved to tears.

– *Berea Mail* (Durban) July 2017

The story he weaves in *The Echo of a Noise* is funny, sad, poignant and utterly compelling. Uys's finest work.

– *The Witness* (Pietermaritzburg) August 2017

The Echo of a Noise is an austere staged tour de force from a man of the theatre capable of seducing his audience with nothing more than a fluent monologue for well over an hour without an interval. He navigates a tricky path to find his own identity. He does so with intelligence, courage and a humility unexpected in a performer noted for his confident and extrovert personality. He is authentic in this soulbaring show that has universal appeal.

– *Cape Argus* (Cape Town) June 2016

Geen resensie kan reg laat geskied, of waarlik hulde bring aan *The Echo of a Noise*, die jongste eenmanvertoning van Pieter-Dirk Uys nie. Hy is gestroop, eerlik, oordekend, openhartig en vreesloos, maar o, so weerloos op daardie verhoog. Hy is 'n meesterlike storieverteller, sonder arrogansie of selfbeheptheid. En eendag as hy nie meer daar is nie, gaan mense waarlik besef watter diep spore hy nou eintlik getrap het, sonder dat ons regtig aandag gegee het.

– *Litnet* (Kaapstad) Junie 2016

By the end of *The Echo of a Noise* one leaves with rare and privileged insight into Uys's past. He is both the echo of the 'noise' originally created by his forefathers, grandparents and parents, as well as the one who made the actual noise with his activism and rule-breaking antics during South Africa's darkest hour. Compelling, fighting fit at 70 and with

the phrase 'Almost Famous' ironically printed on his hoodie, at the end of *The Echo of a Noise* Uys appears more determined than ever before. For the first time pulling out some rouge from his pocket before defiantly applying it to his lips during the production's last few seconds, let that be a warning to all of us as he takes on the next 70.

– *Cape Times* (Cape Town) June 2016

Quite often these are painful memories and the audience has to swallow deep, but through the years Uys developed a way to fight injustice with humour. As a master storyteller he makes his audience roar with laughter and does some soul searching on the side. Phrases that reoccur during the performance are loaded with new meanings in the next story, as an echo of a noise – an audience, all ears, laughter and some tears.

– *CUE* (National Arts Festival Grahamstown) July 2016

Arguably one of the best shows I've seen at NAF2016 so far, it ended to thunderous applause as Pieter pulls out a tube of lipstick and smears it on, to the accompaniment of the Evita song. You want to hug and kiss him at this point because nowhere else has such bravery been shown; and you walk away with a sense of pride, remembering that he has implored you to be brave!

– *Artsvark* (National Arts Festival Grahamstown) July 2016

There I was, one of about five millennials in the audience, yet Uys spoke straight to me. Giving us an incredible look into the world of Pieter-Dirk Uys, I found myself relating to so many aspects of this man's life, this great South African's journey to now. Me, a 25-year-old from Grassy Park, connecting with a 71-year-old white Afrikaner from Pinelands. It was both amazing and surreal. That's what

I took away from *The Echo of a Noise*: a feeling of solidarity. That, and a night filled with laughter and some tears. And that's Pieter-Dirk Uys. That's always been Pieter-Dirk Uys; an artist who has, through the decades, united a very divided South Africa through laughter and later, introspection. Certainly, a must-see for anyone interested in South Africa, satire, and a good night out.

– *Cape Argus* (Cape Town) December 2016

Watching this intimate performance was like having a one-on-one conversation with Uys. He has the extraordinary ability to capture imaginations while getting viewers to laugh, cry, reminisce and even nod in agreement to his many wise statements, certainly making him at the age of 71 one of South Africa's greatest performing artists.

– *The Witness* (Pietermaritzburg) February 2017



APRIL FOOL'S DAY

FRIDAY 1 APRIL 2016

EVITA'S FREE SPEECH ON *DAILY MAVERICK*

Comrades, I have just received this breaking news on my iPad. Of course it's far ahead of our newsprint, because today's editions are already out on the street. Yes, we all expected it, but again the reality of politics so often puts our expectations into the out tray. The hurtful hashtag #ZumaMustFall did nothing other than upset our first citizen who couldn't understand why everyone was being so horrible to him. Well, now we have the result of that total and may I add DA-inspired onslaught. Let me quote so that I won't be accused of mis-speech:

'Comrade Jacob Zuma hereby announces his immediate resignation as president of the Republic of South Africa, as well as president of the African National Congress, not necessarily in that order. Standing in the calm atmosphere of Nkandla, next to the fire pool glittering in the morning sun, President Jacob Zuma, surrounded by his four wives and holding an email from his

former spouse now in Addis Ababa, this native of KwaZulu-Natal, who has spent his life fighting for the rights of his people and the need to embrace all those who have taken refuge in our country and so prospered, especially those from India, has announced that for reasons not disclosed, he is leaving the post of president of South Africa for health reasons.

Of course it goes without question that he leaves his sacred duty as leader of his nation, which include all peoples: Africans, whites, Indians, coloureds, Chinese, Russians, Brazilians and other BRICS with a heavy heart. He will go into his next chapter as a mere citizen of our great nation with full amnesty. And, of course, this is right. What has he done wrong? President Zuma and his matrimonial cluster is happy to know that the people of South Africa have unanimously agreed to present him his homestead of Nkandla as a farewell present from the nation.

I might add that the secretary-general of the ANC, Comrade Gwede Mantashe, has announced that the ANC will also name a lasting monument for our departed leader. The JG Zuma International Airport in Upington will be a permanent reminder of what we as a nonracial, nonsexist and at times nonsensical party harboured in our hearts about this remarkable South African who started life as a young shepherd boy on the hills of Natal, to be forced out of school by apartheid at Standard 3. Thanks to the National Party he managed to master the arts of reading and writing at the legendary University of Robben Island.

This man, who against all odds - and odd is the weakest word that can be used here - became the president of this rainbow nation, wading through the footsteps of Nelson Mandela and successfully avoiding the skid marks of Thabo Mbeki, to leave his imprint so firmly and finally on the economic, commercial and emotional future of this beautiful beloved country. Signed by ... (I can't make out the name) ... on this 1st of April 2016.'

You heard it here first.



2017

EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT & THE KAKTUS OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT



TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS



2018

R60/R120
18:00 - 19:00
KYKNET-TEATER
SONDAG, 29 APRIL

SUIDOOSTERFEES

WWW.SUIDOOSTERFEES.CO.ZA



@Suidoosterfees



@Suidoosterfees



@suidoosterfees

Evita Bezuidenhout & the Kaktus of Separate Development

Performed in Johannesburg at the Pieter Toerien Montecasino Theatre and Theatre on the Bay in Cape Town

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

THE SETTING

Act One stage: lighting bars lowered; ladders; furniture covered with sheets. The action takes place on the stage in front of the lowered curtain.

ACT ONE

(Evita enters through auditorium)

EVITA: Ag nee, what is happening here. *(She calls off)* Excuse me? Have I come on the wrong day? Didn't Luthuli House deliver the boxes? Hello? *(To the audience)* And here you all sit? Have you been bussed in by the ANC? I'm sorry there are no free T-shirts and sausage rolls as a reward. Hang on. *(She makes a call on her mobile)* Gwede? Evita ... no, I'm here, but we were supposed to start at eight ... No, Gwede, they were supposed to deliver them here. To Montecasino. Not Saxonwold. The Guptas ... Yes please, as soon as you can. Oh ... and Gwede? The Mbekis are expecting me ... hello? Gwede? *(The call ends)*
Gwede Mantashe. He's always in his office. I don't think he ever leaves Luthuli House because he knows they won't let him back in again.
(She looks at the cellphone)

Now why is he sending me an SMS? *Washington Post*? Has anyone here heard of the *Washington Post*? Isn't that in the USA? For heaven's sake, why don't they leave me alone... (*She reads*) 'Dear Ms Bezuidenhout ... (wrong spelling) ... please confirm your experience of being sexually harassed by Donald Trump ...' Oh what nonsense. All this fake news. What has it got to do with me? They even contacted my son De Kock, even convinced him that I should come clean. Clean? He said: 'Mama, so many women are being sexually compromised by men, even in South Africa! Mama, you should speak out and help them by coming forward.' Ag nee asseblief ... anyway it was so long ago.

1984. I was in New York for three weeks to help the South African Mission at the United Nations with their catering. That was a way we found to fight sanctions. With food. Invite them for a plate of bobotie, a koeksister and melkert and before you know it, they send their products via Israel and no one even knows sanctions are being broken. That is where I met Mrs Jacqueline Onassis ... Jackie Kennedy. She visited the UN and someone offered her one of my koeksisters. She was so impressed, she asked to meet me. She said they were so much nicer than the baklava her husband sent her from Athens every week. So I asked if I could send her some koeksisters as a gift from South Africa? She was thrilled and invited me to come on that Wednesday at 3 p.m. to her apartment beyond the Plaza Hotel and next to the Pierre.

It was my day off as well. Someone suggested that if I go up Fifth Avenue, there is a new Italian restaurant that serves a wonderful spaghetti bolognaise. Ja-nee, I said, although why should I eat that if I make such good bobotie? But there was time and I popped in – and it was a wonderful plate of bolognaise. I even asked for the recipe.

I was sitting in the window overlooking Fifth Avenue. What an exciting city! Fire engines racing up and ambulances racing down, bells ring and sirens blaring, and police cars chasing and hooting. We're really catching up here in Joburg. Then I saw the new building across the road and remembered how people had said that this tower has the best view of Manhattan from the top floor, from Central Park to the Statue of Liberty.

I had Mrs Onassis's koeksisters in a brown paper bag so that no one would think I was carrying something so precious. I went across the road into the foyer of this tower. All gold mirrors and chandeliers, like Sun City. I got into the lift and pressed the top button. As the doors closed, a man ran in just in time. And off we went. He said: 'Are you having a nice day?' I said: 'Yes thank you.' (Jinne, but the New Yorkers are always so friendly. Not the taxi drivers! Sies, sulke varke.) Then he said: 'Did you enjoy your lunch?' I said: 'Yes, thank you.' 'And the spaghetti bolognaise?'

Ek dog, wat gaan hier aan? I said: 'Excuse me?' He said: 'You have some bolognaise sauce on your blouse.' I looked down and there it was. Ag nee, how can I go to Mrs Onassis's apartment with bolognaise on my blouse? As I was thinking that, I heard the man make a funny sound. He was spitting into the palm of his hand. And then he turned to me and just clapped his hand onto the bolognaise stain and started rubbing. Up and down, round and round.

The bolognaise then seemed to move onto the other side, because he started rubbing there, up and down – then here, even down there, touching, grabbing. Too terrible! I just had to keep the paper bag out of his reach in case he squeezed Mrs Onassis's koeksisters.

Look, this happened to me before back in Bethlehem when Dominee Brand chased me around the Ford Fairlane in his garage. But not like this. I just didn't know what to do. Then suddenly the lift stopped. We were on the top floor. The doors opened and the man casually walked out saying: 'Have a nice day ...'

I'm not saying it was him. But can two men look so alike? With the horrible orange candyfloss hair? And those small little hands. Soos kloutjies! Hy't aan my getas soos 'n jags meerkat! That's certainly not something I will repeat to the media. I don't even know why I told you. Forget it. It never happened.

Well, nothing is ready yet as you can see. And I'm sorry I'm late – am I late? I don't think it matters now. Look it's not my fault. Or African time, although we can't allow jokes like that anymore, because it verges on hate speech. It's my new driver. Thanks to him I even missed my

flight from Johannesburg to Cape Town recently because we lost our way from Pretoria. I really miss my old driver Samuel Zuma, a sweet man from KZN, but then he was appointed as the new South African ambassador in Lichtenstein. So they found me this very nice young man (I think he's Zimbabwean?) called BlackBerry. 'No,' I said, 'my phone is called that. I can't call you BlackBerry!' Then he said his nickname was Monkey. I said: 'Nee o liewe aarde, we'll rather stick to BlackBerry.' They'd given him an old roadmap of the Transvaal from the 1980s! No wonder the poor man lost his way. All the important street names have been changed.

In the old South Africa it was so simple: you travelled on roads named after the architects of apartheid. So you left Pretoria on the Hendrik Verwoerd Boulevard, which became the John Vorster rylaan, that merged with the PW Botha straat when it passed the FW de Klerk cul-de-sac. Now of course all important roads have been named after the architects of democracy. I also had to warn BlackBerry that if you leave Pretoria and turn to the left you end up in Tshwane. If you stick to the right you'll stay in Pretoria.

So you leave on the Nelson Mandela Boulevard. That leads to the Nelson Mandela Circle. You can go round the Nelson Mandela Circle and carry on the Nelson Mandela Street, but I always prefer the Nelson Mandela Avenue, that eventually passes the Nelson Mandela Art Gallery on your left. In the distance you can see the Nelson Mandela squatter camp. Keep your eyes open for the Nelson Mandela Library where you turn right towards the Nelson Mandela Square where they have that lovely Nelson Mandela Statue, but I prefer crossing the Nelson Mandela Bridge which leads you to the Nelson Mandela Freeway and eventually OR Tambo International Airport. (I so hoped that they would call it Madiba International.) At least I could guide BlackBerry here to Montecasino. The word 'casino' did the trick. And here we are.

I delivered some koeksisters to the Union Buildings this morning. They were doing an inventory; it didn't take long. I was on my way out to find BlackBerry and come here, when the director-general of

homeland security asked me to please pop into the president's office. 'But number one is there.' 'No, he is at Nkandla. Please Comrade Evita, there's a problem in the president's office.' 'Yes? And?' Please could I go and investigate.

Listen, the last thing I want to do is get involved with security issues in a national key point. Then I was told: 'Comrade you are a member of the ANC. When the party demands action from you, you obey without question.' O, my boere siel het gebons! But anyway I said: 'Yebo okay.'

First I just had to pop round to the little garden behind the Union Buildings, safely out of the way of any rioting students. It is always my favourite place. You people can also see it if you clear security and walk up behind the building. Look to your left through the bars of the 10-foot security fences, but don't touch them! They're new from North Korea and will shock you into Port Elizabeth!

Those gardens are there thanks to Mrs PW Botha and, well, I helped a bit. Nelson Mandela's three little plants he brought from Robben Island are still against the wall of the veranda. Well, yes and no. When he was moved to Pollsmoor Prison from Robben Island so that Winnie Mandela wouldn't get seasick when she went to visit him, the plants went with him, and then to the Victor Verster in Paarl, where he ended that long walk to freedom on the 11th February 1990. And not even from a cell, but a house. Madiba's own bungalow with a swimming pool. Not a fire pool ...

So the plants were transferred to a small bed next to the swimming pool. Of course, when he became president in 1994, the plants had to be moved to the Union Buildings. I had nothing to do with that. We all knew that our days of planting and eating cheese were over. Amandla.

So a young member of the ANC Youth League replanted them upside-down and of course they died. Luckily I was at Game a week later buying things for my grandchildren and I found some little plastic plants from Beijing that look so real that no one would say the ones you see today are not alive. And because they're from China, we can call them indigenous.

Thabo Mbeki's rosebushes are still flourishing. He was given them in 2002 at the Chelsea Flower show in London on one of his UK visits. There was small incident at the gate on our way out. The security people thought he was a Nigerian stealing blooms. I said: 'No, please, this is the President of South Africa!' They said: 'Prove it.' Well, he didn't have his ID book with him, so I told them that he smoked a pipe. That did the trick.

Sadly, the herb garden is no longer operational. While he was still Minister of Forestry, Ronnie Kasrils planted a whole selection. But then it seems he smoked most of the herbs and so that was that. I did find something strange lying behind the protea bushes. It must have fallen off the roof. Maybe part of the equipment the Russians sent to prevent the Americans from hacking the president's emails. (*She shows the showerhead*). I'll hand it over to the Hawks.

Then I went upstairs to the President's office with two security men so that no one could point a finger at me. The moment we entered the office I could smell it. 'Who's been eating curry in this room?' I asked. They didn't know. I knew. I feel quite sentimental about that office. When PW Botha decided to become State President, his wife Tannie Elize and I chose the curtains. They're still there although they seem to have changed colour. Then when President Mandela took over, I would bring him fresh koeksisters every Tuesday. The room was always impeccable, like a showroom. But then Madiba knew how to keep a small room tidy.

Then Thabo Mbeki took over when he became our second democratically elected president, but he was seldom here because he was seldom in the country. Overseas all the time. No, I lie, he did come back twice on a short state visit, but he just was never here. Then Kgalema Motlanthe became acting president, but he was gone before he could make a mistake. And now Jacob Zuma is in residence, although one of the men said the President doesn't like coming to the Union Buildings often. The other one laughed and said ja, he was scared of the hashtag #ZumaMustFall.

I didn't laugh. I can't laugh at hate speech like that. Remember I'm

a member of the ANC. And so let me just clarify what's happening here. I may not speak on behalf of the party, or even have an option about anything in public. So I'm not here today as a member of the African National Congress. I speak here purely in a personal capacity as a citizen, a gogo and a democrat.

I was very uncomfortable being in the office of the president. 'So now, where is this cupboard that won't open?' I asked. They pointed into a corner. There was a built-in cupboard along one wall. It seems no one can find the key, the one man said. There's no keyhole, the other one said. Why does anyone need a key in the most sensitive national key point in Africa? It's all on the cloud. So I tugged at the doors, but nothing happened. The wood was probably swollen because of the recent weather.

So they helped me. We pulled – and suddenly both doors opened. We could have been killed! One and a half million Voyager miles fell out of the cupboard! Then I realised that the cupboard had not been opened since Thabo Mbeki left the presidency in 2007. Isn't that just another example of failed service delivery? I told the men to fetch plastic bags and load in all the Voyager miles so they can be delivered to the Mbeki compound in Killarney. Thabo still wants to get into the Guinness book of records. 'And close the cupboard doors. It's got nothing to do with us.' I was just going to push the doors closed when one of the guards gasped and pointed into the cupboard. And there it was! Can you believe this?

(She takes out a Tutu doll)

Thabo Mbeki had his own Desmond Tutu doll in the closet! I took all the pins out – and I'll take this to my grandchildren who love Archbishop Tutu as we all do. But now I was fascinated. What else was Thabo Mbeki hiding in his closet? Books! Of course, Thabo Mbeki read books; he was an intellectual president – that's a contradiction in terms. I still think back with fondness to those speeches Thabo Mbeki made in Parliament back in the days when speeches could be made without disruption. I remembered how often I would slip out of the parliamentary

kitchen and go up to the gallery in the National Assembly just in time to hear Thabo Mbeki make one of his speeches. And he would always use such wonderful English words. I never knew what he meant, but those words ... and he would quote from Shakespeare, Woolworths and Thesaurus. Briljant!

So now I wanted to know, which books has he left behind? But then I saw the first book and my heart gave a leap of shock. (*She takes it out*) How could Thabo Mbeki have left this book behind? Nelson Mandela's *The Long Walk to Houghton*? Most of you own the two essential books: Mandela's autobiography and God's biography – and haven't bothered to read either. Look, this is the most important book ever written in South Africa. It is not just the story of one man's life; it is the story of all of our lives. Especially we whites. Especially we Afrikaners who arguably were always so advantaged by our policies of separate development? Ja ja miskien, miskien. But today I think we Afrikaners are the most disadvantaged of all the people in South Africa, because we don't know where we come from.

Everyone in our 23-year-old democracy is now free to be proud of a history, to celebrate a struggle – everyone, except the Afrikaner. We don't know where we come from. Our history was made up behind a desk in Pretoria as colonialist propaganda to ensure the Afrikaners superiority over the other races. It worked, yes, but it was all lies. Hulle't vir ons gelieg. It is time that we Afrikaners rediscovered our roots, found the remarkable true stories and all those wonderful things we Afrikaners did to bring about this democracy of ours. I can't think what they are now at the moment, but they were wonderful!

We still just believed the lies and because of that we are blamed for the colonisation of our country. It wasn't our fault! But we accepted the fake news as gospel. Imagine, telling us that Jan van Riebeeck brought civilisation to South Africa in 1652. Do you remember? *Nonsens*, 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 the Cape of Good Hope to steal chickens from the Bushmen! And yet,

every time I read this book – and I do so to always remind myself of the great legacy of reconciliation Madiba left us – I am so shocked, because everything that happened in this book, happened behind my back. I knew nothing, ek het niks geweet nie, ich habe nichts gewusst.

Even in the 1980s when I was the South African ambassador in the independent black homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti, I should have known better. I was a member of the diplomatic corpse! And yet I allowed myself to believe them when they said: ‘Toemaar Tannie, there are only four million people in South Africa.’ Remember that nonsense? Well, when you read this book you realise that there weren’t just four million white people in South Africa. There were 23 million more people, in the maid’s quarters and behind the garage – all in a struggle to create a democracy that embraces all its people.

I’m just looking for page 612. Nelson Mandela writes about me in his book. Ja ... I think these were his thoughts from ... was it 1983? Yes, 15th March 1983. I remember how Pik Botha and I were sent to Robben Island on a top secret mission from PW Botha. No, I lie, Pik had a bad headache; he stayed in Sea Point, but I went. What an experience. First on that little boat, the *Susan Kruger*, on that rough sea with the boat going up and down. *My muesli het hier gesit vir ’n dag!* Then that prison! Cold and dark. Mandela’s small cell. He couldn’t even stretch out on his mattress because he was longer than the cell was wide. Anyway, he writes about it in his book. ‘Today the beautiful and famous South African ambassador to the independent black homeland of Bapetikosweti, Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout, came to Robben Island to set me free – but I turned her down.’ Well, we didn’t realise that he wanted to first finishing writing his book, so we kept him in for another few years. But what a good investment. It’s a wonderful book and if you don’t yet have it, buy this hardcover edition. A very well-presented volume and also a very heavy book. I call it a traditional cultural weapon. Keep this book in your car at all times. If anyone tries to hijack your car, don’t panic. Wind down your window, pick up Nelson’s heavy book and throw the book at them. No one can accuse you of violence; you’re just spreading the word, but it works. I’ll see that Thabo Mbeki gets this

book back. I'm sure Madiba probably presented it to Thabo when he took over the presidency in 1999. "To my dear Cyril ..."

Of course there were many other books in the cupboard, but they all turned out to be 60 copies of the same book. Maybe Thabo had run out of friends to give it to. It's his own biography: *The Nightmare ... no ... the Dream Deferred*. Kwit, maar dis 'n dik boek vir so 'n klein man. I actually started reading it when it came out all those years ago. I got to page 12 and then the ANC recalled Thabo Mbeki from the presidency and I thought: Dankie Vader, ek hoef nie die donnerse boek klaar te lees nie. But I think do myself a great injustice here. Of course I should have finished reading this book.

As a matter of interest, who here has in fact read this book? Don't you think we're doing something wrong? We are citizens of a democracy – which means that we have homework to do. The five years between elections are time for research and study so that the eventual examination – that general election – means we are voting for people we know and respect. This man was our president for nearly eight years. He decided on the education of our children, the pensions of our elders, the security of the state. In fact, every aspect of our lives were in his hands, and we didn't bother to find out where the passion ended and the corruption began? It's all in the books. Ego has no shame.

I really wanted to know something very essential about Thabo Mbeki: why was he so unhappy while he was president of South Africa? Because he was never in South Africa! He kept finding an excuse to fly around the world to escape. The answer is in this book, page 212. My son De Kock read this book carefully to make notes for his friend Moff de Bruyn's degree at Unisa. A shocking indictment that very simply says that we in the National Party apartheid regime did a terrible thing to Thabo Mbeki. We never put him in jail. Isn't that shocking? No wonder he always felt so disadvantaged. Everyone else in the ANC was in jail, following Nelson Mandela's example – and that example was so clear: that politicians should first go to jail and then into politics, and not the other way round. Sies, en niemand het dit vir Alan Boesak vertel nie. And so Thabo Mbeki was forced into exile for over 30 years. Isn't that

a terrible thing to do to a young South African? Throw him out of his beloved homeland because of his political leanings? And to add insult to injury, he ended up in the United Kingdom in a place called Brighton. (Does anyone know this Brighton?) That's where he studied at the University of Sussex. (Is that a good university? No? For blacks only?) *My magtig*, do you know how much this explains about Thabo Mbeki? He was educated by British education. That's why Thabo Mbeki thinks like an Englishman; that's why he's such a racist.

And then he went to the Soviet Union and studied at the University of Moscow where he graduated Stalinist cum laude. Nou sit ons met die gebakte pere: a womanising, Stalinist, racist president who didn't even like South Africa. And today he sits on the edge of politics as the chancellor of Unisa, writing letters to the newspapers and reinventing the facts around his legacy in his blog. What a waste. This could be a very bright man in the right spot, and we are in dire need of an IQ in leadership. Why isn't Thabo Mbeki the South African ambassador to the United Nations? He knows everyone there by their first names. It's like home from home to him. He even looks like Kofi Annan's son. Then we can safely call him 'Cappuccino Mbeki'! Kwit maar die boeke is dik. Look, I'm right: Thabo is thicker than Madiba.

We were just going to close up the cupboard when I noticed there was one book left at the bottom. (*Take it out*) Jacob Zuma's biography – and you can see: it still has a long way to go. This is a very easy read. You can do it on the plane from Joburg to Cape Town. Of course, I have met President Zuma quite a few times as I am now based in Luthuli House. And I am not speaking here out of turn if I repeat that he is very charming man, always smiling – in fact he laughs a lot. And every time he laughs, we must all laugh as well. We never know why, but if we don't laugh, we could so easily end up in the ANC office in Pofadder. So as they say: he who laughs last, definitely laughs last.

President Zuma always treats me with the greatest respect. Well, I've never been alone in a room with him for more than few minutes, so I don't know what happens then. But when he pops into the Luthuli House kitchen for a koeksister, he still allows me to call him by his Zulu

name: Innocent. Look, it's difficult for me to discuss what I do in Luthuli House because of obvious restrictions. The reason I'm there has really nothing to do with politics. Those of you who read *Huisgenoot* will know, but let me just put the rest of you in the picture. I am the proud grandmother of three born-free grandchildren: they're not white; they're not black; they are Barack Obama beige! And they have challenged me to lead by example. 'Gogo? What are you going to do to protect democracy, so that one day when we need to vote freely and fairly, democracy will still be there in full working condition?'

Well, obviously that means I must go back into active politics and where will I find that? No longer in Parliament. Parliament has become either a DA parking garage or a playpen for the Teletubbies of the EFF. The hub of politics is in Luthuli House, the only working power station the ANC has bothered to build in the last 25 years. And that's where I am. Believe me, I never thought they'd allow me in. Me? Evita Bezuidenhout? Once a member of the National Party? Yes. Evita Bezuidenhout, once the South African ambassador to the black homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti? Yes. Evita Bezuidenhout who voted for apartheid? ... Yes! (I'm probably the only white South African to admit it.)

I'm sorry, I didn't know it was bad. Well, I knew it was bad, but not that bad. At least everyone had piped water, electricity within reason, affordable education. No one told me about the horrible things. If someone had told me, I would have spoiled my paper, but no one told me. But let me make something very clear: if I hadn't voted for apartheid when I did vote for apartheid, I would have been branded as a terrorist and a communist. And I would be the minister of higher education today! So two years ago, on Human Rights Day, I decided to join the ruling party. I drove to the Johannesburg building that now houses the African National Congress. Die voorportaal van die hel. I sat in my car for nearly two hours, agonising. How can I go into that place which is full of the enemies I fought against for all those years? But then I pulled myself together. Boer maak 'n plan. Kom nou Evita, jy is die dogter van Voortrekkers. And so I got out of my car. I locked the car. I kissed the car goodbye and walked into the foyer of Luthuli House. It was empty.

I thought: it must be tea time. I waited for 20 minutes. Then I saw the sign: RECEPTION. No, just part of the word ... CEPTION. I think someone needed the RE. So I pressed the little buzzer. No one there either. Must also be lunch time. Then after 15 minutes the lift doors opened and Jesse Duarte came out.

Of course I know her from the old CODESA days. She's found something clever to do with her hair and looks quite nice. And yet she was shocked to see me. 'Tannie Evita Bezuidenhout?' 'Ja?' 'This is not Woolworths.' 'I know, Jesse, I'm here to join the African National Congress!' 'Why? What have you heard?' 'No, I want to become a member of the party'. 'Do you have cash?' I nodded. 'You're in!'

And it was quite a Damascus Road ... or should I say Rivonia Road experience for me. Of course I walked in there on that first day with all the prejudices that most of us whites seem to share. That everyone in the ANC is corrupt, everyone steals, everyone is a crook. Yes. I can give you six names every day to fill the front page of the *Citizen* newspaper, but there are hundreds of thousands of members of the ANC who are not corrupt. They are working hard to keep us more or less in a balance, otherwise we wouldn't be here tonight. We'd be waiting at the Croatian border with our few belongings in a Pick n Pay bag, hoping to get refugee status in Germany to become nanny to someone's overweight children!

So that is the one thing I have learnt in the last two years. Don't underestimate the fragility of freedom. Don't take democracy for granted. It's becoming a worldwide reality, north south east and west, that democratically elected governments are finding democratically accepted ways to destroy democracy: Brexit? Trump? Putin? Marine le Pen? Mugabe? Jung Hung Din ...

I can't give details about what I do because that would be a security breach. However, I can confirm that I do check the ladies washrooms daily, ever since Robert Mugabe has been sending free gifts of toilet rolls with Cecil John Rhodes's face on them. And yes, I look after the president's self-esteem. You won't believe it, but there are no pictures of him in the foyer of Luthuli House. Jesse Duarte told me about a nice

big painting, but it seems someone added subversive things to it and it ended damaged in an art gallery. Of course there are pictures of Nelson Mandela all over the walls: Madiba, Madiba, Madiba; Oliver Tambo down the passage and Thabo Mbeki in the toilet, but none of President Zuma.

How did that happen? He is the president of South Africa and president of the ANC, not always in that order. (*Take out material*) So every time they SMS me from the basement garage that he's on his way up, I hang this piece of material up in a prominent place. You should see his face when he sees it. He smiles and sings and dances and even stands in front of it and takes a selfie of himself with himself. I must have this drycleaned tomorrow. See? Lipstick. Every Monday morning there is queue of young women all waiting at the front doors of Luthuli House, excited to come get a job with the African National Congress. Of course they all get a job, but most of them must leave before the nine months is over. And as they pass through the foyer, some actually kiss the face of Jacob Zuma. (I'm so glad it's only his face on this material.)

Most of my focus as a cadre of course is in the Luthuli House kitchen. At least there I'm in charge, because everyone knows how I for years was known as the best cook in the National Party, die best kok in die Nasionale Party. I'm so glad I found this in Pretoria this morning. I must have left it in the staff kitchen last week. We had a farewell party planned for minister of social development, but it was postponed. My favourite apron that Nelson Mandela gave me. I think the first phone call he made just after he became our first democratically-elected leader on 10th May 1994 was to me. He said: 'I am here in this official residence – it was then still called Libertas; I think it's been renamed *Madiba-ungungluvu* – and there is a big room in the house called kitchen. What do I do there? Please help.'

So I went into Nelson Mandela's kitchen and cooked for him. Do you know how easy it was? All he had for 27 years was bread and water twice a day. All I had to do was to put sugar in the water and jam on the bread – and he was so grateful. Then he asked me to go and take over the kitchen in Parliament and help the new ANC government come to

terms with African cuisine after a lifetime in exile. So I put putupap with everything: putupap with bread and butter pudding, putupap with a Big Mac, putupap with spaghetti, putupap with sushi. And of course, putupap with the Banting diet! With my bobotie as a special treat.

What a shock it was when Nelson Mandela stood down after one term! How un-African! But life went on. I tried to cook for Thabo Mbeki, which was very difficult because the food was always cold because he was never here. Before I even could make a potjie for Acting President Kgalema Motlanthe, he was gone before he could even put on weight. And I'm very careful not to go into the kitchens at Nkandla, because there too many cooks not only spoil the broth, but even sometimes try to poison it!

Yes, it was the promises of a plate of my bobotie that got Sudanese President Bashir out of the Sandton Conference Centre just in time to whisk him off to Waterkloof Air Base and into a plane before the police could arrest him for crimes against humanity. I'm sorry: *mea culpa mea culpa*. You do what the Party demands; you don't argue or resist. But I must pay tribute here to the person who focused my attention on cooking for reconciliation: Roelof F Botha. I met him for the first time in 1975. Pik was the South African ambassador at the United Nations and I was sent to New York by the new prime minister John Vorster. Remember, he took over after Doctor Hendrik Verwoerd was stabbed to death in the House of Assembly by parliamentary messenger Dimitri Tsafendas—with my favourite fruit knife. (I don't want to talk about it ...)

BJ Vorster didn't like me and had me sent off to help the South African mission at the United Nations with their catering: koeksisters, droë wors, melktert, beskuit. And there was Pik Botha. He was the most attractive man I had ever seen in my life – in 1975. Ek praat nou nie hier uit die komberse nie. Pik was six feet tall. (Well, he's still six foot today, but that's usually this way.) With those yellow-green lion eyes that looked straight into your soul. And the little black karakul moustache? We used to call him the Errol Flynn of the National Party. Nou lyk dit soos 'n ou dooie muis wat daar hang. Pik knew so much about life, it

was quite subversive for an Afrikaner broeder. He took me around Manhattan: to the opera, to the ballet, to a Chinese restaurant where I ate their food for the first time.

Nee, sies, we never ate Chinese food in South Africa in those days because we thought it was black food. It wasn't, because they weren't. Now of course suddenly they are. Eating with those little chopsticks? I said: 'Why can't I use a spoon?' Pik said: 'No, the Chinese food is often alive. First kill it with one stick and then eat it with two sticks.' And that's when Pik said: 'Evita, you must use your cooking art to make friends for South Africa.' I said: 'Pik, it's 1975: we have no friends.' He said: 'Ja-nee. So who is our worse enemy?'

Fidel Castro. From Cuba. I had to look for Cuba in the atlas. I thought Cuba must be as big as China, because the USA is so frightened of Cuba! Nee, Cuba is a little island off America, like England is now also a small island off Europe. And Cuba irritates America like England irritates Europe. Fidel Castro was in New York to make a speech at the United Nations, but because he was a communist leader from Cuba, no one in Manhattan would feed him or let him use their toilets. So I said to Pik: 'Let's invite him to our apartment on Central Park West. Let me try out my bobotie on Fidel Castro. If I poison him and he dies, no one will care.' So in secret we invited him for lunch. He came the next day! Either he was very hungry or dying to use a toilet.

I'll never forget that day. Pik was no help at all. He found a book about the Incas and locked himself into the bathroom, leaving me alone to receive this guest ... no, this communist! Sies sies sies! Daar staan ek, Evangelie Poggenpoel, gebore in Bethlehem in die Oranje Vrystaat, lid van die NG Kerk, die Afrikaanse Christelike Vrouevereniging – die ACVV – en die Nasionale Party – wat nou die deur moet oopmaak vir 'n vieselike Kommunis!

At high noon the doorbell rang. I took a deep breath and undid the first latch, then the second latch, then the two security chains, the Yale lock and opened the door. I couldn't believe my eyes. There stood Fidel Castro. He looked so normal. He looked like a vet from Benoni. He was even taller than Pik, but wearing a typical green communist uniform.

But with real war medals – not like our then-Minister of Defence General Magnus Malan who used to cut his medals out of the Kellogg's Cornflakes box. And that big bushy Cuban beard with bits of take-away food and hamburgers hanging off ... and flies and *brommers* and bees buzzing around.

I just called out to Pik: 'Bring the Doom. Spray this communist with Doom!' 'No,' said Pik, 'this was a third-world leader and those were just vitamins and proteins flying into his mouth!' All I can say is: Fidel Castro loved my bobotie. He nodded and said: if Afrikaners cook so well, we can't all be bad. And he was on his way to Pretoria to taste my famous water-blommetjie bredie – but being a communist, he veered to the left and ended up in Angola.

And that's where I realised the power of the right food at the right time. Yes, cooking for reconciliation. Look, when friends sit round a table and eat and drink and talk, they become even better friends. Now imagine if you put enemies round a table. What can they do? They can't fight; too many knives and forks. They must talk. And when they talk, they realise that there is no reason to fight! I proved that in 1985, when for the first time ever, I managed to bring the ANC and the National Party together.

It was in *Blanche-Noir*, my embassy in Bapetikosweti. I was in the dining room, just checking that everything was in order: the flowers, the ashtrays, the polished furniture, and the beautiful carpet handwoven by a cousin of the Shah of Iran – in the orange, white and blue colours of our old flag: oranje, blanje, blou – when I noticed a long black stripe on the white. 'What is this?' I gasped. Then my secretary Bokkie Bam told me that the department come and added on the black stripe, which was the border between the homeland and South Africa! I had a dining room in two countries. So I knew I could invite enemies to sit together, eat together, talk together – but not be in the same country together.

It came to me in a flash: I will bring the ANC and the NP together around my dining room table and end the terrible violence. The problem was: where would I find the ANC? They were banned! Were

they in Houghton, in Rondebosch, in Durban? No, they were in Lusaka! How do I get hold of them in Lusaka? I couldn't telephone; our lines were tapped. It was policy.

Luckily I had a very clever young garden boy ... well, not very clever but very young ... called Philamon. I said: 'Philamon? How does madam get a message through to Lusaka?' He said: 'Give me the paper and I'll run.' Philamon ran barefoot with my invitation across Botswana, across Zimbabwe – past all those farmhouses that still had glass and curtains in their windows, until he got to Lusaka and the ANC in exile. 'Evita Bezuidenhout has invited you to a dinner of reconciliation with the National Party in her homeland embassy *Blanche Noir* in Bapetikosweti on 31st December 1985.'

The last day of the year. We knew out of experience we could get away with many things on that day, because our security police were either drunk or in bed with the maids. So we cut a hole in the security fence and at the stroke of midnight the ANC crawled through the hole. That's when I met Thabo Mbeki for the first time. 1985. He was the first one through the hole, because he was the smallest. Woep is hy deur die gat! And so I put the ANC in the homeland side of my dining room table. The NP sat opposite them, safely in South Africa. I served my *bobotie* and I watched to see the miracle take place.

It didn't. They loathed each other; they glowered at each other. My heart stopped. How could I have made such a terrible mistake? After all, we were in a civil war! This was not a Sunday school braaivleis. I was horrified. I caught little Roelf Meyer's eye. He and I had decided that if necessary he could help if there were any problems. Now I nodded at him in desperation and so to lighten the atmosphere, he told the oldest van der Merwe joke in Afrikaans. The whole ANC started crying! They so missed the language! 'We haven't heard Afrikaans for years. Please we want to hear it. We missed it! *Praat Afrikaans!*' So we all shouted: 'Voetsek! Voetsek! Voetsek!'

And then Pik Botha opened all those bottles of *Allesverloren*. Die rooiwyn het gevloei soos Bloedrivier. And then we started singing each other's struggle anthems. That's when I knew everyone had won. We all

loved South Africa with a passion but from different sides. Imagine all the broeders in the apartheid government trying to sing some of the banned ANC anthems: *Nkosi Sikelele* and then *Shongololo*. And then ANC started singing all of our FAK boereliedjies. Imagine, Magnus Malan and Joe Modise, the two opposing ministers of defence, arm in arm, doing an a capella version of 'Sarrie Marais'. In fact the one song we all sang that night should have been the new national anthem of democratic South Africa: *Jou kombers en my matras en daar lê die ding*. That's when I realised that the way to a politician's heart is not through his brain; it's through his stomach. I mean look at what happened in the USA? They shot Ronald Reagan through his head; it made no difference whatsoever.

Many recipes in my cookbook *Evita's Kossie Sikelela* have had a history. Take malva pudding. We all love malva pudding, but did you know it was never meant to be a pudding. In fact it was discovered in the laboratories of DENEL, where it was used to waterproof the wings of aircraft. Someone must've got a drop on their hands and tasted how sweet it was – but of course very sticky. They asked a clever medical scientist to adapt the essence of the substance for human consumption and there today we have malva pudding easily enjoyed and not too sticky.

Who remembers CODESA? When the National Party led by FW de Klerk and the ANC led by Nelson Mandela were involved with intense negotiations towards the creation of a democratic constitution for our future? It was virtually impossible. Besides Eugene Terre'blanche and the AWB outside behaving like skollies, the PAC was inside behaving like skollies. Remember the PAC – the Pan Africanist Congress? Now they're just a letterhead asking for funding, but then they were even worse than the EFF in Parliament today. Shouting, toyi-toying, causing disruptions and led by – can you now believe it – today's mayor of Cape Town, Patricia de Lille. Then she was no lady. De Lille was like a chihuahua on Tik!

It was chaos. Eventually Mr de Klerk and Mr Mandela came to me and asked if I could help. I knew how. Food. It's like giving naughty children

chocolates. But better: I would make them malva pudding! Not from the known recipe, but with the stickiness of the DENEL ingredient. So I phoned an old friend, Dr Wouter Basson. I said: 'Do you remember what you found in DENEL and adapted for us to cook? Send me the original recipe.' He faxed it within hours and I made the special version for the PAC. The stickiness glued their Bulgarian false teeth together for four days, during which the ANC and the NP could finalise their negotiations. So when you celebrate our great Constitution, spare a grateful thought for malva pudding!

Minister Derek Hanekom recently whispered that Jacob Zuma may want to marry me for my bobotie! It actually brought us together just after he became president. Jacob Zuma was invited to London on his first state visit as president. I was also invited – by the Queen of England herself. She wanted my bobotie recipe for the state dinner. She's always loved my bobotie. Prince Philip calls it moussaka, maar's hy's 'n ou Griek, so wat kan jy verwag?

Everyone was very tense about this new president suddenly faced with a royal engagement in a foreign country where no one spoke Zulu. Certainly not in Buckingham Palace. Jacob Zuma rose to the occasion. He looked elegant and relaxed in his dress suit with a knotted bow tie. His wife, the second Mrs Zuma, Tobeka Madiba, het geblink in 'n pragtige rok van Mr Price. The Queen even met us in the courtyard of the Palace – something she never did. She looked so beautiful in a pink gown with a diamond tiara and diamond necklace, diamond earrings and diamond bracelet, diamond rings. I just looked at them and thought: 'Ja-nee, dis ons donnerse diamante!'

We were taken upstairs to the smaller dining room as opposed to the great hall, which is the only room that can accommodate an American president because of his huge security detail. The first course was a very tasty green soupy thing, I think an English delicacy. Then came the bobotie. They'd done it perfectly. I looked down the table to see everyone's enjoyment, when to my horror I saw Jacob Zuma get up. Oh my goodness, no! He probably wants a toilet! Did no one tell him: you sit when the Queen sits. When she rises, you can also stand. But he just

went to the front of the dining table and started singing and dancing for the Queen. Umshini wam umshini wam. Queen Elizabeth was entranced. She turned to me and said: 'Mrs Bezuidenhout? Is he singing in Zulu?' I said: 'Yes, Your Majesty.' Umshini wam umshini wam. 'What is he singing about?' I must now tell Her Majesty, the Queen of England and Supreme Head of the British Commonwealth, that her guest from South Africa wants a machine gun in Buckingham Palace? I said: 'He just wants a glass of water.' So she got Prince Charles to ask Camilla to get him a glass of water.

And then the Queen made her speech with such dignity and affection. And she ended with something so special ... ek kry somaar hoedervleis as ek daaraan dink. She invited Jacob Zuma and his wife to spend the night in Buckingham Palace. You know, as I was being driven back to the Savoy Hotel, I was so emotional. There was our own Jacob Zuma who started life as a little shepherd on the hills of Kwazulu-Natal, who left school at Standard 3 – luckily we could teach him how to read and write at the University of Robben Island – now president of South Africa, sleeping in Buckingham Palace just down the passage from where the Queen of England was also sleeping. Then I sent Her Majesty an SMS: 'Lock your door.'

(Her cellphone is active; she answers)

Is it here? Why are you so late? No, we've been waiting. Yes, now, please.

(The call ends)

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your patience. The cactus in question has arrived. Let's take a 15-minute break. I also want get into the outfit I brought for this imbizo: I mean, some of us like to dress up ... and can afford it.

(She starts to exit)

Blackberry? Come and collect these books. They must go back to the Mbeki compound in Killarney ... fancy leaving Tutu and Madiba in a closet.

(She disappears behind the curtain)

INTERVAL

(During interval reset the stage to present the next section – with the kaktus and other props visible. Also the Battle of Blood River screen)



Evita and the kaktuses

ACT TWO

(SOUND: Desmond Tutu introduction)

Hello 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 am 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!

(The curtains open on the set stage)

(*Evita enters*)

EVITA: Thank you dear Archbishop Desmond Tutu for those lovely words of introduction. And to you all again, welcome again. I must just thank the members of the Bryanston ANC Woman's League here tonight for these beautiful gifts for two of my grandchildren. Yes, my oldest granddaughter Winnie-Jeanne Makeoloeli is 19 today and my youngest grandchild LaToya Ossewania will be 12 next Tuesday. And what important presents you have sent them: two wonderful books. Because as we all know: to read a book is to invite the world into your heart.

Winnie-Jeanne is now at WITS University (I think) and is planning to focus her studies on the effect of colonialisation 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. Because sadly it has become fashionable to demean his contribution to the state of our nation. And yes, look, it has the preamble to the Constitution as a foreword. These words we must never allow ourselves to forget:

(*She reads from 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.'

What wonderful words, written by the greatest brains in the country – who have not been heard from of since.

Then little LaToya-Ossewania now in Grade seven, 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 cover notes of Harry Potter*)

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 ... It isn't much easier now that he is an overworked employee of the Ministry of Magic, respecting those who have worked to build and develop a legacy ... and now 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.'

Goodness me, I never knew that Nelson Mandela also read Harry Potter ...

I watched a film on DSTV with my grandchildren last night. I can't remember the name, or much of the film, because Jesse Duarte was on the phone constantly about which Mrs Zuma is wearing the Mugabe diamonds for the opening of Parliament on Thursday. Anyway, this film was about a man who had a drinking problem and in this scene he went to a meeting ... (AA? Alcoholics Anonymous?) You could see how much courage it took him to go up onto the stage in front of everyone and say: 'Hi, my name is John and I am an alcoholic.' And all the alcoholics in the audience answered: 'Hi John.'

Well, driving here today thinking about all of you, I decided that maybe I should start this conversation by saying: 'Hi, my name is Evita and I'm a racist.' Now you can all say: 'Hi Evita!'

Let me quote the French philosopher Voltaire: 'Racism is the hostile attitude or behaviour to members of other races based on a belief in the innate superiority of one's own race. It is not restricted to whites only.' (No, maybe it's Steve Hofmeyr) The only way for an alcoholic to confront the disease of alcoholism is to admit it: I drink therefore I will not drink. Then surely one way for a racist to confront that disease is to be honest: I am a racist therefore I will not be a racist.

I will not judge people because of the colour of their skin, or how they dress, or what they eat. I will not be a racist in the city traffic when the township taxi cuts in front of me. I will not be a racist when politics passes me by. I will not believe in the innate superiority of my race. (No, it was Voltaire.)

So is racism the new virus that has no cure? Before you've even asked the question, most people answer: 'No, I'm not a racist.' Well, let me

hereby lead by rare example: I am a racist. Ek is 'n rassis. Ich bin rassistisch.

I was born in 1935 into a racist family. I went to a racist school and a racist church. My God was a racist and so was his Son. I married into a racist family. I became the wife of a racist member of a racist parliament who served in the racist cabinet of a racist prime minister and was praised by a racist press. My children were brought up as racists. In fact, till my 59th year, if I wasn't a racist, I would have been locked up in jail as a communist or a terrorist! An enemy of the state. A traitor. And it is only because a man came out of darkness on 11 February 1990 and gave me light that I realised that it was no longer politically correct to be a racist in South Africa. Nelson Mandela allowed me to stop being scared of who I was, and to celebrate who I am – an African who is not black.

There are so many urgent areas of our survival that need to be touched upon in this conversation. Education, poverty, violence, crime, security, corruption, xenophobia, the past, the present and the future. So why do I start with this issue? Why don't I focus on my kitchen in Luthuli House from whence I cook for reconciliation? Where I have managed to bring those who disagree together over a plate of bobotie?

Racism is not new. It's not unexpected. It's not profound. But if we here in 2017 do not allow ourselves to get beyond it with understanding and honesty, we will once again be imprisoned by that accusation and every other issue will fade by comparison. The first step in the right direction towards our planned nonracial, nonsexist society is to admit that the majority of South Africans are racists one way or another, finis en klaar.

(She focuses on the kaktus)

And talking about familiar things, here is 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 ... ticci. I always thought this was the ugliest thing in my garden during the old days. I remember saying to my garden boy: 'Philamon? You eat that for breakfast. I don't want to see it there at lunch time.'

But then Pik Botha in his wisdom as minister of foreign affairs pointed

out the social-political significance of the cactus. Social political significance? I just didn't understand what he meant. But then Pik can be very deep. Na ses-uur in die aand, ontsaglik diep! I said: 'Pik, what's the difference between a cactus and a caucus?' He said: 'At least with the cactus, the pricks are on the outside.'

The cactus and the Afrikaner share a lot in common. We can both thrive in drought-stricken areas. Do you remember the 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?' They knew, but because of sanctions they wouldn't tell us! 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 reason for today's imbizo has become very obvious: here we are in the 23rd year of our democracy and everyone in South Africa is free to admit where they come from, to celebrate their struggle and look forward to where they are going. Everyone, except the Afrikaner. We don't dare find the truth about our history because we will be accused of colonialism, as most of our forefathers came from somewhere else. We cannot celebrate a struggle because we were the reason for that struggle. We cannot look forward to where we are going because we don't even know where we come from.

And yes, it is time that we Afrikaners rediscovered the truth about that history and are once again proud, especially of the wonderful contribution we Afrikaners made to bring about this great democracy of the people for the people and by the people ... I can't think what they were now, but they were wonderful contributions! And so I would like to analyse this kaktus to rediscover the survival spirit of the Afrikaner, om weer die oorlewingsgees van die Afrikaner te ontbloot. Oh, does everyone here understand Afrikaans? I got an SMS during interval that some of you don't ... could I have some houselights please?

(She communicates with audience)

We citizens have been given the greatest gift in this wonderful democracy. We have 11 official languages. No one can ever say they didn't know what was going on, because eventually someone will tell 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 warn the DA candidate. So what language do we put on the sign? One language? Or all 11 languages? Does the sign become the gate? Just imagine: Beware of the dog, Oppas vir die Hond, Umkhonto weSizwe ... 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. (Ja-nee al ons vriende van Brakpan wat so lekker klap!) Let me get back to this controversial exhibit.

Please be warned, 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 tonight 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?)

On 6th April 1652 a sailing boat arrived here in Table Bay from Holland and those of you here 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 *Dromedaris* ... *(She shows the picture)* ... I borrowed these pictures from the Apartheid Museum's children's section – and you can see here on the back deck, the kaktus of separate development.

And our teacher also told us that on the *Dromedaris* 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. The first colonialist lie that we all believed without question. It was the first onslaught on truth from this kaktus that eventually became accepted cheap NP propaganda and an early example of how politicians rewrote our history constantly to make themselves strong and to make us frightened. That is the history of white South Africa in a nutshell. False news and alternative facts – to call it by those new fashionable names today. In other words, pure lies.

How could Jan van Riebeeck have brought civilisation to South Africa? He came from Holland. Now we know the truth about Jan van Riebeeck: he was an escaped Dutch convict that came to steal chickens from the Bushmen. And he wasn't even on his way to South Africa. That was another lie. He was on his way to Brazil, to open a coffee shop, because that is what Dutch people do. Have you ever known a Dutchman to be an explorer? What can you explore in Holland except Belgium? Dis alles so klein.

And there Jan van Riebeeck, sailing on his way to colonise Brazil, was blown offcourse by a terrible wind – the El Niño of 1652. (Of course we don't call it El Nino 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! But he wasn't alone on the *Dromedaris*. Besides all the Dutch sailors, there was a woman on board called Maria van Riebeeck. And we all remember her picture from our history classes ... (*She shows the picture*) ... when our teacher told us that Maria van Riebeeck was Jan van Riebeeck's ...? Wife? No, you were brain-washed. That's what they told us and we believed them, but it was another colonialist lie! She was actually not his wife; she was his mother. Because Jan van Riebeeck turned out to be one of those sensitive, artistic Dutch boys who 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 10 rand note – in the days when 10 rand was worth 10 rand and not 10 cents. (*She shows the picture*) Nice clean hair, blue eyes, friendly face? Well I'm sorry to disappoint you, but this is not

a picture of Jan Van Riebeeck. They lied to us. They couldn't find a picture of him, because no one painted him as 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 make us frightened.

And Jan and his mother and his friend walked up and down on the deck of the *Dromedaris* 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. 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 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 *Dromedaris* 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 had already been turned into a timeshare for Hottentots, was empty. It was for penguins only.

And so Jan took his mother and his friend and put them into the rowing boat of the *Dromedaris*. 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 *Dromedaris* on its way to Brazil. (Just imagine if this kaktus had gotten

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? (*She shows the picture*) 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. Jan van Riebeeck, looking very important in his big black hat, surrounded by all the other Dutchman from the *Dromedaris*: 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. Of course, we believed it all. It looked so real. 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 South-Easter wind. And that's what happened. The South-Easter 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 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 on 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 360 years of bad politics in South Africa.

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 came 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 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 democracies.

Who came after the Dutch? The French Huguenots – *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. (Haggis with a sense of humour.)

The moment 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 ... spotted dick? *Sies*, how does a decent woman order that in a restaurant.

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 that instead of learning English and communicating with the hated colonialists, they would just pack up everything and go on a great trek. Die Groot Trek!

Can you believe it? They took their little ox wagons, small and frail, like the Volkswagen Golfs of the day ... because remember the Afrikaner

was always 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, because we now knew that the only reason the British invaded the Cape of Good Hope was to get their hands on this terrible kaktus. Give credit to the boer who decided to deny them the ownership of this weapon of mass control because we took it with us on our Great 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 always faced with.

Natal might look empty, but Natal is never empty. Natal is full of Zulus – especially after noon when they wake up. And the Zulus are a magnificent race, a great nation of compassionate considerate people, as we know after hearing words of wisdom pour forth from the lips of our Zulu President Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma. But let us not forget (as we are not allowed to forget) that the Zulus can also be difficult.

My mother Ouma Ossewania Kakebenia Poggenpoel always warned me about Zulus. 'Oppas, Evita! Oppas vir die Zoeloes. Hulle is bedonnerd.' 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 fight 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: Don't pay the blacks with money; give them cheap wine. And so the Voortrekkers found a dry riverbed in Natal. 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 they waited, morning, noon and night, waiting to fight the Zulus. Waiting. 'Waar de donner is die Zoeloes?' Waiting! The beginning of African time.

Suddenly, after three days, the Zulus appeared on the hills around Blood River. 250,000 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 they saw all those 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.

I don't know how politically-incorrect it is to 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 here, every 16th of December. On that sacred day when we won the Battle of Blood River with God's help, a sunbeam comes down from heaven

specially for us. It beams down through the hole in the roof – (it was planned like that; not built by Indians) – and then falls on the words in marble in the basement that say *Ons vir Jou Suid-Afrika. We for Thee South Africa. Every year. At noon. Can you blame us Afrikaners for truly believing that God was our side?* Till 1994.

Ek sal daardie dag nooit vergeet nie. Pik Botha and I were standing there 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!

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 we realised something was wrong. That's when we knew how politically incorrect it was to even believe that we Afrikaners could win all our battles against the black tribes of South Africa because God was looking the other way.

And so I am so happy to share with you here at this imbizo the breaking news that we Afrikaners have decided to lead by example. In keeping with our national need for reconciliation on every level of our society, we Afrikaners have, after many secret meetings, conference calls, arguments, lengthy disagreements and golden handshakes, unanimously decided to dismantle the hurtful symbols in our history. Like the Voortrekker Monument.

How many times must our Zulu President Jacob Zuma drive past the Voortrekker Monument on his way to his office in the Union Buildings – or on his way somewhere – with his four wives who are all Zulus, followed by bodyguards and special agents who are all Zulus, driven by drivers who aren't – and pass 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 in 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 in die dak. 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 klaskamers; in die vrouetoilette van die *Landbouweekblad*? In die voorportaal van die ACVV? This is why I have arranged for this picture to be prominently displayed. (*She shows the picture*) Am I the only one here whose life was radically changed by this symbol of a nation? I was in the 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 Sunday school picnic – so 'n bliksem. And this painting was hanging on the wall next to my school desk and every morning the children and the teachers came 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 hul rûens en hulle maens. En die rivier is rooi van die bloed! Isn't that terrible? No wonder we Afrikaners are so deeply disturbed. So I am very happy to now be able 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 painting – yes, it looks very violent, but I can assure you it's not meant to be violent. 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 actually shooting at the springboks behind the Zulus with which to feed the Zulus at the braaivleis. Here's a tannie who looks like she's just had her handbag stolen, but 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 Duzi Marathon, proving once again that we must sometimes also rewrite our own history in order to force the square peg of the past into the round hole of the future.

But 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 the British like to do. And so the British Army invaded Natal and forced the Voortrekkers to repack 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 tell us that there was a nice tarred road all the way from Bellville to Pretoria.

Once in the hinterland, we Voortrekkers 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. 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 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 through the veld barefoot, digging holes for our diamonds. And the next morning when we woke up, all we found were 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 the precious diamonds back to England and put them into the crown of the British monarch. So now every time you see Queen Elizabeth open Parliament in her state robes and wearing the state crown, know that her crown is full of our diamonds. Did you know Her Majesty is wearing stolen goods?

I remember being in London with Nelson Mandela for 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!'

By now gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand and overnight all the unwanted elements from every society came to Johannesburg. Uitlanders. Ausländer. Amakwerekwere. More colonialists, followed by the British Imperial Army that once again entered our sacred land uninvited, this time at noon – crossing the Vaal River with the sun glittering on their gold buttons and red jackets, while marching to Pretoria whistling a cheap song, taking away our independence, stealing all 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 and I don't need to go into any detail here, because it was a long time ago and maybe some of you had relatives who 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 brought something unique to South Africa at that moment in our history and that was the concept of the concentration camp.

Are there 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 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? Daar was g'n roomys vir die kinders nie; g'n swembad nie ... dit was so tipies Engels! But then I don't think war is supposed to a tourist attraction. Do you know, I don't think people make wars. 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.

It happened after the Boer War. It happened after our struggle. It has

happened in Northern Ireland. It's not happening in Iraq. Suddenly reconciliation is the most important reality – and I'm happy to tell you that eventually, after years of squabbling, the English and the Afrikaners 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.

You'd forgotten about the kaktus? It had been lost for 10 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 some 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 Butibond aristocracy.

Of course the British knew the value of this terrible kaktus. It was the *raison d'être* of their whole policy of colonial invasion. They brought it down to Cape Town in 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.

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 ... laat ek nou lievers Afrikaans praat. Daardie donnerse Rooinekke! Hulle't het hier in masjeer. Hulle's nie genooi nie. Daar was nie 'n krieket-wedstryd om te speel nie. Hulle't hier ingestorm, bak-ore sonder ken. Daar staan ons trotse Afrikaners gasvry en met Christen vriendelikheid, met koeksisters en melktert, koffie en beskuit. Hulle't ons behandel soos 'n klomp ka ... swartes. 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.

And so when the general election of 1948 was announced, we Afrikaners realised that 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 changed 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 the election. They did not get their ID books with bar-codes; they did not register. 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 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. We had to sell it to Bosnia as ethnic cleansing. 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'll might be the segregation of education, the segregation of language, the segregation of tradition – or here in Gauteng, the segregation of toll gates.

I remember mentioning this to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu when I had tea with him last month. Shame, the darling man, still very frail, still very ill, but yet always with a smile and a hug of encouragement. And 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, what do I do? Here we are in the 23rd year of our democracy? My priority is the future of my grandchildren 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! Do I have to apologise for apartheid and colonialism before I can say anything constructive? I was

there during the worst of times. I saw how easily corruption could become policy! That is why I am in Luthuli House. To make sure that the blueprints of yesterday's horror don't again become the wallpaper of today's alternative facts.'

He laughed and took my hand. 'Gogo Evita,' he said, '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! Blaming apartheid that officially ended 23 years ago for everything we don't like is like in the 1960s blaming Adolf Hitler for the miniskirt. And yes, the temptation to answer accusations of present colonialist attitudes by tweeting: Alright, we will go back to Europe – but we will take the electricity with us, the piped water, the DSTV, the Vorsprung Durch Technik – none of this is helpful, as my friend Helen Zille will tell you.

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 the darkness and gave us light – and Eskom gave up. Where would we have been tonight 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. Nelson Mandela could have 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 even 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 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 in Parliament by Roelf Meyer and his new friend Cyril Ramaphosa.

Look at the difference; *kyk die verskil!* 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, South Africa can still become one of the greatest democracies in the world. As long as our young people all realise that a shower after unprotected sex won't cure anything. (*She studies the kaktus*) Oh? Ah ... made in China?

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 drive the truck of state by looking in the rear-view mirror!

I believe that we whites have been given the greatest gift of all: we are 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. What 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 Yassir Arafat the Palestinian leader in 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 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 that it’s time that the Arabs and the Jews starting living together like Christians!

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 remember to toast our unique country with a glass that is half full and never, never, never half empty.

As news breaks in the palm of my hand, I realise that history is repeating itself and turning tragedy into tweets. I have been approached off the record by persons who wish to remain nameless for obvious reasons. They are from France, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom and Germany. And all they say is: ‘Comrade Bezuidenhout, we are having a little problem in Europe with uninvited guests. Maybe you can help? Surely you remember the way it was done so successfully?’

Yes, during apartheid we called it influx control. We had pass laws, mixed marriage acts, locations, groups areas acts, a population registration act that made sure who belonged where. Easy to rub out ‘coloured, black, Indian, Chinese’ and replace them with ‘Muslim’. Who would have thought that apartheid was 25 years ahead of the world? But I must be careful how well I advise the Europeans. With whites making up a mere 6% of the population, the possibility of us clustered at the Croatian border with a few pathetic possessions clutched in Pick n Pay bags is not so far fetched. At least I know what I will say when I get to the Danish border: No, I have no assets to surrender

except a copy of the South African Constitution. Take that to your liberal leaders.

So are we white South Africans prepared to take the back seat? Believe me, as a member of the ANC from a protected minority, I have found the back seat very comfortable. As long as the driver isn't drunk or carrying a forged licence. We whites can never and we whites will never again lead, but we can lead by example. Things will not go back to what they were. What you see is what we've got. This is it. Let's make the best of it together. Till recently my year had 365 days. Now my year has two: today and tomorrow. What I do well today, will enrich what I live tomorrow.

Hi! My name is Evita ... and I am ... a South African.

(Curtain call)

(The curtains close)

THE END



MEDIA REACTIONS

Weaving through the spiky material, which is delivered with an honesty that had the audience gasping, Pieter-Dirk subtly expounds his message. And yes, there is one. Democracy first. Democracy always. Democracy forever.

– *Artslink* (Johannesburg) May 2017

(Five Stars *****) If anything, Uys teaches us to laugh at ourselves and not take ourselves too seriously. This an absolute treasure. The show is brilliant.

– *Artslink* (Pretoria) May 2017

What is astounding though, is the way Uys uses his improvisational skills to carry the whole show through. You can't help but feel that the whole thing is a very natural conversation between friends. If the idea was to create intimacy, he succeeded.

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) June 2017

With its lights and shade carefully balanced, its quirkiness countered by serious issues, and its relentless pace, *Evita Bezuidenhout & the Kaktus of Separate Development* has Uys at his ebullient best to entertain his audience while exercising its collective mind. – *Cape Argus* (Cape Town) June 2017

Since the early days of Pieter-Dirk Uys's alter ego, Tannie Evita has always reminded us where we come from, so that we can celebrate where we are going. There are laughs aplenty and with good reason, as Tannie Evita got in both off-the-cuff and scripted gems.

– *The Cape Times* (Cape Town) June 2017

The show is a tongue-in-cheek intellectual commentary that in a public service setting makes you flinch and giggle simultaneously, as Tannie Evita ridicules both the past and the present. She delights in unashamedly peeling away at the layers of privilege and prejudice in a take-no-prisoners manner ... in an intriguing showcase of satire.

– *Theatre Scene* (Cape Town) June 2017

Pieter-Dirk Uys is on top form as always, and his flair for speaking his particular style of truth to power is a positive breath of fresh air. – *Weekend Argus* (Cape Town) June 2017

With *Evita Bezuidenhout & the Kaktus of Separate Development* Pieter-Dirk Uys presents a production that is as slightly woven as Afrikaner correctness, but brilliantly disrespectful and laced with a moral twist to fit into our contemporary vernacular.

– *What's On* (Cape Town) June 2017

A PERSONAL MEMO TO THE NEW PRESIDENT

Dear Cyril,

It is the morning after NASREC on 20th December 2017. As you know, I am a member of the ANC, but write here in a personal capacity. I never want to say I told you so. And by telling you now, also means I must admit that it wasn't my idea in the first place. How could I think up something like this? It was written on a sheet of paper I found on the kitchen table in Luthuli House on the morning of the 1st of April earlier this year.

As we all know, that is usually a day for practical pranks and I was wondering what fake news the ANC would spread under the guise of an April Fool's joke. Would Jacob Zuma be crowned as emperor of Nkandla? Would President Trump arrive in Pretoria unannounced to have that demanded meeting with Nelson Mandela?

It was only after I had prepared the Bloody Mary for Gwede and mixed the Eno's Fruit Salts for Tony Yengeni that I read the message. I didn't really understand it then. I still have it here with me. Somehow today, after the NASREC congress, it goes far beyond a joke.

*'Confidential: For the eyes of
Comrade Ramaphosa only.*

Dear Comrade Cyril,

You are now number one in the African National Congress. Soon you will be president of South Africa and president of the ANC, not always in that order. Congratulations on your win from your supporters and a stony-faced amandla from the others.

The party urgently needs a new chapter of leadership and so repeat the following words:

I am now the president of the ANC by the will of the comrades who voted for me and by the grace of other comrades who didn't. This is my first executive order, which is not to offer Comrade Jacob Zuma a one-way ticket to Dubai. That will be my second executive order.

To all the politicians in the ANC and beyond who are corrupt, let make state this most categorically and I'll repeat that with conviction. Your unsubtle criminality has allowed your actions to become part of the public discourse under the heading: state capture. It also shows arrogance in believing that you are entitled to the spoils of your corruption.

You are not.

I know who you are. I know where you live. I have your bank account numbers here, overseas and in the tax havens of white monopoly capital. I hereby give you 24 hours in which you have the democratic freedom to resign from your official

positions voluntarily. There will be no extension.

If you do not resign publicly, you will be arrested in full view of the people of South Africa; in other words, on prime-time television and in the glare of social media. You will forfeit the accepted human rights of freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom of movement. You will be suspended from your job without any payment of salary until you come to trial. You will be given a fair trial within the dictates of the Constitution.

If you are found not guilty of your crimes against the people, you will be free to accept our apology with grace. If you are guilty, you will be imprisoned for 30 years before any parole can be applied for.

Your properties will be confiscated.

Your investments in the name of your spouses, your offspring and your deceased parents will be impounded.

Your party membership will be permanently terminated, declared null and void.

Your 24 hours starts now.'

How we laughed when I read this out in the kitchen during the tea break on that April 1st. Even the young man who arrived from Saxonwold to collect a tray of koeksisters for his employer found it funny.

This morning I read it again and just couldn't even find a smile. I know it's just a silly little April Fool's joke. And yet, deep down inside, I just keep thinking: wouldn't it be wonderful if it wasn't?



Evita with Cyril Ramaphosa

THE MILLIONTH DEATH OF SATIRE

(OR HOW I LEARNT TO STOP WORRYING AND
LOVE DONALD TRUMP)

Pieter-Dirk Uys, *The Cape Times* and *Daily Maverick*, 7 August 2018

Long ago I discovered that laughter is not always because we find something funny. Often it's because we're frightened.

Example #1:

When I was living in Johannesburg during the 1980s and working at the Market Theatre, I bought a telephone answering machine. Now the death threats I received would be recorded. 'Pieter-Dirk Uys, you bleddie communist ... We're going to stop you... We will ...' The gruff voice was interrupted as the machine took over: *Please wait till you hear the bleep and then leave your message. BLEEP.* Back came the gravelly voice, but no longer as confident: 'No man! Hell! I can't talk to these bleddie machines ...' But the threats were real. I put one recording into my show. The audience roared with laughter – and now, so did I.

Example #2: 1985

I noticed a car parked outside my gate with two men sitting in it, day after day. I was being watched. My first reaction was fear. Then I

prepared two mugs of coffee and a plate of koeksisters on a tray, and went out into the street. The men stared at me as I came closer. The driver's window was open. I smiled at them and held out the tray. 'Hello Oom? Koffie en koeksisters?' They revved their car and sped away. I never saw them again. Those were the best koeksisters I'd ever tasted. As Archbishop Tutu said, 'Love your enemy; it will ruin his reputation.'

There was nothing funny about apartheid, a crime against humanity. In Christian South Africa it was just policy. To fight it was to expose oneself to the might of the state. Political protest led to imprisonment, banning, even death. Humour became my weapon of mass distraction: I laughed at something too horrible to contemplate; laughing at the hypocrisy and absurd arrogance of those who perpetuated a system of terror. Making fun of horror and the blandness of the evil was my job for 20 years during apartheid. And old habits die hard. But today what was satire then is now only just tolerated as comedy; to some it's even a form of hate speech.

Nothing gets easier keeping one step ahead of the targets. I find it very difficult to take political correctness seriously. Everything I did on stage under apartheid was considered politically incorrect by the status quo. For 40 years I made fun of fear and those who use it as a weapon to control us. Disrespect is one of few successful ways to put a spotlight on the absurdity, obscenity and mindlessness of rotten politics.

Even though most of my old targets have faded away since 1990, separate developments seem to be reinventing themselves in many countries. Democratically elected governments are using democratically accepted ways to entrench racism and division. The need to use humour as a weapon against the new ruling class of populist dictators is now more essential than ever.

One of the most memorable satirical pieces of the past 60 years was Stanley Kubrick's chillingly funny film *Dr Strangelove or How I Learnt to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. Who can forget that last image of the insane pilot astride the atom bomb on its way down to blow up the world? We all cheered and laughed. Satire then was easily recognised as extreme; outrageous jokes in bad taste at the expense of those who we were meant

to respect or fear – politicians in the main, with popes as a good second choice. One immediately recognised what was ‘satirical’. More often than not, people would just sigh and turn the page. Famously on Broadway, it was said, ‘Satire is what closes on Saturday night.’

In the 1960s there was plenty of horror and madness, but social media was not yet invented and all-present to rub your nose in it 24/7. As a result, today’s 21st century world seems more insane than ever. I’m sorry to be the one to break the news. There is no gentle way of doing it: satire is dead. There have always been the fake newswashes of satire’s demise. It has never been the friend of power. Satire can be traced through history. Much of the time it flourished underground where it was easily trapped and neutralised, preaching to the converted. It wore disguises: funny hats, false noses and high-pitched voices that helped satire to hide in the costumes of clowns and comedians, and so some of its perpetrators got away with assassinating their targets.

Reputations were destroyed by innuendo. Whispers in the theatres could contribute to a final carriage ride to the local guillotine. Charlie Chaplin’s film *The Great Dictator* is a milestone on that long, winding road of using politically-incorrect humour to fight the rising tide of intolerance. It did not stop Adolf Hitler, but it has a legacy: the satirical depiction of power at its maddest, its bloodiest and its most dangerous, such as the recent film *The Death of Stalin*.

It should be a human right to laugh at fear, but maybe the only human right we are left with is the right to be human. That humanity includes the compassion, dignity and respect we show one another, the ubuntu that is the essence of our democracy – or should be. During the Zumafication of South Africa, human rights were bandied about to disguise corruption, theft, possibly murder. Celebrating Nelson Mandela behind his back, as we are doing on his 100th birth year, is again allowing politicians to use his legacy of humanity to pretend that we practice what he preached. We did not.

In our 24 years of democracy, the greatest infringement on our human rights has been the reality of people forced to live in undignified, abject poverty, unable to access their socio-economic rights. That’s

where government for the people, of the people, and by the people should have come in. Making jokes about Hitler in death camps like Auschwitz wouldn't have helped any of the condemned inmates, and yet they did use dark bitter humour to help confront the horrors. On the other side of the spectrum, a cartoonist's showerhead coming out the head of a leader of questionable morality did a lot to remind us what we were in for. And after nearly eight years of Jacob Zuma, our nation has been traumatised all over again. But at least we have a refreshed optimism and the belief that there is light at the end of the tunnel. We also realise that the tunnel is still curved.

Meanwhile the world's superpower, bastion of democratic values, leader of the free world is only entering its second year of trauma. Let me quote from 25 recent speeches by President Donald Trump:

'Nobody can do it like me. Nobody. Honestly ... Nobody is stronger than me. Nobody has better toys than I do ... There's nobody bigger or better at the military than I am ... Nobody loves the Bible more than I do ... Nobody builds walls better than me ... Nobody's better to people with disabilities than me ... Nobody's fighting for the veterans like I'm fighting for the veterans ... There's nobody that's done so much for equality as I have ... There's nobody more pro-Israel than I am ... There's nobody more conservative than me ... There's nobody who respects women more than I do ... Nobody would be tougher on ISIS than Donald Trump ... Nobody's ever had crowds like Trump has had ... There's nobody that understands the horror of nuclear better than me ... Nobody ever understand it but me; it's called devaluation ... The sale of uranium that nobody knows what it means, I know what it means ... Nobody knows more about trade than me ... Nobody in the history of this country has ever known so much about infrastructure as Donald Trump ... I know the H1B; I know the H2B. Nobody knows it better than me ... Nobody knows politicians better than I do ... Nobody knows more about taxes than I do ... Nobody knows more about debt than I do ... Nobody knows the system better than me. Which is why I alone can fix it.'

God bless America. And God help the world.

gesels
met die
voorbokke

"ZUMA
KRY NET
ONE-
LINERS,
hy verdien nie
in karakter nie"
- PIETER-DIRK
GESELS MET
NATANIËL

SONDER
TYD IS JY
BANKROT

PLUS

3 EKSENTRIEKES
TRETCHIKOFF
STEPHEN
HAWKING
EMSIE-ETIKET

**DIE NUWE
KUNS**

PREUTSES
GAAN GRIL

WÊRELD
SE
GROOTSTE
GIER
VIRTUELE
GEMEENSAPPE

JEANNE
GOOSEN
op die
agterblad

Aangewys as beste
SA tydskrif 2005

NOVEMBER 2006 R24,95 BTW INGESLUIT
ANDER LANDE R21,89 SONDER BELASTING



2018

PIETER-DIRK UYS

When in doubt say *darling*

THE
FUGARD
THEATRE - CAPE TOWN
— STUDIO —

7 – 25 AUGUST 2018 | THE FUGARD STUDIO
021 461 4554 | BOOK ONLINE AT THEFUGARD.COM





PDU with Fanny the Cat

When in Doubt say Darling

Performed at the Fugard Theatre, Cape Town * Pieter Toerien's Montecasino Theatre, Johannesburg * Soho Theatre, London * the Jewish Museum, Berlin * one performance in Amsterdam, Holland



THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

PW Botha

Mr G

Jacob Zuma

Piet Koornhof

Mrs Petersen

Mrs Merkel

Mrs May

Nowell Fine

Evita Bezuidenhout



THE SETTING

A collection of cardboard boxes, various sizes, most empty and open round a centre rostrum. On it a barstool centre stage. Gives the impression of packing up a life.

(PDU enters)

PDU: Here you are, here with me, and the burglars have probably just got into your house. No, I'm only joking. Maybe they're getting into your car? No, joking. Maybe they're sitting next to you! Well, with so many crooks in the cabinet, why not a few thugs in the theatre?

I'm not packing up; I'm packing away. After 40 years of doing this sort of work, I have attics, cupboards and *solders* full of costumes, hats, false noses, fake news, wigs and whatnots. And boxes everywhere. Am I the only one? Bet there are some of you here with a few cardboard boxes all over your house? Well, we've all been told that government will expropriate our land without compensation, so we have to sort out the house. What would they want us to leave them? And what do we take with us in our two Pick n Pay bags, when future President Corruptor-in-Chief Julius Malema says to us remaining whites: 'You have 24 hours to get out of my country. Go back to Europe where you belong and take Helen Zille with you.'

Don't worry, it won't happen tomorrow, or next week. Maybe not even next year. But be prepared: buy an EFF red beret. Keep it in the hallway of your house. And when you hear the cluster of comrades coming up the driveway – and you will hear them – put on your red EFF beret, open your front door and say: 'I got here first!'

Wall cupboards: always full of things. No, better in Afrikaans: *kaste vol kak*. Especially in the spare room. Now that you want to change that into an Airbnb, you must first clean out the wall cupboard. You haven't opened it for months because you wouldn't be able to close it again. So you look: full of rubbish. Souvenirs of a trip to Greece. (Remember the old days? Now it's just a trip to Hermanus.) A little ceramic donkey with a *moerse piepie*. Or having passed through Switzerland, you bought a cuckoo clock with no cuckoo that clocks. Throw it away!

Then you see it ... oh no, I can't throw that away ... the *LIFE* magazine from 1953 with pictures of the Queen's coronation. En daar is die *Huisgenoot* met Dr Verwoerd se begrafnis prente! And a small jar with your children's milk teeth in it? And there are those seven tins of tuna

that remind you of the first democratic election of 27th April 1994?
(You still eating your tuna??)

Hopeless. You get trapped by every object because you remember where it came from and then decide to keep it. Put everything back in the cupboard and close the door. Throw nothing away. Except the odd electrical cord. Usually with a funny plug. Chuck it away. And you do – and the next day your computer doesn't work.

Now that's the end of your life. Without your computer the Americans and the Russians won't even know you exist. And how can you exist? Because now everything breaks in the palm of your hand. The news, the WhatsApp, the UpYours/InMine, Twitter, tweet and twat. That's why I am old-fashioned. I still love my daily newspaper, even though the real news broke hours ago, sometimes before it even happened.

In the old days of apartheid, newspapers were my link with you. I saw the headlines and knew you had also seen them and so we could laugh together at our fear and make it less fearful. Today it's just a habit, and a very quick page through. At least it smells of newspaper even while you line the cat's sandbox with it. And sometimes I find material: like here on page 4. The K-word, again used in public and all hell breaks loose. Excuse me, 25 years into our democracy and still the k-word is used as a weapon of mass destruction? We used K-words all the time in the old South Africa. *Kommunis. Katoliek. Kak.*

Now we all have freedom of expression, so is it so difficult to find another word to say: I don't like you? Remember Vicky Momberg who was cell-phone-filmed using the K-word not once but 48 times? That was not a slip-up; that was a recital! She auditioned and got the job: cleaning her police cell in the copshop for two years. I hope the cell next to her is being prepared for Julius Malema, who uses his own copyrighted brand of hate speech.

But it's so hard not to get angry. We see the news and explode. We get frightened and panic. No! It shouldn't happen in our democracy: corruption, lies, rapes, murders. Enough already. So you sit at your computer and try and decide how to react. How to help. How to lead by example. Have a glass of wine. Feel better. Still angry, but better. No!

Don't let them get away with it. Send an email. Another glass of wine. Then off you go ...

Type type type (I nearly did that!) and then press SEND. Whoosh! It's gone. Your life is over. K-words, M-words, D-words, F-words on the cloud forever. In the old days you could reverse your car into the postbox and retrieve your letter, but not anymore. Penny Sparrow flies over your house. So calm down. There's nothing you can do to change the bad headlines. Just make sure your house is in order and your family is safe.

I have a sign on my computer that says: 'Don't press send when pissed.' Even now that she retired as premier, I send a WhatsApp to Helen Zille: 'Darling, please don't tweet after the second glass of Chardonnay.' But I'm also guilty – using that D-word too often. Darling! Going through Heathrow Immigration recently, the official asked: 'Pieter-Dirk Uys, where do you live?'

'Darling.' He looked at me.

'Yes, darling, but where?'

'I live in Darling ... darling.' He stamped my passport.

Live in a town called Darling? I wasn't supposed to even go to Darling. It was the wrong turning that changed my life.

It was 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'. So I got in the car and decided to have a drive to McGregor. Never been there; heard it is very pretty. After about an hour on the road I found myself in Darling. That's like going to China and ending up in Brazil.

I saw a sign for a restaurant called *Zum Schatzi*. Maybe I'll have a Wiener schnitzel in Darling. I was a bit early, so the owner – Herman the German – said: 'Nein, the cow is still in the field', and 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 a house.

'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 what a pretty town it is. Beautiful Victorian house here; charming Victorian house there, Victorian cat, Victorian dog. She turned to the right up the hill.

‘Just need to drop in a cooldrink at this house. We’re having an open day. Disaster. The house has been empty for seven years; 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 in the car! I got back to Cape Town later that afternoon with a schnitzel in my tummy and a house in my hand. ‘I bought an old house in Darling,’ I announced to friends. They stared back. ‘Why?’ I didn’t have an answer.

The next Saturday I drove back to Darling to say I had made a mistake. I stopped in front of the ruin. It was definitely a disaster. A small car drew up behind mine and a young man got out. ‘Hi, are you Pieter-Dirk Uys?’ he asked. ‘You’ve bought this house?’ I was just ready for my monologue of apology and regret. ‘I restore Victorian houses. I’ve just got back from the UK. I’d like to do this house for you as a showcase.’

Are some things 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 of my life. He did a wonderful job on the house from roof to foundations. The snakes – a family of cobras! – were rounded up by an old *oomie* from the community. He arrived in his hat: ‘*Waa’s die Schlange?*’ He caught them live and took them down the road and threw them over the fence into the garden of a Broederbond! And I moved into Darling, lock, stock and 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. I certainly had enough high-heeled shoes to tempt Imelda Marcos to ask for political asylum just to see them. And as for the dresses of the most famous white woman in South

Africa? Tannie Evita always had a choice of three: fat, medium and thin. (I hope she can still fit into the medium!)

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 an idea: *Perron* is Afrikaans word for station platform ... Evita Peron was that lady in Argentina who sang all those songs and died ... and my character 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've opened a theatre in Darling!'

'Darling, you're mad!' they said.

Yes! Mad is good. It means no one's thought of it yet. If people agree, usually there are fingerprints all over a bright idea. And so Evita se Perron has been going for 22 years, even featured recently on an episode of the BBC's *The Travel Show*. It had a section on South Africa and at the end, 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 where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned.
4. Go to Darling and visit Evita se Perron.

From the sublime to the ridiculous. And the longest street in the town – and you can check that in the palm of your hand on your GPS Google Earth map – is the Evita Bezuidenhout Boulevard. I don't think that the late Winnie Madikizela-Mandela has her own boulevard yet ... don't tell Zinzi!

Well, I knew I would see you here tonight ... well, no, I can't see you because it's very dark out there, but by the sound of you I think many of you are of my generation. We probably met at the Space Theatre in Cape Town back in the 1970s, or at The Market Theatre in Johannesburg during the 1980s, or at the festivals during the 1990s, so I think you will enjoy being rushed back to the future with a character I did in my shows back when he was dangerous.

And for the younger ones who probably won't know what the fuck I'm talking about: the born-frees, the millennials and those under 30? Don't panic. Just Google. You now have all the information in the world

in the palm of your hand. All you need is the knowledge. I'm not going to give you the name of the person, just take out things that you'll remember me wearing.

(PDU takes out the PW hat & glasses)

Remember my Bread and Botha? Right through the 1980s I did President PW Botha, who was the superstar of my chorus line. It was also illegal to poke fun of the president of South Africa, so it was even more fun poking PW Botha. Of course during the 1980s when I did him on stage, I wore quite a lot of make-up. Now I even look like the old fucker.

There was also the Broederbond uniform, *die pakkie*-suit. I always wore the same outfit for every National Party leader, which is why so many blacks said: 'Huw, you Afrikaners all look alike!' White shirt, jacket, carnations, rosette, *hoed, bril, vinger en tong*. At my present age, putting on a tie here is a bit of an Alzheimer's test. *(Do it)* And now add the waistcoat, which PW Botha never wore (I got it from the SPCA shop in Darling) and it disguises a multitude of sins ... which brings us closer to PW Botha's true colours.

(PDU adds shirt, tie, jacket, waistcoat, rosette and carnations)

Now to motivate the character. Delve down deep into my soul to find the essence of the person, the humanity, or not. Think Bond ... not James ... but Broederbond.

(Into PW Botha)

PW BOTHA: Revolutionaries may stamp their feet!

The communists in the West may scream their lies.

Our enemies worldwide might try to undermine us –

But here is the reality.

Apartheid is dead! Apartheid is dead!

It is 1985 and I can state here most categorically and repeat it with conviction: we no longer practise apartheid in South Africa because by now we have it down to a fine art!

We Afrikaners did not separate the races; God separated the races. So

who can point a finger at us? Where in world is there a more just society than ours in South Africa? Australia?

After the systematic massacre of their aboriginal peoples, the Australians now accuse us of racial genocide. Let me tell you: today we have 23 million blacks alive in South Africa, and they only have 160,000 left in Australia.

And the United Kingdom? Can Great Britain point a finger at us? Or has she still got her imperial finger in every pie of racial chaos that we hold as a heritage of the great British Empire? Can Great Britain ignore Northern Ireland and the bloody civil war between

Catholic and Protestant, and still point a finger at us in South Africa where we enjoy religious freedoms on every segregated front?

We in the National Party are sick and tired of being represented as Nazis and thugs.

I warn you! If you continue to besmireh 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 will stop me!

(PDU out of PW; takes off jacket, hat and glasses)

PDU: Famous last words. This is not an exercise in nostalgia. I just believe we must remember where we come from, so we can make sure the buggers don't try the same old tricks again. Making fun of the South African president is always the top of my satirical hit parade and I had so many, starting with John Vorster, who was kicked up into the



PDU as PW Botha

presidency to keep him out of jail because of the Information Scandal. (Remember our 1978 info scandal? When we found out that our government was stealing tax payer's money! *Tjoe!* We knew that would never happen again.)

PW Botha kicked himself up into the presidency to keep him out of the Wilderness where he belonged. Then came President FW de Klerk, which was difficult because he looked just like PW Botha: same bald head, same glasses, virtually same initials, definitely same problem. He even said to me then:

'Pieter, are you also going to impersonate me on stage?'

I said: 'Mr de Klerk. That will be very difficult, because you are just too good.' And he believed me.

Then came Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Impossible to make fun of him. It's like doing Mother Theresa with a dildo. The trouble was: Nelson Mandela always laughed first and only stayed for one term in office. (One term only? Very un-African) I thought I'd have him for a lifetime, but after five years he stepped aside and left me with Thabo Mbeki.

What do you do with Thabo Mbeki? He never wore a colourful Madiba shirt, or danced, or sang, or gave me anything to use on stage, until he reputedly suggested that HIV didn't lead to AIDS and so caused the death of 380,000 people in South Africa – and so from that moment on, my hands were full of Thabo Mbeki!

But then the ANC recalled him suddenly from the presidency and we had an interim acting president called Kgalema Motlanthe, who couldn't have been a very good actor because he wasn't there for very long. He also left without even making a mistake. But gave me the ultimate trumpcard of corrupt politics: Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma.

What a gift. Jacob Zuma married everyone! He didn't just give me one first lady, but four desperate first ladies. And he sang for his supper and his machine gun, his umshini wam. He danced in his Zulu apparel with rare and protected animal skins, assegai and shield, kicking up his leg en die balle het geswaai.

And as our President he would stand in Parliament and laugh and giggle ... (*Giggle*) ... sounds like a supermarket trolley with a squeaky

wheel? And every time he laughed and giggled, he degraded and demeaned our democracy into trash. And I loved doing him, because I had to do him v-e-r-y slowly.

But then I heard the voices ... two voices ... even more ... young and angry saying: 'You can't do Jacob Zuma!'

'Why? Am I doing him so badly?'

'No, you're white.'

'Excuse me?'

'You're white; you can't do blacks.'

'I'm not doing blacks; I'm impersonating a rotten President ...'

'No, now it's politically-incorrect. It's racist! You'll soon have a hashtag: #UysMustFall!'

After 25 years of democracy, do we now have a generation of millennials suffering from an irony bypass? I've been shouted at before. During the apartheid days: 'Pieter-Dirk Uys? Jy mag dit nie hier doen nie! You are not allowed to do that here!' So I did it there. 'How dare you do it there?' So I did it here. 'How many times must we ban you!' So I wore Tannie Evita Bezuidenhout's dress. 'O fok, who the hell do we lock up??' Maar Boer maak 'n plan.

The times they are a-changin'. We are now in a new minefield of hash-tags and hate speech. So maybe it's time to reinvent new ways of doing old tricks. Maybe I need some help. And again PW Botha can come to my rescue. He did that in 1981 when he gave me the title of my first one-man show, *Adapt or Dye*. So now he can shield me here from any accusations of racism and political incorrectness, because it will not be me, but PW Botha doing his impersonation of JG Zuma. And why not? They are both South African presidents who were forced to resign.

(PDU into PW Botha as Jacob Zuma)

ZUMA: Counter-revolutionaries may stamp their feet!

The communists in the tripartite alliance can scream their lies!

My enemies in white monopoly capital might try to undermine me,

But here is the reality.

It is 2018 and I did nothing wrong!
What I did, I did for the ANC.
What I did, I did for BEE.

I was the champion of radical economic transformation and I proved it: I radically transformed the state's economy to my friends, the Guptas. They now call me a thief. I cannot agree. I did not steal anything. It was given to me for security reasons.

I did nothing wrong. I am sick and tired of being called a thief. I am a poor pensioner. So I warn you! If you keep dragging me through the courts, you will unleash forces in KwaZulu-Natal, the end result of which cannot be foreseen.

I will keep everything that was given to me and no one in the ANC will stop me! Because most of the ANC still support me and are rich because of me! So bring me my machine gun: Umshini wam ... umshini wam ...



PDU as Jacob Zuma

(PDU back into PW Botha)

PW BOTHA: *Nee, magtig!* Let me state here most categorically and I'll repeat it with conviction. We whites are sick and tired of being represented as racists and stealers of the land. I warn you! If you expropriate our land without compensation, you will unleash forces in South Africa the end result of which cannot be foreseen. Boer maak 'n plan!

We Afrikaners will protect our land and our language and no one in a red beret will stop us! But I don't need to sing for my machine gun. My umshini wam? No, I just sing my Afrikaans lullaby: Jou kombers en my matras en daar lê die ding ... daar lê die ding ... daar lê die ding ... ratarataratarataratar!!!! (*Mimes machine gun shots*)

(PDU takes out a red beret)

PDU: Maybe this is part of a future presidential costume? Winnie Mandela once referred to Julius Malema as the new Nelson Mandela. He liked the idea: 'Yes, I am the new Nelson Mandela. In future you will treat me like Nelson Mandela!' What a good idea. Let's start with 27 years in jail. (To fill in blank spaces here, just google 'Weimar Republic', and then google 'Adolf Hitler 1929'.)

Ironic to be reminded that the apartheid empire was structured on expropriation of land without compensation. As I stole from Archbishop Tutu: 'When the white missionaries came to South Africa, they had the Bible and we had the land. And they said: let us pray. So we closed our eyes and prayed. And when we opened our eyes, we had the Bible and they had the land.'

I'm so lucky that all politicians know how to turn the world into their stage – and Evita se Perron in Darling could contribute its own stage as well as a dressing room. So till we sorted that out, I had to change into Evita at my house up the road. No snakes, just Malteses, my Sea Point sheep. When they saw me they wagged their tails. When they saw Tannie Evita, they bit her. We had a show for every Sunday at 12:15: *Tannie Evita praat Kaktus*. It's still going strong after 22 years, every Sunday at noon. So Mrs Bezuidenhout had to get ready in my house. At five to noon, she left the house and went into the street to the car, just as the NG Kerk congregation across the road came out. The stern dominee walked across to her: 'Mevrou Bezuidenhout, namens die NG Kerk gemeente, welkom in Darling.' Where else in the world ...

Back to the Perron. It was a warm morning. The door was open to allow the wet paint on the walls to dry. The occasional train rumbled by. I noticed a small boy from the formerly-disadvantaged community across the railway line standing in the open doorway.

'What you do?' he asked.

'I'm building a stage,' I said.

'For why?'

'We're going to turn this old station into a theatre.'

'Why?'

‘So we can have shows and laugh and sing and dance ...’

‘O! I like to sing!’

‘Ja?’

‘Ja.’

‘Do you sing well?’

‘Ja.’

‘Ok, come and sing.’

‘No!!!’

‘It’s OK. It’s just you and me. Come on the stage and sing.’

‘Must I pay?’

‘No.’

‘Do I get paid?’

‘Not yet ...’

And so he came onto the stage and sang. And was horrible! Because he was so nervous. He wanted to cry. I said: ‘Come back next week and try again.’ I didn’t think he would but he did. He came back again and sang – and it was less horrible. And came back the next Saturday and the next and the next and five months later when we had the first talent show for the children of Darling, this little seven-year-old boy came first with his song. And ten years later, when he was 17, he came second in the world in the London Trinity College singing exam. So you see, dreams can come true! In Darling, darling ...

(PDU into Mr G)

MR G: Oh no, here they are. My glasses. *(Looks into a box)* And my favourite hat ... I wasn’t expecting you ... but here you are. Darlings, you look so well. And you have found me packing and sorting ...

You know, I swore I would never move again, not after that last ghastly experience ... once the children left for Canada ... and then Brenda left me for Bill ... and now these black garbage bags are full of only my fingerprints.

You should see the garage, the lounge, the guest bedroom just full of boxes ... Yes, your Honour, I am guilty of hoarding ...

(He takes out a book)

I haven't read this, or have I? ... oh yes ... was it a film? No ... ah, a bookmark ... that's a clue. So I didn't finish it.

(He looks at a photo)

Goodness, that's me ... where was this taken? ... surely not from school, no ... yes indeed. There I am with my matric class ... Now that girl I liked very much. What was her name ... quite fat then I notice now ... such a good brain ... wonder where she is today ... probably New Zealand ...

Yes, well, maybe going through everything is not such a good idea ... besides it will take so much time, and I have so many other things to do. But then one doesn't want to throw away something precious by mistake. I mean it might look like rubbish but it's not ... it's just part of my life.

(He fiddles in a box)

I'm really excited to be moving to a smaller place. I mean this house is far too big for me ... now it's just me and Smelly ... where is Smelly? Probably sleeping. Poor old Smelly. He's very old now. I suppose in dog years we're the same age. Sleeps most of the time, until I shake him and say loudly: come for your walk, smelly old dog! It's a lovely place ... two rooms ... well, one room and a bathroom. And a lovely view if you stand on a chair. And the sun shines in the corner for two hours in summer. Smelly will like that sun. Oh yes, he can come with me. At first they said: no pets allowed. I said: he's not a pet. He's my best friend. So they um'd and ah'd and eventually said: Very well you can both come and stay. Obviously not for long that's for sure ...

(He looks around)

All this stuff ... Maybe if I left the door open, some good thief will come and happily steal everything and that would really help me a lot. Claim some insurance for all the valuable things taken ... no, no valuable things, and yet ... but can memory be stolen? Maybe not stolen, just mislaid.

Well, that's the way of the world, he said. Christopher, my old accountant and Barry my lawyer for all those years. We meet once a month just to make sure we're still alive. Christopher says if he stops smoking, he'll

die instantly. And Barry never stops taking pills. I always laugh at Barry. He was dressed up a wedding? I asked: Are you getting married again? Wasn't the third time expensive enough? ... No, he said, it was a funeral. Yes, many more of those around. Barry says he wears that suit sometimes three times a week, even four. Sees a hearse and follows it. I said: Don't wear it to mine. I won't be there to appreciate it. I laughed alone ... touchy about death ... silly really. It's the one box we can all tick ... Can't say I'm not a bit ... scared. Then again, one usually is a bit nervous of something you do for the first time.

(He fiddles in a box)

You know, darling ... oh dear, no, I shouldn't call you 'darling'. I scarcely know you. And even if I did, to call you 'darling' is too intimate and offensive to some and could lead to accusations of sexual harassment. I had acquaintances who were involved with the theatre ... they always say 'darling this' and 'darling that'. Geraldine Brenthurst ... yes? No? You don't remember? I do. When Brenda and I moved here from London in 19-something, she was our neighbour in Bantry Bay and what a fine actress. *Candida* was the first play I saw her in ... Bernard Shaw. Then I think she also did some Shakespeare at Maynardville ... Geraldine Brenthurst ... How Brenda so disliked being called 'darling', except by her of course. I remember Brenda asking Geraldine: 'Why do you always call everyone "darling"?' And Geraldine laughed and said: 'Darling, I can remember all the plays by Shakespeare, Shaw, Osborne, Pinter and Fugard, but when it comes to your name, his name, her name, their names? Sorry, no. So, when in doubt, say "darling".'

Gosh, I'm glad I remembered that ... *(The book in his hand)* Gosh, now where did this come from ... have I read this? Ah, a photo ... can you believe it ... my Standard Eight class ... and look who is in the corner looking so proud. The teacher. Me! Now where is Smelly ... Smelly? It's time to take me for my daily walk? Smelly? Darling ...?

(Blackout)

(Lights)

PDU: The Bo-Kaap used to be called the Malay Quarter of Cape Town. Even during apartheid, it kept its culture and today it is a favourite tourist destination. It is also where Mrs Petersen has recently moved. So here comes a character probably crying out for a few hashtags, a woman who is not only mixed-race Cape Coloured, but also a Muslim! And she's on her way to the UK!

(PDU into Mrs Petersen)

MRS PETERSEN: Hey! *(She shouts)* Hey! Not this bleddie door! This is not a public place; it is a private house and I'm busy! Damn tourists! ... O halieha! ... no, can you believe it? The Bo-Kaap has become a tourist trap. The buses can't fit into the narrow streets, so they park in front of my house and people knock wanting to use my toilet. I just say: 'Welcome to Cape Town. My toilet has been stolen.' Bleddie cheek.

My brother left me this house in his will and so I just moved here from the Cape Flats. Every day, every hour, tourist buses, taxis, ubers, cars. You can't move. When I open my front door, there they all are with their cameras, filming me, wanting selfies with me, asking me stupid things. Like 'when did you arrive?'

'I arrived in 1652, nine months after Jan van Riebeeck arrived!'

Then I must also fill in my UK visa application. I'm going over to Manchester to see my family in the United Kingdom. I'm so excited. I thought you just fill in the form and go to the Foreshore to an office and talk to someone who can help you, but there is no office. It must all



PDU as Mrs Petersen

happen through the internet. No man, I don't have something like that.

(She takes a phone call)

Ja hello? It's Mrs Petersen ... ja, I recognise your voice. Are you here already? No, I'm just going through my answers to see which you must help me with and then I'll meet you, okay? I'm going to Manchester ... hello? *(End of call)*

Oh, the man is so busy; there must be another call. Now let me see: My picture must go here and I got four taken at the chemist. *(She looks at the photos)* O nay, sies maar ek lyk vet! What will the Queen think when she sees me looking like that? The chemist said I must use the photo without my doek. People in the UK don't like people wearing doeks ... *(She starts checking the form)*

FAMILY NAME? Petersen. It doesn't sound Muslim, does it? I know the people in England don't like Muslims. Petersen? Sounds more Jewish. *O hel*, that's even worse. Maybe say it like Scandinavian: Peeetersen. Maybe that's better for there?

FORENAMES? I've only got two. And my second name is Fatima. Nay wat, los die Fatima. No, just Anna.

PLACE OF BIRTH? Cape Town.

GENDER? Hey? What is gender? Female. Onbeskof. He must fill that in for me ...

NATIONALITY? South African. Should I write 'Cape Coloured'? My friends say you can't say Coloured overseas; it's a swearword.

HOW LONG DO YOU INTEND TO STAY IN THE UK? Till my first great-grandson has his 21st birthday ... maybe I should stay for a English Christmas? It might even snow? A white Christmas? No, I said goodbye to white Christmases in 1994. Two weeks, ja.

HAVE YOU EVER TRAVELLED TO THE UK IN THE LAST TEN YEARS? It shows this form is for rich whites and Indians. I've never left Cape Town. But to be able to go to England? I love the Queen. I want to leave her a message here. I saw her on TV on her 90th birthday with the Trooping of the Coloureds. She sat in a chair and watched it for nearly three hours without even going to the toilet? Haai, that Queen is a Muslim!

My daughter Lizzie and her husband Basil came back for my big birthday last year, after being away in Manchester for 15 years. I said: 'Lizzie, how do we look to you people over there?' She said: 'Mommy, in the TV news it always looks like you people are in a civil war.' I said, 'No, my dear, it's an uncivil war; also called democracy'.

They took me to the Mount Nelson Hotel for tea. I was wearing my doek and someone asked if I was a Saudi Arabian princess. I should have said: 'No, I am the landlady from Dubai coming to get the rental from the Guptas and the Zumas!' O ja, I saw Charlize Theron at the Mount Nelson, but the waitress said, no, all the white girls from Durbanville now look like Charlize Theron.

Back to the document ...

DO YOU HAVE A UNIVERSITY DEGREE? If I was a member of the ANC I could say yes and I got it free! But they say: don't make jokes when you fill in a UK visa form. So the answer is no. So I write 'No'.

HAVE YOU HAVE ANY CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS? I can't lie to the Queen. I was arrested in 1982 during the riots against apartheid here on the Cape Flats. Maybe it was criminal then, but now it's an investment for the future.

IN TIMES OF EITHER PEACE OR WAR, HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN, OR SUSPECTED OF INVOLVEMENT IN WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OR GENOCIDE? I just wrote: Your Majesty, I'm a South African!

(She picks up cellphone)

Hello? ... Ja, are you ready for me? ... Look, I've double-checked everything. Can I come now? ... you mean at the Hilton Hotel down on the corner of Wale Street? ... If you look up on your left you can see my house. It's got a green door, blue windows and yellow walls. Ja, a Plascon nightmare! How will I know you? ... Yes, I will wear a doek, blue with glitter; you can't miss it. Yes, I also have the application fee ... R600 in cash? ... you will put that through internet banking? Hey? When did that happen? ... Why don't I know about it? Really? ... R4000? Oh no ... no, don't blame yourself. You probably told me, but I am getting very deaf ... Ja, there's an ATM machine down the road, but we don't

use it because they attack us ... hey? Four different ones? Why? R1000 cash from each? But R4000 ... but it's my money for Manchester. Ja, it's in the bank. Pin number? Ja. I wrote it on a piece of paper so I don't forget it. Will you? Ag, man, I'm so grateful. Thank you. We can go in your car to the ATMs? Oh my goodness ... no, I will bring the pin number. Sorry, but what is your name? Mr Obadinga ... oh, you're from there? Haai, you Nigerian people know everything ... O haliha!

(Blackout)

(Lights)

PDU: I had an interview recently and was asked: 'How did it feel for the last 40 years of satirising South African politics?' Imagine having your head stuck in a blocked toilet for 40 years? You lose your sense of smell. Thanks to Darling, I think can again smell the flowers. Yes, there's a lot that's wrong in my country: terribly wrong, carelessly wrong, but for every piece of bad news there are two pieces of good news. But you must find it.

Good news is working hard, scrubbing the floor. Bad news waves and attracts attention. There's lots of time, but no time to waste. Start focusing on the light at the end of the tunnel? No, it is there. We just can't see it yet, because our tunnels are curved. As we stumble deeper into our democratic minefield of hashtags and hate speech, my next wake-up call might soon be: 'Pieter-Dirk Uys, you can't do women!' Believe me, darlings, I really don't do women; I perform characters – male, female and convertible – because that's my job.

So let me take you down the Evita Bezuidenhout Boulevard in Darling and introduce you to the most famous white woman in South Africa. Just because she doesn't exist, doesn't mean she's not real.

(PDU sets up make-up, then adds base, powder, rouge)

The first time I met Nelson Mandela was in a Milnerton school hall a few months after he released from prison in 1990. A long queue. Eventually there he was right in front of me. He held out his arms and

said: 'Ah, Pieter-Dirk Uys? Where is Evita?' I just thought: Oh God, I hope you know ...



Left to right: PDU as Angela Merkel, Theresa May, Nowell Fine, Evita Bezuidenhout

(Add blonde Merkel wig)

ANGELA MERKEL: Nein, ach du lieber Gott, ich kann das nicht fassen! Seh' doch meine Haaren? Look at my hair? Every time I meet Donald Trump, I think we share the same hairdresser with Boris Johnson! I will give all Germany's euros in exchange for a good hairdresser. Just look at my hair. It's still full of Greece! Greece! Greece!

PDU: Oops, sorry Frau Merkel, wrong famous white woman.

(Add eyeliner, eyebrows, lipstick)

Nineteen seventy-eight: in the weekly *Sunday Express* newspaper I had a column reflecting the madness of our politics, highlighted by the Information Scandal. To confuse censorship I created an Afrikaans tannie who once a month at a party in Pretoria would say: 'Skattie? Have you heard ...?' And then she would come out with the scandal of the last week.

Eventually the editor of newspaper called me in: 'How come you can get away with what I am not allowed to publish? Who is this Evita of Pretoria.' He gave her the name. It was during the time of the new musical. So I found a biography of Mrs Peron and it gave me an ideal blueprint for the life of my Evita.

In 1981 she was part of my *Adapt or Dye*, also during the time when it was

illegal for men to wear women's clothing, and soon became the South African ambassador to the independent homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti. Then President Nelson Mandela pulled all the Bantustans into one black homeland called South Africa, and Evita lost her job.

(PDU adds grey wig and into Theresa May)

THERESA MAY: I have no regrets: I said it in Belfast, I said it in Birmingham and I said it in Brussels. The British people have had a referendum and voted to leave the European Union. I said it again and again firmly and clearly: come hell or high water, I will deliver a Full English Brexit! But alas, it was not to be.

So let me warn the new prime minister, whoever it might be: if you continue to disrupt my processes, you could unleash right-wing forces in the EU, the end result of which cannot be foreseen. They said I didn't know if I was coming or going? Believe me, I knew Brexit might or might not be coming, but I'm definitely going ... dancing in the streets!

(She waves her hands as if dancing)

PDU: Oops, sorry Theresa May, wrong famous white woman. *(Adds false eyelashes and more lipstick/gloss)*

Nelson Mandela loved Evita. He would phone and say: 'Pieter, where's Evita?' He invited her to his extraordinary gatherings of famous people and international media to focus on our young democracy with optimism and pride, and there Tannie Evita had her 15 minutes of fame with an audience that included Bono, Beyoncé, the Queen of Holland, Oprah Winfrey and Bill Clinton. I saw the way he looked at Evita. Randy old bugger! (Jou jags jakkals!)

The most difficult part of the presentation was getting a dressing room. They usually just said: 'use a toilet'. Believe me, putting Evita together in the Ladies means they use her lipstick and never give it back. And to do it in the Mens means I get so many dinner invitations, you won't see me for a month!

So many women have asked me how do I put on the false eyelashes – and quite a few men too, so let me present a master class here on how: you put glue onto the lashes ... touch the edge of the eyelid and leave some there ... let it jell while adding eyebrows ... and then add the lashes with care. I hope you've taken notes, sir?

The first female character in my chorus line was my Jewish-African Princess, my kugel, Nowell Fine ...

(PDU into Nowell Fine)

NOWELL: As true's God, I'm absolutely finished! I've just been in London and just look at my hair! Minister Lindiwe Sisulu suggested I go to her hairdresser and so I did, and look at my hair! I'm having a nervous breakdown.

I'm going to a party given by some friends here from London, who are planning to emigrate and settle in Knysna because of Brexit. I remember how they boycotted South Africa, damn hypocrites. I always said I'll stay put even though there were two things I couldn't stand about South Africa: apartheid and the blacks.



PDU as Nowell Fine

No, as true's God, they said:

'Come to London, Nowell!' I said: 'Thank you very much, but you just can't find a decent maid in London. Give me Johannesburg any day. I'd rather be murdered in my own bed than have to make it myself.'

There has to be a solution to Brexit. What's the alternative? Leave the EU? Yes, and then Scotland becomes independent, Northern Ireland joins up with the republic down south, Wales goes to the highest bidder,

Gibraltar goes Spanish – which leaves England and the Falkland Islands. I can't see the Queen moving there, although that is a place where her husband can safely drive his 4×4.

So here is my suggestion: let Prince Charles abdicate and allow Prince William to become king. Then Charles can leave the royal family as the Honourable Charles Windsor and start his own United Party and so keep the kingdom together for, not just the family, but for all who live in it. And the rest can just come to South Africa! Brexit? Wake me when it's over!

We in South Africa went through it all 30 years ago! Millions of illegals wanting to get into our culture, exploit our way of life. But we solved that. It's so simple, I said to them in London: just Google the apartheid laws and print them out: Immorality Act, Mixed Marriages Act, Group Areas Act, Pass Laws, Population Registration Act. Just cross out black and white and add in Islam and Muslim.

Right, I'm ready to see my friends after a bit of plastic surgery here, some Botox there; dyed my hair red, great jewellery and a divine outfit? I'll be the sensation of the party. And let me tell you, if I am not sexually harassed tonight, I'll kill myself!

(She adds jewellery and perfume)

PDU: Sorry, Nowell Fine, wrong famous white woman! Evita is now a member of the ANC. They really deserve her. Let me add her perfume to help me motivate my performance: I just have to smell it and I know she's here. This perfume was a gift from Michelle Obama. Evita calls it her Channel No 5.

(Add Evita wig, perfume, leopard cloth)

(PDU into Evita Bezuidenhout)

EVITA: Sayibona, dumela, molo, kunjane, hello – and to any American and British guests – salaam. I am happy to be here to bring you the good news you have been waiting for. There is a solution to the proposed expropriation of land without compensation. It is already common

knowledge that among the 139 farms the ANC has pinpointed to start their expropriation of land without compensation, one of the farms is our farm – yes, the Bezuidenhout farm in Mpumalanga.

I went to Gwede Mantashe and said: ‘How can that happen to me? I am a member of the ANC.’ He said: ‘Evita, just look in the mirror.’ I know – now that Derek Hanekom has retired, I am the only white comrade who glows in the dark.

So I went to my black lawyer and he reminded me that King Goodwill Zwelithini had again recently announced that no Zulu landowner would ever have to give up his land to the ANC government, because all Zulu land is protected by the King’s Ingonyama Trust.

I then went to my Jewish attorney, who produced a book from his shelf. I cringed. It was published in 1984 and tried to insinuate that Afrikaans families had black blood in their veins. Yes, the Bothas, the Treurnichts, even the Bezuidenhouts had black ancestors!

So I went to see my husband on the farm. Shame, poor Hasie has lost his memory completely. Luckily I had the right medication to bring back the past. My friend Dr Wouter Basson gave me the two pills, saying they only last for a minute so to ask my question quickly. I did: ‘Hasie, does the Bezuidenhout family have black blood in their veins?’ The pills worked.

He said: ‘Yes, during the Groot Trek, my forefather Pastoor Gerhardus Bezuidenhout was married to a Zulu woman and they had 15 children.’

Do you know what that means? It means that my Bezuidenhout children have Zulu blood in their veins and will not have to give up the farm!

So I am here to tell you all: investigate your history. Every white family in South Africa has a Bantu in the closet. Make sure your Bantu is a Zulu and if he is, take him out of the closet and put your Zulu on the stoep! Nkosi, sikelele, ons vir jou, Afrika bura – Amandla, Vrystaat!

(Blackout)

(Lights)

PDU: The masterclass also includes how to take off false eyelashes quickly when you hear you wife coming back from the library. Take them carefully from the end and slowly pull them off. And the lipstick must also go, unless you're coming through Heathrow immigration.

(PDU removes lipstick and lashes)

I remember the last time I was on stage as Evita with Nelson Mandela holding her hand like Ronald Reagan held Nancy Reagan's hand. The audience was applauding and singing and dancing and through the excitement, I whispered loudly to the most famous man in the world: 'President Mandela? Every time you see me, I am dressed as Evita Bezuidenhout.'

He whispered back: 'Don't worry, Pieter, I know you're inside!'

(Curtain call)

THE END

MEDIA REACTIONS

Uys werk altyd met humor, diep insig en deernis, sonder om doekies om te draai. Die stapel dose op die verhoog bevat sy verhooglewe van meer as vier dekades. Soos hy sorteer, dink hy hardop oor die pad en die karakters wat hom in ons 24-jarige demokrasie as die nuwe bestelling gedra word. Dit word 'n voëlvlug van ons geskiedenis. Uys bly by sy land en sy mense. Hy bly vlymskerp en eietyds. Hy besiel opnuut want hy is ingeploeg hier en die moue is opgerol. Hy is nog lank nie klaar met sy geliefde land en sy mense nie.

– *Die Burger* (KKNK Oudtshoorn) Maart 2018

When in Doubt say Darling helps you to smile at what is happening in our country now and realising: it is your state of mind, your own sense of having fun and finding the dark comedy and satire in many real-life situations that keeps us going. The most heart-rendering sketch – the highlight of the show – sees an elderly man packing up his belongings to move to a retirement village while his old dog, Smelly, is watching him. The quiet sadness and melancholy memories are touching and counts among the best Uys has delivered in recent years. Strongly recommended.

– *What's On* (Johannesburg) April 2018

Pieter-Dirk Uys can best be described as the gift that keeps giving. A one-man artist who has perfected his craft, Uys has a wonderful rapport with his audience, punctuating his stories with naughty asides and infectious laughter. There is still plenty of life in this 'old' man and may he remain the satirical genius he has proven to be.

– *Artslink* (Johannesburg) April 2018

Four decades of work is a great achievement. Pieter-Dirk Uys has reached the proverbial mountain top and *When in Doubt say Darling* is Uys telling his story as he wants to. It felt awfully like a farewell show, like Uys is using this show to retire. This was the first sobering moment for me – it is truly the end of an era. Some of the references required me to Google them for understanding, which in all fairness Uys warned would be the case. The other stuff was funny. Love him or hate him, watching him on a stage is always an experience. And who knows? This may just be the last one man show we get from him.

– *The Star* (Johannesburg) April 2018

Pieter-Dirk Uys has become a social campaigner over the years, for voter education, for HIV education and for social upliftment wherever he happens to be. He recounts heart-warming tales of what he is experiencing as he interacts with the underprivileged youngsters from Darling. This section alone is all new and wonderfully amusing without any satire. Younger audience members assured me they didn't feel alienated by not knowing who Piet Koornhof was, or not really remembering PW (or any other) Botha. It was almost as if they were stepping into history. However, most of his audience has aged alongside him and we continue to love his shows even as we remember those days alongside him.

– *Wordpress.com* (Johannesburg) April 2018

In this new show, Uys offers a taxonomy of South African leaders and insight into the complexity of pulling the mickey out of each of them. You laugh gently with this figure, who slips chameleon-like through eras and identities, but you also sober up and acknowledge that the turning over of decades has rendered Uys an important elder of the theatre community; a unique and irreplaceable one ... a work to cherish.

– *MyView* (Cape Town) April 2018

Wanneer hy sy stories van die dorp Darling en sy mense vertel, hang jy aan sy lippe. Daar kom maar min by 'n goeie storie wat vaardig vertel word. Ook wanneer hy aan die einde gaan sit en van Uys in Evita Bezuidenhout verander, voer hy jou mee. Uys het die keer eintlik nie by sake van die dag gedraai nie, dalk is dit omdat sy teks-skrywers (joernaliste en politici) op die oomblik maar self vaal en vervelig is.

– *Die Burger* (Kaapstad) Augustus 2018

Min mense kan die neurose wat ons daaglikse bestaan kenmerk so goed satiriser soos hy, terwyl hy die manierismes en cliches van ons politici uitsekend naboots, maar altyd met suurbedrupte deernis. Om vandag te oorleef, moet 'n mens grinnik, al is dit met die voorkoms van 'n geraamte se grynsaggende gesig. Bravo, Pieter-Dirk Uys!

– *Rapport* (Cape Town) Augustus 2018

Uys's irrepressible sense of humour keeps the fun light, but the underlying facts are there to exercise the mind. Most witty of all is his audacious portrayal of Zuma by PW Botha, a neat solution to the problem of a white man in a black role – both were presidents of this country and both make almost identical speeches, the former with wagging finger, the latter with forced chuckles. It makes you think, which is what Uys does best. – *Cape Times* (Cape Town) August 2018

Watching *When in Doubt say Darling* is more like being invited in Uys's voorkamer and having a long conversation with an old friend, remembering the old times whilst dissecting current affairs. Actually calling a stranger 'darling' might get you into trouble these days, depending on who you say it to. Pieter-Dirk Uys has his finger on the pulse as ever. He continues to fight fear with fun. He remains optimistic and closes by telling us a secret: the sun will also rise tomorrow, darling.

– *QueerLife* (Cape Town) December 2018

SOHO
THEATRE

THE LEGENDARY SOUTH AFRICAN
SATIRIST EXPOSES THE 'MOCK'
IN DEMOCRACY AND THE 'CON'
IN RECONCILIATION

Mon 6 - Sat 25 May

Soho Theatre presents

PIETER- DIRK UYS

WHEN IN
DOUBT SAY
DARLING

TICKETS FROM £10.50
SOHOTHATRE.COM
020 7478 0100

 Supported along with other theatre by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

NO VOTE FROM ME!

The general election of 8 May 2019 deserves more than a footnote.

I'm a citizen in a democratic country and I can't vote in the next general election. Prisoners in jail can vote, but I can't. Cabinet ministers under suspicion of corruption and state capture can vote. Every citizen in South Africa who has registered to vote on 8 May can queue up and vote for the future of the country.

I can't, because I am in London performing a show called *When in Doubt Say Darling* at the Soho Theatre. I contacted the Independent Electoral Commission when I realised that I would be in another hemisphere on voting day. It would be a shame to miss the excitement and pride one always feels when queueing up to vote at the church hall in Darling, where I am registered. But for the first time since turning 18, I will not be in South Africa on that day, so I will find out how to use a special vote.

'Oh,' they said, 'you will be in London on 8 May? Well, you can vote there on 27 April.'

'No,' I answered, 'I will still be in South Africa.'

'Ah,' they ah'ed, 'then you can vote on the 5th and 6th of May.'

'No,' I sighed, 'by then I will be in the United Kingdom.'

'Oh,' they oh'ed, 'then you can't vote.'

Really? In 2019? What about a postal vote?

'No,' they sighed, 'we don't do that anymore.'

So the Post Office is dead. 'Electronically?'

'No,' they laughed, 'we don't have that system – yet.'

'But, with respect, if the IEC has opened voting arrangements in a

cluster of overseas cities, what's to stop them from opening offices in four of the major South African cities as well on that 27 April date? What a way to celebrate Freedom Day!

'No,' they insisted, 'the computer says no.'

Voting has always been a reason for me to create theatre. Especially after the 1994 experience, it was a logical step in 1999 to take six weeks and travel from Cape Town to then-still-called Pietersburg in a kombi with Evita Bezuidenhout on a Great Election Trek. We stopped twice a day in city halls, school halls, churches, shebeens and under trees to present an entertainment about democracy and the vote, with humour.

Is voting funny? Not until you find out you can't vote because your democratically-elected government couldn't be bothered.

For six weeks we carried the message across the nation: the vote is sacred; the vote is secret. Don't be blackmailed by any political party. If they threaten you – 'Vote for us or we'll burn down your house!' – just lie. Say: yes, amandla awethu, aluta continua. Or Vrystaat! Because when you are in that little booth with pen in hand, you draw your cross wherever you like and no one will know. No one should know, unless you want to get a job in the new government.

Most voter education should start before the registration weekends. Electronic voting is a frightening possibility in a country where too many people still depend on the friendly stranger who offers to help them with their internet banking. All that's needed is your PIN number. And yet knowing that there are still six million unregistered young voters out needs some very serious rethinking.

Our youth all have access to cell phones, iPhones, smart phones or even your stolen phone. They can order food, music, friendship, opinions etc without having to queue. Why should, or would, they bother to go back in time and stand in a dusty place so that they can register to vote? And would they then go back on voting day and stand in another queue to vote? Now that postal services have diminished, the use of carrier pigeons might be that new way to send messages. So let's just make sure that what we do have works.

A week before the election, while packing for Brexit, I heard an IEC official explain on television that every voter needed their place of residence noted on the voter's roll. Did they need to have proof of residence? 'No,' he said, 'just give an address.' What? Is that another example of box-ticking? Maybe the vote isn't that secret after all.

Forty-eight political parties shoving and pushing to get past the winning post. The big boys promise delivery as usual. The red berets have copyrighted eccentric marketing and with their fellow nuts entertain a bored populace. I hope they all get enough votes to be represented in Parliament. Don't just allow Julius Malema and his red ants to hug the limelight with the occasional hip-hop cheer from the DA.

I want to see former SABC CEO Hlaudi Motsoeneng in the benches. I want to hear Jimmy Manyi trying to convince us that he is no longer the idiotic Jimmy we know. I want the Black-First-Land-First Brain-Last leader to grace us with his verbal vomits. A right-wing wave to the FF+ (which still sounds like a cheap condom brand) and a slow wink at the ancient regime of the Zulu prince. We might have coalitions in Parliament this time round. The sulking ANC with a bloody nose might go into alliance with the smiling EFF. I won't say I told you so, but ever since Julius was booted out of the ANCYL, I just knew that this was the beginning of a new relationship.

'Juju? Let's make a deal. We kick you out of the party. You grow cabbages and get the sympathy of the people. Then you start your EFF-off party. We'll pay for the funny costumes. Get the disenchanted youth on your side. Insult us. Call us names. That's OK. Keep the hate speech for the whites. Then when our voter support subsides below 50% and you rise above 15%, we'll go into a new deal, a new dawn – and we'll keep the presidency and create a premier post for Juju. (To fill in the spaces here, just Google: Weimer/Hindenburg/Hitler Alliance 1933.)

In the Western Cape another alliance might push the DA into the dunce's corner. A revived local ANC-EFF alliance with a GOOD nudge from Auntie Pat de Lille might rid South Africa of a white/beige/light brown/fringed with black opposition.

Damn. I'm going to miss all that. All I will have to feed my fun is

Brexit, Trump, the European elections, a pending Polish dictatorship which, with the present one in Hungary, could make some of the Marvel Comic baddies come true. Oh well, blood under the bridge. Maybe Evita Bezuidenhout will make her cross and bear it.

PRELUDE TO A HASHTAG

How the last show in this volume emerged:

Uys dons false eyelashes and presidents listen.

– *Los Angeles Times*

Evita Bezuidenhout is not a woman. Evita Bezuidenhout is a legend!

– Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

You are one of my heroes.

– Nelson Mandela

Just because Evita Bezuidenhout doesn't exist, doesn't mean she's not real.

– *The Cape Times*

Evita Bezuidenhout has been my most famous white woman in South Africa since 1981 when she stepped into the limelight of apartheid. After my plays were banned, she became the only way I could speak truth to power because she was one of the establishment. A man in a dress, which was illegal at the time, managed to seduce some dour white leaders to join her in conversation and thereby expose themselves. Out of a vast archive of footage dating back to the late 1970s, I found moments of Monty Pythonesque madness where Mrs Bezuidenhout can be seen dancing with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, flirting with Nelson Mandela, being flattered by Cyril Ramaphosa, not to forget her cavorting with apartheid's Foreign Minister Pik Botha and then-ambassador to the USA, Dr Piet Koornhof.

Evita would also confront her creator, me, with her fashionable weapon of #MeToo, declaring that my impersonation of her was politically-incorrect, sexist and unacceptable in 'a decent society'. I could also give a reminder of how South Africa's democracy was born in 1994 with so much celebration, hope and humour. Now in the 26th year of ANC governance, while apartheid might never come back again under the same name, corruption, racism and hate speech were finding ways to reinvent themselves. Viva SA's democracy! (Ts and Cs apply).

Looking back at the 40 years Evita and Uys have spent lampooning the political elite in South Africa, you truly appreciate how important freedom of speech is.

– *The Pietermaritzburg Witness*

EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT
& PIETER-DIRK UYS

TOGETHER ON STAGE

#HeTwo





Mal Jan onder die hoenders

2019

#HeTwo (Unmasking Evita)

Performed in Pieter Toerien's Montecasino Theatre, Johannesburg
* Theatre on the Bay, Cape Town * University Theatre,
Pietermaritzburg * At the Woordfees, Stellenbosch * Sneddon
Theatre, Durban

CHARACTERS

Pieter-Dirk Uys

Evita Bezuidenhout

Sir David Attenborough

Nowell Fine

PW Botha

Pik Botha

Mrs Petersen

SETTING

Small table and chair left centre. Screen centre back.

(SCREEN: *a black & white still of Evita with dates 1935–2019 added.*)

(*Houselights out/ keep still on screen*)

(SOUND VOICEOVER: 'Sir David Attenborough will now address the gathering.')

(*Sir David Attenborough enters*)

ATTENBOROUGH: Evita Bezuidenhout: one of a kind. A rare and unprotected species. I will never forget my first meeting with her. I was in the Kruger National Park with my BBC TV camera team filming a



PDU as Sir David Attenborough

pride of lions. And there she was; holding a small lion cub in her arms. The sun somehow caught the sparkle in her eyes, that indefinable something that always made her stand out in a herd ... in a crowd.

I was surprised how worldly-wise she was. She had never allowed herself to lose the colourful accent of her roots, obviously the result of still thinking in Afrikaans while speaking in English.

Her English, like her *bobotie*, was quite memorable; her style, like her *melktert*, was superb. And as for her delicious *koeksisters*?

And so it is with the deepest regret that I am here to announce the death of an icon, the passing of – not just a former ambassador, a faithful wife, a loving mother, a doting grandmother and committed comrade – but also the best cook in the country. Evita Bezuidenhout has gone to that heavenly kitchen in the sky. Sadly, she is no more. But what a legend! What an extraordinary life!

In 1981 she was appointed by the ruling National Party as the South African ambassador to the independent black homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti, a subtle move from Pretoria that gave credibility to the apartheid regime's bantustan policy. As we now know, Ambassador Bezuidenhout also played a major political role in 1985 by bringing the warring sides, representing the banned African National Congress in exile and the ruling National Party in Pretoria, together for the first time on South African soil at her embassy, *Blanche-Noir*, for a reconciliation dinner of *bobotie* and *putupap*, setting the scene that eventually led to the freeing of Nelson Mandela, the unbanning of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party, and the spectacular birth of the present rainbow democracy.

A short BAP-TV documentary was prepared in 1981 by Bapetikosweti

Television, to introduce Ambassador Bezuidenhout not just to her white nation, but even more significantly, to the black citizens of her new so-called independent bantustan. Watch.

(He exits)

(SCREEN: The black & white EVITA still dissolves into the homeland crest. Scenes from the documentary: her early life in Bethlehem; then as an Afrikaans movie star with extracts from her four films; her marriage to Dr Hasie Bezuidenhout; and Ministers Piet Koornhof and Dr Connie Mulder paying tribute to her. (4.30m))

(PDU enters)

PDU: Stop! How can you announce the death of someone who doesn't exist? Kill off the most famous white woman in South Africa? Excuse me, if anybody is allowed to assassinate Evita Bezuidenhout, it's me, because I made her up. We've been together for over 40 years, longer than some of the marriages in this audience. And the last thing in the world that I would want to do is to kill this boere-goose that lays the golden eggs.

At first she was an anonymous addition to my satirical cluster in the late 1970s. The National Party censors didn't like me and had banned all my new plays. *Sies! Vieslik. Ons mense praat nie so nie!* The only solution to earn money to feed my cat was to create a structure of short sketches, making fun of the politicians of the day and taking the mickey out of power – an unfashionable, politically-incorrect way to make them look ridiculous, which was not difficult.

The revue was called *Adapt or Dye*. I knew if they banned it, I would make up a new title for the same show within minutes. They would have to come back constantly to ban the already banned show because the Publications Act stated that a work was to be banned by its title.

At the same time I had a gangbang of desperate Broederbonders in the government queueing up to audition for a part in *Adapt or Dye*. Pieter Wilhelm Botha was then PW, the prime minister and later president.

Happily my bald head matched his bald head. The other bits and pieces soon fell into place. Roelof F. Botha was Pik, the eternal foreign minister. In his youth he was an actor in the National Theatre company and thus always a consummate upstager. Dr Piet Koornhof single-handedly was in charge of all the blacks! He glowed on the political stage with his big Pinocchio nose and Jumbo ears, like a reject from the Walt Disney shop.

Audiences laughed at the madness of seeing last night's TV news reflected on the stage. They laughed at the mannerisms and the bullshit. They laughed at the hypocrisy and the lies. They laughed at the danger of laughing at the danger, because most of the material was illegal, or secret, and protected by a sosatie of unknown laws. But nothing was funny. Apartheid was grim, shockingly successful and many people died. Looking back now, one is relieved that we didn't laugh at the politics; we laughed at the politicians.

Enter this Afrikaans woman, not on the stage, but in a weekly column in the *Sunday Express*, which was the only job I could do in 1978, much to relief of my cat. Once a month, this tannie would be featured at a party in Pretoria and in her own oulike way – 'Skattie, have your heard?' – she would give away the state secrets behind the raging Information Scandal.

(Do you remember the Information Scandal? When we found out that our government was stealing taxpayers' money? We knew that would never happen again!)

The editor gave her a name: the 'Evita of Pretoria'; a poster on the wall of the Market Theatre gave her the surname: Aletta Bezuidenhout in *The Seagull*. Tannie Evita Bezuidenhout became a reality in *Adapt or Dye*. The revue opened at the Market Theatre on the first of April 1981: April Fool's Day. The fools came and laughed – and happily you're all still here.

(SCREEN: *From Adapt or Dye 1981: at the Market Theatre from the video that made her famous, Evita welcomes the audience. Much laughter and applause.*)

You see? Just because she doesn't exist, doesn't mean she's not real.

In the year 2000, Evita Bezuidenhout was presented with the Living Legacy Award in San Diego USA, an award that had in the past also been presented to legends like Bette Davis, Hillary Clinton, Margaret Thatcher and Princess Diana, women who also didn't exist. I brought my little projector and screen from *Darling* to show you the speech Evita Bezuidenhout made in 2008 at the Berlin Film Festival. She gave a keynote address at the annual Teddy Awards (I think Teddy is the gay cousin of the Berlin Bear) where she transfixing a large audience, proving again that when all is said and done, large transfixed audiences might also not exist.

(PDU exits)

(SCREEN: Evita's speech from the Teddy Awards, to a standing ovation at her 'Ich bin ein Afrikaner!' (3.30m))

(Nowell Fine enters)

NOWELL FINE: Excuse me! Yes, howzit, I'm Nowell Fine and I was here first ... here, on a stage long before that Afrikaans woman. In 1975 I appeared in a sketch in his show *Strike up the Banned*. I was his first female impersonation. Then it was illegal for a man to dress in female attire. But remember, in 1975 I represented a huge section of South African voters: white, blonde, liberal, wealthy, and on top of everything, Jewish. The kugel was a farce to be reckoned with and I was it!

Then came *Adapt or Dye* in 1981 and I was featured, looking like this. That Bezuidenhout woman only opened the show as you saw looking like a real drag queen in that cheap leopard skin ... in that big hat? But then I was starred in a later scene with my garden boy Nimrod, beautiful and black with green fingers. I had an affair with him. Oh, get over it! Yes, in 1981 it was a major crime; now you can't even entice them over for a Heritage Day braai! Nimrod? I was absolutely finished!

Then in subsequent shows I was always here to show audiences that we



PDU as Nowell Fine

white liberals were putting our money where our mouths were. Or me, putting my mouth where Nimrod's ... oh, never mind ... yes, no, well, OK fine ... Nimrod was with me on and off right through the 1980s, and then my maid Dora took centre stage. She was like my black sister. Now Nimrod's the South African ambassador to Cambodia and Dora is a member of parliament for King Williams Town South.

And me now in 2019? I don't look like this anymore. I am being portrayed as an old former white liberal, now legally a member of the ANC. Oh, how I long to go back to the days of the struggle. At least there was something to look forward to. Of course, I was an illegal ANC cadre. I had a banned picture of Nelson Mandela hidden in my room. I knew that one day the security police would raid, so I hid it so well, it took me ages to find. But the day he was going to walk free from jail –

11 February 1990 – I had a party at my house with my new black friends and Dora, the potential citizens of the future. I told them: ‘Comrades? I was always on your side – amandla, awethu, viva la cucaracha!’ I said. ‘I had a banned picture of Madiba hidden in my room. It could have got me locked up in jail for treason.’ And I held up the picture. Then someone said: ‘Nowell, I didn’t know you liked Harry Belafonte!’ How was I to know? Mandela’s picture was banned for all those 27 years.

As April 1994 drew closer, most of my PFP friends packed for Perth and left. Wake me when it’s over! I stayed. ‘Blacks should be allowed to live wherever they like,’ they said, ‘but not next door to us!’ So they left for Sydney Australia taking their kids, the cat, the dogs, the boat and the maid. Yes, and as true’s God, they were right. Their neighbour in Houghton would have been black: Nelson Mandela! And there they are living in Sydney with Vietnamese neighbours who eat their dogs.

Why would I ever leave South Africa in those days of the struggle? Besides, where would I find a decent maid like Dora? In London? In Tel Aviv? In San Diego? In Australia? Are you joking? Give me Johannesburg any day. I’d rather be murdered in my own bed than have to get up and make it myself!

I was at two of that Bezuidenhout woman’s public appearances during the old South Africa. What a wedge-driver she was! Imagine, at an anti-apartheid rally in London in 1988 called *Two Dogs and Freedom*, a tribute to the children of South Africa. Everyone was there: all the Tambos (All those Tambos? Wake me when it’s over!). Comrades, liberals, exiles, me and can you believe it? The ambassador to an apartheid homeland making a speech!

And then who can forget that SABC Artes Awards at the Joburg Civic in 1985? I went; me a white liberal at that Broederbond orgy? I wanted to see if I could raise funds for the Black Sash. Some luck: it was like selling tickets to *Fiddler on the Roof* in Nuremberg. And there was that Bezuidenhout woman again, making a speech. As true’s God, it was enough to make any white liberal have a nervous breakdown on the spot!

(*As she exits*) Okay Nimrod, madam’s coming ...

(SCREEN: *Evita at the Artes Awards in a sari; she thought it was the Sarie Awards! Then to London for the anti-apartheid fundraiser. (4.45m)*)

(SOUND VOICEOVER: 'Former President PW Botha will now address the gathering.')

(*An old PW Botha enters*)

PW BOTHA: Let me say this most categorically and I'll repeat it with conviction: she was a brave woman, 'n ware Afrikaner, not only taking on the heavy responsibilities of being a white female ambassador to a new black homeland republic, but also not allowing vicious ridicule and contempt to derail her repeated attempts to extend and protect our policies of separate development.

I also found it deeply offensive to have to watch this man, this Afrikaner wearing woman's clothing, and impersonating Mrs Bezuidenhout on television. A disgusting example of the liberal

filth my government was committed to keeping out of South Africa. I made a few phone calls to the SABC, which was within my rights and, yes, I owned it! And remember, it was in my power to have this so-called comedian arrested. But then I realised that allowing this Uys character to exercise this repulsive example of his free speech – this degrading of a woman of substance – it would confuse those international nations preparing their total sanctions against us for what they called our totalitarianism and fascism.



PDU as PW Botha

So, with Mrs Bezuidenhout's knowledge and support, in spite of the pain it caused both her and me, I allowed this person to impersonate her in high heels, knowing that the novelty would soon wear off and happy that my actions as prime minister and later as president, with the full use of my executive powers, would not anoint this tasteless Uys character with the martyrdom of imprisonment. Besides, all our jails were full. I am just very glad he never dared to impersonate me!

(PW Botha exits)

(SCREEN: PDU in Adapt or Dye as PW Botha making a 1981 speech that said nothing. (2.13m))

(Pik Botha enters wearing a halo)

PIK BOTHA: I'm not here. Let me say that most categorically and add: very few of us are here. Once we all were here. Ja-nee, many Bothas were here. He, PW Botha, was here. Me, Pik Botha, was here. Stoffel Botha, even Bothalesi, and he's still here, if only just. I suppose the only revenge most of us have on this type of entertainment is that it is no longer satire. It's a séance!

I see you are taken with my halo. You now get it in heaven: it's called a halo-app. It includes a GPS so that He knows where you are and what you are thinking. So let me detach it so that you people don't get into too much trouble one day because of me.

(Pik removes the halo)

Ja-nee, I'm sure I would also miss Evita Bezuidenhout. She was the obvious choice to become my ambassador in a newly-created black homeland. She even suggested the name, amalgamating the two tribes: *Bapeti* and *Kosweti*. Of course there were those usual vicious rumours circulating, usually as part of a so-called satirical revue and then taken over by the fake-news media, that Mrs Bezuidenhout and I were having relations beyond a handshake.

Nonsens! Typical anti-South African communist propaganda. Besides,

she was married and I was too busy with foreign affairs. Although, to be honest, there are still times when I wished it to be true. (*He calls off*) Willie, wys die mense daardie ontmoeting ...

(SCREEN: *From Funigalore, Evita is greeted at the door by Pik Botha with an embrace and kiss. (0.20m)*)

(*Pik Botha has watched this. He now moves to a chair and narrates*)

PIKBOTHA: Ja-nec, the camera did not lie in those days. Mrs Bezuidenhout, of course, lost her job as ambassador when Nelson Mandela dissolved all the black bantustans into one black homeland called South Africa, and I got a new job as minister of minerals and energy affairs. (It took me some time to work out how to mix my minerals with my energy affairs ...)

Of course Mrs Bezuidenhout was not just a good diplomat; she was also a consummate communicator. In 1994 Evita presented a television series for MNET called *Funigalore*, where she interviewed the members of our new democratic government, those communists and terrorists that we were trying to eliminate since 1948. She invited me join her in the introduction to each interview, which we did while playing Scrabble, which is an innocent game that even children enjoy ... ag, never mind, you'll see what I mean. Wys die mense, Willie ...

(SCREEN: *Funigalore 1: In the game the letters THABO are changed to BOTHA (1.54m)*)

PIKBOTHA: I can assure you that wineglass of mine was always filled with water. Then there was that SABC television programme lead by Freek Robinson with myself and Minister Dr Piet Koornhof as guests. The surprise of the evening was the appearance of my Ambassador Bezuidenhout, who was in London on a secret mission on behalf of the Diplomatic Corpse, and so she came across live via satellite. That in itself cost the entire annual education budget of Venda. Wys die stuk nou, Willie ...

(SCREEN: *Evita* via satellite was asked: 'Do you still often see Minister Pik Botha?' *Evita*'s answer: 'Ja, Pik faks my elke aand!' Piet Koornhof recalled the telegram she sent him when he was acting-president: 'Now that the Bothas are overseas let's become king and queen!' (1.24m))

PIK BOTHA: Just for those of you who don't understand the subtleties of Afrikaans: you heard her say: 'Ja, Pik faks my elke aand.' That is in Afrikaans. In English it would sound very bad. She was, of course, referring to the fact that I did fax her every night ... no, of course not like that ... you see how easily things get misinterpreted. Let's have a commercial break. Dankie, Willie ...

(SCREEN: *The Jeau Mour* advert (0.28m))



PIK BOTHA: I can smell it now, Evita's very own perfume. It had a beautiful French name: *Jeau Mour*, like *l'amour* and *je t'aime*. She also had a fragrance for men called *Jeau Mour-Homme* and a nice perfume for older women called *JeauMaSeMour*.

Some journalist in 2012 wrote that Evita Bezuidenhout and Pik Botha looked like an old married couple. The Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor of the old South Africa? Oh yes, then there was another scene from the *Funigalore* interview that she did with me. I was explaining my hobby of studying the origins of humanity.

SCREEN: *Pik discusses Homo sapiens; Evita is relieved to hear that the homos have been around for so long; her son doesn't need to apologise (0.37m)*

(PDU intervenes)

PDU: Wait, wait! Let's just pause here for a moment. 'Homosexual'? That was another minefield. A criminal offence. And if you slept with those who were not white, a double criminal offence. I didn't just become gay in 1994 once Nelson Mandela waved his magic wand and the secret could become the CV. I knew that being outed as gay during the 1980s would, besides all the legal rigmarole, just give the enemies a reason to say: 'Oh, that's why he does what he does: hy's 'n fokkin' moffie.'

Picture this: Bloemfontein 1985. The afternoon of the premiere of the feature film about Evita and the homeland *kaskenadis* called *Skating on Thin Uys*. I was being interviewed in the hotel room by a local journalist. Afrikaanse joernalis. Not a fan. Evita was still hanging in the closet. He started by leaning forward and saying: 'This is off the record.' I felt for my parachute.

'Jy's mos 'n moffie. You're a homo?' I saw my life flash in front of my eyes. Instinct took over. 'Yes, I am homosexual on Mondays and Wednesdays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays I'm heterosexual. On Fridays I'm bisexual. On Saturdays I do it myself. And on Sundays I rest.' He laughed ... and it stayed off the record.

Evita also helped me here. Her twin sons De Kock and Izan were the answers to the question: Gay? AWB? De Kock wasn't called De Kock for nothing. And Izan? Write his name on a piece of paper and hold it up in the mirror and you read the word 'Nazi'. That was my protection: characters, disguises and a lot of silliness. And no me. I only had the courage to create the character called Pieter-Dirk Uys after I was allowed to call myself a gay democrat at the age of 50. But back to the silliness. Wys die prent, Willie!

(SCREEN: *A painting of the young Pik Botha (0.5m)*)

PIK BOTHA: Ah, the Errol Flynn of the National Party. Yes, well, I'd better get back Upstairs.

(*He points to heaven*)

Johnny Clegg and my son Piet Botha are going to give a concert and Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu will be there. They say Winnie might attend but she never turns up. Funny, I've not seen any members of the National Party here. Hell, I wonder where they ended up.

Ja-nee, this place called heaven is a bit like the old days of separate development. Every time I go

through the Pearly Gates, St Peter wants to see my passbook. I think he drinks. I keep on saying to me: Excuse me, do you know who I was?

So let me leave you with the introduction to the second series of *Funigalore* by Evita and Dr Piet Koornhof, with echoes of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Of course if I had been there I would have done it better, because I was a good dancer, but remember I was busy fighting apartheid in secret and with great success, because nobody noticed.



Pik Botha

(Pik Botha exits)

(SCREEN: Funigalove2: Piet Koornhof and Evita in a Versailles minuet with fans and fluttering lashes; then Parliament where Speaker Frene Ginwala invited Evita to unveil her bust (3.05m))

(Mrs Petersen enters talking)

MRS PETERSEN: ... no, I'm just going outside to take a call. The reception inside is not good. Ja, hello? *(She is on her cell)* No, I'm at the Spar getting things for the soup kitchen and some nice treats. Is this going to be in your newspaper? ... oh, the website ... oh, a blog? No, just get my name right: Petersen without an 'i' ... ja, can you believe it? Her bust was unveiled in Parliament. *Haai nee, sies.* I saw it on the TV news in the staffroom during the long break: Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout presenting her statue to the Speaker of Parliament Frene Ginwala. That was still in 1995. I didn't let on that I knew her; that was also a long, long time ago. Hey? Oh, another call waiting? No, it's OK ... *(She ends the cell call for your bleddie blog ...*

Ja, 1966. I was the char for Tannie Evita and her husband, Dokter Hasie Bezuidenhout. He was the MP in Parliament for Laagerfontein, up there in the Transvaal. Every six months they would come down for the session here in Cape Town and I would go and do three days a week for her in that house in Acacia Park.

No man, she was okay. For an Afrikaans person, she didn't behave like a Transvaler. Just one thing was out of bounds. Her koeksisters. She would win the first prize every year. Koekbakster van die Jaar. I was so tempted to point out how many mistakes she was making. I mean the koesêster is a Muslim thing ... never mind ... 1966: 53 years ago. I was 20.

She was always entertaining, having other MPs for dinner; even Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd came with his wife Tannie Betsie. She looked like my Griqua cousin, o nee halie ha! And renovations every year? Not like today when ANC MPs and ministers cost us millions to

upgrade their fancy mansions. That government house in Acacia Park was always leaking and the backroom smelt of cat pee, even though we never found the cat.

That's when Mrs B decided to repaint the house; chose the colours herself ... blue for the boys' room and pink for the girl's room. And a chocolate brown in the dining room; horrible! But she saw it in an Afrikaans magazine. Then this man knocked on the door, a tall white man with horrible curly hair and mad eyes. Looking for a job? Hey? Whites didn't look for jobs ...

Mrs Bezuidenhout employed him to do the painting, probably because he was white. What a mess! And the smell of the Plascon paint? I said to Mrs B that the smell will get into her koeksisters and then she won't win the first prize. So she got Dr Hasie to get him a job in Parliament as a messenger. Of course in those days they didn't feed them, so Mrs B prepared the painter a lunchbox: droëwors, sosatie, some cold chicken and of course, a koeksister... and also a Granny Smith apple. The man shouted and waved his hands about a tape worm in the apple. So Mrs B gave him her favourite fruitknife that she got from the Laagerfontein municipality. 'Peel the apple before you eat it, Dimitri' were the exact words she used, which I repeated to the commission of inquiry.

Anyway, he goes to Parliament and instead of peeling Granny Smith, this Dimitri Tsafendas peeled Dr Verwoerd! Stabbed him to death! In the House of Assembly! With Mrs Bezuidenhout's favourite fruit knife! Shame, Mrs Bezuidenhout was so upset; she never saw her fruit knife again. No, thanks to her and Dr Bezuidenhout, they gave me the money so I could study and become a teacher. I still am a teacher, retired. But they asked me to come back and help out-part time. Which is full time.

'Mrs Petersen? Here's today's list. Go to the Spar and see what's on special.' Ai, the little ones come to school ... they haven't eaten in two days ... there's no one at home for them; the father is on tik, the mother is on a bottle. Oh, hang on ... (*She takes the call*) ... No, I'm still here. Hey? Her bust? No, man, not that bust ... a statue, her head and

shoulders. I believe it's now in the basement of Parliament with all the other aikonas, stuck between Dr Verwoerd and Dr Malan. Ja, shame, President Ramaphosa should rescue her! That's real state capture in reverse. No, you must now look on You Tube and see her addressing Parliament in 1999 ... hello? For your bleddie blog (*She ends the call*)

Ja, I think I'm going to buy some nice chocolates for the kiddies. There's no more budget for it, but I have some of my pension money. I just know: give a little child a chocolate; they become so happy they study and learn and one day become a good politician. O hallie ha, we need them ... (*She moves off*) Waar's die chocolates? Nay, ek is amper klaar ...

(*Mrs Petersen exits*)

(**SCREEN:** *Evita addresses Parliament and apologises for apartheid: 'We're very sorry it didn't work!'* (2.46m))

(*PDU enters*)

PDU: And then there was Nelson Mandela. We watched him leave the Vic Verster Prison on 11 February 1990, hand in hand with his wife Winnie. We heard his first speech on the Parade at the Cape Town City Hall ... on the balcony, with Cyril Ramaphosa holding the microphone while Madiba read the speech ... wearing Winnie's glasses because he couldn't find his. We listened to his words and we soon realised what we had missed. If we had been allowed to hear Nelson Mandela's Rivonia Trial speech back in 1961 – which was banned – what a different country we would have been. But Mandela was free at last and we knew that the future was certain; it was just the past that was unpredictable.

The 27 April election date was announced. The ANC was excited. The NP was depressed. And white South Africa was stocking up on tins of tuna. In an election speech in Cape Town, Nelson Mandela suggested that those who didn't vote for the ANC would be exposed. And all hell broke loose with a gentle shudder: 'Can't say that! The vote is secret! Come back to Cape Town and make things better.' That would happen

at a rally in Retreat. The ANC in Retreat? Oooo, that was nearly too good to be true!

The phone rings. Dr Alan Boesak, rabble-rouser for the ANC (that was before he also bit the dust). 'Hello, Pieter, bring Evita to the rally in Retreat. Madiba wants to meet her.' Here comes the final audition, I mused. A hot Saturday afternoon. I arrive early with my friend Maria. Me in shorts and flipflops; Evita in the two Pick n Pay bags. Huge tent. Thousands of people.

Three young ANC cadres approach. They look at Maria. 'Is this Evita?' 'No,' I say, 'she's in the bag.' They don't get the joke. I'd asked Alan Boesak to arrange a changing room for Tannie. The caravan stands next to the back entrance to the tent. More young cadres are waiting. One smiles broadly and winks at me. Thank God, a fellow moffie.

The caravan is sweltering inside, small and cramped. I unravel Evita's outfit: her Voortrekker rok: orange, white and blue, a perfect foil for the green, gold and black around us. Ah, a cupboard ... let me hang the dress here. I open it. An AK47 leans out at me. I close the door with a beating heart. A knock from outside and a cadre looks in. 'You okay, Bra Piet?' I nod, dry-mouthed. The cadre nods. 'Don't look in the cupboard.' I did, I say. 'Ah,' he says, 'then don't look under the bed.' I don't. Then everything goes on fast-forward.

Tannie Evita Bezuidenhout is announced by Boesak. Huge applause from a crowd who probably don't even know who she is. She sweeps onto the stage, a National Party meringue in her oranje blanje blou. 'Amandla! Vrystaat!' she said and it was downhill on roller skates from there. They loved her. They screamed Viva! She could have gone on for hours. The group of small boys at the edge of the stage wearing balaclavas – the little Julius Malemas – throw sweets at Evita ... not 'nigger balls', good sweets!

I hear applause from outside the tent that indicates that Nelson Mandela has arrived. Relief. Now I can go and change back into me and meet him. 'No,' says Boesak, 'Madiba wants Evita. Sit there,' he says. In the front row, with all the other usual suspects, who within months would be ANC ministers in government, sitting in rows behind

her. Trevor Manuel's two boys came up to me: 'Are you a man or a woman?' Evita smiles: 'Go ask your father!'

(SCREEN: *ANC Retreat stills of Evita and Madiba (1.41m)*)



1994 Evita and Mandela in Retreat | Photo: Benny Gool

Mandela arrives on stage. Jesus would have been jealous. Through Evita's eyelashes I watch him embrace people, hug people, shake hands, wave and smile. And then he looks up towards me and sees her. He opens his arms and says: 'Ahhhh Evita ...!' And comes towards her with open arms. A hug. Another hug. A handshake. Our mikes pick up the chat. 'Ahh, Evita, you look so beautiful. I saw your friend PW Botha yesterday in the Wilderness. Do you miss him?' And his laugh set everyone laughing. There is a rainbow in the sky. Evita presents him with a plate of koeksisters and a big silver key to the door. Maybe a key to the future? Maybe a key to the safe in the Union Buildings? What could top this? Tuynhuis!

(SCREEN: *Evita arriving at Tuynhuis*)

How do you prepare for an TV interview with the most famous man in the world? While you're wearing a dress? Will it clash with his ethnic shirt? How do you start? I am there hours before the 10h00 appointment

and told to change in the women's toilet on the ground floor. Two cleaning ladies come in. I say: 'I'm sorry, I should be in the men's ...' 'Nay,' they are wide-eyed, 'waar is Tannie Evita?' So they watch me put on the makeup with a running commentary on the base ... ('Haai Revlon!') ... and the powder; then the rouge. Lots of laughter and applause when the lipstick goes on. I look in the mirror. My shiny PW Botha's bald head glows. Evita's eyelashed eyes looked back at me. I put on her wig and turn to the ladies.

The laughter has stopped. They gasp. 'O God, dis sy! Hello Tannie!' And instantly turn from fans into her subjects. 'Jammer Mevrou ... kom loop, man, Evita wil klaarmaak.' And they left. And I did nothing. Evita Bezuidenhout had arrived.

Cut to the president's office; camera crew ready and waiting. We hear the famous voice coming down the passage, a sound I later referred to as a cross between Donald Duck and a hadeda. (*As Mandela*) 'Ah, where is Evita?' He comes into his office and sees her ... sees me? No, her – all miked-up in the chair. His smile melts all tensions. Never mind the president of France is waiting in another room and the head of the Olympics is in the foyer.

'Evita, you look very beautiful.' Does he say that to all the women? He sits and they mike him up. I lean forward. 'President Mandela, thank you for this chance to interview you ...' He looks at her ... at me? Yes, he looks at me! 'No, Pieter, I want to be on Evita's show, because I have important things to say and no one watches the news.'

The programme is to be broadcast on New Year's Day, 1 January 1995. So Evita asks if he has a message for the nation. He turns to the camera. 'I want to speak to the police.' This is a message for them and he proceeds with a serious focus on the fact that police were dying by the day. Three armies had to become one. Clever man. Nelson Mandela used this silly show with a man dressed as a woman to put across his message of support, and he was right. Police died on the news ... so police rather watched Evita's show, where no one dies. And the first democratically-elected president of South Africa used humour to cross another donga of fear. When it was over, there is a moment. I turn to

him: 'President Mandela, you've never seen me without Evita's hair?'

'No, I have not.'

'Do you want to?'

'Oh yes, very good ... very good.' I take off Evita's wig. 'No!' he gasps, 'put it back on!'

(PDU exits)

(SCREEN: Mandela still with PDU wig off; Mandela arrives at Mount Nelson Hotel for FW de Klerk's 70th birthday with Evita, Tutu, Elita de Klerk and FW. Evita on video sends Madiba koeksisters for his birthday. Bill Clinton and the Queen of Holland among guests. All love Tannie. She suggests a Mandela statue on Trafalgar Square. 'The column is already there. Take your Nelson off and put our Nelson on!' (5.31m))

(PDU enters as Evita now)

PDU: I bring you some very good news: Eskom is still here!

Sayibona, dumela, molo, kunjane, hello – yes, those are the words of my greeting wherever I make a speech outside South Africa and always end up with the greeting they dread: salaam.

As a member of the ANC, I spend much of my time in my Luthuli House kitchen, cooking for reconciliation, and with all the factions fighting for control of the party, the country and the reserve bank, it's a full-time job.

But President Ramaphosa also sends me into the global village as a former diplomat, which I am, encouraging investments in our country, in spite of Fitch and Moody's demeaning our currency and optimism. And every time I get back to South Africa, I am so relieved to be here, because there's no place like home.

Yes, this is our home and it must stay our home. And yes, we are in deep trouble, because democracies are never perfect. Everybody's fingerprints are on that silver chalice of freedom. But we have still got our freedoms of speech and expression, so that no one can ever say—as they

did 70 years ago in Europe – I didn't know what was happening; Ich habe nicht's gewusst!

We know what is happening. We know who the crooks are, these third-rate politicians with their fourth-rate ideas. Let us stop being hypnotised by their corruption. Let us find the good politicians in every party and encourage *them* to be better so that together we can make South Africa great again!

After each visit to the United States – which is in a state; to the United Kingdom – which is no longer united; to the European Union – with its 27 ways of doing nothing well; to the designer-democracies of Russia, Brazil, the Middle East, the Far East, India, China, North Korea and much of Africa – after a visit to the world out there, I come back to Tshwane so inspired and so optimistic to be back in a real democracy. And knowing how many of you have links with the United Kingdom, or even have recently emigrated to South Africa from the UK, what will happen with the United Kingdom after it leaves the EU? Scotland will become independent. Northern Ireland will merge with the republican south. Wales will go to the highest bidder. Gibraltar will go back into Spain – which leaves England, St Helena and the Falkland Islands. I can imagine Boris Johnson eventually being exiled to St Helena, but to see the Queen of England on the Falkland Islands? Unless she's looking for a place where her husband can drive his Land Rover. At least Harry and Megan, the duke and duchess of Sussex, will be welcome to come and live in Cape Town. Their little boy will fit in so beautifully here.

Yes, for some of us the glass is still half-full, but for too many of us the glass is half-empty, if not already captured. And as the world out there moves more to the right, becomes more of what we left behind in 1994, with invented apartheid and growing populist-fascist-racism, it is not impossible if we do our job as citizens, that South Africa with all its faults and disappointments, might be the only true democracy left in the world. And then be prepared: the world will demand sanctions against us, like once upon a time back in the old days of our whites-only populism ...

(SCREEN: *Evita on the screen talks back to Evita on the stage (1.38m)*)

EVITA: (*on screen*): Excuse me, excuse me? Can I get a word in here?

PDU: (*as Evita, on stage*) What are you doing here? You're not supposed to talk to me!

EVITA: I'm all over the place in this show! I'm sick and tired of you impersonating me: here, in the media, on television, on YouTube, at your Evita se Perron in Darling. You make me sound trite and shallow. You make me look fat!

PDU: I'm on a diet for you. No chocolates ...

EVITA: Because you never give me a chance. Well ...

PDU: What do you want me to say here?

EVITA: ... no, let me say my say. Have you heard of #MeToo? Respect for the dignity of women? You can't keep doing this, putting on woman's clothing and saying: 'Just because Evita Bezuidenhout doesn't exist, doesn't mean she's not real!' Well, thanks to you, I am existing and I'm real and I'm sick and tired of it and I won't take it anymore. Enough!

PDU: It's entertainment ...

EVITA: No, it's politically-incorrect and unacceptable in a decent democratic society. I demand my rights. I might even go on strike!

PDU: On strike? That's funny ...

EVITA: Be careful. Oppas, eendag gaan hulle vir jou sê: jy mag dit nie meer doen nie! You keep impersonating blacks and coloureds and Muslims and me ...

PDU: It's just a joke, Mrs Bezuidenhout ...

EVITA: Oh? Am I the joke? Or are you the joke? Beware: #UysMustFall!

(SCREEN: *Evita leaves the screen*)

(*PDU takes off the wig and dress*)

PDU: Why do I have the feeling that the dummy has just kicked the ventriloquist in the bum? Evita Bezuidenhout going on strike? Spoken

like a true member of the ANC. So she says I am politically-incorrect. That's a compliment.

(PDU takes off the high heels; leaves them centrestage)

How can we forget that apartheid was politically correct. For 49 years of my life it was politically correct to be racist; for 49 years of my life it was politically correct to treat the majority of our people like second-class citizens and worse. For 49 years of my life it was politically correct to be politically correct. Well, forgive me for being allergic to political correctness. 'You can't do this, you can't say that. You cannot impersonate her, or him, or them.' They said to me back in 1974: jy mag dit nie hier doen nie! And I'm still here.

(PDU takes socks out of his bra and puts them on his feet)

Now it's August 2019. We are in the 25th year of a democracy that started off with so much laughter and fun. I suppose when a democratically-elected government loses its sense of humour, it becomes a gang. Hello 2019. The old whispers are back and getting louder: You can't, you mustn't, you shouldn't. Democracy (Ts &Cs apply). Was it Bette Midler who said it first? Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke?

(PDU exits)

(A spotlight is on the high-heeled shoes. PDU comes back for high heels, puts them on and exits)

(SCREEN: 'Evita for Queen' anthem with stills of her as the audience exits (2.11m))

THE END

**EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT
& PIETER-DIRK UYS
TOGETHER ON STAGE**

**#HETWO:
EVITA EXPOSED!**



**SNEDDON THEATRE
19-24 NOVEMBER**

MEDIA REACTIONS

It's a class act; the clever word play, his timeless impersonations of political figures and the brilliant strategy of cobbling the whole shoot together into a sparkling show. It's immensely entertaining ... a great show and a wonderful tribute to one gutsy Lady created by one of South Africa's true sons of the soil.

– Peter Feldman, *Artslink* (Johannesburg) August 2019

Uys in his 70s, continues to ratchet up the quality of his work, yielding a flawless dollop of South African nostalgia, mixed with uncontrollable laughter at things that terrify us. A must-see for all South Africans, particularly those caught in the messy and slippery entanglements of political correctness. *#HeTivo* is richly autobiographical and profoundly generous in the slices of political contradiction and horror it dishes up. Uys is a master of the give and take of political nuance, interjecting barbs so bright and sharp that you don't see them coming, and while you're laughing with abandon, he brings in something else to make you weep. Watching Uys at work gives you goose bumps. It's been more than 40 years of fierce and earth-shattering repartee that, rather than pulling punches, perfumes them.

– Robyn Stassen, (Johannesburg) August 2019

#HeTwo highlights what an extraordinary life Pieter-Dirk Uys has lived. Without arrogance, it states again the importance of his abiding messages – about free speech being essential, about the destructive power of unwarranted prejudice and ways to heal it, and about how necessary it is to be courageous to take a stand. Perhaps more so than some of his more comic material, this piece offers direct addresses to those who need to take responsibility for the effects of their actions. *#HeTwo* clearly displays how far South Africa has moved forward during Uys’s career, but it also illuminates how much work there still remains to do. Get to it.

– Bruce Dennill, *Artsvark* (Johannesburg) August 2019

The comedian’s ingenuity, as well as his gift for the unexpected, are the chief strengths of *#HeTwo: Evita exposed*. In true PDU fashion, the comedian reserves the biggest surprise for the end. What could be more subversive? Or more delightfully thought-provoking? Or more typically PDU?

– *Cape Argus* (Cape Town) August 2019

Don’t miss this extraordinary show by the incomparable, legendary Pieter-Dirk Uys as himself and as he steps into the skins of real and unreal figures. It’s a celebratory and harrowing 90 minutes of biting spirited live theatre.

– Robyn Cohen, *The Cape Robyn* (Cape Town) September 2019

It was classic Pieter-Dirk Uys and classic Evita Bezuidenhout: thought-provoking, funny, from the heart and on point with the current popular conversation.

– *Broadway World* (Cape Town) September 2019

Uys is a rare human being. As a brilliant satirist, he single-handedly has taught us to laugh at ourselves, taught stiff-nosed politicians to laugh at themselves, to believe our glass is half full, never half empty, and his campaign amongst teenagers has changed many an attitude towards avoiding the HIV/AIDS scourge and other STDs by talking bluntly about sexual responsibility. What a man! *#HeTwo: Evita exposed* is memorable!

– Sheila Chisholm, *Weekend Special* (Cape Town)
September 2019

Looking back at the 40 years Evita and Uys have spent lampooning the political elite in South Africa, you truly appreciate how important freedom of speech is.

– Estelle Sinkins, *The Witness* (Pietermaritzburg)
November 2019

Fascinating film footage and a delightful series of sketches that explain why Uys and Tannie Evita have become widely adored, honoured, feared and loved, while becoming part of South Africa history.

– Billy Suter, *sosuterbill* (Durban) November 2018

There is a genuine message to be gleaned from this production – free speech and freedom of expression is paramount in any democracy, and while South Africa has come a long way, there is still so much to be done.

– *Artsmart* (Durban) November 2019

just **BROWSING**

summer 2002/2003 issue no 3
www.struik.co.za
www.zebrapress.co.za

the **PIETER** behind

EVITA

discover

TANZANIA

**CONVERSATION
TIPS**

RELAXATION

FREE COPY

26 JULY 2019

THE HASHTAG Q&A

Is this your last show?

Every show is a last show in the theatre, because tomorrow there will be a different audience, which means the timing is different, laughs come in new places and the energy is fresh and full.

What is different in *#HeTwo*?

Well, Evita and I literally share the stage at the same time. There is so much footage I have of her since 1981, with famous and infamous people, entertaining the superstars, embracing Madiba and Tutu, making edgy speeches in foreign lands, material which I can then balance with characters on stage who comment on her and the state of the world. It is also the first time EVER that I leave the stage to change into a character. Since 1981 I have always done it in the light in front of everyone.

It feels like a farewell to Evita.

I would be sorry to see her go, but again I am led by the politics of the moment. If President Cyril Ramaphosa appoints her as the South African ambassador to Luxembourg, she will have to go. Hope it won't be to North Korea or New Zealand. That's just too far to send a whisper across the world.

What motivated *#HeTwo*?

The *#MeToo* movement has been a great motivator, because it is time that women are heard, seen and respected as equals, and in many ways, unique leaders of society. I thought about a *#HeToo*, because it is also

men and boys who also suffer the indignity of harassments and innuendo. Then, as with my 1981 revue *Adapt or Dye*, I had taken PW Botha's 'adapt or die' and with a change in spelling created a new platform. Therefore #*HeTwo*– the two being me and my shadow, Mrs B.

Political correctness has always been your *bête-noir*.

Can we say that word aloud still? Apartheid was politically correct and for most of my life fighting the injustices, which meant that I was politically incorrect and often punished as a result. To now suddenly wear the halo of political correctness in a democracy? For me it just doesn't make sense. Politics is NEVER correct; it is an adaptation of panic, illogicality, truth, lies, fear and futility. If the fact that I impersonate people/characters on stage – people who are not white – and 'do' superstars like Nelson Mandela, Winnie Mandela, Jacob Zuma, and Desmond Tutu, is seen as politically-incorrect and racist: Toughies. It's been my job as an entertainer for 40 years. I have impersonated them all: black, white, brown, male, female and convertible.

To play a trans character in a film or a play, must a trans performer be cast? And must a woman play a woman?

Whatever happened to the word ACTING? The success of a story, either on screen or stage, is to cast the best performer to play the part. If you have a murder mystery, does your main protagonist have to be a real murderer to play one? Nonsense! Of course you shouldn't cast against type to the extent that you lose credibility of character, and yes, today it is possible and challenging to cast across the colour lines and see a black Hamlet and a Chinese Ophelia. The fact that I portray females as well as males is part of the fun of theatre. Making the women recognise the woman and the men forget the man.

And the politics of the day?

In my work politics is the lifeblood of the drama. Satire is usually unleashed through bad politics that need to be made ridiculous, contemptuous and funny – even though it is never funny in the ha-ha sense of the sound. I believe that if we can laugh at our fear and make it less fearful, we will see beyond the barbed wire fence of fear. Laughing at fear doesn't make it less lethal; but at least you've got your eye on it.

Keep your eye on it; give it a name – it will then never become taller than you. Look away and it becomes a 100-metre monster that will frighten you to death. Also there is nothing more enjoyable than laughing at arrogant, crooked, useless politicians. They can't take it. For example, The Donald in the White House.

Who are the bad guys on your stage?

I don't work with bad guys. I mention them, but I have to believe that the worst of my targets also has a sense of humour and certainly the charisma to become a chosen leader. That demands a certain respect, which gives the character belief. Brutal cartooning is easy. One has great power on a stage. I never belittle or demean through my comedy.

Do you deliver a message?

Yes! Come back for more!

What do you want the audience to leave the theatre with?

Maybe I'm a failed satirist, because satirists take no prisoners. I must find some compassion with the targets I dismember, because, as during the white Afrikaner leadership of apartheid, there by the grace of a giggle go I. I am a terminal optimist, having been in the theatre for over 40 years and theatre does not tolerate the negative. You've just got to believe that a crazy idea of a 1848 street revolt in Paris with an unpronounceable title would end up as *Les Misérables*, which earned over \$3 billion so far.

If you ever met Evita Bezuidenhout face to face, what would you say or do?

I'd say: excuse me, but I have to take this call – and run.

How much of your time do you spend on her?

People think I sleep in Evita's nightie! Now I spend about 2% of my time with the character: mainly dieting for this woman who doesn't exist. Sound crazy, but it's what the people see that makes the character work. Evita has been with me for so long that she has enough information and opinions to fill four hours without taking a breath. Her clothes are important. If I take her offstage, the shoes must be expensive and new or all the women walk away disgusted. No dirty nails! And focus her speech on the issues of the day, not as a politician,

but as a gogo of three black grandchildren, a member of the ANC, a citizen and a designer-democrat.

And racism?

That's a big wake-up call at every performance. My pet hate is racism, that evilly fabricated weapon of mass destruction. The only race I acknowledge is the human race. And yet especially today in our 25-year-old democracy, racism is being used as a tool of fear, a way to blame, a ploy to end an argument before it started; to divide and rule. Yes, it's okay for populist Malema's racism, but not okay for silly old Penny Sparrow. And yet in order to expose racism, you must show it. K-words sometimes must be used. Not a comfortable decision, which depends also on the issue at hand. I hate doing it.

Do you ever find her funny?

Yes, because she has no sense of humour or sense of irony. When people laugh at her, she smiles and thinks it's sweet. It's also the reason she's survived for so long. A sense of humour can get you into hot water and sadly we have a new young generation who seem to suffer from an irony bypass. A bit like Tannie herself.

Who is your audience?

Anyone who will give me the four hours of their time to come to where I'm performing. They have to set their burglar alarms, feed the Rottweilers, load the gun, reverse their four-by-fours out of the garage hoping the burglars don't slip in, risk their life in the city traffic, which turns them into racists within 20 seconds. They find the theatre, park their car, kiss the car goodbye, get their tickets and sit and wait for me. And then it's up to me to give them a life-changing experience, which means they will come back over and over again, because they want more of this thing called theatre, because it is LIVE.

How different are the performances in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban?

Performances vary night by night because of the variations of people that sit together and react. Joburg is a megacity with the tensions of big business, big mouths and big noise. Cape Town tiptoes in and sometimes nods off. Durban hears about the show after you've already left.

Bloemfontein walks out when you say *poep* and *kak*, and Port Elizabeth ...? Well, I'm not sure any more. My most secure stage is at Evita se Perron in Darling where I perform at least 90 times during a year, usually on a Saturday and a Sunday. I have ten productions ready and try and do each one at least twice a month to make sure it's all up to date and still in my 73-year-old head. Yip, I suppose it's a bit like showing off in the lounge, because everyone feels at home. Including the Perron cats, who sometimes sit on the piano and criticise me with yawns.

You perform overseas? Do they get us?

I usually have more of a problem getting them! Playing the USA you have to focus on the tweeted noise of Trump. A show in London grinds into chaos with Brexit. The Dutch hate being reminded that Jan van Riebeeck and Hendrik Verwoerd were one of them. The Germans want to see more lions in my streets. I usually do a lot of research where I perform, so I can anchor my characters there and not have to bring an audience all the way to South Africa. Once I open the closets of international politics with their racism, hypocrisy, arrogance and separate developments, I have enough to fill an entire evening. Except sometimes they don't find it funny – and then I know I've succeeded.

People have been complaining about your swearwords.

Isn't that wonderful? After 46 years of vicious apartheid and 25 years of diminishing returns from our government, they still find certain words more offensive than the rape of women, the abuse of children, the state capture, the propaganda through fear and that elephant in the room, climate change. I love Afrikaans *vloekwoorde*. They are so poetic, or as I explain to the offended patron: *poësie met twee dotjies op die e!*

Are you careful not to offend your audiences?

I am careful not to insult patrons who can't hit back. Demeaning people is cheap and nasty. Making fun of those mentally or physically disabled is not my style. But to offend people? Great! Shows I've rattled their cage of opinion, usually about politics. So let them be offended and ask themselves: why does he think that and I think this? Changes of attitude and thought could be in the offing.

Do you have enough young people in your audience?

Does one ever have enough young people in a theatre audience? I'm no Lady Gaga or Madonna to appeal to the XYZ generation. Sadly, we did not prepare them for the choice of live theatre against tinned fashion. Schools do not include theatre in their curricula. Media focus on theatre is minimal. So I celebrate young people who come and say to them: 'I'm 73; you're 14. Let's make a deal. You make me feel 16, and I'll make you feel 24. And if you don't know what the hell I'm talking about, just Google. You have more information in the palm of your hand than the world has ever delivered. Now all you need is the knowledge.'

It's really wonderful when an 11-year-old comes up and says after the show: 'I loved the pictures.' I said: 'What pictures?' 'The pictures in my head.'

How come you've been in the theatre since 1964?

I went to UCT to become a teacher and then the theatre hijacked me. After four years at drama school, it was life imprisonment without parole. So now I suppose I know nothing about anything and everything about something.

What's the difference in your work now that you're over 70?

I hope the disease to please is cured. For too long I worried about what people would think. I would cut my foot to fit the public shoe, but no longer. I don't need to explain or apologise. If people don't like it, get Netflix and have a good time there too. At 73, it's easier to say to the grumpies: *Gaan kak*.

Plans for the future?

You mean tomorrow? I've made my list. Looking forward to it. My year used to have 365 days; now it has two days – today and tomorrow. Besides, I'm already in my future.

And retirement?

Can't spell the word.

The Pieter-Dirk Uys Legacy?

That's a tough one. When you're gone, you're gone. I just hope once I've finished my stay on the toilet of life, I flush before I go.

Something people don't know about you?

Lots. If I'm in a swimming pool and it rains, I get out because I don't want to get wet.

Any regrets?

Not regrets, but interested in people who do wonderful things that I enjoy and would have loved doing myself if there was time. But there is only enough time to do what you do well. Fear is the bitch. When you're frightened, you can't do anything. But fear can also be your own reflection in the mirror of your mind. Save your life as an example to others. Good luck – and come to the theatre.



Tannie entertains a factory in the Highveld

OLD DAMAGED RAINBOW FOR SALE - T's & C's APPLY

I loved the idea of being part of a Rainbow Nation.

During CODESA there were whispers coming from both sides. The National Party kept hiding the words 'terrorist' and 'communist', even though, then, those t's and c's still applied. And the ANC were uncomfortably swallowing their accusations of 'racists' and 'fascists'. Meanwhile the inebriated AWB were outside the locked door of our World Trade Centre in Johannesburg singing and dancing, and in my mind's eye all they needed were red berets to take me back to the future.

On the edge of a cliff at the height of a blustery storm, a rainbow solved everything. All those primary colours which allowed our nations their shade of choice. The fact that black and white were not part of the rainbow also boded well for a democratic future. Besides, a rainbow always ended in a pot of gold and maybe that was the one focus that everyone shared. A future for all with freedom of choice and expression and lots of money.

Did we whites ever think that we would get away with apartheid? We did! Nothing happened to us. There was no Nuremberg Trial. No one was hung like Saddam Hussein for crimes against humanity. A banned freedom fighter (Do t's and c's apply to him?) came out of 27 years of darkness and gave us light - and Eskom gave up. 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 so easily could have come out of jail and spoken like Robert Mugabe.

Nelson Mandela could have come out of jail and said: To hell with democracy! Take the farms and kill the whites! Hundreds upon hundreds of whites (and coloureds and Indians) would have been killed and no one in the world, or on CNN, would have looked in our direction. He took out a rainbow (made in China?) from his pocket and threw it into the air like a toy grenade, allowing it explode over our heads and fill us with hope and relief. (It could have been our new flag if the LBGTXYZ-lot hadn't got there first.)

The rainbow was our umbrella into the month of April in 1994 when the first democratic election took place with millions of South Africans voted for the first time, and many of them voted many times. The Rainbow Nation was official. A new national anthem was sung. Maybe the first punishment for us in the National Party was to learn the former banned words of *Nkosi Sikele Afrika!* But our colourful umbrella of reconciliation was there and even though we stocked up on tins of tuna, preparing for that eventuality of bloody revolution (I am still eating that damn tuna!), we embraced the delightful sounds of the Soweto String Quartet and *sayibona'd* our way from dining room to kitchen, hugging the former maid as the new soulmate and eyeing the garden boy as our future BEE partner.

It made sense, in the excitement of reconciliation and proving the bloody revolution to be the fake news of the moment, that black economic empowerment became the foundation for a future economy. Why a landslide majority should now be protected like a minority after having won an election is still an unanswered

question. Maybe the rainbow demanded sentimentality too. Many of my comrades in the National Party (*Die Afrikaanse Nasionale Kongres?*) did not mirror what happened in Germany in 1945 when Adolf Hitler committed suicide. In fact, not a single member of the former regime killed themselves. They rushed off to the local Oriental Plaza to buy the latest Madiba shirt, either ethnic or rainbow. They even join the African National Congress, the liberation movement we had turned into our version of Al Qaeda for all those years. Yes, committed old *Broederbonders* were now proud members of the ANC, proving once again that hypocrisy is the Vaseline of political intercourse.

In a drought a rainbow is seldom on the horizon. By 2016 we had gone through the dizzy honeymoon with Madiba (which went on for far too long), and then the African Renaissance of Thabo Mbeki, where the rainbow suffered its first amputation when he started referring to black citizens as Africans, leaving the white, brown and yellow South Africans huddled under a leaking rainbow. The acting presidency of Kgalema Motlanthe tried to patch together the quilt of hope, but alas he left before anything could get better.

Enter the Age of Zuma. The Nero of the NEC fiddled while Azania burnt. Let me just for the sake of balance admit that when it came to theft of state coffers, the National Party held the copyright. But our control of media and the use of as a weapon of mass distraction was a great help to move our billions out from under the rainbow into the safe havens of Geneva, Panama and Monte Carlo.

Suddenly the rainbow had nowhere to go. The pot of gold had been stolen. Like a colourful kite without a guiding string, it flapped pointlessly in the new

hurricane of discontent, a wind of change that blew away all the colours, except red. It remained in berets and overalls, high-jacking an age-old symbol of resistance and making it the reminder of a coming tsunami of freedom fighting. Even Nelson Mandela is now being spat at as a sell-out.

As the *gogo* to three black grandchildren (actually they're not black: the boy is Barack-Obama-Beige and the two girls are musty-Meghan-Markle.) It pains me to have to explain to them that no politician comes out with 100%. Negotiation usually results in either 51% or 49%. (A new generation of born-free citizens suffering from an irony bypass does not bode well for the future.) Meanwhile the rainbow lies crumpled up at the bottom of an over-filled drawer of old Viva Madiba T-shirts and Y-front flags. The yield sign in our flag means that if you yield to the left nothing is right; and when you yield to the right, nothing is left!

Do we, after 25 years of a New Struggle at last hinting at a New Dawn, reinvent the rainbow as a symbol of a confident nation? Or will the colours be absorbed by the unforgiving red? Will black now dominate the cluster of colours? I suppose there will be time to still hang out decorations in hope of some celebration. I just have one focus: I want to move away from any colour. I am not a white South African any longer. Let me be a South African who isn't black.

Viva! Amandla! Vrystaat!

EVITA'S 2020 LUTHULI HOUSEKEEPING REPORT

The State of the Nation address was delivered on 13th February 2020, the day before Valentines Day. This Luthuli Housekeeping Report was carried by *The Cape Times*. One month later a pandemic paralysed the world.

I bring you some good news: Eskom is still here. And some bad news: Eskom is still here! Before I unpack/tick the boxes of my 2020 Luthuli Housekeeping Report from the vantage point of my kitchen in Luthuli House, let me observe, take note, ignore, eavesdrop, cook and cater. It is remarkable how much detail passes from lip to ear.

Twenty nineteen certainly was a year of trashcans and turmoil, with party unity making place for more factions than the old Nationalists used to hide under the excuse of state security. Of course, as a member of the ANC, the boxes that I wish to tick are embargoed by rules and regulations in 12 official languages (Afrikaans is available on request), which do not allow comrades and cadres to exercise freedoms of speech, expression or opinion. Public utterances are controlled to prevent contradiction. So, I communicate here in my personal capacity as a gogo.

The austerity highlight of this new year so far has been the celebration of the ANC's 108th birthday. One hundred and eight? Do you know anyone that old? You might know them, but they probably

won't know you. At 108 you are blind, deaf, senile, incontinent and on drips. Respect for the aged therefore now includes kindness towards this very old party. White monopoly Botox has done its job on the surface, but deep down we still have to investigate every *cul-de-sac* before the party finds the freeway.

Sayibona, dumela, molo, kunjane, hello! Yes, those are the first words of greeting wherever I make a speech outside South Africa, and I always end with the salutation they dread: *Salaam!* As a member of the ANC, I spend much of my time cooking for reconciliation and with all the factions fighting for control of the party, the country and the reserve bank, it's become a full-time job. I have proved that *bobotie, melktert* and *koeksisters* can resolve the unsolvable. President Ramaphosa therefore sends me into the global village as a former diplomat and cook of note, encouraging investments in our country in spite of Snitch, Fitch and Moody demeaning our fragile currency and designer optimism.

Then came Davos – three days of stand-up theatre, topped by the orange man from a white house and also a South African team huffing and puffing somewhere among the smaller echelon. Our minister of finance tweeted: 'If South Africans don't pull up their socks, they will lose their legs!' CNN wanted to interview me, but I was busy trying to unravel Greta Thunberg's plait, so Mr Quest spoke to someone else. What a relief. How would I have answered his quote from Public Enterprises Minister Gordhan: 'You think it was bad; I'm telling you it was worse.'

Yet every time I get back to South Africa after reading overseas that the writing is on the walls for us, I am so relieved, because there's no place like home. Yes, this is our home and it must stay our home. Ninety per cent of the news that breaks in our hand we can do nothing about. So, it's time to put your news intake on a strict diet. Delete! Switch off! Reboot! We are deep trouble, but democracies are never perfect because every citizen's fingerprints are on the silver chalice of freedom. We have still got our constitutionally-protected freedoms of speech and expression. No one can ever say: 'I didn't know what was happening.'

We know who is capturing the state. We know who the crooks are.

They thrive on the publicity. Let us find the good politicians in every party and encourage *them* to be better and together we can make South Africa great again! Which brings me to the green plastic lawn at the White House. Donald Trump will win a second term as president. You don't need a crystal ball to see what will happen to the USA in the future, if people there don't use their vote.

Every democracy deserves the government they get. Impeachment will roll down The Donald's back like a duck's water! As president he will just pardon himself. He might even postpone the November election for 'security reasons.' So the United States is in a state and the United Kingdom is no longer united.

What will happen after the UK leaves the EU on 31 December 2020? Scotland will become independent. Northern Ireland will merge with the republican south. Wales will go to the highest bidder. Gibraltar will go back into Spain. Which leaves England, St Helena and the Falkland Islands. I can imagine Prince Andrew soon being exiled to St Helena and the Queen of England on the Falkland Islands looking for a place where her husband can drive his Land Rover. Harry and Megan, the duke and duchess of Sussex, will put a deposit down on a house in the Bo-Kaap. And why not? Their little boy will fit in much better there than in the Windsor establishment.

Yes, for some of us the glass is still half-full, but for too many of us the glass is half-empty, if not already captured. The world out there is moving 'bigly' to the right, now embracing what we left behind in 1994. Looking at the POTUS-Kushner-Netanyahu coup that has been announced with its nine pieces of a future Palestine dotted all over the map, I see what looks like the outlines of our Bantustans! Or should that be Bibistan? I so wish for a De Klerk in Israel and a Mandela in Gaza.

When will they stop shooting at each other and learn from us in South Africa? If we could reconcile with each other, as we have done, anyone in the world can reconcile. For heaven's sake, isn't it time that the Jews and the Arabs started living together like Christians? So let us celebrate every small success and tick that box. Will we keep on allowing

third-rate politicians to frighten us into silence with their fourth-rate ideas? Or will we rediscover the legacies of Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu that remind us to love our enemies and in so doing ruin their reputations?

The ANC cadre, with due respect to all of them, is both comrade and curse. The day the ANC cadre is liberated from the chains of greed and realises that the occupation of political office and political space is one of leadership, that is the day that the ANC will begin to move in the right direction. Public office is a privilege, not one for the privatisation of public wealth. There is no magic in the ballot box. A corrupt cadre who has been elected will just remain an elected corrupt cadre. They are the downfall of our beloved party, celebrating its 109th birthday on a saline drip in 2021. So *viva* our democracy! *Viva!*

(Ts and Cs apply.)

Meanwhile outside in the real world there are dry coughs in a Chinese town called Wuhan ...