

# Jakes Gerwel Foundation

## Annual Report

1 MARCH 2021  
- 28 FEBRUARY 2022

# Objective

The Jakes Gerwel Foundation celebrates the legacy of the late Professor Jakes Gerwel through a variety of programmes aimed at assisting the development of emerging writers.

We strive for harmony and equality in a thoughtful, unified South African society that addresses and overcomes socio-economic ills.

**THE JAKES GERWEL FOUNDATION** (PBO: 930051454)

**FOUNDER:** Ms. P. N. Gerwel

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** Prof. B. Figaji (Chairperson),  
Mr. G. M. Aboobaker, Mr. M. A. Enus-Brey, Mr. H. J. Gerwel,  
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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Mr. C. T. Kemp

# Focus

The Jakes Gerwel Foundation aims to promote and expand South African literature in general, and specifically Afrikaans, with a broad focus on the following areas:

Enriching South African literature

Assisting with new perspectives and sharing of new experiences

Supporting emerging writers and new voices

Encouraging reading and promoting literature among the youth

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Dr. Anna Maria van der Merwe

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Mr. Theo Kemp

**Financial team:**

Boss Accountants (accountants)

Solace (auditors)

**Project and programme leaders:**

*Archive* - André Landman

*Children's book project* - Nompumelelo Sokoyi

*Fiction and non-fiction* - Angela Briggs and Suzette Kotze-Myburgh

*Kommadagga workshop* - Rachelle Greeff

*Songwriting project* - Frazer Barry

*NATi Rising Stars* - Abduragman Adams and Rafiek Mammon

*Website* - Naomi Bruwer

*Paulet House Housekeeping* - Batronisa Martins

*Paulet House gardening* - Donovan Taai

*Paulet House catering* - Gilbert van Zyl

*Yoh!* - Thérèse Hulme and Marcia Woolward



Paulet House, formerly Professor Jakes Gerwel's retreat in Somerset East, Eastern Cape, is the centre of the organisation's activities and projects.

After Professor Gerwel passed away in 2012, Ms. Phobé Gerwel donated the much-loved historical house at the foot of the Bosberg Mountain to the Jakes Gerwel Foundation to help serve the broader community.

The house, with its charming old-worldliness, spacious rooms, wooden floors and luscious green garden, offers writers the ideal opportunity to work on their manuscripts in a quiet, nurturing and inspiring environment.

Apart from various mentorship programmes offered at Paulet House, the Foundation ploughs back into communities in the Eastern Cape with its expansive children's book project.



# Pivot Point

# What We Do

The Jakes Gerwel Foundation  
offered the following projects  
and programmes during  
2021:

JAKES GERWEL ARCHIVE  
BOOKS IN THE HANDS OF CHILDREN  
JAKES GERWEL COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATION  
KOMMADAGGA WORKSHOP  
MENTORSHIP FOR YOUNG SONGWRITERS  
MENTORSHIP FOR EMERGING WRITERS OF FICTION AND NON-FICTION  
NATI RISING STARS PROJECT  
UNINTERRUPTED WRITER'S RESIDENCY FOR MEMBERS OF PEN AFRIKAANS  
JAKES GERWEL DISCUSSIONS AT THE SUIDOOSTERFEES  
YOH! PROJECT



# Jakes Gerwel Archive

For the first time ever, all Prof. Gerwel's documents – essays, speeches, photos and write-ups about or by him – are now available in a single place. Both the digital and physical archives are kept at the Nelson Mandela Foundation. These archives contribute to our literary, political and historical landscapes, and provide researchers with valuable information.

The experienced and respected archivist, André Landman, manages this project and will continue to update and maintain the archives.

One of the highlights at the foundation is the annual road trip across the Blue Crane Route Municipality in the Eastern Cape – including Somerset East, Pearston, Cookhouse and Kommadagga – to donate more than 9 000 brand new books and school bags to about 3 000 learners in the Foundation Phase.

This year was a little more exciting, as playwright Andrico Goosen adapted one of the donated books, Mama Antelope's House, into a puppet show. Goosen has participated in the mentorship programme for scriptwriters in 2020 and understands the heart of the project.

Skilled artists Wynand Kotze and Wian Taljaard had the children's eyes glued to the puppets while putting on the show.

# Books in the Hands of Children



With the help of our partners, this project continues to grow.

Every year, Book Dash gets a group of illustrators, writers, and designers together for a day to create new South African stories in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa.

The school bags donated to the learners are handmade by previously unemployed women using recycled plastic. The women now form part of the Bags4Good Project in Elsies River on the Cape Flats.

The Suidoosterfees came on board as co-producers of the puppet shows.

The project leader, Nompumelelo Sokoyi, serves her community in Pearston with great enthusiasm and understands the hunger and aspirations of the children from the Eastern Cape.





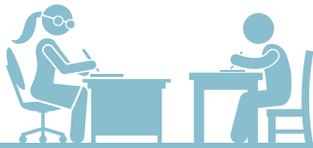
# Jakes Gerwel

# Commemorative Celebration

On 28 November 2021, nine years after the untimely passing of Professor Gerwel, we honoured him and his contribution to a better South Africa in a virtual broadcast.

Award-winning writer Mandla Langa, who is the author of *The Lost Colours of the Chameleon*, *Dare not Linger* and *The Lost Language of the Soul*, among other novels, discussed the role that Professor Gerwel played in the lives of various artists with Heindrich Wyngaard.

The discussion was hosted by actress Crystal-Donna Roberts



# Kommadagga Workshop

The Kommadagga Workshop, in collaboration with LitNet, is aimed at emerging writers of prose.

The participants - Daylen Tobias, Jodie Groener, Anna-Karien Otto and Kenny Williams - were mentored by renowned author and playwright Rachelle Greeff.

After the three-week programme, their short stories were published on LitNet.

Die Stigting het vir my 'n deur oopgemaak wat ek nie  
geweet het bestaan nie.  
- Jodie Groener

As ek skryf, hoor ek steeds Rachelle [Greeff] se  
stem agter in my kop, wat sy sou sê van my sin of  
skryfstuk. Die lesse kleef aan my vel en ek sal  
hierdie ervaring nooit vergeet nie.  
- Daylen Tobias

Every year, Paulet House is treated to the unique, truly South African sounds of the songwriters, and 2021 was no exception.

The different genres of the programme participants – Bryson Appels, Jemaine Julius, Duwayne Lombaard, Monique Basson and Mpumelelo Kamkam – entertained both staff members and the public. The presentation was hosted by acclaimed artist Frazer Barry.

This mentorship programme is offered to artists annually in partnership with the Suidoosterfees. The programme aims to provide a platform to lyricists who create original songs in Afrikaans, English or isiXhosa, as we help contribute to the advancement of unique South African lyrics.

After completing the programme, the artists' work was showcased at the Suidoosterfees as part of the festival's popular drive-in offering at Atlantic Studios, Cape Town. This provided an exciting opportunity for the young singers to perform with professional musicians.

# Mentorship for Young Songwriters

Ek het nie net oor die tegniese aspekte van lirieskrywing geleer nie, maar ook meer oor die bedryf. Dié twee weke sal ek altyd met my saamdra.

- Monique Basson

Dit is die beste ding wat met enige opkomende kunstenaar kan gebeur en as ek kon, sou ek dit oor en oor doen. 'n Mens se sak loop oor van alles wat jy daar leer.

- Bryson Appels



Die sirkel is voltooi en my manuskrip is terug by die uitgewers. Ek is baie dank verskuldig aan die Jakes Gerwel Stigting vir die geleentheid.  
- Alex Marshall

You might not know this, but it was the best thing to ever happen to my career as a writer.  
- Sihle Qwabe

Wat ek die meeste waardeer van die program is die selfvertroue wat ek opgebou het; vertroue in my verbeelding en die stories en karakters wat daaruit kom.  
- Crystal-Donna Roberts

It was my first time experiencing something like this – to be cared for, cooked for, to be given a comfortable room with an electrical blanket, to be flown to another province! All because I am a writer!  
- Tebello Mzamo

# Mentorship for Emerging Writers of Fiction and Non-fiction

This programme, presented in partnership with NB Publishers, aims to better represent the diverse communities of South African literature. Writers' manuscripts with lots of potential often land on the desks of publishers, but are not yet ready for publication. Publishers don't often have the resources or time to help writers, so valuable, new voices get lost in the process.

The Jakes Gerwel Foundation intervened with an intensive mentorship programme, which, once completed, helps young writers to have their work published.

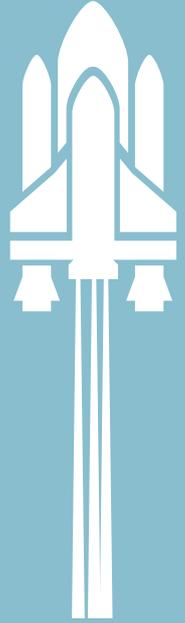
The programme is headed by skilled and experienced editors Suzette Kotze-Myburgh and Angela Briggs. The success of this project speaks for itself.

Since 2019, the books of four new writers, Engela Ovies (*Draairivier*), Bronwyn Davids (*Lansdowne Dearest*), Miriam Telanie (*Hier verlaat ek jou*) and Lebo Mazibuko (*Bantu Knots*), appeared in different imprints of NB Publishers.

In 2022, Audrey Jantjies' novel *As die katjiepierung blom*, Crystal-Donna Roberts' youth novel, Deidre Jantjies' children's book *Stories in die wind* and Shana Fife's crime novel *Triggered* will appear in bookshops.

The polished manuscripts of the group of writers of 2021 – Crystal-Donna Roberts, Alex Marshall, Tebello Mzamo and Sihle Qwabe – are now at the publishers and we are hoping to receive good news any day now!

# NATi Rising Stars Project



The environment sparked so much fire in me and I wanted to live in the moment forever. Needless to say, I reached a level of creativity I never deemed possible.

- Jane Mpho

This project, presented in partnership with the foundation, Suidoosterfees and Artscape, aims to invest in the development of emerging playwrights. While the foundation covers the costs of the playwrights' residency at Paulet House, the Suidoosterfees covers, with the financial support of NATi, the production costs of the completed plays.

Artscape, in turn, supports the theatremakers with repetition venues, costumes and technical assistance. The playwrights also got the opportunity to stage extracts from their plays at the Baxter Theatre in Cape Town as part of Teksmark (a project of Kunste Onbeperk).

Young playwrights who were mentored by Abduragman Adams in 2021 include Heloïne Armstrong, Henque Heymans, Jane Mpholo, Melissa Myburgh and Stephren Saayman. Their productions will premiere at the Suidoosterfees in 2022.

The group of 2020, also under the guidance of Abduragman Adams, saw their productions come to life at the 2021 Suidoosterfees.

These productions included the works of Carlo Daniels (*Kokon*), Margo Kotze (*Al dra 'n aap 'n goue ring*), Andrico Goosen (*But Baby, I love You*), Fabian Rainers (*Die workshop*), Xolisa Ngubelanga (*It's my Baby*), Misha Krynauw (*The Infinite Woman*) and Gerhard Visagie (*Mannetjie*).

*Mannetjie*, which deals with sexual abuse in a school hostel for boys, won Best Production at the festival. Stephren Saayman received the Award for Best Actor for his role in this disturbing play.

This project aims to create a space for writers and poets – emerging or established – to write uninterrupted for a month. In the past, this residency programme resulted in the publication of Ronelda S. Kamfer's poetry collection *Chinatown* as well as her first novel *Kompoun*.

The multi-award-winning debut collection of Ryan Pedro Pienk *ceramic hondjies* was also born in Somerset East. The same goes for the debut collections of Lynthia Julies (*Uit die kroes*) and Veronique Jephtas (*Soe rond ommie bos*).

Paulet House was also the place where Jeremy Vearey worked on his second police memoir *Into Dark Water*, and Nathan Trantraal completed his poetry collection *Oolog*. André Trantraal's award-winning series of children books, *Keegan & Samier*, was also produced in Somerset East.

# Uninterrupted Writer's Residency for Members of PEN Afrikaans



The group of writers of 2021 who made use of this residency – Andries Bezuidenhout, Valda Jansen, Sarie Marais-Nell, Salvia Ockhuis, Lydia Gittens and Mercy Kannemeyer – were so inspired that they not only worked on their own manuscripts, but also recorded a spoken word album called *derde golf*.



Benewens die voorreg om ongehinderd te kon skryf, het ek ook die huis, my skryfmaats en die geselsery daar baie geniet en terselfdertyd baie geleer.  
- Salvia Ockhuis

Met die aanvang en verloop van die pandemie was dit asof daar iets in my doodgegaan het. Ek kon nie meer skryf nie. Die wegkom van alles, tesame met die ongelooflike voorreg om net te kan fokus op skryf het daardie vonkie hier binne my weer laat vlam vat.  
- Lydia Gittens

# Jakes Gerwel Discussions at the Suidoosterfees

The aim of our series of discussions is to facilitate robust discourse about current issues and to bring authors and their readers together. The programme is designed in such a way that it speaks to divergent audiences.



Some of the highlights and well-attended panels included the discussion between Tembeka Ngcukaitobi and Patric Tariq Mellet about *The Lie of 1652*, Whabie Long's thought-provoking insights into the psychological state of South Africans as documented in his book *Nation on the Couch*, and the panel with young law student Thembaletu Seyisi, who compiled a book for his birthday entitled *21 Life Lessons @ 21*.

Seyisi invited prominent South Africans to write about the lessons they wished they had learnt in their twenties. Thuli Madonsela, Sandra Prinsloo and Susan Booyens not only shared their personal experiences, but also spoke about South Africa's young democracy, and the lessons they wished the nation could have learnt by now.

Rachel Jafta hosted a conversation with Johan Fourie about his book *Our Long Walk to Economic Freedom*, and authors Ivor Price and Kobus Louwrens introduced Alfreda Mars and Whernit Dirks: two formidable local brown farmers, who shared their thoughts about land reform and farming.

The discussion between Ashwin Arendse and Veronique Jephtas focused on their experiences as young poets in a predominantly white Afrikaans literary world, the racist attitudes by white students in Stellenbosch, and their perspectives of mainstream Afrikaans.

# Yoh! Project

The learners have come to trust that the question “How are you doing today?” is a genuine question. This is where we learn of an upcoming birthday, a parent in hospital, a death in the family and the emotional state of the learner even if they cannot explain it. The engagement with learners is not a one-way process. The experience also changes the facilitators in the process.

- Marcia Woolward (co-facilitator)

In 2018, the Jakes Gerwel Foundation started the Yoh! Project at Grassy Park High School on the Cape Flats where Jakes Gerwel taught.

By means of an intensive narrative process, our facilitators help the learners express themselves through poetry or rap. Young people from vulnerable communities are often further marginalised and silenced by traumatic experiences, and the Yoh! Project aims to help these individuals find their voices and self-worth.

During the challenging times of the Covid-19 pandemic, the learners could not meet in person for the weekly sessions, but rather had virtual workshops. The learners made such good progress with their poetry that their poems will be published in 2022 as part of a teacher's guide written by Dr. Thérèse Hulme.

# Our Support

As a non-profit organisation, we are dependent on funding, and are therefore grateful to the following organisations for their financial support in 2021:

- Die Jakes Gerwel Family Trust
- The National Arts Council (NAC)
- Naspers
- Afrikaans Education Trust (TAO)
- LW Hiemstra Trust
- Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports

# Our Partners

- Suidoosterfees
- NB Publishers
- Nelson Mandela Foundation
  - Book Dash
- PEN Afrikaans
  - LitNet
  - NATi
- Kunste Onbeperk
- Artscape

The foundation has built strong partnerships with the following organisations: