

The Beautiful Project

9-10 DECEMBER 2011

**PERFORMANCES / TALKS /
FILM SCREENINGS / FEAST**

**Sarah Nuttall Neliswa Xaba Neo Muyanga Nicola Hanekom Fred
Abrahamse Peter Hayes James Webb Julia Raynham Fiona du
Plooy Lara Bye Guy de Lancey Gaëtan Schmid UCT Choir Neliswa
Rushualang Ntombi Gasa Chan Marti Claire Berlein Thoko Masikini
Dominique Ripoll-Dausa Patrick de Wet Lefa Letsika Siya Sikawuti
Glen Biderman-Pam Samantha Knight Celia and Nathalie Sidler**

GIPCA

GORDON INSTITUTE FOR PERFORMING AND CREATIVE ARTS
Courage. Imagination. Foresight.

01 THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 9 DECEMBER

- 18:00** Welcome drinks (Hiddingh Hall).
- 18:15** Welcome and 2011 in review; announcement of 2012 Donald Gordon Creative Arts Fellows.
- 18:30** Keynote address: **Sarah Nuttall**.
- 19:00** Performances: a choice between *They Look At Me And That's All They Think*, choreographed and performed by **Nelisiwe Xaba** (Arena Theatre) and *Hol*, written and performed by **Nicola Hanekom**, directed by **Fred Abrahamse** (Intimate Theatre).
- 19:45** Light supper.
- 20:15** Performance: *Dipalo*, composed and performed by **Neo Muyanga** (Hiddingh Hall).
- 21:15** Performances: a choice between *They Look At Me And That's All They Think*, choreographed and performed by **Nelisiwe Xaba** (Arena Theatre) and *Hol*, written and performed by **Nicola Hanekom**, directed by **Fred Abrahamse** (Intimate Theatre).
- 22:00** Ends.

SATURDAY 10 DECEMBER

- 13:30** Film Screening (Playroom): *The Adonis Factor*, directed by **Christopher Hine** (USA / 2010 / 70 min).
- 14:45** Film Screening: *The Importance of Being Elegant*, directed by **George Amponsah** and **Cosima Spender** (UK / 2004 / 69 min).
- 16:00** Film Screening: *Glitterboys and Ganglands*, directed by **Lauren Beukes** (SA / 2011 / 60 min).
- 19:00** *The Beautiful Feast*, directed by **Peter Hayes**. A processional dinner, including artistic collaborations with **James Webb**, **Julia Raynham**, **Fiona du Plooy**, **Samantha Knight**, **Neliswa Rushualang**, **Ntombi Gasa**, **Lara Bye**, **Guy de Lancey**, **Gaëtan Schmid**, **Nicola Hanekom**, **Celia and Nathalie Sidler**, **Claire Berlein** and the **UCT Choir** (Cape Town City Hall).

02 THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT PERFORMANCES

THEY LOOK AT ME AND THAT'S ALL THEY THINK

Friday 9 December, Arena Theatre (Hiddingh Campus), 19:00 and 21:15

Choreographed and performed by **Nelisiwe Xaba**, in collaboration with **Strangelove**.

They Look At Me And That's All They Think refers to the story of Sara Baartman, known as the "Hottentot Venus". Born in 1789, Baartman was taken from Cape Town to London in 1810 by a British ship's doctor and exhibited in Britain and later in France as a scientific curiosity. Whether it was the hope of money that made her follow him will never be known. When she died in Paris in 1815, a plaster cast of her corpse was made by the famous zoologist, George Cuvier, and parts of her body preserved and displayed in the Musée de l'Homme until 1974. At the formal request of President Nelson Mandela, supported by a powerful action campaign, her remains were repatriated to South Africa in 2002 and buried with full state decorum at Hankey, near Port Elizabeth. She is widely considered as a symbol of the oppression of African women.

For Nelisiwe Xaba, the story of Sara Baartman is an allegory of her own artistic journey from Soweto to the Eurocentric world of contemporary art, and the exotic voyeurism with which the bodies of black dancers are often viewed.

Music credits: *Sina Mali Sina Deni Khadja*: Nin; *Hamba Notsokolo*: Dorothy Masuka; *Autumn Leaves*: Rachele Ferrell; *Naranjo en Flor*: Suzana Rinaldi; *Don't cha*: Pussycat Dolls; Traditional Ntswana wedding song sung by Nelisiwe Xaba.

With thanks to Schlachthaus Theatre, Bern; FNB Dance Umbrella, Phillip Stein Grant Award; Jomba Dance; Visa pour la creation, Culture France.

HOL (an excerpt)

Friday 9 December, Intimate Theatre (Hiddingh Campus), 19:00 and 21:15

Written and performed by **Nicola Hanekom**, directed by **Fred Abrahamse**, design by **Marcel Meyer**.

Hol considers the pressure and consequences of notions of beauty and excellence, and the cost of a fastfood existence. The character Liesbet runs on an empty stomach on treadmill, struggling to keep her balance and stumbling into her past. The Afrikaans title may refer to an empty space within, the dwelling of an animal in the ground, to lose one's self-control, to be confused, that which is meaningless, and amongst other things 'to run'.

Hol is a project of the Artscape New Writing Programme and Spring Drama Season, 2011.

DIPALO

Friday 9 December, Hiddingh Hall (Hiddingh Campus), 20:15

Composed and performed by **Neo Muyanga** on vocals, piano and guitar.

Neo Muyanga performs new improvisations and acoustic arrangements of material from his latest record, *Dipalo*, released in October 2011 as a supplement to the cultural journal, the *Chimurenga Chronic*. Produced using counting and proportion games as inspiration for the music, the album is titled using the Sesotho term for 'mathematics'.

1+1=1 [an opening dedication to Ganesha, the remover of obstacles, a Hindu deity]

The Tribulation of Job [the one who endures great sorrow and suffering following a test of faith devised by Satan and accepted by God]

Log7 Promises [the corruption and subsequent correction of a goema in 7/4ths]

The Ballad on Thomas van Bengalen who was hung in 1713

Interlude (to be improvised)

A Beautiful Life [a whimsically philosophical pop ditty]

5-Squared Narrative [based on a poem by Lara Foot called 'Narratives of Hate']

Ke Hana fx 3(4) [a song to ward off threats of violence]

Interlude (to be improvised)

Ba Dutse [a song about the loss of rituals in the world of the mundane]

Interlude (to be improvised)

Jwaneng [about a triplet game played in the grass]

With thanks to the Little Theatre Complex.

**THE LITTLE
THEATRE**

03 THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT FILM SCREENINGS

THE ADONIS FACTOR

Saturday 10 December, Playroom (Hiddingh Campus), 13:30

Directed by **Christopher Hine** (USA / 2010 / 70 min).

From the director of the critically acclaimed film, *The Butch Factor*, comes an intriguing and thought-provoking exploration of gay men's pursuit of physical perfection. **The Adonis Factor** looks into stories of the "buff" and the "unbuffed", illustrating the roots, stress, addiction and consequences of body obsession. Through a myriad of interviews and diverse viewpoints, Hines investigates the often-unsettling reality of how many gay men struggle to achieve and maintain a particular image in order to be accepted.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ELEGANT

Saturday 10 December, Playroom (Hiddingh Campus), 14:45

Directed by **George Amponsah** and **Cosima Spender** (UK / 2004 / 69 min).

One of the most unusual clubs in the world is the Congolese *Le Sape* (Society of Ambience and People of Elegance) whose members, the Sapeurs, are fiercely devoted to expensive designer clothes and have elevated fashion to the status of a religion. The society was launched in the 1970s (although it harks back to the 1940s) in the chaotic post-Mobutu era in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, by the country's most famous musician, Papa Wemba. *Le Sape* is about escape and the Sapeurs in Paris and Brussels use clothes as status symbol, the movement was also an act of rebellion against one of Mobutu's dictatorial decrees that everyone had to dress in the abacost – the standard African costume. Many Sapeurs, however, still on temporary visas, are living on the margins of society in the big cities, and their futures are very uncertain.

The film follows the Sapeurs' spiritual leader, Papa Wemba, opening with Wemba's release on bail in July 2003 from French prison after being charged with smuggling illegal immigrants into Europe for profit. Threatened with legal fees and an upcoming trial, he records a new album and prepares for an extravagant come-back concert in Paris...

GLITTERBOYS AND GANGLANDS

Saturday 10 December, Playroom (Hiddingh Campus), 16:00

Directed by **Lauren Beukes** (SA / 2011 / 60 min).

Deep in the heart of the Cape's most violent ganglands, sequins are being sewn, hair arranged, tiaras polished, stilettos worn in, lashes glued and shimmies perfected: all for a night of glitz, glamour and the honour of being Miss Gay Western Cape. In her peek behind the drag curtain, Beukes turns a filmic eye on a few of the contenders during the prelim rounds who bravely present their glittering inner lady to the world, and ask to be crowned: Kat the Princess, Eva the Mechanic, Kayden the Pre-Op and Janet Jackson among them. Interviews reveal the real people behind the stage names, and as rehearsals in the Joseph Stone Auditorium get underway, it's as much about the rigours of a large production – timing, focus, music cues, placement – as about the body issues common to all.

With thanks to the University of Cape Town African Studies Library and Out in Africa.



04 THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT

THE BEAUTIFUL FEAST

THE BEAUTIFUL FEAST

Saturday 10 December, Cape Town City Hall (Darling Street), 19:00

Theatre director and 'foodie', **Peter Hayes**, is both artistic director and chef.

Taking his cue from the culinary arts as well as an enveloping political and social climate, ideas around scarcity and plenty, power and food, appetite and wish-fulfillment are explored through the twinning of food and performance. The site of the feast is contested and political: from animal sacrifice to Kenny Kunene's sushi maidens, from canapés to cake, from the handmade to home maid.

Drawing on the hallmarks of Hayes' cooking style - clean robust flavours that give rise to exceptional dishes, reinterpreting classics and adding a contemporary edge and fun – *The Beautiful Feast* will allow the food to comment on the art, and the art on the food, while also influencing your experience of what you eat, encounter and enjoy. Replete with performance art, theatre and dance; the evening is planned as true feast for all your senses, and all five flavours. Come with an open mind and hungry belly.

Peter Hayes is assisted in the kitchen by **Chan Marti** and **Dominique Ripoll-Dausa**.

Artistic collaborations:

We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far

An unannounced intervention by **James Webb** on the façade of the City Hall using the cackling of Black-backed jackals (*Canis mesomelas*) broadcast from concealed speakers.

Evita Perón

A solo performance by **Samantha Knight**.

Salomé

An excerpt from the play by Oscar Wilde, directed and choreographed by **Fiona du Plooy**, with **Nicola Hanekom** (Salomé), **Guy de Lancey** (King Herod), **Lara Bye** (Herodias), **Siya Sikawuti** (Soldier 1), **Glen Biderman-Pam** (Soldier 2) and **Lefa Letsika** (Jokanaan).

Costume design from the University of Cape Town Drama Department production of *Salomé*, 2011: directed by Geoffrey Hyland, design by Illka Louw.

Tableau Vivant

Directed by **Julia Raynham**, with **Neliswa Rushualang**, **Ntombi Gasa** and **Thoko Masikini**.

Wing Finger

An installation by **James Webb**. Webb has invited celebrated Chinese singer, **Wing**, to entertain guests with her unique renditions of popular classics.

Crudités Dancer

Lefa Letsika

The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover

An excerpt from the film by Peter Greenaway, performed by **Gaëtan Schmid** (The Cook) and **Claire Berlein** (Georgina).

Ein Versuch glücklich zu werden / An Attempt To Get Happy

An installation by **Celia and Nathalie Sidler**.

2011

Chocolate mousse cake, red jam, cream, white chocolate icing, edible gold glitter, plinth, latex gloves.

30 x 30 x 120 cm.

With thanks to Spier Wines and Bijoux Chocolates.



05 THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT

PARTICIPANTS



FRED ABRAHAMSE

Fred Abrahamse started his career at The People's Space, as a founding member of Troupe Theatre Company. He was Artistic Director of the Baxter Theatre and is a well-respected producer and designer. His theatre involvement spans some 30 years and over 90 productions including dramas, operas, musicals, cabaret and several community theatre projects. Of his productions at least 25 years have involved bringing new South African works to the stage. Theatre credits include various Shakespeare productions, Steven Berkoff's *Decadence*, *Greek* and *The Secret Love Life of Ophelia*, Sondheim's *Assassins*, Noël Coward's *Private Lives*, Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, *District Six – The Musical* and *Angels in America*. Fred has won numerous awards for his direction and design.



CLAIRE BERLEIN

Claire Berlein is a multi-award winning actress who has worked on stage and in film, both locally and abroad, for over two decades. During this time she has also headed up the UCT Drama Department wardrobe, lectured in stage make-up, designed for and directed theatre. As a fine artist she has exhibited and sold her work internationally. Claire is also an accent and performance coach for film. She was last directed by Peter Hayes in *Wit* and is delighted to work with him again on *The Beautiful Feast*.



LARA BYE

Durban born director and actress Lara Bye launched her career in Cape Town after studying at the Lecoq Theatre School in Paris and working with various companies in Havana, Barcelona and Paris. She started the year with a production of Richard Wagner's opera *The Flying Dutchman* and her highly successful *London Road* continues to tour the country. As an actress, Bye is best known for her work in *The Vagina Monologues*.



GUY DE LANCEY

Actor, cinematographer and director, Guy de Lancey, is a member of the Mechanicals collective. He was educated at New York University, Rhodes University and Benetton's Fabrica Arts and Communication Research Centre. Guy's theatre awards include two Fleur du Cap awards for Best Actor in a Supporting Role for his roles in *As You Like It* and *Glengary Glen Ross*, a Vita Award and Dalro Award for Best Actor in *Looking Glass*, as well as Vita Award for Best Newcomer.



FIONA DU PLOOY

Fiona du Plooy is a choreographer and teacher whose evocative visual style, comprehensive movement vocabulary and extensive knowledge of ballet and contemporary dance has been seen in work created for both theatre and television. Recent choreographic highlights include creating a water ballet for Nicola Hanekom's *Betésda*, for which she was nominated for a 2011 Fiesta Theatre Award for Outstanding Design for Choreography and staging and choreographing the 2011 *Not The Midnight Mass*. Winner of the prestigious Fleur du Cap Award for Outstanding Performance in a Cabaret 2010 for *Angels on Horseback*, she now teaches Physical Theatre Movement Technique for Performers at UCT's Drama Department.



NTOMBI GASA

Ntombi Gasa began her dance career at the Natal Playhouse Youth Development Programme under the directorship of Alfred Hinkel and Jay Pather. She obtained a Dance in Education certificate from the University of Kwazulu Natal in 2000. Ntombi has performed and travelled extensively with Siwela Sonke, both locally and abroad. Commissioned choreographic works include *I am Here* (2000), *Woza Nawe* (2006), *Faces* (2009), *Giyani Lusha* (2010), *Encounters* (2010) and *Imbokodo* (2011). In 1999 Ntombi was nominated as Most Promising Female Contemporary Dancer in Durban, and in 2009 she won the Special Abalongi Award. She is currently the director for training and development at Siwela Sonke.



NICOLA HANEKOM

Nicola Hanekom has worked as an actress in film, television and on stage. Film highlights include *Husk*, the groundbreaking *String Caesar*, *Taste of Rain* and recently the comedy *Hond se Dingus*. On television Nicola has worked across genres, credits include *Transito*, *Plek van die Vleisvreters* and the internationally acclaimed *Human Cargo*. In theatre Nicola was celebrated for her portrayal of Ingrid Jonker in *Altyd Jonker*. Other highlights include a Vita Award for *Ek, Anna van Wyk*. *Betésda* which she wrote, directed and produced, won three Kanna awards and two Fiesta awards, her play *Lot* again won three Kanna awards and her latest script *Babbel*, won an ATKV-Woodveetjie award. She also works as acting coach.

05 THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT PARTICIPANTS



PETER HAYES

Actor, theatre director and 'foodie' Peter Hayes founded Hearts & Eyes Theatre Collective in 1992, and has since gone on to create award winning work both in South Africa and abroad. As actor his most recent performance is *I Am Here*, and as writer, *Sadako*, which recently won the Handspring Award for Best Production at Out The Box. His journey with food has taken him from private catering to London's 80s royalty (including Princess Diana), *Gorgeous* restaurant, food writing and styling, and back to cheffing. *The Beautiful Feast* is a dream job where twin passions of theatre and food are celebrated on the same platter.



SAMANTHA KNIGHT

Samantha Knight (created and portrayed by Johan Marais) is an upcoming drag artist based in Cape Town. Samantha has been hosting a very successful open Stage on Friday's at Lola Lou's Bubbles Bar since May 2011. She's known as the 'Christina Aguilera of Cape Town' for her theatricality and bravery in choice of material. Samantha was also the creator, organiser and hostess of the Golden Heel Awards and can be seen at the Mother City Queer Project this December.



CHAN MARTI

Chan Marti works extensively as an actress, director, 'foodie' and voice artist. Theatre credits include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Die Toneelstuk*, *Falling Awake*, *Hex*, *Sweat on Somerset* (for which she received an FNB Vita nomination), *Pick-ups*, *Stop Kiss*, *Rustlers*, *After Mrs. Rochester*, *Julius Caesar* and *Cissie*. She trained with Anika and Boaz Barzan, studying Min Tanaka's Body Weather style of Butoh dance, and performed *In the Wake of the Body* in 2007. In 2001, Chan had the privilege of working along side Peter Hayes in his restaurant, *Gorgeous*, where her true love for food began...



NEO MUYANGA

Neo Muyanga was born in Soweto, into a long line of traditional composers and makers of the timbila (a Mozambican tuned wood percussion instrument). He studied the Italian madrigal tradition with choral maestro, Piero Poelen, in Trieste, Italy. Neo composes works for choir, chamber and large ensemble and continues to tour widely as a solo performer and as a member of Blk Sonshine. Most recently, his *Memory of How It Feels* was performed at the Baxter Theatre. He has composed for the Royal Shakespeare Company and Handspring Puppet Company, and is also co-curator of the Pan African Space Station (PASS) with Ntone Edjabe.



SARAH NUTTALL

Leading cultural commentator and critic, Sarah Nuttall, is a Research Professor in English at the University of Stellenbosch and worked for ten years at WISER (Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research). She is author, editor or co-editor of many books including *Senses of Culture: South African Culture Studies*; *Beautiful/Ugly: African and Diaspora Aesthetics*; *Entanglement: Literary and Cultural Reflections on Post-apartheid*; *Johannesburg – The Elusive Metropolis*, as well as *Load Shedding* and *At Risk: Writing On and Over the Edge of South Africa*. Sarah is recognised locally and internationally as a prominent voice in the on-going debates on cultural theory, particularly for her fresh perspective on the contemporary South African context.



JULIA RAYNHAM

Working in between socially engaged performance, pedagogy, music, divination, film and visual art, Julia Raynham's work explores transience, transformation and the possibilities of transcendence in contemporary society. Her use of public and shared spaces exposes the potential of the human body, coexistence, differences, rhythms of production and cooperative practices that present a step forward in the democratization of art and aesthetic experience. She embraces experimental audio culture, multi-cultural ritual medicine, transgression and resistance, as catalysts in the creative process.



DOMINIQUE RIPOLL-DAUSA

French chef Dominique Ripoll-Dausa immigrated to South Africa from the South of France in 2001. He has a passion for cooking with fresh seasonal ingredients and mixing traditional recipes from the Mediterranean with South African classics, making best use of the *terroir*. Also interested in eating healthy and responsibly, his grandmother's wisdom and Ayurveda's cooking techniques are contributing to enjoying his food guilt-free and feeling energised afterwards.

05 THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT PARTICIPANTS



NELISWA RUSHUALANG

Neliswa Rushualang obtained a Dance in Education Certificate from the University of Kwazulu Natal in 2000. She began her dance training in 1994 under the directorship of Alfred Hinkel and Jay Pather. Nelisiwe joined Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre in 1997 and has contributed to the development of the company's training programme as senior teacher and resident choreographer. Neliswa has performed and travelled extensively with Siwela Sonke, both locally and abroad. As a choreographer, her commissioned works include *Absent Fathers* (2006), *Unandi* (2007) and *Human Ladder* (2009). She has been nominated for several awards and won the Special Abalongi Award (2009).



CELIA & NATHALIE SIDLER

Celia and Nathalie Sidler were born in April 1983 in Sarnen, Switzerland; they live and work in Basel. Celia and Nathalie attended the Art University in Basel (FHNW HGK), graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. They have had several joint exhibitions in Switzerland, Germany and France. Celia is currently an artist-in-residence in South Africa.



GAËTAN SCHMID

Gaëtan Schmid is a Belgian theatre artist currently living and working in Cape Town. After studying directing and acting at the École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq in Paris, he toured exciting new creations to festivals and theatres in Russia, Sweden, Romania, USA, Belgium, the Netherlands, England, Wales, Uganda, Andorra, Spain and Scotland. Since moving to South Africa 12 years ago, Gaëtan has produced, created, written and performed his own excitingly original one-man shows, most recently *The Dog's Bollocks*, *Rumpsteak* and *Body Language*.



UCT CHOIR

The UCT Choir is a fully student-run ensemble at the University of Cape Town. This forty-person choir, currently under the direction of John Woodland, was founded in 1985. The UCT Choir performs a rich variety of a cappella works from early classical to contemporary genres, both sacred and secular—especially compositions by young, local composers. The choir has toured extensively around the country and hopes to make its international debut soon.



JAMES WEBB

James Webb has been working on both large-scale installations in galleries and museums as well as unannounced interventions in public spaces since 2001. His work explores the nature of belief and dynamics of language in our contemporary world, often using exoticism, displacement and humour to achieve these aims. He has participated in exhibitions including the 3rd Marrakech Biennale, the 2009 Melbourne International Arts Festival and the 9th Biennale d'Art Contemporain de Lyon. Notable recent projects include *Scream*, wherein the artist invited members of the gallery staff of the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid to scream at Picasso's *Guernica*, and *There's No Place Called Home*, an ongoing, world-wide intervention using incongruous foreign birdcalls broadcast out of speakers concealed in local trees.



NELISIWE XABA

Internationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer Nelisiwe Xaba has been involved in various multi-media projects, collaborating with visual artists, fashion designers, theatre and television directors, poets and musicians. Her seminal work, *They Look At Me And That's All They Think*, inspired by the 'Hottentot Venus' (Sara Baartman), saw her collaborate with fashion designer Carlo Gibson of Strangelove, producing avant-garde costumes central to the work. Her recent work, *Black! White?*, interrogates racial politics and incorporates costume animation, music and dance. *Uncles and Angels* uses video projection technology to create a multiple live recorded and pre-recorded images exploring traditional dance forms.

ABOUT GIPCA

The University of Cape Town's Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts (GIPCA) facilitates new collaborative and interdisciplinary creative research projects in the disciplines of Music, Dance, Fine Art, Drama, Creative Writing, Film and Media Studies. Interdisciplinarity is a key theme of the institute and projects are imbued with innovation, collaboration and dialogue with urbanism and community. GIPCA was launched in December 2008 with a substantial grant from Sir Donald Gordon, founder of Liberty Life.

For more information on the 2011 GIPCA programme, visit www.gipca.uct.ac.za, or contact 021 480 7156 / fin-gipca@uct.ac.za.

GIPCA Director: **Associate Professor Jay Pather**; GIPCA Project Manager: **Adrienne van Eeden-Wharton**; Chair of the GIPCA Board: **Professor Paula Ensor**.