



# INHABITING THE FRAME

## DOCUMENTARY & SUBJECTIVITY IN THE ANTI/POST/COLONIAL VISUAL ARCHIVE

A colloquium facilitated by the Visual Identities in Art and Design  
Research Centre (VIAD), in association with curators Erin Haney &  
Shravan Vidyarthi

Mon 9 - Tues 10 October, 2017

FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg  
Bunting Road Campus, Auckland Park



## **PRIYA RAMRAKHA**

A Pan-African Perspective | 1950-1968

FADA Gallery, 5 October – 1 November 2017

Curated by Erin Haney and Shravan Vidyarthi

Presented by the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre (VIAD)

Presented in this exhibition is the first comprehensive survey of images by pioneering Kenyan photo-journalist Priya Ramrakha. Following the recent recovery of his archive in Nairobi, the photographs on show track Ramrakha's global travels in the 1950s and 1960s, and his sensitive chronicling of anti-colonial and post-independence struggles.

Born into an activist journalistic family, Ramrakha contributed to his uncle's paper, *The Colonial Times*, which subversively advocated for civil rights in colonial Kenya. Another outlet for his images was the Johannesburg-based *Drum* magazine, which opened an office in Nairobi in 1954. Photographing life under Kenya's colour bar, Ramrakha's images countered the privileged colonial purview of the mainstream press, which consistently reinforced British settler interests. This is especially evident in his coverage of Mau Mau – an anti-colonial movement discredited by British colonial propaganda as both an 'irrational force of evil' and a communist-inspired terrorist threat. Ramrakha's images of detentions, roundups and urban protests tell another story; bearing witness to the severe backlash and State of Emergency enacted by the colonial administration, and characterised by mass displacement, enforced hard-labour, and horrific cases of rape, torture and murder.

Negotiating the censorial context of 1950s Kenya, Ramrakha tracked a growing independence and Pan-Africanist movement, photographing leading figures like Tom Mboya and Jomo Kenyatta, as well as the more everyday experiences, contributions and political aspirations of various communities in the country. Studying for a period in the United States, he similarly captured a range of figures and socio-political encounters, ranging from Malcolm X to Miriam Makeba, and from everyday interactions to the public protests of civil rights activists.

Returning to Kenya in the early 1960s, Ramrakha became one of the first African photojournalists to work for *Time* and *LIFE* magazines. With the mobility and access afforded by this position, he went on to chronicle key independence moments across the continent, as well as Afrocentric cultural celebrations like the 1966 Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres in Dakar. Largely unpublished, his most hard-hitting images document situations of colonial and post-independence conflict in such contested territories as Aden, French Somaliland and Nigeria. Caught in the cross-fire of Federal and Biafran troops, he died near Owerri in Southern Nigeria (then the Republic of Biafra) on October 2, 1968.

In chronicling the complex struggles and aspirations of the independence era in Africa, and in situating these as lived human experiences – not only of suffering, but also of celebration and community – Ramrakha's archive re-centres to some degree the democratising vision and liberal humanitarian impulse of mid-century 'high' photojournalism. In this respect, his attention to everyday expressions of resistance and freedom, and the sustained anti-colonial narrative of his visual commentary, speaks to his distinctive position as a Kenyan correspondent, rooted in subversive and largely unacknowledged histories of Asian and black press collaborations in Africa. In profiling his work, this exhibition affords viewers an opportunity to revisit these narratives of colonial disentanglement, and to consider the ethical imperatives, dilemmas and implied politics of their documentation.

Applied to the present, such enquiry is pertinent in the light of recent (and ongoing) activism around decolonisation in South Africa, and its relation not only to the mainstream press, but also to new technologies of image making and dissemination, and the associated emergence of 'citizen photography'.

#### Erin Haney | Curator

As a curator and researcher, Erin Haney collaborates with artists and writers interested in photography, media histories, politics and creative institutions. Recent projects include the pioneering 3PA workshop, Porto-Novo, Benin, and the online exhibition *Sailors and Daughters*, which was supported by the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art. Professor Haney teaches photo, film, art and new media practice and histories at the Corcoran School of Art & Design, Washington D.C, and is a Research Associate at the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre (VIAD), University of Johannesburg, and at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. Haney has published widely, authoring *Photography and Africa* (Reaktion, 2010), and contributing articles and essays to *Africa is a Country*, *Hyperallergic*, *Public Culture*, *Critical Addresses* and *Autograph* (to name a few). She is presently working with Shravan Vidyarthi on an edited volume on the life and work of Priya Ramrakha.

#### Shravan Vidyarthi | Curator

Shravan Vidyarthi is a filmmaker and photographer based in New York and Nairobi. His documentary film *African Lens – the Story of Priya Ramrakha* won best African Film at the 2008 Zanzibar International Film Festival, and again at the Kenya International Film Festival. Vidyarthi's films have screened on PBS and at MoMA, and have featured in *The New York Times*. He has been a guest speaker at the National Museum of African Art, the Smithsonian Institution, New York University, Columbia University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, and the University of Maryland. Vidyarthi studied English, French and African Studies at the University of Georgetown, Washington D.C, and has an MA in Media Studies from the New School, New York. Vidyarthi is currently working with Erin Haney on an edited volume on the life and work of Priya Ramrakha.

# COLLOQUIUM PROGRAMME

FADA Gallery, 9 & 10 October 2017

Presented by the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre (VIAD)

## DAY 1 | MONDAY 9 OCTOBER 2017

TIME	SESSION
<b>SESSION 1: PRIYA RAMRAKHA: A Pan-African Perspective, 1950-1968</b>	
09:00	<b>Welcome</b> / Leora Farber
09:15	<b>Exhibition walkabout</b> / Erin Haney & Shravan Vidyarthi
09:45	<b>Screening: African Lens, the Story of Priya Ramrakha</b>
10:45	<b>Joint discussion</b> / Erin Haney & Shravan Vidyarthi
11:15	<b>TEA</b>
11:45	<b>Joint discussion continued</b> / Erin Haney & Shravan Vidyarthi
12:30	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>SESSION 2: INHABITING THE FRAME: anti-colonial photographic chronicles</b>	
13:30	<b>Opening address</b> / Prof John Edwin Mason <i>Life Magazine: Picturing Africa in the American Century</i>
14:30	<b>Presentation</b> / Associate Prof Pamila Gupta <i>Auto-ethnographic interventions and 'intimate exposures' in Ricardo Rangel's Portuguese Mozambique</i>
14:50	<b>Presentation</b> / Prof Patricia Hayes <i>Photography &amp; African History</i>
15:15	<b>Joint Q&amp;A Discussion</b> Chair: Pervaiz Khan
15:40	<b>TEA</b>
<b>SESSION 3: PHOTOGRAPHY IN CONTEXT</b>	
16:00	<b>Presentation</b> / Peter McKenzie <i>History of African Photography (HOAP)</i>

16:30	<b>Panel Discussion</b> / Natasha Himmelman (Chair) Panelists: Prof Daniel Ojwang and Shravan Vidyarthi <i>(un)framing: independence contexts, histories and subjects</i>
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## DAY 2 | TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2017

TIME	SESSION
<b>SESSION 4: FOCAL DEPTH: spaces &amp; traces in the 'post-colonial post-apartheid' photographic archive</b>	
09:00	<b>Presentation</b> / Prof Cynthia Kros <i>Getting the right story out there</i>
09:20	<b>Presentation</b> / Khwezi Gule <i>Projecting the Present onto the Past</i>
09:40	<b>Presentation</b> / Omar Badsha <i>Archive, Knowledge Production and Peoples History in post-apartheid RSA. A case study of South African History Online</i>
10:00	<b>Joint Q&amp;A Discussion</b> Chair: Amie Soudien
11:00	<b>TEA</b>
<b>SESSION 5: EMPATHY &amp; AFTER: crisis photography and the crisis of photo-documentary</b>	
11:30	<b>Panel Discussion</b> / Prof Bronwyn Law-Viljoen (Chair) Panelists: Rory Bester, Dr Erin Haney, Prof John Edwin Mason & Paul Weinberg
13:00	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>SESSION 6: MEMORY &amp; THE ARCHIVE: alternative documentary practices</b>	
14:00	<b>Presentation and Q&amp;A</b> / Keval Harie and Linda Chernis Keval Harie, Dir. Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA) and GALA archivist Linda Chernis discuss the importance of queer histories in the context of photographic documentation in GALA's archive collections, with a focus on the collection of Kewpie of District Six.
14:30	<b>Presentation and Q&amp;A</b> / Geoffrey Ogwaro <i>Title: TBC</i>
15:00	<b>TEA</b>
<b>SESSION 7: 'KWASUKA SUKELA': performing the absent subject</b>	

15:15	<b>Presentation / Amie Soudien</b> <i>Looking for self-love: Ebony, beauty and Africa Reclaimed</i>
15:35	<b>Artist's reflection &amp; discussion / Sethembile Msezane</b> Sethembile Msezane reflects on her film <b>Falling</b> , followed by a presentation and a vocal performance.
16:30	End of Day 2 programme

## SESSION OUTLINES

### SESSION 1

#### PRIYA RAMRAKHA: A Pan-African Perspective, 1950-1968

**Session 1** focuses exclusively on the exhibition. The session includes an exhibition walkabout with curators **Erin Haney** and **Shravan Vidyarthi**, as well as a documentary screening and opportunity for discussion.

### SESSION 2

#### INHABITING THE FRAME: anti-colonial photographic chronicles

**Session 2** centres around the diverse practices and associated politics of African photographers engaged in the visual chronicling of anti-colonial struggles as well as independence and post-independence experiences on the continent.

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**John Edwin Mason** / *Picturing Africa in the American Century*

No publication did more to shape American perceptions of Africa than **Life** magazine. After World War Two, as the United States became the dominant global superpower and anti-colonial movements in Africa gathered steam, **Life** was the nation's most important and authoritative source of visual information about newsworthy people, place, and events, reaching tens of millions of mostly white, mostly middle-class readers every week. Surprisingly, perhaps, the magazine covered Africa extensively. Its pictures of Africa were informed, in part, by colonialist stereotypes and Cold War concerns. At the same time, **Life's** photographers and editors could not separate their understanding of Africa from their anxieties about the rising African American freedom struggle. Because the magazine's vision of Africa offered white Americans – from policy makers to ordinary citizens – ways of understanding the continent's past, present, and possible futures, it powerfully impacted the response of the American government to the long process of decolonisation and to immediate crises, such as the Sharpeville Massacre, Congo independence, and the Nigerian civil war.

**John Edwin Mason** teaches African history and the history of photography at the University of Virginia. He has published extensively on slavery in the nineteenth-century Cape Colony and on the Cape Town New Year's Carnival. His book, entitled ***One Love, Khoema Beat: Inside the Cape Town Carnival*** grew out of his membership in the Pennsylvanians **klopse** troupe of Hanover Park (Cape Town), combining archival research, personal experience, and his own photographs. More recently, he has written about Margaret Bourke-White's **Life** magazine photo-essays on South Africa and many essays on twentieth-century American and African American photography. He is currently working on a book about the photographer, writer, and filmmaker Gordon Parks.

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**Pamila Gupta** / *Auto-ethnographic interventions and 'intimate exposures' in Ricardo Rangel's Portuguese Mozambique*

Trained as a photojournalist, Ricardo Rangel (1924-2009) has contributed some of Mozambique's most iconic images, even as many of his colonial-era photographs were banned or destroyed by Portuguese censors. In this presentation, using the concept of the archive as less a repository than a process, I delve into his photographic collection that, for me, speaks so cogently about Mozambican society during the last years of Portuguese colonialism (1961-1975) – both in its representational aspects as well as its ability to generate critical commentary and insight. I focus on three themed sets of his photographs that I engage with in my writings on Portuguese Mozambique, as a form of 'auto-ethnographic' intervention (Ellis, Adams & Bochner 2011; Russell 1999). Framing my discussion of Rangel's images (and imaginary) as a form of 'intimate exposure' (Bystrom & Nuttall 2013:308), I explore photography's potential to suggest the contours of individual lives and experiences on the cusp of colonial independence and which, in turn, can be used to build a Mozambican public-private archive, thus contributing to its collective memory.

**Pamila Gupta** is Associate Professor at WISER (Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research) at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits), Johannesburg, South Africa. She holds a PhD in Socio-cultural Anthropology from Columbia University. She writes about Lusophone India and Africa, Portuguese colonial and missionary history, decolonisation, heritage tourism, visual cultures and islands in the Indian Ocean. She has published in *South African Historical Journal*, *African Studies*, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, *Ler História*, *Ecologie & Politique*, and *Public Culture*, and is the co-editor of the volume, *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean* with Isabel Hofmeyr and Michael Pearson (UNISA, 2010). Her monograph, entitled *The Relic State: St. Francis Xavier and the Politics of Ritual in Portuguese India* was published by Manchester University Press (2014). She is currently working on a new book manuscript entitled *From Portuguese Decolonisation in the Indian Ocean World: History and Ethnography* (forthcoming Bloomsbury Press, 2018). Two new joint projects include the history of a photography studio and archive in Stone Town, Zanzibar with Meg Samuelson (University of Cape Town (UCT), English) and a study of the Marigold beads co-operative in Bulawayo with Joni Brenner (Wits, History of Art).

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### Patricia Hayes / Photography & African History

With the intensification of the production and circulation of visual media, broader questions about the relationship between **photography** and **history** are increasingly overlooked. This brief presentation will address some of these questions. First, there are distinctive ways that photographs work with time and space, that are not the same as other materials or fragments deployed in the reconstruction of history. Secondly, the status of the photograph in relation to other historical 'sources' is also in question, as there are hierarchies of legibility across textuality, visuality and sound, for example. Finally, what dictates photographic visibility or invisibility beyond the immediate circulation and archiving of photographs? In other words, is value that is not seen in the contemporary period available to be found in a later era, where previously unwanted photographs may emerge in a new post-colonial context?

**Patricia Hayes** is the National Research Foundation (NRF) South African Research Chair Initiative (SARChI) Chair in Visual History & Theory, based at the Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa. She obtained her PhD degree in History from the University of

Cambridge, with a thesis focused on the colonisation of northern Namibia and southern Angola. Two collaborative projects followed which explored South African colonialism in Namibia. *Namibia Under South African Rule* (1998) was based on historical research, and *The Colonising Camera* (1998) on photographic research and public exhibition. From 1995 she has lectured in History at the UWC, and



has taught African history, gender & history, and visual history. She has held visiting fellowships in Brazil, United Kingdom, Germany, India and the United States. Her volume, *Bush of Ghosts: Life & War in Namibia* with photographer John Liebenberg was published in 2010, and she has published numerous articles on photography and southern African history. She is a co-editor of the series *Photography/History: History/Photography* at Bloomsbury Academic.

### SESSION 3

#### PHOTOGRAPHY IN CONTEXT: Critical engagements with contested histories

Session 3 begins with a presentation by documentary photographer **Peter McKenzie**, in which he discusses the **History of African Photography** lecture series – an online initiative, which took place earlier this year. Following this, VIAD Research Associate **Natasha Himmelman** convenes a conversation with **Prof Dan Ojwang**, African Literature Dept., Wits, and **Shravan Vidyarthi**, co-curator of the exhibition, **Priya Ramrakha: A Pan-African Perspective 1950-1968**. This discussion foregrounds the East African cultural and political context, and takes a critical look at the historicising of key events during the colonial era.

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#### Peter McKenzie / *A History of African Photography*

The **History of African Photography** (HOAP) project is a unique and timely project with expected outcomes and content that challenges traditional photography education and pedagogy, and orientates photography in its African context. HOAP focuses on four epochs: *Colonial Photography: The racist camera*, *West African Studio and Street photography: The humanizing camera*, *Struggle Photography: The camera shoots back* and *Contemporary documentary photography: Its not what's out there but what's in there*.

One objective of HOAP, amongst others, is to make these four modules available online so that teachers, lecturers and mentors on the continent and globally have access the required teaching tools.

HOAP has been well received by many who see the need for this kind of intervention inspired by African example. As a professional, my vision is to the continued transformation of the African self-image through the mentorship of the continent's exciting young photographers.

**Peter McKenzie's** current preoccupation is the development of new visual voices, modes of expression and innovative advocacy in contemporary photography practice. **A History of African Photography** (HOAP) is one theme of the Durban Centre for Photography's innovative approach to teaching and mentoring photography on the African continent. His return to Durban in 2011 has resulted in visual reflection of his hometown. His association with the art collective, Dala has reflected in work focused on the 'new urbanites' and the consequent development of alternative and dynamic cultures.

McKenzie is Director of the Durban Centre for Photography (DCP) and the BAT Centre 2014-2017. Current projects include: **Themmerri: Walking on a bed of flowers, Durban's fire-walking ceremony**; **A History of African Photography (HOAP)**; **Ngale (To see beyond)**; and his work as Project Director and photographer with DCP students 2015/16. He has exhibited at the KZNSA Gallery, the ICC Social Cohesion conference (2016), the Market Photo Workshop (2017), amongst other galleries. McKenzie took part in **The Rise and Fall of Apartheid** group exhibition, Museum Africa, International Center for

*Photography, New York, the US and Germany (2015). He led the **Durbanity** project, a visual audit of Durban, and participated in the **Masibumbane; Archival Photo Project** with Durban's Chesterville community published May 2017.*

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**Natasha Himmelman** is a Puerto Rican researcher/educator raised in New Jersey. She is committed to a particular decolonisation of knowledge that labours against homogenisation, aspiring for horizontal polyvalences and the legitimisation of multiple ways of knowing and being. It is through this lens that Himmelman participates in Africa and African Diaspora centered projects that privilege a sociopolitical consciousness and engagement with artistic and cultural spaces. She is currently completing her PhD in the Dept. of African Literature, Wits.

**Dan Ojwang** began his career at Wits as a senior tutor and is currently Associate Professor of African Literature (Wits). His research interests include contemporary African fiction, literary cultures of the Indian Ocean world, and African intellectual and literary histories. His most recent work is on the intersection of literary and ethnographic imagination in East Africa. He has an amateur interest in black popular music worldwide. An editor with the journal **Postcolonial Text**, he has also served as Head of African Literature (2005-2008) and Deputy Head of the School of Literature and Language Studies (2010-2012), Wits.

**Shravan Vidyarthi** is a filmmaker and photographer based in New York and Nairobi. His documentary film **African Lens – the Story of Priya Ramrakha** won best African Film at the 2008 Zanzibar International Film Festival, and again at the Kenya International Film Festival. Vidyarthi's films have been screened on PBS and at MoMA, and have featured in **The New York Times**. He has been a guest speaker at the National Museum of African Art, the Smithsonian Institution, New York University, Columbia University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, and the University of Maryland. Vidyarthi studied English, French and African Studies at the University of Georgetown, Washington D.C, and has an MA in Media Studies from the New School, New York. Vidyarthi is currently working with Erin Haney on an edited volume on the life and work of Priya Ramrakha.

#### SESSION 4:

#### FOCAL DEPTH: spaces & traces in the 'post-colonial post-apartheid' photographic archive

As curators, archivists, practitioners and researchers, the panelists in **Session 4** reflect in different ways on the ethical/political imperatives and critical value of revisiting, rethinking and re-inscribing photographic archives in post-colonial/post-apartheid contexts.

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#### **Khwezi Gule / Projecting the Present onto the Past**

A long time ago when I was an art student at this institution when it was Wits Technikon, before it became the University of Johannesburg (UJ), I proposed to my drawing lecturer to make a drawing depicting the scene in Sam Nzima's iconic image of Hector Pieterse. He dismissed the idea, stating that some images are so iconic that it is impossible to remake them into something new. Telling by the number of artists who have done just that, it is clear that he was wrong. Ultimately, images are only as powerful as the kinds of ideas one attaches to them. No image, no matter how explicit or graphic is entirely monolithic. Whether one likes it or not, images do acquire different meanings over time. This becomes more likely with time as its meaning becomes divorced from its historical context.

A crude example is how the image of Che Guevara by Alberto Korda has become a fashion statement. Using Walter Benjamin's formulation, the image could be thought of as having lost its original aura and gained a different one. In a previous text, I have argued that everything eventually becomes art. I further assert that everything also becomes a commodity. Whether or not the image of the dying Hector Pieterse has reached that point is to be debated, but there are clearly signs that it might have. This also happens to terminology as much as images. Today when you utter the word 'Soviet', the listener is likely to associate the word with a clothing brand rather than the USSR. And yet the pursuit of collective memory requires a certain freezing of time and demands that things should mean what they mean despite the ravages of time.

**Khwezi Gule** is a curator and writer based in Johannesburg. He is currently Chief Curator at the Soweto Museums which includes, the Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum and the Kliptown Open Air Museum. Prior to that Gule held the position of Curator: Contemporary collections at the Johannesburg Art Gallery. Gule has curated a number of projects locally and internationally. He has contributed essays to various publications including exhibition catalogues, journals and newspapers and has delivered numerous conference and seminar papers straddling his areas of interest namely, the art field and heritage studies.

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**Omar Badsha / Archive, Knowledge Production and Peoples History in post-apartheid RSA:  
A case study of South African History Online**

**Omar Badsha** was born in 1945. He grew up in an artistic home; his father Ebrahim was an artist, and uncle Moosa, a photo journalist. Badsha is a veteran of the liberation struggle, trade union leader, artist, photographer, curator, and historian. He was one of the pioneers of the new wave of activist artists of the post-Sharpeville era and went to become one of the influential figures in shaping the arts and documentary photography in the 1980s. He is the recipient of a numerous awards for painting and photography; author and editor of several books; and curator of numerous exhibitions. He helped to found Afrapix – the legendary activist photography collective – in the 1980s. Badsha's first publication **A Letter to Farzanah** (1979) was banned by the Apartheid regime. His other works include: **Imijondolo** (1984); **South Africa: The Cordoned Heart** (1986); **90 Fighting Years** (1985); **Imperial Ghetto** (2001); **With Our Own Hands** (2002); **Amulets and Dreams** 2001; **Bonani Africa** (2010). In 1999, Badsha founded South African History Online (SAHO) – a non-profit history and educational project, which has grown into the largest popular history project and website on the continent.

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**Cynthia Kros / Getting the right story out there**

According to at least one account, Priya Ramrakha, who was killed on the roadside in crossfire while he was covering the Nigerian (Biafran) Civil War, knowingly risked his life in an increasingly frantic bid to make the 'world understand' what was happening in Africa. Given conditions in the world today, we might well identify with Ramrakha's quest. We hark back hopefully to the 'conviction' that Susan Sontag referred in war-torn Sarajevo that if only 'the (right) story could be gotten out, the world would do something' (see also **Bang Bang Club** authors).

Roland Barthes argued robustly for the 'evidential force' of photographs. In my presentation, I consider this phrase in relation to Ramrakha's Biafran War photographs. Barthes, as it happens, did not care much for news photographs, arguing that they tended to 'shout' rather than 'wound' and therefore did not win his love and were quickly forgotten. Might Ramrakha's Biafran photographs, by contrast, deliver what Barthes famously called the **punctum**, deeply wounding the viewer through a poignant or incongruous detail? Barthes intended judgments about **punctum** to be purely subjective,

but I propose to use the concept to explore the genius of Ramrakha's last photographs, and to pose questions about ways of telling the truth, especially about a continent that continues to be presented as mysterious, barbaric and wracked by 'tribal' conflict.

*Cynthia Kros is a historian and heritage specialist who taught for many years in the History Department at Wits, and thereafter was the Head of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Management Division in the Wits School of Arts. Currently she is a research associate of the History Workshop, also at Wits. Kros holds a PhD (Wits) and in 2010 published a book entitled, **The Seeds of Separate Development: Origins of Bantu Education** on the basis of her doctoral thesis. This year, she has published a book for their centenary on the history of the Parkview Schools. Kros has published many articles in the fields of education and heritage in academic journals and, lately on projects she has been involved in using the principles of art as research.*

## SESSION 5

### EMPATHY & AFTER: crisis photography and the crisis of photo-documentary

Discussions in **Session 5** track and (within a specifically postcolonial frame) critically review the 'ethical impulse' and western liberal/humanist agenda often associated with traditional or 'high' photojournalism – as vested in a commitment to veracity; to the capacity of the photographic image to make distant suffering 'present'; and to invoke empathic response and civil action. Complicating this narrative, panelists reflect on ways in which this presumed model was disrupted through multiple, individual and differently located photographic practices (particularly with respect to the intersecting politics of race, class, gender and sexuality). Extending this dialogue, consideration is also taken of the multiple flows and functions of photo-documentary today – in relation to specific geographies and socio-political contexts; shifting perceptions of the power-relations and social contracts of photography itself; the role of the media (as fourth estate) vs. propaganda and now 'fake news'; as well as important developments in photographic technologies, and the extent to which these are effecting the ways in which photographs are taken, tweaked, posted, shared, searched and tagged.

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*Bronwyn Law-Viljoen is Associate Professor and Head of Creative Writing Wits, editor and co-founder of Fourthwall Books, and former editor of **Art South Africa** magazine. She received her doctorate in literature from New York University (NYU) in 2003 and her doctorate in creative writing from Wits in 2017. She taught writing and literature at NYU before returning to South Africa to take up the post of editor at David Krut Publishing. She has edited many books on art, design, photography and architecture in South Africa, and has written essays on these subjects for magazines, journals, catalogues and books both locally and internationally. Her short stories have appeared in the journals **New Contrast** and **Aerodrome**. Her first novel, **The Printmaker**, was published by Umuzi in 2016.*

*Rory Bester is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of History of Art at Wits, Johannesburg, where he teaches undergraduate courses on photobooks, and photography as research practice, as well as supervising photography research in the postgraduate art history by practice programme. Recent curatorial projects include **A Short History of South African Photography** (Fotografia Europea, Reggio Emilia, 2017; co-curated with Rita Potenza and Thato Mogotsi) and **Rise and Fall of Apartheid** (International Center of Photography, New York, and touring, 2012-2015; co-curated with Okwui Enwezor).*

**Paul Weinberg** is a senior curator at the Centre for African Studies Gallery, University of Cape Town (UCT). He is photographer, filmmaker, writer, educationist and archivist. He began his career in the early 1980s by working for South African NGOs, and photographing current events for news agencies and foreign newspapers. He has taught photography at the Centre of Documentary Studies at Duke University in the US, and holds a master's degree from the same university. He lectures in Documentary Arts and Visual Anthropology at UCT. Together with David Goldblatt, he founded the Ernest Cole Award for creative photography in Southern Africa.

## SESSION 6: MEMORY AND THE ARCHIVE: alternative documentary practices

**Session 6** begins with the Director of Gay & Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA), **Keval Harie**, who introduces the organisation, giving an overview of GALA, their history, projects and archives. Thereafter, GALA's Archivist, **Linda Chernis**, speaks about how photographs feature through GALA's archival collections, and showing examples ranging from personal photograph albums to pride parades and protest marches. Thereafter, the presentation focuses on one of GALA's largest and most significant purely photographic collections, that of **Kewpie** of District Six, using this collection as a case-study through which to discuss the theme of photographic documentation in the archives.

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**Keval Harie** is the director of the Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA). Harie, a qualified attorney, has always sought to put South Africa's constitution at the centre of his career, using it to find new ways to promote social justice and human rights across the country. Harie joined GALA in January 2017 from UCT's Research Contracts and Innovation Dept. where he helped students and faculty grow and apply their research in new and implementable ways. While at UCT, he also focused on developing a stronger culture of activism and advocacy for social justice in South Africa's higher

education sector, particularly regarding the application of legislation related to higher education and university policy on transformation. At GALA, Harie is most excited about the opportunity to connect the archives to new intersections of activism, particularly around gender identity and sexuality. In his spare time, Keval enjoys cooking, reading, and Instagramming – you may already know him by his online name 'Kevstix'.

**Linda Chernis** is an archivist and heritage practitioner who has worked in museums and archives for the past 13 years. She has a passion for bringing history, heritage and the arts to the public – this has taken various forms during the course of her career and includes creating website content, researching, writing and curating exhibitions, developing and writing catalogues and brochures, facilitating public research, creating databases and archiving and preserving material. Linda became the archivist at GALA in January 2015.

**Session 6** continues with a presentation by **Geoffrey Ogwaro**, Coalition Coordinator at Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law.

## SESSION 7

### 'KWASUKA SUKELA': performing the absent subject

**Session 7** begins with a presentation by VIAD Curator/Researcher Amie Soudien who will present on the African presence within the American publication EBONY during the Civil Rights Era, and concurrent changes in perceptions of 'feminine' beauty within the magazine.

#### *Amie Soudien / Looking for self-love: Ebony, beauty and Africa Reclaimed*

**Ebony** magazine sought and was successful in fulfilling a glaring absence of media focused on and produced by black Americans. According to Adam Green, a professor of history at The University of Chicago, Ebony was responsible for the creation of the black celebrity, and "contributed to the formation of a national black culture." This presentation will focus on the shifting perceptions of feminine beauty within the black American community as is presented in **Ebony** during the Civil Rights Period, loosely defined as 1954-1968. More specifically, this presentation will aim to assess if and how changes in the conception of beauty from an attitude of "blending in" and conforming to the dominant white society, to the mantra of "Black is Beautiful" popular during the 1960s, were influenced by the growing independence of African states occurring at around the same time.

*Amie Soudien is an arts journalist and artist from Cape Town, South Africa. Soudien completed her BAFA at Michaelis School of Fine Art in 2013, and completed her MA in New Arts Journalism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2016. Her research interests include early colonial and slave history in Cape Town, postcolonial studies, popular media, and emerging artists from Africa and the diaspora. In 2016 she was a National Fellow at the Institute of Creative Arts (ICA) in Cape Town. Soudien has contributed to a number of publications including **ArtThrob**, **Adjective**, the **Mail & Guardian**, and the upcoming issue of **Frieze**. Soudien is currently a researcher and curator at VIAD.*

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The second part of **Session 7** facilitates an artist's reflection and discussion around the connection between a resurgence in spiritual consciousness among young South Africans, and the rise in social tensions in South Africa and Zimbabwe. As a point of focus, visual artist **Sethembile Msezane** ([www.sethembile-msezane.com](http://www.sethembile-msezane.com)), whose practice engages with the critical absence of black African women in established historical narratives, will screen her film **Falling** (2017), followed by a presentation on the film, and a vocal performance by singers of the Gauteng Opera.

*Sethembile Msezane (RSA b.1991) completed her Masters in Fine Art (2017) at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Msezane maps out how the process of commemorative practice informs constructions of history, mythmaking, and ultimately addresses the paucity of the black female body in the monumentalisation of public spaces.*

*Msezane has had a solo show at Gallery MOMO titled **Kwasuka Sukela** (2017), as well as a solo at FNB Joburg Art Fair (2017). Selected group shows include **Women's Work** and **The Art of Disruptions** at the Iziko South African National Gallery (2016), **Dis(colour)ed Margins** at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe (2017), **Re[as]sisting Narratives** an exhibition at Framer Framed, Amsterdam (2016). **Dance, if you want to enter my country! / Global Citizen** at GoetheOnMain, Johannesburg (2016), **Nothing Personal** at SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, **#theopening** at Greatmore Studios, Cape Town (2016), **Translations** at*

*Emergent Art Space and Reed college, Portland, Oregon (2015), **Anywhere the Wind Blows** at Brundyn+ (2014). Her work sits in prominent collections such as Zeitz MOCAA and Iziko South African National Gallery.*

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For more information, please contact Amie Soudien

Amie Soudien  
VIAD Researcher & Curator  
Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre  
Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture  
University of Johannesburg  
[www.viad.co.za](http://www.viad.co.za)

[t] 011 559 1607  
[c] 073 390 0914

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