

The Text and Context of Post-Apartheid Afrikaans Theatre: A Case Study of Aardklop Arts Festival

Lida Krüger

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0336-3096>

University of South Africa

krugeja@unisa.ac.za

Abstract

Afrikaans theatre occupies a curious position within the post-apartheid South African theatre landscape. Despite a limited number of Afrikaans-speaking South Africans and very little state funding for the arts, the Afrikaans theatre industry continues to survive and is most notably showcased at various Afrikaans arts festivals across the country. This context in which theatre is performed is, however, seldom taken into account in scholarship on Afrikaans theatre, despite the value that a historiographical approach to such research can add. In this article, I consider the interplay between the neoliberal platform of the arts festival and the theatre performed there, while being cognisant that historical inequality and financial pressure greatly influence which plays are included in the festival programme. To illustrate the interplay between text and context, three theatre productions that debuted at Aardklop are discussed: Pieter Fourie's *Boetman is die Bliksem in!*, Marlene van Niekerk's "Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W.," and Christo Davids's "My Seuns." The study concludes that scholarship on both the text and context of these plays can be significantly enriched if read in tandem.

Keywords: Afrikaans theatre; Aardklop; *Boetman is die Bliksem in!*; "Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W."; "My Seuns"

UNISA



Journal of Literary Studies

Volume 41 | 2025 | #19893 | 25 pages

<https://doi.org/10.25159/1753-5387/19893>

ISSN 1753-5387 (Online)

© The Author(s) 2025



Published by the Literature Association of South Africa and Unisa Press. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)

Introduction

Afrikaans theatre has maintained a precarious, but persistent presence within post-apartheid South Africa. While it struggles to survive after the institutional privilege that it had during apartheid ended, the various Afrikaans arts festivals that have been established provide a welcome platform for Afrikaans theatre (Du Preez 2015, 206). Nevertheless, research on South African theatre, regardless of the language it is written or performed in, is significantly limited due to the country's lack of a strong theatre archiving tradition (see Keuris and Krüger 2014).

In the last 25 years, a number of crucial articles that explore the trends and themes within Afrikaans theatre have been published by Johan Coetser (2001, 2003, 2010a, 2010b), Marisa Keuris (2020, 2025), Hennie van Coller and Anthea van Jaarsveld (2006). Excluding dissertations, theses, and reviews, the remaining scholarship on Afrikaans theatre is focused on a particular drama or playwright, with the notable exception of Petrus du Preez's (2006) article on the directorial work of Marthinus Basson.¹ This implies that the majority of scholarship on Afrikaans theatre is based on a body of published plays, rather than its performance, or the larger context thereof.

The arts festivals where most performances of Afrikaans theatre in post-apartheid South Africa are performed function within a neoliberal context. Neoliberalism is "a loose conglomeration of ideas and policy prescriptions" that favour tax cuts and reductions in social expenditure (Campbell 2017). According to Ian Buchanan (2018), it has become a "catch-all term" for any political policy that prioritises the market over societal needs. Therefore, as Trish Reid (2020, 5) warns, neoliberalism often obscures the nuances of hegemonic systems of power. In South Africa, this market-driven ideology underpins both the media (Govenden 2024, 568) and the arts (Eckersall et al. 2013, 43).

As commercial ventures, most of the research on Afrikaans arts festivals² falls within the discipline of economic sciences and, while not negating its cultural value, generally focus on theatre as a product, positioned to attract visitors who stay longer and spend more money at the festival (Kruger, Saayman, and Ellis 2011, 512). The Afrikaans arts festival as commodity then raises the question of to what extent it runs the risk of

1 See Brukman (2012), J. L. Coetser (2012), J. Coetser (2013), De Kock and Pieterse (2012), Devarenne (2010), De Villiers (2010), Du Preez (2004), Hauptfleisch and Keuris (2020), Jackson (2015), Keuris (2015, 2007), Loubser (2010), Meyer (2012), Morgan (2015), Nolte (2022), Peimer (2021), Stimie (2013), Van Coller and Van Jaarsveld (2008, 2007), Van der Merwe (2009), Van Wyk (2004), and Van Zyl Smit (2005).

2 See Botha and Slabbert (2011), Botha et al. (2011), Botha, Viviers, and Slabbert (2012), M. Kruger (2020), Kruger and Saayman (2012, 2016, 2019), Kruger, Saayman, and Ellis (2011), Kruger and Petzer (2008), Kruger, Viljoen, and Manners (2025), Saayman, Douglas, and De Klerk (2009), Saayman and Saayman (2005), Slabbert and Viviers (2011, 2013), Slabbert, Viviers, and Erasmus (2013), Van Zyl (2005, 2006), Van Zyl and Botha (2004), Van Zyl and Queiros (2009), Viljoen (2023), Viviers, Botha, and Marumo (2017), Viviers, Botha, and Perl (2013), and Willis and Snowball (2009).

becoming a consumerist private sphere, isolated from the wider post-apartheid society, marked with its legacy of inequalities, while exerting an influence on who gets to put on which plays.

Reid (2020, 8) sees scholarly analysis as an essential tool to “diagnose and clarify” the practices that engage with the hidden systems of power associated with a neoliberal context that result in persistent inequality. In this article, in agreement with Keuris (2025, 387), I argue the value of a theatre historiographical approach that does not view Afrikaans drama in isolation but considers the interplay between its text (or content) and the context in which it is performed. Since both the text and the context of theatre exert an influence on each other, I find a theatre historiographical approach in which the text is read as complement to its context, and vice versa, productive.

I do this by first describing the theatre historiographical approach, then discussing the political significance of drama and theatre, before sketching the context of Afrikaans theatre, starting with a review of the post-apartheid theatre landscape before progressing to Afrikaans arts festivals and then turning my focus to Aardklop National Arts Festival specifically. I then proceed to briefly discuss the text of three examples of politically significant Afrikaans plays that debuted at Aardklop over the span of two and a half decades to illustrate how the text and context of these three plays are mutually impactful. The three plays are Pieter Fourie’s *Boetman is die Bliksem in!* (2000, Laddie is mad as hell), Marlene van Niekerk’s “Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W.” (2010, The limited shelf life of Anastasia W.) and Christo Davids’s “My Seuns” (2018, My sons).

The Theatre Historiographical Approach

The paucity of scholarship that emphasises aspects of performance is understandable given the scarcity of archival material on South African drama and theatre (see Keuris and Krüger 2014). However, this means that research on Afrikaans theatre then tends to negate the intrinsic interdisciplinary nature of the field. Christopher Balme (2015, 110) describes theatre’s constitution as inherently multi-medial, in that it “combines literature (drama) and the fine arts (set design, architecture), anthropology (traditions of acting) with social and political change (theatre as an institution).” This means that theatre research is much richer and more comprehensive when the text, performance as well as the context of this performance are considered.

Keuris (2025, 387) therefore argues for a theatre historiographical approach, rather than a purely literary approach in research on Afrikaans theatre. According to Thomas Postlewait (2005), historiography, in broad terms, entails a self-reflexive approach to historical research. This means that it not only considers the historical significance of events but is also aware of its own influence on how these events are perceived. Theatre historiography, then, can include a variety of possible projects (Postlewait 2005), including the attempted reconstruction of past performances (Balme 2015, 96–97). In this case, theatre historiography is very much concerned with the question of how

“ephemeral phenomena of the past [can] be captured and rendered suitable for aesthetic study” (Balme 2015, 97).

The fleeting nature of performance, however, renders any attempts at recreation—even *with* an abundance of archival material available—accessible only through “conceptual constructs that we ourselves create” (Balme 2015, 101). When considering archival material, theatre historiographers draw a distinction between direct sources (such as prompt books, props, and account books) and indirect sources (such as reviews, anecdotes, posters, and playbills), as well as objective mediation (including scripts, theatre buildings, and parts of the set) and meta-commentary (including stage photos, video recordings, and interviews) (Balme 2015, 98). This distinction, while emphasising the importance of the epistemological status of a source, also illustrates the impossibility of recreating a past performance “as it really was,” as none of the objects that document theatre equals its performance (Balme 2015, 99). According to T. Sofie Taubert and Ruthie Abeliovich (2020, 301) also, when writing about past performance, the theatre historiographer must acknowledge that any conceptual reconstruction of performance is necessarily incomplete.

Taubert and Abeliovich (2020, 298) therefore suggest a theatre historiographical approach that “gravitates between the staged theatrical meaning, its reception when staged, and its later historical interpretations.” For the purposes of this project, I define this approach as one that considers the text and context of a specific performance, the interplay *between* text and context, as well as a consideration of how the text and context have been perceived by the audience and in scholarship.

Theatre, Politics, and Ephemerality

What sets drama apart from the other literary genres is that it is an incomplete product. The drama text can be seen as the blueprint of the eventual performance, which is then the final artistic product (Botha 2012, 213). In fact, the performance of a text often precedes publication since the theatre production is a product of both the author and the director, as Van Coller and Van Jaarsveld (2006, 70) point out. For these reasons, Temple Hauptfleisch (2004, 279) refers to theatre as an *event*. The audience consumes the product at the same time as it is being produced, and as a result theatre is necessarily communal (Eversmann 2004, 141). According to Taubert and Abeliovich (2020, 301), “theatre is a cooperative art form, unfolding in time and space,” which implies that the audience is not merely present, but also actively involved in the constitution of the performance.

This collaboration, coupled with the ephemeral nature of the genre, makes theatre an exceptionally apt vehicle for political engagement. After the Second World War, various theatre makers experimented with the form of the genre in attempts to reach a wider audience with a more relevant art form (Somers 2011, 150). These theatre makers endeavour to use the collaborative aspects of theatre to effect political or social change by eliciting a visceral or emotional response from the audience. Augusto Boal’s (2008)

Theatre of the Oppressed and Bertolt Brecht's (Brecht 2015) Epic Theatre are two notable examples that still exert influence on contemporary political theatre (Eckersall and Grehan 2019, 4). Together with Antonin Artaud's (2000) Theatre of Cruelty and Jerzy Grotowski's (2002) Poor Theatre, these theatre forms also inspired the workshop methods used in protest theatre during the struggle against apartheid (Hauptfleisch 1997, 42).

However, theatre need not necessarily function within one of these forms to exert a potent political influence. In fact, Peter Eversmann (2004, 157–158) argues that all theatre is in one way or another political in nature. Also, according to Peter Eckersall and Helena Grehan (2019, 2), “theatre and performance are always critical acts of assembly and hence capable of provoking and/or unsettling politics.” These scholars are in agreement with Brecht's idea that so-called depoliticised theatre merely allies itself with the status quo, or the ruling group (Eckersall and Grehan 2019, 4). Moreover, theatre that rejects political engagement becomes “complicit with oppressive political, cultural or religious establishments that re-tool democracy to suit their own ideological agendas” (Eckersall et al. 2013, 31). In this view, any supposedly purely aesthetic theatre simply conceals its allegiance with unjust ideologies, whether performed during the overtly oppressive apartheid years, or in the democratic, but still politically turbulent post-apartheid South Africa.

South African Theatre after Apartheid

Scholars such as Njabulo Ndebele (1991, 65), Zakes Mda (2002) and Loren Kruger (2020, 183) describe the advent of democracy as a time of crisis for South African theatre makers. According to L. Kruger (2020, 183), “many practitioners floundered as the certainties of the anti-apartheid struggle faded and political lines shifted.” Elsewhere, Kruger (2002, 231) ascribes this crisis not only to the “loss of a focused movement for change,” but also to “inefficient and compromised institutions of patronage and development” for the support of South African theatre. Kruger (2002, 231) therefore sees the crisis as the result of not only a lack of motivation and cause, but also structural and administrative ineptitude.

Over two decades into democracy, Kruger (2017) still views the post-apartheid theatre landscape as dull. For Kruger (2017), good, contemporary theatre that engages with the current realities of democratic South Africa is drowned out by commercially successful comedy shows, international imports, performances of prescribed texts, or adaptations from the Western canon.

Playwright Mike van Graan (in Eckersall et al. 2013, 42), in contrast, sees democratic South Africa as a much more inspiring context than the apartheid era:

[A] country in transition, a democratic work-in-progress, a society struggling to realize its constitutional ideals from a base of gross inequality, is a much more interesting place

for theatre-makers—and audiences—than the “us/them,” black/white binaries of apartheid. There is so much more in the way of irony, contradiction and complexity.

Post-apartheid South Africa thus presents Van Graan (in Eckersall et al. 2013, 42) with a less clearly defined distinction between the oppressor and the oppressed, an incomplete and still evolving revolution containing complicated structures of power. Also, according to Anton Krueger (2010, 40), post-apartheid South Africa resembles an enormous rhizome, in the Deleuzian sense, in that it escapes accurate quantification, and remains in various stages of flux: “Some elements crystallise while others burst loose; here is a divergence, there a subversion, while micro-fascisms are perpetually forming within it.” It is this contradictory and instable environment that Van Graan (in Eckersall et al. 2013, 31) views as rich material for artistic intervention.

Nevertheless, Van Graan (in Eckersall et al. 2013, 43) is acutely aware of the structural and administrative barriers that many aspiring or would-be theatre makers face. Within “a neoliberal creative industries paradigm,” Van Graan (in Eckersall et al. 2013, 43) argues, “access to and participation by all were sacrificed on the altar of ‘the market’ so that those who were excluded by race generally now continue to be excluded by class.” Historical inequality combined with the pressure to make theatre financially profitable significantly impacts which plays ultimately get performed.

Unsurprisingly, Eurocentric performances are still privileged on South African stages (Hutchison 2015, 268–269) and, according to Megan Lewis (2016, 11), “South African theatre is still predominantly white-faced in terms of the real power brokers.” This is the case in both English and Afrikaans theatre, contrary to Krüger’s (2017), observation that “text-based drama driven by character and dialogue is still mostly performed in English.” Despite the major changes that the end of apartheid brought to the status of Afrikaans and Afrikaners in the country, as well as in the state structures available to fund Afrikaans theatre, numerous Afrikaans plays (newly written, revived, or translated) are still performed every year.

Afrikaans Arts Festivals

Afrikaans occupies a complex position within post-apartheid South Africa. On the one hand, the majority of home language speakers of Afrikaans belong to the Coloured community (Krüger, Viljoen, and Manners 2025, 7). On the other hand, despite officially losing its privileged position over other indigenous languages in 1994, Afrikaans is still associated with the apartheid administration and its project of Afrikaner nationalism (Van der Merwe 2014, 351).

Herman Wasserman (2009, 64–65) identifies three distinct responses by the Afrikaans media to the loss of political and symbolic power with the demise of apartheid: an ideological repositioning that embraces multiculturalism and a democratic South Africa, privatisation of the media, and a “vigorous assertion of Afrikaans group rights” to resist any curtailing in the use of Afrikaans in the media.

This campaign has resulted in a lucrative market for Afrikaans cultural products. Wasserman (2009, 70) indicates that Afrikaans speakers occupy a high position on Living Standard Measurement scales. This means that Afrikaans is a commodity that advertisers would be keen to invest in. As a result, the discourse of consumerism dominates the repositioning of Afrikaans media after the end of apartheid, as “part of a larger neoliberal logic that became hegemonic during the first decade of South African democracy” (Wasserman 2009, 63). According to Prinola Govenden (2024, 568), South African media is still substantially informed by a neoliberal ideology. Two recent events also suggest that Afrikaans media is still positioned as part of a hegemonic neoliberal logic. In 2024, the online Afrikaans newspaper *Vrye Weekblad* closed due to unprofitability (Barnard 2024) and Media24, South Africa’s largest print and digital media company, announced that in future, it will cease to publish print versions of Afrikaans newspapers, for the same reason (*Rapport* 2024).

In this way, the launch of private Afrikaans television channels such as KykNet “can be seen as a form of withdrawal from the public media sphere to a private sphere premised on consumption” (Wasserman 2009, 71). Also, according to Adriaan Steyn (2016, 486), the products that cater for the Afrikaans market usually reinforce forms of Afrikaner enclavism. The separatist suggestion of this retreat is emphasised as Coloured speakers of Afrikaans are often overlooked or simply ignored by conservative civil rights organisations in their campaign for the language (Steyn 2016, 484).

However, to retain credibility, Afrikaans media was compelled to “regain the trust of Black Afrikaans audiences, while not alienating their loyal—and lucrative, affluent—audiences” (Wasserman 2009, 73). The resulting balancing act, though, cannot accommodate any challenges to entrenched assumptions for fear of upsetting “this fragile consensus” (Wasserman 2009, 75). Any attempts at meaningful and probing political discourse in a neoliberal Afrikaans media that depends on consumer support for its survival are therefore potentially curtailed from the outset.

The establishment of various Afrikaans arts festivals after the Performing Arts Councils, which previously supported the production of Afrikaans (and English) theatre, were dissolved can be seen as another example of withdrawal to a consumerist private sphere. While the repertoires of the Performing Arts Councils were aligned with the Nationalist agenda (Kruger 2019, 75), the Afrikaans festivals state their main aim as the promotion of the arts in Afrikaans (Van Zyl 2011, 188). However, as is the case with the post-apartheid Afrikaans media, this repositioning does not axiomatically imply a shift away from enclavism. Since these festivals form the context of most Afrikaans theatre, the theatre historiographical approach necessitates a further investigation and discussion of the political climate at these festivals.

The National Arts Festival, held annually in Makhanda (previously Grahamstown), is “South Africa’s largest, longest-lasting, and most prestigious arts festival and the only one that can claim international standing” (L. Kruger 2020, 178). It therefore sets itself

apart from other South African festivals that mostly cater to local audiences. These include the Zabalaza Theatre Festival, showcasing new local work and the now defunct Dance Umbrella (1988–2018), as well as the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (Little Karoo National Arts Festival, or KKNK) and Aardklop aimed at Afrikaans and/or Afrikaner audiences (L. Kruger 2020, 178). Apart from the KKNK and Aardklop, numerous other arts festivals were subsequently established for these audiences. The most notable are: Woordfees (Word festival) in Stellenbosch, Vrystaat Kunstefees (Free State festival) in Bloemfontein, Suidoosterfees (Southeastern festival) in Cape Town, and Innibos (In the bush) in Mbombela.

According to Ciná van Zyl (2011, 193), Aardklop and the KKNK “cater for a specific niche market, with a unique ‘folk festival’” atmosphere that consumers associate with the event. According to data published in 2005, almost 90% of festivalgoers at Aardklop and the KKNK are white and Afrikaans-speaking and attend 4,5 shows per festival on average (Saayman and Saayman 2005, 214). According to data collected at the Aardklop festival of 2019, 95% of festivalgoers are Afrikaans-speaking and on average buy eight theatre tickets per person (Kruger, Viljoen, and Manners 2025, 10). However, visitors to a festival are not all alike (Kruger, Saayman, and Ellis 2010, 140). Martinette Kruger, Adam Viljoen, and Bianca Manners (2025, 16) found differences in the preferences of festivalgoers at Aardklop, based on their age. Corné Pretorius, Pierre-André Viviers, and Karin Botha (2014, 160), however, raise concern that “some festival visitors barely attend the festival shows and productions, only attending the festival for its [craft market] stalls, restaurants and pubs.”

The KKNK has been criticised in the past “for perpetuating the principle of the *laager*, or circle of wagons, creating an exclusionary, white cultural festival—a Boerefees—each year in Oudtshoorn, South Africa” (Lewis 2008, 654). Coetser (2001, 85) also voices his fear during the early years of Afrikaans festivals that “Afrikaans theatre is increasingly being limited to events with a distinct Afrikaner ambience” and suggests that the sponsorships of festivals could have a conservative influence on the theatre staged there (Coetser 2001, 100). Adriaan Steyn (2016, 487–489) also interprets Afrikaans arts festivals as part of a profitable cultural industry with a fiercely loyal target audience, which confirms rather than challenges the separatist tendencies within Afrikaner culture.

These separatist proclivities are indeed reflected in the racial representation of festival theatre makers and audiences during the first few years. According to François Campana (2003, 50), 80% of proposals to arts festivals in South Africa are submitted by white directors or producers and are destined for white audiences. Marlene le Roux (in Kitshoff 2004, 67), former head of education and development and current CEO of Artscape Theatre Centre in Cape Town, describes Afrikaans festivals in 2003 as epitomising “the post-1994 split of South African culture into so-called islands of ethnicity, which proves that there had been little sign of transformation in the performing arts since the demise of apartheid.” Le Roux (in Kitshoff 2004, 67) therefore

dismisses the potential for transformation within arts festivals. While Johann van Heerden (2011, 91) interprets the development of the festival circuit as a vital platform for South African professional theatre, he does concede that “most festivals did relatively little” in exploring Black South African culture or theatre and consequently remain white affairs.

However, there has been noticeable change in recent years. In an interview with Jill Planche (2019, 301), playwright Amy Jephta describes the Afrikaner community as “protective of its culture and language.” Consequently, it “only recently opened its doors to dialects of Afrikaans to allow different voices and disruptions of old testimonies of the major language.” In light of this perceived marginalisation of Coloured artists within Afrikaans culture, and previous, documented incidents of racism at the KKNK (Haupt 2006, 20) and Aardklop (Badenhorst 2000), the belated inclusion of Coloured artists in Afrikaans festival programmes should be regarded with cognisance to the potential contradictions that often accompany attempts at inclusion.

Adam Haupt (2006, 16) considers, in an article titled “Race, Audience, Multitude: Afrikaans Arts Festivals and the Politics of Inclusion,” whether the popularity of Coloured artists such as Brasse Vannie Kaap among mostly white audiences at KKNK demonstrates a key political shift or if it is a purchase of legitimacy for the Afrikaner community and their language campaign. Haupt (2006, 20) identifies the ideology behind the campaign when he states that “[w]hat is at stake [at these festivals] is not so much the continued existence of a language—Afrikaans—but a particular worldview that allows festival participants to gloss over ... class and race disparities.” Haupt (2006, 20) therefore recognises how language is entangled with culture and specific worldviews. Subsequently, the supposed neutral campaign for Afrikaans cannot simply be taken at face value. However, Haupt (2006, 17–18) also sees the potential for a new generation of white South Africans to reinvent and “distance themselves from the previous generation’s complicity in apartheid” through their appreciation of Coloured artists. Haupt (2006, 25) concludes that the debate surrounding the marginalisation of the Coloured community within the broader Afrikaans culture “cannot be reduced to a binary conflict between black and white subjects,” thereby inviting an appreciation of the complicated post-apartheid context that Krueger (2010, 40) compares to a rhizome and Van Graan (in Eckersall et al. 2013, 42) embraces as a playwright.

Similarly, Lewis (2008, 654) argues that while elements of nostalgia for the old dispensation are present at Afrikaans arts festivals like the KKNK, these are juxtaposed by more nuanced questionings of Afrikaner identity. Lewis (2008, 658–659) therefore takes note of the contradictory nature of Afrikaans arts festivals and how the context as well as the content on stage create meaning. Given the political potential of theatre to unsettle the status quo, I am interested to see the extent to, and ways in which, more nuanced works of Afrikaans theatre engage with this conflicting context and inform the discourses surrounding it.

Hauptfleisch (2006, 195) argues that although arts festivals are often perceived to be monolithic events, they are, in fact, polysystems. Therefore, although a festival's public relations campaign might market it as a homogenous unit, its various components function in a heteroglossic and unpredictable way. Hence, it is helpful to view the arts festival as a carnival, in the Bakhtinian sense. Overflowing craft markets and beer tents with free stages often seem to overwhelm the offering of theatre. Yet, these different aspects of the festival co-exist, even if they appear to contradict each other. As Hauptfleisch (2006, 183) explains, "[d]espite its many weaknesses and instabilities, the informal and often unstructured festival circuit has had an enormous impact on the country and ensures that plays and productions are put on annually in South Africa." Festivals therefore also seem to resemble a rhizome, in the way that Krueger (2010, 40) describes post-apartheid South Africa, providing space for both problematic and progressive acts and expressions. Although arts festivals are therefore not unproblematic events, they are also not problematic by their very design. While it is necessary to recognise and investigate the concerning aspects of these festivals, it is equally important to acknowledge the vital platform that they provide for local theatre and other cultural expressions.

Aardklop

The case of Aardklop is no different. The name "Aardklop" is a pun on the Afrikaans word for heartbeat and literally translates to "earthbeat." The festival has been held annually since 1998 (apart from the cancellation of the 2020 festival due to the Covid-19 pandemic). Aardklop's home-base is the town of Potchefstroom in the North West province, and it is one of the largest national arts festivals in South Africa (Kruger and Saayman 2016, 393). The festival's main aim is to preserve and enhance "the Afrikaans language and culture as well as to meet the need for an arts festival in the northern part of the country" (Kruger, Saayman, and Ellis 2010, 137).

A typical Aardklop programme³ contains a small number of revivals, either from the Afrikaans canon or translated works from the Western canon. The majority of the plays produced, however, are newly written. Of these, there are usually a few plays that eventually become canonised through publication and research. The rest of the offering mostly sets out to entertain, and these texts generally do not spark lively debate or get published.

Nevertheless, most of the plays performed at Aardklop, regardless of their canonical status, are mainly written, directed, and performed by white artists for predominantly white audiences. While Coloured actors such as Brendon Daniels, Zane Meas, Denver

3 The statements regarding "a typical Aardklop programme" made in this section are based on an examination of the Aardklop programmes and/or festival guides from 2000 to 2025, collected by the author and donated to the Unisa Library Archive, where they are available for viewing (Aardklop 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000).

Vraagom, Abduragman Adams, and June van Merch have appeared on Afrikaans stages since the early days of Aardklop, it has only been over the last decade or so that larger scale productions written and/or directed by Coloured theatre makers are enjoying prominence. For example, in 2015, P.G. du Plessis's (1971) canonical *Siener in die suburbs* (Soothsayer in the suburbs) was adapted for an all-Coloured cast and directed by Heinrich Reisenhofer. Another important emerging voice is that of Christo Davids, who has written and directed relevant works such as "My Seuns" (My sons) in 2018, "Queenie-hulle" (Queenie and them) in 2019, and "Laaitie mettie biscuits" (Boy with the biscuits) in 2024. These plays engage with diverse South African realities in a sophisticated way and further exploration and discussion of these texts within their performance context will shed light on how the texts as well as the festivals where they were performed are perceived.

Three Examples

As a starting point for further research, I now turn to a concise discussion of three notable plays that overtly engage with political issues and had their debut performances at Aardklop. I aim to show how the plays contributed to the shaping of the meaning of the festival, and vice versa, as per the theatre historiographical approach. The first of these plays was motivated by a political debate in the media. In the year 2000, journalist Chris Louw wrote an open letter to Willem de Klerk, the influential apartheid-era newspaper editor and author. In this letter, Louw airs his grievances against the apartheid government, which conscripted his generation to be cannon fodder in a highly controversial war. This letter unleashed an emotionally charged debate in the public sphere, to this day referred to as the *Boetman-debat* (Laddie debate).⁴ In the same year that Louw's letter was published, Pieter Fourie wrote a documentary play, *Boetman is die Bliksem in!*, based on the letter and other documentation of the debate that followed. The play was, however, only published in 2017 by Protea.

The production premiered at the 2000 Aardklop and was directed by Marthinus Basson. It starred veteran actors Dawid Minnaar, Cobus Rossouw, and Sandra Kotze. Albert Snyman and Zebulon Dread, who later sharply criticised the KKNK's race politics (Haupt 2006, 20), were also part of the cast. Performances were sold out and received standing ovations (Niewoudt 2000a; H. Viljoen 2000). It is clear from reading the festival newspaper, *Spat* (splash), that *Boetman is die Bliksem in!* and Chris Vorster's unpublished "Kwaggapolitiek" (Fool's politics) were the festival highlights of the year 2000. Both these plays ask questions about a past in which the status quo was maintained through lies (Niewoudt 2000b, 2000c). The popularity of the productions suggests that

4 The word *boetman* is used to refer to a young boy in a familial setting. When used to refer to an adult male—as De Klerk reportedly referred to Louw interpersonally in 1980 (Louw 2001, 8)—it suggests a patronising attitude by the speaker, which in this case alludes to the paternalism underpinning Afrikaner culture. The word thus connotes not only the disillusionment and loss of youth of this generation of white men, but also the infantilisation that they, as young men, were subjected to under the patriarchal apartheid regime.

the audiences at the Aardklop festival of 2000, who mostly consist of demographic groups who were privileged by the apartheid regime (Saayman and Saayman 2005, 241), were open to confronting the ways in which they were also victimised by the previous dispensation.

Apart from addressing the wounds that Afrikaner culture's paternalism and patriarchy inflict on itself, *Boetman is die Bliksem in!* also acknowledges the privilege that was built on the suffering of others. Specific reference is made to Nelson Mandela, Steve Biko, as well as the victims of the Sharpeville and Soweto massacres (Niewoudt 2000a). The play explores the aftermath of a cohort of white men's forced participation in the Border War and, as such, the larger apartheid apparatus. It also ushered in a preoccupation on Afrikaans stages with the fate of white men in post-apartheid South Africa: a group of plays that Kobus Burger (2006, 6) facetiously refers to as a "Boetman-genre."

Yet, this play has received very little academic attention. After the play was finally published, 17 years after its performance, Marina Albertyn and Marie Kruger's (2020, 67) article "White Women without Weapons: An Analysis of Women's Voices in Border War Dramas" appeared in 2020. This remains the only academic study in which the drama is analysed and discussed, rather than simply mentioned. Albertyn and Kruger (2020, 81) interpret the female characters in Fourie's drama as conforming to the archetypes of the Mother and the Whore, as opposed to the archetype of the Virgin. Subsequently the text illuminates "the hypocrisies, pains and complexities" associated with the aftermath of the Border War, rather than glossing over these events with restorative nostalgia (Albertyn and Kruger 2020, 8).

Albertyn and Kruger's (2020) study furthermore points to Afrikaner whiteness as an extension of the patriarchy—a notion that Lewis (2016, 15) also observes. Given the highly charged political significance of *Boetman is die Bliksem in!*, Albertyn and Kruger's (2020) study invites further academic enquiry. This lacuna potentially demonstrates why scholarship that considers both text and context can make a valuable contribution.

Ten years later, Basson directed Marlene van Niekerk's play "Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W.," which premiered at the 2010 Aardklop festival with Nicole Holm, Eben Genis, Marlo Minnaar, and Dean Balie in the cast. This play was inspired by news reports of an 11-year-old girl, Annetstacia Wiese, who was raped and murdered by her mother's boyfriend (*Mail and Guardian* 2008). Not surprisingly, the play that followed is shocking and disturbing. Van Niekerk does not approach this material in a realistic way. Instead, she and Basson staged a grotesque musical, or opera, set in a funeral parlour, which indicts the values of the post-apartheid nation state.

The production won two of the prizes annually awarded by Aardklop: one for best musical direction, and the other for best newly written text (Joubert 2011). Audience

reactions, however, were sharply divided, and the play generated vehement debates in the press and online. While debates in the public domain inspired by *Boetman is die Bliksem in!* concern the subject material of the play, this was not the case with “Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W.” Many audience members—as well as various commentators who ostensibly never saw the performance—expressed disgust that the play was staged in the first place (see De Kock and Pieterse 2012). The fact that the production was quite expensive and that this cost was made public fuelled the fire (Ley 2010). Instead of becoming enraged about the subject matter of the play, a large number of spectators thus seemed to have displaced their anger towards the play and the theatre makers. This suggests that in 2010, Aardklop audiences were concerned with the cost and function of art, and not ready to be confronted with a grotesque representation of violence.

The play has not been published, but a bound copy of the script was for sale at the performance and recordings of the music could subsequently be obtained from the producer, Hugo Theart. Along with the various festival reviews, as well as the public discourse that ensued, the play is well documented, even if those documents can be hard to come by. The play has been the subject of academic discussion in two scholarly articles. Coetser (2013, 51–52) briefly relates Van Niekerk’s text to the British tradition of in-ye-face theatre, in which the audience is confronted with exceptionally violent and explicit material to shock them out of complacency.

De Kock and Pieterse (2012, 61), on the other hand, made a comprehensive survey of the divided reactions to the play. They conclude that “*Anastasia W* reveals a deep preoccupation with the complicity of *ordentlike mense* (decent people) in the perceived ongoing decay of social responsibility.” This play is therefore highly significant in terms of political engagement as it not only overtly deals with political themes but also became the source of public outrage and heated debates. Ironically, this outrage and the debates that followed the performance created awareness of and additional publicity for the play.

“My Seuns,” written and directed in 2018 by Christo Davids, is a rewriting of Arthur Miller’s *All my Sons* (1971). Davids transposes the main plotline of Miller’s play to contemporary South Africa. In this version, the family is headed by an interracial couple, Le Roux (portrayed by André Odendaal) and Joy van der Merwe (portrayed by Sandi Schultz). While both their sons are obviously mixed race, Ben looks Coloured, while Tyron looks white. The brothers therefore have very different life experiences. As in Fugard’s *Blood Knot* (1991), the two characters are portrayed by actors of different races. In “My Seuns,” Donovan Pietersen was cast as Ben, and Edwin van der Walt as Tyron. Le Roux’s mother, Ouma Alet (portrayed by Sandra Prinsloo), has dementia and therefore does not keep her disapproval of her son’s marriage, and her racism, to herself. Various family secrets and skeletons are revealed during the course of the play, and the heavy and serious subject matter is interrupted by the comic relief of Ouma Alet’s inappropriate comments about her family members. The transposition to the South

African context broadens the theme of personal accountability to also include questions of class and race disparities.

The play won six of Aardklop's annual prizes: best production, best boundary-pushing production, best supporting actor for Donovan Pietersen, best direction, and best newly written text. The production was also selected by audience members as the winner of the "Hartsvriende" (best friends) prize (*Die Burger* 2018). Unlike "Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W.," the play was thus popular among audience members as well as critics. This suggests that by 2018, the audiences at Aardklop were ready to investigate their political past and open to a broader and more diverse definition of what Afrikaans culture entails. Notably, the text has not been published yet. Van Collier and Van Jaarsveld (2020), however, examine the unpublished script as translation and adaptation of Miller's text according to leading theories in translation studies. Van Collier and Van Jaarsveld (2020, 138–139) reach the conclusion that the domesticating elements in Davids's text narrow the thematic focus of the original text. In "My Seuns," the characters' survival in each of their own political environments overshadows the supposedly universal concept of guilt and accountability as portrayed in Miller's text.

What remains unexplored, however, is the political significance that the text acquires when it is moved from its original context of modern tragedy to the convoluted reality of a post-apartheid, postmodern, and neoliberal context. When viewed in this way, the shift from the universal to the political could potentially be a productive consequence of the transposition that highlights topical issues related to marginalisation, privilege, and race within the wider Afrikaans-speaking community.

Conclusion

This article is a tentative exploration of the text and context of three plays selected from two and a half decades' theatre performed at Aardklop National Arts Festival. In an attempt to broaden my scope beyond the written or published text of these plays, I have explored the context within which these plays were performed and received, as per the theatre historiographical approach

As neoliberal constructs that form part of the larger Afrikaans cultural industry, Afrikaans arts festivals closely resemble Krueger's (2010, 40) description of South Africa as a rhizome. Festivals are a heteroglossic combination of various things. They are a space where Afrikaner enclavism, catharsis, entertainment, dissident theatre, and nostalgia co-exist. It is only in the last decade that playwrights and directors from more diverse Afrikaans backgrounds have been given a platform at Aardklop (Planche 2019, 301). These attempts at inclusion can be productive, transformative steps, or they can be self-serving. Either way, they form part of the contradictory context in which Afrikaans theatre is performed.

Albertyn and Kruger's (2020) discerning study reveals how the female characters in *Boetman is die bliksem in!* do not conform to the docile image of femininity encouraged

within the context of the Border War. By viewing this analysis against the ideologically ambiguous context in which the play was performed, Lewis's (2016, 15) observation of Afrikaner whiteness as an extension of patriarchy comes into sharper focus. A consideration of the emotional and enthusiastic reception of the play (Niewoudt 2000a; H. Viljoen 2000) suggests that audiences at this festival were open to scrutinising their own position within apartheid. It is only since its publication that the playscript can now form part of scholarship on Afrikaans theatre.

De Kock and Pieterse's (2012) article on "Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W." is a good example of the potential of research that takes the larger context of the play into account. Public reactions to the play shifted the topic from a discourse on the violent realities of life in South Africa to the mandate and role of theatre. Reactions to the play suggest that audiences were not quite ready to be confronted with a grotesque representation of the failings of the post-apartheid state, which include violence and—specifically—violence against children (de Kock and Pieterse 2012, 61; Ley 2010).

Christo Davids's "My Seuns" is an interesting case where the very phenomenon that plays out in festivals, namely wilful ignorance of race and class disparities (Haupt 2006, 20), is explored on stage. The warm reception that the play received from critics and audiences (*Die Burger* 2018) suggests that audiences are ready to consider their own white privilege and the marginalisation of Coloured Afrikaans speakers. While Van Coller and Van Jaarsveld's (2020) study on the adaptation of the text offers valuable insight into the difference in the textual functioning of both texts, the political significance of the play is yet to be explored in depth.

By following the historiographical approach and taking the wider context of the performance of plays into account, it becomes clear that what might be regarded as a monolithic concept is indeed contradictory and unstable. Despite Kruger's (2017) interpretation of post-apartheid theatre as dull and Coetser's (2001, 100) fear that the festival context will exert a conservative influence over Afrikaans theatre, texts that engage with their conflicting context in nuanced ways are still performed at Afrikaans arts festivals. Scholarship on Afrikaans theatre can be substantially enriched if this context is taken into account.

References

- Aardklop. 2000. "Aardklop Nasionale Kunstefees Potchefstroom." Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2001. "Aardklop Nasionale Kunstefees." Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2002. "Aardklop Nasionale Kunstefees Potchefstroom." Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.

- Aardklop. 2003. “Aardklop besprekingsbrosjyre.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2004. “Die hartklop van die kunste.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2005. “Aardklop—bring jou nader aan die kunste.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2006. “Aardklop—bring jou nader aan die kunste.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2007. “Aardklop 10—bring jou nader aan die kunste.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2008. “Kuns wat die hartsnare roer.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2009. “Aardklop—bring jou nader aan die kunste.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2010. “Aardklop—die ware kunstefees.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2011. “Clover Aardklop—die hart van die kunste.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2012. “Clover Aardklop Nasionale Kunstefees.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2013. “Feesgids.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2014. “Feesgids.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2015. “Clover Aardklop Feesgids.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2016. “Feesgids: wat die hart van vol is.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2017. “Feesgids: fees na #hartelus.”
- Aardklop. 2018. “As die stoel jou pas: feesgids.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2019. “Operasie feesgids: teater, terrein en feestaktiek.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2021. “Aardklop: Program.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2022. “Dagprogram—volledig.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2023. “Aardklop: hier kom ons!” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.

- Aardklop. 2024. “Aardklop: hier kom ons!” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Aardklop. 2025. “Feesgids: #DieKunsVanFees.” Festival programme. Unisa Library Archive.
- Albertyn, Marina, and Marie Kruger. 2020. “White Women without Weapons: An Analysis of Women’s Voices in Border War Dramas.” *South African Theatre Journal* 33 (2–3): 67–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2020.1844045>.
- Artaud, Antonin. 2000. *The Theater and Its Double*. Translated by Mary Caroline Richards. New York: Grove Press.
- Badenhorst, Philna. 2000. “Akteurs ‘ontstel deur rassevoorvalle.’” *Spat: Aardlop feeskoerant*, September 28, 2000.
- Balme, Christopher B. 2015. *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511817021.008>.
- Barnard, Marelize. 2024. “Vrye Weekblad gaan ‘finaal f*k*f’—Max Du Preez.” *Netwerk24*, February 20. <http://netwerk24.com/nuus/aktueel/vrye-weekblad-gaan-finaal-fkf-max-du-preez-20250220>.
- Boal, Augusto. 2008. *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Translated by Charles A. Leal-McBride, Maria-Odilia Leal-McBride, and Emily Fryer. London: Pluto Press.
- Botha, Karin, and Elmarie Slabbert. 2011. “Market Segmentation of Visitors to Aardklop National Arts Festival: A Correspondence Analysis.” *Management Dynamics: Journal of the Southern Africa Institute for Management Scientists* 20 (1): 2–18.
- Botha, Karin, Elmarie Slabbert, Riaan Rossouw, and Pierre-Andrè Viviers. 2011. “Expenditure-Based Segmentation of Visitors to Aardklop National Arts Festival.” *South African Theatre Journal* 25 (2): 142–166. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2011.639168>.
- Botha, Karin, Pierre-Andrè Viviers, and Elmarie Slabbert. 2012. “What Really Matters to the Audience: Analysing the Key Factors Contributing to Arts Festival Ticket Purchases.” *South African Theatre Journal* 26 (1): 22–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2012.754080>.
- Botha, Saartjie. 2012. “Die boustene van ’n drama.” In *Die Afrikaanse skryfgids*, edited by Riana Scheepers and Leti Kleyn, 212–219. Johannesburg: Penguin.
- Brecht, Bertolt 2015. *Brecht on Theatre*. Edited by Marc Silberman, Steve Giles, and Tom Kuhn, translated by Jack Davis, Romy Fursland, Victoria Hill, Kristopher Imbrigotta, and John Willett. London: Methuen Drama, Bloomsbury. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472558640>.

- Bruckman, Jeffrey. 2012. "Dominant Culture, Afrikaner Nationalism and Cromwell Everson's *Kluttaimnestra*." *South African Music Studies* 32 (1): 1–20. <http://ajol.info/index.php/samus/article/view/87425>.
- Buchanan, Ian. 2018. "Neoliberalism." In *A Dictionary of Critical Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acref/9780198794790.013.0777>.
- Burger, Kobus. 2006. "'Groundswell' sê 'n bevol." *Beeld*, November 1.
- Campana, François. 2003. "The Africa of Festivals: Bringing People Together." Translated by Joel Anderson. *Contemporary Theatre Review* 13 (4): 48–56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1048680032000122111>.
- Campbell, John L. 2017. "Neoliberalism." In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Political Behavior*, edited by Fathali M. Moghaddam. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. ProQuest Ebook Central.
- Coetser, J. L. 2003. "'So Little of It Left': Remembrance, Occasion and Event in Afrikaans Theatre." *South African Theatre Journal* 17 (1): 7–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2003.9687761>.
- Coetser, Johan. 2010a. "Aspekte van diaspora in drie Afrikaanse dramatekste na 2004." *LitNet Akademies* 7 (1). <https://www.litnet.co.za/aspekte-van-diaspora-in-drie-afrikaanse-dramatekste-na-2004/>.
- Coetser, J. L. 2010b. "Dramakroniek 2008–9." *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe* 50 (3): 383–403. <https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/tvg/v50n3/v50n3a06.pdf>.
- Coetser, J. L. 2012. "Voorstellings van verset in drie Adam Small-dramas: Kanna hy kô hystoe, Joanie Galant-hulle en Krismis van Map Jacobs." *Tydskrif vir letterkunde* 49: 51–69. <https://doi.org/10.4314/tvl.v49i1.5>.
- Coetser, Johan. 2001. "Afrikaans Theatre: Reflections of Identity." *Alternation* 8 (1): 81–104. https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/AJA10231757_297.
- Coetser, Johan. 2013. "Representations of Violence in Slaghuis (2007) and Skrapnel (2011) by Playwright Willem Anker." *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe* 53 (1): 45–59. https://scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S0041-47512013000100004&script=sci_abstract.
- De Kock, Leon, and Annel Pieterse. 2012. "A Vast Domain of Death: Decomposition and Decay in Marlene van Niekerk's *Die Kortstondige Raklewe van Anastasia W.*" *South African Theatre Journal* 26 (1): 61–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2012.754085>.
- Devarenne, Nicole. 2010. "The Language of Ham and the Language of Cain: 'Dialect' and Linguistic Hybridity in the Work of Adam Small." *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 45 (3): 389–408. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021989410377550>.

- De Villiers, Dawid W. 2010. "'Van Daai Plek': David Kramer, 'Die Ballade van Koos Sas', and the Ground of Being." *Journal of Literary Studies* 26 (2): 58–68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02564711003683618>.
- Die Burger*. 2018. "'My Seuns' wen ses pryse op Aardklop." October 9.
- Du Plessis, P. G. 1971. *Siener in die suburbs*. Kaapstad: Tafelberg.
- Du Preez, Petrus. 2004. "Concerning the 'Incomprehensible' in the Afrikaans Dramas of Breyten Breytenbach." *South African Theatre Journal* 18 (1): 184–220. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2004.9687786>.
- Du Preez, Petrus. 2006. "Shaping the Metaphor: Marthinus Basson as Artist/Director." *South African Theatre Journal* 20 (1): 79–101. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2006.9687827>.
- Du Preez, Petrus. 2015. "Re-Imagining Space and Identity: A New Generation of Post-Apartheid Afrikaans Playwrights." In *New Territories: Theatre, Drama, and Performance in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, edited by Greg Homann and Marc Maufort, 205–221. Bruxelles: Peter Lang.
- Eckersall, Peter, Dominic Gray, Jisha Menon, and Mike Van Graan. 2013. "Valuing Ecologies of Performance: Culture and Capital in a Neoliberal World." *Performance Research: A Journal of the Performing Arts* 18 (2): 31–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2013.807164>.
- Eckersall, Peter, and Helena Grehan. 2019. *The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Politics*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203731055>.
- Eversmann, Peter. 2004. "The Experience of the Theatrical Event." In *Theatrical Events: Borders, Dynamics, Frames*, edited by Vicki Ann Cremona, Peter Eversmann, Hans van Maanen, Willmar Sauter, and John Tulloch, 139–174. Amsterdam: Rodopi. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004502888_012.
- Fourie, Pieter. 2017. *Boetman is die bliksem in*. Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis.
- Fugard, Athol. 1991. *Blood Knot, and Other Plays*. New York: Theatre Communications Group.
- Govenden, Prinola. 2024. "Disrupting the Neoliberal Capitalist Media Agenda in South Africa: Exploring Anti-Capitalist Alternative Media Playing a Developmental Role." *TripleC* 22 (2): 568–591. <https://doi.org/10.31269/triplec.v20i1.1301>.
- Grotowski, Jerzy. 2002. *Towards a Poor Theatre*. Edited by Eugenio Barba. New York: Routledge.
- Haupt, Adam. 2006. "Race, Audience, Multitude: Afrikaans Arts Festivals and the Politics of Inclusion." *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa* 3 (1): 16–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980608538780>.

- Hauptfleisch, Temple. 1997. *Theatre and Society in South Africa: Some Reflections in a Fractured Mirror*. Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik Academic.
- Hauptfleisch, Temple. 2004. "Eventification: Utilizing the Theatrical System to Frame the Event." In *Theatrical Events: Borders, Dynamics, Frames*, edited by Vicki Ann Cremona, Peter Eversmann, Hans van Maanen, Willmar Sauter, and John Tulloch, 279–302. Amsterdam: Rodopi. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004502888_017.
- Hauptfleisch, Temple. 2006. "Eventifying Identity: Festivals in South Africa and the Search for Cultural Identity." *New Theatre Quarterly* 22 (2): 181–198. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266464X0600039X>.
- Hauptfleisch, Temple, and Marisa Keuris, eds. 2020. *Reza de Wet: 'n Huldiging—die dramaturg as dromer*. Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis.
- Hutchison, Yvette. 2015. "New Territories: Theatre, Drama, and Performance in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *South African Theatre Journal* 28 (3): 268–271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2016.1218202>.
- Jackson, Jeanne-Marie. 2015. "Retreating Reality: Chekhov's South African Afterlives." *Journal of Narrative Theory* 45 (1): 46–78. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jnt.2015.0000>.
- Joubert, Jan-Jan. 2011. "Protesteater haal boeie af." *Rapport*, April 10.
- Keuris, Marisa. 2007. "An Ecocritical Reading of Pieter Fourie's *Die Koggelaar*." *Journal of Literary Studies* 23 (4): 417–431. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02564710701786467>.
- Keuris, Marisa. 2015. "Portrait of an Afrikaner Revolutionary: Harry Kalmer's *The Bram Fischer Waltz*." *South African Theatre Journal* 28 (2): 117–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2015.1033378>.
- Keuris, Marisa. 2020. "The Changing World of Afrikaans Drama Translations and Adaptations: A Few Remarks." *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe* 60 (1): 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2224-7912/2020/v60n1a2>.
- Keuris, Marisa. 2025. "Afrikaans Drama and Theatre from 1925 to 2025: A Few Theatre-Historical Remarks." *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe* 65 (1): 383–401. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2224-7912/2025/v65n1a16>.
- Keuris, Marisa, and Lida Krüger. 2014. "South African Drama and Theatre Heritage (Part I): A Map of Where We Find Ourselves." *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1): 19–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2014.846662>.
- Kitshoff, Herman. 2004. "Claiming Cultural Festivals: Playing for Power at the *Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees* (KKNK)." *South African Theatre Journal* 18 (1): 65–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2004.9687781>.

- Krueger, Anton R. 2010. *Experiments in Freedom: Explorations of Identity in New South African Drama*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Kruger, Loren. 2002. "Introduction: Scarcity, Conspicuous Consumption, and Performance in South Africa." *Theatre Research International* 27 (3): 231–42. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0307883302000317>.
- Kruger, Loren. 2017. "South Africa—Theatre Lost, Performance Found?" *Critical Stages*, May 28. <https://www.critical-stages.org/15/south-africa-theatre-lost-performance-found/>.
- Kruger, Loren. 2019. *A Century of South African Theatre*. London: Methuen Drama, Bloomsbury. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350008045>.
- Kruger, Loren. 2020. "The National Arts Festival in Grahamstown." In *The Cambridge Companion to International Theatre Festivals*, edited by Ric Knowles, 178–191. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108348447.012>.
- Kruger, Martinette. 2020. "Arts Festival Offerings: What Do Market Segments Prefer? Evidence from a South African National Arts Festival." *Event Management* 24 (1): 197–216. <https://doi.org/10.3727/152599518X15403853721385>.
- Kruger, Martinette, and Melville Saayman. 2012. "The Question Is Not Whether to Promote or Not to Promote, But Rather When to Promote." *South African Theatre Journal* 26 (1): 2–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2012.754087>.
- Kruger, Martinette, and Melville Saayman. 2016. "Are You Willing to Pay More for the Arts?" *Journal of Economic and Financial Sciences* 9 (2): 392–408. <https://doi.org/10.4102/jef.v9i2.48>.
- Kruger, Martinette, and Melville Saayman. 2019. "The Relationship between Decision-Making Factors and 'Festivalsapes' with Visitor Loyalty: Evidence from a South African National Arts Festival." *Acta Commercii* 19 (1): a765. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ac.v19i1.765>.
- Kruger, Martinette, Melville Saayman, and S. M. Ellis. 2010. "Determinants of Visitor Expenditure at the Aardklop National Arts Festival." *Event Management* 14 (2): 137–148. <https://doi.org/10.3727/152599510X12766070300966>.
- Kruger, Martinette, Melville Saayman, and Suria Ellis. 2011. "Segmentation by Genres: The Case of the Aardklop National Arts Festival." *The International Journal of Tourism Research* 13 (6): 511–526. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.818>.
- Kruger, Martinette, Adam Viljoen, and Bianca Manners. 2025. "The Nexus Between Arts and Ageing: Bridging the Generational Gaps." *International Journal of Arts Management* 27 (3): 4–21.
- Kruger, S., and D. Petzer. 2008. "Measuring Tourists' Satisfaction with Quality of Life Issues at an Arts Festival." *Acta Commercii* 8 (1): 113–127. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ac.v8i1.74>.

- Lewis, Megan. 2008. "(Un)Patriotic Acts of an Imagined Community: The Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (KKNK)." *Theatre Journal* 60 (4): 654–659. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tj.0.0106>.
- Lewis, Megan. 2016. *Performing Whiteness in the Postcolony: Afrikaners in South African Theatrical and Public Life*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press. <https://doi.org/10.1353/book48513>.
- Ley, Marga. 2010. "Dis dúur geweld hierdie." *Spat*, appendix to *Beeld*, October 1.
- Loubser, Henriëtte. 2010. "Die transgressiewe karnavaleske: 'n fenomeen in die kabarettetekste uit 'n Gelyke kans van Jeanne Goosen." *Tydskrif vir letterkunde* 47 (2): 59–68. <https://doi.org/10.4314/tvl.v47i2.60625>.
- Louw, Chris. 2001. *Boetman en die swanesang van die verligtes*. Cape Town: Human and Rousseau.
- Mail and Guardian*. 2008. "Mother 'Heartbroken' after Girl's Rape and Murder." February 18. <https://mg.co.za/article/2008-02-18-mother-heartbroken-after-girls-rape-and-murder/>.
- Mda, Zakes. 2002. "South African Theatre in an Era of Reconciliation." In *The Performance Arts in Africa*, edited by Frances Harding, 279–289. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315013220-24>.
- Meyer, Susan. 2012. "'We Who Cannot Speak Lived There First': A New Claim to Land in My Plaas Se Naam Is Vergenoeg by George Weideman." *Tydskrif vir letterkunde* 49 (2): 34–50. <https://doi.org/10.4314/tvl.v49i2.3>.
- Miller, Arthur. 1971. *All My Sons*. Edited by E. R. Wood. London: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Morgan, Naòmi. 2015. "Finding Your Tongue as Cook and Playwright: The Case of Ryk Hattingh's *Eensenaar*." *Translator* 21 (3): 296–309. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2015.1103097>.
- Ndebele, Njabulo S. 1991. *Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Essays on South African Literature and Culture*. Johannesburg: Congress of South African Writers.
- Niewoudt, Stephanie. 2000a. "Afrikaners aan't derms uitryg." *Spat: Aardklop feeskoerant*, September 29.
- Niewoudt, Stephanie. 2000b. "Afrikaners torring aan gister." *Spat: Aardklop feeskoerant*, September 29.
- Niewoudt, Stephanie. 2000c. "Boetman verlei Potch." *Spat: Aardklop feeskoerant*, September 27.

- Nolte, Carel. 2022. "Reimagining *King Lear*—and Capitalism." *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* 35 (1): 68–70. <https://doi.org/10.4314/sisa.v35i1.7>.
- Peimer, David. 2021. "Staging Race in White South African Afrikaans Theatre." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Theatre and Race*, edited by Tiziana Morosetti and Osita Okagbue, 219–236. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43957-6_12.
- Planche, Jill. 2019. "The Larger Stages: The 'Becoming Minor' of South African Theatres." PhD diss., Brock University.
- Postlewait, Thomas. 2005. "Historiography." In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre and Performance*, edited by Dennis Kennedy. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acref/9780198601746.001.0001>.
- Pretorius, S. C., P. Viviers, and K. Botha. 2014. "Is It Still about the Arts? The Perceived Contribution of KKNK to the Arts." *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (3): 159–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2014.910964>.
- Rapport. 2024. "Rapport sê: lesers, koerante bestaan nie net op papier nie." June 23. <https://www.netwerk24.com/stemme/kommentaar/rapport-se-lesers-koerante-bestaan-nie-net-op-papier-nie-20240623>.
- Reid, Trish. 2020. "General Introduction." In *World Political Theatre and Performance*, edited by Mireia Aragay, Paola Botham, and José Ramón Prado-Pérez, 1–10. Leiden: Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004430990_002.
- Saayman, Andrea, and Melville Saayman. 2005. "Sociodemographics and Visiting Patterns of Arts Festivals in South Africa." *Event Management* 9 (4): 211–222. <https://doi.org/10.3727/152599506776771553>.
- Saayman, M., M. Douglas, and S. de Klerk. 2009. "Attributes of Entrepreneurs at an Arts Festival." *Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management* 2 (1): 17–29. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajesbm.v2i1.16>.
- Slabbert, Elmarie, and Pierre-Andr  Viviers. 2011. "Residents' Perceptions of the Impacts of a Major Arts Festival in South Africa." *Tourism and Management Studies* 2: 1109–1113. <https://www.tmstudies.net/index.php/ectms/article/view/305>.
- Slabbert, Elmarie, and Pierre-Andr  Viviers. 2013. "The Impacts of a Major South African Arts Festival: The Voices of the Community." *African Journal for Physical Health Education, Recreation, and Dance* 19 (3): 623–638. <https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/EJC142296>.
- Slabbert, Elmarie, Pierre-Andre Viviers, and Joffrey Erasmus. 2013. "The Influence of Length of Residency on the Social Impacts of Selected National Arts Festivals in South Africa." *Journal of Human Ecology* 44 (1): 85–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09709274.2013.11906646>.

- Somers, John. 2011. "Boalian Perspectives on Interactivity in Theatre." In *Performance Perspectives: A Critical Introduction*, edited by Jonathan Pitches and Sita Popat, 148–156. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Steyn, Adriaan S. 2016. "Afrikaans, Inc.: The Afrikaans Culture Industry after Apartheid." *Social Dynamics* 42 (3): 481–503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02533952.2016.1259792>.
- Stimie, Annemie. 2013. "Deon Opperman en Janine Neethling se Die skepping—'n skouspel: resensie-artikel." *Tydskrif vir letterkunde* 50 (2): 161–166. <https://doi.org/10.4314/tvl.v50i2.13>.
- Taubert, T. Sofie, and Ruthie Abeliovich. 2020. "Dossier-Theatrical Vestiges: Material Remains and Theatre Historiography: Introduction." *Theatre Research International* 45 (3): 297–302. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0307883320000280>.
- Van Coller, Hennie, and Anthea van Jaarsveld. 2006. "Tendense in die Afrikaanse drama en teaterwêreld—'n bestekopname (met verwysing na enkele Sanlamprysfinaliste)." *Stilet: tydskrif van die Afrikaanse Letterkundevereniging* 18 (1): 69–89.
- Van Coller, Hennie, and Anthea van Jaarsveld. 2007. "Vergenoeg: George Weideman as dramaturg (deel 1): vroeëre dramatiese werke van George Weideman." *South African Theatre Journal* 21 (1): 328–342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2007.9687870>.
- Van Coller, Hennie, and Anthea van Jaarsveld. 2008. "Vergenoeg: George Weideman as dramaturg (deel 2)." *South African Theatre Journal* 22 (1): 150–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2008.9687889>.
- Van Coller, Hennie, and Anthea van Jaarsveld. 2020. "Translation and Adaptation as Interpretation and Strategy: *My Seuns* by Christo Davids against the Background of *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller." *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe* 60 (1): 124–140. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2224-7912/2020/v60n1a9>.
- Van der Merwe, A. S. P. 2009. "'n Koorsagtige gehollery uit die voetval van die verlede." *Stilet: tydskrif van die Afrikaanse Letterkundevereniging* 21 (1): 83–100. <https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC109905>.
- Van der Merwe, Schalk D. 2014. "Radio Apartheid: Investigating a History of Compliance and Resistance in Popular Afrikaans Music, 19561–979." *South African Historical Journal* 66 (2): 349–370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2014.891044>.
- Van Heerden, Johann. 2011. "Beyond the Miracle: Trends in South African Theatre and Performance after 1994." In *Trends in Twenty-First-Century African Theatre and Performance*, edited by Kene Igweonu, 85–111. Leiden: Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401200820_007.
- Van Wyk, Steward. 2004. "Mulat-estetiek: 'n analise van Adam Small se dramas." *Journal of Literary Studies* 20 (3–4): 283–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02564710408530358>.

- Van Zyl, C. 2005. "Identifying Situational Inhibitors Regarding the Aardklop National Arts Festival." *Southern African Business Review* 9 (2): 68–76.
<https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC91301>.
- Van Zyl, C. 2006. "Motivating Factors of Local Residents for Attending the Aardklop National Arts Festival: Research Article." *Southern African Business Review* 10 (2): 150–171.
<https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC92826>.
- Van Zyl, Ciná. 2011. "A Model for Positioning Arts Festivals in South Africa." *South African Theatre Journal* 25 (3): 181–196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2011.674681>.
- Van Zyl, Ciná, and Christel Botha. 2004. "Motivational Factors of Local Residents to Attend the Aardklop National Arts Festival." *Event Management* 8 (4): 213–222.
<https://doi.org/10.3727/1525995031436818>.
- Van Zyl, Ciná, and Dorothy Queiros. 2009. "Situational Inhibitors Preventing Attendance at Three Selected Arts Festivals in South Africa." *South African Theatre Journal* 23 (1): 23–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2009.9687900>.
- Van Zyl Smit, Betine. 2005. "Medea praat Afrikaans." *Literator* 26 (3): 45–64.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/lit.v26i3.236>.
- Viljoen, Adam. 2023. "Beyond a Tug-of-War: Motivation-Based Segmentation of Visitors to a National Arts Festival." *Journal of Convention and Event Tourism* 24 (5): 433–457.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2023.2209340>.
- Viljoen, Haddad. 2000. "En nou ... die chaos!" *Spat: Aardklop feeskoerant*, September 27.
- Viviers, P., K. Botha, and E. Marumo. 2017. "Attendees' Attitudes towards Supporting Green Practices at Two Afrikaans Arts Festivals." *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 6 (2): 1–25.
https://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_21_vol_6__2__2017.pdf.
- Viviers, Pierre-Andrè, Karin Botha, and Cliff Perl. 2013. "Push and Pull Factors of Three Afrikaans Arts Festivals in South Africa." *South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation* 35 (2): 211–229. <https://doi.org/10.10520/EJC144088>.
- Wasserman, Herman. 2009. "Learning a New Language: Culture, Ideology and Economics in Afrikaans Media after Apartheid." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12 (1): 61–80.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877908098855>.
- Willis, K. G., and J. D. Snowball. 2009. "Investigating How the Attributes of Live Theatre Productions Influence Consumption Choices Using Conjoint Analysis: The Example of the National Arts Festival, South Africa." *Journal of Cultural Economics* 33 (3): 167–183.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-009-9097-z>.