



# Monday Paper

Newspaper of the University of Cape Town

At the helm – GIPCA's Assoc  
Prof Rob Baum – P3



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## Agulhas Current to the rescue of the north

In a new paper, UCT and European oceanographers suggest that Southern Africa's Agulhas Current is feeding its northern counterparts with enough warm and salty water to save parts of Europe from a bad case of frostbite

Dr Mathieu Rouault is relishing the opportunity to upset a few oceanographic apple carts.

For too long now, he explains, it's been taken for granted that if any ocean phenomenon has a say in weather conditions around the US and Europe, it's the Gulf Stream (the main current in the northern hemisphere) and its northern extension towards Europe, the North Atlantic Drift.

Not surprisingly, hardly a footnote has been spared for its distant, southern-based cousin, the Agulhas Current.

Originating in the Indian Ocean, the lusty Agulhas Current tears southward alongside the eastern coast of South Africa, negotiating its way past the Cape of Good Hope before taking a hairpin bend and, renamed the Agulhas Return Current, heading back into the Indian Ocean. Huge eddies and rings escape from the current and head towards Brazil, leaking Indian Ocean water into the Atlantic.

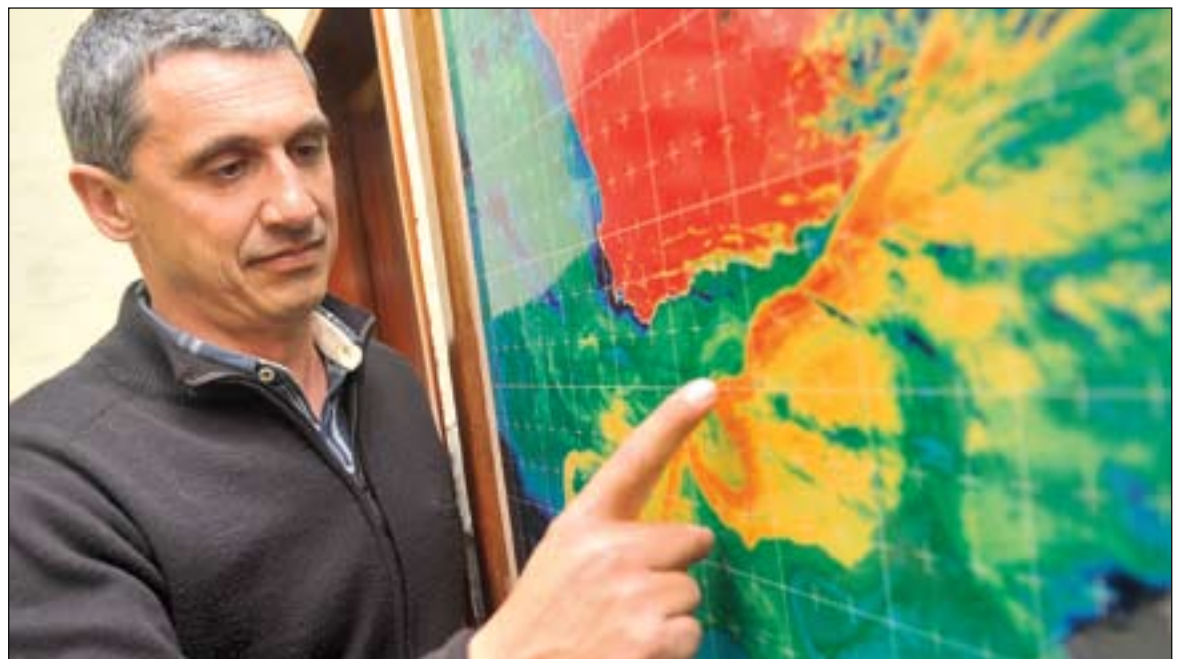
But down south a tireless bunch of oceanographers, helmed by members of UCT's Department of Oceanography with the support of visitors and funders from Europe, have slowly been building up a case for the mechanics, sway and prestige of the Agulhas Current. More to the point, they've been arguing that the current plays a key role in global ocean circulation by the way it regulates the exchange of

water, heat and salt between the Indian and the Atlantic Ocean at the southern tip of Africa.

A new study hopes to cement that case by explaining the causes and details (changing atmospheric pressure and wind conditions) of the current's warming over the past 25 or so years in a paper, *Warming of the Agulhas Current since the 1980s*, published in the latest *Geophysical Research Letter*. The article is penned by UCT's Dr Mathieu Rouault of the Department of Oceanography, Pierrick Penven of the French Research Institute for Development (IRD), and Benjamin Pohl of the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), also in France, as part of a South African/French partnership.

According to Rouault, the findings will have some telling consequences, not just for South Africa – the current has influence on local climate and weather, fish resources and ecosystems – but also for Europe. The export of heat and salt from the Indian Ocean into the Atlantic Ocean through leakages in the Agulhas Current has doubled over the past 25 years, he says. "The good news for Europe is that the extra salt injected in the Atlantic will eventually make its way to the North Atlantic and counteract the potential effect of ice melting."

The fear exists that a surge of fresh water from the melting of the polar ice cap will dilute the Atlantic's salty



Water carrier: Dr Mathieu Rouault is among the UCT and European researchers who have built up a case for the not-inconsequential influence that the local Agulhas Current has on global climate.

waters, and in effect slow down the ocean's thermohaline circulation (aka the ocean conveyor belt or, these days, the meridional overturning circulation), which is driven by heat and salt ('thermo-' for heat, '-haline' for salt content) and carries warm water from the south to the north.

The build-up of salt in the Agulhas Current, and its transport north through the leakages, could compensate for the influx of fresh water from the melting

ice cap, believes Rouault.

Others may take some convincing. To their disappointment, the writers' paper did not make it into *Nature* as they had hoped. They do, however, merit a mention in the journal's News & Views section.

That *Nature* column, which looks at a study of palaeoclimatic records from a marine sediment core in the southwestern Indian Ocean, also lobbies for the Agulhas Current's role in

the Earth's natural cooling and warming. It may have an even greater hand, says the writer, than solar radiation and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) concentrations, the two-handers normally thought to be behind these climate swings.

The local findings open up new opportunities for research of both local and international relevance, says Rouault.

"Africa to the rescue," he says. Vive l'Afrique du Sud. **MP**

## Confederations Cup fans will return for World Cup

Most of the international tourists who attended the recent Fifa Confederations Cup were so happy with their visit that they are returning for the Fifa 2010 Soccer World Cup – but feel public transport needs urgent attention.

This is according to a study conducted by UCT's School of Management Studies, in conjunction with Cape Town Tourism. The study reveals that 63% of the thousands of spectators – attracted mainly by South Africa's culture, history and natural beauty – enjoyed their two-

week spell in the country during the World Cup rehearsal event, and are coming for the main course.

The research, undertaken by a trio of BBusSc students as part of their final year thesis, was conducted at the stadiums in the cities that hosted the event (Johannesburg, Pretoria, Rustenburg and Bloemfontein) and at major hotels in Johannesburg, where foreign tourists were accommodated at the time.

About 323 people aged between 19 and 45 took part in the survey, and all were here to attend the

games. Most (33.12%) were from the US, followed by Brazil (20.25%) and other countries such as Japan, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Zimbabwe, Portugal, Holland and Argentina.

The study revealed that 40% of respondents used rented cars and 10.42% used minibus taxis.

However, far too few respondents felt safe using public transport in Johannesburg – 19.6% strongly disagreed that they felt safe, while 16.56% disagreed that they felt safe.

"This is a primary concern for the country to address before the

World Cup, and the introduction of the Rapid Bus Transport System, as well as other public transport developments, should improve safety perceptions of public transport," says the report.

Most respondents, however, felt safe at the stadiums and other public places such as restaurants and nightclubs, and while walking on the streets.

Dr Richard George of the School of Management Studies, who supervised the study, said that the results revealed some interesting



demographics. "Much of what we expected is true, but it is fantastic to hear that most respondents had an overwhelmingly positive experience of South Africa and plan to return in 2010."

George said the Confederations Cup had been a good trial run for South Africa, and many lessons had been learnt. **MP**

# Innovative voting system is one of brilliant winners

Five UCT students couldn't wish for a better holiday than spending a week of their vacation doing an internship at software solutions giants Business Systems Group (BSG), thanks to their innovative ideas.

The information systems final-year students – Theresa Janse van Rensburg, Wilson Kopman, Richard Sadie, Morty Selelo and Kgolane Thobejane – were named winners of the BSG Brilliance Competition for 2009, along with Derek Sanhokwe of Rhodes University. They won an all-expenses-paid internship at the company's Sandton branch.

The winners came up with solutions to problems faced by the Independent Electoral Commission in the April general elections.

Selelo's 250-word idea was to have a web-based system comprising inter-linked computerised voting stations distributed throughout South Africa.

Voting cards would be issued beforehand, and each would be bar-coded into the system. These would



Brilliant: UCT students Richard Sadie, Theresa Janse van Rensburg, Morty Selelo, Wilson Kopman and Kgolane Thobejane.

hold the personal details of the voter, their address, gender and their fingerprints, for security.

"This sort of system would allow anyone to vote at any place as long as they have their voting card, since their details can be retrieved from the online system," he explained.

At the voting stations, several

easy-to-use multilingual touch-screen terminals would be available, allowing the voter to scan their voting card and ensure that their identity is verified by pressing a thumb against the screen to match the fingerprint on the card.

Only after verification can the user proceed to the next screen, where they can cast their vote.

Animations are very important for guiding both illiterate and literate users.

Following the voting, a confirmation receipt is printed as proof of voting, and the terminal resets to the default screen, ready for the next voter.

Selelo proposed that several easy-to-use terminals at each voting station would facilitate a speedy voting process. All votes would be counted automatically, and results could be verified and released on the same day.

Selelo said the internship was enriching.

"I got to see what I can apply to the workplace from my studies." **MP**

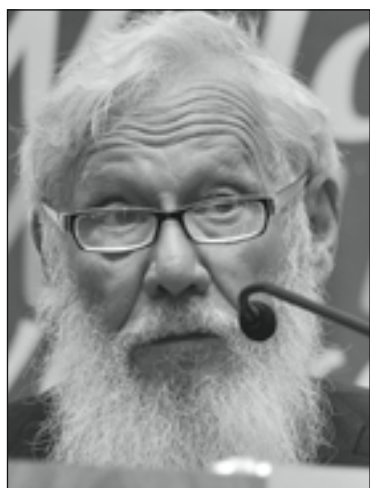
# Explaining the game

Game theory and engineering were the focus of the second Vice-Chancellor's Open Lecture, delivered by Nobel Prize Laureate Professor Robert J Aumann on 31 July.

Aumann, an Emeritus Professor in the Institute of Mathematics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, and a member of the University's Centre for the Study of Rationality, spoke on the topic *Practical Applications in Game Engineering*.

"Game engineering is all about incentives," said Aumann, who notes that when he delivers this same lecture to the business sector, he simply re-titles it *Putting Incentives to Work for You*.

Useful in understanding strategic



All's fair: Game theorist Prof Robert J Aumann delivering the Vice-Chancellor's Open Lecture.

interactions, in which one's success in making choices is dependent on the choices made by others, game theory is applied in areas as diverse as auctioneering, road planning, and personal relationships.

The author of over 90 scientific papers and six books, Aumann was awarded the 2005 Nobel Prize in Economics, alongside Professor Thomas Schelling of the University of Maryland in the US, "for having enhanced our understanding of conflict and cooperation through game-theory analysis".

(A podcast of this lecture can be downloaded from the UCT website on <http://www.uct.ac.za/news/multi-media/sound/>) **MP**

# Six of the best



Researchers and students from UCT's Department of Zoology have picked up a slew of awards and honours this year. Making a strong showing at the 2009 Zoological Society of South Africa Conference held in Durban recently, UCT took six student awards, including the Best PhD Oral Presentation and the prestigious Best Overall Student awards, both won by Alta de Vos for her work on the herd habits of seals. Among the many other achievements were Sandra Jasinoski's Young Investigator's Award at the International Biomechanics Conference held in Cape Town, and Charmaine Uys receiving the 2008 RF Lawrence Memorial Grant. **MP**

# Foster safety awareness, says mining head

Safety Week, aimed at promoting safety awareness at UCT, kicked off on 27 July with an opening talk by Anglo American's head of safety, John Holt.

In his address, titled *The Importance of Safety in the Workplace*, Holt argued that safety doesn't begin at home, but rather with the individual, and their concern for their own safety as well as the safety of others. He noted that safety awareness is especially important in larger groups, such as on UCT's campuses, where people are less likely to help others because they tend to think that someone else will do it.

"UCT has a responsibility to create a safe working environment," said Holt. "But like all universities, it's a society of rule-breakers, where people are encouraged to think outside the box, so it's a spe-

cial challenge to persuade people to follow safety rules."

A project of the Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment (EBE), Safety Week ran from 27 to 31 July, and featured a number of events, including discussions, presentations and demonstrations by departments in the faculty.

Safety Week was inspired, said EBE dean Professor Francis Petersen, by his concerns about how much – or little, to be more precise – people at UCT sometimes take individual and group safety to heart. The aim of the week was to foster a culture of safety awareness.

"If you haven't got that culture, you can teach students as much as you want to in the curriculum, and while they may learn it, they're not going to believe it."

The project involved EBE students, faculty and PASS. **MP**

# Price hits the right note at concert

UCT's Vice-Chancellor's Concerts have traditionally been named only in honour of UCT's CEOs, not because they're actually on the programme. At least, that was the case until this year, when Dr Max Price, UCT vice-chancellor and keen saxophonist, made his stage debut. The occasion was the first of the two VC's Concerts for 2009, which showcase the young talent-in-training at UCT's South African College of Music (SACM). Price did the formal hellos, and after the interval joined the UCT Big Band, under Mike Campbell, on stage. Price, who's only been playing the sax for around three years, admitted to a few butterflies before the event. Just two rehearsals of about 10 minutes apiece didn't help his stage fright either, he said. **MP**



Debutant: VC Dr Max Price lets rip at the VC's Concert on 29 July.

# Hat-trick for UCT physics students



UCT postgraduates scooped three out of four applied physics prizes at the 54th Annual Conference of the South African Institute of Physics (SAIP), held in Durban on 10 July. The trio won for their work on an Innovation Fund project to develop novel printed silicon electronics. The students received their awards from outgoing SAIP president Nithaya Chetty. Wole Solana won R750 for the best oral presentation by an MSc student, while Batsirai Magunje and Stanley Walton each received R1 000, for the best poster presentation and best oral presentation by a PhD student, respectively. Photographed here are (from left) Prof Magit Harting, Batsirai Magunje, Wole Solana and Professor David Britton of the Department of Physics. (Absent: Stanley Walton.)

# Top UN post for Manjoo

Former UCT staffer Rashida Manjoo has made history by becoming the first African to be appointed as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

Manjoo, who over the past decade worked as a senior researcher and trainer for the Law, Race & Gender Research Unit at UCT, is the third person to hold this position.

As the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Manjoo's mandate is to investigate and make recommendations on ending gender-based violence at international, regional, and national levels.

The position is one of a handful of special mandate appointments (the equivalent of a cabinet minister in government) made by the United Na-

tions Human Rights Council.

An advocate of the High Court of South Africa, Manjoo served on the Commission on Gender Equality from 2001 to 2006, and is a member of the international board of Women Living Under Muslim Laws.

Dr Dee Smythe, director of the Law, Race & Gender Research Unit, said Manjoo has wide experience of working as a gender activist within local and international civil society, and in academia.

Smythe described Manjoo as "outspoken, critical, and independent", and able to cut to the heart of a problem.

"These are characteristics that will serve her well as she navigates the complex politics of her new position." **MP**

# Baum takes GIPCA reins

Rob Baum, new director of the Gordon Institute for the Performing and Creative Arts, talked to *Monday Paper*

Associate Professor Rob Baum comes to UCT from Alaska in the US, by way of Australia, New Zealand and Israel, where she completed her postdoctoral research, at the Technion Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, on gender gesture and ritual in Middle-East African refugees in the country who had fled from their war-torn homes to Israel.

As the new director of the Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts (GIPCA), launched in December 2008 and underpinned by a R50-million challenge grant from the Donald Gordon Foundation, Baum is set to take on a fresh challenge in a new environment.

**MP: Why South Africa?**

RB: The decision is an extension of my research. While working in Israel with Ethiopian dancers I became

aware of the rich diversity in African cultures. As my research turned to trauma, especially post-traumatic stress disorder as result of war, I realised my focus was of great relevance for many African populations. Although there's no actual war here, many South Africans are extremely traumatised as a result of the disparities in class and status.

**MP: So where to for GIPCA?**

RB: I came here with lots of ideas, but I believe that it is paramount that I listen to my colleagues, and find out what they want. My primary role here is not to impose my own research interests, but rather to facilitate theirs. I've only been here for three weeks, and already I've received some great ideas that I hope to shape into proposals.

**MP: Will your own research take a back seat?**

RB: I haven't had much time to think about it! I'm still finding my feet. I'm looking for a car, a place to live, hand-me-downs...

**MP: How are you finding the job?**

RB: Busy. Day-to-day facilitation of the institution is very time-consuming. We're also putting out a call for proposals in August, and I'm looking forward to supervising and collaborating in the institute's research projects.

**MP: How does GIPCA compare to similar institutions around the world?**

RB: It's a unique world in a bottle. Pippa [Skotnes, the former interim director of GIPCA] has put some great things in place.

In the last five or so years, consortia

have grown in European and American universities, which tend to constrict the various performing arts disciplines to their own area. My understanding is GIPCA's approach, that creative writing underlines drama, and drama and dance are handmaidens. The performing arts are made up of many disciplines that have to work together. So being here is quite a dream.

**MP: Finally, we have to ask about your name. Is it short for something?**

RB: No, it's just Rob. My family are first-generation German refugees. For protection, we were all given first and second names that could be used as either gender, and as last names, so we could drop the 'Baum', if we wanted a stage name. But none of us did. I've never seen the need. **MP**



## De la Rey is second UCT executive to land top job

The good track record of senior UCT academics creates a high demand for their services, says Dr Cheryl de la Rey, former UCT deputy vice-chancellor and newly-appointed vice-chancellor of Pretoria University.

Her appointment follows the resignation of Professor Calie Pistorius.

Though the date of her appointment is yet to be confirmed, De la Rey, who is currently chief executive officer of the Council on Higher Education, said the knowledge she had gained during her term at UCT would be vital in her new role.

"My experience at UCT will be very important for what I will be doing, especially working in a complex environment with different stakeholders and different challenges," she said.

De la Rey is the second former UCT deputy vice-chancellor to land a vice-chancellorship. Professor Martin Hall, who took the reins as DVC at the same time as De la Rey in 2002, started his official term as vice-chancellor of the University of Salford in the United Kingdom in 2009.

De la Rey said she was "honoured" by the opportunity to lead such a large and complex university, but that



transformation would be one of the key challenges, as it is at UCT.

Women are a minority in the public higher education sector, she said, but her appointment indicates that the sector is headed in the right direction in terms of gender representation.

"But we still have a long way to go," she noted.

De la Rey also serves on the Council of the Botswana University of Science and Technology, on the National Advisory Council on Innovation, the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust and

the national Science, Engineering and Technology for Women Committee.

A Fellow of the Psychological Association of South Africa, and a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa, she also holds a Visiting Professorship at the University of the Witwatersrand.

In her declaration of intent, De la Rey said: "There is a sound base from which an exciting future can be built to realise the vision to be South Africa's leading academic institution, renowned for the quality of its teaching and student life, outstanding research, diversity, innovation and public engagement."

Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price said he was delighted by her appointment.

"There are significant challenges facing tertiary institutions in this country and I look forward to working with Professor De la Rey on tackling these at macro and institutional levels. The University of Pretoria is a formidable sister institution and has a significant role to play in securing higher education for a growing number of students and preparing them to play their role in Africa and internationally. Professor De la Rey will be a huge asset to the University of Pretoria, as she was at UCT." **MP**

## Law alumni give R21.6 million

"They say that any university is as great as its alumni, and as the newly-appointed dean, I can tell you that this faculty has fabulous alumni," said Professor PJ Schwikkard, who was speaking at a lunch in July for the presentation of the 2008 awards in the Faculty of Law.

"What some of you may not know is that this year UCT celebrates 150 years of the teaching of law in South Africa; the first lecture was given on 18 March 1859, and to commemorate that event, we launched the *Law 150* campaign, Towards Sustainable Justice.

"The response from our alumni has been wonderful. We have raised R21.6 million so far, and a portion of that has been in scholarships. It therefore gives me great pleasure to acknowledge alumni Adam Brink and Lisa Visagie from Bisset, Boehmke and McBlain.

Their firm is also celebrating its 150th anniversary, and they have opted to mark the occasion by instituting an award for a final-year student who has demonstrated a passion for what the law can do."

Schwikkard also thanked alumnus Andrew Heiberg of Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr for their inaugural award to the top student at the Preliminary Level, and Estelle Yach of the Mauerberger Foundation, a staunch supporter. Yach was at the awards ceremony to represent her daughter, alumna Dianna Yach, who instituted the Ionann Scholarship in 2005, for the top student in Criminal Justice.

Dozens of other alumni have given to the Diversity and Endowment scholarships, and in 2010 UCT is offering R40 000 per annum to each of ten prospective LLB students. **MP**

## UCT steps up swine flu information campaign

Universities, schools, businesses and institutions in the province remain on high alert after a Stellenbosch student died as a result of H1N1, or swine flu, two weeks ago. This was the first reported fatality in South Africa as a result of H1N1.

A special task team, headed by Communication and Marketing Department executive director Gerda Kruger, has been formed at UCT to monitor the situation on a daily basis.

A risk-assessment committee meets regularly to assess the extent of our exposure to the flu, and to update university protocols on how to deal with the pandemic.



UCT has also geared up its information campaign on swine flu, with a dedicated webpage featuring comprehensive information on H1N1 symptoms, frequently-asked questions about swine flu, advice and

important telephone numbers for healthcare advice and facilities, both on- and off-campus. Posters and flyers have been distributed to all residences and campuses.

Though most cases of H1N1 have been mild, with patients recovering without medical attention, anyone reporting a fever, cough, headache, body aches, sore throat or runny nose should seek medical care. **MP**



### Important numbers

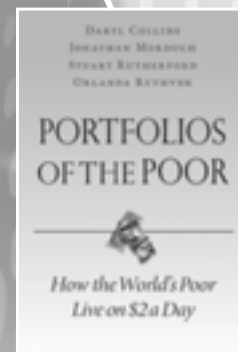
- Students should contact the Student Wellness Service Hotline on 021 650 1068
- Staff may call Susan Williams on 021 650 4376
- Claremont 24-hour Unit: 021 670 4333
- Vincent Pallotti 24-hour Unit: 021 506 4000
- Groote Schuur Hospital general line: 021 404 9111
- For more information go to [www.uct.ac.za/students/health/swineflu](http://www.uct.ac.za/students/health/swineflu)

UCT PRESS to host a panel discussion at the book launch of:

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*How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*

D Collins, J Morduch, S Rutherford, O Ruthven



"This is an important, boots-on-the-ground look at how microfinance functions in the developing world. The descriptions of how poor households manage their limited resources are exciting, raw, and novel, and I found myself unable to put the book down."

- Edward Miguel, University of California, Berkeley and co-author of *Economic Gangsters*

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# Keep your oath, even when it hurts

Accountability on the African continent was the focus of an international conference at UCT, held from 20 to 24 July.

Attended by forty prominent thinkers representing academia and civil society as well as judges from across Africa and Europe, the conference was part of an ongoing collaboration between UCT, The University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and the University of Warwick in the UK.

In his opening address, the recently-fired national director for public prosecutions, Advocate Vusi Pikoli, spoke with passion about the power that prosecutors hold, noting that this power can literally ruin people's lives. And so, their "discretionary powers have to be exercised fairly and impartially so as to enhance public confidence in the administration of criminal justice".

Acknowledging that the position of a prosecutor in Africa is a hazardous one, Pikoli's closing words, drawn from Psalm 15, were, "To all prosecutors I say, keep the oath even when it hurts."

1992 saw the reclamation of an independent prosecuting authority, and this was confirmed by the adoption of a democratic constitution. But it was Section 33 (1) of the National Prosecution Act, which states that



Outgoing: Advocate Vusi Pikoli delivered the opening address of the international conference on accountability at UCT.

the Minister "shall ... exercise final responsibility over the prosecuting authority", that was cause for some debate.

For Professor Pierre de Vos of UCT, this should be read within the

framework of both the prosecution policy, which enshrines concepts such as the public good, and the Constitution, which safeguards the independence of the prosecuting authority. **MP**

# Play on marriage and identity for Edinburgh Fringe

UCT alumnae Leila Anderson and Cindy Mkaza are at the Edinburgh Festival this week to stage their one-hander play, *Sleeping with Inkosazana*, with Anderson as director and starring Mkaza.

It will run for 10 shows, as part of the Fringe.

The two studied theatre and performance at UCT, graduating in 2006, and created the play for last year's Out of the Box festival, run by Unima, the South African association for puppetry and visual performance.

Among other themes, the play examines marriage and relationships in our society.

The story is set in a mythical village. A woman tries to flee from an arranged marriage, but a sea spirit promises her immortality for going through with the nuptials. She will be able to marry many men, and does – always in transit between a dead

previous husband and becoming a new wife – producing thousands of neglected children along the way.

There is plenty of political allegory in the play, but it is polygamy and its many facets that it highlights.

"And now we have a president who has many wives and polygamy is a concealed part of our landscape, but one that needs to be talked about," Anderson said in an interview with the Saturday Argus.

"We're not trying to say it's bad," Anderson said. "Polygamy involves very complex relationships; there are notions of family and a communal sisterhood that are wonderful. But there's the aspect of it being a remnant of a patriarchal culture, which needs to adapt to changing issues and concerns like HIV."

"There should be greater debate and public discourse around the topic." **MP**

# Students examine social relationships with community

# Women rule the air waves in August



Women sharing: UCT Radio's news and talk manager, Pholile Hlope.

This month sees UCT Radio embark on a campaign to put women under the spotlight (the link is Women's Day on 9 August) and listeners are being invited to take part by sharing their personal stories and debating topics such as femininity and stereotypes.

"The world is growing increasingly matriarchal," said UCT Radio's news and talk manager, Pholile Hlope. "More and more women are taking on leadership positions, and running households single-handedly."

Hope said she hoped to diminish

the idea that superwomen were necessarily "CEO-types".

"Women in communities all over South Africa also deserve to be saluted. They are the ones selflessly effecting changes and leaving legacies where others might have cursed their circumstances."

Hlope said the idea of a woman's rightful place has shifted from "archaic placement" to social need.

"Sigmund Freud said: 'A woman should soften a man, not weaken him'. So we'd like to value the men who have stood by, protected,

provided for and loved the women in their lives."

Guest interviews include Kopano Matlwa, UCT's award-winning novelist. On 9 August there will be a special broadcast from Colleen's Place in Mitchell's Plain, a community outreach initiative in which 20 children are cared for in a home in the community.

If you would like to get involved please call 021 650 3550 or email hr@uctradio.co.za.

To hear their broadcasts, keep your dials locked onto 104.5FM. **MP**



Social wise: VC Dr Max Price is flanked by Student in/and Community Conference organisers Jon Hodgson, Jon Parsonage, Jess Auerbach and Brennan Hodkinson.

UCT would be failing in its civic duty if it produced students who were not committed to alleviating social injustice, vice-chancellor Dr Max Price said at the opening of the Students in/and Community Conference on 24 July.

Price said that the student body had a long history of fighting social injustice, but these efforts had taken a back seat in the past 15 years, following the demise of apartheid, as students sensed that the battle had been won.

"They felt that it was no longer the job of universities to fight the battle, to toyi-toyi and picket against social injustice," he explained.

Price believes opportunities have opened up again in the past year or so, following changes in the political landscape. He said that while the gov-

ernment had succeeded in many areas, it had failed in others. Here there is scope for students.

"Once again, universities must think of the role they can play, and take up that role. We must challenge injustices and campaign on behalf of the poor."

The student-driven conference provided a lens for examining UCT's engagement with the community – on all levels.

Jon Hodgson, one of the organisers, said that in the past five years UCT has seen a massive growth in community activities, through the Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisations and Ubunye, and numerous other student-run organisations.

Hodgson said that every week, approximately 2 000 UCT students participate in community activities.

# Section gears up to rekindle interest in African languages

After 12 years away from UCT, Adjunct Professor Tessa Dowling returns to put her street smarts to use in the teaching of African languages

Adjunct Professor Tessa Dowling of the African Languages and Literatures section has learned a few valuable lessons in the 12 years she's been away from UCT.

As director of African Voices, which provides a suite of celebrated language-related services and teaching guides, Dowling has witnessed first-hand the march of African languages. This, after all, has been the age of the cellphone, the SMS, blogging, MXit, an explosion of brand names and the rise of English, all assimilated and remixed into African languages.

As a result, urban isiXhosa, for example, charged with township jargon and slang, is a far cry from the version generally taught at universities. It's that kinetic, colloquial touch Dowling wants to pass on to her students at UCT.

"I'd like our department to have an ear in the townships," she says. "We should not just be teaching standard varieties, which of course we must uphold; we should also be researching and teaching varieties that are non-standard."

It's that approach that Dowling and the section hope will lure back an audience it has lost over the past few years.

While the section still attracts substantial numbers of international (especially American) and non-mother-tongue South Africans to its beginner courses, curriculum changes in the late 1990s saw a sharp drop in registrations from mother-tongue speakers, who were possibly not interested in the deep linguistic analysis that was part and parcel of the mainstream programme. This, for one thing, undermined any plans the section may have had to boost post-graduate studies in these languages.

Which is why they called on Dowling who, in turn, leapt at the opportunity. ("I think like an academic," she says with a laugh.)

"Since her company was involved in second-language learning we thought she might bring that experience into our classroom," says Dr Abner Nyamende, section head. "As a white urban South African who acquired isiXhosa when she was already at university, she is an ideal model for our students."

Among the first things Dowling did was set up a new website, [www.afrilang.uct.ac.za](http://www.afrilang.uct.ac.za), designed by computer science students Michael Dube and Mononts'i Nthontho and founded on the groundwork of Rose Man-toa Smouse, who runs the African

language courses in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

And, over the next couple of years, the section will bring in a raft of new, self-pioneered courses. These will be open to all students, they will, perhaps controversially, be taught in English, and will include:

*Yebo Gogo*, which will analyse advertising in African languages.

*Introduction to Texts and Talk in Africa*, which explores the beginning of writing in African languages (using texts going back to the 1850s), and how – if at all – contemporary African-language texts and sources, such as radio, reflect the spoken version.

*Sex, Love and Taboo*, which will look at how people speak about HIV/AIDS and sex in general, and how modern-day ads and magazines in African languages portray and talk about sex and sexuality.

*Growing up in Africa*, studying children's first experience of language, and how they learn language.

New majors are planned in Xhosa Communication and Indigenous African Languages and Literatures.

Dowling and Nyamende echo each other's sentiments about where they'd like to see the section in a few years' time – chock-a-block with postgraduates breaking new ground.



Welcome back: To boost interest in African-language studies at UCT, Adjunct Prof Tessa Dowling, back after a break of 12 years, will be using some of the teaching tools she's developed in her company, African Voices.

"There is still so much initial research to be done in the field of African languages, and we need to produce home-grown scholars who will lead in this field," says Nyamende.

"I would love to see the section full of students who have ideas for research that are completely pioneering," adds Dowling. "We want to prompt them to think about the linguistic world, and the multi-lingual society they live in."

Six months into this, her second

term at UCT, Dowling is still bristling with enthusiasm, even if the decision-making pace is slightly slower than what she's grown used to. Academia's just her cup of tea, she says.

"I think I'm a better academic now because, for one thing, I spend far more time reading academic journals than I did before. I love being paid to read and research."

That can only bode well for her students. **MP**

## First baby vaccinated in pioneering TB trial

Four-month-old Janenique Pienaar of Worcester made history in July when she became the first baby in 80 years to be vaccinated in a proof-of-concept efficacy trial of a candidate TB vaccine (MVA85A/Aeras-485).

This is being tested at the TB vaccine research site of UCT's South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (SATVI), in partnership with Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation, the Oxford-Emergent Tuberculosis Consortium Ltd and the Wellcome Trust.

Baby Janenique lives in the Boland, an area with one of the high-

est rates of TB in the world (14 out of every thousand), and an area in which HIV and TB are the main causes of death.

Like all South African newborns, she was given the BCG vaccine at birth to prevent her contracting TB. While BCG is known to protect against severe forms of TB in children, it does not appear to protect against lung TB, the main form of TB. In addition, BCG itself can cause disease in HIV-positive infants.

The urgent search for a new, safe and more effective TB vaccine – for all ages, all types of TB and for those

living with HIV – has seen 10 new TB vaccine candidates in clinical trials worldwide, of which SATVI is testing four at its site. SATVI is currently the largest dedicated African TB vaccine research group.

SATVI has the infrastructure and capacity to conduct large-scale clinical TB vaccine research, having conducted large-scale epidemiological TB studies in babies and teenagers as well as a Phase IV trial involving almost 12 000 infants.

"The MVA85A/Aeras-485 ('phase IIB trial', as it is called by the SATVI team) offers hope that the TB

pandemic can be reversed, especially in high-burden settings like Worcester," said Professor Gregory Hussey, director of SATVI.

The trial aims to enrol 2 784 BCG-vaccinated, healthy babies, all about four months of age, from Worcester, Ceres and Robertson. Half the babies will be given the new vaccine candidate, and the other half a placebo, after which they will be followed up and monitored for two years to compare the incidence of TB in the two groups. Earlier, smaller studies have shown the vaccine to be safe in adults, children and babies. **MP**



TB trial: Baby Janenique and her mother Jane, who, like other parents of babies in the trial, will wait three years until the anticipated release of the trial report in 2012 to hear whether their participation in the study has borne fruit.

## SA's first positron emission particle tracking lab opens

The world's second positron emission particle tracking facility, PEPT Cape Town – a first for SA – has opened at the iThemba LABS national cyclotron centre near Faure.

The facility was set up by Professor Andy Buffler and Dr Indresan Govender of UCT's Department of Physics. The decision to situate it at iThemba LABS was driven by the regular availability of radioisotopes produced by the Radionuclide Production Department.

The facility received a major leg-up last year when the world's most sensitive positron emission tomography (PET) scanner, the ECAD EXACT3D, was donated to UCT by Professor Jan Cilliers of Imperial College, London.

In April this year the camera was decommissioned at Hammersmith Hospital in London, where it had been used for PET research for over a decade.

The new laboratory at iThemba LABS is the world's second operational facility after the Positron Imaging Centre at the University of Birmingham. It will be available for multi-disciplinary research by local and international scientists. Current UCT PEPT projects include research in physics, engineering and medicine.

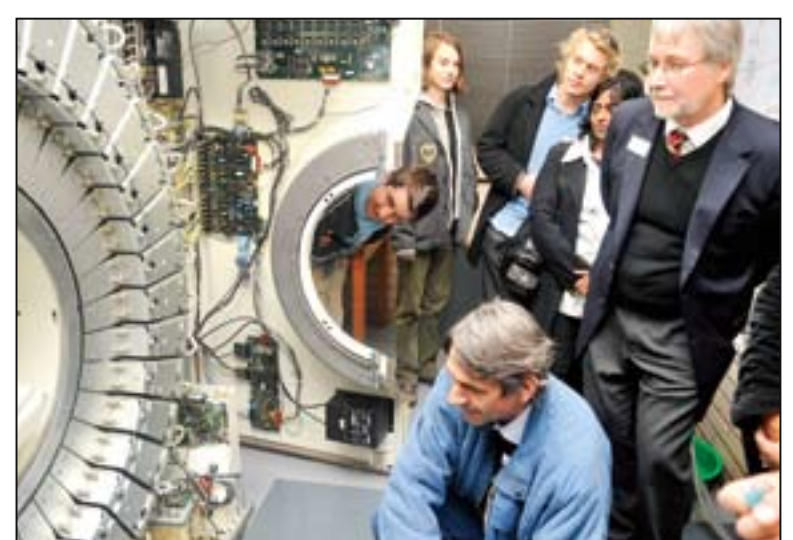
Seed funding for PEPT Cape Town was provided by the National Research Foundation, UCT (the Centre for Minerals Research, the Minerals to Metals Initiative and the UCT Equipment Committee), Imperial College in London, and the Centre for Sustain-

able Resource Processing in Australia.

In addition, Anglo Platinum and Xstrata are funding UCT-lead PEPT research at the Positron Imaging Centre at the University of Birmingham.

PEPT is based on the tracking of a single tracer particle which has been labelled with a radionuclide. This provides the basis for a technique for the characterisation and visualisation of particulate flow within aggressive industrial environments. These include tumbling mills, flotation cells and powder mixers.

PEPT is currently the only non-invasive technique capable of mapping the in-situ flow fields in robust industrial systems to the level of detail that is demanded for mechanistic modelling. **MP**



PET project: DVC Danie Visser (far right) was among those who attended the launch of UCT's new particle-tracking facility, PEPT Cape Town.

## LETTERS

## Strategies and specifics for transformation

Your correspondent Aphibe Bewana, the provincial chair of Sasco, has written a letter (Volume 28#10) of “warm greetings” to complain about groups at UCT who display “tendencies ... whose underlying principles and acts are divergent to genuine transformation”. This letter in response is written in the same spirit.

For a long time we have been told by Sasco and other black organisations that this university has been too slow in pursuing the goals of transformation. I suggest that if they want additional policy action they need to be much more concrete in their proposals. Apart from stating in general terms their wish to see more black appointments to senior academic and administrative posts, as well as certain curricular changes, they do not specify what actual changes would satisfy them, nor any strategies for carrying them out.

Until groups like Sasco become specific we are not likely to see a greater meeting of minds within the university on these issues. The following list contains the sorts of

questions I venture require clarification by concrete answers. These are illustrative, not complete.

- What does black mean in this context? Africans, or all people other than white as designated in the old apartheid era terminology?

- Can black appointments be of people from anywhere in the world, such as the rest of Africa, the Caribbean countries and the US? Or do they have to be South African-born and bred to satisfy the demands of ‘transformation’?

- Given the supply constraints – too few suitable applicants for employment who are black – should the university perhaps offer enhanced salary and benefit packages? Say, 40% more than the going rate, in monetary terms?

- If this is acceptable, then should the 40% premium be paid only to new hires after a certain date? Or should it be paid to all black employees in comparable grades?

- If such a strategy is adopted by the university, is it realistic to expect problems of morale and motivation among staff members

who are not paid the premium? If so, how can this be countered?

- If curricula are to become less Eurocentric or global-centric in content and style, then what concrete changes are proposed for disciplines other than the obvious ones such as historical studies, languages, certain social sciences, and arts like fine art, drama and music?

- We need to recognise that curriculum regionalisation – greater African-oriented content – will entail costs. To meet such a goal, some of what is now taught in a range of disciplines will have to be substituted by the new content, because there is not room and time for everything. Is that simply a cost to be borne? What should be dropped, and by what criteria will these difficult decisions be made?

These are the kinds of questions that must be researched and distributed within the university community by groups, like Sasco, pushing for accelerated policy action.

Sean Archer  
School of Economics

## Langerman exhibition on representation of disease

Artist Fritha Langerman of UCT’s Michaelis School of Fine Art is the curator of *Subtle Thresholds*, a new exhibition that explores infectious diseases and the complex inter-relationship between the zoological, human and microbial worlds.

Langerman spent over two years developing the exhibition, combining thousands of elements to examine the historic and current visual representation of disease.



“Infectious diseases are caused by organisms which are as deserving of visual attention as any other species,” she says. “The exhibition suggests that within an extremely complex biological system, humans represent a very small unit.”

Funded by the Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts, the National Arts Council and the National Research Foundation, *Subtle Thresholds* is on at the Iziko South African Museum until March 2010. **MP**

## Obituary: Yvonne Banning

UCT lecturer, mentor and former broadcaster Yvonne Banning (65) died on 6 July.

Banning earned her LTCL BA (Hons) and UED at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and her master’s at the University of the Witwatersrand before coming to UCT. She joined UCT in July 1992 and was a senior lecturer at UCT’s Department of Drama, teaching across a range of theoretical and practical courses, with a focus on contemporary South African work and voice. Her research interests included community theatre-making and women in theatre.

Liz Mills of the UCT Drama Department pays tribute: “It is with deep sadness that I pass on the news that Yvonne passed away quickly, painlessly and peacefully, with her children at her bedside.

“Yvonne, as her students know, was inspiring and deeply nurturing of individual creativity. Some of the finest postgraduate writing produced in this department was crafted under her supervision. She tirelessly supported postgraduate work, and particularly the people in the work, no matter how big or small the project.” **MP**



## Half century for lecture that honours academic freedom

The TB Davie Lecture, hosted by the Academic Freedom Committee (AFC), will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year.

It will be delivered on 12 August by Professor Nithaya Chetty, who is currently facing disciplinary charges at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

Chair of the AFC, Professor Andrew Nash, said Chetty had been invited to present the lecture both because of his outstanding contribution in recent years to public debates on the role of the university in South African society and because UCT wishes, through the invitation, to express solidarity with him and his colleagues at UKZN.

“Universities are stronger for it if they examine their own practices rigorously. This often means we must

accept public debates about our practices, and be prepared to deal with public criticism.”

He said that the TB Davie Lecture had been established at UCT in 1959 to protest injustice, show solidarity with its victims, clarify the role of the university in society and defend ideals of academic freedom.

“At that time, the frontlines of the conflict over academic freedom ran between the apartheid regime and the open universities. Today, they often run through the universities themselves. We honour Nithaya Chetty for keeping the ideals of academic freedom alive. We look forward to welcoming him to our campus.”

The lecture will take place in Leslie Social Sciences LT 2A from 13h00 to 14h00. It is titled *Universities in a Time of Change*. **MP**

## Vision 2020 paying dividends



The number of people in the world suffering from visual impairment has come down significantly in the past nine years, but it is up to health-care workers to keep that downward trend going.

So said Professor Colin Cook on 22 July at his inaugural lecture, *Vision 2020 – The right to sight*.

Cook reported that there were 30 million blind people in the world in 1980, 38 million by 1990 and 50 million by 2000. But in 2009, that number has gone down to 37 million, thanks to *Vision 2020*.

The initiative was launched in 1999 by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and the World Health Organisation, for the Global Elimination of Avoidable Blindness. Its purpose is to eradicate the main causes of visual impairment – cataract, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy – and to give millions of needlessly blind people the right to sight.

“*Vision 2020* is having an impact, and it is our responsibility to continue the good work,” he said.

Cook drew a bleak picture of the current situation, saying that the high-

est burden of blindness is in Africa, with the poor hit the hardest. Yet most of these cases are treatable and preventable.

Among the reasons for the persistent problem is the population boom, the ageing of the world population, and inadequate eye-care services for the poor, he explained.

Cook said infrastructural and human resource developments, as well as disease control, were key to eliminating blindness.

He advised, though, that the process would be like “eating an elephant – piece by piece”, and that team effort was required. Essential to this would be the establishment of 4 000 programmes around the world, with a chain of training, supervision, and support extending from community level up to tertiary level.

UCT can and should make a significant contribution, Cook argued.

“One of the greatest impediments is the lack of human resources in Africa. UCT is strategically well-placed to train clinicians who are competent to deal with individual patients, and who have a good public health perspective.” **MP**

# New mission – take UCT sport to the next level

A weekend bosberaad signals that changes are afoot in sport at UCT. But first things first . . .

A bosberaad on UCT sport, hosted by UCT Sports Council on 1 August, was something of a no-brainer. Students and administrators who attended saw eye to eye that student sport here can and should be taken to the next level.

“There was consensus that we want things to change,” says Angus Morrison, chair of the UCT branch of University Sport South Africa (USSA).

For now, excellence and success top the to-do list. But, cautions Morrison, those concepts mean different things to different clubs.

For some clubs success will be measured by the silverware they win. For others, taking a more professional approach means getting people on board to help with finance, sponsorships and organising tournaments. Still others will want to attract more students to participate, if only at a recreational level.

Professor Michael Meadows, chairperson of the UCT Sports Council, agrees that change will be a matter of different strokes for different folks. However, he is one of those keen to see UCT clubs bag more trophies.

“The focus of sport at UCT has been on participation, and I didn’t want to change that; on the contrary, the more people who participate, the better, surely,” he says. “But there is an opportunity, I think, to develop sport – in some codes, at least – to a higher standard.”

That will have a two-pronged advantage, he believes. For one, it would be a boon to marketing UCT in general, as illustrated by the success of



the televised rugby Varsity Cup. But it would also encourage more students to participate in those sports that are seen to be more successful.

Neither Meadows nor Morrison see UCT going the way of other institutions, by offering princely sports bursaries and the like. (“There was not a single person who supported the idea of pay-for-play,” says Morrison.)

Meadows, instead, would like more clubs to tap into existing UCT resources, some begging to be called on. These include the expertise of those at the UCT/MRC Research Unit for Exercise Science and Sports Medicine (ESSM) and, possibly, the School of Management Studies, which offers a postgraduate diploma in sports management.

These groups were represented at the bosberaad by Professor Tim Noakes of ESSM and the Sports Science Institute of South Africa (SSISA),

and David Maralack of the School of Management Studies.

Between them, ESSM and the SSISA offer access to one of the best facilities in the country and some of the best brains in the global sports-science field, says Ross Tucker, sports scientist and management consultant with ESSM.

Incorporating that kind of expertise into UCT sport could raise the standard considerably, he says, and is the first step towards a process of creating a leading sports brand at UCT.

“You can start to approach world-class levels by doing the right things, or by doing better things.”

(For ESSM, a partnership with UCT sport will provide an opportunity to develop a blueprint that shows how intellectual capital can work for the benefit of athletes, a model that can be parcelled out to all sports across the country.)

John Donald, manager of Sport and Recreation at UCT, is a longtime and vocal champion of the ‘participation’ ethos of student sport. But even he concedes that, given the means to do so, there may be a compromise position.

“The danger is that we lose sight of what our core business is – our own bona fide students and the depth and breadth of the current student experience – in favour of opening our clubs to all and sundry in order to aspire to national titles,” he says.

This approach would also compromise the governance model currently in place, where students are responsible for the running of the clubs, Donald adds. (That’s a model that would have to stay in place, agrees Meadows.)

It was unanimous among those at the bosberaad, though, that opening clubs “to all and sundry” would not be the UCT approach. If clubs were to be allowed to sign up non-UCT students, there would be caps on how many and even how ‘non-student’ that person would have to be, says Meadows.

But much of the nuts and bolts must still be clarified. For now, the first thing that the Sports Council will do is draw up a sports policy that includes a mission and vision for UCT sports. The UCT sports constitution covers plenty of the minutiae of how clubs should be run, but contains no big-picture philosophy, notes Meadows.

“It’s important,” adds USSA-UCT chair Morrison, “that the values of UCT student sport are represented in that new mission statement.”

It’s those values that would help UCT lead the field in South Africa. Just what everyone wants. **MP**

## SK holds off relentless UCT



In picture: UCT’s Therlow Pietersen makes a beeline for the SK Walmers line, with Springbok hooker Hanyani Shimange in support.

The FNB UCT First XV marked their post-vacation return to the WP Super League with the debut of Springbok hooker Hanyani Shimange, but also with a one-sided 11-16 defeat to SK Walmers on Saturday 1 August at the Green Point Track (which stands in the shade of the 2010 stadium).

One-sided in that the Ikeys had the lion’s share of the ball and territory, but SK Walmers fended off attack after attack with ferocious tackling and clever rucking. SK’s tireless defence paid dividends, as a breakaway try and a near-flawless performance from their flyhalf saw them take a prized scalp.

Coach John Dobson had to ring some changes for UCT’s midweek game against Victorians in Stellenbosch, with flyhalf Matthew Rosslee and fullback Therlow Pietersen called up for duty with the SA Universities team, who played a US college squad on the same evening. UCT still took the honours, however, winning the match 31-20. The team touched down three times, while Ollie Braithwaite, taking over kicking duties from Rosslee, booted over four penalties and two conversions. **MP**

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