

Even though there is a nationally declared Heritage Day (24 September), heritage at UCT has never featured prominently on the UCT calendar. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Njabulo Ndebele, has initiated a University-wide engagement that embraces these National developments. In so doing the UCT community can explore and problematise its own heritage in relation to broader issues of heritage in the country.

Heritage has many different meanings, for example biological heritage and the heritage determined by language, landscape and trauma. It is important to note that heritage is not static, and that it evolves with time. In the landscape of UCT, which spans more than 175 years, there are many symbols that relate to our heritage. In the first stage of this Heritage Trail we explore some of these symbols; it is our intention to expand this trail in the future, to reflect UCT's changing social and political landscape.

## heritage trail from middle campus



### 1 THE UCT CREST

This crest, designed in 1859 by Charles Bell at the request of the South African College (the precursor of UCT), is filled with symbolism. Crests and coats of arms, of medieval origin, are traditionally used as badges of identity. Their designs and colours have specific meanings in heraldry, and are linked to the nature of that identity. On this crest, the black and blue represents the line of the sea; the mural crown, anchor, the words 'Spes Bona' (which mean 'Good Hope') represent the Cape of Good Hope; the open book represents learning and the lamp affame represents 'good works' illuminating darkness. The placing of the words 'Spes Bona' across the open book emphasises the location of the SA College at the Cape, and the use of Latin reminds us that the institution was founded in the classical Western tradition of 19th century academic learning. A current source of debate is whether the crest appropriately represents the identity of UCT today as a World Class African University.

### 2 JAPONICA WALK

The Japonica Walk, which leads up to the Summer House, was by 1814 (when surveyed by Thibault) an oak-lined walk and a distinctive feature of Rustenburg farm. When Cecil John Rhodes purchased the Grootu Schuur estate, he made parts of it freely accessible to the public, and this area was a popular picnic spot. The first plantings of japonica shrubs (also known as camellias), which bear pink, red and white flowers in late winter and early spring, along the walkway are thought to have dated from the 1890s. It is said that when the gardener told Rhodes that he had planted a few dozen, Rhodes expostulated: 'When will you learn to think in thousands!'

The development of the Middle Campus in the 1980s led to fears among the Cape Town public that the University would deny public access to Japonica Walk, but this was not the case. In 1982 new japonicas, specially developed for South African conditions, were planted to replace those that had died over the previous 90 years.

### 3 THE SUMMER HOUSE



The Summer House (a key landmark in the layout of Joseph M. Solomon's 1918 design) was proclaimed a national monument in 1960 and was probably built about two hundred years before that, at the upper end of Rustenburg farm. It is the oldest building on UCT's Grootu Schuur campus. It was designed as a belvedere, a raised structure from which to enjoy an extensive view, and to provide a shady retreat in summer. A garden plan that was drawn up in 1791 for Rustenburg House features a drawing of the Summer House as the focal point for an avenue of oaks leading up the hillside from the house. When Cecil John Rhodes bought the land for the Grootu Schuur estate a century later, he commissioned Sir Herbert Baker to restore the by then dilapidated Summer House. Baker did this, however, without following the style of the original. In the 1920s a large rose garden was planted in front of the Summer House, but in 1972 there was further restoration when the rose garden was replaced by the lawns that are there today (the walkways were added in the late 1980s).

### 4 MIDDLE CAMPUS



Andrew Verster: *Birds in flight*, 1987, etched glass roof light, sand blasted glass  
This glass roof light serves as a source of light to the stairwell of the Law Library, situated on the lower floors of the Kramer Building. It is designed on the outside as a glass prism, with images of flying birds evoking a sense of free spirit.

Bruce Amott: *Alma Mater*, 1996, Bronze

This sculpture of a female figure used as a supporting column is referred to as a caryatid and is often associated with classical Greek figurines. However, it is not exclusively a western figure, since it is known from China, ancient Persia, West Africa and the Congo, particularly in the art of the Luba people. This caryatid symbolically combines the twin roles of authority and responsibility. The phrase, *Alma Mater* (Latin: 'nurturing mother'), is often used to denote a school or university, and here we see the emblems of learning being generously offered by the stylistically evolved caryatid figure. The chameleons represent historical process and transformation.



### 8 THE WAR MEMORIAL

The War Memorial commemorates the sacrifices of members of the University community in the two World Wars, 1914–18 and 1939–45. No names appear on the Table Mountain quartzite, which may imply that suffering extended in many directions, and was not confined to those that died. World War I came to an end a few months after the University had received its full charter. UCT relaxed its entrance requirements, and offered financial assistance to returning white servicemen – these exemptions and assistance were not extended to returning black servicemen. Among the returning servicemen was Andrew Proctor (BSc. Mech. Eng. 1920), an RAF air ace and UCT's only recipient of the Victoria Cross.

At this time and after World War II the age and life experiences of these more mature students, who were mostly male, and generally respected and admired by their fellow students, had a significant influence for several years on the student ethos as a whole. Not surprisingly, during the Second World War, the enrolment of women at the University increased, and some departments were almost entirely staffed by women.

In more recent times, during the struggle for freedom from the bonds of apartheid, many UCT staff, students and alumni endured severe hardships. A number were forced into exile, or had their freedom of movement and expression curtailed, some suffered detention without trial, and many sacrificed their studies in the name of the struggle.



### 7 SOD-TURNING SLAB

The day designated to mark the symbolic beginning of excavation for the new University's buildings, 2 July 1920, was a stormy winter's day; a strong north-westerly wind blew and the rain fell in torrents. The ceremony had been scheduled to take place above what are now the rugby fields, but the invited guests had to take shelter in the Summer House, alongside which the first sod was turned by a drenched Sir Otto Beit, brother of Sir Alfred Beit, whose bequest to found a university in Johannesburg had been increased and instead turned to establishing UCT. Thus, this memorial slab marks the place where the ceremony was meant to take place, and not where the first sod was actually turned.



### 6 STATUE OF CECIL JOHN RHODES (1853–1902)



This statue of Cecil John Rhodes, gazing out over the Rugby Fields and the Cape Flats and symbolically towards the interior of Africa, was sculpted by Marion Walgate and unveiled in 1934. Rhodes' imperialist and racist attitude to Africa causes much controversy and resentment today, but without this section of the Grootu Schuur estate which he donated for the founding of a university, UCT would probably not have come into existence in 1918. Rhodes envisioned Boer War enmity between English and Afrikaner being laid to rest by means of the interaction of promising young people from these backgrounds in an academic environment. Just as many

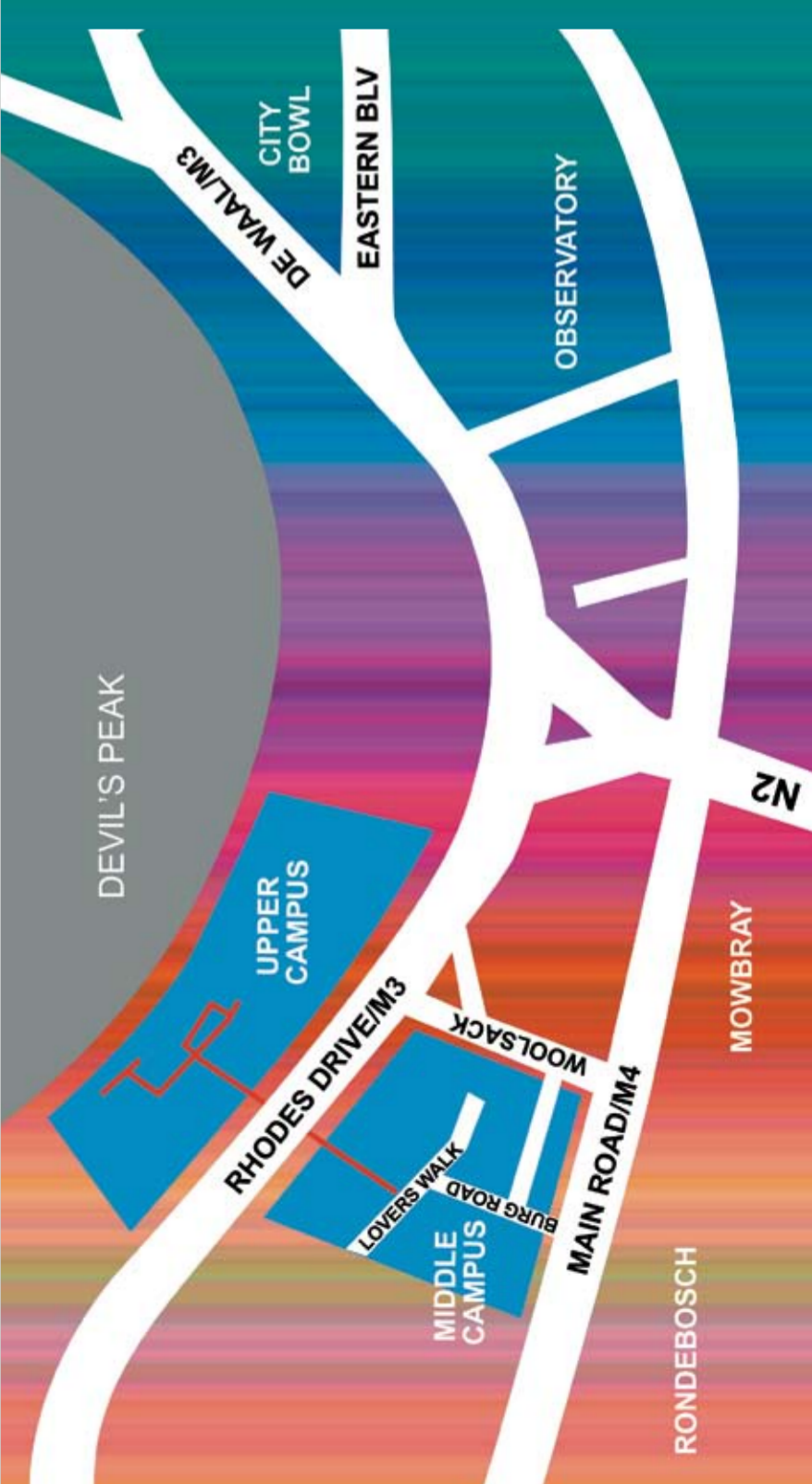
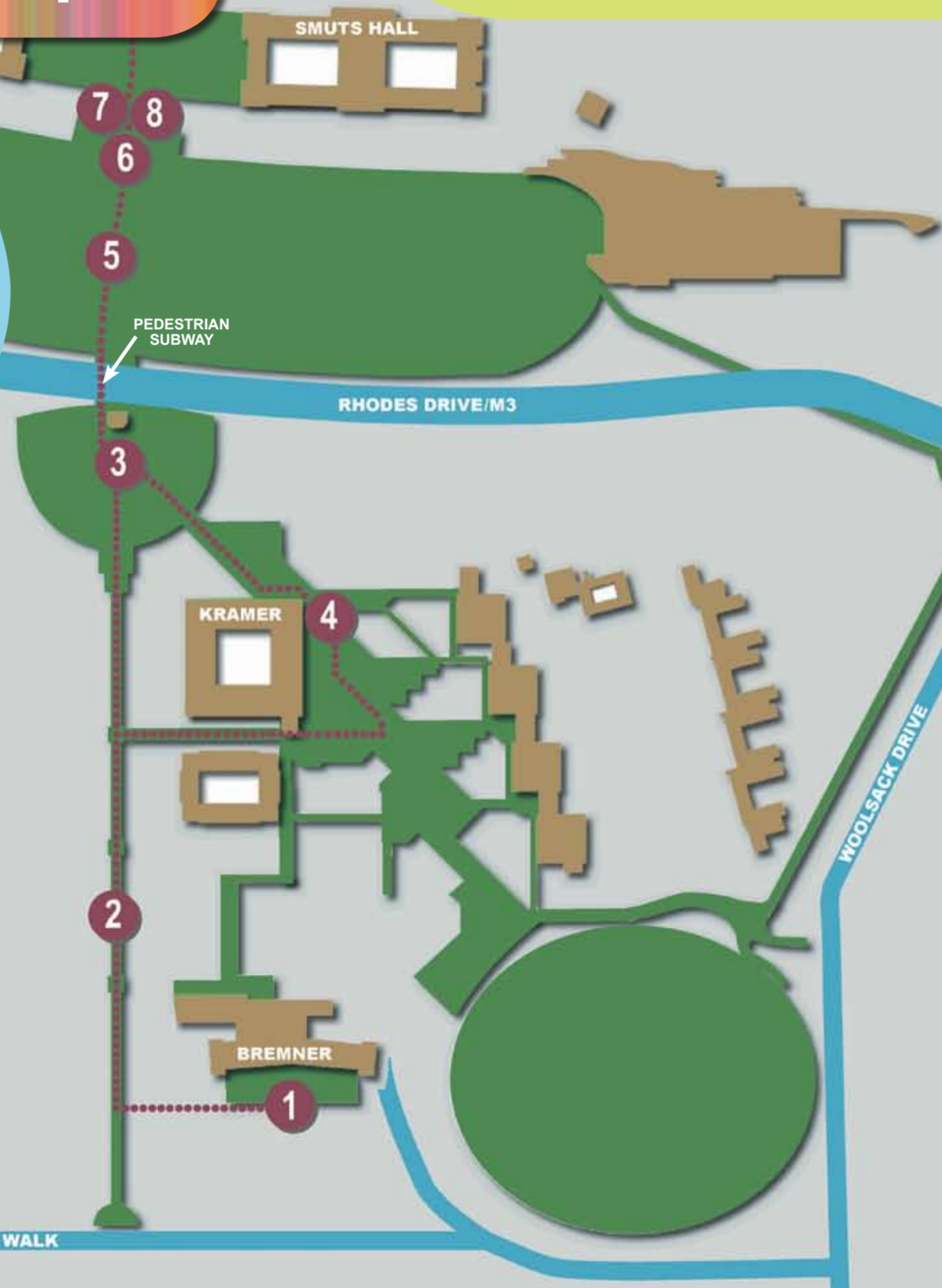
young Afrikaners in the 1930s and 1940s were uncomfortable on a campus which provided daily reminders of Rhodes and Jameson, today many students question the ways in which these figures continue to be memorialised. Even the post office on University Avenue bears the name 'Rhodes Gift', franking the University's correspondence with this reminder.

### 5 THE RUGBY FIELDS

Sporting disciplines at all tertiary education institutions were inevitably affected by apartheid. Most sport at UCT too was segregated, even before the introduction of the laws making this necessary: UCT teams, playing in white leagues, did not include people of colour. Photographs hanging at the Sports Centre attest to this deliberate exclusion. During World War II the split between UCT members who did not support the war against Nazi Germany and those who did resulted in there being two official rugby teams, one (pro the war effort) playing in the name of UCT and the other as Grootu Schuur. However, it is worth noting that even though the official teams were segregated, people of all races mixed informally in recreational games on these and other sports fields. The rugby fields were also used by black staff members for lunchtime soccer games.

Since unification of the segregated sports bodies in 1994, UCT has been a member of the South African Students' Sports Union, the umbrella body for sport in the country's tertiary institutions. UCT teams and sports people have distinguished themselves in many areas over the years, though few will be old enough to remember a nine-hole golf course once situated behind Jameson Hall. Today the Sports Centre, built in 1977 at the northern end of the fields, caters for a number of indoor sports, from fencing to indoor soccer.

Perhaps the most memorable occasion that took place on these rugby fields, however, was not a sporting event, but the awarding of an honorary doctorate to Nelson Mandela in November 1990. The ceremony was held here as Jameson Hall was considered too small to accommodate all those who wished to attend.



# heritage trail continued: upper campus



## 9 SMUTS HALL AND FULLER HALL

These student residences, with central courtyards surrounded by cloisters, were consciously modelled on the architecture of traditional European institutions of learning such as Oxford and Cambridge, although the UCT crest featured in various places on these buildings flags them as situated in Africa. Until 1981, black students were denied access to UCT residences. However, soon after Dr. Stuart Saunders was appointed Vice-Chancellor, he defied the Group Areas Act and opened the residences to all students.

Two levels up from the residences, alongside the Arts Block (on the left) and the Maths Block (on the right) are four identical stone urns, depicting the faces of early wardens of SA College/UCT residences (Sir 'Jock' Beattie, Professor Charles Lewis, Professor Lawrence Crawford and Professor Alexander Brown). These are placed so that each presents a different face looking out over the residences. As elsewhere on campus, it is only the contributions of the 'great men' that are acknowledged, while the efforts of the lower ranking staff, such as the servants in the residences (some of whom chalked up the longest long-serving records at UCT), are invisible.

The building of a women's residence alongside what is now Smuts in the mid-1920s was an acknowledgement of the increasing status of women in academic and public life; indeed, the urns, which date from c.1928, are the work of a woman – Grace Wheatley of UCT's Michaelis School of Fine Art. The residence was named after Mrs Fuller, who as a Council member and in many other ways, fought for equal status for women staff.

## 10 SOLOMON PLAQUE

This plaque shows the original 1918 design for the Upper Campus by Joseph M Solomon (1884–1920) in the Classical Revival style. In the top left hand section is a sketch of how Solomon's completed buildings were to look from Rondebosch and from above. Solomon envisaged a vertical axis running up through the Japonica Walk to the Summer House, and culminating in the main hall, to be aligned with Devil's Peak. The sloping site was extremely costly in terms of building construction. Note too that the original Jameson Hall is domed: this idea had to be abandoned during the Great Depression because of the need to cut costs, although the building was constructed so that it could support a dome should the money ever become available. Jameson Hall also ended up slightly out of Solomon's desired alignment due to excavation difficulties.

The National Monument emblem in the top right hand corner indicates that all the area and buildings representing the historical core of UCT were declared national monuments under the legislation then in force.



## 11 Bruce Arnott The oracle, 1987

Water feature, Paarl granite and concrete



Bruce Arnott uses concentric circles of substance, space and contained movement. The central turbulent void suggests beginning, roundness suggests wholeness, stone suggests permanence and resistance, flowing water suggests flux and process, and change is suggested by permutations of broken and unbroken lines in the I CHING trigrams on the Taoist sun disc. Trigrams were originally yarrow sticks, which were thrown at random, and the resulting pattern 'read' to determine the future. Each pair of trigrams, or hexagram, thus gets a verse in the I CHING, the ancient Confucian, 'Classic of Changes', analysing the good and bad fortune entailed by its appearance. Later on the Taoists arranged the trigrams in standard groupings, to ensure good luck (although these depicted in this work are considered more stylistic than accurate). Arnott notes that all the trigrams have a binary structure, or two beats to a bar, and he suggests that the disc as a whole may be described as 'a computing apparatus with psychoanalytical and prognosticatory potentials ... Depending on the rules devised, the disc might also suggest a children's game, the form of a poem or novel, or the structure of a symphony or an economic theory.'

## 12 Neels Coetzee Skull series, 1986

Bronze

This work referred to thematically by Neels Coetzee as the *Skull Series* was executed between 1975 and 1986. The human skull was a major inspirational source. In life the human head is believed to be the seat that controls all human faculties, yet after death the skull is seen as a symbol of death and decay, a reminder of the transience of life. The irony of these notions evokes a strong interest in the human skull as an image. In the *Skull Series* the skull form is distorted so that it could refer to human and/or animal forms, foetal forms, torsos or figures in different stances and postures. Textures, colours and forms within the work are intended to evoke associations with biological phenomena, the major subject matter of the research conducted in the Zoology Building. These symbolic references stimulate personal views and associated imagery.



## 18 Lippy Lipschitz Mechanical man, 1965

Cast and carved in terrazzo



In the terrazzo *Mechanical Man* Lippy Lipschitz of UCT's Michaelis School of Fine Art merged a human figure with mechanical elements, which invites questions about human nature in a world increasingly dominated by machines. As Lipschitz noted, 'It is not only the work we do, but what it does to us that is important'. Lippy Lipschitz was one of South Africa's foremost 20th century sculptors, and his work was said to be 'not sculptures of Africa by a European, but the heart of Africa is in them'.

## 17 Jackson Hlungwani Kava va nga hetji, late 1980s

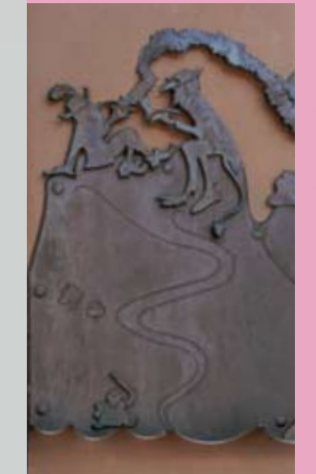
Wood sculpture, Carved from the trunk of a Mbhesu tree



According to the artist, the name of this 3m long work means 'a fish that is so big that it cannot be finished/completely eaten'. Hlungwani's works feature fish prominently, and may be symbolic of change in flexibility and movement; of beliefs that fish are linked to immortality; and of Christianity. In the artist's village, Mbhokota in Limpopo, there are many streams and rivers, which informs the connections he makes between man and fish in his art: many of his fish sculptures have human characteristics. Fish also are a part of the natural environment, and water is vital for their existence, as it is to us. Hlungwani's comment on this work, completed at a time of turmoil in South Africa, was: 'In the new country we must learn to swim like fish'.

## 16 Professor Cecil Luck & Guy Luck Legends of the Cape of Good Hope, 1987

Copper



This group of three small sculptures depicts legends of the Cape. From the left, the first depicts Adamastor, the fierce god of storms featured in Luis Vaz de Camoes The *Lusiads*, who from his stronghold in the Cape mountains blasts wind and rain onto passing ships and sailors. The accompanying text on the scroll is a quotation in Portuguese from The *Lusiads*, with a translation into English below it. The second sculpture portrays Van Hunks, who, tradition has it, went fishing to escape his ill-tempered wife, and smoked a pipe with the Devil on Devil's Peak – their smoke forming the south-easterly wind cloud over Table Mountain. The Latin inscription can be roughly translated as 'There are dangers in smoking, in fishing – and also in marriage! The third sculpture is of the ship *The Flying Dutchman*, condemned to sail forever the seas around the Cape. The quotation here is from the Afrikaans poet I.D. du Plessis, which may be translated as:

Who across the swell?  
Who looks for him, follows him  
Chases the apparition  
Skeleton of the southern sea  
No blessing for sailors  
No saving, no sleep  
Only the endless, god forsaken  
Journey around the Cape

## 14 Cissy Gool Plaza & Molly Blackburn Hall

Zainu-Nissa (Cissy) Gool (1897–1963) was the first black woman to graduate from UCT with an MA, in 1932. She subsequently completed her LLB and at the age of 65 – was admitted to the Supreme Court as an advocate. The daughter of Dr Abdullah Abdurahman (leader of the African People's Organisation), Cissy grew up in a highly political environment, and was at the forefront of the national campaign against racial oppression and social injustice.



Molly Blackburn represented the Progressive Federal Party in the Cape Provincial Council during the 1980s, and was also a leading member of the Black Sash. She particularly spoke out against the abuses experienced by people of the Eastern Cape during the State of Emergency, defending their rights to justice. She is especially remembered for her dedication to obtaining the truth about the murder of the 'Cradock Four'. She died under suspicious circumstances, in a car accident in 1985, while on a journey in the Eastern Cape to take statements and record events.

In the Molly Blackburn Hall is a 3D visualisation of the history of the University of Cape Town since its creation out of the SA College in 1918. The 3D visualisation can also be seen at the following website: [www.cs.uct.ac.za/heritage](http://www.cs.uct.ac.za/heritage), and people are invited to send their own photographic memorabilia with clear dates to the following address: [heritage@cs.uct.ac.za](mailto:heritage@cs.uct.ac.za).

## 15 ACADEMIC FREEDOM WALL MOUNT

After the Extension of the University Education Act of 1959, despite vigorous opposition by UCT staff and students, the University lost its freedom to determine its admission policies. This infringement was formally commemorated in the 1960 Latin plaque, and the TB Davie Academic Freedom Lecture was instituted to recall this loss every year. In 1968 academic freedom at UCT was further restricted when the state compelled UCT to overturn its decision to appoint a black academic, Archie Mafeje, to its staff. This second restriction of UCT's academic freedom is commemorated by the 1968 Latin plaque.

During the 1970s and 1980s the state's grip on academic and personal freedoms tightened even more, producing open resistance by numbers of students and staff and bitter clashes with the police. Since 1990 the state's overt restrictions on academic freedom at UCT have been withdrawn, but the threat of its erosion by less direct means, from both within and without, should not be ignored. Tellingly, on the 1968 plaque a blank space still remains after the statement, 'The right to choose who shall teach was returned to UCT in'.

## 13 JAMESON HALL

The University's best-known icon, Jameson Hall, is named after Leander Starr Jameson (1853–1917), a medical doctor and confidant of Cecil John Rhodes, who led the illegal Jameson Raid on the Transvaal, which contributed to the outbreak of the Boer War. Although Jameson was convicted and imprisoned in England for this act, he later became Prime Minister of the Cape and strongly supported the efforts of the SA College to attain university status. After his death in 1917, his friends raised funds in his memory and contributed these towards the building costs of a great hall for the new University.

Portraits of four of the past Chancellors hang in this hall: Edward, Prince of Wales (Chancellor 1918–1936), Jan Christian Smuts (Chancellor 1937–50), Albert van der Sandt Centlivres (1951–1966) and Harry Oppenheimer (1967–1996). As yet there is no portrait of the current Chancellor, Graça Machel (1999–), the first woman and also first black Chancellor of UCT.

The large metal statue by sculptor Gavin Young, between Jameson Hall and the Library building is called *Hoerikwaggo*, which is the Khoisan name for Table Mountain.

