

# Athlone *in* Mind

Edited by Heidi Grunebaum and Kurt Campbell

A Centre for Humanities Research (University of the Western Cape) publication

Private Bag X17  
Bellville  
7535  
Cape Town  
South Africa

<http://www.chrflagship.uwc.ac.za/>

© Centre for Humanities Research, UWC, 2017

Individual artworks © with artists

Individual essays © with authors

Individual photographs © with photographer

Photographs of Jane Alexander's works © Mario Todeschini

ISBN 978-0-86808-763-4

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, or stored in retrieval systems, without prior written permission from the publishers.

'Athlone in Mind' project team: Heidi Grunebaum, Kurt Campbell, and Premesh Lalu

Curator and artistic director: Kurt Campbell

Editors: Heidi Grunebaum and Kurt Campbell

Copy editor: Russel Brownlee

Photographer of artists and artworks: Vanessa Cowling

Photographer of Jane Alexander's works: Mario Todeschini

Graphic design and layout: Melvin Pather from The Virtual Galleries

Printing: Scan Shop

This publication accompanies the exhibition, 'Athlone in Mind' curated by Kurt Campbell for the Centre for Humanities Research.

The exhibition forms part of the annual international meeting of the Consortium for Humanities Centres and Institutes, Cape Town Castle, Cape Town South Africa

10–13 August 2017



CENTRE FOR  
HUMANITIES  
RESEARCH

# Athlone in Mind

## Table Of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
<i>A Question of Place</i> by Heidi Grunebaum .....	4
<i>Curatorial notes on the exhibition 'Athlone in Mind'</i> by Kurt Campbell.....	11
<i>Commissioned Artists</i>	
Zyma Amien .....	16
Hasan and Husein Essop .....	21
Kemang Wa Lehulere .....	26
Dathini Mzayiya .....	32
Berni Searle .....	37
<i>Essays</i>	
<i>Between history and apocalypse: Stumbling</i> by Premesh Lalu.....	42
<i>Another Athlone: dreamscapes and the aesthetic imagination of faith</i> by Gabeba Baderoon.....	58
<i>In the tracks of jazz refuge(es): sounds cross Athlone</i> by Lindelwa Dalamba .....	66
<i>Athlone: Exploring the meaning of place through a journey of the sensible</i> by Michail Rassool .....	83
Festival Artist: Jane Alexander .....	96
Contributing Artists.....	101
Contributing Authors.....	105

## Acknowledgements

As in all collaborative efforts, the making of the 'Athlone in Mind' exhibition, book catalogue and digital platform has involved the efforts of many people. As the curator and editors, we wish to acknowledge the many contributions made in support of this book and the exhibition.

The Vice-Chancellor of UWC, Tyrone Pretorius, Director of Institutional planning, Larry Pokpas and Ramesh Bharuthram, Executive: Special Projects have supported this project from the outset. Their support of the CHR's vision and efforts to develop Humanities scholarship through a sustained encounter with art making across creative disciplines and in the absence of an as yet dedicated creative arts department, has resulted in this groundbreaking new exhibition of commissioned contemporary art and publishing project.

Premesh Lalu, Director of the CHR, merits our greatest thanks. His intellectual vision insists on ways of thinking attuned to the impossible demands of the current global predicaments. Lalu imagined this project long before its current iteration took shape or funding proposals were written.

Duncan Brown, Dean of the Arts Faculty, and the advisory board of the CHR: William Ellis, Patricia Hayes, Suren Pillay, Ciraj Rassool, Tamara Shefer, Jane Taylor, Herman Wittenberg and Leslie Witz have provided ongoing support and intellectual guidance in the academic programme of the CHR and research area of Aesthetics and Politics. We warmly thank the CHR's Lameez Lalkhen who has assisted with the administration of the project whilst simultaneously holding the intellectual work of the project on the horizon of her tireless efforts. Michail Rassool, archival research fellow, conducted oral interviews and archival research for the project, and CHR doctoral fellow and early career scholar, Aidan Erasmus filmed the interviews. We thank Fred Robertson for access to the Lydia Williams Centre for Memory which currently houses the Factory of the Arts.

We thank Sara Guyer, President of the Consortium for Humanities, Centres and Institutes (CHCI) and the board for selecting the CHR as host of its 2017 annual meeting.

We are grateful to photographer Vanessa Cowling, designer Melvin Pather from The Virtual Galleries, and copy editor Russel Brownlee, who have enabled us to produce a publication and digital platform that are aesthetically coherent and visually beautiful. We thank the CHR's Derek Carelse, and Cape Town Castle's Calvin Gilfillan and Faith Mtabati for making the exhibition installation space available. We thank artist Jane Alexander for accepting our invitation to appear as festival artist for the CHCI conference. We warmly thank the commissioned artists Zyma Amien, Hasan and Husein Essop, Kemang Wa Lehulere, Dathini Mzayiya and Berni Searle, as well as contributing authors Gabeba Baderoon, Lindelwa Dalamba, Premesh Lalu and Michail Rassool for accepting our invitation to create artworks and write about Athlone, respectively.

We acknowledge our debt to artist, curator, arts educator and cultural activist Emile Maurice, who passed away in September 2016. He was instrumental in developing a much earlier iteration of the project, then titled, 'Unlikely Arts.'

We pay homage to Ncedile Daki, our young colleague, artist in residence, puppeteer, puppet-maker, aspiring sculptor, and member of Ukwanda Puppet Design Collective who departed from this world so tragically and far too soon in February 2017.

This book is dedicated to both Ncedile Daki and to Emile Maurice.

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences and the Department of Science and Technology and National Research Foundation for generous grants that supported various stages of work, research, art making and production that have culminated in the '*Athlone in Mind*' project.

We thank SAGE journals for permission to reproduce the essay *Between History and Apocalypse: Stumbling* by Premesh Lalu (first published in *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education*).

The author, editors and publisher will not accept any legal responsibility for any errors or omissions that may be made in this publication. The publisher makes no warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein.