THE REMAINS BEHIND THE RENAME

THE HERITAGE OF SARAH BAARTMAN HALL AS RECOUNTED BY CAMPUS ARCHITECTURE

Le'Passion Darby, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

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For my mother, Frances Ellen Poole (1954-2021)

FOREWORD

Since February 2018, I have served as University Landscape Architect and Heritage Practitioner within the Campus Planning and Design Team at the University of Cape Town, where I also obtained both my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and served as a studio master and lecturer in landscape architecture and city planning.

As directed by then Deputy Vice Chancellor for Transformation, Professor Loretta Ferris, I was responsible for facilitating the permit application process to the Provincial Heritage Authority (Heritage Western Cape) for the renaming of Sarah Baartman Hall.

Official sanction was necessary, not because the heritage authority has a jurisdiction over (or interest in) the actual names that private institutions give to their buildings, but rather because the old name (Jameson Memorial Hall) was physically affixed to the entablature of the pediment of the building in bronze lettering, and renaming would entail removing these letters and replacing them – causing a physical change (and possible damage) to the building; therefore, a methodology statement detailing the letter removal and replacement strategy was required.

The Upper Campus of the University of Cape Town is considered to be a set piece of urban design, occupying a highly visible position on a series of terraces on the lower slopes of Devil's Peak, above the rest of the city. Within this composition, Sarah Baartman Hall occupies the central and most prominent position, with the plaza space in front of it functioning as a sort of university 'town square'.

The Hall was designed to 'crown' the upper most terrace of the campus, signifying the dignity and aspiration of learning rising hierarchically through the terraces, and culminating in the ceremony of graduation – the crowning achievement of academic life – taking place within the heart of the Hall. Thus, Sarah Baartman Hall, with its forecourt plaza is a highly symbolic spatial construct, powerfully positioned within the heart of the campus. It is only natural that this has always been the site for the gathering of the university community, not only for celebration, but also for protest and demonstration, many times throughout the years.

The renaming of the Hall was indeed a significant moment for transformation of the university, at least symbolically, as it seemed to me that apart from the new letters upon the entablature, little else had changed spatially. Between colleagues within our campus planning team we debated whether or not renaming went far enough to effect meaningful transformation – and what the physical and spatial implications and manifestation of transformation could mean for the campus environment.

Possibilities include extending the avenue of trees flanking the plaza further into the forecourt (whilst still preserving sightlines and framed views), but providing shade and shelter throughout the year. And, incorporating Indigenous African plants into the space (including those that Sarah Baartman and her family might have used for medicinal and healing purposes) would root the space firmly within its African context, as would introducing a more textured and vibrant surface treatment within the paving of the plaza itself.

Peeling back retaining walls and inserting ramps into the terraces would enable universal access, and the integration of narrative artwork through a sequence of spatial experiences and thresholds through the space and across the campus would give meaningful expression to the living story of transformation.

From a peripheral matter, some years ago, transformation has become far more of a central theme in the life of the university.

Within this context, I believe that the renaming of the great Hall in honour of Sarah Baartman has been well-received, and carries a strong message: That Black South African identity is valued and celebrated, and that a more comprehensive representation of the diversity of the campus community is starting to transform the physical environment in real and tangible ways. I imagine a sense of validation, even vindication, is justified; though in terms of a thorough transformation of space, there is still a long road ahead.

Yet whatever decision UCT eventually takes, I believe that we are making history.

David Gibbs
University Landscape Architect, University of Cape Town

INTRODUCTION

There are one hundred eighty-one steps between the empty plinth where the statue of Cecil John Rhodes once sat and the recently renamed Sarah Baartman Hall at the University of Cape Town (UCT). The Jammie Steps, the plinth, and the Hall communicate heritage at the university, perhaps more markedly than any of the campus' other countless monuments. This essay will present and analyze that heritage by chronicling the evolution of the Hall from its 1929 construction to its 2018 renaming, conceptualizing campus architecture as recounters of institutional heritage and messaging, and culminating with a discussion on the potential of the Hall and its adjacent artifacts as an ensemble space for the study of Sarah Baartman and the advancement of transformation at UCT. The essay begins with a timeline of Baartman's saga and a homage to the return of her remains to South Africa.

SSEHURA/ SARAH BAARTMAN/ SAARTJIE BAARTMAN/ THE VENUS HOTTENTOT/ UNKNOWN BIRTHNAME

The Indigenous name of Sarah Baartman is still unknown, though it is believed to be Ssehura (Willis, 2010; Ade, 2021). Her misnomers, however, include Sarah Baartman, Saartjie Baartman, and Venus Hottentot (Moudileno, 2009; Tillet, 2009; McKittrick, 2010; Gordon-Chipembere, 2011; Henderson, 2014; Mothoagae, 2016; Parkinson, 2016), all of which are of Dutch origin. The Dutch have had a colonial and linguistic history in South Africa since they first settled on what is now Cape Town in 1652 (Meeuwis, 2018). The language spoken by the Dutch in South Africa has evolved into the dialect known today as Afrikaans (Meeuwis, 2018), and is one of South Africa's eleven official languages.

It is probable that the name "Sarah" was given to Baartman by the Dutch people to whom she was employed (South Africa History Online, 2013; Parkinson, 2016). "Saartjie" is Dutch for "little Sara" (Qureshi, 2004), and given that Baartman died at the age of 26 (South African History Online, 2013) after five years of being trafficked throughout Europe, one can speculate that she was indeed a young girl when she was taken from South Africa, hence the diminutive "Saartjie." Additionally, and based on McKoy's (2011) account of Baartman's story – in which McKoy chooses to refer to Baartman as "Sarah" because it is "less objectionable than 'The Venus Hottentot'" (p. 87) – she confirms that it was not uncommon for Baartman's Indigenous nation, the Khoi, to have Dutch names after a century of intermingling with the Dutch by the time Sarah was taken to Europe by her abductors (McKoy, 2011).

It was also not uncommon for Khoisan people to be referred to as Hottentot by the Dutch (Marks, 1972; McKoy, 2011). The Khoisan (a contraction of "Khoi" and "San") are the original peoples of South Africa and were derogatorily referred to as Hottentots (bushmen) by Dutch settlers (Marks, 1972). The Khoisan are comprised of two separate but related nations – the Khoikhoi (pastoralists/herders) and the San (hunter-gatherers) (Marks, 1972), both of whom resided on the land, though were somewhat nomadic (McKoy, 2011). Cave art discovered in Cape Town by archaeologists verifies that the San had lived on the land for at least 30,000 years before the arrival of Europeans (Witelson, et al., 2021). However, land wars amongst the Khoi, San, and Dutch during the latter part of the 17th century (Marks, 1972) resulted in the "extermination" (de Prada-Samper, 2012, para. 6) of the Khoisan for the most part and the escape to other southern African countries (e.g., Botswana, Namibia) for those Khoisan who survived (McKoy, 2011).

Marks (1972), Barnard (2004), and de Prada-Samper (2012) suggest that the Khoisan now suffer cultural extinction. In fact, UCT does not differentiate nor list Khoisan descendants as an ethnic student group amongst its 28,693 students (P. Mgolombane, personal communication, November 22, 2021). Students who possibly have Khoisan ancestry are grouped demographically at UCT as "generic Black" and "Black South Africans," and collectively, those students make up 45 percent of the undergraduate and graduate populations. The Dutch descendants, however, remain in South Africa at 5.2 percent of the total population despite the 1806 colonization of the country by the British. Some of those descendants are now known as the Afrikaners ethnic group (Meeuwis, 2018) and are too listed in the "generic Black" category at UCT. Descendants of other European settlers (e.g., German, French Huguenots, English, Portuguese) (Ramerini, 1998; Meeuwis, 2018) are categorized by UCT as "white" and make up 22 percent of the student population (UCT, 2022).

Sarah's encounters with the Dutch began tragically. Though the saga of Sarah can vary depending on the

author, seminal publications (Crais & Scully, 2010; Gordon-Chipembere, 2011; Destiny-Bey & Parks, 2017; Holmes, 2020) concur that she was born in 1789 in South Africa's Eastern Cape, and that her mother and father passed away during her childhood and adolescence, respectively. Sarah married young and began domestic service in Cape Town after her husband was killed by a Dutch colonist; the child she bore with her husband also died (Parkinson, 2016).

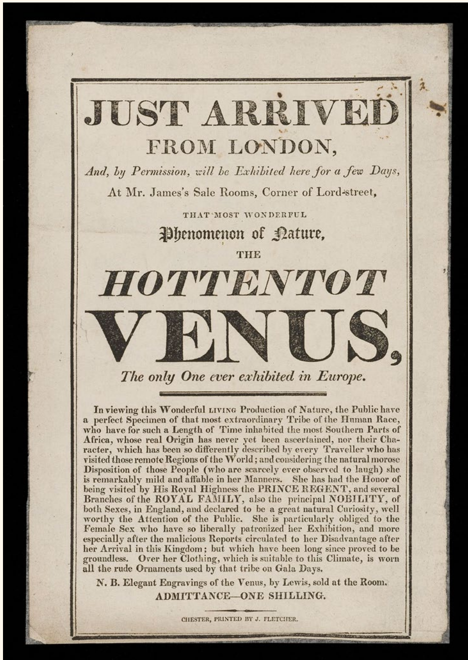

Image 1: Small poster advertising the exhibition of the Hottentot Venus.

Following her husband's murder, Sarah was sold to Dutchman Pieter Willem Cezar to work as a domestic slave. Cezar relocated Sarah to Cape Town, where she worked for his brother, Hendrik. Though Sarah was from an ethnic group whose cultural heritage was absent of written literacy (South African History Online, 2013), it is alleged that she signed a contract on October 29, 1810 (Howard, 2018) that committed her to travel to England with Hendrik and his colleague William Dunlop to "take part in shows." (Parkinson, 2016, para. 9). Under these false pretenses, Sarah was lured away from her Indigenous land to Europe where she would be exploited, sexually trafficked, and put on exhibit for both English men and women spectators who were perversely fascinated with Sarah's genitals, large buttocks (McKoy, 2011), and skin tone (Ndlovu, 2011). Sarah spent four years on mostly naked display at Piccadilly Circus in London, where she was caged, prodded, and ogled by strangers (McKoy, 2011; Parkinson, 2016).

Abolitionists became aware of Sarah's captivity during her enslavement and legally charged Dunlap and Cezar with holding Sarah against her will. The defendants used Sarah's signed contract to prove their innocence, and it was reported that even Sarah herself testified in their favor though she was more than likely coerced (Parkinson, 2016). The court case backfired, and subsequently increased the popularity of Sarah's exhibit within Europe, which resulted in Baartman becoming a traveling exposition (Parkinson, 2016). Dunlap and Cezar were never convicted, and the legal case was dismissed (McKoy, 2011).

In 1814, Sarah was sold to a French animal trainer named S. Reaux (McKoy, 2011), who specialized in animal exhibits and profited a great deal from the consequent and sexual exploitation of Sarah, which included private shows for Reaux's wealthy clients who were allowed to touch Sarah at their pleasure (Parkinson, 2016). Sarah's "act" (McKoy, 2011, p. 89) was quite popular in Paris thanks to London-based press coverage during her time in the United Kingdom (Image 1). It was in Paris that Sarah became known by the nickname "The Hottentot Venus," which McKoy (2011) suggests further dehumanized Baartman. Reaux often displayed Sarah alongside animals, and she was ordered by Reauz to take on circus animal-like poses to entertain onlookers (South African History Online, 2013).

Baartman died in Reaux's Paris home on December 29, 1815 at age 26 for reasons that are still undetermined (McKoy, 2011; Parkinson, 2016). Her tragedy did not end with her passing, however. In *The Significance of Sarah Baartman*, Parkinson (2016) writes that Sarah's body parts were used as a museum display at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris "to support racist theories about people of African ancestry. Some of the body parts remained on display until 1974" (para. 23). Sarah's dissected brain, skeleton, and sexual organs were part of the assemblage for more than 160 years (McKoy, 2011; Parkinson, 2016).

Before Sarah's remains were housed at Musée de l'Homme, French anatomist, Georges Cuvier - to whom local police had given Sarah's body - dismembered her anatomy for a research study that contributed to the European-based scientific discourse that people of African descent were inferior (McKoy, 2011; South African History Online, 2013). Despicably, Cuvier's probing centered on Sarah's genitalia, by which he

hypothesized her inferiority after he had "meticulously cut and measured" (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011, p. 10) her sex organs and stored them in jars of formaldehyde along with her brain. Cuvier's findings were supported by other white European scientists and philosophers who posited that Europeans were a superior species (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011).

THE REMAINS

Baartman's mutilated remains were returned to South Africa after an eight-year campaign initiated by Sarah's kindred (Moudileno, 2009) and spearheaded by the Nelson Mandela administration (Tillet, 2009; Henderson, 2014; Parkinson, 2016). Mandela, the first post-apartheid president of South Africa, formally requested that the French government return Baartman's remains as well as a plaster cast of her body molded by Cuvier after the artifacts had been displayed for 160 years and placed in Cabinet Number 33 for storage thereafter (Barnard, 2004; Gordon-Chipembere, 2011; Henderson, 2014). The French resisted in several ways, including stalling talks between themselves and South African representatives, including Mandela (Henderson, 2014), and drafting a dual-purposed bill that authorized Baartman's return while simultaneously prohibiting other countries from making future claims on objects stolen by the French (Henderson, 2014).

French Senator, Nicolas About, finally persuaded his government to return Sarah's remains after convincing relevant parties that "the Baartman case was unique and not part of a worldwide initiative to return the bones of colonized people everywhere that lay in private and public collections." (Henderson, 2014, p. 947). According to legal documents, "a plaster cast, preserved organs, a skeleton and waxed moulds of genital parts" (Moudileno, 2009, p. 209) were transported to the South African government on March 6, 2002, and buried in Hankey, South Africa (approximately 500 miles east of Cape Town) on August 9, 2002, National Women's Day in South Africa (Tillet, 2009). The national burial ceremony (Image 2) was attended by Mandela's successor, President Thabo Mbeki, as well as Khoisan representatives. While some doubt that the objects returned by the French are Baartman's remains (Moudileno, 2009), Baartman advocates are understandably unwilling to have what is presumed to be Sarah's dismantled corpse subjected to exhumation for DNA testing (Moudileno, 2009).

Image 2: Associated Press (2002). The re-interment of Baartman's remains takes place in South Africa.

CAMPUS ARCHITECTURE AS RECOUNTERS OF INSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE AND MESSAGING

Campus ecologist, James Banning, and his colleagues have published a body of scholarship that analyzes the communicative properties of campus architecture and spans five decades. Banning's research consistently lists architecture as one of the four primary physical artifacts (objects) common to college and university environments (Banning, 1993; Banning, 1997; Banning & Bartels, 1997; Banning et al., 2008; Banning, 2018); the others are art, signs, and graffiti. As architecture, Sarah Baartman Hall can intrinsically recount messages of equity (Banning et al., 2008), multiculturalism (Banning & Bartels, 1997), and diversity (Banning, 2018). Banning's 50-year research agenda has expounded upon these concepts.

1970s

Banning and Kaiser's 1974 publication, "Ecological Perspective and Model for Campus Design", ushered in the "campus ecology movement" (Banning & Bryner, 2001, p. 1), and introduced the campus environment as a communication medium. In Banning and Kaiser (1974), the ecological perspective for campus design is compared to the unenlightened perspective, the adjustment perspective, and the developmental perspective. Banning and Bryner (2001) describe the latter three perspectives as one-sided (2001). The unenlightened perspective presumes that some students do not belong in college and will therefore not persist to graduation. The adjustment perspective concludes that providing students with student affairs-based services (e.g., counseling) can make them a better fit

for the campus environment. While students are not excluded from the campus as with the unenlightened perspective, they are advised to adjust themselves to fit into the campus environment. On the other hand, the developmental perspective assumes that college students must first mature before fully appreciating the campus environment. Thus, with these three perspectives, the responsibility of the student-environment transaction falls solely on the student.

The ecological perspective, however,

> Overcomes the one-sidedness of the other perspectives… The focus of concern is not solely on student characteristics or environmental characteristics but on the transactional relationship between students and their environment… On campus, therefore, the attempt is to design environments in which the transactions between the student and environment will foster optimum educational growth and development." (Banning, 1974, p. 371-372).

The ecological perspective also acknowledges that the effect that people and their behavior have on the environment is symbiotic, and "different people respond differently in different types of environments." (p. 374).

For the most advantageous campus design, the professional expertise of college counselors (Conyne et al., 1979), health center personnel, community mental health staff, architecture/environmental design faculty, auxiliary staff, and existing campus committees (Banning, 1978) should be consulted (Banning, 1979). Students should also be included in the campus design process (Banning, 1978).

1980s

In Behavioral Traces: A Concept for Campus Ecologists, Banning (1988) presents traces as a methodology for deducing student behavior for the intentional design or redesign of campus architecture. Reading traces – by-products of use, adaptation of use, displays of self, and public messages – can reveal to campus personnel how students use architecture and the ways in which said architecture can be constructed to optimize student development (Banning, 1980; 1988).

> **By-products** are produced by people interacting with the environment (e.g., *erosion* – worn sidewalks or staircases/stairwells, *leftovers* – trash and litter left in campus buildings or on campus sitting walls, *missing traces* – campus buildings and surrounding areas that were designed for use but are not being used by students).
>
> **Adaptation for use** occurs when campus buildings are changed because "the first design did not serve its original intention." (Banning, 1988, p. 1) (e.g., renovations, expansions, improvements, redecorations, additions, demolitions, removal).
>
> **Displays of self** materializes when campus buildings are "used to convey messages about individual and group ownership" (Banning, 1988, p. 1) (e.g., Greek letters on sorority houses, signs marking residence hall floors/marketing student organizations).
>
> **Public messages** include "official signs, symbolic images, and graffiti." (Banning, 1988, p. 2). Campus architecture is a hotspot for public messages (Banning, 1988), and name inscriptions on campus buildings can be explicit public statements as well as important nonverbal recounters (Banning & Cunard, 1986; Banning, 1989).

1990s

Banning and Bartels (1997) present a taxonomy by which architecture such as campus buildings (and the offices and spaces within campus buildings) can be accessed for nonverbal messages of belonging, safety, equality, and roles (Banning & Cunard, 1996). The authors define architecture as "the physical structures within educational settings, including classrooms" (p. 32), and recognize the ability of architecture to communicate content related to multiculturalism (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability). As artifacts, campus buildings hold encoded messages that are both positive and negative (Banning & Bartels, 1997).

To promote positive messaging by way of campus architecture, however, Banning and Banning (1995) recommend that campus buildings and the areas among and between them be designed for informal learning that "promote a 'sense of place' or 'landscape'" (p. 1) as well as social interaction among campus users (students, faculty, administrators, and visitors). Artifacts such as wayfinding signs can transmit messages of welcome for affiliated and visiting campus users if they are: 1) "given at the point that a decision needs to be made." (p. 2), 2) easily legible, 3) short and readable, 4) reliable, and 5) accessible (Banning, 1996).

2000s

In an article focused on student unions, Banning (2000) suggests that the messages that campus buildings send are embedded in the signs, symbols, and artwork (e.g., paintings, posters, statuary, murals) added to and around said buildings by those who inhabit the campus. Along with other architectural features such as sidewalks, plazas, campus lawns, parking lots, and green spaces, these artifacts disseminate messages about equity and diversity as well as institutional values (Banning, 2002; Bott et al., 2006). For example, programming spaces for public speakers, music programs, and cultural performances can demonstrate an institution's interest in promoting the arts to students (Banning, 2001; 2002). Carefully selected colors, feature sizes, and shapes highlight the importance the institution places on providing an aesthetically pleasing environment for its inhabitants (Banning, 2002; Bott et al., 2006).

Overall, campus buildings and the messages they relay should foster a sense of place, which Banning's co-authors, Bott et al. (2006) define as "an emotional bonding to a particular geographical place" (p. 42); senses of ownership, territoriality, and learning are also important messages to impart by way of campus architecture (Bott et al., 2006). Collectively, these messages produce positive moods, perspectives, attitudes, and feelings among passersby, give the aura of an "organic habitat or 'village'" (p. 43), and advance the mission and goals of the institution (Bott et al., 2006). Architectural artifacts that support a sense of place include landmarks, style materials, universal seating, and objects that "promote special ceremonial, cultural history" (p. 46) and "engage people in conversation and discussion." (p. 46).

2010s

Banning's most recent research on campus ecology continues the discourse on sense of place (Banning, 2012; Thomas & Banning, 2014), and aligns with the technological advances of the millennium (Banning, 2018). Most relevant to the renaming of Sarah Baartman Hall, however, is Banning (2018), which proposes that photographs taken by cellular phones can be used to extract and interpret diversity messages sent by campus artifacts. Dissimilar to the taxonomy illustrated in Banning and Bartels (1997), the taxonomy for diversity photographs in Banning (2018) measures equity (community, inclusion, safety, and welcoming) within campus environments and allows for "additional categories" (p. 49). These affordances make room for equity parameters that can exist among campus buildings in non-western contexts such as South Africa and for Indigenous campus users such as the descendants of the Khoisan and other Black South Africans. Forty-six photographs dispersed throughout Banning (2018) challenge readers to evaluate campus artifacts for their message content on a spectrum of:

Negative: "...clearly discriminatory and produces a hostile climate for students of diversity" (p. 47).

Null: "captures the circumstances when a campus has an absence of negative, but yet no positives" (p. 47-48).

Contributive/Additive: "captures positive messages, but the messages are presented without the call for personal involvement to bring about change" (p. 48).

Transformational/Social Action:
"The transformational message is also positive, but calls for a personal commitment to transform campus culture" (p. 48).

Image 3. Sarah Baartman Hall. University of Cape Town
Photograph provided by Lerato Maduna

The 2018 renaming of Sarah Baartman Hall (Image 3) was a transformational/social action approach taken by UCT to replace the negative, null, and contributive/additive messaging communicated by the building's first namesake, Jameson Hall. The next section will recount the heritage of the Hall and its surrounding landscape. Per Banning (2018), it will also evaluate the historical messaging broadcasted by this campus conglomeration.

MEMORIAL ASSEMBLY HALL; NEGATIVE MESSAGING

The January 1921 issue of *School Life* published by the U.S. Department of the Interior announces the construction of Memorial Assembly Hall at the University of Cape Town:

> Building construction on the University of Cape Town site at Groote Shuur, South Africa, will soon be in full operation, according to the Christian Science Monitor. The site, which is the one that Cecil Rhodes thought most suitable for the purpose, is on a beautiful slope, with an expanse of flowering shrubbery below and stately Devils Peak above. The university is to consist of seven blocks of buildings with the Memorial Assembly Hall, with an accommodation of 2,000, at the central point. The white pillars and high dome at the latter will stand out in bold relief against the crags of the mountain. The architect made a tour of the English, French, and American universities in order to incorporate their best features in the Groote Schuur buildings, adapting them, of course, to their South African environments and requirements. (School Life, 1921, p. 14).

The headline for this article is "Stately Buildings for African University."

Establishing the University of Cape Town at Groote Schuur was the brainchild of Cape Town's first Prime Minister and southern Africa imperialist, Cecil John Rhodes, whose likeness would later become the center of the #RhodesMustFall campaign at UCT in 2015 and at Rhodes' alma mater, Oxford College, in 2016. During his tenure, Rhodes resided at the two-hectare Groote Schuur (Dutch for Great Barn) and held political aspirations of unifying the English and Afrikaners. To this end, he aimed to "establish one national, teaching university on his estate at Groote Schuur, where English and Dutch-speakers could mingle during their student years, thus laying a foundation for future cooperation." (Phillips, 1993, p. 2).

The University was incorporated on April 2, 1918. With state and private funding, the facilities at the original campus (Groote Kerk) were relocated to the new campus, which its private donors proposed to be residential in nature (Phillips, 1993). In August 1916, 32-year-old architect, J. M. Solomon, had been selected to design the site. Throughout 1917, and per the previously mentioned *School Life* article, Solomon traveled to campuses in both Europe and the United States for architectural inspiration. He returned that same year with design concepts for two residence halls (now Fuller Hall and the recently unnamed Smuts Hall), a sports field, and a quadrangle system, all to be positioned on separate, symmetric terraces alongside an ascending hillside and in route to the local main road (Phillips, 1993). Collectively, these campus artifacts would "culminate in a large central block housing the Administrative Offices, the Faculty of Arts and a domed assembly hall, suggestive of Jefferson's University of Virginia." (Phillips, 1993, p. 147) (Image 4).

Image 4. Tom Richey (2020). University of Virginia Rotunda.

The third president of the United States and the initial architect of University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, had designed his university's focal building, the Rotunda, to be the "centerpiece" of the campus. "Modeled after the Pantheon in Rome, it was designed to house the library and be flanked on either side by faculty pavilions, interspersed with student rooms." (University of Virginia, 2022). Two staircases lead up to the Rotunda (University of Virginia, 2022), and the red brick, three-story structure sits on a "rectangular, terraced green space" (Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2022), is crowned with a wooden dome, and is poised by six Corinthian columns.

Solomon's vision for UCT's assembly hall began with a similar concept but ended with a conspicuous

architectural discrepancy: the dome. The original architectural drawings (Images 5 to 8) present “a single volume space with an upstairs gallery … 35 stairs are part of the larger campus terracing design … only the upper most 15 could be considered as properly part of the building” (D. Gibbs, personal communication, November 19, 2021). Mimicking the Rotunda, six Corinthian columns are positioned in the front of the Hall. Four columns flank the J. W. Jaggery Library and Otto Beit University Union, respectively. The Hall itself was sketched with a large gold dome covering its roof (Image 9). However, as Phillips (1993) reveals, the Great Depression and dwindling endowments,

> Abridged the scheme, sacrificing size, decoration, and even what the architects described as the ‘culminating point of the whole group’, the dome. ‘Finance was the deciding factor in the end.’ As a concession, stanchions were built into the structure so a dome could be added subsequently. Sixty years later it has not been.” (p. 180). (Image 10)

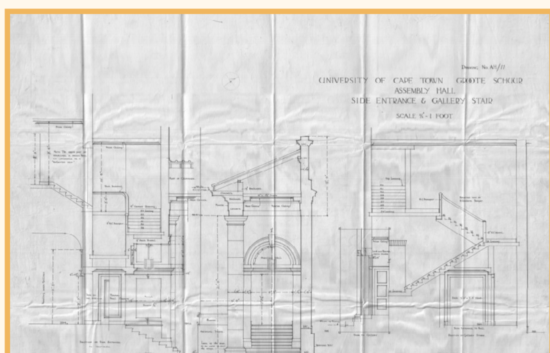

Image 5: Original architectural drawing of Memorial Hall. Photograph provided by David Gibbs.

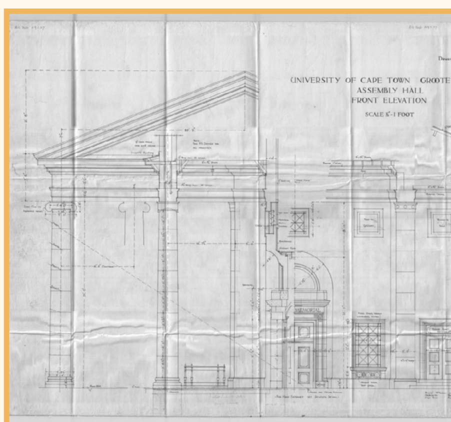

Image 6: Original architectural drawing of Memorial Hall. Photograph provided by David Gibbs.

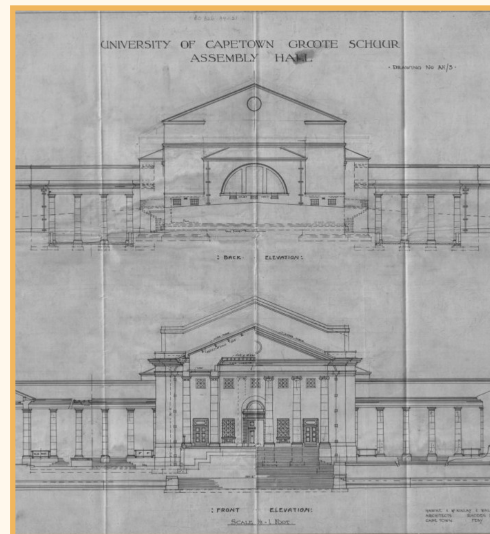

Image 7: Original architectural drawing of Memorial Hall. Photograph provided by David Gibbs.

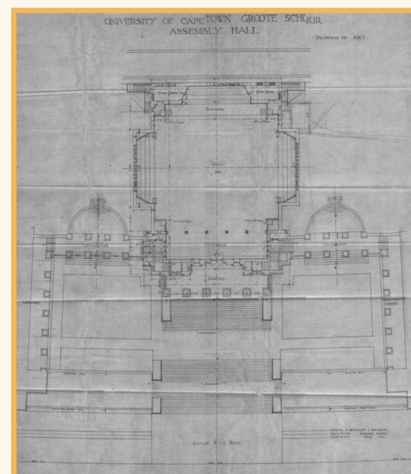

Image 8: Original architectural drawing of Memorial Hall. Photograph provided by David Gibbs.

Image 9: Architectural line drawing of front of Jameson Hall. UCT Libraries Digital Collections.

Another deterrent to construction, however, was the labor force. More than 300 African workmen contributed to the construction of the Hall and other Groote Shuur facilities but chose not to travel to campus in winter weather conditions to prevent “a wasted expense” (Phillips, 1993, p. 156). When frustrated contractors requested that an on-campus compound

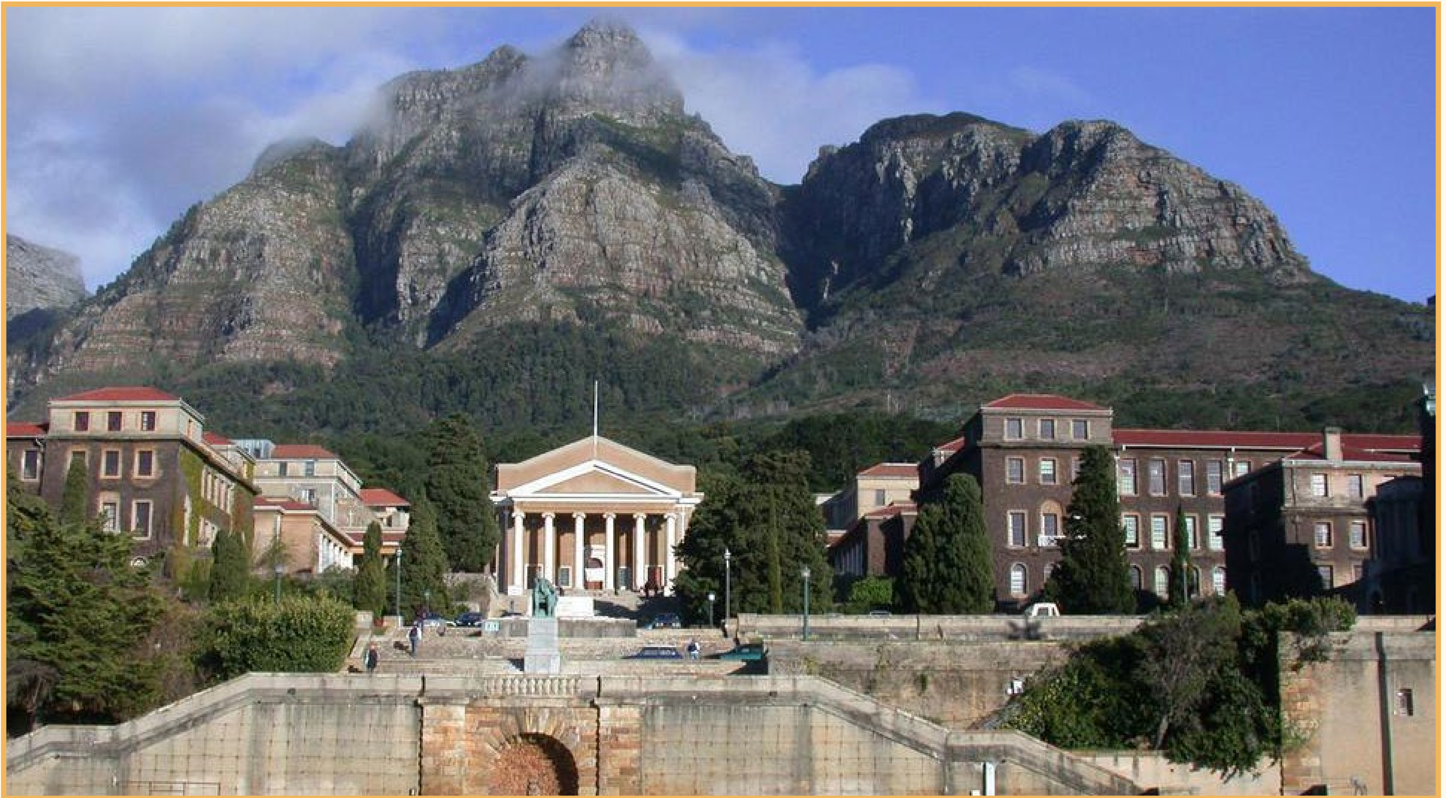

Image 10: The University of Cape Town UCT. Cape Town Mapping Project.

be built for the African workers as it had been for the white laborers, UCT "flatly refused" and, in writing, had "expressly forbidden the erection of quarters for workers who were not white" (Phillips, 1993, p. 156). This absence of physical accommodations for the African workers sent a clear and early message of exclusion to the Indigenous peoples of the land on which the campus was built.

JAMESON MEMORIAL HALL; NEGATIVE MESSAGING

Construction on the Hall was complete in 1932, but financially backed proposals to have the Hall named in honor of Scottish colonial politician, Sir Leander Starr Jameson, began one year after Jameson's death in 1917 and was accepted by the university in 1918. Jameson was the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony from 1904 to 1908 and shared an alliance with Cecil Rhodes that brought incalculable and ceaseless obliteration to Indigenous South Africans and their sense of place (e.g., Matabele War (1893); Jameson Raid (1895); Natives Land Act (1913) – viewed as the precursor to apartheid) (South African History Online, 2019). Though immeasurably destructive to Black South Africans in his own right, Jameson's association with Rhodes on the heels of the 2015 removal of the Rhodes statue at UCT put Jameson "no longer in favor" with much of the UCT campus body (D. Gibbs, personal communication, November 19, 2021). Until that time, however, Jameson's name had become synonymous with UCT and had mutated into terms of endearment (or verbal campus artifacts) (Kuh & Hall, 1993) that describe the Hall, the large upper terrace on which the Hall sits, the steps leading to the Hall, and the UCT bus fleet that transports students between the terraces below the Hall and to the Hall itself.

In 1932, as the "university's symbol building" (Coulson et al., 2015, p. 3), Jameson Memorial Hall became the longstanding venue for UCT's annual graduation ceremonies. Since then, the Hall has been used for student dances, writing of academic exams, and gathering of student organizations (Phillips, 1993). Formal campus meetings, dinners, and speeches have also been held in the Hall; Nelson Mandela, Bobby Kennedy, and former U.S. President Barack Obama have all spoken there (Hunma, 2018).

The uppermost terrace is referred to as Jameson Plaza and has historically been a performative space (Hunma, 2018) where student events and protests have occurred (Image 11), including the 2015 #RhodesMustFall movement, a series of protests

that led to the removal of the Cecil J. Rhodes statue. The steps leading to Jameson Plaza are referred to as "Jammie Steps" (Image 12 and 13). According to Phillips (1993), the tradition of "stepsitting" – the daily gathering and socializing of UCT students on the Jammie Steps – was established shortly after the Hall was officially in use and is a popular student pastime; a 1934 photograph of all-white students stepsitting during a political rally is featured in Phillips' book.

Image 11: UCT Student Protest, Jammie Steps, Cape Town. UCT Libraries Digital Collections.

Image 12: Detail of Jameson Hall. UCT Libraries Digital Collections.

Image 13: Diagram of Jammie Steps from empty plinth to Sarah Baartman Hall. Photograph provided by David Gibbs.

The Jammie Steps extend to the lower terrace where a bronze, 900-kilogram statue of a seated Cecil Rhodes was unveiled in 1934. According to South African History Online (2019), until the 2015 removal of the statue, it "had stood erect for eighty-one years serving as a dual representation of a figure that stimulated South Africa's economy, but at the expense of the subjugation of Black people for the provision of cheap labor…" (para. 1).

Lastly, the Jammie Shuttle is UCT's 26-vehicle fleet bus system. Though the buses were rebranded as "UCT Shuttle" in January 2022, the vehicles had sent negative messages to non-white campus users through graphics of Jameson's name on the buses, bus stop signs (Image 14), and the Shuttle's mobile app since their deployment in the 1990s (Hunma, 2018). The buses were stamped with a "Jammie Shuttle" logo, and the drivers, some of whom are of Indigenous South African descent, were required to wear uniforms with the logo embroidered. UCT also rents 200 21-speed "Jammie Bikes" to students with the words "Jammie Bike" imprinted on the bike's down tube in UCT colors (Image 15). Diff-Riddell et al. (2006) acknowledge that all these artifacts are "colonial symbols" (p. 2) that challenge some UCT students' sense of belonging; still, the authors consider the Jammie Shuttle a UCT landmark and believe that the distinct and permeable branding of the affiliated artifacts also offer "a sense of security" (p. 114) to campus users. But to which campus users?

Image 14: Jammie Shuttle Bus Sign.

Image 15: Jammie Bike. Bicycle South.

SARAH BAARTMAN HALL; TRANSFORMATIONAL/SOCIAL ACTION MESSAGING

Black South Africans were not allowed to enroll at UCT until 1923. Racist policies at the institution and nationwide (e.g., 1948 institution of apartheid; 1959 Extension of University Education Act) prohibited admission to Black South Africans. The "handful" (Phillips, 1993, p. 114) of Black South Africans who were admitted in 1923 and decades thereafter were barred from access to major faculties (e.g., Medicine; Fine Arts) and participation in learning activities that would instigate intimate interactions among Black and white students (Phillips, 1993).

According to a UCT article on the history of the university,

> The number of Black students remained relatively low until the 1980s and 90s, when the institution, reading and welcoming the signs of change in the country, committed itself to a deliberate and planned process of internal transformation. From the 1980s to the early 1990s, the number of Black students admitted to the university rose by 35 percent. By 2004, nearly half of UCT's 20,000 students were Black ... (UCT, 2022, para. 11)

The increase in Black student enrollment in the 1990s aligns with the 1994 end of the apartheid era, which by law, restricted the numbers of Black students entering South African universities. Throughout apartheid, Black students were met at UCT with segregation and racism by white students and faculty. They were prohibited from residing in UCT residence halls, participating in sports and student government, and attending social activities such as the popular Jameson Hall dances. Indigenous students also experienced ostracization within lecture halls, laboratories, and the Student Union located on Jameson Plaza, where they often sat at separate tables when eating (Phillips, 1993). The alienation by white UCT constituents led many Black students to avoid social spaces on campus and to forgo significant UCT student events. The unspoken institutional ethos was that Black students "should be neither seen nor heard outside classes," and that they were "comprehensively excluded" and "unwelcome" (Phillips, 1993, p. 193) at university events. These sentiments were even illustrated on a 1944 student poster that announces "Dance Tonight! Only Unpigmented Persons Admitted!!!" (Phillips, 1993).

By 1945, 76 Indigenous Africans were enrolled at UCT (Phillips, 1993). As the academic years passed, and with a steady increase in Black student enrollment, some institution-based racist policies and bans were reluctantly lifted in response to student protests and other forms of resistance to the status quo by both Black and non-Black campus users (Phillips, 1993). Despite these advances and the end of apartheid-based higher education legislation, artifacts that reminded students of UCT's colonial beginnings remained within the campus environment, with the most prominent being those objects named in honor of ruthless, anti-Indigenous imperialists (e.g., Cecil J. Rhodes, Sir Leander Jameson, Jan Christian Smuts, Sir John Carruthers Beattie).

The campus environment mirrored the national environment in that material culture representing the Khoisan people were scanty (Barnard, 2004; Boezak, 2017), and students identifying as Khoisan descendants were not recorded by the university (P. Mgolombane, personal communication, November 22, 2021), further minimizing the indigeneity of those students' ancestors to the land on which UCT sits (Barnard, 2004; Fairbanks, 2015).

Image 16: Bosch, R. (2015). A statue of Cecil John Rhodes was removed from the campus of the University of Cape Town.

These campus norms came to a head on March 9, 2015, when frustrated, Black South African UCT student, Chumani Maxwele, defaced the Rhodes statue with human excrements while shouting to bystanders, "Where are *our* heroes and ancestors?" (Fairbanks, 2015, para. 7). Maxwele's outcry was immediately followed by a string of on-campus protests by UCT students and staff that "revealed that behind this scenic façade, a great number of the Black students were very, very angry." (Fairbanks, 2015, para. 7). The collective movement was coined the #RhodesMustFall campaign, and a four-page mission statement was drafted that synopsized the resentments of UCT's Black student population: "This movement is not just about the removal of a statue … At the root of this struggle is the dehumanization of Black people at UCT." (RMF, 2015, p. 1). The statement demanded "the removal of all statues and plagues on campus celebrating white supremacists" (p. 4) and included demands directly related to UCT architecture:

- Rename buildings and roads from names commemorating only white people to names of either Black historical figures, or to names that contribute to this university taking seriously its African positionality.
- Recognize that the history of those who built our university – enslaved and working class Black people – has been erased through institutional culture.
- Pay more attention to historical sites of violence, such as the slave graves beneath the buildings in which we learn. (RMF, 2015, p. 3)

The Rhodes statue was removed from campus on April 9, 2015 (null messaging) (Image 16). Later that year, on November 11th, a Jammie Shuttle was set ablaze; some UCT constituents blamed protestors, and others blamed poor bus maintenance (UCT, 2015). On December 10, 2016, UCT issued a *Strategic Planning Framework* with a "focus on transformation" (UCT, 2016, p. 10), which aimed to interrogate "coloniality" (UCT, 2016, p. 10). The Framework commits UCT to "understand, debate, and engage with a process of decolonization" (p. 10), and to create an institutional culture that reinforces "a new, inclusive identity for UCT through an appropriate display of artworks, symbols, building names, and the use of Indigenous South African languages." (UCT, 2016, p. 11).

As part of the latter charge, the UCT Council (the University's governing body) passed a resolution in June 2016 to rename Jameson Memorial Hall, and temporarily reverted its name back to Memorial Hall (Pityana & Phakeng, 2018) as processes to rename the building commenced (contributive/additive messaging). That same year, UCT invited students, staff, alumni, and members of the Khoi and San Kingdom Council to recommend names for the Hall. Ultimately, UCT's Naming of Buildings Committee (NoBC), which consists of four faculty members, one non-faculty staff member, one UCT alumnus, one student, and the University Archivist, proposed that the Hall be renamed in honor of Sarah Baartman (transformational/social action messaging). After a year and a half of undergoing institutional and national renaming procedures and consultation with members of the Khoi community (Image 17 and 18), Memorial Hall was renamed Sarah Baartman Hall on December 8, 2018, with the published intention to honor Baartman's memory and "restore to her name the dignity that was so brutally stolen from her in the 19th century." (Pityana & Phakeng, 2018, para. 1). While Pityana and Phakeng (2018) recognize that UCT "cannot undo the wrongs she suffered, the UCT Council members speak for the campus community in writing that "we can lift her up as a potent symbol of the new campus community we are building."

Image 17: Community consultation processes in the Centre for African Studies gallery, March 2018. UCT Communications / Newsroom.

WHAT DOES SARAH BAARTMAN HALL TELL US?

Sarah Baartman Hall was instated sixteen years after Sarah's remains were returned to South Africa. The Hall was de-lettered on May 26, 2021 (Image 19), and reddish-brown, semi serif letters spelling "Sarah Baartman Hall" were installed atop the concavities – or traces (Banning, 1988) – cemented by the deeply implanted letters that spelled "Jameson Memorial Hall" for 86 years (D. Gibbs, personal communication, November 19, 2021) (Images 20 to 21).

Image 18: Community consultation processes in the Centre for African Studies gallery, March 2018. UCT Communications / Newsroom.

Image 19: De-lettering of Jameson Memorial Hall. University of Cape Town. UCT Communications / Newsroom.

Image 20: Lettering for Sarah Baartman Hall. University of Cape Town. UCT Communications / Newsroom.

Though Sarah Baartman herself is not directly connected to University of Cape Town, dedicating the most emblematic building at Africa's highest ranked university to Baartman recounts messages of transformation at UCT on an inevitably global stage. The Hall's agency to do this salient work is recognized by UCT's Executive Director of Student Affairs:

> The Hall is the face of UCT … It is important because … it recognizes the people who were here before because it is not only on Sarah Baartman herself, it is about Sarah Baartman and the people she represents. Naming that Hall Sarah Baartman in Cape Town, it really, really locates the Khoi and the San, in this space as people who have lived here … it provides the window … through which one can get into and get access to that heritage. (P. Mgolombane, personal communication, November 22, 2021)

Gaob Martinus Fredericks, National Chairman of the Southern Africa Khoi and San Kingdom Council, participated in UCT's A/Xarra Restorative Justice Forum that was founded in response to the renaming process. His perspectives on the renaming echo Mgolombane's and counters the narrative that the Khoi and San are extinct:

> The renaming of Sarah Baartman Hall is the vindication of the existence of the aboriginal people of South Africa. Sarah Baartman is personified as the acknowledgement of the Khoi and San people. For a very long time, the narrative in South Africa was to say that Khoi and San people are extinct, which is very, very far removed from the truth. Now, renaming Sarah Baartman Hall brings some of the remembrance back and acknowledges that we existed in the past and that we still exist today (G. M. Fredericks, personal communication, August 14, 2023).

UCT's Landscape Architect, David Gibbs, was responsible for applying to the Heritage Western Cape for the permit to rename the building. He refers to the renaming of Sarah Baartman Hall as "transformation that is tangible" and interprets the Hall's messaging as reparations for Sarah Baartman:

> I think this is probably the most significant hall on campus; it really is the centerpiece of the urban design … it is really the most iconic and symbolic space on campus. … If you are going to rename any building, the highest honor or the highest building to rename is this one; this is *the* most important building on campus. If you want a building to be renamed after you, you want it to be this building. … It has a symbolic presence; highly visible … elevating her and honoring her is the opposite of what happened to her; our way of making reparations. (D. Gibbs, personal communication, November 19, 2021)

Image 21: Sarah Baartman Hall. University of Cape Town.

SARAH BAARTMAN HALL FOR THE STUDY OF SARAH BAARTMAN AND TRANSFORMATION AT UCT

As illustrated through James Banning's scholarship, Sarah Baartman Hall as architecture has the potential to transform the historical messaging at UCT, particularly for its Black South African student population. To start, the Hall, its plaza, and its steps can be used as an informal learning space (Banning, 1995; Bott et al., 2006) where architectural features such as explanatory plaques, educational signage, Indigenous statuary, and pedagogical accents can educate campus pedestrians on historical facts about Sarah Baartman, her nation, and her journey. In fact, David Gibbs presented a conceptual proposal to UCT Executives in 2021 to:

> Go beyond renaming. We actually need to reimagine the plaza space, the focal point to the hall, and humanize it, and Africanize it, and transform it spatially. Not to say that we will dismantle the architecture entirely, maybe that we overlay it with plants that are African, Indigenous, or shades, and seating structures, and artwork, and sculptures, that tell the story. (D. Gibbs, personal communication, November 26, 2021) (Image 22).

Gibbs' vision for what he proposes will be the *Sarah Baartman Precinct* aligns with suggestions made by Bott et al. (2006) regarding the inclusion of natural elements in campus design.

Mgolombane believes the Hall and its neighboring artifacts provide opportunities for in-depth and experiential learning on Sarah Baartman and the Khoisan:

> I will use the analogy of a tombstone because the tombstone, it gives you an education of who is lying there, and at which time did they live, and through which one can understand the road they traveled … So, for me, Sarah Baartman Hall is like a headstone, because then one must ask, who was Sarah Baartman, who were her people, and then you begin to get a sense of who they were, including her lived experience.

Image 22: Proposed Sarah Baartman Precinct. University of Cape Town. Photograph provided by David Gibbs.

Going back to UCT's goal of institutional transformation, Dober (2005) defines campus heritage as the three-dimensional commemoration, celebration, and memorializing of people, activities, and events through and with physical objects that are consciously created or identified to serve and symbolize a college or university's purpose, presence, and patrimony (p. 5). Therefore, if UCT sincerely plans to use its environment to advance transformation, the Hall, plaza, steps, and empty Rhodes statue plinth are the optimal aggregation of campus architecture for this purpose. As a grouping, and per this essay's literature review, each architectural object can be used in some fashion to commemorate, celebrate, and memorialize Sarah Baartman individually and the Khoisan collectively

through tangible and intangible material culture.

As with UCT's renaming procedures, multicultural members of the micro and macro communities should be invited to generate and institute transformative/ social action messages (Banning, 1978) that will make future recounts of heritage at UCT tales of equity, inclusivity, and justice, and free of details on colonial symbols. As demonstrated in this essay, such symbols have historically caused Black South African students to feel disrespected, dishonored, unwelcomed, and understandably angry. As with all predominantly white institutions with colonial beginnings, true transformation at UCT must change this heritage at the systemic level, through its architecture as well as its human resources, including its non-Black South African students and staff. Renaming Sarah Baartman Hall is certainly a stride, however, in the transformative direction.

Interestingly, in November 2021, the Naming of Buildings Committee published a call to the UCT community to propose names for Jameson Plaza, the Jammie Steps, and the plinth where the Cecil John Rhodes statue once stood (UCT, 2021). Thus, the transformation at UCT continues. However, and unfortunately, Black South African students still experience blatant racism within the UCT community that has resulted in grievances (Nordling, 2021), violence, discrimination, psychological abuse (UCT, 2019), suicide (Chutel, 2019; Nordling, 2021), and multi-issue student protests (Charles, 2022; O'Regan, 2022; Phakeng, 2022) as recent as this essay's inception. When asked if he thinks the renaming of Sarah Baartman Hall will eventually halt some of these occurrences, Pura Mgolombane admits that "it has begun to disrupt it material wise, but students and staff must feel as if they belong in the space, and we are not there yet."

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Le'Passion Darby is a recent graduate of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where she earned a master's degree in Learning Design and Leadership and graduate minors in Art History, Global Studies, and Heritage Studies, respectively. Prior to studying learning design, Le'Passion managed college readiness programs for first-generation, college-bound students for our nation's most notable youth development organizations, including two Boys & Girls Club branches in her hometown of Chicago, Illinois. As Director of Girls Programming for the YWCA Evanston/North Shore, Le'Passion developed her niche for leveraging campus artifacts and heritage to inspire students to attend and complete college.

Le'Passion's research interests are campus artifacts, campus heritage, and material culture at colleges and universities worldwide. To date, she has toured more than 100 colleges and universities in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.

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The University of Cape Town's Work of Art Committee (WOAC) is a gracious co-sponsor of this report. Below are examples of WOAC's artistic and cultural expressions that took place at Sarah Baartman Hall. The latter three videos were produced by UCT and relate to the renaming of Sarah Baartman Hall.

The Fire This Time: Launch Event at Sarah Baartman Hall, UCT Works of Art Collection
The Fire This Time: Lukhanviso Skosana, UCT Works of Art Collection
The Fire This Time: Qondiswa James, UCT Works of Art Collection
A Fire in Our (He)Art, UCT Works of Art Collection
Redressing Past Injustices with Art
Khoi San Heritage and Cleansing Ceremony for Sarah Baartman Hall
Unconcealing the De-lettering Show, The Institute for Creative Arts