

Dr Sonja Smit – Curriculum Vitae

Smit has experience in academia as a researcher and lecturer. She has written and published a number of academic articles. Smit is also an experimental artist who creates provocative and unsettling statements through performance and has presented work on various platforms.

Languages: English and Afrikaans

Work History

- 2022 Freelancer at Pearson Publishing.
Freelance video script writer for UNESCO Report on Creativity
Rooftop Productions
Part-time writer and editor
- 2020-2021 Freelance Videographer & Video Editor (part-time), Goodbye Boring Advertising,
- 2019-2023 Research Supervisor and Performance Lecturer, AFDA School for the Creative Economy.
- 2018 Production Course Manager, AFDA School for the Creative Economy
- 2017 Dance Lecturer, Department of Creative Arts, University of Zululand
- 2016 Assistant to Editor, Journal for Contemporary African Studies
- 2016 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Rhodes University
- 2014 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Rhodes University
- 2011-2016 Lecturer (part-time), Drama Department, Rhodes University,
- 2010-2013 Choreographer, Performer, Designer, Production Manager and Yoga teacher, First Physical Theatre Company, Rhodes University

Academic Qualifications

- 2011-2013 PhD in Drama from Rhodes University (RU), *Challenging Desire: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South Africa*
- 2008-2009 Master of the Arts with distinction in Drama (Choreography) from RU, by coursework and thesis, *Revolt and De-reification in Contemporary Performance Practices*
- 2007 Honours in Drama with distinction, Specialising in Dramatic Literature, Choreography, Design, Contemporary Performance
- 2003-2006 Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Drama and Art History

Selected Awards and Honours

- 2011-2013 Andrew Mellon Scholarship
- 2009 Jane Osbourne Scholarship
- 2007 Jonathan Marks Prize for Choreography,
Dean's Merit List,
Academic Colours

Standard Bank Ovation awards for *Ama-no-gawa* (2010); *Proximity: Loss and Having* (2011); *Sub* (2011); *Sipping, Lapping, Slap* (2015); *Down to a Sunless Sea* (2017)

Creative Projects

I have worked in different capacities as a creative practitioner in live and screen performance. I have experience in choreography, directing, costume and set design, performance, video editing, grading and production management.

Teaching and Related Administration

I have taught theory and practice at both the postgraduate and undergraduate level and have a proven ability to facilitate group work. Designed curriculum and explained challenging concepts using planned lessons, assignments and targeted discussions for film, dance and performance students. I have integrated multimedia approaches and used instructional technology to enhance the learning experience. Assessment and related administration for +150 students.

Supervision

I have guided students through the research process from idea generation to research findings supervising undergraduate and postgraduate (Honours and Masters) research since 2011. I am well-versed in qualitative methodologies and creative methodologies such as practice-as-research and practice-led research.

I have experience as a moderator, reviewer and external examiner assessing the research papers, theses' and practical projects of graduate and post-graduate students between 2013-2020 at Rhodes University, Wits, UCT and AFDA Port Elizabeth. These have all been related to creative academic research in theatre, dance, performance and film. I have also provided peer reviews for journal articles and for subsidy earning creative outputs at universities.

Editing and Proofreading of Master's research:

Zulu, S. 2022. *Impact of tillage methods on soil macrofauna, micronutrients, nitrogen and ammonium in subtropical semi-arid Feralsols Haplic of Winterton (KZN)*. University of Zululand. Masters' Agriculture thesis.

Loubser, A. 2022. *Investigating Zeitlin's Beasts of the Southern Wild (2012) as Hybrid Cinema through a Deleuzian lens*. Nelson Mandela University. Masters' Media Studies.

De Raedt, A. 2022. *Shifting the Narrative on Food Insecurity: An Investigation into the Potential Power of Social Media to Promote Sustainable Practices*. Nelson Mandela University. Master's Media Studies.

Pienaar, S. 2021. *Applied Ludology: An exploration of player immersion theories as they relate to the design of a (single player) First person shooter video game*. AFDA. Game Studies. Masters' thesis.

Mkhize, M. 2021. *Factors contributing to child malnutrition in the informal settlements of Inanda area, eThekweni Municipality*. University of Zululand. Agriculture thesis.

Sithole, V. 2021. *The effect of feed rations on livestock performance and the impact of effective microorganisms on litter odour and other gas emissions*. University of Zululand. Agriculture thesis.

A. Research

My research interests lie in the space between philosophy and performance and more specifically how performance and film activates thinking through process and practice. This is referred to as performance philosophy, a growing field of studies within the paradigm of performance studies. I am interested in how performance can challenge perception and become a site for a mobile and immanent form of ethics. Or, in the very least, to propose an alternative to static values and approaches with regards to the production and practice of knowledge within performance studies and on a broader level. I think that this significant for the South African context in which the arts climate is a challenging space which necessitates experimental approaches to the problems we face as artists and as a society. Following from this, I am interested in experimental forms of performance with the onus on new philosophical approaches to the creation and analysis of performance.

Publications

Academic Journal Papers

1. "There is nothing to hold onto here: Complicity and Vulnerability in Gavin Krastin's *On Seeing Red and other Fantasies* (2015)". *South African Theatre Journal*. 2019.
2. "Thinking through Nicola Elliott's *Bruising*" (2014). *Studies in Theatre and Performance Journal*.
3. "Enter the Imperceptible: Reading Die Antwoord". *Cogent Arts and Humanities*. 2015, 2: 1064246
4. "The Search for a More Desirable Origin: Steven Cohen's *The Cradle of Humankind* (2011)". *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies*. Vol. 11. Issue 5. 2015
5. "Performing the Inarticulate: An analysis of Jaco Boucher's *Untitled* (2008)". *South African Theatre Journal*. 2012. Vol. 26. No.2. pp.139-150

Book Chapter:

1. Nicky Falkof and Oliver Cashmere-Brown (eds): *On Whiteness: 'De-Reifying Representations of White Male Identity in Post-Apartheid Popular Performance Practices: Jack Parow'*. pp. 229-239. ISBN: 978-1-84888-105-1. First published in the United Kingdom in eBook format in 2012.

Conference Presentations and Proceedings

Confluences 8: Negotiating Contemporary Dance in Africa. 2015. 'Thinking through Dance: An analysis of Nicola Elliott's *Bruising* (2014)'. Edited by Sharon Friedman. UCT School of Dance Woolsack Drive. Rosebank. Cape Town. ISBN No 978 – 0 -7992 – 2516 – 7.

African Theatre Association Conference. An Analysis of How a dead dog explains soccer to Sonja Smit, Cape Town. 12-15 July 2012

Confluences 6: Physicality and Performance. 'Becoming: Transformation and Embodiment in Ankoku Butoh practices'. pp. 289-299. University of Cape Town (UCT) School of Dance Woolsack Drive. Rosebank. Cape Town ISBN: 978-0-7992-2478-8

1st Global Conference on Whiteness Studies. Cambridge, Oxford. 'De-Reifying Representations of White Male Identity in Post-Apartheid Popular Performance Practices: Jack Parow'.

Butoh and Transformation. Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Conference, Rhodes University. 14-16 September 2011.

5 July 2009: Revolt and Abjection in Vera Mantero's one mysterious Thing*. Presented at the SEWSA Conference, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

Conference Planning: Secretary of the Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Conference Committee, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

Community work

- 2019-2020 Pre-literacy workshops in Port Elizabeth. Improving the learning experience for disadvantaged children through drama and reading activities.
- 2010 Vuka Drama Workshops for St Mary's Preparatory School in Grahamstown
- 2004-2005 Public Relations Officer: Live Music Society Committee Member at Rhodes University.

References

Prof Juanita Praeg. Associate Prof at Rhodes University. Contact: 0787098256 or 046 6038538. Email: j.praeg@ru.ac.za

Alan Parker. Lecturer at Rhodes University Drama. Former Company Manager of the First Physical Theatre Company. Contact: 0741131190. Email: alan.parker@uct.ac.za

Prof Alex Sutherland: Senior Research Associate at Rhodes University & Co-ordinator of creativity in activist education, Tshisimani Centre for Activist Education. Former PhD Supervisor. Contact: phone: 0849663798. Email: a.sutherland@ru.ac.za