2005 Prince Claus Awards
Humour and Satire
Address by
His Royal Highness Prince Johan Friso of Oranje-Nassau
His Royal Highness Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands
Honorary Chairmen of the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development

This year Humour and Satire is the theme of both the Prince Claus Fund and its awards: a theme that pays tribute to the Fund’s namesake and the memorable ideas, actions and surprises that he bequeathed us.

Of course, 2005 has been no laughing matter. Natural disasters, conflict and attacks have caused concern throughout the world along with feelings of fear and anxiety. These have affected all of us across the globe in countless different ways. Yet, whilst the world is in a state of uproar, the Prince Claus Fund has specifically opted to add humour and satire to this year’s agenda. Why?

Humour makes life more bearable. Laughter is liberating and contagious; it cheers people up, even in difficult circumstances. Humour can provide release in troubled times, deliverance in hostile situations, hope when all hope seems to have vanished and happiness, no matter how fleeting.

Satire goes beyond laughter. It provides a critical view of life. Satire exposes, it criticises rulers and politicians, and comments on policymakers and their quest for rules and regulations. Satire involves two aspects: it is humorous, liberating and puts things in perspective, and it analyses the state of society in a critical way.

Hence, both humour and satire can provide an emotional outlet, an entertaining, cultural escape route for people in areas and situations that are politically and economically complex. Humour and satire provide the Prince Claus Fund with a window on the world that not only surveys international abuses but also depicts life in a positive manner. It is a smiling, yet sometimes mocking, reflection of reality. In its endeavour to uncover zones of silence and to create spaces of freedom, the Prince Claus Fund has found that humour and satire are natural allies. They have the power to generate a breathing space when life is difficult, and they can express reality in contexts where words either fall short or are restrained.

Through this year’s awards, the Prince Claus Fund is recognising artists who have produced extraordinary work in the field of humour and satire. The Principal Award has been granted to the South African cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro, who criticised apartheid, facilitates the discussion of HIV and Aids, and provides a critical commentary on the political situation in Southern Africa, particularly in relation to Zimbabwe. In short, he is someone who creates a safe haven for freedom of speech, and a space for criticism and laughter.

Humour is an essential quality of human existence, humour can be found in all cultures and communities, and is experienced by everyone. Humour can therefore be understood as being inherently universal, yet at the same time it is deeply embedded in the cultural specificity of both its context and the individual understanding of the perceiver. It is this dependence on cultural context, language and social conduct that makes humour such an intangible aspect of culture, and yet such a fundamental one.

Beyond the seriousness of this theme, now is the time for laughter and for honouring those who have enriched our world with their wit and intelligence.
HRH Prince Friso in Beijing, China, to present the 2003 Principal Prince Claus Award to Wang Shixiang

HRH Prince Constantijn in Nairobi, Kenya, to present the 2003 Prince Claus Award to Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA)
Foreword

This is the ninth occasion on which the Prince Claus Fund seeks to honour, and to draw the world’s attention to, the achievements of remarkable people who inspire, uplift and stimulate positive transformations in society through their cultural activities. Each year the Fund selects a specific focus as well as continuing to work with the themes of previous years, and in 2005 ‘Humour and Satire’ have centre stage. Humour creates fellowship, and what a relief it is to laugh at situations, at ourselves, and to find solidarity in sharing a humorous insight into our daily frustrations.

Yet this levity can have far reaching consequences. Satire and humour are universal instruments for speaking truth to power, giving voice to repressed thoughts and challenging ‘sacred cows’, subtly yet incisively undermining established hierarchies and dominant conventions. They have been used throughout human history and in every part of the planet to create ‘Spaces of Freedom’. Cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro alias Zapiro, the 2005 Principal Laureate, provides a daily dose of laughter – bitter medicine for some, a tonic for others – in the social and political mine-fields of contemporary southern African and global realities. Through their humour and satire, Egyptian playwright Lenin El Ramly and Zimbabwe’s stand-up comedian Edgar Langevelidt confront cultural and political conventions; Iran’s Ebrahim Nabavi, now living in exile, continues to challenge intolerance and repression; in Indonesia and Armenia, Slamet Gundono and Michael Poghosian, respectively, give potent expression to people’s aspirations and hardships. The smiles evoked by the graphic line of Argentina’s Quino and the laughter caused by the exuberant brushwork of Chéri Samba from the Democratic Republic of Congo bring issues into the open for public debate.

Also facilitating popular access are laureates Abdul Sheriff and Niède Guidon, who have reinvigorated local cultural heritage in Zanzibar and north-eastern Brazil respectively, and Kenya’s Opiyo Okach, who is a prime mover in the world of contemporary dance.

The Prince Claus Fund would like to thank the laureates for their excellent work in the area of culture and development, work that stimulates new thought, renews inspiration and hope and, at times, creates laughter, throughout the world.

In 2005, two new countries join the list of the Prince Claus Awards: Armenia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our gratitude goes to the scouts, nominators, experts and advisers around the globe, who generously volunteered their time, energy, knowledge and assistance in the identification of the 2005 Prince Claus laureates. Their multiple contributions, combined with the discerning involvement of the members of the Awards Committee and the diligent work of the staff in the Fund’s Bureau, have once again resulted in an outstanding group of laureates.

This year, HRH Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands is presenting the Principal Award to master cartoonist Zapiro in the Muziekgebouw aan ’t IJ in Amsterdam. The other awards are presented by the Dutch ambassadors in the countries where the laureates reside. The Fund is grateful for their co-operation and involvement.

We are delighted that Jant-Bi, the dance company directed by Prince Claus laureate and renowned choreographer Germaine Acogny, will perform during the awards ceremony, which will be held on 7 December 2005 at Amsterdam’s new Muziekgebouw aan ’t IJ.

Culture enhances and gives meaning to our daily lives leading to development, and this year the Prince Claus Fund is delighted to celebrate particularly pleasurable ways of having our eyes opened and our spirits nourished.

Lilian Gonçalves-Ho KangYou
Chairperson of the Board

Els van der Plas
Director of the Prince Claus Fund
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Humour is a loaded weapon! Be careful where you point it. Many are the practitioners who have learned to their cost that it can backfire. Even today, in many parts of the world, comedians of all kinds find themselves chased from stage and screen, from the pages of newspapers and magazines, into exile, prison and worse. And the tyrants are right: humour reaches where other voices cannot. It creates those spaces of freedom denied to the regular discourse of politics and society in countries where people live under multiple forms of oppression – political, economic and social.

No society is free of problems, divisions, injustices. There are no utopias, only relative dystopias – with a very wide range of possibilities along the way. But all have moments of particular discontent, distress, oppression: exclusion from the machine that is society and from a sense of participation in its deliberations and the decisions that affect it. These times of social unrest and breakdown see humorists in their element. S/he becomes the voice of society: the supreme articulator of its disquiet.

Throughout history, humour has been the weapon of the underdog and those who speak for and to them. As far back as the dramas of ancient Greece, even before then in the cultures of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, the fool was a familiar figure. Satirical plays and jokes have survived in fragments of papyrus or clay tablets in tombs and ruins buried deep beneath centuries of rubble. Humour is a universal feature of life on earth, something that defines our common humanity. Leaders and politicians may not care for the cutting edge of satire, but they are powerless to stop the ridicule. Despite the armies of spin-doctors and guardians of the gate, comedians cut through the pomposity of state and wealth to expose the corruption, abuse, chicanery and excess common in the modern world.

But then so do political commentators across the board. Why should the comic and the purveyor of those satirical gestures we call cartoons be any different? Because they retain an independence, remain the ‘outsider’. They do not seek to go through the gate, dabble in spin or seek preferment. They see through the pretensions of power and do not aspire to favour. They have no truck with flattery and tell things as they are, in their own particular – and at times peculiar – way.

Wittgenstein’s “Whereof we cannot speak we must remain silent” is a much abused adage. Rather say: “Whereof we will not or dare not speak, send in the humorist” because their other great virtue is that they can communicate to high and low alike, with an economy of word or image that makes them the envy of politicians and rulers. Satirists and comedians everywhere are able to give voice to matters that would otherwise remain silent. They unlock secrets and open debate at home; they inform the outside world more truly of the nature of a society than any official history or media report can. Wherever free expression is a luxury and the media is under the control of those in power, the comedian creates a space where laughter or the sly knowing smile fills the silence and tells us the message has been understood.

Though humour, in all its forms, is meant to raise a smile, the seriousness of its purpose is never in question. At the personal level, the art of ridicule has been the most potent deflator of overblown egos and exposé of cant for centuries, and is most in use when political oppression or social and religious taboos prevent more straightforward comment.

Humour will always get a hearing. It creates a complex space in which many things happen. It is a way of smuggling unacceptable thoughts, feelings and ideas into a socially acceptable form; of getting pleasure from unacceptable ideas and beliefs. “To be amused is a fantasy of freedom,” says the analyst Adam Phillips. “Humour,” he adds, “brings multiple points of view into the arena.” A space for laughter, ambiguity, human release, action/reaction that is far bigger than itself. Wherever there’s laughter, there’s the debate that’s being suppressed, the conflict that can’t be publicly opened up. A joke or cartoon is like a diagnosis. Wherever in a system people can be amused, there the humorist has touched on something that cannot be discussed. His is often the only voice of truth or sanity in a mad world; the fool is wise. But the fool will talk in riddles, hide his meaning in humour, often ribald; and those who have ears will hear – not only the mighty in their seats, but the ‘little people’ far from the seats of power and frequently oppressed by the omnipotent whim of a lord who fails even to see them. The fool creates the freedom to laugh and enter the space of the ruler for a moment; to be for an instant no longer simply the victim, but to see and enjoy the clay feet beneath the robes of state.

This is the ground comedians everywhere cultivate. The fool counterfeits his folly to enlighten through entertainment; the cartoonist ridiciles his subject to alert his audience to an underlying truth. Essentially a dissident form, humour is most needed and most evident in societies where other forms of criticism and comment are frowned on if not openly suppressed. This is the art that says: “No. Hang on; let’s take a closer look. Everything you’re being told is not so.” It invites people to challenge, to look again; above all, to think for themselves rather than passively accepting the party line. Such art is dangerous. It is the art that important people want to ban. It is the art that is capable of destroying careers, bringing down governments, exposing the big lie.

Different cultures, different preoccupations, produce their own range and style of humour. In Cameroon, Di voice of di pepul, with its pungent combination of satirical prose and raucous cartoons and strips, provides a greater insight into the problems and vexations of its country than any sober – and all too often deferential – “official” publication. It voices the general discontent of the impoverished and politically disempowered. In India, the voice of its pre-eminent cartoonist Laxman has for half a century poked fun at a government that is remote from much of its vast rural population, exposing the folly and corruption of its local representatives as well as exposing the inadequacies and neglect of its officials in the capital. In Zimbabwe today, the press is all but silenced, foreign journalists have been expelled and political opposition to the incumbent regime is subjected to violence and abuse, yet among the remaining voices are cartoonist Tony Namate and stand-up comic Edgar Langeveldt. Who could forget South Africa’s Pieter-Dirk Uys and his charismatic persona Elvira Darling, the living one man/woman scourge of the lethal stupidity of a government that for years condemned thousands of HIV/AIDS sufferers to death. His humour draws audiences in at home and around the world.

It is the cartoon, above all, that most frequently expresses what words cannot. The finest cartoons or caricatures share two sets of qualities: they are allegories that seek to highlight social, political and moral dilemmas with economy of line and in memorable ways; they are often fantasies of the blackest and most disturbing kind, drawing the spectator into a world where everything apparently normal and commonplace is subverted and called into question.

We can point to endless instances of the wit and humour with which cartoonists tackle the ills of their societies. Across the Middle East, the Palestinian problem in particular has sharpened pens and cost lives. In Iran, where the mullahs and their henchmen have not been spared, cartoonists have ended up in jail but have not ceased to enliven the beleaguered independent press. In China, where economic freedom runs apace but political independence is another matter altogether and even Internet cafes have been closed, the subtle lines of the cartoonists have eluded the eye of the censor. In Latin America, where the removal of military
The poignant work of the cartoonist Ares points the finger and articulates the voice of the silent majority in the former rightwing dictatorship as much as in Castro’s Cuba. Throughout Africa there are numerous examples, from Algeria, where for over a decade the frequently brutal pen of Dilem has matched the comedy skills of the now-exiled Fellag (1999 Prince Claus laureate) and has not shrank from holding government and Islamic militants to account, to Kenya where the pungent comments of the likes of Gado expose suffering and injustices; and throughout South East Asia: Lat with his Malaysian urchin ‘Kampung Boy’, the indefatigable Ranabi in Bangladesh and his 27-year-old but ageless cartoon cult hero ‘Tokai’, and Kim Song-Hwan of South Korea, whose strip cartoon has so long been a thorn in the side of successive governments. All raise a smile in a grim world; give, if only for a moment, relief and the awareness that someone knows and is telling them they are not alone, that they too have a voice and a champion.

Verbal satires can seem clumsy weapons compared to visual ones: visual representations deliver their messages immediately to their chosen audience, but can also retain a degree of ambiguity that foxes those outside. In societies where illiteracy is still widespread, cartoons are the lingua franca of the poor and disenfranchised. They can convey multiple, layered meanings more effectively than words.

By their nature, cartoons, like jokes on the street or the stage, like humour generally perhaps, particularly political humour, are ephemeral: an instant comment on that place, that time, that subject. They are all, also, historical documents – vivid and personal witnesses to their times. As such, they have been insufficiently regarded in narratives of the mainstream.

Humour is from the margins; it provides the footnotes to the official histories. But make no mistake, in much of the world it provides the most radical and potent voice of dissent. The humorist has always been a vital voice in society, giving the people back some of the dignity lost to oppression and poverty. It is the world of ridicule and laughter that exposes the vulnerability of the rogue, the tyrant and the hypocrite by reducing them, however briefly, to figures of fun.

In the hands of the powerless, satire is the weapon of choice in the face of tyranny. Nor is there any shortage of targets. They may vary from place to place and at different times, but the weapon will always have the same purpose: to challenge, confront, and hold power to account, particularly when other means are closed.

(This is an edited version of ‘Gagged for it: or the strange history of comedy as a weapon’ which will be published in a forthcoming book ‘Political Cartoons from the Zones of Silence’ from the Prince Claus Fund Library.)
Report from the
2005 Prince Claus Awards Committee

The 2005 Prince Claus Awards

The Prince Claus Awards are given to individuals, groups, organisations or institutions that have made outstanding contributions to culture and development within the Prince Claus Fund’s area of interest. The Principal Award of EUR 100,000 is presented to the laureate at the Muziekgebouw aan ’t IJ in Amsterdam in the presence of members of the Royal family and an audience of 500 international guests. The ten awards of EUR 25,000 are presented to the recipients by the Netherlands Ambassadors in their respective countries.

Criteria and considerations

The Prince Claus Awards are offered to artists and intellectuals for their excellent achievements in the field of culture and development. Individuals, groups and organisations all over the world, but mainly in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, are considered for the awards.

The quality of a laureate’s work, assessed within the candidate’s professional and personal context, is a sine qua non for a Prince Claus Award. Another decisive criterion is the positive impact of the laureate’s work on a wider cultural and social field. Building bridges and creating commonalities between different cultures or cultural currents are highly valued. The Prince Claus Awards recognise artistic and intellectual qualities that are alive today. They aim to support experimentation, to appreciate audacity and tenacity, to legitimise, to increase impact and to provide others with inspiration.

Policy

The Prince Claus Fund maintains a broad view of culture. It seeks innovation and experimentation amongst the multiplicity of cultural initiatives around the world. The Fund welcomes proposals from every cultural field and all types of artistic and intellectual disciplines, including the transmission of culture, education, media, applied arts and fields such as sports, science and technology that interact with and impact on the domain of culture.

‘Interculturality’ is an important feature of the Fund’s agenda, with particular interest in vocabularies that develop into universal languages bridging different cultures. The Fund continues its interest in previous themes, such as creating spaces of freedom, which addresses the ways in which artists and thinkers find methods to express dissenting views. The Prince Claus Fund aims to protect and support culture in places where it is threatened and to identify cultural voices and actors in ‘zones of silence’.

Humour and Satire

The 2005 Prince Claus Awards focus on the importance of humour and satire in culture and development. An essential quality of human life, humour exists in all cultures and communities. It can therefore be understood as inherently universal, yet at the same time deeply embedded in the cultural specificity of its context and the individual experience of the perceivers. This dependence on context, language and social conduct makes humour an intangible yet fundamental aspect of culture.

Humour operates on the premise of critical distance from the taken-for-granted organisation of social life. This distance allows the opening up of a space in which humour is employed to reflect, criticise or offer relief to the tensions of social life. By interrupting, distorting or subverting accepted norms, humour reveals the underlying structures. Through humour, life is constantly renegotiated, contested and rethought, making humour a crucial vehicle for social change. By unravelling the hidden structures of reality, humour gives a voice to the inexpressible. It can function as an effective – if not the only available – tool to break open taboos, dogmas or other moral restrictions. Protected by the deception of the joke, humour can thus be an allusive way to speak the unspeakable.

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In its ability to rebel against reality, humour is a celebration of the freedom and self-mastery of the individual. It is therefore a powerful tool for human survival, with a strong therapeutic function to re-incite (lost) hopes and enjoyment of life. By presenting a distorted yet often all too real picture, humour offers relief in situations that are marked by tragedy, trauma or despair. It can provide consolation by making life – even temporarily – a little more bearable, and should be understood not just as ‘foolish’ entertainment, but also as providing necessary diversion from the difficulties of life.

Satire – the particular form of humour that confronts and exposes the powers that be – is essentially subversive. Especially in conditions of oppression and censorship, satire is a mechanism for expressing fierce criticism, camouflaged in a package of wit and folly. Its seemingly harmless character can make satire a dangerous player, and therefore a widely employed tool in times of repression. By creating enclaves of democratic freedom in realities that are dominated by restriction and fear, satire flourishes in societies that suffer from strong censorship or general lack of freedom of speech. In many parts of the world, writers, musicians, artists, comedians and cartoonists use satire to express their critiques on the conditions in which they live.

It is within this framework that the Prince Claus Fund considers humour and satire as a field of special interest. The Fund is particularly interested in those expressions of humour and satire that are not only innovative in their singularity, but also convey quality and a certain degree of social commitment.

Procedures

The Prince Claus Fund invites a changing group of experts relevant to the Fund’s mission of culture and development, as well as colleagues and partners of the Fund, to nominate candidates and to assist by providing insights and opinions on the proposed candidates. Nominations for the 2005 Awards were submitted to the Fund’s Bureau by April and second opinions requested from advisers in the Fund’s network. The 2005 Prince Claus Awards Committee met on 30-31 May to establish a short list from the proposals received. Following further research, the Committee met on 25-26 July to draw up the list of recipients of the 2005 Prince Claus Awards.

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The 2005 Principal Prince Claus Award

Zapiro, alias Jonathan Shapiro
South Africa

The Principal Prince Claus Award for 2005 is presented to Zapiro, alias Jonathan Shapiro (b. 1958), an outstanding cartoonist whose incisive satire digs into contemporary African and international realities. With striking graphic detail and perfectly pitched text, Zapiro’s sharp insights expose absurdities and paradoxes, and highlight social and political issues.

He began working with anti-apartheid groups and publishing cartoons during the 1980s and since then his work has appeared on a daily basis in leading South African newspapers, in community and activist publications of human rights and social welfare organisations, as well as in the international media. He has published nine books of cartoons and numerous educational comics, participates in exhibitions and cartoon events, and mentors young cartoonists.

In the midst of the social, racial and economic tensions that characterise southern Africa and the current global situation, Zapiro provides comic relief, a space for self-reflection, criticism of abusive power, challenges to dogma, and perhaps most importantly, hope for humanity.

The Principal Prince Claus Award is presented to Zapiro, a modern African descendent of the legendary jester who speaks truth to power and punctures arrogance with laughter, in recognition of his role in stimulating social and cultural development.

Ten 2005 Prince Claus Awards

Niède Guidon
Brazil

Niède Guidon (b. 1933) is a professor of archaeology and a public intellectual who combines scientific research, cultural knowledge, and social and environmental activism to make significant contributions to local culture. She has identified over 700 prehistoric sites, among which are 426 walls of ancient paintings and evidence of early human habitation in Parque Nacional Serra de Capivara in northeastern Brazil. She is responsible for the preservation, development and management of the park, as well as the protection of endangered flora and fauna, and has set up a cultural centre and museum in the park, and the Museum Foundation of American Man in São Raimundo Nonato. Recognising the importance of local participation for real development, she has set up community support nuclei, which provide social services, health care and education for local communities, as well as training local staff in ecology, prehistory and restoration. With meticulous scholarship, she has recorded over 35,000 images, published numerous papers and books, and organised conferences. This Award to Niède Guidon honours her dedication and achievements in protecting and promoting this local and world cultural heritage.

Slamet Gundono
Indonesia

Slamet Gundono (b. 1966) is a contemporary puppet-master and multi-disciplinary artist who draws on the long traditions of Indonesian culture, reinventing, innovating and excelling within the fields of shadow-puppetry, story-telling, dance, singing, music and theatre. Imbued with indigenous philosophy, he works with local communities and tours villages, schools and rural market places as well as the cities. His performances are both funny and provocative, dealing with sensitive subjects, breaching taboos and stimulating reflection on topics like gender, exploitation, religious orthodoxy and degradation of the environment. Taking an experimental approach, he works with unconventional and low-cost materials and simple means, using local idioms and dialects, and collaborating with artists in other disciplines. Gundono also runs workshops to encourage experimentation and community creativity, and brings insight into Indonesian reality to international audiences. Using humour and satire in a non-confrontational way, he gives a voice to the marginalised in society, asserts their vitality, affirms their dignity and integrity, and demonstrates that traditional cultural forms are powerful vehicles for contemporary statement. This Award honours Slamet Gundono for his innovative work employing humour as a vehicle for social development.
Edgar Hendrick Langeveldt Zimbabwe
Edgar Langeveldt (b. 1969) studied law and politics before turning his skills, acute observation and acting talent to social commentary as a stand-up comedian. A member of a minority caught between dominant racial groups, he uses his outsider’s view to analyse social realities with sharp insight, employing humour as a camouflage to reveal the contradictions, stupidities, inequalities, injustices and immoralities of contemporary Zimbabwean society. He has evolved an innovative style of monologues or duologues with swift changes of character, minimal stage effects and lively interaction with his audience, ensuring that no-one leaves the performance without having had his/her ideas and opinions challenged. He writes his own material based on current local and international events, creating hilarious characters, prising open all races and all sections of society. A singer, songwriter, keyboardist, actor, screenwriter, and producer, he has toured in the southern African region, made TV programmes, and his 1999 video is compulsory material for NYU’s African Studies degree. This Award honours Edgar Langeveldt for his use of humour to create spaces of freedom.

Joaquin Salvador Lavado, alias Quino Argentina
Joaquin Salvador Lavado, alias Quino (b. 1932), is a cartoonist who believes that humour is “the little grain of sand that acts as a catalyst to change” and whose work stimulates reflection on global ethical concerns. His cartoons focus on power relationships, social inequalities, environmental degradation, family, religion, football, bureaucracy, politicians, the military – daily life in Argentina and in the world. Meticulously executed in black and white, Quino’s drawings are distinctive for their fine aesthetic quality. The lithe line, subtle detail and evocative spatial effects convey his intention without any need for words, and compel the viewer to look carefully and consider deeply, encouraging a deep response. His popular 1960s heroine Mafalda, devised to promote gender equality, peace and children’s rights through comic strips, was revived for the 10th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and has been used for public health education and democracy campaigns. With several illustrated books and animated films, and widely published in Latin America and internationally, this Award honours Quino for his subtle aesthetics and for a lifetime of dedication to human rights through humour.

Ebrahim Nabavi Iran
Ebrahim Nabavi (b. 1958) is a political satirist of exceptional talent. He uses comedy to write about serious social and political issues, and believes the satirist’s job is to show the true face of those who desperately try to portray a false image. With the policy of tolerance in Iran in 1997, Nabavi’s columns and articles began to emerge in reformist newspapers. He parodied official speeches and declarations with biting wit, turning their allegations and rationalisations upside down. The campaign targeting reformists forced his column to move from one paper to the next. At the 7th Press Festival in Iran, he received the award for the best writer of a satirical column but was arrested the following day and sentenced to 18 months in jail for writing satire. He has published 31 books and his *Prison Memoirs* is now in its 5th edition. Since his release in 2003, he has been living in exile where he continues to write, perform stand-up comedy and publish on the Internet to reach his audience. This Award honours Ebrahim Nabavi for his inspiring use of humour to challenge repression and create spaces for thought.

Opiyo Okach Kenya
Opiyo Okach (b. 1962) is a superb dancer and innovative choreographer, who draws on the traditions of East African peoples and transforms them into unique and complex interpretations of the modern condition. Renowned for his improvisation, timing, subtlety of movement and elegance, Okach demonstrates that dance is a poetry of everyday life. In 1996, he formed Company Gaara, the first contemporary dance company in Kenya, and is director of the Gaara Dance Foundation in Nairobi which trains and mentors young dancers. Through master classes, workshops, creative productions and tours to 20 countries in Africa, he is a catalyst for a new depth of intellectual reflection and analysis within the emerging dance community, encouraging an open perspective, new vocabularies and professional standards. Recent work has seen the introduction of video and sound elements in the choreography. Fostering audience development, he introduces new dance forms at village level, while maintaining his reputation on the international circuit, dividing his time between Kenya and France. This Award honours Opiyo Okach and recognises his significant contribution in making contemporary dance an important part of East Africa’s modern artistic and cultural identity.
Michael Poghosian Armenia

Michael Poghosian (b. 1954) is a highly regarded and well-loved actor, who uses humour and satire to vividly expose the problems of a society in transition. Through a variety of masks, disguises and costumes, expressive body language, song and exaggeration, Poghosian portrays human foibles and confusions, at the same time encouraging self-examination and social awareness. His satire shines a spotlight on social injustice, corruption and aspects of political populism in present day Armenia and, by ridiculing the tricks and wiles of various people in society, he creates spaces where his audience can laugh as well as reflect. His many outlandish characters and their provocative statements are so popular with local audiences that their gestures are mimicked and their phrases have become colloquialisms. Initially a member of an actors’ group touring Armenia, Russia, Hungary and Syria, among other places, he has acted in and directed numerous films and television series, and now works with other actors in script writing, management and production, as well as continuing to create new performances. This Award honours Michael Poghosian for his comic relief and for his contribution to the development of an open society.

Lenin El Ramly Egypt

Lenin El Ramly (b. 1945) is a comic dramatist who daringly questions social convention, hypocrisy and bigotry. His work includes popular television dramas and series, and he has written 40 plays, using techniques ranging from farce, parody and grotesque to satire and the absurd. Combining intellectual depth with entertainment, his play bi-l’-Arabi al-fasih (In Plain Arabic) is “remarkable for its biting satire” and “an honest, though painful portrait of modern Arab society”. Among his 12 film scripts is Hello America (1998), dealing with Egypt’s relationship with the USA and Islamic terrorism. His works are performed throughout the Arab world and translated into other languages. He also publishes and has founded two drama troupes, educating and directing gifted amateurs. He guards his independence, does experimental work such as his most recent play entitled Take Off Your Masks, and adapts classical texts as in Peace of Women based on Aristophanes’ anti-war comedy, Lysistrata. El Ramly’s writings appeal to reason, while conveying sympathy for human weakness, and have wide social appeal and impact. This Award is presented to Lenin El Ramly in recognition of his constructive use of humour to provoke public analysis of social and cultural issues.

Chéri Samba Democratic Republic of Congo

Chéri Samba (b. 1956) is an accomplished and talented exponent of a unique genre of popular painting, traditional in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire), which encompasses humour, social commentary and political satire. Representational, visually inventive, with striking colours and elements of exaggeration, Samba’s work combines aspects of advertising, cinema, popular culture, incisive details and witty captions. His challenging pictorial statements are distinctive within the tradition of popular painting due to his clever social analysis, skill and use of innovative techniques. He deals with daily lives, the problems, pleasures and paradoxes of cultures undergoing rapid change, as well as the impact of international events on societies in Africa. Believing that the artist must make people think and must appeal to people’s consciences, Samba’s paintings are always accessible and popular with the general public. His work has received international acclaim and he is a leading figure in the local cultural scene in Kinshasa, where he chairs the Union of Artists and encourages and nurtures a new generation of painters. This Award honours Chéri Samba as an outstanding visual artist, whose social commentary and humour stimulate both local and international audiences.

Abdul Sheriff Zanzibar, Tanzania

Abdul Sheriff (b. 1939) is a leading authority on the history and cultures of the Indian Ocean and plays a crucial role in conserving and reinvigorating Zanzibar’s heritage. Professor of history at the University of Dar es Salaam, following his retirement he became advisor on National Heritage and Principal Curator of Zanzibar’s museums. Emphasising low cost and low technology, using local technicians and skills, he directed the restoration of the House of Wonders, a former sultan’s palace, which opened as the new museum of Zanzibar in 2005. He conserved and expanded existing museum collections and undertook the development of local staff, creating a professional team of skilled and committed personnel and sustainable management. He has published books on East African history, including two volumes on Zanzibar’s unique Stone Town. A consummate professional with profound curiosity, dedication to academic standards and belief in the value of historical knowledge, he is raising consciousness of local heritage. This Award honours Abdul Sheriff for his intellectual leadership and for his achievements in ensuring the survival and appreciation of global cultural heritage.

French version of this report: see from p. 74
Spanish version of this report: see from p. 81
Jonathan “Zapiro” Shapiro stands out among political cartoonists for his courageous and entertaining work – a few masterly lines, a few succinct details up-ending the accepted, the projection of a truth we recognise immediately, a sort of visual karate chop to the imagination. Political cartoonists are the Baedekers of the political life of their times. These journalists/artists chart the changing dynamics of society. They are professional subversives, waging war on the powerful and the privileged. The distinguished jurist, Judge Murray Gurfein, noted in the Pentagon Papers Decision: “A cantankerous press, an obstinate press, a ubiquitous press must be suffered by those in authority in order to preserve the right of people to know.” Zapiro is following in the tradition of activist South African cartoonist Abe Berry, who echoed the credo of English cartoonist Victor “Vicky” Weisz: “Goad, infuriate, provoke and amuse.”

Zapiro takes full advantage of his special stage, South Africa. He has long been a strong critic of racism and has never backed away from his job of holding the powerful accountable, regardless of colour. While South African leadership has changed, from a line of repressive Afrikaners to the transitional figure FW De Klerk, to the legendary Nelson Mandela, to Thabo Mbeki today, Zapiro has been a constant. Along with Abe Berry, Zapiro’s name is on the honours list of talented South African cartoonists who have challenged the system including David Anderson, the late Napier Dunn, Dov Fedler, the late Derek Bauer, Tony Grogan, Chip Snaddon and Nanda Soobhen. Zapiro thrives in the post-apartheid political environment: a free press in a stable democracy governing a multiracial society. His political cartoons appear daily on the pages of the country’s leading newspapers and are syndicated to publications around the world. A wide range of publications call for his work, from highbrow journals to popular dailies and newsweeklies, from academic textbooks to children’s comics, local and international, leftwing and conservative.

Life for a serious cartoonist is seldom smooth. Freedom of expression for the political cartoonist is a litmus test of democracy. Nineteenth-century France failed the test when Honoré Daumier was jailed for his series of devastating cartoons exposing the misdeeds of the monarchy of King Louis-Phillipe. During World War I, the American magazine New Masses was brought to trial for publishing the anti-war cartoons of Art Young. In totalitarian states, of either political extreme, the results are less surprising: after World War II in the former Soviet Union, defiant artists such as Viatcheslav Syssoyev were sent to the gulag; in the 1970s, the rightist regime in Uruguay shut down a critical journal, Marcha, sending its editors into exile and jailing and torturing its cartoonist, Francisco Laurenzo Pons. In the 1980s, Zapiro was an active dissident in the United Democratic Front (UDF) and was arrested for his “subversive” work, spending five days in solitary confinement, refusing to answer questions. It was a popular calendar designed for the UDF that brought him to the attention of South Africa’s security police, and ironically, it was this controversial calendar that led to his first professional job as a cartoonist.

A good political cartoonist is at once an artist and a political/social commentator – a student of history and current events. But most of all, he has opinions and convictions and the ability to translate abstract ideas into concrete visual terms with wit and wisdom. Zapiro does it all. There is sometimes subtlety but rarely ambiguity in his work. He pulls no punches. According to international cartooning scholar John Lent, “Zapiro is a great stylist... Hard-hitting and on the
Disarmingly humorous, his sharp insights lift the lid on events that politicians hope no-one has noticed, provoking and amusing in equal measure. Zapiro’s art is distinguished by an economy of line and an appeal to both eye and mind. Camouflaged in their informal appearance, his cartoons are freehand masterpieces, using exaggeration, stylisation and wordplay with ‘perfect pitch’. He is a painstaking artist in a time when high standards are often sacrificed for expediency. His cartoons are a product of distillation in reaching an issue’s essential truth. The solution is often eloquent in its simplicity, as in Zapiro’s obituary cartoon of a bus soaring into the heavens. The driver says: “Welcome to Ms. Rosa Parks…sit anywhere.”

A potent record of his generation, Zapiro’s cartoons are an oasis of clarity in a distraught world. He is passionate, with a curiosity about the core meaning of events. He knows he doesn’t have the ability to make things right but he can point the way. He has an eye for fraud and hypocrisy. Zapiro’s view on the revelations about torture in the Iraq War is an example. The drawing shows a US army soldier guarding “Saddam’s Torture and Humiliation Centre”. Screams are coming from the prison windows. A sign announces: “Under New Management”.

Humour in times of insanity keeps us sane. It also keeps us free. There is nothing that tyrants and demagogues fear more than ridicule, and the graphic form has proved to be uniquely painful. Zapiro is well known throughout Africa, and beyond, for his stand against repressive regimes. Over many years, he has created scathing cartoons about Zimbabwe’s Robert Mugabe. In one such cartoon, Zapiro shows a naked Mugabe parading down the street. In this version of the old tale of the emperor’s new clothes, the local police are seen beating up a journalist for not showing the ‘emperor’ proper respect for his attire. Zapiro’s notable counterpart within Zimbabwe, political cartoonist Tony Namate, has focused poignantly on life for the common man under the Mugabe regime and been subjected to threats of physical assault and legal action.

As historian Arthur Schlessinger Jr. noted, “Satire is morality disguised as mockery.” Morality infuses Zapiro’s work, but ample humour and satire are also in his repertoire. For example, Arafat’s death inspired Zapiro to create a cartoon in which a lawyer is seen reading Arafat’s will to a group of his followers. Sitting to one side is his widow, obviously pleased with the provisions. “To my people I bequeath our claim to a free Palestine…To my wife, Suha: my offshore shareholdings, the Paris apartment, the villa in Tunis, my Swiss bank accounts…”

Few political cartoonists have been recognised for their greatness. As a profession that is usually underappreciated compared to other journalists, political cartooning has had to achieve its due as a result of both extraordinary talents and breakthroughs, and when a cartoonist earns a special honour the art form as a whole is elevated. Examples of such outstanding cartoonists are David Low who was knighted in 1962, Ze’ev (Yaakov Farkas) who won his country’s highest honour, the Israeli Prize, and Art Spiegelman who in 1992 won a Pulitzer Prize Special Award. The 2005 Principal Prince Claus Award is a well-deserved tribute to the art and courage of Jonathan Shapiro, the man, and Zapiro, the master cartoonist.
OH, DON'T WORRY...THAT BIT FALLS OUT ALL THE TIME!

FIFA

CHANGE?..CHANGE TAKES TIME, MY FRIEND.

EMBEDDED JOURNALISM
NOW HERE'S A LITTLE TUNE CALLED "PRIVATISATION"...

WE'RE STILL MISSING A KEY TRANSLATOR...

A.U. LAUNCH

WHOW! WHAT IS IT, DEAR?

I HAD A DREAM... IN MY DREAM I SPOKE TO THABO IN FRONT OF THE WHOLE NATION!

I TOLD HIM: "CRITICISM IS THE LIFE-BLOOD OF THE MOVEMENT! DON'T SURROUND YOURSELF WITH YES-MEN!"

BUT MADIBA, THAT'S WHAT YOU ACTUALLY TOLD HIM... AT THE ANC NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN MAFIKENG IN 1997.

OH, RIGHT, I DID.

I FELT HE DIDN'T HEAR ME....

MAYBE HE DREAMED HE SLEPT, DEAR.

SOUTH AFRICA MUST LEAVE ZIMBABWE TO SORT OUT ITS OWN PROBLEMS!

LEAVE NIGERIA TO DO WHAT IT WANTS WITH AMINA LAWAL!

LEAVE ISRAEL ALONE TO PROTECT ITS SECURITY!

BUT WE MUST STOP THE STONING OF AMINA LAWAL IN NIGERIA!

BUT WE MUST STOP THE ISRAELIS OPPRESSING THE PALESTINIANS!

BUT WE MUST STOP MUGABE IN ZIMBABWE!

Bottom line: As South Africans we have our double standards to uphold.
Niède Guidon
Fighting for Holistic and Sustainable Development

by Anne-Marie Pessis and Gabriela Martin

Niède Guidon is a Brazilian archaeologist committed to holistic development. When she trained in archaeology under the guidance of Leroi Gourhan, she was already a graduate of natural sciences, an essential subject for discovering prehistory. Among her many achievements, she uncovered – in the remote mountainous region of south-east Piauí – recorded, studied and brought to international attention one of the largest concentrations of prehistoric rock paintings and carvings in the world.

These figuratively compelling images portray a world of resources as used by prehistoric man, in harmony with nature. They show a profusion of deer, capybaras, jaguars, emus, yellow armadillos and collared peccaries, together with now extinct or endangered species, and a great number of bird species, depicted in an unexpectedly lifelike way, combined with human figures adorned with head-dresses, masks and body paint, shown hunting, fighting and dancing in a world of delight previously unknown. But Niède Guidon also discovered that this peerless heritage was in one of South America’s poorest and most abandoned regions. When the images were painted, the region did not have today’s semi-arid climate. Streams flowed from the mountains and rivers ran through the valleys and meadows, amidst lush subtropical vegetation, of which little survives.

Ever since she was young, Niède Guidon has had a strong social conscience. It prompted her to leave Brazil during the military dictatorship and move to France in search of a society with more open minds, as well as to extend her already considerable academic training. Over time, as her work became recognised, she was appointed senior lecturer at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, but she did not forget the Piauí rock paintings and engravings. And, above all, she recalled the poverty and desolation of the local population, living in scattered dwellings, barely eking a living from the soil, or concentrated in small towns with no schools, hospitals or work. In the 1970s, she organised the first scientific missions in Piauí, initially with French resources and researchers who were later joined by researchers from Brazil and other countries.

From the outset of these pioneering archaeological missions, it was clear to Niède Guidon and her team that preserving the region’s cultural and natural heritage would depend on sustainable development. That meant creating a fairer way of life, by providing local people with education, health and work, and even more importantly social self-respect, by teaching them about their rights and duties as citizens and providing hope for younger generations.

In a region where backward-looking oligarchies had held sway since the ending of colonial devastation, it was a difficult task to instil a new element that was more than mere social assistance. Education and civility are words commonly used by politicians, especially at election time, but the real application of such wide-ranging concepts requires an iron will, generosity and honesty. From the very first, Niède Guidon had those qualities, as well as a clear and comprehensive strategy to achieve her goals.

With concentrated dedication to the scientific study of the area as well as the physical implementation of a protective sanctuary, Niède Guidon led her team towards the creation of
the Serra da Capivara National Park, opened in 1979, as a formal way of protecting Brazil’s prehistoric natural and cultural heritage. As well as its unique flora and fauna, more than 460 archaeological sites, including more than 260 rock art sites, have been identified within the 129,140-hectare park. Its inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1991 stemmed from further unflagging efforts to gain protection for the park at an international level. As a central part of the plan, Niède founded the Museum of the American Man Foundation (FUMDHAM), an organisation to preserve knowledge and continuation of the indigenous way of life and culture, based in the city of São Raimundo Nonato. One day, during a drought that had seen no rain for five years and when the silent impact of poverty and death were a daily feature, Niède Guidon was stopped by the side of the road in her car when a man, marked with pain and hunger, approached her. He told her how happy he would be if his son were an animal in the national park so that Niède could care for him. With renewed determination, she sought further international support for resources to extend FUMDHAM’s actions. Far from restricting itself to scientific or academic aims, FUMDHAM operates multilevel education and public health projects, and intensively promotes environmental and socio-economic development actions, guided by integrative and sustainable cultural criteria. As its president, Niède Guidon has tirelessly defended FUMDHAM’s aims.

Community facilities were established around the park, including schooling, health clinics, job training activities and wells. Initially, teachers were recruited from Brazil’s more developed areas to provide children with the best and to give quality training to local infant school teachers. Children are welcomed, provided with general education, introduced to art, music, creativity and image, and taught about their cultural heritage. Adults receive practical training and skills which enable them to get jobs in the park and the tourism facilities, including acting as guides for visitors.

Along with the activities in the park and social projects, Niède Guidon has continued her academic studies, organised and participated in international conferences and published her findings and research. She has held academic appointments in several Brazilian universities, including the Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, where she currently develops undergraduate and graduate teaching activities. Her writings, focusing mainly on prehistoric rock art and the earliest human settlements of Atlantic South America, are known worldwide and her analysis of early human remains discovered in the region has challenged existing early migration theories.

Niède Guidon has been central in establishing local alternatives, involving local people in developing this region with its wealth of palaeontological, archaeological, ecological and ethnographical interest. The biggest challenge facing such projects is continuity and, while Federal Government follow up is needed on the work already achieved, it is to Niède Guidon’s credit that she has persevered in trying to maintain what has been built, transferring skills to local people in order to enable sustainability. Her enthusiasm and firmness have been behind that struggle for thirty years. Yesterday’s children are today’s adults, but the path is a long one.

Niède Guidon believes that a balance can be struck between nature and people via education, solidarity and creativity. She has spent the greater part of her life fighting for her ideals, in Piauí, and she has not given up. Niède Guidon is still full of fight for a better world.
Indonesia – land of hundreds of ethnic groups scattered over thousands of islands – has undergone radical change since it declared its independence in 1945. In many Indonesian societies, earlier religious beliefs and systems of social organisation and interaction have been weakened or abandoned. In some cases groups have been obliged to move from their homelands, and other once-cohesive populations have dispersed through internal migration caused by economic or environmental pressures.

Such changes pose drastic problems for the traditional arts of Indonesian societies. How can arts based in beliefs no longer held, social systems no longer practiced, and places no longer lived in continue to satisfy? One answer is that their function can be shifted from religious or social purposes to the representation of group identity and solidarity, to the honouring of group history. The danger here is that they may become frozen symbols of the past. Another answer is that their idioms – their formal structures, artistic conventions, styles of dance and music – can be applied to new subjects, to contemporary experience, just as they were to the experience of earlier times.

Until recently, this second approach was rarely tried in Indonesia, but now several artists are beginning to explore its possibilities. Interestingly, most of them have had some association with the government-supported arts conservatories of Java and Bali. This means both that they are grounded in the ‘classical’ traditions of those regions and that they are consciously concerned to create new and distinctive work. The context and audience for their performances is also new: they usually perform not for rural audiences at domestic celebrations or community occasions, or for royal audiences at court ceremonies, but rather on stage for urban audiences particularly interested in new developments in the arts. Nevertheless, they maintain the traditional genres as the generative framework for artistic creation.

In the forefront of these artists is the strikingly unconventional dhalang (puppeteer) Slamet Gundono, from Tegal, on the north coast of Central Java. His art, though built from the elements and stories of Central Javanese wayang (shadow-puppetry) and performed narrative, is proudly rooted in the traditional and the local. Even the deliberately incongruous jokes and props he sometimes uses – a cordless telephone, a wagon wheel that has rolled in from a cowboy movie – are funny precisely because the prevailing context is traditional. Although his stance is not confrontational (he creates a relaxed, joking rapport with his audience), his work runs counter to many of Indonesia’s prevailing aesthetic and artistic norms. Where most contemporary performance assumes the Indonesian language as the necessary lingua franca, he uses Javanese – and the non-standard ‘regional’ dialect of Tegal at that. Typically artists seek to impress audiences with expensive production equipment, but Gundono is unabashedly low-tech, with no stage or lighting effects. While many performers strive to look glamorous or elegant in beautiful or flamboyant costumes, Gundono dresses his large, unglamorous body in floppy caftans or a sarong with no shirt. There is no telling what he will wear on his head: an Australian bush hat, a silk skullcap, a supremely ugly sausage-curl wig.
Most radically, Gundono rejects the pervasive assumption that the royal courts set the standard by which Javanese arts are to be measured. Rather than obey the ‘refined’ court aesthetic, with its intricately carved leather puppets and glowing bronze instruments in elaborate wooden cases, he uses a cheap stringed instrument and puppets made from vegetables, cooking utensils, or plaited grass. Rather than follow the complicated rules of sung poetry as codified in the courts, Gundono sings in an unfettered, exuberantly expressive style that is nevertheless true to the scales and melodic idiom of Javanese music.

At its deepest level, this is a challenge to the ideology of social class. Class in Indonesia is embedded in the notion of the ‘exemplary centre’, which sets the courts and major cities as the arbiters of excellence in everything, arts included. Rural society, according to the fables purveyed in newspapers and broadcast media (which, nota bene, are always based in the cities), constantly aspires to match this excellence but never succeeds. Against the preeminence that public discourse unquestioningly accords the urban and the aristocratic, Gundono asserts the vitality of the marginal, the rural, the demotic. He does this not with stridency or anger or shock tactics, but with humour and pathos. (I once saw him act the role of a woman, a character from the wayang stories, who has lost her child. In his loud voice he bewailed her loss, and his power and empathy were such that one believed wholly in the woman’s grief. At the same time one was aware that this was a large male actor bellowing. The effect, which Gundono clearly intended, was at once comical and very moving.) His work draws on the stories, characters, music and philosophy of Javanese tradition, but not in their classical, court-sanctioned formulations. Instead he reassembles the traditional elements in a looser, alternative structure and uses them to affirm the dignity and integrity of the neglected and ignored, the people without power and voice.

In so doing, he rebuilds the broken bridge between the tradition and today. When contemporary artists abandon the traditional arts as inadequate to the complexities of modern life, they cut themselves adrift. Increasingly adept in the genres of international culture, they lose their ties to the history and culture of their own place and ancestry, and they can address only the immediate urban present. What Gundono does is to show that using traditional idioms and the simplest means – cucumbers and mandolins – he can indeed depict the pressing social issues of today. Wayang stories have long been used to refer to topical matters, and Gundono takes every advantage of this potential. Sometimes he reverses the polarity and sets wayang characters in contemporary situations. But his great themes are present even when they are not the explicit subject of the story, for they are embodied in the formal conditions of his work. The story could be anything, but when it is told by an oversized man using humble props and a street-singer’s instrument, eschewing centuries of aristocratic elaboration to return a genre to its village roots, marginality, dispossession and voice are inevitably the subtext.

The bridge Gundono is rebuilding runs in both directions. If contemporary work can be created with traditional materials, then the tradition itself regains its relevance to contemporary artists and audiences: it is recognised as the history of the present and not the archaeology of a lost world. Boldly ranging across time, class, geography and language, confounding expectations and ignoring conventions at every turn, Gundono’s work brings radically new dimensions and resources to contemporary Indonesian arts.
Picture the scene: Harare, Zimbabwe. December 2002. It is the night of the Harare Mayor’s Christmas Cheer Show. The fundraising dinner is being held in a five-star hotel downtown. The cream of Zimbabwean society is present – politicians, businessmen, philanthropists. These are society’s fat cats, invited in the hopes that they will dig deep for charity in the spirit of Christmas. The men are attired in dinner jackets and black ties. The women sparkle in satin, sequins and jewels. This is a night to remember... one of the highlights of the social calendar.

But, as with every other sphere in Zimbabwe today, political tension pervades the gathering. The underlying current is palpable. The all-pervasive political divide has become more pronounced since 2000 and the emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change, the first viable opposition to Robert Mugabe’s ruling Zanu (PF) for 20 years. Democratic space, restored at Independence in 1980, has been steadily eroded. Political, social and racial intolerance is the order of the day.

Among the diners there is an uneasy truce, but the air crackles with tension. The reason is that, for the first time, the proceedings are under the control of the opposition. The new Mayor of Harare, Elias Mudzuri, has been recently elected on an MDC ticket. He is our host tonight. The President of the MDC, Morgan Tsvangirai, and his wife Susan are present. There are also a number of government ministers, including the Minister of Justice, Patrick Chinamasa.

The pretence of civility is there, but people are uncomfortable. Conversation is strained. We all eat and drink too much. As a superb meal is served, paid for by sponsorship from commercial companies, many in the room are aware of the suffering of fellow Zimbabweans. Economic collapse is evident, largely as a result of rampant corruption and disastrous government policies that have brought unemployment and hardship to many.

A slight young man, casually dressed but incongruously wearing a hand-knitted woollen cap, slips into the room. The spotlight finds him and the polite chatter ceases. This is Edgar Langeveldt, part of the line-up of local music, dance and theatrical talent mustered to entertain the assembled elite.

In a conversational tone, Edgar begins his patter. He is well known in this relatively small and close-knit society even though, in his own words, he comes from the wrong side of the railway line. Edgar is of mixed-race, part of the 250,000-strong community known as ‘Coloureds’ – a product of the illicit relationships between (mainly) white men and black women that characterised the colonial era.

Rhodesia, as the country was known before it became Zimbabwe at Independence in 1980, had its own version of ‘apartheid’. Coloureds were regarded as a separate race – one rank below the whites, but above the blacks. As with the other racial groups, they were born, lived, went to school and were buried in segregated hospitals, suburbs, schools and graveyards. But they didn’t fit in anywhere. The whites shunned them as being inferior and the blacks resented them because they were legally regarded as superior. They were living proof that one cannot legislate against passion.

Most Coloureds of Edgar’s age (he was born in 1969) can trace their ancestry back only
one or two generations. Beyond that it gets murky and nobody wants to talk about it. Most of the white fathers did not acknowledge their children and soon returned to the bosom of their families – their progeny ignored. The black mothers remained unmarried, a disgrace in traditional society.

As the decades passed, a substantial Coloured community grew and was located in Harare’s Arcadia suburb, sandwiched between the black township of Mbare and the lower-class white suburb of Braeside. It was a fascinating mix of cultures and backgrounds. A cultural melting pot, where black, white and Asian blood flowed in differing proportions. The hybrid offspring resulting from this cross-pollination were very beautiful – ranging in skin tone from deep chocolate, through gold and honey to café au lait and almost white. Religion, customs, languages, food and dress blurred in a kaleidoscope of diversity.

“Howzit, howzit, ek se,” Edgar tuned the hushed Christmas gathering. Before he could even say a full sentence, people were laughing at this typical Arcadia greeting delivered in a typical Arcadia accent.

With his incisive and perceptive wit Edgar snaped the uneasy truce in the room and went straight for the jugular with a stream of politically incorrect jokes – poking fun at the ruling party, the opposition, custom, race and religion. Within five minutes he had the entire audience roaring with laughter. Dignity was forgotten as government ministers and society housewives alike mopped tears of laughter with the paper Christmas serviettes. Momentarily, all differences ceased to matter. We were united in hilarity.

Edgar’s patter streams effortlessly from him. He changes personality and character seamlessly with the use of minimal props – using only his voice, his accent, his facial expressions and a pair of sunglasses. One can hardly keep up with him. Nothing is sacrosanct. His mild and unthreatening manner subtly masks a deeply uncomfortable, social commentary – but so skilful is his delivery that one is roaring with laughter almost before one realises one has been insulted.

His humour is relevant, irreverent and pertinent. It cuts through all prejudice and shines a spotlight onto those things we would all rather keep hidden from view. And his remarkable gift is that he makes us laugh at ourselves, in spite of ourselves.

Interaction with the audience is something Edgar has honed to perfection. That night, he noticed me. I had recently been arrested and briefly imprisoned on a trumped up charge of fraud for my part in founding the country’s first independent daily newspaper, The Daily News.

He dedicated his next joke to ‘former prisoner Wilf Mbanga’. The Minister of Justice, who had ordered my unlawful arrest, squirmed in his seat. I roared with laughter – even though my time in jail was not a happy memory.

Sadly, Edgar’s sense of humour, born out of the harsh realities of growing up in the Coloured community – where, he says, it was a key tool for survival – is not always appreciated. As democratic space in Zimbabwe is increasingly eroded and intolerance becomes increasingly entrenched, his courageous determination to laugh at the world has been interpreted by some as some kind of subversive activity. Political pressure has increased. He has been threatened and censored. One over-zealous government official attacked him and broke his jaw.

But none of this has stopped the self-styled Ambassador of Laughter from poking fun at life in Zimbabwe. He can be found performing several times a week at The Book Café in Harare where his ‘Hot social satire and cold beers’ show continues to draw the crowds, weary of the daily grind and eager for him to make them laugh away their sorrows.
Soon after his resounding entry into the literary world, Gabriel García Márquez allowed himself the liberty of scrawling a gigantic graffiti on one of the walls of the office of Carmen Balcells, his literary agent in Barcelona: “What I most want is to be a literary agent and have an author like me.”

Nobody would expect Quino, with similar qualifications, to do the same on the walls of any of his publishers, which range from Helsinki to Papeete. This is because, although conscious of the mass attraction of his work over five decades, of the spread of his several million copies of his works in many languages, of the almost religious devotion he inspires among fans – his loyal readers can only be called thus – Quino has never parted from his genuine modesty which translates into caring for others; a human quality, which is nurtured not only by basic ethical principles but also by his deep interest in all around him, especially in people, in specific issues and particularly gender.

Perhaps I could imagine myself announcing, “What I’d like most in the world is to be a publisher and have an author like Quino,” and, having had this pleasure since 1970, I can say that I have held an especially salubrious job.

To have been part of the fine care given everything to be done, of months of debate about the possible title of a book, of being related with the content and run of pages, of weeks of tests of cover colours, has been a stimulus to the publisher’s professional responsibility. To be at his side, as my partner and I have been during decades, in the creative process of a book of graphic humour when this involves not just the simple collection of scattered works, has been a real privilege which, without a doubt, improves health and the quality of life. To share his hopes and distress, the anxiety and the ill humour precipitated by a country as trying as Argentina, has forged a link that means much more than simply being able to include in an Ediciones de la Flor catalogue all of his books, which at once become long and best sellers.

And when political misfortune – the murderous military dictatorship that ruled between 1976 and 1983 – put us his publishers first in prison without trial, and later forced into exile, Quino’s solidarity and warmth, his loyalty as “our author”, had its most severe and dramatic of tests.

Up to this point my words must simply be believed, because I speak of Quino from the professional link and the declared friendship. For the view of his multi-faceted talent and his intellectual commitment to good causes, I must become a publisher who reproduces the opinion of others – and with whom there is almost full agreement – so that more people can know him, and thereby eliminate all suspicion of partiality which my personal words might transmit.

But before that, an anecdote: the day before José Saramago’s Nobel Prize for Literature was announced I had the pleasure of introducing him to Quino at the Frankfurt Book Fair. After an embarrassing silence, precipitated by the shyness of both, Saramago blurted: “Mafalda was my teacher of philosophy. She should be compulsory reading in all curricula, not in elementary schools but at universities, because she teaches how to think.” Quino blushed and could only mutter his gratitude.

The passages I transcribe below – with the exception of the line by Eco – are included in Mafalda’s World (El mundo de Mafalda), a book published as a catalogue for the exhibition by that
Character 'Mafalda' by Joaquín Salvador Lavado
name held in Spain in 1992, and from Quino, 50 Years, the catalogue of the travelling exhibition held in Argentina during 2004-5 to celebrate his half century as an illustrator.

“It does not matter what I think of Mafalda, but what Mafalda thinks of me.” Umberto Eco.

“Born in 1964 (...) Mafalda went through what has been branded a brilliant decade, anticipating – unbeknown to her or her creator – the explosion of protest in 1968. Hers was not a proletarian and barricade response, but an intellectual and psychological, a dialectical, answer, which covered topics such as the authoritarianism of adults, racism, hunger, population growth and social injustice (...) Quino was the backbone of a social satire that constituted at once a far from frivolous or schematic reflection on the moral and political vulnerability of our society...” Román Gubern.

“He is a poet of humour, a sociologist who draws.” Miguel Brascó.

“If in the sixties Oscar Masotta coined the phrase ‘graphic literature’ for comics, I think it appropriate to suggest that Quino has drawn ‘illustrated philosophy’ (...) for five decades (...) Quino’s world does not appear to have a resolution... Therefore his humour is counter-utopian. Utopia is always a distant state, out ahead, temporal in some future time, when things might be different. Quino expresses the world as it is. And the world is as Quino sees it (...) This world does not allow him to encourage much hope (...) He reflects on the failure of man in a world that capitalism has made mercantile, mechanical, chaotic, sick, selfish, competitive and frozen. His points also stretch to the massification and authoritarianism of the collective regimes. In other words, he offers no solutions. He is not required to give them.” José Pablo Feinmann.

“If Mafalda’s saga is the undisputed great novel of the middle class which Argentine literature has never dared – or never will – write, then it must also be accepted that the full page plates by Quino offer the best stories ever told by an Argentine. What I would like to say – sorry, I can’t avoid doing so – is that Quino is a great writer. This is a great writer who draws.” Rodrigo Fresán.

“Quino does not draw like Rembrandt, not like Picasso, nor Carlos Alonso, nor even like the Cromagnon of Altamira, he draws like a master because he makes of the drawing a perfect tool with which to illustrate his ideas of genius. If the drawing is not that, what is it?” Crist (Cristóbal Reinoso)

“In the impeccable pages he regularly delivers... Quino has combined most of the universal topics – his reading library is no less than the whole world – with a personalised graphic treatment, perhaps with a modern, shocking barbarous quality. Quino illustrates ideas but does so by drawing the little things, people in context, people in their place, according to his own expression.” Juan Sasturain.

“But, why were those jokes so good? Why did they make us laugh? Because they were drawn with the style of a master illustrator. By one who knows how many lines are needed to produce a result and ignores the rules of virtuous vanity of those who only want to impress the ignorant.” Oscar Grillo.

“I have always read Quino as if his were literature. And his literature seems to me best when its words are fewest. Now that he writes lines made of purest silence, the work of Quino also sounds like music. What in the sixties was Chekhov, in the twenty first century has become Mozart. (...) Now, as he becomes more Quino, he also becomes more Kafka.” Tomás Eloy Martínez.

Such a harmonious chorus of praise places me above suspicion and, with that for background, it is not out of order that the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires should have proposed Quino for the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Translated from Spanish by Andrew Graham-Yool.
Many decades have passed since an Iranian satirist was so popular that his work was eagerly received among the most diverse strata of Iranian society, even the illiterate. Nabavi’s satire is read, recited and talked about in neighbourhoods and corner-shops, in taxis and on public transport, including Tehran’s metro system. It reaches a vast number of people, far beyond the range and circulation of media he contributes to because his work is proliferated, inside and outside Iran, by people chatting to each other, during the working day and at evening gatherings. This is unprecedented in the recent history of Iranian literature.

During Khatami’s presidency censorship was less strict, and that provided an opportunity for the satirical writings of Ebrahim Nabavi to appear in publication. As the second term of Khatami’s presidency approached an end, there was increasingly less freedom and Nabavi’s work, as expected, came under scrutiny. This resulted in some of his pieces being banned from publication altogether and the rest being subjected to alterations demanded by Edareh-ye negaresh (the Censorship Bureau).

The advent of satirical writing in Iran goes back to the beginning of the twentieth century, in particular to the 1906 Constitutional Revolution. At that time, social critique and political satire filled the most popular, influential, potent and effective columns in the newspapers. Ali-akbar-e Dehkhoda (1879-1956) wrote the pioneering satire pieces in the Persian language under the column title of ‘Charand-o-parand’ (‘Garbage and Gobbledygook’). Dehkhoda had spent some time at the beginning of the twentieth century in Europe and was familiar with the genre of political satire. In the following decades other distinguished Iranian satirists appeared and wrote in particular for two publications, namely, Baba-shamal (Daddy Shamal) and Toufiq (Accomplishment). Their works, to certain extent, had a broad impact on the level of social debate and were feverishly consumed by people at large who looked forward to reading their next oeuvres.

In the years following the 1979 revolution, Hadi Khorsandi emerged on the scene as the unrivalled and celebrated satirist. At the time, Bazarghan was appointed prime minister by the Revolutionary Council, while Shapour Bakhtiar, who was the last prime minister under the Shah, was deposed and went into hiding when Khomeini arrived. Bakhtiar and Bazarghan had been on the same political front in the past so when Khorsandi came out with a few lines of poetry about Bakhtiar exiting Iran into Turkey through the Bazarghan border point, people found his use of this pun hilarious and he became famous all over Iran prior to his own exile.

When Kiomars-e Saberi started the publication called Gol-aqa (Mr. Goody) after the frenzied post-revolution years, a number of satirical writers, including Nabavi, published their work in this weekly newspaper. Nabavi felt that the atmosphere of Gol-aqa was rather constrained and that he needed greater expanse to realise for his talents. He persisted in the development of his own style and eventually became, and is acknowledged as, the King of Satire in Iran.

In the ‘reformist’ years of Khatami’s presidency, the fame and popularity of Nabavi reached such a point that it was sufficient for a newspaper just to have him as a columnist to increase its circulation to unprecedented levels. His constituency of readers bought that newspaper or magazine only because of his contribution and would switch to another if he did so too. Nabavi was prolific, managing to write for two or three newspapers simultaneously. Each published
piece soon reached everybody’s ear, enthusiastically retold by those who were delighted to convey his latest humorous reflection and who took pride in being the first to have read it. People then went on to discuss the piece, to decipher its coded messages and reveal them to all they met. This popularity made Nabavi’s name synonymous with satire and had its political ramifications. He was imprisoned and subjected to hardship and humiliation. Nevertheless, he stood firm and, even during his trial, used the same style and satirical approach in his defence.

All social topics come within Nabavi’s field of fire and satirical reconstruction. He identifies the mine-field and his pen carries out the blast or – given the censorship – a controlled detonation. He writes on and about a diversity of topics and issues relating to political developments of the day. For example, he wrote about the trial of Karbasschi, Tehran’s popular mayor; on the political demise of Nouri, Minister of the Interior, and on Mohajeraami, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance (both members of Khatami’s cabinet); on the censorship and banning of publications and newspapers; on the imprisonment of journalists; and on city council elections. His work approaches black satire, and in many instances it is at the crossroads of the comedy and tragedy unfolding in the political and social arena of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The specific tenets of the satire of Ebrahim Nabavi are his sensitivity to issues of modernism and his subscription to the general idea of change – the transformation of old and archaic beliefs. His satire is targeted at those who advocate the preservation of obsolete ideas, and at those who encourage a medieval way of looking at life and old-fashioned value systems. Ideas of reform, and the necessity and exigency of accepting modern values, are instrumental in his intelligently composed black-satire writings. He sometimes becomes the devil’s advocate, claiming that all these ‘modern’ ideas are held by his adversaries, those who want to silence him. He has an enviable command of the language, which enables him to bring to the surface the selfishness, sinister ambitions and power-hunger of those who oppose democracy. Nabavi has created an undying satire, recorded so far in over 30 volumes.

Satire is a thermometer that displays the health or sickness of a society. Iranians have consigned the patient to their most acclaimed health specialist, a surgeon who can open the patient up with his penknife and reconstruct or stitch up the vital organs. His work reveals the inner vessels, and the diseases and deformities that must be removed if the patient is to take the path to recovery. The readers may be gently anaesthetised by their laughter but the surgery allows preservation of their aspirations and ensures that their souls remain intact – they know what is going on and are facing it. Iranians, all over the world, are impatient to read still more of Nabavi’s satire and to follow closely his odyssey for change and democracy.

Satirists are like the physicians or nurses who, when I was a child, used to place a thermometer under a patient’s tongue or under his arm. But when patients were incapacitated, they would try to insert it elsewhere, in a place that patients usually didn’t appreciate. As a consequence, the patients reacted, sometimes even breaking the thermometer. This is exactly how Nabavi operates, and we should ask him how many thermometers his patients have broken!

Translated from Farsi by Ahmad Ebrahimi.
Opiyo Okach is a choreographer and dancer whose work, in many ways, reflects the state of flux and self-discovery that is taking place in his homeland, Kenya, and in many other African countries. Just as the fledgling Kenyan nation is propelled to balance its priorities between heritage and modernity, Opiyo’s work too, deliberately and thoughtfully, tries to negotiate a place for African contemporary dance between traditional heritage and modern reality. The themes he explores in his research and choreographic creations revolve around notions of “encoding identities, crossing paths, overlapping across boundaries”, boundaries that are at once cultural, aesthetic and political. He is part of the second generation of contemporary African choreographers and his work seems to suggest that contemporary Kenya, in its quest for self-definition, needs to embrace in authentic and relevant ways, the interaction, interchange and interference of cultures, a characteristic of our times that cannot be escaped.

With the emergence of Opiyo Okach in the mid-90s, the restrictive contexts into which traditional Kenyan dance had settled started to be examined and broadened. Dance, one of the primary artistic and cultural mediums of Kenya’s diverse communities, is typically expressed as a combined form of song, movement and language. However, there has been little evolution of this prevailing form. Since independence from colonial rule, traditional dance has been mainly used for celebration during national and state occasions. It has experienced some innovation within performing arts festivals of educational institutions, but with no prospects for development outside of this framework. And at worst, traditional dance, as presented on Kenyan tourist circuits, has been reduced to an empty form of a once meaningful expression. But, thanks to the efforts of Opiyo Okach over the last decade, the Kenyan public today can experience an evolving and innovative contemporary African dance.

In 1997, Opiyo and his Company Gaara, with their choreographic work Cleansing, dazzled like a meteor in the firmament of East African dance; they won a prize at the 2nd Contemporary African Dance Competition in Angola. Invited to create a work for the 1998 spectacle of Kenyan fashion design, Opiyo’s performance sent a ripple of excitement through the audience – for many present, it was their first taste of African contemporary dance. Company Gaara seemed to have appeared miraculously, from nowhere. However, the foundations for this sensational rise had been laid as far back as 1987, when Opiyo, as a young man in his twenties, began to explore mime and physical theatre in Nairobi, and later in Europe.

Opiyo’s talent is as clear as day. When he dances, he is fluid and supple. His compositions are rich and layered. He uses a range of mediums together to create the final oeuvre, and has incorporated sculpture, installations, video and music to masterful effect.

But talent without a field in which to flourish can easily wither. Opiyo is aware that grounding contemporary dance in Kenya is as important as taking it to international dance circuits. Consequently, his contribution to East African dance has not only been the building of an impressive body of creative work but also in developing and nurturing talent in Kenya, as well as in Uganda and Tanzania.

In 2000, Opiyo embarked on an ambitious two-year project Generation 2001, his aim being to identify and train potential Kenyan and East African dancers from the existing fields of
Opiyo Okach performing No Man’s Gone Now, 2003
Vil du Sujet, programme A production Sacd/
Festival d’Avignon, choreography Julyen Hamilton
Photo Laurent Philippe

theatre, traditional dance and even fashion’s modeling world. He enlisted both African and European choreographers and teachers for the workshops.

The outcomes of this process were far reaching. For a start, the impressive and beautifully structured choreographic piece *Abila* was realised out of this process. When Opiyo and Company Gaara performed this work at the GoDown Arts Centre in Nairobi in 2003, on a tour through East and Southern Africa, the local audience was deeply moved. There was an atmosphere of noticeable awe, a sense that something quite powerful had transpired.

Another positive outcome is the small but growing local following for contemporary dance that has emerged. Keenly aware that innovation often takes time to touch the mainstream (if ever it does), Opiyo constantly questions the frameworks through which audiences and contemporary dance meet. So, one sunny day in August 2004, at a trendy outdoor coffee-house in Nairobi, a group of silent moving figures cut and dipped in and out of the spaces between tables of patrons, while a trumpet improvisation fused effortlessly with the easy afternoon chatter. It was Opiyo and a group of African contemporary dancers, bringing dance into the community. This was part of his East Africa Dance Encounters initiative, a platform for African choreographers and dancers to exchange experiences and ideas.

Opiyo’s latest work, *Shift...Centre*, which premiered at Dance Encounters 2005 in Nairobi, also challenges the conventional understanding of the relationship between audience and performance. This piece again demonstrates Opiyo’s increasingly bold approach to tackling assumptions. He has stated that in this creation “the audience is invited to explore the performance space, (is) offered the liberty to choose how to engage with and perceive the performance.”

Opiyo Okach is truly at the origin of contemporary dance development in Kenya, and indeed East Africa. In Tanzania and Uganda two young dance companies, Mionzi Dance Theatre and Footsteps respectively, have benefited from his mentorship. In Kenya, Jokajok Dance, Kunja Dance Theatre, Lailah Masigah Project, African Arts Ensemble and Dance Into Space have all grown from the inspiration and the training he has provided.

Above all, Opiyo Okach is honoured for his commitment, not only to his own career but also to the nurturing of the young generation of dancers and the development of contemporary dance in Kenya and throughout Africa. Through his work he is helping to create a new face, a new image of Africa, an Africa of artistic talent and powerful creativity, an Africa that fights, progresses and wins after all.
There is a clearly traced regularity, namely, each national cinematography at a certain period is associated with a certain actor or rather with characters incarnated by the latter on screen. These characters merge into a generalised image that personifies the time. Examples are abundant. Post-Soviet Armenian cinematography (1990s) begins with the quest for the new hero who could graphically and psychologically express the shrill contradictions and polyphony of the troubled times. In turn, this new hero looks for an appropriate physical envelope through which to reveal himself, to prove himself, to become significant, relevant and remarkable. The hero of these tumultuous times in Armenia has found his actor: Michael Poghosian. Many new Armenian films, TV shows and even concerts cannot do without Michael Poghosian’s meaningful or symbolic presence. He plays everybody, remaining Michael Poghosian, the actor.

Why has the phenomenon of actor Michael Poghosian manifested itself now? Why is he so much in demand in present-day cinematography whereas his existence in the Soviet 1980s was nearly invisible? During the Soviet years he was a certified, physically fit and psychologically honed actor with an operatic voice trained at the conservatoire, yet, hardly anyone would recognise today’s Michael Poghosian in the Armenian films that date back to the Perestroika when he performed not only secondary but also leading roles... Indeed, in the schematic space of Soviet cinematography, Michael Poghosian – with his pronounced inclination to improvisation and grotesque execution of the image, in other words, his propensity to ‘enact’ in the best sense of the word – had no room to manoeuvre. This was the time of ‘non-acting’, epitomised in a famous retort of a well-known Soviet film director: "Don’t you act out! This is cinema, not theatre!" In that situation, Michael Poghosian with his explicit stature as an actor could not enjoy himself.

The actor in him was able to ease his anxiety in secondary parts, playing an elderly lady promenading her rooster or a slanderous neighbour. He can play without make up or even words, using only brisk gestures and mimicking. This is his element where he can vent his passion for acting and personification. He endowed one character with an absurd red moustache, which signified the invisible presence of a new dimension or essence in the character and in the actor himself. This is the essence of the red clown, comedian and jester who manipulates a multitude of masks and tries on many roles; and this ultimately manifested itself in Poghosian’s first film success where he played the wandering medieval actor Thomazo in The Voice in the Wilderness (dir. V. Chaldranian). Thomazo himself did not need any markers, such as a red moustache or red eyebrows (the latter, in fact, he shaved off altogether), because during his times he was free to do what he wanted, as prompted by the instinct to act that resides in any free individual and by the defence mechanism living in any actor.

This Thomazo character came into being as late as 1991, and not coincidentally. At the painful threshold of the 1980s and 1990s, Armenian cinematography badly needed an ‘expressive man’ with a very wide drama diapason and a unique ability to incarnate, making use of body, mime and voice. Playing Thomazo became a pivotal point in the artistic biography of Michael Poghosian because the film heralded the return of ‘play’ and ‘acting’ to Armenian cinematography, in the original, Renaissance sense of the words.
In Thomazo one can discern the characteristic that was to become definitive in all the key film roles performed by Michael Poghosian over the last decade. This characteristic is ambivalence, or in other words, the organic, harmonious co-existence and co-presence of incompatible notions, which add a stereoscopic effect to the character, filling him with inner intrigue. This ambivalence manifests itself in Thomazo's base and buffoon culture and, at the same time, in his lofty and exalted spirit. He epitomises the synthesis of the 'lofty' and 'low' in the Renaissance consciousness and culture that manifested itself best of all on stage.

Thomazo reminds us of Michael Poghosian's ability to incarnate. The range of incarnations and the actor's craving for incarnations is demonstrated in the entertaining video film Los Angeles-Yerevan, made in the genre of a TV show (dir. V. Chaldranian), with national types and characters ranging from a recognisable politician cum fat cat who lectures us on how we should live, to an old spinster, animal lover. Distinguishable masks and characters follow one after the other, creating a satirical portrait of Armenian society in the early 1990s and revealing a whole range of national complexes and topical problems. This social, critical and grotesque line continues in the popular films Khatabalada and Yerevan Blues for which Michael Poghosian was the co-author of the screenplay, co-director and the author of sketches and skits. Here he continues the quest for his 'mask' or rather 'character/mask' which, according to the actor, lives indispensably inside him, wanting to get out, and through whose eyes the actor sometimes sees the world. This mask is called Apetik, a lumpen-proletarian, a home-grown poet, an ever-hungry frequenter of Yerevan cafés. This character originates from commonplace urban culture which, on the one hand, proved more responsive to change, and on the other hand, is most vulnerable to it.

Tumultuous marginal times engender marginal heroes or 'crazy angels'. Michael Poghosian's character in Suren Babayan's mystical fable Crazy Angel (2000) resides in prison. Who is he? A madman possessed by devilish pride or a new messiah? The inmates of his cell believe in him, as if he were a miracle, but he induces them to commit a great sin, making them crucify their teacher (i.e. him), not on a cross but on a prison bench... Perhaps this is in line with ambivalence: a false prophet and false Jesus?

Compared with the false Jesus crucified on a prison bench, the hero named Crazy in the Symphony of Silence (dir. V. Chaldranian, 2002) apparently lives in a different dimension and is made of a different human texture. This is a rough and tough businessman with a criminal record and the soul of a failing romantic poet who, after 20 years, suddenly gets homesick. This hero, nevertheless, is the same 'crazy angel' only turned inside out and retaileored by the film director under the standards of spectacular cinematography. Thanks to the rules of the genre, the character has more room for manoeuvre, acting and sarcasm, and Michael Poghosian, feeling himself in his milieu, submerges into the twists and turns of the plot with pleasure, becoming not only the director's instrument but also the co-author. Obviously, the more perfect the instrument and the more finely it is tuned, the more interesting the result on screen.

Here we get back to one of the dimensions of the 'expressive man' who is not only not restricted by actor-oriented or non-actor-oriented film directing but is indispensable as a perfect instrument, a tuning fork, in the present-day chaotic quest for the genuine 'hero of our time' who may appear in a very broad range of guises. While the 'crazy angel' is one extreme of this quest, Crazy is another. And, most importantly, the Hero and the Anti-hero are revealed, marked and proved in the same person. This is an exposed nerve, and this, seemingly incompatible, co-existence of two extremes resides in the creative work of Michael Poghosian, the actor of tumultuous times.

Translated from Russian by Aram Ohanian.
Lenin El Ramly is one of Egypt’s most celebrated, prolific and controversial comic playwrights. Taking on commercial theatre, at a time when serious critics were scared of being overwhelmed by its box-office pitfalls, he launched the Actor’s Workshop and was for a long time the group’s in-house playwright, setting his own conditions and refusing to yield to market dictates. His plays, film scripts and TV series tackle the pressing issues of Arab modernity and the impasse it has run into over two centuries. He constantly searches for meanings that transcend the dichotomies pervading his world. Division, unbearable tension, sweeping frivolity, squabbling, intimidation, suppressed violence, bewilderment and an impending disaster: it is a world on its toes... and, along with the laughs, he throws in the really big questions, combining transient entertainment with deep meaning and powerful metaphor.

Not simply a playwright, El Ramly is a dramatist in the full sense of the word; he has devoted himself to theatre, penetrating its farthest recesses. Constantly experimenting with both ancient and modern techniques, he creates his own uniquely profound, poetical language that is breathtaking in its pace.

In each of his works, El Ramly introduces stunning innovations, barging into the world of the absurd and the experimental, making use of what world theatre has to offer without losing his own individuality and authenticity. Prolific as he is, each play is different in form and theme. At times he draws on oral narrative, folkloric tales and great legends, yet is never bound by any stereotype that would incapacitate his freedom of action or plunge him into repetition. He works adeptly, with the skill of a sculptor fascinated by the richness of his raw material. His diversity flows from a freely roaming imagination, a deeply committed artistic spirit, an urge to overcome self-division, and a ceaseless search for his own truth.

Lenin El Ramly’s motivation is the creation of form as the means to put across a message. This may entail reverting to the imposing past, as in his play Hello Behs, which looks back to the French expedition to Ottoman-ruled Egypt, deals with religion, art and the impact of the past on the living. Alternatively, he may fast track to the future, with the aim of exploring its potentials, or converge different periods with fantastical implications, as in Goodbye Behs. The tense, unrelenting pace of In Plain Arabic uses dramatic images intersecting in swift shifts from one form to another. A bitterly satirical exposé of the current Arab world and the prevalent triviality and pettiness, In Plain Arabic employs Chekhov’s technique of soliloquies with no interaction to signal alienation and broken communication.

Madness recurs in a number of El Ramly’s works, often deriving from split personality. In Mad Sadoun, the hero’s revolutionary dreams are shattered following the June 1967 defeat when Israel occupied Arab land having routed three Arab armies. Released from hospital 25 years later, Sadoun is in denial, refusing the changes around him. As his ‘world’ and the real world clash they implode together.

The changed scene always involves a new meaning – speech is minimised and the border between the apparent and the hidden is blurred. The contradiction between the façade and what is behind it, between words and deeds, is depicted through immaculate attention to detail. El Ramly explains that “the pen pauses at every detail no matter how small, an item of accessories, a certain costume, a moment of silence, the way a character makes his or her
entrance or exit... etc. And every time, tens of questions are asked, beginning with: Does it have a meaning? If so, what exactly does it mean?"

We find ourselves departing from the familiar logic of life. The systematic overturning of norms signifies dissatisfaction: Never mind the familiar, seek out the extraordinary! There are things we are unaccustomed to and things of unknown origins, like the “thing” that peasants find in their village and cannot put a name to. Crippled by their fear of knowing, the peasants dump earth on the “thing” until it disappears. There is an arbitrary cobweb of surprises – the impossible becomes conceivable. In *The Shame*, a man carries a foetus inside him. In *A Goblin for Every Citizen*, the hero finds himself juxtaposed with his antithesis, i.e. the folkloric version of himself. The normal is the abnormal, as in *I Dreamed I Was Walking on My Feet*. Another feature is the use of short descriptions and conversational sentences marked by swiftness and by their capacity to produce significance. El Ramly’s *Viewpoint* is set in a charity for the blind. A dialogue takes place between darkness and light in which dark is light and vice versa. A state employee delivers “the people’s food” in a powerful expression of exclusion and marginalisation. Scavenging appears quite normal in one character’s encounter with a cockroach and provokes laughter rather than anger.

El Ramly adds new dimensions to the long-standing notion of a clash between progress and underdevelopment, wealth and poverty, urban and rural life. This dichotomy that plagued conventional Orientalism is carried further and transcended through a dialectical complex epitomised in *Hello Behs* in the character of Nadir, who embraces the values of modernity, democracy, rationalism and enlightenment while rejecting hollow consumerism. In *Goodbye Behs*, he points to a new kind of slavery that develops on a planet built on science alone, and in *The Incident*, one of the best comedies dealing with Arab women’s struggle for emancipation, he creates a remarkable artistic metaphor for the worsening situation.

Paradox in El Ramly’s world is complex rather than simplistic. Truth has many faces and is reflected in many mirrors. Deep in the individuals identified with underdevelopment, despite their wretchedness and ignorance, are the values of solidarity, loyalty, tolerance and altruism. Although “everything is possible, nay probable, if consciousness is nonexistent” – or stunted under tyranny and military rule in the name of accommodation and thwarting sedition – when such consciousness rises it poses a threat to patriarchy, authoritarianism and exploitation. There is a clash between emancipation and the arresting of this consciousness, between censorship and the thirst for unrestricted knowledge, and indeed, an internal clash caused by self-censorship, where “religion, ethnicity and politics are out of bounds”, where there are more and more taboos, and where the struggle between fundamentalism and secularism is intensifying: “No nation can advance while lying to itself.” In the event, “all are prisoners and the jailer is more fed up than the jailed.”

The odds are stacked against moral strength, courage, ethical education, culture and human advancement in the struggle against dogma, narrow-mindedness, selfishness, shallowness and vulgarity. It is a reality dominated by dead souls that more often than not emerge as the stronger side. But ideals, though on the defensive as underdogs in this struggle, remain luminous and inspirational, in ceaseless turmoil within and without the self, between tradition holding them back and modernity breaking away from the grip of tradition. Often the two exist in the same character, tormented by tension and duality.

El Ramly’s protagonist may cut a lonely figure in the face of fate but there is always a glimmer of hope, no matter how faint, in the continuously shaping poetical relationship between image, word and tireless movement. Everything is changing, nothing remains the same, and all takes place in a blend of thought and spectacle. El Ramly captures the essence of the historical phase the Arabs are living through with aborted modernity. Satire is invoked where it is least expected, and the laughter of the audience may sound like wailing.

Translated from Arabic by Abdullah Al Nuaimi.
Chéri Samba has built an artistic universe for all post-colonials, in the North as well as in the South. This universe is filled with sounds, colours, shapes and scenes, a world where performance has not yielded to narrative. Fully aware of the power of the written word, however, Chéri Samba’s paintings are also texts – the words intervene to give his minority universe the weapons of the dominant powers.

A self-taught artist, Samba arrived on the international platform where he performs today after a long march. When he exchanged Kinto-Mvuila, the village where he was born in 1956 and where he spent his childhood, for the capital Kinshasa, he oriented himself on the local advertisement painters. He started with odd jobs such as cutting stamps and copied the comics from popular magazines and sold them to school kids. Within two years, he succeeded in setting up a studio on KasaVubu Avenue, painting signboards and advertisements, and soon began to apply the pictorial language of comics to his paintings. Through the combination of naturalistic scenes, accurate portraits and textual comments he developed, together with painters such as Moke and Sim Simaro, a local form of painting which became increasingly popular. The paintings focused on current topics with strong social relevance, such as the Mami Wata theme, and by hanging them outside his studio they became the subject of lively discussion among all the passers-by.

The Kinshasa society strives to combine the urge for modernity with the values of the past, and is full of contradictions. During the 1980s Samba’s themes spread to include practically all topics of social relevance or general interest to the population of Kinshasa: social and political injustices, moral dilemmas or dramatic incidents. And, even from the early days, he often represented himself within the painting, commenting on the chosen subject. In this city, full of hardship and vital energy, Samba has chosen to play the role of moral commentator and teacher, simultaneously retaining a strong ambition as a painter, with a continuous drive to reach pictorial perfection, in terms of accuracy, striking colours and effective staging.

Already in the late 1970s, his great talent attracted admirers and buyers from the West, and with that development, Samba began to confront not only the aspects of modernity that he recognised in the Kinshasa society, but also the Western world itself. This challenge became stronger in the 1980s when he was invited to live and work in Paris for several short periods, and unavoidable after 1989 when he participated in the exhibition Les Magiciens de la Terre. Since that time he has performed on two stages: Kinshasa and the world. He continues to play his role as moral Christian and satirical commentator but he has broadened the scope of his subjects, encompassing world issues. He has become a critical explorer of the customs and values of the Western world, like an inverted Stanley. But it is far from easy to remain an independent outsider. Through his Western buyers and representatives he is drawn into the Western art world, which has its own rules, preconceptions and habits. He confronts this pressure and analyses with the weapons he masters, his intelligence and humour, applying them within the domain where he rules: his paintings. He never surrenders his own convictions and always strives to keep dominating the situation. Encountering critique and jealousy, he responds by making a painting with the theme “no one throws stones at an unfertile tree or one with bitter fruits”.

Chéri Samba
Universalising a Unique Perspective

by Bogumil Jewsiewicki
In spite of his fame and the push and pull of the international art market he succeeds in following his own path, with the Kinshasa society as his primary source of energy and inspiration. He has formulated his approach often enough: “I have always said that I did not just paint for the beauty of the painting, but to transport a message. But that is not easy. For me there are three fundamental principles in my paintings: improving the work, making fun, telling the truth.”

Samba’s work and his international influence correspond with Monique Wittig’s observation: “A text by a minority author is effective only if it universalises the minority perspective.” Wittig has applied the lesbian perspective to overturn traditional perceptions relating to sexuality. Chéri Samba uses the Kinois perspective to overturn ‘modern’ perceptions about the relationship between works of art and the public, about communication between the victims of globalisation – those who possess nothing but a tenuous capacity to observe the world – and those in the West blinded by the power they have accumulated. Has he not said that his art is a weapon, and that post-modernists confirming that they have no message to convey may simply have nothing to say?

Intellectual, political and aesthetic provocation – these are Chéri Samba’s weapons of choice. Feigning ingenuity, provocation has led him to pose as a trickster. He knows that the public expects this of an artist from Africa but uses it to forge a double-sided weapon for his aesthetic and political battles. He is a trickster in order to better confront us with our own prejudices and injustices. A variegated persona, he refuses to be pegged definitively either as a post-colonial Kinois or as a post-modern artist who submits to criticism. When it suits him in pronouncing his truths, he is a “popular” Congolese painter and an international jet-set artist, a Christian moralist and a provocateur who paints sex to shatter the ambient hypocrisy, but also because it amuses him. Samba assumes all these postures at once. He participates in several worlds but maintains a critical distance from all of them through his personal integrity, intellect and wit. By doing so he has also put the popular painting tradition of the Congo on the international art agenda, paving the way for new, young and talented colleagues. It is this combination of talent as a painter, unique style of commentary and good sense of humour that makes Chéri Samba so important, not only for the arts in the Congo and beyond, but also for awareness of positive social and political change.

(With thanks to Paul Faber.)
Abdul Sheriff

Significant and Tangible Impact on Society

by John Mack

Professor Abdul Sheriff is without question in the same mould as the distinguished recipients of the Prince Claus Awards in the past, and those with whom he is honoured in 2005. He is a man of undoubted intellectual eminence and someone of the strongest principle and personal probity. Despite being more than capable of pursuing a career as an international scholar, he chose to return from an education outside Africa firstly to teach in the History Department of the University of Dar es Salaam and then, at the invitation of the then-President, to go back to his native island of Zanzibar to take the leading role in reviving the Zanzibar Museums. This he has done highly impressively, raising the resources to open up historic buildings and assisting with the conservation planning of Zanzibar Stone Town. He has contributed thereby to lifting both local and international understanding of Zanzibar’s history and culture through high quality exhibitions and interpretation, whilst contributing to the economic development of the island through encouraging tourist income. There are few scholars in any field who have had a significant and tangible impact on the nature of the civil society of which they are a part, whilst managing to remain faithful to the disciplines of their academic upbringing. Professor Sheriff is a shining exception to the norm.

Professor Sheriff could have had a conventional academic career. He is amongst the foremost African historians of his generation. He could have plied his trade exclusively on a significant international stage, as many other scholars from the African continent and the adjacent islands have done before. It would indeed have been the easier option. He was already well known amongst historians of Africa and the western Indian Ocean from his work as a student at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and before that at the University of California, Los Angeles. His field is the history of Zanzibar. It is as well to remember that in terms of population size Zanzibar is little bigger than a large town might be elsewhere in the world. It is within sight of the African coastline, but has a distinctive and critical part in the story of central Africa, the whole eastern side of the continent and across the surrounding ocean. Its place in the international imagination far outstretches its actual physical and demographic dimensions; and this, at least in part, is due to its truly cosmopolitan composition. Professor Sheriff is not only the best-informed indigenous historian of Zanzibar but also the most able and sophisticated of those working on the larger implications of the story of Zanzibar. He has held Fellowships and Visiting Professorships at major academic institutions in Europe and America and he has continued to publish prolifically.

His decision, however, was not to pursue a career on the world’s academic circuit to the exclusion of a direct contribution to the society of the country and island of his birth. His return to academic work at the University of Dar es Salaam led eventually to him being appointed to a Professorship. On Zanzibar itself, many of the historic buildings were deteriorating, having been abandoned to their fate through lack of resources in the postcolonial era. Yet, as development monies began to arrive, it was not the historic fabric that was to benefit. Instead other new buildings were starting to go up on the fringes of the historic Stone Town itself, threatening it from another direction. Professor Sheriff began to take the lead in seeking to draw attention to the issues facing Zanzibar. His sabbatical period in 1992 was
partly devoted to organising a major international conference on the History and Culture of Zanzibar to highlight the issues. He could not resist the invitation to return more permanently as Advisor and Principal Curator within the President’s Office. He saw it as a matter of civic duty. Sheriff’s personal efforts were focused on a number of buildings, two of which are well known to anyone with even a minimal acquaintance with Zanzibar: the former Sultan’s Palace and, next door, the building known as Beit al-Ajaib or ‘The House of Wonders’. Both face the seafront, with a wide public walkway in front, which serves as a popular place to meet in the evenings. When I worked with Professor Sheriff in the mid 1990s it was in helping to configure a plan for the second of these, as he had himself already managed, within a few short years, to secure the physical state of the former Palace and open it as a Museum devoted to the Zanzibari Sultanate. However, the next-door building was intended to deal with the broader story of Zanzibar. It was here that the less glamorous but no less gripping narrative of Zanzibari life could be told, for local residents as much as for foreigners.

It was a sensible plan. Tourist income would be essential to maintain the economic viability of Zanzibar, and it could be linked to the ambitions embedded in conservation strategies; but Professor Sheriff was deeply aware that it was an ambition with potential pitfalls. As a country with a deep religious tradition and a concentration of historic sites within a small space, international tourism could be as much of a threat to the viability of contemporary Zanzibar as neglect already was. There was a delicate path to be trodden. And money to do anything was limited and difficult to obtain. European Union funding that had been anticipated got caught up in political webs and failed to materialise. In similar circumstances, many might have given up, gone back to academic life, sought the Chairs in western universities that could have been available. Yet, when I revisited Zanzibar in late 2004 the House of Wonders was indeed miraculously reconfigured, with high quality exhibitions and attracting large numbers of both local and foreign visitors, and local guides were fully employed in showing them around. The two buildings were fully functioning, providing Zanzibar-recruited staff with important incomes, and had become a magnet for those wishing for an authoritative and accessible explanation of the island’s extraordinary story. Professor Sheriff had taken a major role in encouraging foreign donors, developing training within Africa itself, and putting in place a thoroughly professional museum service. But much was also achieved with local resources: furniture makers, glaziers, Zanzibari tradesmen. All had been achieved quietly and modestly – but, for all that, magnificently, given the many difficulties that needed to be overcome.

I do not know what Professor Sheriff makes of development studies and, as a rigorous historian by academic background, he would, I suspect, be surprised to be considered at all as an exemplar in that area. But he remains a beacon for those who believe that development is not a matter of economics alone. The lesson of his ‘project’ is that ‘sustainability’ is a matter of cultural and historical viability, not only of balance sheets and aid budgets; though the institutions he has set up are indeed beginning to generate significant income of their own. History is both a matter of academe and of developing a rootedness in the popular imagination. Professor Sheriff has taken the primary role in creating an institutional framework for the accessible communication of cultural history in Zanzibar.
Les Prix Prince Claus
Les Prix Prince Claus sont décernés à des individus, des groupes, des organisations ou des institutions pour l’excellence de leur contribution à la culture et au développement, dans les domaines d’intérêt de la Fondation Prince Claus. Le Grand Prix de 100 000 euros sera décerné au lauréat lors d’une cérémonie qui aura lieu au Muziekgebouw aan ’t IJ à Amsterdam en présence de membres de la famille royale et devant un public de 500 invités des Pays-Bas et de l’étranger. Dix autres lauréats recevront des mains de l’ambassadeur des Pays-Bas dans leurs pays respectifs un prix de 25 000 euros chacun.

Procédure
La Fondation Prince Claus contacte des spécialistes travaillant dans les domaines correspondant à la mission de culture et de développement de la fondation, mais aussi des collègues et des partenaires de l’organisation, et leur demande de proposer des candidats. Ces personnes, différentes chaque année, aident également la fondation à se faire une opinion et à mieux connaître les candidats proposés.


Critères et considérations
Les Prix Prince Claus sont décernés à des artistes et à des intellectuels pour leurs réalisations exceptionnelles dans le domaine de la culture et du développement. Pour ces prix, entrent en ligne de compte : des individus, des groupes et des organisations, partout dans le monde, mais principalement en Afrique, en Asie, en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes.

La qualité du travail – évalué dans le contexte professionnel et personnel du candidat – est une condition sine qua non pour recevoir un prix Prince Claus. Par ailleurs, les répercussions positives du travail du lauréat dans le champ culturel ou social pris dans le sens large, la « construction de ponts » et la création de liens entre différentes cultures ou différents courants culturels sont également des facteurs déterminants.


Stratégie
La Fondation Prince Claus entretient une vision très large de la culture. Elle recherche les expériences novatrices parmi les innombrables initiatives culturelles partout dans le monde. La fondation accueille les propositions venant de tous les champs culturels et de toutes les disciplines artistiques et intellectuelles, y compris la transmission de la culture, l’éducation, les médias, les arts appliqués, ainsi que les domaines du sport, de la science et de la technologie qui ont des incidences sur la culture et vice-versa. L’« interculturalité » occupe une place importante dans le programme de la fondation qui s’intéresse tout spécialement aux vocabulaires et aux dialectes se développant au sein des langues universelles et établissant des ponts entre les différentes cultures. La fondation maintient son intérêt pour les thèmes des années passées, tels que la création d’espaces de liberté qui concerne la manière dont les artistes et les intellectuels inventent des méthodes pour exprimer des visions contestataires. La Fondation Prince Claus cherche à protéger et à encourager la culture là où elle est menacée, et à faire connaître des voix et des acteurs culturels dans les « zones de silence ».

Humour et Satire

L’humour utilise le postulat de la distance critique par rapport à l’organisation de la vie sociale considérée comme allant de soi. Cette distance permet d’ouvrir un espace dans lequel l’humour est utilisé pour mettre en évidence, pour critiquer ou pour apporter un soulagement aux tensions de la vie sociale. En dérangeant, en déformant ou en ébranlant les normes en usage, l’humour révèle des structures cachées. La vie est constamment renégociée, contestée et repensée à travers cette forme de comique, ce qui en fait un instrument fondamental de changement social. En démêlant les structures cachées de la réalité, l’humour donne une voix à l’inexprimable. Il peut être un outil efficace – quand ce n’est pas le seul – pour briser les tabous, les dogmes ou autres restrictions morales. Sous le couvert de la plaisanterie et protégé par elle, l’humour permet donc d’exprimer par sous-entendus ce qui ne se dit pas.

Offrant la possibilité de se rebeller contre la réalité, l’humour constitue un véritable éloge de la liberté et de la maîtrise de soi des individus. C’est donc un puissant outil de survie, doté d’une indéniable fonction thérapeutique. Il ranime les espoirs (perdus) et incite au plaisir de vivre. En donnant une image déformée mais souvent plus vraie que la réalité, l’humour offre un soulagement dans des situations marquées par la tragédie, le traumatisme ou le désespoir.

Il apporte une certaine consolation en rendant la vie un peu plus supportable – même si ce n’est que momentanément. On peut le considérer comme une distraction dérisoire, mais aussi comme un dûritatif nécessaire face aux difficultés de la vie.

La satire – cette forme d’humour qui présente les choses ouvertement et affronte les pouvoirs établis – est fondamentalement subversive. Dans des situations de censure et d’oppression en particulier, la satire est un mécanisme qui permet d’exprimer une critique féroce dissimulée dans un emballage de malice et d’inéptie. Son caractère apparent inoffensif peut faire de la satire un moyen dangereux. C’est donc un outil largement utilisé dans des périodes de répression. Comme elle crée des enclaves de liberté démocratique dans des situations où régent les restrictions et la peur, la satire s’épanouit dans les sociétés qui subissent la censure généralisée ou l’absence totale de liberté de parole. Dans de nombreuses régions du monde, des écrivains, des musiciens, des artistes, des comiques et des caricaturistes utilisent la satire pour exprimer leurs critiques concernant les conditions dans lesquels ils vivent.

C’est dans ce cadre que la Fondation Prince Claus a pris l’humour et la satire comme domaines d’intérêt particulier. La fondation s’intéresse tout particulièrement aux expressions d’humour et de satire qui se distinguent non seulement par leur caractère novateur et leur singularité, mais par leur haute qualité combinée à un certain degré d’engagement social.
Le Grand Prix Prince Claus 2005

Zapiro, alias Jonathan Shapiro Afrique du Sud


C’est au cours des années 80 que Zapiro commence à travailler dans des groupes anti-apartheid et à publier des dessins humoristiques. Depuis, son travail paraît tous les jours dans de grands journaux sud-africains, dans des publications locales qui militent pour les droits de l’homme et les organisations d’assistance sociale, mais aussi dans les médias internationaux. Zapiro a publié neuf livres de dessins humoristiques et de nombreuses bandes dessinées éducatives. Il participe régulièrement à des expositions et à des événements liés aux bandes dessinées. Enfin, il forme de jeunes dessinateurs.

Au beau milieu des tensions sociales, raciales et économiques auxquels sont confrontés l’Afrique du Sud et le monde entier, Zapiro apporte un divertissement, un espace d’autofluctuation, une critique contre les abus de pouvoir, une mise en cause des dogmes, et – ce qui est peut-être le plus important – un espoir pour l’humanité.

Le Grand Prix Prince Claus est décerné à Zapiro – descendant africain moderne du bouffon d’autrefois qui dit la vérité aux détenteurs de pouvoir et écrase l’arrogance à coups de rires – en hommage à son influence stimulatrice sur le développement social et culturel.

Les Dix Prix Prince Claus 2005

Niède Guidon Brésil

Niède Guidon (1933) est professeur d’archéologie. C’est une intellectuelle engagée qui combine recherche scientifique, savoir culturel militantisme social et écologique, et contribue de manière fondamentale à la culture locale. Elle a inventorié 700 sites préhistoriques, dont 426 abris sous roches avec peintures rupestres et des éléments de preuve d’habitat précoce dans le parc national Serra da Capivara situé au nord-est du Brésil. Niède Guidon est responsable de la préservation, du développement et de la gestion du parc, mais aussi de la protection de la flore et de la faune menacées. Elle a fondé un centre culturel et un musée dans le parc, ainsi que la Fondation Musée de l’Homme Américain à Sào Raimundo Nonato. Consciente de l’importance de la participation locale pour un vrai développement, elle a mis en place des moyens d’aide de proximité qui offrent services sociaux, éducation et soins de santé aux habitants, et forment sur place ses spécialistes en écologie, préhistoire et restauration. Avec un soin minutieux et une grande érudition, elle a archivé 35000 images, publié de nombreux livres et articles, et organisé des conférences. Le prix Prince Claus accordé à Niède Guidon rend hommage à son dévouement et à tout ce qu’elle a réalisé pour la protection et la promotion de ce patrimoine culturel local et mondial.

Slamet Gundono Indonésie

Slamet Gundono (1966) est un marionnettiste contemporain et un artiste pluridisciplinaire qui s’inscrit dans la longue tradition de la culture indonésienne. Il réinvente, innove et excelle dans le domaine des marionnettes d’ombre chinoise, introduisant dans ses spectacles, les histoires orales, la danse, le chant, la musique et le théâtre. Impregné de philosophie aborigène, il travaille avec les communautés locales et fait des tournées dans les villages, visite des écoles et des marchés de campagne, mais également les villes. Ses spectacles à la fois drôles et provocateurs traitent de questions sensibles, enfreignent des tabous et stimulent la réflexion sur des sujets tels que les différences entre hommes et femmes, l’exploitation, l’orthodoxie religieuse et la dégradation de l’environnement. Il a choisi une approche expérimentale, utilisant des matériaux non-conventionnels et bon marché, et de simples moyens, se servant du parler local et des dialectes, et travaillant avec des artistes d’autres disciplines. Gundono dirige également des ateliers afin de stimuler les expériences théâtrales novatrices et la créativité des habitants de la région, familiarisant des publics internationaux à la réalité indonésienne. Il se sert de l’humour et de la satire sans volonté de provocation et donne une voix aux marginaux de la société, témoignant de leur vitalité et proclamant leur dignité et leur intégrité. Gundono démontre que les formes culturelles traditionnelles peuvent être de puissants instruments pour l’expression d’une vision contemporaine. Le prix Prince Claus rend hommage à Slamet Gundono pour sa manière novatrice d’utiliser l’humour comme outil de développement social dans son travail.

Edgar Hendrick Langeveldt Zimbabwe

Joaquin Salvador Lavado, alias Quino Argentine

Joaquin Salvador Lavado, alias Quino (1932) est un dessinateur humoristique pour qui l’humour est « ce petit grain de sable agissant comme catalyseur de changement ». Ses œuvres incitent à la réflexion sur des questions éthiques qui concernent tout le monde. Elles traitent des rapports de force, des inégalités sociales, de la dégradation de l’environnement, de la famille, de la religion, du football, de la bureaucratie, des politiques, de l’armée – autrement dit, ce qui fait la vie quotidienne en Argentine et partout dans le monde. Réalisées en noir et blanc, les dessins de Quino se caractérisent par leur qualité esthétique et la finesse de leur exécution. Son graphisme précis, la subtilité des détails et ses effets spatiaux traduisent ce qu’il veut dire sans qu’il ait besoin de mots. Du coup, les dessins de Quino forcent le spectateur à regarder avec attention, à examiner avec intensité, encourageant ainsi la réflexion. Son héroïne populaire des années 60, Mafalda, avait été conçue pour promouvoir l’égalité des sexes, la paix et les droits des enfants par le biais de bandes dessinées. Quino l’a ressuscitée lors du 10e anniversaire de la Convention des droits des enfants de l’ONU et de l’égalité des sexes, la paix et les droits des enfants par le biais de bandes dessinées. Quino a l’essentiel lors du 10e anniversaire de la Convention des droits des enfants de l’ONU et elle a été utilisée dans des programmes d’éducation de santé publique et des campagnes en faveur de la démocratie. Les livres illustrés et les films d’animation de Quino sont largement diffusés en Amérique latine, mais aussi à travers le monde. Le prix Prince Claus rend hommage à Quino pour la subtilité de son esthétique et son dévouement de toute une vie aux droits de l’homme à travers l’humour.

Ebrahim Nabavi Iran

Ebrahim Nabavi (1958) est un satiriste politique doté d’un talent exceptionnel qui se sert de l’humour pour écrire sur des questions sociales et politiques. Il considère que le travail du satiriste consiste à montrer le vrai visage de ceux qui tentent désespérément de présenter des idées fallacieuses. En 1997, une politique de tolérance s’étant installée en Iran, les chroniques et les articles de Nabavi ont commencé à paraître dans les journaux réformateurs. Il parodierait des déclarations et des discours officiels avec un esprit caustique, démontrant complètement leurs allégations et leurs faux raisonnements. La campagne dirigée contre les réformateurs l’a obliger à faire passer ses articles d’un journal à l’autre. Lors du 7e Festival de la Presse en Iran, il a reçu le prix du meilleur écrivain d’articles satirique, mais a été arrêté le lendemain et condamné à 18 mois de prison pour avoir écrit des satires. Il a publié 31 livres et ses Mémoires de Prison en sont actuellement à leur 5e édition. Depuis sa libération en 2003, il vit en exil où il continue à écrire, à donner des spectacles comiques et à publier sur Internet pour atteindre son public. Le prix Prince Claus rend hommage à Ebrahim Nabavi pour l’inspiration que suscite son usage de l’humour contestant la répression et créant des espaces de pensée.

Opiyo Okach Kenya


Michael Poghosian Arménie


Lenin El Ramly Égypte

Lenin El Ramly (1945) est dramaturge humoriste, auteur de comédies qui interrogent hardiment les conventions sociales, l’hypocrisie et la bigotry. Son œuvre compte de nombreuses émissions dramatiques et séries télévisées populaires. Il a écrit des pièces utilisant différentes techniques dramatiques, passant de la farce et de la parodie au grotesque, à la satire et à l’absurde. Sa pièce bi-l’Arabi al-fasih (En arabe simple) qui combine profonde intellectuelle et divertissement est « une extraordinaire satire mordante » et « un portrait sincère bien que douloureux de la société arabe moderne ». Parmi les 12 scénarios de film qu’il a écrits, Hello America (1996) traite des relations de l’Égypte avec les États-Unis et le terrorisme islamiste. Les œuvres d’El Ramly sont jouées dans tout le monde arabe et traduites dans différentes langues. Il est également éditeur et le créateur de deux compagnies théâtrales dans lesquelles il forme et dirige des amateurs de talent. Tout en gardant son indépendance, El Ramly crée des œuvres expérimentales comme sa dernière pièce intitulée Take Off Your Masks (Retirez vos masques) et adapte des textes classiques comme dans Peace of Women, une pièce basée sur Lysistrata, une comédie pacifiste d’Aristophane. Les écrits d’El Ramly font appel à la réflexion et à la raison, tout en montrant de la sympathie pour les faiblesse humaines. L’intérêt et l’impact social de ses œuvres sont très étendus. Le prix Prince Claus est décerné à Lenin El Ramly en reconnaissance de son utilisation constructive de l’humour en vue de provoquer une analyse publique de questions sociales et culturelles.
Chéri Samba, Republic of Congo

Chéri Samba (1956) is the accomplished and talented champion of a Congolese pictorial genre that melds humor, social commentary and political satire. With their brilliant and bold expressions, Samba's figurative paintings bear witness to a large inventory of visual ideas. They combine the elements of the public scene, cinema, the popular culture with details of caustic and legendary events. Above all, they raise questions about the conservation and valorization of the world's cultural heritage. In the genre of traditional popular culture, Samba's paintings are a sign of a new emerging consciousness. The paintings of Samba are available to the public and are appreciated by the public. His work enjoys international success. On the cultural stage of Congo, Samba is a leading figure. He chairs the Union of Artists of Kinshasa, and inspires and encourages a new generation of painters. The Prince Claus Prize pays tribute to Chéri Samba as an exceptional plastic artist who, through his work, invites the spectator to reflect and calls on the public. His work is celebrated internationally. In the field of traditional popular painting, Samba's audacious stances, his figurative paintings bear witness to a great inventiveness. They combine elements from the world of advertising and camp stories. 

Abdul Sheriff, Tanzania

Abdul Sheriff (1939) is an eminent specialist of history and cultures of the Indian Ocean. He has a leading role in the development of the cultural heritage of Zanzibar. Professor of history at Dar es Salaam University, he has been a consultant for the national Patrimony and the Director of the museums of Zanzibar. He has directed the restoration of the Maison des Merveilles, an ancient sultan palace, privileged by costs reduced and a limited use of technology, and utilized the competences and the technicians present on the place. This palace opened its doors in 2005 in such a way that new interested in the cultural heritage. Sheriff has preserved and increased the collections already existing and had an active role in the formation of the local personnel, and created an active team that dealt with the oriental Africa that is characterized by the painting «ville de pierre» of Zanzibar. Sheriff is an accomplished university professor with a great capacity for historical work and devotes himself to the sciences. Convinced of the importance of historical knowledge, he raises the consciousness of the heritage. The Prince Claus Prize is dedicated to Abdul Sheriff for his initiatives in the domain of intellectual work and for his realizations guaranteeing the conservation and the valorization of the cultural heritage worldwide.

Translated from English by Marie-Luc Grall.
a otra. La Fundación sigue estando interesada en temas que figuraron en años anteriores, como el de ‘Creando Espacios de Libertad’, que está centrado en las maneras por las cuales artistas y pensadores encuentran métodos para expresar opiniones disidentes. La Fundación Príncipe Claus tiene como objetivos proteger y apoyar la cultura allí donde se ve amenazada, así como identificar las voces y actores culturales en las ‘zonas de silencio’.

**Humor y sátira**

Los Premios Príncipe Claus 2005 centran su interés en la importancia que tienen el humor y la sátira para la cultura y el desarrollo. El humor, que es una cualidad fundamental en la vida humana, se da en todas las culturas y comunidades; por eso puede ser entendido como algo intrínsecamente universal pero a la vez también como algo muy integrado en la especificidad cultural de su contexto y de la experiencia personal del receptor. Tal dependencia del contexto, del lenguaje y del comportamiento social, convierte al humor en algo intangible, pero a la vez fundamental de la cultura.

El humor funciona basándose en la premisa de la distancia crítica con respecto a la organización de la vida social tradicionalmente asumida; una distancia que permite abrir un espacio en donde el humor se emplea para reflejar, criticar o aliviar las tensiones de la vida social. El humor pone al descubierto las estructuras subyacentes interrumpiendo, distorsionando, o subvirtiendo las normas aceptadas. A través del humor la vida se renega, se pone en cuestión y se replantea constantemente, convirtiéndolo en vehículo básico para el cambio social. Desenmarañando las estructuras ocultas de la realidad, el humor proporciona una voz a lo inefable y puede funcionar como eficaz herramienta, quizás la única herramienta, para romper los tabúes, dogmas u otras restricciones morales. Bajo la apariencia falaz de la broma, el humor puede ser entonces un modo de aludir a lo indecible.

El humor celebra la libertad y autodominio del individuo en su capacidad de rebelarse contra la realidad, siendo por ello poderosa herramienta para la supervivencia humana, que además tiene una importante función terapéutica: la de volver a estimular (viejas) esperanzas y el gusto por la vida. Mostrando una imagen distorsionada, pero no por eso menos real, el humor proporciona alivio en situaciones marcadas por la tragedia, el trauma o la desesperación; puede proporcionar consuelo y hacer que la vida, aunque sea temporalmente, se haga un poco más soportable; por lo cual no sólo debe entenderse como un ‘tonto’ entretenimiento, sino también como algo que ofrece la necesaria distracción a los problemas que la vida trae consigo.

La sátira, esa forma específica de humor que expone y pone al descubierto a los poderosos, es, en esencia, subversiva, especialmente cuando se manifiesta en condiciones de opresión y censura, que es cuando funciona como mecanismo para expresar su feroz criticismo, camuflándose en traje de ingenio y de disparate. Su carácter aparentemente inofensivo puede convertirla en un agente peligroso y, por consiguiente, ser muy utilizada en épocas de represión. La sátira florece en sociedades que han padecido fuerte censura o una inofensivo puede convertirla en un agente peligroso y, por consiguiente, ser muy utilizada en épocas de represión. La sátira florece en sociedades que han padecido fuerte censura o una inofensivo puede convertirla en un agente peligroso y, por consiguiente, ser muy utilizada en épocas de represión. La sátira florece en sociedades que han padecido fuerte censura o una

**El Premio Gran Premio Príncipe Claus 2005**

Zapiro, alias Jonathan Shapiro Sudáfrica

El Premio Gran Premio Príncipe Claus 2005 será entregado a Zapiro, alias Jonathan Shapiro (1958), un destacado dibujante gráfico cuya sátira mordaz ahonda en la realidad actual de África y del resto del mundo. Con un llamativo detallismo gráfico y un texto bien elaborado, los agudos puntos de vista de Zapiro muestran las absurdidades y paradojas y resaltan los temas políticos y sociales.

Zapiro empezó en la década de los 80 trabajando con grupos anti-apartheid y publicando dibujos y desde entonces sus trabajos han venido apareciendo a diario en periódicos sudafricanos prestigiosos, en publicaciones de organizaciones de activistas de derechos humanos y de bienestar social, así como en medios de comunicación internacionales. Ha publicado nueve libros de cartones y numerosos cómics educativos y ha participado en exposiciones y muestras del cómic, además de ser mentor de jóvenes dibujantes.

En medio de las tensiones sociales, raciales y económicas que caracterizan al sur de África y a la situación global actual, Zapiro proporciona ‘comic relief’, (álvivo cómico) espacio para la autoreflexión, crítica al abuso del poder, desafío al dogma y, tal vez lo más importante, esperanza para la humanidad.

Se concede el Gran Premio Príncipe Claus a Zapiro, descendiente afrocaundo del legendario bufón que canta las verdades al poder y destruye la arrogancia con la risa, en reconocimiento al papel que desempeña en la promoción del desarrollo cultural y social.

**Diez Premios Príncipe Claus 2005**

Niède Guidon Brasil

Niède Guidon (1933) es profesora de arqueología y una conocida intelectual que combina la investigación científica, el conocimiento cultural, y el activismo social y ecologista para hacer significativas contribuciones a la cultura local. Ha descubierto más de 700 sitios prehistóricos, entre los cuales 426 son rosas con pinturas rupestres y ha hallado pruebas de ocupación humana temprana en el Parque Nacional Serra do Capivara, en el noreste de Brasil. Ella es la responsable de la protección, el desarrollo y la gestión del parque, así como de la protección de la flora y la fauna que se encuentra en peligro y ha fundado un centro cultural y museo en el parque y la Fundación Museo del Hombre Americano, en São Raimundo Nonato. Sabiendo la importancia que tiene la participación local para que pueda haber un auténtico desarrollo, Guidon ha creado también núcleos de ayuda a la comunidad que ofrecen servicios sociales, asistencia sanitaria y educación a las comunidades locales, así como también adiestramiento al personal local en temas de ecología, prehistoria y restauración. Niède Guidon ha clasificado, con academicismo riguroso, más de 35.000 imágenes, ha publicado numerosos ensayos y libros y ha organizado conferencias. Este premio honra su dedicación y sus logros en la protección y promoción de esa herencia cultural local y mundial.

Slamet Gundono Indonesia

Slamet Gundono (1966) es un moderno titiritero y un artista multidisciplinario que se basa en las largas tradiciones de la cultura indonesa, reinventando, innovando y sobresaliendo en los terrenos del teatro de títeres de sombras, del relato, la danza, la canción, la música y el teatro. Impregnado de filosofía indígena, Gundono trabaja con las comunidades locales y hace giras por aldeas, escuelas y mercados rurales, recorriendo también las ciudades. Sus actuaciones son a la vez divertidas y provocadoras y tocan temas sensibles, rompiendo...
Edgar Hendrick Langeveldt Zimbaue

Edgar Langeveldt (1969) estudió Derecho y Ciencias Políticas antes de dedicar sus habilidades, su fina capacidad de observación y su talento interpretativo a la crítica social como stand-up comedian (monologuista). Como miembro de una minoría atrapada entre grupos raciales dominantes, Langeveldt utiliza sus puntos de vistas de outsider para analizar la realidad social con aguda percepción, empleando el humor como camuflaje para poner al descubierto las contradicciones, estupideces, desigualdades, injusticias e inmoralidades de la sociedad en el Zimbaue actual. Langeveldt ha desarrollado un estilo de monólogos o dúlogos innovadores, caracterizados por los rápidos cambios de personajes, efectos escénicos mínimos y una activa interacción con el público, que hace que nadie abandone la sala. Su sátira enfoca la injusticia social, la corrupción y aspectos del populismo político de la sociedad en el Zimbaue actual, ridiculizando los trucos y tretas de algunas personas de la sociedad y creando un clima de reflexión y análisis intelectual que estimula el autoexamen y la conciencia social por medio de gran variedad de máscaras, disfraces y vestuario, de un lenguaje corporal expresivo, del canto y de la exageración. Sus representaciones Poghosian muestran las debilidades y confusiones humanas, al tiempo que la sátira para exponer de manera plástica los problemas de una sociedad en transición. En 1996 fundó la Compañía Gaara, primera compañía de danza contemporánea de Kenia y es director de la Fundación de Danza Gaara de Nairobi, que se encarga de preparar y capacitar a jóvenes bailarines. Impartiendo clases de baile, talleres, producciones creativas y realizando giras por 20 países de África, Okach ha escrito y desarrollado nuevas formas de danza a nivel de comunidad, alternando su tiempo entre Kenia y Francia. Este Premio honra a Edgar Langeveldt por la manera en cómo emplea el humor para crear espacios de libertad.

Joaquín Salvador Lavado, alias Quino Argentina

Joaquín Salvador Lavado, alias Quino (1932), es un dibujante de tiras cómicas que cree que el humor es “el granito de arena que actúa como catalizador para el cambio” y cuyo trabajo induce a reflexionar sobre asuntos éticos globales. Sus historietas enfocan las relaciones de poder, las desigualdades sociales, la degradación medioambiental, la familia, la religión, el fútbol, la burocracia, los políticos, los militares; es decir, la vida cotidiana en Argentina y en el resto del mundo. Los dibujos de Quino, realizados de manera minuciosa y en blanco y negro, se distinguen por su elevada calidad estética. El trazo ágil, el sutil detaillismo y los sugerentes efectos espaciales expresan lo que quiere transmitir sin necesidad de palabras, forzando al público a una mirada atenta y reflexionar profundamente, lo que genera gran respuesta. Mafalda, su popular heroína de los años 60, que fue ideada para impulsar la igualdad de género, la paz y los derechos de los niños a través de las tiras cómicas, fue resucitada con motivo del X aniversario de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos de los Niños y ha sido utilizada para la educación en salud pública y para campañas en pro de la democracia. Este premio honra a Quino por su fina estética y por una vida entera dedicada a los derechos humanos a través del humor, que ha resultado en varios libros ilustrados y cortos animados, los cuales han sido extensamente publicados por toda Latinoamérica y a nivel internacional.

Ebrahim Nabavi Irán

Ebrahim Nabavi (1958) es un satírico político excepcionalmente talentoso. Utiliza la comedia para escribir sobre temas políticos y sociales serios y cree que la tarea del satírico consiste en mostrar la cara verdadera de todos aquellos que intentan desesperadamente crear una falsa imagen. Sus columnas y artículos empezaron a salir en periódicos reformistas de Irán en 1997 con la política de la apertura. Nabavi parodiaba los discursos y declaraciones oficiales con un humor incisivo, expresando sus racionalizaciones y aseveraciones al revés. La campaña dirigida contra los reformistas hizo que la columna que escribía tuviera que ir de periódico en periódico. En el VII Festival de la Prensa de Irán recibió el premio al mejor escritor de columnas satíricas, pero al día siguiente fue arrestado y condenado a 18 meses de prisión por el hecho de escribir sátira. Ha publicado 31 libros y Prison Memoirs va por la quinta edición. Desde que salió de la cárcel en 2003, ha vivido en el exilio desde donde sigue escribiendo, haciendo stand-up comedy (monólogos cómicos) y publicando en internet para mantenerse en contacto con su público. Este Premio honra a Ebrahim Nabavi por el modo tan inspirador de emplear el humor para desafiar la represión y crear así espacios para pensar.

Opiyo Okach Kenia

Opiyo Okach (1962) es un magnífico bailarín y un coreógrafo innovador que se basa en las tradiciones de los pueblos del África Oriental, transformándolas en interpretaciones excepcionales y complejas de la condición humana actual. Renombrado por la capacidad de improvisación, el ritmo, la delicadeza en los movimientos y la elegancia, Okach demuestra que la danza es la poesía de la vida cotidiana. En 1996 fundó la Compañía Gaara, primera compañía de danza contemporánea de Kenia y es director de la Fundación de Danza Gaara de Nairobi, que se encarga de preparar y capacitar a jóvenes bailarines. Impartiendo clases de maestría, talleres, producciones creativas y realizando giras por 20 países de África, Okach se ha convertido en catalizador de una nueva profundidad de reflexión y análisis intelectual dentro de la emergente comunidad de bailarines, alentando una perspectiva abierta, nuevos léxicos y nuevos estándares profesionales. Recientemente ha introducido elementos de vídeo y de sonido en su coreografía. También incorpora nuevas formas de danza a nivel de comunidad impulsando la evolución del público, a la vez que mantiene su reputación internacional, alternando su tiempo entre Kenia y Francia. Este Premio honra a Opiyo Okach y es un reconocimiento a su importante aportación en hacer de la danza contemporánea un valioso componente de la moderna identidad artística y cultural del África Oriental.

Michael Poghosian Armenia

Michael Poghosian (1954) es un actor muy querido y respetado que se vale del humor y la sátira para exponer de manera plástica los problemas de una sociedad en transición. En sus representaciones Poghosian muestra las debilidades y confusiones humanas, al tiempo que estimula el autoexamen y la conciencia social por medio de gran variedad de máscaras, disfraces y vestuario, de un lenguaje corporal expresivo, del canto y de la exageración. Su sátira enfoca la injusticia social, la corrupción y aspectos del populismo político de la Armenia actual, ridiculizando los trucos y tretas de algunas personas de la sociedad y crea así espacios donde su público tanto pueda reírse como reflexionar. Sus muchos personajes estafadores y sus provocadores pronunciamientos se han hecho tan populares entre el público local, que sus gestos son imitados y sus frases han pasado a ser expresiones coloquiales. Perteneciente originariamente a un grupo de actores que hacían giras, entre otros países, por Armenia, Rusia, Hungría y Siria, Poghosian ha dirigido y actuado en numerosas películas y series para la televisión, y actualmente está trabajando, junto con
Abdul Sheriff Zanzíbar, Tanzania

Abdul Sheriff (1939) es una autoridad destacada en el campo de la historia y culturas del océano Índico y juega un papel muy importante en la conservación y revitalización del patrimonio en Zanzíbar. Fue profesor de Historia en la universidad de Dar es Salam y después de jubilarse pasó a ser asesor del Patrimonio Nacional y Comisario en jefe de los museos de Zanzíbar. Haciendo hincapié en el bajo coste y en una tecnología simple y empleando a técnicos y capacidades locales, dirigió la restauración de The House of Wonders, un antiguo palacio de un sultán, que se inauguró como el nuevo museo de Zanzíbar, en 2005. Sheriff se encargó de conservar y de hacer crecer las colecciones existentes del museo y se dedicó al desarrollo del personal local, iniciando un equipo de profesionales talentosos y comprometidos y una gestión sostenible. Ha publicado libros sobre la historia del África Oriental que incluyen dos volúmenes sobre la singular ciudad de Zanzíbar, Stone Town, (Ciudad de Piedra). Sheriff es un profesional consumado, que profesa una profunda curiosidad y dedicación hacia los estándares académicos y cree en la importancia del conocimiento histórico, haciendo tomar conciencia del patrimonio local. Este premio honra a Abdul Sheriff por su liderazgo intelectual y por los logros obtenidos en asegurar la supervivencia y valoración de la herencia cultural global.

Chéri Samba República Democrática del Congo

Chéri Samba (1956) es un artista consumado y de talento, exponente de un género único de la pintura popular, tradicional del Congo (Zaire), que abarca el humor, la crítica social y la sátira política. La obra de Samba, que es representativa, tiene inventiva visual, un colorido llamativo y toques exagerados; mezcla aspectos de la publicidad, del cine, de la cultura popular, con un detallismo incisivo y unas ingeniosas leyendas al pie de cuadro. Sus desafiante manifestaciones pictóricas se distinguen dentro de la tradición de la pintura popular debido a sus inteligentes análisis sociales, sus habilidades y la utilización de técnicas innovadoras. Samba se ocupa de temas como la vida cotidiana de la gente, los problemas, alegrías y paradojas de culturas que pasan por rápidos cambios, así como también de la repercusión que tiene lo que acontece en el mundo en las sociedades africanas. Samba cree que la tarea del artista es la de hacer pensar a la gente y de apelar a sus conciencias; por eso sus cuadros son siempre accesibles y gozan de popularidad entre el público. Su obra ha recibido gran acogida en el exterior, siendo él figura puntal en la escena cultural local de Kinshasa, donde preside la Unión de Artistas y anima y educa a una nueva generación de artistas. Este premio honra a Chéri Samba por ser un artista visual destacado, cuya crítica social y humor estimulan al público local y extranjero.

Lenin El Ramly Egipto

Lenin El Ramly (1945) es un dramaturgo cómico que cuestiona atrevidamente las convenciones sociales, la hipocresía y la intolerancia. Sus trabajos incluyen series y dramas televisivos populares; ha escrito 40 obras de teatro utilizando técnicas que van desde la farsa, la parodia y lo grotesco a la sátira y el absurdo. Su obra de teatro bi-f'Arabi alfasisht (en árabe llano), que combina la profundidad intelectual con el entretenimiento, es “notable por su sátira mordaz” y por ser “un retrato honesto, aunque doloroso, de la sociedad árabe moderna”. De entre sus 12 guiones cinematográficos figura Hello America (1998), que trata de las relaciones de Egipto con los EE UU y el terrorismo islámico. Sus obras son representadas en todo el mundo árabe y han sido traducidas a otras lenguas. También ha hecho publicaciones, ha fundado dos compañías teatrales y dirige y adiestra a prometedores actores amateurs. El Ramly mantiene su independencia, realiza trabajos experimentales, como su más reciente obra, titulada Take Off Your Masks y además adapta textos clásicos, como Peace of Women, basada en Lisistrata, la comedia antibélica de Aristófanes. La escritura de El Ramly apela a la razón, a la vez que transmite una identificación con las debilidades humanas y tiene gran popularidad e impacto en la sociedad. Se entrega este Premio a LeninEl Ramly en reconocimiento al uso constructivo que hace del humor para provocar el análisis público sobre temas sociales y culturales.

otros actores, en guiones, en dirección y en producción, además de seguir con la creación de nuevas representaciones. Este Premio honra a Michael Poghosian por su ‘comic relief’ y por su aportación al desarrollo de una sociedad abierta.

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Translated from English by Maria Arbat.
Pedro Pimenta, film producer and trainer, was born in Maputo, Mozambique. He was involved in the creation and running of Ebano Multimedia and of the National Film Institute of Mozambique (1997-1984), and was Director of the UNESCO Film and Video Training Project for Southern Africa (1997-2002), as well as board member of various professional film organisations. As an independent producer, his credits include acclaimed documentaries and feature films such as Marracuene, Farewell GDR, The Tree of Our Forefathers, The Gaze of the Stars and Zulu Love Letter. He is currently involved in the creation of an African documentary film festival.

Claudia Roden, food writer, was born in Cairo, Egypt. Educated in Cairo, Paris and London, she was drawn to the subject of food partly through a desire to evoke a lost heritage. With a special interest in the social and historical background of regional cuisines, her books on Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, Italian and Jewish food have won her many awards including Italy’s Premio Orio Vergani, France’s Versailles Award, America’s James Beard Award, and six Glenfiddich Awards in the UK as well as Food Writer of the Year for her newspaper articles. She presented the BBC TV series ‘Claudia Roden’s Mediterranean Cookery’ and travels internationally giving seminars and masterclasses to chefs and restaurateurs.
The 2005 Prince Claus Awards Committee
From left to right: Goenawan Mohamad, Fariba de Bruin-Derakhshani (Secretary to the Committee), Sadik Jalal al-Azm, Claudia Roden, Niek Biegman (Chairperson of the Committee), Pedro Pimenta, Aracy Amaral, Mick Pearce and Elis van der Pias (Director of the Prince Claus Fund)
Contributing Authors

Germaine Acogne, dancer and choreographer, was born in Senegal, founded a dance studio in Dakar in 1968, was artistic director of Maurice Béjart’s Mudra Afrique (1977-82), and published her book, *African Dance*, in three languages in 1980. She worked with Béjart’s company in Brussels, organising international African dance workshops, which she also took to Senegal, and in 1985 she co-founded Studio Ecole BalletThéâtre du 3ème Monde in France. On her return to Senegal in 1995 she established Ecole des Sables, an international centre for traditional and contemporary African dances. She was artistic director of the dance section of Afrique en Créations/AFAA (1997-2000). With her dance company, Jant-Bi, she dances, produces, choreographs and teaches internationally.

Ali Dehbashi, writer and editor, was born in Tehran in 1958. He studied Persian literature and history, and contributed to newspapers produced by the Youth Organization in Tehran. Since 1990 he is editor in chief of Keik, a journal on Iranology, and since 1999 editor in chief of Bokhara, a literary magazine. His writings have been published in many cultural magazines including Arash, Borj, Cheragh and Donoyae Sotkan. He was editor of Tavoos Art Quarterly, is currently editor of the Academy of Science Quarterly and the selected editor by the Board of Trustees for publishing the works of Seyed Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh.

Daniel Divinsky was born in Argentina in 1942 and is a lawyer by training. He is the literary director and senior partner in Ediciones de la Flor, which was established in 1967 and publishes works of humour, fiction and literature, including books of Quino’s famous character Mafalda alongside other other well-known authors such as Fontanarrosa, Caloi and Maitena. He was imprisoned and lived in exile during the military government of the 1970s, returning to Buenos Aires in 1983. He has published various articles, has been an invited participant in editors international meetings and colloquia, and has received several awards related to his work as an independent publisher.

Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You was born in Suriname, graduated in law at the University of Leiden, and worked in Suriname first as assistant to the Prime Minister and later as an attorney. In 1984 she moved as a political refugee to the Netherlands where she practised commercial law. She was Chairperson of the National Bureau against racial discrimination and Vice-President of the Equal Treatment Commission. She is Vice-President of the Board of OPTA, Vice Chairperson of the International Executive Committee of Amnesty International and Chairperson of the Foundation for Legal Cooperation between the Netherlands and Suriname. In 2004, she became Chairperson of the Board of the Prince Claus Fund.

Susanna Harutyunyan was born in Yerev, Russia, and graduated in film criticism at the Moscow State Cinema Institute in 1967. She is president of Armenia’s Association of Film Critics and Cinema Journalists (the Armenian National Section of Fédération Internationale de la Presse Cinématographique – FIPRESCI) and Art Director of the Yerevan International Film Festival ‘Golden Apricot’. She is a member of the FIPRESCI International Jury, has been film expert and commentator for various Armenian and Russian public, political and professional newspapers and magazines and is the author of more than 500 articles. Since 2003, she represents Armenia in the European Cultural Parliament.

Bogumil Jewsiwewicki is Professor of History at Université Laval, Quebec, Canada. He has carried out extensive historical, economic and social research in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), and has published more than fifty articles on post-colonial African history, Congolese popular culture and urban painting, including a catalogue essay entitled ‘Painting in Zaire: From the Invention of the West to the Representation of Social Self’ in *Africa Explores: 20th Century African Art* (1991). He is author of *Chéri Samba: Hybridity of an Art* (1995) and editor of an important study of Congolese painting entitled *Art pictural zaïrois* (1992).

John Mack is Professor of World Art Studies at the University of East Anglia, UK. He moved to the university world after a career of nearly three decades in the British Museum where he was Curator of African Collections, Keeper of the Museum of Mankind and later Senior Keeper of the British Museum as a whole. He has worked in many parts of eastern Africa and the islands of the adjacent areas of the Indian Ocean, on which he has published extensively and arranged a number of exhibitions. In the mid 1990s, he undertook a feasibility study of the Museums of Zanzibar and continues to act as a Special Advisor for the British Museum’s programmes in Africa.

Wilf Mbanga, editor and journalist, was born in Zimbabwe and worked for newspapers and magazines in southern Africa (1967-2002). He was founder and editor of Ziana for the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (1981-87), founder and chief executive of Zimbabwe’s Community Newspapers Group (1987-97), and founder and managing director of Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (1997-99) publishers of now banned *Daily News*. In 2003 he was a guest of the City of Tilburg Refuge Programme and wrote a weekly column for *Brabants Dagblad*, published as *Van onze correspondent* (*Vrijplaats Tilburg*). In 2005 he moved to the UK where he founded and edits *The Zimbabwean*, a weekly newspaper distributed in the UK, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Joy Mboya is the Director of Nairobi’s Performing and Visual Arts Centre, popularly called The GoDown, which offers subsidised workspaces and promotes the arts through a varied annual programme of exhibitions, performances and activities. She is an active participant in the Kenyan music scene, as the lead singer of a pioneer all-woman Kenyan pop group in the 1980s and 90s, and as a member of the Board of Action for Music, Kenya. She served on the Governing Council of the Kenya Cultural Centre, which manages the Kenya National Theatre and associated cultural spaces, and is currently a Trustee of Gaara Dance Foundation. In 2004, she received the National Women’s Council of Kenya Merit Award for her contribution to the development of the performing arts.

Farida El Naqash, writer, journalist, drama critic and interpreter, was born in Egypt. She has written for numerous publications in the Arab world and is currently editor in chief of the Egyptian monthly *Adab wa Naqd (Literature and Criticism)*. She has served on many literature juries, most recently that of the 17th Festival of Cairo Experimental Theatre in September 2005. She is an elected member of the leftist Tagamou Party and chairwoman of the NGO Forum for Women in Development. She was imprisoned three times during the Sadat era and released in 1981, after his assassination. She has published six books including *Tears and Roses* on her prison experiences, and translated many literary works into Arabic, including a 1976 translation of Wole Soyinka’s *The Road*.
Anne-Marie Pessis is a French researcher living in Brazil and has a PhD in Prehistory from the University of Paris X-Nanterre in France. She is the Scientific Director of the Fundação Museu do Homem Americano, in the Serra da Capivara National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. She is also a professor at the University of Pernambuco, and is a member of the Board of ICOMOS-Brazil for the northeast region as a specialist in Brazilian rock art. She has more than 70 articles, books and films to her credit.

Els van der Plas, art historian and curator, is Director of the Prince Claus Fund since 1997. She was the founding director of the Gate Foundation and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. She has curated several international exhibitions and was advisor to the exhibition Africa Remix. She has lectured at various institutions including Kingston University, London; Cornell University, New York; at the curators course in De Appel, Amsterdam; at the World Bank conference ‘Culture Counts’, Florence; and at the Unesco conference ‘Culture and Development’, Copenhagen. Her writings have been published worldwide and she was co-editor of The Future is Handmade, Creating Spaces of Freedom, The Art of African Fashion and Indonesian Modern Art.

Jerry Robinson, cartoonist, creator of ‘The Joker’ in Batman comics and historian, is the founder of CartoonArts International (CAI). He has served as president of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists and the National Cartoonists Society, written and illustrated over 30 books including The Comics: An Illustrated History of Comic Strip Art, and has won numerous awards including the National Cartoonists Society’s Milton Caniff Award for lifetime achievement. Jens Robinson studied law and holds a Masters in International Relations from London School of Economics. He is editor of CAI, which represents cartoonists from 75 countries and has collaborated on exhibitions with the Smithsonian, the Freedom Forum and the UN.

Judith Vidal-Hall is editor of Index on Censorship, the international magazine for free expression, which among other projects is currently leading a training programme for journalists in Iraq. She holds an MA in Modern History and a Diploma in Education. Before joining Index at the end of 1993, she lectured at the Graduate School of Journalism at London’s City University, created Third World Review, and was a founding editor of the magazine South. She has published fiction and has contributed to a number of free expression and media books, including The A-Z of Free Expression.

Philip Yampolsky, a musicologist who has studied Indonesian arts since 1971, spent the decade 1990-1999 recording and editing Music of Indonesia, a series of twenty CDs published by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. He is currently Program Officer in Arts and Culture for the Ford Foundation in Jakarta, where his work with grantees focuses on arts education to stimulate appreciation of the Indonesian arts, and on the transmission of traditional arts to new generations of performers and audiences.

The Principal Prince Claus Award was presented by HRH Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands on 7 December 2005 at the Muziekgebouw aan ‘t IJ in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

The ten 2005 Prince Claus Awards were presented in the laureates’ countries by:

Mr. R.J. van Houtum, Netherlands Ambassador to Argentina
Mr. O.F.G. Elderenbosch, Netherlands Ambassador to Armenia
Mr. R.S. Bekink, Netherlands Ambassador to Belgium
Mr. O.W.C. Hattinga van’t Sant, Netherlands Ambassador to Brazil
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Mr. B.S.M. Berendsen, Netherlands Ambassador to Tanzania
Mr. J.B.M. Heinsbroek, Netherlands Ambassador to Zimbabwe

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Kenneth Yeang
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Salah Hassan
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Ineke Holtwijk
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Gustaf Houtman
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Pablo Inza
Mella Jaarsma
Jyotinda Jain
Angeline Kamba
Cecilia Kenning de Mansilla
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Omara Khan Massoudi
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Nancy Ressang
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★★★★★

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The generous assistance of all these colleagues has helped the Fund to realise its aims of expanding and connecting networks and creating opportunities for the exchange of ideas and the discussion of new initiatives in the field of culture and development.

The Dutch Postcode Lottery supports the Prince Claus Fund.
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Richard Messina of Messina Productions, producer of the ceremony
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Willem Lely of Connexxion, transport of the international guests of the Prince Claus Fund
Jacqueline Meulblok, travel and accommodation for the international guests of the Prince Claus Fund

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Soulange Farkas, Director of VideoBrasil, São Paulo, Brazil
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Charlotte Elias, Director of CCA, Trinidad
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Goenawan Mohamad, Journalist and poet, Jakarta, Indonesia
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Nkosi Phakathi, Member of the Board, Editor of African Book Club, South Africa
Laureates of the Prince Claus Fund 2005–1997

The Principal 2005 Award for ‘Humour and Satire’
Zapiro alias Jonathan Shapiro
South Africa

Further 2005 Awards went to:
Nidde Guidon Brazil
Slamel Gundono Indonesia
Edgar Langeveldt Zimbabwe
Josquin Salvador Lavado, alias Quino Argentina
Ebrahim Nabavi Iran
Opiyo Okach Kenya
Michael Poghosian Armenia
Lenin El Ramly Egypt
Chéri Samba Democratic Republic of Congo
Abdul Sheriff of Congo

The Principal 2004 Award for ‘The Positive Results of Asylum and Migration’
Mahmoud Darwish Palestine

Further 2004 Awards went to:
Jawad Al Assadi Iraq
Tin Moe Myanmar
Ivaldo Bertazzo Brazil
Bhutan Archery Federation Bhutan
Halit Çambel Turkey
Carlinhos Brown Brazil

The Principal 2003 Award for ‘Languages and Transcultural Forms of Expression’
Mohammed Chafik Morocco

Further 2003 Awards went to:
Marcelo Arizcun Lavandos Bolivia
Ali Ferzat Syria
Ferreira Guilar Brazil
Amira Haas Israel
Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial (LKS) Indonesia
Youssou N’Dour Senegal
Virginia Pérez-Ratton Costa Rica
Walter Tournier Uruguay
Wu Liangyong PR China

The Principal 2002 Award for ‘The Survival and Innovation of Crafts’
Wang Shixiang PR China

Further 2002 Awards went to:
Biloki Weavers and Yvita Meta Indonesia
Carinhos Brown Brazil
G.N. Dey India
District Six Museum South Africa
Mathare Youth Sports Association Kenya
New Argentinian Cinema: Lila Stantic Argentina
Mick Pearce Zimbabwe
Reyum Institute of Arts and Culture Cambodia
Hasan Salıtk Turkey

The Principal 2001 Award celebrating ‘Carnival’
Stichting Zomer carnaval Rotterdam, Netherlands
Peter Minshull Port of Spain, Trinidad

Further 2001 Awards went to:
Chris Abani Nigeria/USA
Duong Thu Huong Vietnam
Samuel Fosso Central African Republic
Jahan-e Kebab Iran
Mehr Ali Naqdi Afghanistan
Antoun Maqdesi/Syria
Elena Rivera Mirano Philippines
Ibrahim Salah/Sudan/UK
Talingo Panama
Ivan Thay’s Peru

The 2001 Prince Claus Awards speech was delivered by: Rex Nettleford Jamaica

The Principal 2000 Award for ‘Creating Spaces of Freedom’
Fellag France/Algeria
Vitraal Cuba
Al-Jazeera Qatar

Further 1999 Awards went to:
Patrick Chamoiseau Martinique
Paulin J. Moundounga Benin
Pepelela Angola
Cildo Meireles Brazil
Dessalegn Rahmato Ethiopia
Juana Marta Rodas and Julia Iñadiez Paraguay
Claudia Roden UK/Egypt
Check Omar Sis tắco Mali
Tsai Chih Chung Taiwan
Ken Yeang Malaysia

The 1999 Prince Claus Awards speech was delivered by: Abie Sachs South Africa

The Principal 1998 Award for ‘The Art of African Fashion’
Kwasi Wiredu Ghana

Further 1998 Awards went to:
Rahshan Bani-Etemad Iran
Heri Dono Indonesia
Ticío Escobar Paraguay
Jyotindra Jain India
Jean-Baptiste Kéithéga Burkina Faso
David Koloane South Africa
Jean-Paul Lohari India
Werewere Liking Ivory Coast
Ayu Utami Indonesia
Van Leo Egypt

The 2000 Prince Claus Awards speech was delivered by: Ismail Serageldin Egypt

The Principal 1997 Award for ‘The Survival and Innovation of Crafts’
Wang Shixiang PR China

Further 1997 Awards went to:
Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Senegal
Index on Censorship UK
Malangatana Valente Ngwenya Mozambique
Joseph Hanson Kwabena Nketia Ghana
Sardono W. Kusumo Indonesia
Bruno Stagno Costa Rica
Jim Supangkat Indonesia
Abdeljefri Temimi Tunisia
Ernest Wamba-Dia-Wamba Tanzania

The 1997 Prince Claus Awards speeches were delivered by: Kwasi Wiredu Ghana/USA and Yvonne Vera Zimbabwe

The Principal 1996 Award for ‘Urban Heroes’
Joaquin Salvador Lavado, alias Quino
Jyotindra Jain India

Further 1996 Awards went to:
Ali Akhavan Iran
Alfredo Espinosa Paraguay
Jean-Paul Lohari India
António Lobo Antunes Portugal
Eugenia Melchor Spain
Joseph Hanson Kwabena Nketia Ghana
Sardono W. Kusumo Indonesia
Bruno Stagno Costa Rica
Jim Supangkat Indonesia
Abdeljefri Temimi Tunisia
Ernest Wamba-Dia-Wamba Tanzania

The 1996 Prince Claus Awards speeches were delivered by: Kwasi Wiredu Ghana/USA and Yvonne Vera Zimbabwe
The Jant-Bi Company was set up in 1995 by dancers who had participated in the first professional workshop for traditional and contemporary African dance held in Senegal and is organised by Germaine Acogny, its artistic director. The company is part of the École des Sables, the International Centre for Traditional and Contemporary African Dance, a meeting point where dancers and choreographers from Africa and other parts of the world exchange approaches and experiences, fusing different cultures and dance styles with African dance.

Jant-Bi’s objectives are to provide professional training to dancers and choreographers through workshops, exchange programmes and residencies; to develop, promote and internationalise contemporary African dance; and to encourage dialogue with the worldwide dance community. In January 2004, Jant-Bi became a network partner of the Prince Claus Fund, exchanging ideas with cultural institutions in this global network, generating new collaborations and creating links with varied artistic disciplines. Jant-Bi is one of the participating organisations in the production of the Sahel Opera in collaboration with the Prince Claus Fund.