

BRAM FISCHER MEMORIAL LECTURE



The University of the Free State (UFS) is honoured to invite you to the third Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture, which will be presented by Prof Premesh Lalu from the University of the Western Cape. Prof Steven Friedman from the University of Johannesburg will respond.

Bram Fischer's briefcase: *What's Left of Apartheid?*

In a fascinating twist of history, a briefcase exchanged between Bram Fischer and Sydney Kentridge after the Rivonia Trial made its way into the 1997 production of *Ubu* and the Truth Commission by Jane Taylor, William Kentridge, and Handspring Puppet Company. Transformed into the "Dogs of War" puppet, the briefcase became the body of a menacing trio – Brutus, Brutus, and Brutus – representing apartheid's scurrilous enforcers. In this role, it symbolically held the unspoken political unconsciousness of apartheid, for which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission seemed unprepared. By exploring the absurdities of this tragic history through theatre, the lecture will examine whether Bram Fischer's briefcase revealed apartheid as tragicomedy that needed to be dismantled before it could be fully overcome.

THE SPEAKER



Prof Premesh Lalu is a senior researcher and former director of the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) at the University of the Western Cape. Under his leadership, the CHR achieved national Flagship status, awarded by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSTI) and the National Research Foundation

(NRF) in 2016. Lalu is the author of 'The Deaths of Hintsa: Post-apartheid South Africa and the Shape of Recurring Pasts' (2009) and 'Undoing Apartheid', published by Polity Press in 2022. His other works include co-editing 'Remains of the Social: Desiring the Post-Apartheid' (2017), 'Becoming UWC: Reflections, Pathways and Unmaking Apartheid's Legacies' (2012), and 'Love and Revolution in the Twentieth Century Colonial and Post-colonial World' (2021). His research has appeared in renowned publications such as 'History and Theory', the 'Journal of Southern African Studies', and 'Critical Times'. He serves on several international advisory boards, including the Consortium for Humanities Centres and Institutes, and various Advanced Studies Institutes.

THE RESPONDENT



Prof Steven Friedman is a Research Professor in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg. He has published extensively on South Africa's transition to democracy, with his current research focussing on democratic theory and practice. His notable works include 'Good Jew, Bad Jew: Racism, Anti-Semitism, and the Assault on Meaning', which explores

how ostensibly anti-racist rhetoric can be used to justify racism. Friedman is also a well-known media commentator on South African democracy and writes a weekly column titled 'Against the Tide'.

Thursday, 14 November 2024 | 18:00–21:00

Albert Wessels Auditorium | Bloemfontein Campus | UFS

RSVP | Before 10 November 2024

For further information,
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