



INVITATION

You are herewith cordially invited to a public lecture presented by
the Department of Afrikaans and Dutch, German and French at the University
of the Free State.

Act, Ek't, Ekke: Klara du Plessis' Translingual Poetics

Speaker: Dr Klara du Plessis, University of British Columbia (Okanagan)

ABSTRACT

Positioned against the binary of multilingualism and monolingualism, critic Sarah Dowling argues for "the term *translingual* [...]" because it describes the capacity of languages to interact, influence, and transform one another" (*Translingual Poetics*). Adopting translingualism as a poetic and methodological frame that allows for an exploration of the relationships between languages, Klara du Plessis composes poetry in and between English and Afrikaans. Her award-winning debut collection, *Ekke* (2018), has been described as both "a participant in and an interrogator of systems of meaning" (DeLong, "Equivalence, Excess, *Ekke*"). Her collaborative collection, *G* (2023)—written with Khashayar "Kess" Mohammadi—relies on homophones to weave Persian between English and Afrikaans, asserting the significant relationship between languages and resisting arbitrary borders of linguistic nationhood. Most recently, Du Plessis published her first South African, bilingual collection *Ek't Act* (2025). As the title suggests, it foregrounds a thematic slippage between agency and being, on the one hand, and performance, on the other. It asks: How does the poetic speaker resonate across languages, landscapes, and bodies? What is the relationship between translingualism, roleplay, and authenticity?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

JKlara du Plessis is known for her contributions to long-form and translingual poetics. *Ek't Act* (Karavan Press, 2025) is her South African debut collection, but she is also the author of four other books of poetry published in Canada. *Ekke* (Palimpsest Press, 2018) won the 2019 Pat Lowther Memorial Award, awarded annually for the best collection written by a woman in Canada. Both *Ekke* and *G* (Palimpsest Press 2023)—a collaboration with Khashayar "Kess" Mohammadi that places English, Afrikaans, and Persian in translingual relation—were launched locally at Poetry In McGregor, Tuin van Digters, Vrystaat Kunstefees, Woordfees, and other venues. A selection of Klara's poems have been published in Alfred Schaffer's Dutch translation in *DW B's* "Stemmen uit Zuid-Afrika" edition (2024). She holds a PhD from Concordia University, is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of British Columbia, and lives in Montreal.

This lecture will be presented in Afrikaans. Please let Petronella Bango know if interpreter services will be needed.

Date: Friday, 3 October 2025

Time: 12:00-13:00

Venue: FGG201

RSVP at Petronella Bango: BangoPJ@ufs.ac.za

