

'Om poësie te lees met ander maatstawwe as die suiwer estetiese is 'n aanpassing wat sy eiesoortige beloning bring en poësie op nuwe terreine vestig'

teë te kom, geskryf deur Engelse, die pro-swart gedigte geskryf teen apartheid ook deur die Engelse, sodat 'n mens dalk kan aflei dat hoewel die Engelssprekende digter nog nooit die underdog was nie, hy hom tog wel getrou geskaars het by hulle lot.

Baie interessant is die versweë gedigte wat nou hulle verskyning maak. Noukeurig is die gedigte uit die tradisionele Afrikaanse kanon geweier. Het u geweet dat S J Pretorius 'n gedig geskryf het waarin hy volkome identifiseer en simpatiseer met die "Munisipale Kaffer-Arbeider"; dat H A Fagan 'n gedig geskryf het waarin hy luister na Nkosi Sikelele 'i-Afrika en vra dat God ons almal hier sal seën omdat ons saamgeplant is in een vaderland; dat Leipoldt in 1944 'n gedig geskryf het waarin hy die idee van 'n wonder-republiek, 'n kliek wat dink dat hulle beter as ander is, snedig veroordeel en 'n profetiese blik gee na hoe veragterlik ons ons nog sal voel, geskandvlek.

Voeg hierby nog die werk van lensma, Letoit, Anthony — en nog talle ander skrywers wie se werk mens selde of ooit in die hande kry — en die boek is uit die Afrikaanse oogpunt alleen, die moeite werd. Om te sien hoe Afrikaans tussen ander tale wen en prysgee is 'n nuwe plesier; om poësie te lees met ander maatstawwe as die suiwer estetiese is 'n aanpassing wat sy eiesoortige beloning bring en poësie op nuwe terreine vestig.

Uit hierdie werk wat getuig van jare se navorsing, is dit onmoontlik om keuses te maak. Toe-oog en sonder rede kies ek om die gedig van Lionel Abrahams volledig aan te haal:

The Whiteman Blues

*Two cars, three loos, a swimming pool,
Investment paintings, kids at a private school . . .
we entertain with shows or gourmet food —
and yet we don't feel right, we don't feel good.*

*Why doesn't the having help?
Why doesn't the spending save?
Why doesn't the fun —
Why doesn't the culture —
Why don't the ads add up to something?*

*We can afford to say we know
the blacks are really given hell,
Big Boss is harsh and stupid and must go:
we say it — and it helps like one Aspro.
We still feel jumpy, mixed up, not quite well.*

*Which specialist can cure the thing we've got —
the got-it, gotta-get-it blues,
the deep-freeze, cheaper wholesale, world
excursion blues?*

*We high on the know-all-about-it booze.
We're bursting with kwashiokor of the bank.
We're depressed by the whiteman blues.*

*In the backyards they pray for us.
In Soweto they see our plight.
In the border areas they understand.
In the Bantustans they wait
to pat our shoulder, hold our hand.
They know, they know,
to them it isn't news:
we've got these lost-man, late-man,
money-man, superman,
whiteman blues.*

STAFF

Idasa appoints national director

Mr David Alan Screen has been appointed as national director of Idasa.

Mr Screen, currently deputy principal at Pinelands High School, will assume office in 1990.

He will be based at Idasa's head office in Cape Town.

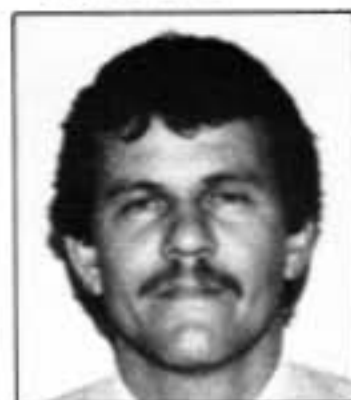
As national director Mr Screen will be responsible for the day to day running of Idasa, and provide support for executive director Dr Alex Boraine in directing operations. Over the past 18 months, the institute has experienced tremendous growth in both its programme activities and staff numbers. The new post of national director was accordingly created to effectively respond to the growing demands of Idasa's work.

Mr Screen has been an active member of the South African Teachers' Association, as well as a member of the founding committee of Education for an Aware South Africa. He started his teaching career at Queens Park High School in Cape Town in 1977 and has held a number of teaching posts at schools in the Peninsula. He was vice-principal at Camps Bay High School prior to moving to Pinelands High at the beginning of 1989.

Within Sata he has actively promoted the ideal and practice of non-racialism and democracy. He was a prime mover, for instance, of a resolution which was adopted at the 1987 conference of that teachers' organisation, leading to the document "Educating for a Democratic, Non-racial Society".

Mr Screen was a founder member and chairman of the Observatory Civic Association, formed to counter the existing conservative ratepayers' association in the suburb.

He is married to Annamia van den Heever, a Cape Town city councillor. They have two children.



MR SCREEN

Top Amcham job for Mitchell

Mr Wayne Mitchell, national co-ordinator of Idasa since May 1987, has left the institute to take up a position with the American Chamber of Commerce in South Africa.

Mr Mitchell succeeds Mr Adrian Botha as executive director of Amcham. He will be based in Johannesburg.

He has been with Idasa since its inception in 1986 and initially held the position of regional director in the Eastern Cape.

Commenting on his departure, Mr Mitchell said he believed that Idasa still had an



MR MITCHELL

important role to play in resolving conflict in the country "despite the obstacles coming from varying political quarters". He intends maintaining his links with Idasa and those engaged in its work.

Mr Mitchell said he would have ample opportunity at Amcham to continue the struggle for a peaceful, just and prosperous South Africa. "I believe business has to become more pro-active in working for change. Amcham is working for greater co-operation between business and labour and business and the community in general."

New Border director

Ms Hermien Kotzé has been appointed as regional director of Idasa in the Border region starting December 1.

Ms Kotzé, a lecturer in development studies at the University of Fort Hare, succeeds Ms Cindy Deutschmann who has moved to Johannesburg.

She grew up in the Western Cape and holds degrees from the University of Stellenbosch and the London School of Economics (MSc). Prior to joining Fort Hare in 1987, Ms Kotzé lectured at Stellenbosch and the University of Bophuthatswana.



MS KOTZE

Critical assessment vital at school

The importance of the student-teacher relationship was emphasised at an Idasa seminar on people's education which was held at Rhodes University in September and attended by some 120 people.

Speaking on this topic, Mr Dirk Meerkotter, senior lecturer in education at the University of the Western Cape, said teachers generally assumed that it was their responsibility to provide information in the classroom, often forgetting that students need critical assessment of that information. People's education need critical intervention from both students and teachers, he said.

In any social transformation teachers and students would play a pivotal role because change and education were inter-related. Mr Meerkotter emphasised the importance of a

progressive pedagogy which challenged traditional authority relations in education and also reduced the emphasis on prescribed information in the education process.

Some delegates expressed concern that people's education may be "hijacked" by parties who had the technology to access information about international developments in people's education.

Giving an MDM perspective on people's education, Mr Irhon Rensburg, managing director of the Education Aid Programme, strongly advocated the participation of parents, teachers and students in education.

He emphasised that people should acquire skills now so that they will be able to occupy their rightful places in a new democratic, non-racial South Africa.