

A MISTRA Book Launch

Mintiro Ya Vulavula: Arts, national identities and democracy in South Africa

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Introduction

In a country with a development path and democratic transition shaped by a history of colonial occupation and repression, the epistemology and praxis of arts, culture and heritage are rendered all-the-more significant to development endeavours. Indeed, we can contextualise the calls for social transformation in South Africa within a broader, global movement for the recognition and restoration of indigenous heritage and knowledge-production, and in recent campaigns for decolonisation and racial justice. The resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement in May 2020, stemming from the death of African Americans, George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, at the hands of white American police officers, once again foregrounded the marked persistence of racial and institutional injustice in societies with long histories of anti-racial struggles and national policy shifts. Elsewhere in the world, national cultures such as the one advocated by rainbow nationalisms are rejected. Currently the Maori people in Aotearoa (New Zealand) are still outraged that a national culture forces them to celebrate a colonial legacy that visited horror and tyrant on the Maori people.

The advent of non-racial democracy in the United States predates the South African experience by several decades. Yet, toward the end of 2015, students at South Africa's public universities started a movement to campaign not only for free tertiary education, but also for the decolonisation of teaching and learning and the social transformation of white-controlled institutions. As in the case of Black Lives Matter, the protests of the #FeesMustFall movement targeted citadels and symbols of white domination and supremacy – the historical monuments of founding figures of these racialised societies. Their focus on monumentalised objects of history, brings into sharp focus the role that arts, culture and heritage play in the making and unmaking of societies and nations. The targeting of these monuments touches on three aspects that are central to cultural production. First, the figures are, in themselves, works of art; second, they are commissioned to celebrate a culture of a society or nation – in this case, a culture of racism; and, third, they are monumentalised as commemorative objects of history, meaning that they represent a heritage that binds a nation.

But whose national arts, culture and heritage are they, if different sectors of the nation find them objectionable during moments of heightened intolerance of cultural and racial diversity? If the arts, culture and heritage commodities of any nation emerged from histories steeped in what Abdul JanMohamed (1985) termed colonial Manichean binaries, should it not be obvious that such cultural objects will inevitably be rejected by those citizens most derided by their installation and celebration? South Africa can draw lessons from the recent racial explosions in the Global North. Despite years of anti-racism struggles, particularly in the United States, the promises entailed in their cultural policies of healing and national transformation have been dealt a resounding blow. Arts, culture and heritage are, thus, at the centre of these recent protests and are elaborations of the contested conventions of the politics of historiography.

While these recent events provide important context to the questions addressed in this book, the pressing concern is how existing discourses and practices can draw lessons from how indigenous societies – suppressed and subjected to the colonial order of things – process these cultural categories for redress and social transformation. Writings about indigenous societies and their deployment of arts, culture and heritage production for social transformation and healing (Lange, 1995; Schifold, 1998; Archibald and Dewar-Pímatísíwín, 2010) have shown that there is a need for a sense of a shared culture that will be a crucible for societal formulation and collective imagination. In other words, this shared culture must lead to some level of social cohesion, and therefore a process of nation-building.

Against this background, this book contributes to a way forward for social transformation and cohesion that positions arts, culture and heritage as key contributors to effective policy formulation. In an effort to position the sector at the centre of the project of democratisation and development, it draws together contributions from the visual, literary, performing and multidisciplinary arts, and locates them in the context of wider societal debates that call for the transformation of centres of power. The critical appraisals of the authors are diverse and cover views across generations, providing a rich constellation of ideas that blend practice-sourced observations with some of the best heritage practices in South Africa. Throughout the volume, readers are invited to consider the *Arts and Culture White Paper* of 1996 as the post-apartheid regime's attempt at the transformation of arts and culture.

The philosophies behind the book rest entirely on how the arts, culture and heritage practitioner community seeks to rethink the positioning of the arts in the democratic transition and development, and its long-term strategic 'fit' in South Africa. It seeks to contribute to the development of an understanding of the role of arts and culture in the country's social and political

economy. Ultimately the book interrogates the historical and contemporary role of the arts and culture sector, and its potential influence in the future. Moreover, by addressing a wide range of complex challenges from a transdisciplinary perspective, it aims to advance South Africa's development.

This introductory chapter lays the foundation for a discussion of the role of the arts and culture sector in development through a brief overview of the post-1994 period. It frames the initial policy direction of the democratic state as informed by the Western idea of the nation state and by South Africa's home-grown project of rainbow nationalism. It then provides an overview of arts and cultural policy scholarship in South Africa and introduces the contribution of this collection in extending these endeavours to a transdisciplinary discussion of the value proposition of the arts. The role of power in art, and in artistic and cultural expression, is then discussed: Using Bourdieu's (1977) notion of 'cultural capital' and applying it to South Africa, it frames the arts as subject to dominant processes of societal and cultural production and reproduction. The final part of this chapter takes us through the structure of the collection and the individual contributions, aligned to the foundation of the past, present and future, and examines each through the prisms of national identity, everyday development experiences, and social cohesion and collective imagination.

Inasmuch as South Africa's arts and culture policy has been designed for a postcolonial, post-apartheid dispensation, much of its theorising and articulation is rooted in Western thought, practices and traditions. Many chapters in this volume discuss the problematics caused by the West's imposition of the nation-state in Africa. They give readers insights into how cultural policies are intimately tied up with Western conceptions of nationhood and, in modern times, can be considered bourgeois postulations, formulated for feelings of social belonging in which that very class actively participates in the making of the arts. In writing about arts in French society, Bourdieu (1984) and Bourdieu and Darbel (1990) map out how bourgeois art policy was oriented towards scientific rationality of the arts in order to legitimate representation and practices. Bourdieu argues that what emerged were, in fact, policy positions informed by individuals who came from privileged backgrounds and who were self-assured in the claims they made about what was good for the people.

South Africa's arts and cultural policy reflects the views highlighted by Bourdieu. Apartheid's cultural policy formulations undermined the local, indigenous cultural forms that have always coexisted, and have often syncretised with, imported traditions and cultures (Barber, 2000; Mhlambi 2012). To a large extent, the post-apartheid dispensation is yet to gravitate away from this. Yet, indigenous African and black popular cultural productions, which have developed in syncretic forms cognisant of

the cultures from which they have been drawn (Barber, 2007), must be factored in, providing a vista to celebrate post-1994 South Africa's diversity in its full and complex dimension. Across the length and breadth of the country, South Africa's arts and culture – be it derived from the Western mainstream or the marginalised indigenous and popular cultures of Africans and the Khoi, San and Nama – have played an important role in the development of arts and cultural productions¹ for which the country is known globally.

However, the move to rainbow nationalism, as a post-apartheid policy for development and national reconciliation, has threatened this diversity, as Rekgotsofetse Chikane argues in *Breaking the Rainbow, Building a Nation* (2018). Nationalism, as an ideology to suture up communities or nations, has been debunked in many progressive, international debates (McClintock, 1991; Calhoun, 1994; Wiessala, 1997) due to its association with radicalism, fascism and the isolationist, power ambitions of dominant nations. It therefore seems a misnomer that the 1996 *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* (DAC, 1996) and its subsequent reiterations should have continued to frame themselves in a nation-building narrative, based on a singular nationalism. South Africa's multiculturalism, ethnic diversity, and heightened racial differences, alone, defy a singular nationalism that risks repressing inherent differences. This collection thus points to the complex ways in which different indigenous national ethnicities and social formations are (re)constituting themselves around nation-building and culture rebuilding in ways that apartheid's separate development policies failed to disrupt.

Beginning with Nelson Mandela's non-racial rainbowism, the scholarship that serves as a rejoinder to nation-building imperatives quickly sounded alarm bells (Degenaar, 1994; Baines, 1998). This anxiety was raised even as the Mandela-era Ministry of Arts and Culture's yearly publication, *Arts*, detailed proof of artistic developments by different arts groups from different racial categories as they attempted to build a non-racial, non-sexist national identity (Mistry, 2001). After South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994, several policy frameworks were developed by the new government. This included the work by the 1994 Ministerial Arts and Culture Task Team, whose brief was to develop national policies for the arts that would undo the apartheid practice of domination and exclusion. This resulted in the creation of arts regulatory and policy bodies such as the National Arts Council, the Film and Video Foundation and the National Heritage Council, which were mandated to allocate resources, and to engender principles of redress, diversity, tolerance, creativity, freedom and development. Certainly, these reformulations were meant to ease concerns regarding the negative attributes of nationalism. Indeed, Mandela's nationalism embraced some fluidity in social identities, where collective and individual identities could coexist, and where different cultures manifested a shared sense of 'Africanness'.

Thabo Mbeki's notion of the African Renaissance, on the contrary, had a more rigid trajectory, with specific implications for arts, culture and heritage policy. His notion was conceptualised along the lines of the Janus-faced African-American Harlem Renaissance, reawakening the African past and redirecting it to define contemporary identities (Mbeki, 1996). While calling for African artistic and intellectual revival, the discourse entailed in his African Renaissance, did not embrace the multicultural/polycultural stance that Mandela's cultural policy nurtured. Instead, it fostered selective African unity throughout Pan-African and African diasporic constituencies. As a discourse speaking to broader continental concerns, it was also somewhat South-Africa focused (Adebajo, 2016). Although Mbeki was able to appeal to an identity that developed powerful Pan-African economic development programmes, for South Africa's divided racial profile, his renaissance discourse did not make clear the role for other racial communities (Adebajo, 2016). Limitations in the African Renaissance project are reflected in the ongoing search for an arts and culture policy framework that recognises and affirms diversity, while fostering a collective imagination.

Although Mbeki's Pan-Africanism and Mandela's national unity waned from 2009 when Jacob Zuma took office, the lack of a mainstream narrative about South Africa's national identity during Zuma's administration did not halt developments regarding revisions to the 1996 *Arts, Culture and Heritage White Paper*. Significant revisions to cultural policy happened during Zuma's tenure in office and would have been tabled at the beginning of 2020, were it not for the onset of COVID-19. However, the delay in legislative processing, as a result of the government's focus on alleviating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, has allowed for further scrutiny and reimagining of how the arts, culture and heritage practices in the age of the 'new normal' – introduced by life with COVID-19 – could further shape the redirection of policy. On the one hand, the pandemic has deepened South Africa's crisis of inequality and exposed the failures of successive African National Congress (ANC)-led administrations to transform society. Yet it also offers the country the opportunity for reflection, reckoning and reimagination – an exercise that may find its articulation in the revised policy on arts, culture and heritage.

Already, different arts, culture and heritage organisations have begun to ruminate on the broader impact the pandemic is having on society at large. COVID-19, as with all aspects of social and economic life, has brought about new challenges for the arts. Faced with restrictions on public performances and gatherings, social distancing and economic malaise, the sector is being forced to adapt in order to survive. Yet this also provides new opportunities to rethink the role of arts and culture in South Africa's COVID-19 recovery and development path.

This book builds on a tradition and scholarship devoted to studies that explore cultural policy, cultural studies and the various artistic forms; ranging from traditional, to popular and elite forms and how these impact different societal values and acts of citizenship (Meintjes, 2017, Gunner, 2014, Dalamba, 2016). The book also engages scholarship and cultural practices that have been documenting the place of the arts in South Africa's liberation struggle and its post-apartheid dimensions under different historical epochs. The contributions in this volume build on these advancements, extending the analysis of our past and evolution of our present to a cross-generational conversation about the intersection of arts, national development and democracy. This collection thus facilitates a transdisciplinary dialogue, reflecting on the intersections between arts and culture, and society's struggles, challenges and aspirations. Different chapters in this collection reveal how the arts manifest in development experiences, and vice versa; and how the revision and reformulation of policy on arts, culture and heritage can impact the very experience of citizenship itself.

Aim

After almost three decades since the birth of a non-racial and non-sexist democracy, it is urgent to review public policies and public discourse on the role of arts, culture and heritage in South Africa. The book aims to reposition the value of arts in South Africa's democratic transition, and arts and culture's long-term strategic fit in society, especially in facilitating social transformation, nation-building and social cohesion.

Scope of the book

The book provides important insights into ways in which the arts can both guide and challenge dominant notions of development, identity and democracy, and possibilities they hold for new beginnings

This book demonstrates that cultural output is not the product of an autonomic process resulting from artists exercising their freedom of expression, as enshrined in the country's Constitution. It shows that the production of art involves a number of issues: the sociology of culture, as espoused by Bourdieu and others, which affects cultural policies; analyses of cultural consumption; conditions of cultural production; structural relations of power, and changes of economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977, 1984, 1986; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bourdieu and Darbel 1990). According to Bourdieu's conceptualisation, cultural reproduction is a social process of reproducing culture across generations – a process made possible by major institutions found in society, such as schools, media,

universities and government departments. These institutions, more often than not, transmit ideas that privilege the cultural position of the dominant classes.

In an essay titled *Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu (1986) identifies three forms of cultural capital, namely, embodied capital, institutionalised capital and objectified capital. While institutionalised cultural capital can be something certified, such as the degrees and jobs we possess, objectified capital reflects the material things we possess, such as the brands we choose, and is often a determinant of our economic conditions in society. These conditions help some people to maintain their privileged positions and pass them on to their kith and kin, aspects which have potential to reproduce and maintain societal inequalities. On the other hand, embodied capital is acquired over time through socialisation and education; it is reflected in our mannerisms and the skills we acquire, which together shape our behaviour (Bourdieu, 1986; Sociology Group, 2017). These forms are used to describe and understand how culture is passed from one generation (or society) to another.

Contributors to this book highlight policy positions taken by the state to bestow cultural, economic or symbolic capital on certain cultural productions. We recognise that Bourdieu's broader concepts on cultural production have been devised as a rejoinder to 19th-century modern art production within democratic contexts of the West. However, we argue that his ideas are epistemologically open and can be appropriated to study South African cultural policy, which also has as its basis, Western notions of nationalism and creation of national identities, and has Western cultural economy impositions have done since the 17th century. The post-1994 attempts at reconfiguring cultural production present opportunities to understand how cultural processes of the colonial-apartheid past were formulated, how to prevent these from self-generation, in a Gramscian sense, and how to transform them for the benefit of South Africa's development.

As Bourdieu's (1993) tenets demonstrate, cultural production, structures of social relations and position-taking in the field of cultural production are foundational to creating new possibilities for art forms to achieve symbolic capital. Yet, this is dependent on how cultural forms are positioned, and on their interrelations with the institutions that determine the distribution of resources and capital. Such cultural entities are, of course, contested terrains, and the social structures mandated with cultural production are complex, fractured, and susceptible to changes wrought by the global structures that influence them. This is particularly the case in a postcolony such as South Africa, where local and international capital interests, capitalist logic, and the commercial linkages established through settler communities, continue to exert formidable power on the shape and development of the post-apartheid nation state.

In the South African case, the ANC-led government serves as the newcomer, to dismantle the entrenched structural relations and sedimented conditions of cultural productions of the past. This involves wresting power away from organisations that guided the cultural policy of past epochs and redirecting it to a new South African cultural policy, as pointed out by Hesmondhalgh (2006). Bourdieu's view of cultural fields of production helps us to understand the factors that restrict and allow for this transformation; to think of what is do-able or not; and what is possible or not, depending on how social institutions operating within the cultural fields are constituted. All chapters in this volume, as Hesmondhalgh (2006: 216) intones about Bourdieu's *The Rules of Art*, 'draw attention to the structured nature of making symbolic goods, and the way that the social making-up of the rules surrounding such activities, is hidden from view, or misrecognized'.

Theoretical question raised in the book

- How do we define arts, culture and heritage in a society with a complex history of hegemonic and counterhegemonic traditions?
- How can historical positions on arts, culture and heritage be reconciled with post-apartheid cultural productions?
- What opportunities exist for alternate policy formulations for the arts that transgress existing boundaries, and policy positions that may retard, rather than advance, national development and transformation?
- What and who are the social agents for the formulations, implementation and performance of these alternative forms of understanding?
- How can the global market for the arts be leveraged in order to elicit new forms of cultural productions and identity formation?
- Given the ubiquity of global financialisation how can local arts, culture and heritage brands be protected from commercial appropriation?

Overview of the book

The book is divided into three sections:

Part one

Setting the scene: Arts, culture and the shaping of the national heritage.

- This section investigates the historical foundations of arts in the struggle against apartheid. Further it interrogates divergent and complex stands of the sector in steering the post-1994 democratic project in forging a new nation.
- Interrogates and generates question around narrow conceptualisations of what is the role of arts in a post-apartheid society; the 'instrumentalisation' of the arts as a weapon of the struggle, began to witness a split as cultural workers came to imagine a post-apartheid cultural landscape; how arts and cultural life post-1994 could be released from the burden of historical political baggage to help South Africa reimagine its identity anew; contentions around the constitutionality of arts are brought into stark relief as different contributors question the contradictions that beset many formulations of what art is within a context of massive social transformation. The questions generated by these conflictual perspectives necessitate that thinking about the role and position of the arts, culture and heritage going forward needs deep reflection.

Part two

Arts in the present: Everyday developmental experiences

- Contributors apply themselves to popular arts and how issues of the quotidian life reveal aspects of the political and cultural economies that are often glossed over by policy-makers in favour of cultures that are not ontologically tied to our African localities;
- Highlighted are how popular arts are representative of marginalised African people's modes of being-in-the-world; chapters in this section investigate the political and economic structures maintaining the cultural status quo; they examine everyday culture, or quotidian experiences, as they continue to shape life in the aftermath of the post-apartheid dispensation.
- Draw important intersections between the arts and everyday experiences; illustrate connections between the grassroots experience of post-1994 democracy, and its expression in cultural and artistic forms; show the ways in which the arts have embodied and reflected South Africa's many contradictions and complexities, from the apartheid era into the present.
- Demonstrate the achievements of the first five years of South Africa's democracy and policy documents produced and extracted from the *Redistribution and Development Programme* (RDP); illustrate how these policy positions emphasised redress, redistribution of resources, national healing and reconciliation.

- Demonstrate the lack of oversight with some of the social redress aspects in our democracy, e.g. some key aspects of the *Arts and Culture White Paper* of 1996, pertaining to linguistic rights and land as central to transforming South Africa, took something of a backseat in development efforts, meaning that foundational moments of healing and redress would be slow to unfold. Part of the call for an end to apartheid centred on linguistic and land rights, and many popular songs highlighted these social injustices.
- The slow-turning wheel of transformation with regard to linguistic and land justice continues to be part of the call for redress in post-apartheid arts and cultural landscapes.
- Further impositions from the foundations laid by the global political economy are commented on through popular expression. Again, the message embodied in these art forms – often produced at the margins by producer–consumers who are regarded as not sophisticated – betray a deep (mis)understanding of how local and international dialectics affect ordinary citizens.

Part three

Arts in the future: Towards social cohesion and collective imagination

- Contributors continue to explore the art of everyday culture as a restaging and reconscientising site; by exploring the sites of arts and culture as they affect the government's agenda of social cohesion. South Africa's reconstruction architects made attempts to create an interracial democracy that celebrated the country's unique diversity.
- However, its attempt to combat the foundational pillars of white supremacy and injustice are incomplete. Despite several elections returning the ANC to power post 1994, it has failed to redress past injustices and create social cohesion, evident in the re-emergence of discontent throughout the country. The students' call for decolonisation, in particular, has exposed the post-apartheid myth of social cohesion, as the limited impact of the ANC's reconstruction efforts remain trapped in an entrenched system of racial oppression.
- Highlight that cultural expressions remain essential in communicating and performing the country's transformative and developmental agenda. However, a parochial understanding of nation-building and collective imagination hover as a spectre that disavows broader, more inclusive, understandings of South Africa's plural identities.
- Illustrate that existing cultural productions have promised to be sites for cultural transformation and, therefore, new narratives for a post-1994 social formation, historical contingencies affecting cultural production, the ever-complex nation-building, access to existing structures of cultural production, circulation of art, and complex structures of the

art market economy, have all proven to be serious challenges in reimagining an equitable landscape brought about by the democratic dispensation.

- Show an urgent need to reconfigured spaces such as museums, work by migrant artists, and other contemporary cultural scapes,
- Illustrate need to map future considerations of national cultural policy, which might lead to social cohesion and collective imagination in the context of the neoliberal turn and digital disruption of the present generation.

Findings and Recommendations

Key findings

Arts, cultural and social struggles

- Arts and culture were very integral and valuable in the fight against the unjust apartheid system. Arts and culture are still valuable in the democratic era.
- There has been a deleterious delay in updating the 2006 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage. Revision of the White Paper process began in 2015, and by 2020, it had not been finalised. This has affected the repositioning of arts and culture in transforming South Africa's socio-economy.
- There is a big gap between policy statements on the arts and cultural sectors' role in alleviating poverty on the one hand, and the practical and consistent actions to support this vision on the other. In a rapidly globalising world, this gap needs to be narrowed through ensuring that arts/culture policymaking becomes dynamic and agile in order to adapt to the changing world.
- Societal aberrations such as killings, violence, and corruption have caused tremors and disquiet, especially in the lives of black people. These events highlight how South Africa resembles a monstrous mental asylum from which vicious bodily and mental attacks are unleashed continuously. They threaten the consolidation of democracy.

Arts, culture and the youth

- Arts and culture are not restricted to entertainment. They also encompass key societal pillars of the modern state such as education, law, commerce and environmental concerns.

- Popular youth music, even though not overtly political, engages broader cultural, social and political issues in a critical manner. Artistic productions such as township music, theatre, paintings, graffiti, etc., posit themselves as intellectual projects; presenting the youth as individuals who can think for, and about, themselves.

Language, community interests, indigenous cultures and nation building

- Most arts and culture policy documents are written in English. High levels of illiteracy among Africans mean that communities with disadvantaged backgrounds find English-only policy documents alienating and inaccessible in an environment where a reading culture needs to be cultivated.
- At present, indigenous language publishing is still mainly aimed at learners in formal institutions of learning from Grade R to Grade 12. This is inadequate if arts, culture and heritage are to be useful in consolidating democracy.
- South Africa's multiculturalism, ethnic diversity, and racial differences, alone, defy a singular nationalism. Through negotiation, this diversity is a strong basis for nation-building and social cohesion.
- Indigenous art such as Ndebele paintings and popular music genres seem to be unevenly accommodated in government policy and programmes, which then allows for gaps that can be exploited by market forces. For example, current policy is not clear on how intellectual property rights of designs lifted from common tradition should be managed.

Digital space and moments of pandemics

- The digital age is upon us, and the arts and culture sectors are impacted. The functionality of the arts sector will require digital policies and actions that foster equitability in accessing information and communication technology.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has sharpened the already existing problems besetting the arts and cultural sector. However, the sector is exhibiting some adaptation strategies through virtual platforms, which need resourcing by government.

Recommendations:

As a language understood by many, arts and culture should guide society's fight against socio-economic injustices, gender-based violence, xenophobia and the rampant abuse of state power. Regrettably, sector is still guided by a White Paper that came into effect in 1996. Some of the policies therein have been overtaken by events, and hence the urgent need to finalise the revised version, which has been in the pipeline for the past five years. Below are policy recommendations

that MISTRA makes, with some being present in current policy, however requiring emphasis and better enforcement.

On arts and cultural struggles

- Policymakers must be alert to structural relationships that distort conditions where cultural productions must happen. This should involve wresting power away from institutions that guided cultural policy in the past and redirecting such power to new and inclusive created structures that appreciate the value of transformation. In the 1996 White Paper, cultural policy was limited to concepts of national identity, core creative practice, and public funding for the erection and maintenance of cultural infrastructure. However, the advent of digital media and arts and culture's dynamic intersection with economic markets shifted understanding of the sector and paved the way for the introduction of the *creative economy* concept. The cultural and creative industries, as well as the evolution to the present digital age need to be factored into the new policy.
- Policy must ensure that issues of race, class, nationality and gender are fostered in the public sphere through the arts. In other words, in cultural discourse, work and the work-scene, community and broader society become absolutely important for revolutionary art to be effective. The latter can be achieved through continuously government support of art production that offers a critical response to everyday socio-economic challenges in South Africa.

On arts, culture and the youth

- Since young people know the future they desire as evidenced by their recent struggles, government policy must ensure compulsory representation of the youth in political, economic, social and cultural engagements to ensure their views are carried forward.
- Policy must create, prioritise and support localised community artistic and cultural programmes since this is an essential they have the know-how (exceptional experiential knowledge) to effect / help effect these desired policies. This recognition will not only to prevent young artists from leaving the country to work abroad, but also to enable the preservation of all of the country's traditions and customs through youth programmes. This aspect is missing in the 1996 White Paper.
- A rigorous and clear policy environment must be created to advance a stronger presence of arts and culture education at school level. This process should endeavor to bring indigenous cultures and traditions into the school and tertiary education syllabi with the help of ministries and community cultural workers.

- Although Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) are paramount skills, we also require skills akin to that of cultural and emotional intelligence, and empathy. This recognition is a necessary strategic policy position that government should adopt to reduce the humanistic skills gap evident in the current system. Thus, policy must begin to emphasise STEAM over STEM.

On arts, social cohesion and nation-building

- Arts and culture policy endeavours must ensure that different indigenous national cultures, sub-cultures and social formations continue to (re)constitute themselves around nation-building and culture rebuilding. South Africa need not follow a European homogenous approach to nation-building, but should develop a multi-cultural, multilingual, postcolonial society based on equality-in-diversity as a precondition for unity. This is recognised in the latest Revised Draft White Paper, and speaks of transforming South Africa into an inclusive society based on actual equality, which recognises that 'rainbow-ism' as a concept is mythical and only works for the elite.
- Government and policy-makers must establish programmes to make South Africa's arts and culture increasingly inclusive of various migrant communities based in South Africa, who currently are on the margins of mainstream local arts and culture. More artistic initiatives to advance the African Union's Agenda 2063 vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa are needed.

On the protection of indigenous arts, cultures and languages

- South Africa's cultural policies must encompass greater appreciation for the value of African Indigenous Knowledge Systems, including language. Besides being progressive and accommodating to diversity, AIKS constitute a reservoir of vast knowledges that have been allowed to lay dormant despite the alternative solutions they present for some of the challenges facing humanity.
- Libraries, community centres and parks must work for and serve the community, and their numbers should be increased to make different forms of cultural and non-cultural productions accessible to everyone.
- There is a need for the regulation of the book retail industry in order to protect smallholder independent publishers. This is key in developing a reading culture in South Africa.

On arts, culture and the digital space

- The digital space, presently characterised as 4IR, is on the march. Policy must appreciate this, and, by making use of existing schooling infrastructure, make provisions for young people to gain hard and soft digital skills that have become indispensable for a changing environment.
- While technology has allowed contemporary musicians to do quite a lot (record, (re)mix, master and distribute) by themselves, it has also worsened piracy and illegal duplication of productions. Policy must be agile to protect the rights of artists in digital spaces.
- Future arts/culture policy must address the digital divide by advocating for equitable access to ICT infrastructure. This is particularly important for artists at local levels to maximise opportunities for their relevance and sustenance.

On arts, culture and heritage during pandemics

- COVID-19 has taught us that innovative ways should be sought to reduce dependency on physical interaction for creation and consumption of artistic products. Thus, virtual interactions, streaming and online spaces must become accessible domains not only for urbanites, but for all communities in South Africa. Access to high-speed internet should be prioritised by policy.
- COVID-19 has already begun disrupting some aspects of African traditions/cultures. It's no longer advisable to observe certain rituals related to death and burials because there are concerns about turning traditional ceremonies into COVID-19 super-spreader events. Therefore, there is a need for clear policy initiatives that bridge the divide between tradition/customs and government interventions necessary to deal with pandemics. This will reduce resistance to government plans from traditional communities.

ⁱ The idea of arts and cultural productions in this book is used to mean more than just performances or exhibitions. It refers to the entire process of developing artistic and cultural products, how they are expressed or express themselves, as well as their impact on society once they have been produced.