

**SUSTAINABILITY IN ARTS AND CULTURE FUNDING:**

**A retrospective exploration of *Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre* as a Case Study, 1998-2008**

**WELILE K. TEMBE**

**A Research Report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the  
Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts.**

**Johannesburg, 2013**

## ABSTRACT

This study presents an exploration of South Africa's cultural policy as a framework for achieving sustainability for the sector. Cultural policies set the parameters for the impact of funding structures on arts organizations. Reputable contemporary dance companies in KwaZulu Natal closed because of crises in funding. This becomes a concern for policymakers as it reveals unexpected circumstances and pressures under which artists operate.

The approach was a single case study focus on *Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre*, a contemporary dance company based in KwaZulu Natal. Interviews with their management addressed factors that influenced their development and sustainability. Moreover, this study unpacked their perceptions of the Provincial Department of Arts and Culture.

The Provincial department is perceived to be unapproachable and removed from the daily realities of making art. Province has Constitutional powers to affect policy change, and engage meaningfully with artists. Artists have the powers to amalgamate and set the agenda for policy reform that prioritizes their requirements.

There is a gap in literature analysing the role of Provincial government in reducing the funding pressure of national institutions. By providing accessible funding mechanisms for artists within their constituencies, Province would be placing proactive measures to encourage the sustainability of Arts and Culture.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The accumulative preparation for this Research Report was partially made possible through the Faculty of Humanities at Wits University and the *Wits Schools of Arts (WSOA)* who provided much needed financial relief in the form of a Merit Award.

My supervisor, Joni Barnard, whose attention to grammar and punctuation opened my eyes, and reawakened me to the possibility that words are like movement; they need to flow and make a point(e). I am also thankful for the early supervision by Monica Newton, who will always be my Cultural Policy gladiator.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of *WSOA* lectures for sharing their expertise and widening my knowledge of Cultural Policy, namely: Jill Waterman, Joseph Gaylard and Prof Cynthia Kros. Special mention to Sao Mendes whose handling of administrative and logistical queries is nothing short of magical.

This study would not have happened without permission from Jay Pather, Neliswa Rushualang, and Ntombi Gasa. Your generosity with time and information is appreciated. *Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre's* pursuit of excellence in dance in KwaZulu Natal continues to be inspirational.

Over time, I have had the privilege and honour to receive encouragement, feedback and interest in my writing from colleagues in academia and the sector. Their conversations enhanced my understanding of the theory and practical application of the subject matter; and occasionally they have given me the proverbial 'push from the rear'. Particularly, Dr Christopher John, Dr John Kani, Nicky du Plessis, Motshabi Tyelele, Dr Siyanda Ndlovu, Kerry Frizelle and especially Nzokuhle Nxumalo. I am indebted to Tarryn Frankish for her assistance throughout the writing process and being a sounding board for my thoughts. Heartfelt thanks to Prof Jill Bradbury and Dr Keith Ferguson whose humour and love kept feeding my desire to finish.

There is an immeasurable network of support from friends sharing personal and professional experience, to which I am thankful. However, Ingrid 'Mazozo' Masondo, Lee Walters, Karima Effendi, Khobi Ledwaba and Samora Sekhukhune became my peers in the academic struggle and my chosen sisters in life. I am blessed that from the beginning, and on endless occasions, they have assisted and loved me during this undertaking. Now my academic 'through-put' is a reality. They embody the ideals of humanity as well as possessing integrity in a sector yearning to be esteemed. Viva, let us live Artfully!

Most importantly, I express gratitude to my parents Mandisa and Jabulane Tembe for investing in my academic journey. To my siblings also, for always supporting my studies. Bongeka Tembe, I am thankful 'for infinity and beyond the buzz light years' for "running around" for me.

My beloved husband, Lorenz Giorgi, I am eternally blessed that when I ran out of energy you carried me on your broad shoulders to the finish line. You give me strength to be at my best for our son.

Ngiyabonga.

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this Research Report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |      |
|--|------|
| ABSTRACT   | ii   |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS                                     | iii  |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS                                | vi   |
| <br>   |      |
| CHAPTER  | PAGE |
| <b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>                               |      |
| 1.1 Background and Aim of Study                      | 1    |
| 1.2 Theoretical Framework                            | 4    |
| 1.3 Methodology                                      | 8    |
| 1.4 Structure of Chapters                            | 13   |
| <b>2. CONTEXTUALIZING CULTURAL POLICY</b>            |      |
| 2.1 Contextualizing Policy                           | 14   |
| 2.2 Cultural Policy                                  | 20   |
| 2.3 Democratization: the effects on Arts and Culture | 30   |
| <b>3. CASE STUDY SIWELA SONKE DANCE THEATRE</b>      |      |
| 3.1 Historical Overview                              | 39   |
| 3.2 Management                                       | 46   |
| 3.3 Sustainability in KwaZulu Natal                  | 53   |
| 3.4 Perceptions of KZNDAC                            | 55   |
| <b>4. CONCLUSION</b>                                 |      |
| 4.1 Reflections on Sustainability                    | 64   |
| 4.2 Concluding Remarks                               | 78   |
| <br>   |      |
| <b>APPENDIX</b>                                      |      |
| 1. CONSENT FORMS                                     | 82   |
| <br>   |      |
| <b>REFERENCES</b>                                    | 83   |
| <br>   |      |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>                                  | 86   |

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ACH    | Arts, Culture and Heritage sector            |
| ACTAG  | Arts and Culture Task Group                  |
| BASA   | Business and Arts South Africa               |
| CAPAB  | Cape Performing Arts Board                   |
| CIF    | Cultural Industries Fund                     |
| CODESA | Convention for a Democratic South Africa     |
| DAC    | Department of Arts and Culture               |
| KZN    | KwaZulu Natal                                |
| KZNDAC | KwaZulu Natal Department of Arts and Culture |
| NAI    | National Arts Initiative                     |
| NAC    | National Arts Council                        |
| NAPAC  | Natal Performing Arts Council                |
| NGP    | National Growth Path                         |
| NLDTF  | National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund     |
| PAC    | Performing Arts Councils                     |
| PANSA  | Performing Arts Network of South Africa      |
| PACOFS | Performing Arts Council of Orange Free State |
| PACT   | Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal     |
| RDP    | Reconstruction and Development Policy        |
| RNE    | Royal Netherlands Embassy                    |
| SSDT   | Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre                   |