

# GALA TIMES

The Quarterly Newsletter of the GALA Queer Archive

4/4 October - December  
2021

## DEZEMBER!

### A Year in Review

2021 will be remembered for the most part for the numerous and compounding hardships that were brought to bear on our daily life. Most notably, the continuation of the global pandemic drew out health and economic challenges. Horrific hate crimes and other violent criminal acts across South Africa robbed our community of people who were loved and cherished. Electricity blackouts and water shortages continue to make it even harder for people to live, earn an income, learn, teach, pray, and come together in spaces that are safe and healthy. Further afield, more and more governments around the world are turning to fascist and corrupt practices that reduce democratic rights, liberties and freedoms of people. Climate change continues to loom above it all, threatening us with an ailing planet that cannot survive the insatiable greed of humankind.

In this *annus horribilis* GALA has weathered the storm, and 2021 has still offered us milestones which are worth celebrating. This is in no small part due to the dedication and fastidiousness of the GALA team who were committed to ensuring that the beneficiaries that we serve were able to find support and that the archive continued in its unwavering efforts to ensure that the queer experience of our past and present are neither ignored nor erased.

As the year draws to a close, it brings me great joy to share some of the moments worth celebrating:

- **Books! Books! Books!** GALA published, co-published and/or actively supported the following publications: [Outros Corpos](#)

[Nossos Other Bodies of Ours](#) (MaThoko's Books); [Hopes and Dreams that Sound Like Yours](#) (MaThoko's Books in partnership with Taboom Media); [Seeking Sanctuary - Stories of Faith, Sexuality and Migration](#) (Wits University Press); and [>>we are f\\*\\*\\*\\*g here!<<](#) (Iwalewa Books with the support of GALA).

- **Lights! Camera! Action!** GALA was fortunate to partner with [Google South Africa](#) and the [Australian Volunteer Program](#) in creating online short films highlighting the work of GALA, particularly during the global pandemic.

- **GLOW Opera: on the life and times of Simon Nkoli.** GALA has been engaging with composer Philip Miller and his creative team in developing an opera honouring the life of Simon Nkoli. Workshops were held with artists, musicians, filmmakers, singers, choreographers and gay activists to give creative expression to Simon's story and available historical material. As a result of supporting this endeavour, the GALA archive has been enriched with film interviews with Simon's family, friends and comrades.

- **Queer Hillbrow Tour.** In partnership with Dlala Nje, GALA has worked to develop the Queer Hillbrow walking tour which will be offered once a month. [2022 bookings.](#)

- **Geleza Diaries: Featuring Sicka Starban.** GALA produced a short film, shot and directed by Collen Mfazwe. The film follows Sicka Starban, a local queer hip-hop artist and traditional healer who lives in Daveyton, Johannesburg. It elaborates on various aspects of her identity, and how race, class, gender, sexuality and spirituality intersect in her experience as a black lesbian woman. [Watch here.](#)

- **Talking Queer.** GALA produced our very first podcast series! In eight episodes, our host, Caio Simões de Araújo speaks to writers, scholars, artists and activists working in various locations in the Global South, with a focus on the African continent. [Listen here.](#)

- **Be a Better Human.** GALA collaborated with Be A Better Human, an organisation that specialises in developing online courses for people to learn about issues pertaining to diversity and sexuality. [Sign up for the LGBTIQ 101 course.](#)

**Relief on the Edge:** *Interrogating and Implementing Relief Strategies for Queer Community during the Covid-19 Pandemic and Beyond* - two short films made in collaboration with the Wits Centre for Diversity Studies. Watch them [here](#) and [here](#).

Wishing all our fellow GALA fam all the best over the festive season. May you use this time to rest and recharge, to revel in the company of loved ones, to spread queer joy, love and kindness. Above all, we wish you good health and stay safe!

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## Archive Spotlight:

# QUEER ACTIVISM IN CAPE TOWN

**GALA's Archives Coordinator takes us on a little tour of Cape Town, where it's not just holidays, beaches and mountains, but also historical organisations key to South Africa's queer activism.**

During the politically charged and tumultuous 1980s and early 1990s, Cape Town saw the birth of various gay and lesbian organisations, including Lesbians and Gays Against Oppression/Organisation of Lesbian and Gays Activists (LAGO/OLGA), the Association of Bisexuals, Gays and Lesbians (Abigale), the Out in Africa (OIA) Film Festival, and the Gay Association of South Africa 6010 Group (GASA-6010), which later became the Triangle Project. These organisations all have collections in the GALA archives. By looking at two of these organisations and their archive collections, we can see how politics and race shaped these two early Cape Town LGBTIQ+ organisations.

### LAGO/OLGA

LAGO was formed by a small group of prominent, white activists that included Ivan Toms, Julia Nicol and Sheila Lapinsky, in Cape Town in 1986, following the failure of GASA-6010 to accommodate those activists in the organisation who wanted to go in a more radical political direction. Their aim, as recounted by founding member Julia Nicol in an interview with GALA in 2002, "was to be an openly gay presence within the struggle for a non-racial, democratic South Africa". Nicol goes on to say: "We felt it was essential for a specifically gay/lesbian voice to be speaking out against apartheid. GASA had emphatically failed to do this", and on the other side, "The climate within the democratic movement was such that lesbians and gays did not feel comfortable about being open about their sexual orientation". Nicol highlights here the exclusions taking place in both the gay rights struggle and the anti-apartheid struggle, and it was bridging this divide which motivated LAGO's, and later OLGA's, members.



(L-R) Simon Nkoli, Ivan Toms, Sheila Lapinsky, Julia Nicol. Cape Town, January 1989. Photograph from the Julia Nicol Collection.

In 1990 OLGA joined the United Democratic Front (UDF), a non-racial coalition/umbrella body of anti-apartheid organisations, and this gave OLGA added credibility in leftist political circles. In September 1991 OLGA submitted to the African National Congress (ANC) Constitutional Committee a proposal for the inclusion in its draft constitution provisions outlawing discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation (what became known as the 'Equality Clause'), ratified by the ANC in May 1992.

In December 1993, directly after Cape Town's first Pride march, OLGA facilitated a meeting in consultation with other South African lesbian and gay organisations, and together they drafted a 'Charter of Bisexual, Lesbian and Gay Rights'. The 1993 post-Pride meeting was to be OLGA's last formal meeting, though no official decision was taken to disband. OLGA was dissolved in 1994, the same year that South Africa held its first democratic elections.

Despite OLGA's successes, it seems they could never shake their image as a white liberal organisation. In April 1993 Chris Woods wrote in London's *Gay Times*: "During the 1980s, gay

and lesbian activism in Cape Town was dominated by the group OLGA. The group with a radical feminist/socialist bent set itself the objective of convincing the ANC of the need for sexual equality within the new South Africa. But OLGA also came to be seen by many black lesbians and gay men as an elitist, white organisation".



Five OLGA members *en route* to the Grand Parade rally to welcome Nelson Mandela on his release from prison, 11 February 1990. (L-R): Stephen Garratt, Sheila Lapinsky, Julia Nicol, Ivan Toms, Peter Scott. Photograph from the Julia Nicol Collection.

### Association of Bisexuals, Gays and Lesbians (Abigale)

Abigale was formed in Cape Town in January 1992. The majority of its membership were urban and working-class queers of colour. The gay bars and clubs that were beginning to emerge in the Cape Town city centre had a predominantly white clientele and racism from both club owners and patrons was a problem. There were almost no alternative spaces for socialising in the townships, Cape Flats and outlying areas. It was precisely this lack of secure and welcoming spaces for queers of colour to socialise and express themselves that prompted a group of friends to start Abigale.

Founded by Midi Achmat, her partner Theresa Raizenberg, Zackie Achmat (Midi's brother) and Jack Lewis, Abigale provided an important and much needed social function.

Abigale's founders recognised that providing social support would be a core component of the organisation, and a necessary first step before more political work could begin.

*"Black and coloured working-class people didn't feel at home in GASA because it was so white and middle class. Then OLGA came along, and we didn't feel at home there either. Even though they were part of the United Democratic Front and strictly anti-apartheid, they were still white and middle-class... It was all politics and no support. And so we decided to start Abigale as a way of introduction for black people who have never been part of a gay organisation."*

- Midi Achmat, *Defiant Desire*, page 79

Despite this focus on the social, Abigale did also have queer political and activist goals, and many of its members came from political backgrounds in the anti-apartheid and trade union movements. In 1993 they held protests and pickets at the popular, and effectively 'whites only' gay club, Strawbs, at Green Market Square in the centre of Cape Town, and outside the Woodstock Police Station. This protest-style of activism differed from the predominately white, middle-class organisations of the left. Through members like Funeka Soldaat (a member of the ANC Youth League), Abigale was able to attract young members in the townships of Cape Town, particularly Khayelitsha.



Picket organised by Abigale outside gay club Strawbs, protesting the club's racist admissions policies, April 1993. Theresa Raizenberg Collection.

In addition to protests and pickets, Abigale also hosted workshops and organised drag shows in the townships. But their most prominent public



Members of Abigale getting ready for the first Cape Town Pride in 1993. Theresa Raizenberg Collection.



Poster for Cape Town's first pride in 1993. Abigale Collection

event was arguable the organising of Cape Town's first pride march on 11 December 1993.

The march organisers printed and put up thousands of posters around Cape Town and beyond, focusing on promoting the event in township bars and shebeens. The Cape Town march took place three years after the first Pride march in South Africa in Johannesburg in 1990, perhaps also defying the narrative that Cape Town has always been at the forefront of gay Pride in South Africa. The previous year, Abigale had hired a bus and transported some 50+ members to Pride in Johannesburg, where they drew inspiration to host their own event in Cape Town. In a reciprocal move, the Gay & Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand (GLOW), who organised Johannesburg's first Pride, sent some 40 members to Cape Town to support Abigale at their first Pride

event (as well as to attend the meeting that followed).

It would seem that this first Pride was the most political of Cape Town's Prides. The original Abigale organisers were involved in organising Pride the following year, 1994, but by 1995 Abigale was beginning to fall apart and there was no Pride event hosted that year. In 1996 Pride was held at a nightclub in the suburb of Observatory, and was described by Midi Achmat as more of a party and that Pride had lost its political roots (*Pride: Protest and Celebration*, p.64).

Abigale broke up due to infighting and tensions over those wanting the organisation to remain predominantly a social support structure, and those wanting to move forward in a more political direction.

What the archival records for both these organisations show, is that despite being relatively short-lived and facing internal conflicts, they served an important need in a specific time, place and context, and both left behind lasting legacies in the work they did. And while archival collections can never give a complete history, what they can do, and have done for these two organisations, is give us an understanding and insight into how they were formed, their key role-players, their successes (and failures), who they connected and collaborated with, and their internal conflicts, as well as how racial politics played an important role in both their establishment and their dissolutions. These, and other collections in the archive, are important building blocks for researchers who seek to trace the roots of some of the current issues facing queer activism in Cape Town, and to put into context the queer organisations of the past.

**Linda Chernis**

(Archives Coordinator)

This is an abridged version of a chapter in *Beyond the Mountain: Queer Life in 'Africa's Gay Capital'* (eds. Zethu Matebeni, B Camminga), UNISA Press, 2020.



# NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

## The Lived Realities of Trans and Gender Diverse Persons in Higher Education Institutions: A panel discussion.

On the 20th and 21st of November 2021, Gender Dynamix (GDX) hosted an incredibly impactful and successful conference in Cape Town, at the Double Tree Hotel in Woodstock. The conference unpacked various complexities related to the ongoing challenges transgender and gender diverse persons in South Africa face in institutions of higher learning. The conference was held in-person, and simultaneously online, as a hybrid model in order to reach a broad audience interested in the topic. The conference also started on the 20th of November, the International Transgender Day of Remembrance, which is a day that allows our community to mourn the people we have lost due to violence. In order to create space for those people who we miss dearly, that would have been there if their lives were not taken, GDX placed an empty chair on stage at the conference, to acknowledge that their voices will always be with us in spirit.

It was an honour to moderate the first panel at the conference on inclusive higher education for trans and gender diverse persons hosted and organised by the incredible Gender Dynamix team. The panel I facilitated featured Keisha Ndlwana, a student from Phatsemang College in the Northern Cape, Porsha Moabelo, a student from Sol Plaatjie University in

the Northern Cape, Vuyo Mmasebitsana Mbutho and Malwende Ndengane, both students at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein. The panel kicked off the conference, and grounded the conversation in relation to the experiences of students who shared their personal stories of exclusion, violence, discrimination and prejudice they face at universities, due to biased attitudes toward their gender and/or sexual identities.

It was extremely challenging to moderate this particular panel, because the purpose of the first discussion was to set the scene for the conversations that will continue throughout the conference. In addition to the pressure that I felt to hold space for students sharing their trauma, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng, the Vice-Chancellor of UCT, was sitting in the front row, listening to our every word. The panel therefore became a deliberate act of 'speaking truth to power' and thus introduced some much needed complexity and tension in the room, where university management and leadership were present and listening. The conversation was robust and at times very uncomfortable, as the students shared their personal experiences. Issues surrounding unequal access to higher education institutions – based on incongruent identification

measures e.g: ID un-inclusive filing systems that affirm gender identity, student and staff card issues, absence of gender-inclusive restrooms, scarcity of inclusive on-campus housing, lack of inclusive healthcare services on campus, lack of sensitised security services, uninclusive sporting codes, cis-normative cultural practices in residences on campus, physical and sexual violence perpetuated against trans and gender diverse students and the lack of sensitised university staff and students was unpacked and discussed on the panel. Needless to say, the conversation exceeded the allocated time, but it was a much needed moment of disruption and a 'reality check' for the university management that attended the conference.

The responses from the audience reflected concern for the students who were sitting on stage with me on the panel. The discussion was rounded off with a few suggestions from the students around ways that universities can become safer and more inclusive spaces for trans and gender diverse students and staff. The conversation certainly acted as a springboard for further in depth discussion at the conference around the need to hold leadership and management accountable for policy changes that will ensure that trans and gender diverse students are protected against discrimination and feel included in their universities. The consensus at the end of the panel discussion however, was that there is a need across the country to continue to fight for the rights of trans and gender diverse students, because institutions of higher learning are still spaces of archaic colonial power structures that need to be transformed.



Keisha Ndlwana, (Phatsemang College), Porsha Moabelo (SPU), Vuyo Mbutho (UFS), and Malwende Ndengane (UFS), Genevieve Louw (GALA).

**Genevieve Louw**  
(Programmes Coordinator)



## KEDEZEMBA CDG BISCUITS

I don't usually need a reason to don my apron and get baking but KeDezemba really does feel like the perfect time to cook, bake and just generally feast. I want to share my **Cashew, Date and Ginger (CDG) Biscuit** recipe with you, which are buttery, chewy, crunchy, extra *kwetsa* filled morsels of holiday season deliciousness. These biscuits are also quick and easy to prepare and the real bonus: the dough is freeze-able so you're able to really impress those unannounced visitors!

### Ingredients:

255g salted butter at room temperature  
 1/3 cup (43g) granulated sugar  
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
 1 teaspoon ginger powder  
 ½ teaspoon flaky salt  
 2 ½ cups (325g) cake flour  
 ½ cup (64g) of de-seeded and roughly chopped dates  
 ½ cup (64g) lightly roasted and roughly chopped cashew nuts  
 Castor sugar, for setting

### Method:

**Step 1:** Line two rimmed baking trays with baking paper. Using a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment or an electric hand mixer, beat the butter, sugar and

vanilla on medium-high till it's super light and fluffy (3 to 5 minutes for a stand mixer; 6 to 8 minutes for a hand mixer).

**Step 2:** In a separate bowl sift the flour and add the ground ginger and salt. Then using a spatula to scrape down the sides of the bowl with the fluffy butter mixture and, with the mixer on low, slowly add the ginger-flour mix to blend. If necessary, knead the dough with your hands to make sure the flour is totally incorporated. At this point, the dough should be smooth and feel similar to play dough with all the ginger-flour mixture fully incorporated.

**Step 3:** Divide the dough in half, placing each half on a large piece of Glad wrap. Using your hands, form the dough into a log shape; rolling it on the counter will help you smooth it out, but I wouldn't worry too much getting it totally perfect – there's beauty in imperfection darlings! (Don't be afraid to make them compact. Similar to shortbread, this biscuit is meant to be dense. That's part of why it's so good.) Each half of the dough should form a 15cm log, 4 to 5cm in diameter. Chill the logs in a freezer until totally firm (about 2 hours).

**Step 4:** Heat the oven to 180 de-

grees. Using a serrated knife, carefully slice each log into 1.5cm-thick rounds (if you hit a date or cashew chunk, slowly saw back and forth through it). If the unbaked biscuits break or fall apart, just press them back together — like humpy dumpty! Place the unbaked biscuits on the prepared baking sheets about 3cm apart (they won't spread much). Bake until the edges are just beginning to brown, 12 to 15 minutes.

**Step 5:** While the biscuits are baking pour about ½ cup of castor sugar in a bowl. Once the biscuits are removed from the oven, work quickly using a spatula to remove the biscuits from the baking sheet while they are still hot and gently dunk the biscuits in the castor sugar making sure that every part of the biscuit is covered. Once covered gently dust off the biscuit in the air then let it cool on a baking rack before serving.

**Save it:** The dough can be made ahead and stored, tightly wrapped in plastic, up to 1 week in the refrigerator, or 1 month in the freezer. Cookies can be baked and stored in plastic wrap or an airtight container for 5 days.

**Keval Harie**  
(Director)

## Featured Fam:

The following are abridged extracts from an oral history interview with Nosipho. She was calling from her new eco home in Inanda, KZN. The interview was conducted over zoom on the 6th of December 2021. Nosipho was interviewed by Karin Tan (GALA), who was calling from Johannesburg, GP.

**Pronouns:** she/her/they/them

**Nosipho Vidima is a sex worker and sex worker activist. She has recently moved back to KZN after spending the last few years in Cape Town working with [Sisonke](#) and the [Sex Worker Education and Advocacy Taskforce \(SWEAT\)](#). She is currently a coordinator at the [Sex Work Donor Collaborative \(SWDC\)](#). She was recently featured in GALA's [Relief on the Edge short film](#). Nosipho was born in Pietermaritzburg, KZN in 1985.**

**Karin (K):** What do you like to do during this time of year?

**Nosipho (N):** Hang out with my siblings. Hang out with family. Braai! I mean, we never leave our braais, guys.

**K:** Is there any specific dish?

**N:** I mean, I am a meat lover, but I would give up my meat any day for a good vegetarian lasagna. I used to know how to make a good one, but I've fallen out. My sibling on my dad's side, Zandile, is mean at it! So I make sure I pop in at my grandmother's house in Pietermaritzburg. She is always going to be serving that along with the braai meat and salads.

**K:** What is currently on your playlist?

**N:** Zakes Bantwini's new album. My favorite songs there is [Osama](#) and [Girl in the Mirror](#). Adele, obviously. A little bit of Maskandi. Maskandi is a music genre that's popularity comes from KwaZulu-Natal and has a history with Ladysmith Black Mambazo, with a transition into a modern sound.



**K:** If you had a super power, what would it be and what would you do with it?

**N:** Are you serious? Oh my god, it would be the ability to strike men with lightning every time they utter a patriarchal, sexist, homophobic word or sentence or action or anything! *Nje* out of the blue! Wherever I am, I hear it, and this person is wherever they are, and lightning will just be like djoom! Any utterance that is rape cultured, and it would just be like, dshoomp! Dead. (laughs) I'm sorry, I am not promoting more violence, but you know what I mean (laughs). They must just realise.

**K:** You need to put the fear of god into them!

**N:** Even if it not killing them, just putting them into line. So they can stop hate crimes and GBV [gender-based violence] and get them moving towards the right direction.

**K:** This newsletter was originally going to be themed around activism in Cape Town, but now you have moved to KZN, so I don't know if it is going to be relevant anymore. I was going to ask you what is your favorite thing to do in Cape Town...

**N:** In Cape Town, the most favorite thing - and I am still going to do them because I am still going to be in Cape Town a lot - is the beach. Muizenberg beach exactly. There is a walking trail that starts from the other side of the Muizenberg beach and ends up where

those colourful bungalows are. I love that walk. Especially in the mornings. I also just love the beach in general. It is super exciting now that my dog can swim in the ocean.

The hiking trail in Towers River, just after the Cape Town tunnel. I love that hiking trail. Hanging out with my colleagues was also a huge thing as well.

**K:** Do you have a holiday message for the readers?

**N:** As we go into this December, whether we are going to be in hard lockdown or gentle lockdown, people are going to be forced to sit with families that are discriminative and violent towards them. Please can people reach out to the national hotlines. I know that suicide is a thing amongst our communities. Especially in December when they are forced to go back home, whether from university, whether from the sex work space because it is closing down. Just reach out, find community, try to keep safe.

One day we will be free to be who we are, love who we love and work where we work. It is just to hold on really. I have no words because this is the time where we get a lot of hate murder, whether you are LGBTIQ, whether you are a sex worker, it just escalates around the festive season. So also try and be safe in any way you can. Walk in groups, work in groups, party in groups of similar people to you. don't party where you don't know.



## Featured Fam (extended):

# NOSIPHO: SEX WORKER ACTIVIST

**K:** Please describe your current employment situation?

**N:** I think the last time I spoke to GALA, I was the Sex-Worker Rights Projects Specialist at [Sonke Gender Justice](#). But I really wanted to transition to stay in the villages a bit, so I needed a job that was remote. I've moved to the [Sex Work Donor Collaborative](#). I am the coordinator for it. It is a global network of donor funders or donor funding advocacy strategies for funding sex work organisations and grassroots movements. Already we know that only two percent of global funding goes to key populations. Out of that, it is about less than zero-point-something that comes to sex work directly. So, what this organisation tries to do is build advocacy to bring in more funding and to fund such organisations or grassroots movements globally. So this is the advocacy part. Then there is also the membership part, meaning that funders that are already funding such communities/organisations/grassroots movements have a membership with the network and this is where they build on their advocacy work to bring in more donors and to highlight issues within the sex worker space.

**K:** Can you describe the current state of decriminalisation [of sex work] in South Africa? Where are we at?

**N:** Hm. This is the most painful question. Last week I was in a conference organised by [JASS – Just Associates](#). I was with one of my best friends and now colleague, Constance Mathe, who is the coordinator of [Asijiki](#). So we are having this conversation around this question that you are asking. We don't know what to say because it is stagnant! It is the most it has been stuck. So if you are looking at history and the timeline of advocacy for decrim, and the achievements, you will see that up until 2020, there was movement. It looked like we were going to get decrim immediately. The fact that the president, on the timeline of the GBV (gender-based violence) implementation plan and the 24 demands to end GBV, they even have a section that says that we are going to have decriminalisation of sex work by 2023. Right? But in reality that stopped there. We have never been consulted. I don't know what the

president meant and 2023 is upon us very soon. There is also the South African Law Reform Commission's report which was sent back to the Department of Justice by the cabinet to say that the recommendations and the law that was given is not adequate. They were told to go back to the communities and consult. They haven't consulted. And so it is kind of just sitting with the Department of Justice. It is the most stagnant we have ever been. I think out of the sex workers - and there is not a lot who come out in this community. I think there is one - there is a lesbian sex worker, who is called Zelda Nhlabatsi who is on a lot of the Gauteng space around media and radio interviews. There is Katlego Rasebitse, who is a gay men-to-men sex work activist. There is Duduzile Dlamini who speaks out as well, she runs Mothers for the Future. I think there is less than ten of us who are actively, openly speaking out toward decriminalisation. Although the movement is big, people are scared of stigma.

So among the two of us [at the JASS conference], we are sitting and are like, we don't know, we are tired. We have exposed ourselves. People hate us. And obviously COVID also just pushed back a lot of social justice issues. Whether it is queer issues, whether it is women issues, reproductive issues, everything was pushed back from parliamentary agenda. So yeah, nobody is even talking about sex work.

**K:** Do you think there is an intersection between LGBTIQ activism and sex work activism?

**N:** Yes. It's one of those things where you can't really separate the other from the other. The main point being that those that are seen, or openly express in an LGBTIQ way in communities, there are no jobs. Whether it is gay men, trans women, trans men, a visible butch woman, they can't really get work, so they do sex work rather. Because it is a space that actually opens and accepts the sexual orientations and gender expressions in a lot of ways. Whether it is the cliental that you get, or whether it is just the fact that you can make money [while] being yourself. So a lot of our community is people who come from the LGBTIQ space and they are in

this space because of work. Although it is a hidden environment, it is a space that accepts.

Then there are issues around government accountability. If you look at the history of LGBTIQ rights in this country, and you are looking at the current happenings of sex work. They are criminalised environments. Those cannot be separated from each other. The similarities are quite visible from police harassment, stigma and discrimination, lack of access to basic fundamental rights and services. Those are also what intersect these communities.

**K:** Currently the LGBTIQ activist space is very focused on the hate crimes bill.

**N:** We also worked on it for a few of the sections there.

**K:** How does that bill effect or benefit the sex worker space?

**N:** It is the discrimination part. It is the verbal utterances, it is the murders, because you are a sex worker or because you are gay and a sex worker. Basically sex workers face the same kinds of hate crimes. Sometimes it is triple fold. It is the fact that sometimes it is a person who is a trans person, a sex worker, is also black, is also homeless. So this kind of taps into the movement of hate crimes very much. This coming out is also giving us ground where we can express these layers of hate crimes that happen, or layers of violations that happen to our community members or to ourselves.

**K:** How can people get involved to support the activists who work to decriminalize sex work?

**N:** You can join Asijiki. You can, in your own spaces or where you find platforms speak about sex worker rights and the violations that are happening. Although we say, "nothing about us without us," I think if you are an activist you realise that sometimes when you are given a platform, if you can raise the issue with other family members or sectors or siblings, just raising your voice and saying that Minister of Justice is not addressing sex worker issues. Just don't forget that in this country we have sex workers who are criminalised, who are part of us as LGBTIQ communities, who are part of us as social justice spaces.

# FESTIVE FASHION

## with Wenzile Thwala

The festive season is right around the corner and I know many of us are looking forward to shutting off our PCs and closing textbooks to focus on family, fun and adventure. What better way to enjoy yourself and make amazing memories while looking like the best version of yourself. You're in luck today, because I will be sharing with you darlings, statement pieces that I believe you need in your closet for the festive season.

**Patterns and prints are something that has been making a comeback this year and honestly, I'm here for it.**

The first item that gives me very festive and carefree vibes for both is tie dye. It has been making the rounds lately. I love this trend because it is effortless, the bold and bright colours of a tie dye top or sweat pants draws attention with very little effort. Plus, I personally feel you don't need much accessories with tie dye. Pair it with neutral colours and you're ready to dazzle everyone with your style at the next braai or pool party.

Another look that I love for everyone is floral. Gone are the days when floral shirts were associated with our grandfathers and uncles. A personal favourite for me is a floral dress with bold and bright neon colours for anyone who loves a pop of bright colours to lighten the mood. We all deserve brightly-coloured pieces to lighten our moods. Just because we are in a pandemic doesn't mean we must look like our problems honey.

The last piece which is a style dear to me and I'm growing to love is pin-up style summer dresses. I love an A-line dress with a cinched waist. Patterns like polka dots on dresses make me feel like a Dita Von Teese or a Marilyn Monroe. This style is a collectible that you can even pass down to your children or younger siblings because it honestly never goes out of style.





## A Holiday Message from MaNobantu

Well, 2021, that was another crazy year!

### To Keval Harie – Director:

Your hard work helps us grow. We all are like one big family. Wishing you all the happiness, success and strength.

May love be in your life, may hope be in your heart. All the best for 2022.

### To all staff members:

It has always been a pleasure to work with you.

The holidays are a wonderful time to remind you of how grateful I am to work with you.

Even if we do not see each other for the remainder of the year, just know that I'm thinking of you.

Enjoy a well-deserved rest and time with family this Christmas. Have a healthy and happy holiday season!

Having co-workers like you is truly a gift.

Fill your hearts with the warmth that is the closeness of your family, friends, and loved ones this holiday season and forever.

Let the spirit of love gently fill your hearts and homes. In this loveliest of celebrations may you find many reasons for happiness.

Since it is difficult to gauge how long this epidemic will last. It is important to be prepared for all scenarios.

Wishing you essential, socially-distanced, unprecedented, happy and healthy holidays.

### To the Board Members:

I know the pandemic isn't over. But I feel like there is a higher power taking care of us and it's reassuring.

My heartfelt thoughts and best wishes goes to you all.

Wishes for health, happiness and love this holiday season and into the New Year.

### To: GALA Family:

Tons of wishes to the most beloved GALA Family.



I wish you a great bonding with your family. Christmas is the best time to spread joy and happiness.

May the magic of Christmas fill your family with fun, joy, and happiness. Season's greetings and best wishes for you and your family.

Celebrate and enjoy this joyous occasion. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

With lots of love  
**Nobantu Nqolobe**  
(Administration Officer)

## Notice:

As of 2022, the GALA offices will no longer be open to walk-in visitors. This decision has not been made lightly, but these measures are being enforced to protect the GALA staff and visitors from health and safety risks.

Only people with calendared appointments with the GALA team will be granted access to the office and library. The only concessions that will be made are for students who can produce student identity cards. No more than 3 visitors will be permitted in the library at a time.

Email [nobantu.nqolobe@wits.ac.za](mailto:nobantu.nqolobe@wits.ac.za) to make an appointment.

## Donate to GALA

The GALA Archive is a living archive. This means that we never stop collecting.

Do you have documents, posters, flyers, photographs, t-shirts or other items you would like to donate? Do you want your story, or that of your organisation, recorded and/or preserved? Your stories and contributions are important. Help us document the present in order to preserve the past.

Your contribution matters.

Please contact our Archive Coordinator, Linda Chernis: [linda.chernis@wits.ac.za](mailto:linda.chernis@wits.ac.za)

Donations of books with queer content are welcome additions to the Cooper-Sparks Library that is housed at the GALA offices.

GALA is a non-profit organisation that relies solely on donor funding. Any and all donations are welcome.

You can donate to:

Bank name: Investec

Account name: Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action Trust

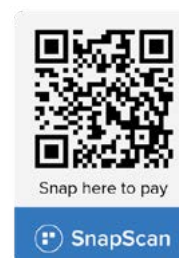
Account number: 100 1183 4713

Branch name and code: 580105

Type of account: Current

Swift code: iveszajjxxx

or via snapscan:



\*Please note that GALA is a registered non-profit trust with S18A status, meaning that neither you nor GALA pays donations tax, and that donations are deductible from your taxable income.