

Int This is an interview with Janina Masojada and it's the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, 2012. Janina, thank you so much for agreeing to participate in the Constitutional Court Oral History Project, we really appreciate it.

JM Pleasure.

Int I wondered if we could start at the real early beginnings, if you could talk about early childhood memories in terms of where you were born, family background, and some of the formative influences that may have led you down a particular professional trajectory?

JM Okay. I was born and raised in Durban, and I've spent the majority of my life here. Except for some part of my professional studies where I did a Masters in Architecture abroad. But to go back to the beginning I was one of five children, placed in the middle. My mother is Mauritian, my father is Polish. He came to this country as a refugee in the Second World War. Was evacuated out of Poland together with his family, and trucked across Europe. Eventually him and his mother and sister ended up living in Oudtshoorn in a camp. And at the end of the war his family returned to Poland and he at the age of sort of thirteen, fourteen, made the decision to stay in South Africa and not to return to communist Poland. And was then separated from his family until in his thirties, keeping very strong connections but at the same time not being able to return. So I was raised in a family that had a very strong family tradition. I think the separation of my father from his family, and a sense of responsibility that he felt towards them, of him being in the west and them living under really hard conditions, made him feel quite strongly about the power of family and community and one's role in one's broader community. South Africa for him was the land of milk and honey. It offered him an education, from that young age he was almost raised as an orphan by the church, who sort of gave him opportunities. But really he had to make his own way as a foreigner, feeling, I think, a lot of the prejudice...growing up with a lot of prejudice. He still has a very strong Polish accent. Growing up with him, he was quite an autocratic personality. I know a lot of my friends found him quite daunting and intimidating. He worked unbelievably hard to give all of his five children the best of what was possible, and education for him represented really what he could provide for his children. So my mother provided a loving and gentle sort of home base for us. My father was the hard worker. And she worked as a teacher, a remedial educationalist. And, ja, I sort of grow up in Durban, in a very privileged environment that my parents both worked incredibly hard to achieve. My parents were practising Catholics. They were very strongly involved with outreach programmes, and I remember one of my earliest memories with my mother was packing up old clothes, and we used to send old clothes and pillowcases back to Poland. And then drive on a weekly basis

over the other side of the hill, to people who were hugely less privileged than ourselves, and do food kitchens and assisting with health and educational lessons, which my mother provided. So I think from a very early age there was this kind of conflictual relationship that we had with living in South Africa. One, from my father seeing it as this land of opportunity, milk and honey, which it was for him, as he made his way and ended up, you know, having a very successful professional life as a structural engineer. And on the other hand being exposed probably quite little but relative to the other white children with whom I was in school, probably a lot more to a broader reality of who South Africans lived in this country. So that was probably the earlier influences. My mother was a part of various social and political movements, and she was a conscience against which we were raised. So I went to Durban Girls' College, which is a sort of a snooty girl's private school. I was a nobody there, I didn't achieve anything really particularly. My siblings went to schools in and around Durban. We were considered quite rebellious at the time. I really had a difficult time with the kind of institutional conservative environment in which we were placed. And then really felt that my life began the day I walked out of school and entered university. I knew from an early age, or it was the direction which my life was going to take, and that it was going to be either in the arts or architecture realms. My father was, as I said previously, a structural engineer. Many of the people with whom my parents socialised, were Eastern Europeans, or people who had come here from other countries, across the range of creative professions. So there were many vibrant evenings in my home with lots of animated and raucous discussions to do with art and architecture, politics and what was going on, which I think was pretty unusual in that time where most people lived in a very restricted and constricted reality. So those influences of those, call them, Europeans, who were part of my parents' life, who included people who had branded tattoos on their arms from the concentration camps, you know, it was an unusual range of exposures. And I mean, I hoped to be able to expose my children, also living in what is quite a constricted South African environment, to that range of adult influences. Because there's no doubt that those people gave me insights and exposures, which I otherwise wouldn't have had living in suburban Durban. But anyway, I was always going to study art or architecture. I spent my weekends driving around with my father to building sites. A few very influential personalities of graphic designers, artists and architects, who including Andrew Verster, who you'll be seeing later, as I was growing up. My father shared an office with a very talented architect working in Durban, who eventually left the country. But whilst he was here was one of the foremost and well-respected architects. So I was exposed to a creative world, the home that I grew up was extremely modern. Even now when people come there, they're blown away by the concrete, the glass, the light, the same palliative materials that you'll hear Albie Sachs referring to that are part of the Constitutional Court. Very modern, very sort of contemporary environment. And anyway, enrolled in the architecture department in first year...

Int Which university did you attend?

JM Pardon?

Int Which university?

JM I started off at University of Natal, Durban. I then went to Cape Town for a year, and that's where I got my undergraduate degree in architecture. And it was a pretty uneventful based education. But Durban University at that time had some...it was a very conscious university. I was there in the eighties at a time when, you know, there was a lot of political consciousness on campus. It was all still quite segregated but a lot of activism. And I was lucky enough to become friends with other students who were highly politicised and engaged with what was going on in the broader South African politics. And I say lucky enough, because often those things just happen and you get exposed to ideas and activities which you otherwise would have no idea were going on around you. So, nothing extreme but enough to kind of be a part of a slightly more conscious population at the time. After my undergraduate it's customary for one to take a prac year and travel abroad when you study architecture, and at that stage my sister had already left South Africa. And out of five, my older brother and my older sister had already left the country not wanting to be here. Which is very upsetting to my father, obviously, because he had chosen this...well, not chosen, this was the place that he had come to live in; the same with my mother, and now the next generation were moving on to other places. My sister was living in New York, and as part of my travels I went and lived with her in Manhattan and worked there for a while. And my parents encouraged me to look around at opportunities to study further, and I studied (for) a Masters Degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. And was given tuition aid to be there. And it was an interesting time also because it was a time where there was a very strong move for disinvestment from the universities in South Africa. Demonstrations on the front of the sort of primary fields of...shacks being burnt down, so a lot of protest going on. So South Africa was quite primary in the news at that time.

Int Was it before the States of Emergency or during the States...?

JM It was during that time.

Int That you were at MIT?

JM Yes, that I was at MIT. And it was interesting to be there, having very strong connections back to here. My sister being in America, my brother being in the UK, and I was travelling backwards and forwards between Boston and New York, and really having to think about where I was going to be based in my future. My sister then left the United States and she went to live in Australia,

and I returned back to South Africa. And coming back to South Africa was quite a shocking experience. I'd been exposed to the most exciting, stimulating, two and a half years of study at a top academic environment, with students from all over the world. It had been, I suppose, a real coming of age for me, and exploring ideas in architecture, it was very much architecture driven. And the kind of thinking that was going on at MIT at that time, was very west coast as opposed to east coast. And architecture schools have very defined kind of directions or philosophies or sort of social positioning. Harvard, which was just up the road from MIT, was the much more favoured popular university. The kind of thinking that was going on at that time was very postmodern driven. MIT was the opposite. MIT was a school that was almost stuck in the sixties. Social movement, social awareness and architecture to support conscience, I suppose, or architecture as an extension of the way the communities live was the basis of all of their theoretical teaching. It was the opposite of Harvard. Was much more stylistic, and it was almost by default that I came to study at MIT, but it was a base of education that I think had a huge influence in the thinking of the Constitutional Court. It was really how a building supports the way that people live and how a building and architecture can be highly influential on public space and a lot of the issues that we later then spent time exploring in our design development. So I came back to South Africa and it was a very difficult transition because I'd left a personal relationship behind in Boston, that I think my parents were quite keen that I give up. Because my choice at that stage was, do I go and live in Pakistan, do I come back where my partner was returning to, do I stay in the States, do I go to Sydney, London, or come back to South Africa? Anyway, for a whole lot of sort of family reasons, I came back to South Africa, my parents feeling that it was time that I sort of give some time back to the family. And I did do that and, coming back to South Africa at that time, the kind of architecture that was going on here was very uninspiring. A lot of the professionals, by that stage, had actually left and gone to make their way somewhere else, for either political reasons, economic reasons; South Africa was in tough times economically. And a lot of architects at that time were working for developer-based clients. There was a lot of commercially driven work, and you know, the lowest common denominator was what the client base was looking for. Sort of popular market driven architecture, easy sell. And I went to work for the practice inaudible and partners that had been very influential through my scholar years where I had gone to work every day after school, and as a student. And I worked there for a while, but very soon, about a year after having got back here, became very involved with disadvantaged communities, and became involved with street child projects going on in the inner city of Durban. And street children had never really existed before I'd left, and had suddenly become a huge phenomena, with children flooding into towns, looking for actually better opportunities than what they had where they were raised. And so that in fact almost took over from my interest in architecture. Anyway, that led to becoming involved with building of street children shelters and introduction to a lot of NGO projects. At that time, there was...the NGO bodies were very strong, powerful and highly operational in South Africa because a lot of international funding wasn't going through government, it was

coming through the previous NGO structures. And so I left and started my own practice, together with a friend of mine, and we ended up doing a lot of work in skills development, skills training, nursery schools, community halls, clinics, those kind of buildings. But a big part of that work was actually to do with trying to bring into areas a sense of community. Because there were no services, there were no community facilities, there was no sense of community. And it was within a sort of very small broken localities that we started to work. And we worked with construction training organisations. So it was part of a much bigger structure; architecture was one small fragment in terms of being able to deliver projects. And it was...occupied us sort of twenty hours a day, we got involved with a lot of sort of grassroots building ourselves. Anyway, so that was that phase of life. And in that period is when I met my current professional partner, Andrew Makin, who was one of the people who formed a partnership with the Constitutional Court project. And we started working together as individuals, on project-by-project basis. And we did various projects for the city of Durban, also NGO funded, and it was...there were normally...there were clients that were looking to an alternative kind of architect, as opposed to the corporate practices, and it was very divided at that time, where you were positioned as an architect. You were either a corporate architect doing mainstream work or else you were a grassroots architect. And there were very defined communities of practitioners. And the grassroots architects, as they kind of were called at that time, were all people who came out of a completely different heritage, they were all involved in building in what we call the other side of the hill. Completely different kind of practice, completely different kind of design opportunity, and in a way one had a much greater amount of flexibility in exercising one's design flexibility than one did within a corporate market where you were representing corporate ideals and ambition, within a very market driven idea of what architecture should be about within a sort of postmodern stylistic environment. So something very unappealing to where we were coming from. So Andrew Makin and myself and a few other individual architects got together and we shared an office, we shared overheads, but we work primarily as individuals collaborating on a project-by-project basis. And at this stage...and I suppose that was really when I started to feel that I'd settled back and committed to being in South Africa, and I think that that period of transition of sort of three to four years of committing myself to working at that grassroots level was a real commitment to, okay, this is where I am going to be, and finally giving up being a part of an international, global, kind of architectural move.

Int Historically where were you situated in terms of this transitional period? Did it coincide with the country's transition at all?

JM Ja, it was...you know that was...all of that was going on at the same time so where we were positioned, in a way it was kind of very isolated and insular, but it was at the same time as the transitions had taken place of, you know, the release of Nelson Mandela, so it was a very vibrant time and a very exciting time. And in a way, we who had been sort of a marginalised

grassroots set of architects, were suddenly becoming quite mainstream. And it was very interesting because we were being approached by the corporates to come in and almost form outreach architects as extensions to where they were. So they were very busy trying to reposition themselves. We had been kind of in the right place, at the right time, as it were, completely without any intention. And so, ja, there was a real sort of shift happening within a profession that was a few steps behind what was happening in the country in terms of politics and the social dynamics. It was a fraught time for white South Africans, because people were faced with quite radical choices that they needed to make. White South Africans were flooding, rushing out of the country. So it was a very defining time and quite an affirming time. So having made choices knowing exactly that where one was positioned. But at the same time still being very insular to the broader reality of what was going on, which was just the nature of living here. So, that was sort of...when was that...sort of early...I sort of get confused in terms of the time frames.

Int 1990 was transition. '94 was elections, so...

JM Ja. So it was, ja, in that sort of mid-nineties period. We then...so what happened next...so ja, and then the competition document came out for the new Constitutional Court...

Int And that was when...?

JM That was '97, ja. And up until...ja, so...professionally, when that document came out, it was the first public competition that had been held...well, that I'd ever been exposed to in my memory of working as a profession. I don't even remember how we got to hear about it. But we at that stage were in our early thirties, myself and Andrew (Makin), a colleague, Erik Orts-Hansen who was working with us, the three of us. We'd been working on the city, that project over there, Warwick Street Bridge, had been a project we'd been commissioned to do. So we were working with the herb traders, the witch doctors, in what was called the Warwick Street Triangle, which is a very sort of grassroots development programme that was going on here. And we decided we were going to enter this unbelievably exciting competition. And, you know, to say, it was an exciting, riveting, stimulating, invigorating time being here, and being involved with the kind of projects that we were involved in. But we were working. We worked twenty hours a day, doing what we loved, architecture was...we breathed, lived, whatever, architecture. And we were individuals, we had no liabilities, no partners, we were just...our social lives, our professional lives, they were all completely intermingled; it was one thing. Anyway the court competition came along and we decided we were going to enter the competition, and Paul Wygers lived in Johannesburg, and I had only met Paul (Wygers) a few times, because I had not been at the university the same time as Andrew (Makin). So Andrew (Makin) and I had met almost by default. I returned from America, he had been practising here.

He and Paul (Wygers) were at university together and they were friends. I met Andrew, we had this kind of common connection, passion for architecture, and had done a few projects together. We drove up to Johannesburg for a weekend. He drove, I sat in the passenger seat. I mean, I can hear the music playing, my feet on the dashboard, and I was reading out the document. And I don't know if you're familiar with the document, but it's a beautiful competition document.

Int I'd like to see that.

JM Ja, I've got a copy here. It's really...it's wonderful and it's got...it sets out the architectural competition, and I think that, you know, the people that put that document together, I think it's worthwhile interviewing them. It's very particular about asking for a building that is the equivalent of the new Union Buildings. A building that can offer an identity for all South Africans that they can feel proud of and they can relate to. A building that doesn't have any pastiche references to ethno-bongo – which is a word that we use here – architecture. Which is a big thing that was going on here in architecture. So you had the corporate, you had the grassroots, and then you had the kind of in-between where people were building, as they still are, grass huts that are casinos, you know, because that's Africa. I mean it's...you know...anyway, so the document very clearly calls for not doing that kind of architecture. And for looking at, or discovering what can be a more inclusive identity as a built environment for all South Africans. So hugely challenging really because architects very often begin a project with the image, the 3D, here it is. And even now, everybody wants to have, what's the image? And even during the court process, I remember Albie saying, but where's the image that we can put out and say, this is the Constitutional Court building? And we said, there isn't one. The whole principle of the building is that there isn't a white house façade that you can look up at it and say, that's what it is. The building came out of a long process of interrogation, it's completely integrated into its context, it doesn't stand alone, it doesn't stand apart, it doesn't stand separate, it has no big, you know, big view, big image. Anyway, so that's how the process started. The long drive up to Johannesburg with Andrew (Makin) and I reading the document and we went and we spent a weekend with Paul (Wygers), and started to think through how we were going to approach the project.

**(pause in recording)**

Int And then you were saying about driving up to Johannesburg and spending time with Paul Wygers...

JM Yes. And we stayed with Paul (Wygers) and his wife Karen, who's also an architect. Paul (Wygers) is an architect. He had studied together with Andrew (Makin); they were in the same class, both from University of Natal, Durban.

Paul (Wygers) is a Durban person, so he went up to Johannesburg after finishing his degree, with Karen, because his wife was based in Johannesburg. And Paul (Wygers), after doing his bachelor degree here, had gone and studied urban design at inaudible, I think, in London, and had come back all, you know...architecture was Andrew (Makin) and my thing, Paul (Wygers) was an urban designer, completely passionate about urban design, had kind of put architecture to the side. So that was when? So '97, how many years ago is that, you know? And if I look back in our relationship between Andrew (Makin), Paul (Wygers) and myself, from then to now, and the history of that, it's a beautiful, wonderful thing, the things that we have gone through and experienced together, and not to say that it's all been good because we've had rocky patches. And the Court was a hugely demanding process for us. When we were awarded the project, we were in our early thirties, at the very beginnings of our architectural career. We didn't have a practice, we operated individuals, really just doing our own things. And so it was a real time of growing up, huge responsibilities. I mean, I say responsibilities, one responsibility was having to deliver the new Constitutional Court to the nation, I mean that was one huge responsibility. And the other was, handing the responsibility of the legal contract, employing people, setting up the infrastructure to actually deliver a huge building. Where the project we'd worked in before had been a fiftieth of the scale of that project. And in a way we...so we started to work on this project and it happened over a series of months, I don't remember time frames. Andrew (Makin) and myself based in Durban, Paul (Wygers) in Johannesburg. The competition required that a team have a local architect as part of their project. So we had Paul (Wygers) was our local architect but we chose to keep Durban as our base. And that was a decision that was a good decision because in a way when they appointed us they were appointing a Durban practice which meant that we could...which is what we chose to do, carry on being based in Durban and commuting up and down, and that was basically a part of...something that the client had to take on. So the way that the project...we started to work on the project and Paul (Wygers) primarily drove the urban design component of the project and Andrew (Makin) and myself the architectural component of the project. One of the reasons, I think, why we were awarded the project was because we began with an urban design direction whereas I think mostly the other projects were designing a building. And our building was generated from a response to that urban environment. And I'm sure in other interviews they will talk about the process of selecting the site for the Constitutional Court and how the site eventually came to be ConHill, and so much a part of that project was how the Constitutional Court would integrate into a regeneration of the sort of downtown urban Johannesburg. So that starting point of looking how that building could act as a catalyst, and how the building within the overall site would connect different parts of quite disparate pieces of the city, was, I think, a big part of us kind of being considered. Anyway, we worked and we worked and we worked, backwards and forwards. There was essentially four of us at the time, Andrew (Makin), Paul (Wygers), myself, and our colleague Erik Orts-Hansen. Erik was part of our Durban team. Between the first stage of the competition, the second stage Erik (Orts-Hansen) went and moved to

the UK, so he didn't continue to be a part of the process. So, ja...and that was the beginning, I suppose, of this kind of long history of working together with other people. And working together as architects is quite a complicated process because architects have almost this ego is a word that you always kind of connect directly with architects. And to collaborate in the design process, I think the reason why it happened so seamlessly between us was directly connected to our process of working, that it was a process driven architecture. So there never was a big idea. So it was never about one person putting forward, what's the idea, what's the concept? The building arose out of a constant interrogation of a thinking about the brief for the Constitutional Court. Which is why I come back to what the document was about, because the document put forward a brief that consisted of the traditional physical accommodation, how many rooms, how many people, how big, and that was driven by Public Works. So very particular about the hierarchical, spatial requirements from a judge, to a messenger, to a driver, to a research assistant. So that's the pragmatics of the brief. But far more significant and far more directional, was the other component of the brief, which wrote out the purpose of the Constitutional Court as a nation serving building, in terms of the pragmatics, but in terms of its meaning, at that place in time. And into the future and relative to our history. And we were of a generation that positioned us really to a huge advantage to be able to tap right into what those issues were. Because we were that generation, we felt it, we believed it, we were embracing it, we were waiting for it, we had supported it, all of those things. So we think we had a huge advantage over the international submissions, who really...you know, it was another project, they didn't feel it, they didn't believe it, it wasn't in their hearts and souls like it was for us. And relative to maybe some of the other South African colleagues who were entering we were young, we were hungry for this project, we just believed in it, and in a way it represented our future commitment to living in South Africa, which we were at the point in our professional lives of making. So that was a huge part of us committing the next, however many months, every waking moment to the discussion of this. So you can enter a competition and it's a process of just delivering the work. For us there was huge amounts of extended times of conversation. and the conversation was driven by the three, sometimes four of us, that were involved in the project, but involved much broader communities of people that we were involved with, you know, socially, professionally. So, we operated out of a little garden apartment, which was next door to where I lived. So it was a residential environment, people came and go, it was open almost twenty-four hours a day, we smoked like chimneys, we drank twenty cups a coffee a day, we ate chocolate, people brought us our supplies at all times of the day, of the night as we were completely immersed in this project.

Int And this was in Durban?

JM And this was in Durban. And the project, as I say, it was a building but it was a much bigger thing than a building for us. And I think at the time the thing that enabled us to do it, was because we were so immersed. We actually very

seldom pulled back and looked at this in terms of, as I said earlier, the responsibility of delivering this to the nation. We interrogated architectural principles of public and private relationships and how building form represented a relationship between public space and private space. And the brief of the Court, as I say, as an extension of the kind of things that we had been studying at MIT, which is a lot to do with how one is as an individual relative to one's community, and the build-up from an individual to a community, which is so much about what the Constitution is about, was so much about the ideas which we were talking about in our architectural profession. So, the ideas kind of developed slowly over time. Paul (Wygers) was in Johannesburg, we were in Durban, at that stage it was all fax. I had bought my first computer at MIT and I was way ahead because I had the first Mac. In fact, if you look at Steve Job's biography, the one on the front book, that's the Mac that ran that whole competition for us. I mean, we didn't have huge big fancy computers, so it's a very different kind of infrastructure that delivered that project to what we have now. And, ja, we communicated by fax, Paul (Wygers) focusing, as I said, on the urban design, but very seamless communication. We went up there and he came down here, and at the same time we were running our other projects in the office. Anyway, so we worked, we worked, we worked, we put this thing together, our friends supported us, they loved us, they came and they fed us and they did everything that they needed to do, and we sent in our project, and I remember sitting up in the office and the telephone call coming through from the person that was the co-ordinator of the project telling us that we had been shortlisted. So it was a two stage competition, which meant that they, from, I think there were about fifty-two...I can't remember the number of entries, but a lot of entries from all over the world. I think fifty-two countries, a hundred and something entries...a hundred thirty entries from over fifty countries. And they had selected, shortlisted down to, I think, five of us. So even now when we speak with Paul (Wygers), because we still work with Paul (Wygers) on on-going competitions, I remember him saying, if we're going to do this, we're going to do it to win. It's the only reason to do it. And we then started our second phase of the competition. And after the first phase we had an adjudicator's comment, and one of the things that they had wanted was they wanted a building that had a greater sense of gravitas than what we had presented. And various other components. Some of their comments we took on board, others we challenged. And in fact were challenged again once they had awarded us the project. One of the primary challenges was how we had to locate the primary functions of the building. Which is getting into much more detailed design, but...when I sort of say that the urban design position directed the way the building was, it was to place the building in the public realm completely. And to place the actual court chamber in the midst of the public realm, which was to make Constitution Square, which didn't exist, and to say that this actually was what the Constitution represented. So, in going between Braamfontein and Hillbrow and crossing through a public space, and making a place where people could gather freely, at that time was a new notion. So now it seems, oh, well, you make a public square but by making a public square at that time, is making a statement. At that time people were arrested for loitering. You

couldn't assemble in groups of more than two or three people. So those were issues now that kind of seemed quite...you know, you would never raise them as part of an architectural concept, but back then it had great meaning to people and still now stands for something. So the first move was to make a Constitution Square. Our second move was to place the Court chamber in the midst of that square, to give it to the people. and to make it feel that you could wander into the Constitutional Court chamber on your way between work and home, you could go there for lunch, you could stop incidentally and listen to a court hearing for ten minutes and go about your way. To make the judges feel that when they were going through their business day that they were interacting with the people that they were serving. So very fine and very different to the majority of how other courts work around the world. So those kind of discussions had arisen out of our debates over days and days of, how do you locate...where do you locate the library, the admin, the judges' chambers, and the Court, all the different functions of the Court. So the primary planning of how the building worked and the logic and the organisation for us...it's the same process of how we work now: you start at the very beginning and you just ask yourself a very simple question, you give yourself a first very simple answer, and that's how the court building came to be. So, at the time, we just took things step by step by step. If we'd looked at the big picture, I think we would have been so overwhelmed and intimidated and terrified about what we were taking on, we dealt with it and those very simple pragmatic questions, where should the court chamber be? Where should the library be? What's the logic of how the administration works? Where's the public circulation routes within the building relative to the public spaces outside of the building? And wanting for those to be as seamless as was possible for the Constitutional Court and all the security aspects that were a part of it. So the design process, in terms of how we communicated, were so easy and seamless because we all followed or shared the kind of like logical principle of design development. So a process driven design as opposed to a product driven design. And even now in architecture I think that's the first kind of path, or fork in the road, that architects would take in terms of how you respond to the job as an architect. And so the project sort of just developed on from there. So when we got our feedback from the judges, the gravitas was one of the big comments, and they wanted us to rethink the primary positionings between where the court chamber was and where the library was, and we went with how we had originally presented because we believed in that first move that we had made. When we submitted our second submission, it was a very arduous and complex process. We had to produce a document and that document set out our belief and our understanding of the project brief, in terms of that theoretical or philosophical or ideological whatever brief. And we presented that. The individual and the collective, unity and diversity, so we made a list of principles which we thought the Constitution represented and we interrogated how building and form could represent those same ideals, literally and experientially. So, there might be a whole lot of judges, each one of them is there as an individual but they are there as a collective. And how does one represent that? And it goes down to the detail of designing the judge's Bench, and the vanity in front of them, and

having the hides in front of it, like what those hides represent. And those hides come from traditional leadership, with Zulu kings having hides over their knees. And how do we translate that into a contemporary twentieth century, kind of respectful representation of a way of culture being, that can bring associations to a much broader range of the population, than it just being decoration. And that was, ja, that was, I suppose, one of the big challenges, is how does one...how can one connect into the range of cultures that we have in this country in a way that's not patronising, that's not superficial, but can have depth and a longevity beyond that time of making those decisions. So the ranges from urban design to architecture, down to the detail in those little inaudible or a marking on a stair, consumed us for, you know, five years. So anyway, the project, we won the competition, and it was unbelievably exciting for us, you know, for us, for our community, for Durban, for our friends, for our families, it was the most incredible...I mean, I get all choked up thinking about it now still. And going to Johannesburg for the award ceremony, Nelson Mandela was the man that came and shook our hands, it was a huge event for us. For me. All of our parents came to the awards ceremony. We knew beforehand. So they had this function with the five different teams there. We knew that we had been shortlisted...we knew that we had won, and they'd actually wanted us to meet the adjudication panel prior to making the final award. And the reason for that...and so we went to Johannesburg, and we met with Albie in his office, and I mean, can you imagine for us, we'd all read his books, Albie Sachs, I mean, you know, the whole world thinks that he's a hero. And there we were sitting in his office, the honour was mind-blowing to us. And I think that the adjudicators were quite taken aback at...I think first of all they were delighted it was a South African team that had won. And then a bit taken aback by our youth, although, you know, at the same time we had less baggage that we were coming with. And the issue really was is that they wanted to give us...appoint us as the architects but there were a few things they wanted us to reconsider, and would we agree to go forward in a consultative process together with the adjudicating panel? We would have said yes to anything at that point in time, so we did, we agreed. And, they wanted to ensure that we went forward, because often what happens is between a competition award and a final product, there's a big diversion. They wanted to ensure there was going to be continuity at the same thinking because of the inevitable design development. And when you look at the competition scheme, you look at the current scheme, they are the same scheme but they are different. So if you look at the...they've got computer generated pictures, they are different. If you look at the plan diagram, the relationships between things, it's exactly the same layout and set of relationships. And there was a huge amount of...I mean, we interrogated everything in that process of design development. And we worked together with the building committee, and that I think was one of the most enjoyable processes or components of having won this competition. We had intimate interaction with Albie (Sachs), with Kate O'Regan, who, you know, she was brilliant. And the other judges that formed part of that committee.

Int Who were the other judges, Janina?

JM So there was Kate (O'Regan), there was Albie (Sachs), there was (Arthur)Chaskalson, although he wasn't present so much because he was under a lot of pressure. Pius Langa was on the committee, also came and went. We had...

Int Yvonne Mokgoro?

JM No. Now you see, this is where I will have edit it out, because this isn't good that I'm...it will come to me. Three other judges, all intermittently involved. And interrogated everything. So for us, at that young stage, coming and having to go through and present ideas, from the big picture down to the small picture, the layout of the court, as an example, where the judges sat, we actually marked things out. The debating was incredibly stimulating. We'd talk about an idea, we'd come back to the next meeting, and let me tell you, all those judges, they'd gone away, they'd done their research, they came back with a whole other take on it, educated to re-engage with that debate. So it was a very thorough process, and for us hugely enriching. And you know, the idea is that we had been able to explore in the competition process and that's what competitions are for architects. They are opportunities to explore responses to architecture that has an influence way beyond just that building. But that process of interrogation, exploration, that we had with the judges...and you can imagine the level of the debate, and it was light, it was light and serious at the same time...has influenced all of our work to this day. It's almost like if you look at our work that we're doing now, there's a continuity, from pre the court, because the court came out of ideas that we had started to think about at university. It's been a continuation all the way through that. The relationship between buildings and landscape, public and private, collective and the individual, unity and diversity...the same things we talk about again and again. ja, it was a hugely stimulating process and we just loved it.

Int Janina, I'm very curious about the fact that on that adjudication panel there were people of international stature, as I understand it, and I wondered whether you could talk about some of the feedback you'd received at that award ceremony, your memories of that award ceremony?

JM Yes. In a competition process, one of the first things one does when one decides to enter competitions, you look who the judges are. because, you know...first of all if you know them or you're going to look it up, because you'll know what they stand for, what they believe. The international judges were Charles Correa and Geoffrey Bawa. And if you look at our bookshelves here, we have their books. When we were at university, they were the architects that our universities put forward to us as precedent in their studies. Other

universities wouldn't have looked at their work. So that was like the first, okay, let's tick the boxes, because these are architects who support the same point of references and frameworks that we are striving for. So, that was a great honour to be able to think that these were people that were looking at our work. Geoffrey Bawa, from Sri Lanka...and they are highly respected international architects at the top of the global profession...Geoffrey Bawa, who has since died...and I think, who Albie (Sachs)...Albie (Sachs) has formed quite a close relationship with both of them in their travels. He died not that long ago. We never met him directly but we communicated with him. And Charles Correa, also in a funny way, had a very strong relationship, he taught at MIT, backwards and forwards. So, ja, I mean, there were...you know, it's like when...at that stage in our lives it's like having...communicating with a guru, you just sort of sit and nod your head and smile and sort of, you know, too nervous to say much, but...and also on the panel were two local architects who'd been part of the adjudication process. One of them, Herbert Prins, who remains with us on the building committee to this day. I don't know if you're interviewing him, but he's been very involved with the heritage component of the court. And Willie Meyer, who was sort of from a bigger corporate practice. Ja, and they were involved in that on-going process of that design development. So parts of the interrogation and representing the judges to us. The judges felt that they needed some people within the profession who could interpret what we were saying, and almost look at the drawings that we were showing. They could have very strong dialogue about the ideas. And then there was, well, how do the drawings represent, illustrate those ideas. So we didn't always share...the architects that carried on as part of the design process, we didn't always share the same thinking that they did, so the debate, the discussion between us and the judges, but also us and the other architects...and there were time where we came to loggerheads and it was a...the judges in a way, became the adjudicators. And we went forward in a positive route all the way. The only kind of conflicts that really arose in that process were between Public Works and ourselves. And I think the Public Works Department, the whole process was completely foreign to them. These were people who'd been there for a much longer period. The architects within Public Works, I think, Gerard Damstra, who's still with the Department, he was very supportive, and throughout the process was very supportive, and I think excited by the process. But for the project managers within the Public Works, first of all that we had such influence as architects, and in fact, that the judges gave us, in a way, such a powerful position relative to them, was a difficult relationship. The project also nearly stopped, or came to a halt, at various times along its way, for a number of reasons. One of them being is that in the brief and in the project definition, there was a budget for a building, but the building stood on a site that was a no-man's land, that was derelict buildings, prison buildings. There was no means of access, there was no servicing, and nobody had accounted for the bigger cost of the site development relative to just the footprint of the building. So there wasn't funding and the project stood somewhere between national government, provincial government and the City of Johannesburg. So there were those kind of other dynamics going on all the time. And then there was the political dynamic happening between the

judiciary and the Constitutional Court, and the Constitutional Court positioning itself relative to the judiciary. There were a lot of other components that became a part of it. And for us, at a personal level, here we were, three, early thirties architects, having to now employ a whole lot of people, buy a whole lot of equipment, handle an income flow which we were completely unfamiliar with. My father who at that stage had just retired, and his secretary had been a secretary for decades, they came in and worked for us as kind of consultants to help us kind of ramp up to respond to this. We were required by Public Works Department to now become a legal entity because we had to enter into contractual relationships. So on one side there was the whole design development process. On the other side, there was all the kind of contractual professional items that were taking place. We made the decision to base ourselves in Durban and not to relocate to Johannesburg. We had heard about other projects stopping and starting, and then when this project is over, where are you, etc? So, Andrew (Makin) and myself commuted to Johannesburg and back. At a personal level, that stage I was sort of in my mid-thirties, and we were all single. I don't think we had any time for any relationships, except for Paul (Wygers) who was already married. I met the person to whom I'm currently married now, Bruce Robertson. He was South African but living in Uganda. And you know, so we met and it was pretty clear that...and I met him between the first stage and the final stage of the competition, and I said to him, let's just like hold out on getting married and everything until after we've finished this building. Anyway, the building consumed the next of seven years of our life, however long it was, so we didn't wait, we actually...we did get married, and I remember the Public Works guy when he heard that I was getting married...and obviously this is after having an intense relationship with him, with communication, so he says, '*jislaik*, I feel sorry for that ou' (*laughter*). So, and this is a man who kind of wrote all his emails like in two lines, all capital letters, no full stop, punctuation, you know, he was an old school guy, that guy. Anyway, so in the time of doing that Court and being based in Durban, I got married and I had my two children. and working at that pace, commuting backwards to Johannesburg. So looking back, I kind of, not quite sure...it was demanding. But my office was next door to where I lived, so really next door, down a passage was what my commute was, so that made it quite manageable. And in the early days I used to take my babies with me to the Court and stick them under the desk, and the Court were all very supportive but it was, you know, it was still really demanding to sort of carry on as normal, as if everything's actually quite fine, I mean, you know, how it is. But you've actually been up all night and, you know, I mean, I'll never forget the feeling of sort of leaving home at five o'clock in the morning when it's dark to get onto the airplane and like walking out of that house, and just feeling that dead heavy feeling as you leave, babies sleeping in the dark. And my husband travels so he's away sort of a third of his time, so it was a very demanding time, but...so, ja, life was full-on for us over that period. Ja, so, as I was saying, the project nearly stopped quite a few times. One was for lack of funding, and then, you know, when the project started there were certain politicians who, this was their pet project. And then there was a whole repositioning and all the ministries changed and Jeff

Radebe, who was the Minister of Public Works, he moved somewhere else and everything changed. New people come in and they've got their own set of projects which become their priority projects. So those were on-going dynamics, which also were very difficult. And it was only through the will of the judges at that time that made it happen, and they fought that battle, and you'll hear about those battles I'm sure in their stories. But they fought that battle for the court, they fought the battle for us. They believed in us and gave us such unbelievable support, you know, through those years, never wavering in their commitment to delivering the building as it was originally envisaged. Because there was a lot of pressure to change dramatic components of the building. So the project was an architectural project, and extended to an urban design project. It then...one of the kind of conceptual things that we wanted to put into the building, was we wanted, although we were the architects we felt that there needed to be an integrated art work program. And when we called it integrated and there was a whole debates of, when you say art work, what does it mean? And we were very against, at that time, a lot of kind of pastiche ethnic applications onto buildings to make it look as if it was African. And in the broader profession, not only architecture, in fashion, jewellery design, architecture and all the design kind of disciplines, and even today it continues, so what's our South African, what's our African identity? And we've become so complex about what's the answer to that question? Ten years on from democracy, what is our South African identity? And so those were big discussions that were going on at the time, and for us we sort of avoided that as a topic because identity for us was something it takes decades to become. You don't just...you can't just make it. And there was quite a lot of building going at that time where murals and surface applications were being put onto buildings and we wanted to involve artists and crafts persons in the building, but we wanted to do it in such a way that it was integrated. And by integrated, that elements of the building would be, firstly made by others, and it actually started in one of our discussions where...because Andrew's (Makin's) father...all of our parents come from a crafting background. And in one of the discussions we talked about our parents making some parts of the building, being able to contribute to it, you know, as an integrated part of the architecture. And then that's how it developed into, well, why don't we get artists and crafts people to carve the door, or put in the tile on the side of the step, or do things that are required by the building. To promote that to Public Works itself, because how do you budget for that, because you can buy a door for x amount, and now an art work door is going to cost x plus. And that's where Albie (Sachs) just kind of came completely into his own and he basically went on a road trip. And an Art Works Committee came into being, and collected all this additional funding that we could supplement the artwork budgets for. So from our side, we're designing a building, we're handling budgets, we're having to handle the budgets, we then went through a whole completely separate process of writing, of making mini competitions for what we called the art work sites. And it was like a whole concurrent program because the judges, they bought into this idea, and as an extension of that they decided, you know, we were promoting that the furniture, the tables, integrated furniture needed to be one idea. You couldn't have somebody else

or Public Works coming in and now putting their stuff. So this continuity between City, site, urban site, building, architecture, and that continuity of thinking became accepted as one of the project ideals. So we wrote all these briefs for all these different sites, and like Jane (du Rand), we wrote a brief, we had these columns, we wanted them to...what was our idea of how these things should be, wrote the brief, and then we had a separate panel that adjudicated those submissions. And then of course with each one there was a whole another kind of thinking. Some of them we didn't award because it wasn't quite right. Some of them the artists took it off into a completely different direction. And then there became a whole series of other collaborations with architects because some of the artists...Jane, as an example who did the columns, she, there was a sort of a conceptual presentation that she did. We had an idea of wrapping the columns, we wanted the columns to be still structural, we wanted to avoid the kind of complete deco...so there was that process. And she then made, delivered, implemented, physically herself put on each one of those mosaics. That was one kind of process. Other artists conceptualised the idea, but they didn't have a technical skill or ability to deliver. So we then had to collaborate with, well, how do you make this thing work? So you might have an idea, bringing in an engineer, what materials do we use? What's the actual implementation strategy behind that particular conceptual response? So each one of them was almost like a whole other project which began, and that was funded through the separate process of the art works committee. And, you know, there's that separate book that kind of goes through and introduces what the intention of integrated art works program were.

Int Is that the *Art and Justice* book?

JM *Art and Justice*. So we worked with the African Arts Centre downstairs with some of their artists. We would take, like for example, paintings from an artist and then identify a weaving workshop and get them to sort of turn that...a piece of the painting into a carpet and that carried through this idea of unity and diversity. So all the judges' chambers, which in terms of Public Works had to be exactly the same, how did we decide to individualise each one of those chambers, and give them their own character. We did it by means of the carpets and the art work. Although the furniture is all the same, which it had to be, etc, so those were sort of means to an ends of an objective that was identified right in the first stage of the competition. Finding its way, all the way through to the end. The gates through to each of the judges' chamber, it was the same thing. Each pair of gates to the different chambers is made by a different artist. Together they make up a collection. So you've got the collection of gates, the collection of art work. So it was also an idea, well, how do you take something like security and turn it into a completely different thing? There were so many ideas. Ideas of giving memory to what was on the site. You know, we demolished the awaiting trial building, which was a big decision to make the public space, and keeping the memory of that footprint and the building. And it's done in a whole range of ways. Those bricks...we

used those bricks to build the chamber. And we marked out the footprint on Constitution Square. All the prison security guards' bars are now covering the substation and they've got creepers growing on them. So everything, we sort of had different lives and different stories for a whole lot of components of what the project was about. So ja, so the building kind of went quite fluidly, I suppose, from design, design development through into construction. We worked with a really great construction team who had to get involved with kinds of building that they'd never come across before. Dealing with wacky artists, demanding architects, changing, because we did...we never...until the thing was built it was never static. We're constantly rethinking and...ja, you know, until it's built the thing has not become static. And anyway, through that process Andrew (Makin) and myself doing more and more of the building and the architecture, the precinct then became a much more defined scope of work. And Paul (Wygers) was focusing more on Constitution Square and the precinct. We sort of, I suppose, in terms of the strength of our relationship and the practices, our practice we started a separate office in Johannesburg, and Christine Paddon was somebody that we employed to almost run that practice and to drive it in terms of its production. Andrew (Makin) spent a lot of time in Johannesburg, and I commuted up almost on a weekly basis. And it was hard, I mean, financially it was a hugely demanding process, hugely committed. It was also, there was a lot of hype and kind of publicity around it. I think we handled it unbelievably well considering, you know, our youth and our inexperience, I do. And I think part...just because we were heads down and just kind of working and working. And things got a bit rocky between Paul (Wygers) and Andrew (Makin) and myself, as the project got towards the end.

Int What was that in relation to?

JM You know, I don't even really know. I think it...in a way the separation maybe between the sort of urban design components and the architecture components, was one of the issues, because I think maybe...I think Paul (Wygers) felt that architecture kind of got all the glory, and there's a building, and in fact that there was...we had to be very careful in terms of how we always presented who the authors of the project were. And the experience that we have as a result of it is that, don't trust journalists to represent anything that you say. They'll make it up as they go along, they'll say what they say, they don't check any of their facts. So it was very difficult for us. Especially, we were in Durban and he was in Johannesburg, feeling a kind of competition, who was getting what credit? How you...agh, it just...and it was...you know, also we all had personal stresses going on at the same time, which inevitably flow into this thing. So, ja, it go to the point we were sort of towards the end working fairly independently, but the project scope almost required that, and we had set up the project in such a way that there was a third party office. Now Paul (Wygers) being in Johannesburg, and that's where the office was, I think he probably felt that he had to have first...you know, he was sort of more responsible for that than we were. And we used to have management meetings and quite formal structures. Anyway, we got over that,

you know, time passes and, you know, ja...it's...you know, we're really close, good, supportive friends. Life carries on, you move on, you go through shit and you come out the other side and like things are richer for that experience. And ja, so...and I'm glad for that because it was such a hugely powerful time in our lives, that to kind of not to have it be positive and a lasting positive thing, would be a huge loss. So we share that now and it's a great source of pleasure between us. Ja, so then...what's the kind of the next component of the story? I mean, the court, through all that time, it was the same set of judges from our very beginning all the way through. There were some...you know, the diehards really being Kate (O'Regan) and Albie (Sachs) who stayed through, and they were also, I guess, the younger generation of the judges. There was a huge...and then we carried on, we get involved with the court through the building committee and through the arts committee. And then it was a huge change in the court for everybody when the last of the original judges moved on. And ja, it was a very sad time really, for all of us. I just want to get...because there was also nobody left to...who held the original kind of energy and ambition of the Court. And as new judges came on, you know, without an understanding, I guess, of the complexity of the history of the making of the Court and what it stood for, there was less appreciation for like just what we had been trying to achieve. And then for us as architects, you know, there was also a change of administration of the Court, and we in a way, rely on the administration to maintain, to keep clean, to care for, to love. And I used to find every time I went to the Court I'd start rearranging furniture, or get mortified because they'd put surface conduiting just all over the place and hadn't bothered to kind of think about what material should it be, how should it look. So inevitably now, when I go to the Court, it's with, you know, varying degrees of frustration because of that kind of, what I would call, lack of care, or that kind of a bureaucratic interventions, you know.

Int Are you still part of the building committee?

JM Building committee and the art work committee. So I go to Johannesburg every three months; we have a building committee, and then followed on by the art works committee. And it's hard because budgets are tight, the Constitutional Court also has always sat in a very funny place politically. The building is a difficult building to be in, so people love it, and it changes their lives, but I think the reality of having to live in it and work in it, people experience it very differently. So some people it's...you know, they love it, it's...they appreciate going to work in that kind of environment as opposed to a corporate down the passage into a cellular office. Other people, that's what they want. It's where they come from, it's what they know, it's what an office is supposed to be like. Then there are sort of just physical discomforts. The building relies on a natural heating and cooling system that was one of the kind of first public buildings to go in the direction of a sort of climatically conscious and sustainable environment. And, so it's not great. In winter it's cold, and it's very cold in Jo'burg. They make jokes about, you know, it's been designed by architects from Durban who never really appreciated the cold,

and I'm sure there's truth in that. So those are the kinds of things, which it's been hard and, you know, well, just put on a jersey, but it gets cold. So there have been things that we've had to do in retrospect, put more carpets down, make it more warmer. And it's a question of style, how much hard concrete can you take? For us, that's the very meaning of it, it's not...you know, it is a hard building. Other people want to sort of cover it up. Even in the art works committee it's like, how much decoration can there be? And there's different views of you should actually need to pull it back a bit, and it's becoming a bit overwhelming and dressed up, as opposed to keeping some surfaces free for relief. So there's all those kind of things that are on-going.

Int I'm also very curious in terms of the slew of books that have come out since the court building was inaugurated, and I wondered whether you could talk about your association with those publications?

JM Ja, okay. I'm just looking here, I want to sort of just say who the judges were that were part of that first committee because this is the...we had, as I said, (Arthur) Chaskalson and Pius Langa, Judge Laurie Ackermann was wonderful on that committee. Very engaged with the debates and discussions, very open-minded. Because I think it was all completely new and foreign for him, but he brought sort of great pleasure and dedication to the process. Judge (John) Didcott was very ill at the time so he was very uninvolved. (Richard) Goldstone was on the road, he was travelling. And then Johann Kriegler was the other one who was just fabulous. So, you know, besides the judges I mentioned earlier, it was (Johann) Kriegler and Judge Ackermann who were wonderful. And also light-hearted, ja, and gave great...ah, and of course, Yvonne Mokgoro, she was on the committee, and then on the art works committee, also beautiful woman. Kate (O'Regan), and Andrew (Makin) and Paul (Wygers) had a really soft spot for Kate (O'Regan). I think on the first time we met her she had a broken arm from rollerblading and that earned her huge points in our initial meetings. So ja...Johann van der Westhuizen, he heads up the art works committee now, so he came in, as the other judges retired, he came in.

Int And who's part of the building works committee that you liaise with now?

JM Judge Cameron heads up that building committee. So he took over from Kate O'Regan. Kate O'Regan, she...I mean, she really undertook to try and preserve everything that that Court stood for. In terms of writing documents, putting it into the constitution of the Court running. Giving us huge...I want to say sort of authority but positioning us relative to the administration in such a way that there needed to be consultation. So the forum of the building committee and the art work committee really became a forum in which the architects could position themselves and have some space, because of that turnover. And, you know, bureaucrats are bureaucrats. I mean, I remember the first time going to the court and somebody had got a contract for those

things that spray sweet smelling stuff as you walk, and you'd walk down the passage and every ten metres you'd get this kind of poof of this dreadful smelling toilet spray throughout the court. It was everywhere. So those were kind of things that just...that come in, you know. I remember the first meeting with Cameron...Judge Cameron on the building committee asking for the removal of all of those items. So having the support of the judges, in terms of trying to maintain what the Court needs to be, is huge. And it's becoming harder and harder.

Int It just sounds incredible that...and I'm not sure whether that's the case for every project you work on, where you've actually developed this building, designed bit by bit, it's built, and you're still so involved. I mean I hear it within your voice.

JM I mean, it was such a critical...it has been such a hugely critical part of our personal lives and our professional lives, and it came at such a fundamental time for us. And the experience of being exposed to these judges and to...the opportunity almost to...the court was a vehicle for us to explore so many other ideas about who we were, what we believed in, what we felt, how architecture represents those things. In a way that as a professional, it's a huge privilege because very, very seldom in projects does one get an opportunity to have a project that can reflect one's beliefs beyond just aesthetic or form. So, ja, I mean, it's a really defining thing for all of us in our lives, which is why I'm so grateful that the three of us remain such...you know, so connected in each other's lives, because...

Int You have memories that you share...

JM Ja, ja.

Int Janina, I was also wondering you mentioned winning the competition, and the awards ceremony, and I wondered in terms of the actual inauguration of the building, if you could share your memories of that event?

JM Ja, I mean, the inauguration, Mr Thabo Mbeki inaugurated the building. And one of the things when you design a building is that you have this sense of ownership, and even in other projects we always mutter to ourselves that when we design someone's house they should really let us go and live in it, or have holidays there whenever we want. Because we were the architects, and of course you design these things and you never get a chance to experience them. So it's a kind of a very strange relationship and especially when you give it your everything, you're completely committed to it. And even though in theory we had this thing where we were the architects but we wanted the building to be contributions by a whole range of people, you know, inevitably you also feel this kind of tugging when you've got of sort of let go of parts of it.

So when it came to the inauguration, by the time the inauguration happened and the time, you know, it had been whatever, five years, I don't even remember what year the inauguration was, the community that contributed to the court and to ConHill, because Constitution Hill started to be developed in parallel, and that in itself was another huge project going on with a team, Heritage, Education and Tourism, they were called. Have you had...?

Int Not yet.

JM And they were a critical component to putting the project into the public realm. And making the public exhibitions that are on the court, etc, and so there's a whole other community of people. So this thing that started off with just really being us, which had been a very intimate relationship between us and the judges...it was us and the judges and then kind of Public Works and the rest of the world out there making it happen. And of course the JDA came in, which I haven't talked about before, and the JDA and Graeme Reid, who headed up the JDA, in fact saved the project with his negotiations between province, City of Johannesburg, and the court. And Graeme Reid was a critical person to having the vision for the Hill, over and above just the court and making that happen. So coming back to the inauguration. The inauguration was really the celebration, the kind of pause and the celebration. And in the briefing of the building, they call for the...one of the challenges of the building is to remember the past and to kind of feel the gravitas of the past. But for the building to really be a celebration of an accomplishment and at the inauguration it was a celebration of that. So it was a...it remains vivid because of the way that it was that way and because of the vast community of people that were present there and not present, who had contributed to the building. And so the building was just, you know, a symbol of like one particular event along the way. But even things like, you know, there's a choir at the court, and having the choir sing at the inauguration. I mean, that in itself, it's not some third...it's the staff of the Constitutional Court who obviously existed from the Constitutional Court in the previous office building, Braamfontein just across the road. So all of those people, who all of us having completely different intimate relationships with the court and its coming to be, and the inauguration was really kind of, okay, alright, all of these people, they...each one of us had the sense of ownership and entitlement to like some component of what made this building up. And that was, ja, it was a powerful time.

Int It also sounds, from what you've said previously, that your parents and everyone else's parents on the team had become a real part of this project, which is unusual.

JM Ja, I mean, I think that's why our parents, you know, like the honour of having your child be the architect of the Constitutional Court was huge for them. And ja...and I think for all of our parents in different ways, had all made very

different sacrifices in their lives, to give us the opportunities in our education that we had all had. Which were all very different, but ja...I mean, they travelled that road with us, and maybe my parents most of all...maybe because I'm a girl, so I'm closer to my parents, or they live just up the road, or the place that we had our office, they lived there. My dad was very much a part of helping us to set the structure up initially. But ja, it was considered hugely valuable. And, you know, Durban, there was this little community, people were really proud of it, and the process of involving so many more other people really made a community of those who were involved. So, other projects we're involved with here are very isolated and no-one really knows, people say, so what are you involved with, and you tell them what you are doing. And people say, you know, so what you are involved with? And you'd say, we built the Constitutional Court. I almost sort of said it in a whisper because I became self-conscious about it, because it just seems so unreal. And even now I sort of laugh at my husband because...or my children now, I mean, what does your mom do? She's an architect and she designed the Constitutional Court. And I say, well, I was one of the people that designed the Constitutional Court so they can understand what it's about. I don't think they even really grasp what the Constitutional Court is about, but they...

Int And they know it's important...

JM They know it's important, and they know that they went up and down. They know that they were like screaming underneath the judge's table and I had to kind of, you know, do my whole thing, so...ja, it was good.

Int Janina, before we stop, I was really curious, you mentioned at some point your concerns in terms of the current state...the original judges leaving, and the current judges perhaps not understanding the complexities of what had transpired. I wondered in that vein, whether you had concerns for the future of the art works, the building, and the Constitutional Court which itself in South Africa, for the public life of the nation?

JM Short answer...Yes. I mean, it's so loaded, I mean, all those different aspects and one is like, who are the judges and how are they being appointed and all of that's like one complex, you know, political and...and then there's the...and I suppose that's the more later one because...but the first one is, I suppose the transition of the judges, you know, when Kate (O'Regan) left it was, ah! and everybody, at the time was aware, because Kate (O'Regan) was such a powerful..., and she made things happen in a way that was gentle and firm and unwavering. I mean, I have such huge respect for her, and she cared about the small detail, understanding of the small detail ended up being what the big picture was about. And she was the last person to move...Yvonne (Mokgoro) and her were the last people to move out...

Int And Albie (Sachs)..

JM And Albie (Sachs). You know, Albie (Sachs) became very involved with just the art works, but Yvonne (Mokgoro) and the majority, Kate (O'Regan), they held the court, and in a way that is more important. The art works can kind of go and we had Jane (Lane) for continuity and other people could come in, so I wasn't concerned so much for the art works, and by that stage the art works committee had serious funding problems and Albie (Sachs) had kind of moved on, so the art works was a...and the art work will have its own life, it comes and goes depending on what its budget is, and at the moment we really just sort of manage donations and what's there. But the building, on two different levels, the one is like in its original form, and things like new...and we had...okay, there was a certain kind of furniture that was in the court. New judges come in and Kate (O'Regan) had this...they introduced the policy you couldn't select your own furniture, you took...judges in there kind of whatever, they're allowed to have new furniture coming in, so then you had each judge bringing in what their idea of furniture was for the court. And, you know, as an example, one of the discussions at the briefing stage of the court was, does each chamber has its own bathroom? Because in the public works hierarchy, a judge's chamber came with its own bathroom. And this was a discussion that happened and debate around with the judges, and they made the call that they would not have their own bathrooms per chamber, they would use the same bathrooms, which were restricted to their researchers and their secretary. Now that debate is emerging again, because there's a whole new...there's a new set of judges, new principles, new aspirations, they want...well, it's, if you're a judge you get your own bathroom. And with that you get your own choice of table. So instead of it being like the...you know, we designed a type of furniture that we thought was appropriate, and then you'll go and you'll see...it started off with curtains, huge brocaded embroidered lacy, you know...and then it moved into the furniture, so, you know, the more status, the more ostentatious, the more whatever, can be reflected on the furniture. So those are the kind of things, which are sort of heart breaking in a way because they represent a change of culture of judge in the court, and a change in the understanding of the meaning of between now and at that time, of what the Constitutional Court judges represented. And at that time, the Constitutional Court judges that are part of the original, they came out of struggle. Maybe these judges also came out of a struggle but with a completely different kind of end objective. And those are the things, I think, which are probably, you know, they're depressing. Then there's the other thing which is, trying to maintain the building in its purity which means stop putting cabling all over the place. Don't come in and rip this out and put that in. These carpets were a part of...and they are art works. You don't go into a basement and roll it up in a corner, getting sopping wet from some leaking something, is one of the carpets that was produced as an art work programme. So those are the things, which are tricky in the court now. And with all due respect to the judges who are trying...the building committee particularly, because I think that's where the challenges are, not in the artwork

committee. Artwork committee is survival from a funding, so it's that...but the building committee it's kind of trying to reign in administration, bureaucratic administration. And they have their own set of challenges, which is budgets and procurement policies. I mean, trying to get light fittings as the same light fittings, and the procurement policies to getting it, I mean it's...every time I come back from Johannesburg and I come in here, Andrew (Makin) sits, he says, okay, I'm listening. Because I have to just...I get so frustrated, and it's so disheartening and every time for the last so many years I've been coming back and saying, I'm out of there, it's like it's pointless, it's hard for me to go to Johannesburg now, I've moved on, okay, but, you know...initially it was, okay, we owe it to ourselves, we owe it to this process, we have to keep on going. And every time a committee meeting comes up I say, you know, really, it's like, is there any value in it? And it is value, I mean, from the original committee there's myself and there's Herbert Prins, who's another architect. And Herbert Prins held and shared that vision along...he was a part of writing the document of the court. And very well respected, and, you know, fighting the small battles along the way. How much crap do you put on the walls and what kind of gold splintered ornate frames do they sit and it tells an evacuation kind of procedure for fire. You know, the kind of arguments for things that you are trying to hold on to are so unimportant but in fact they represent a much sort of bigger changing of ways. So I do wonder and I've kind of had this thing, so in ten years time, or when my children get to the stage where they can appreciate what the Constitutional Court represents, not as a building but as a part of a whole kind of struggle journey of decades and centuries, when they go there, what will be...how will they experience it and what will they see what will be there? You know, I don't know. And I think of different places like the Union Buildings or other sort of buildings of national importance, and they have the same kind of challenges, and when I go there, do I look around and kind of see all the superficial kind of degradation or lack of maintenance or lack of care? Constitutional Court maybe just sits in a very particular place in history and place in my heart where it's a funny building because it's a public building, but it's also a personal building. And I think that was one of its strengths at design conception, and the implementation, and the process of design development, along with those judges. It was a public building to represent personal journeys that everybody went through to achieve a collective end experience. So, I don't know. I mean, when they said that you were doing...when I heard from Elizabeth (Moloto), I thought, okay, that's interesting, it must be Albie (Sachs) and Kate (O'Regan) who are motivating this, partly because it was through Elizabeth (Moloto) and...because they...I can't imagine that anybody within the existing court structure would really care about this process, because this process is historical to them. Whereas, you know, those people, they can still understand, like what it takes to the process of getting these letters in this design on to this façade on the building, the thinking that went behind that, there's a whole story just held in that design decision. Why this does this, and so it's so laid and so rich...maybe we're too close into it to know or care and at the end of the day what counts is the experience of looking at that façade. But that all the languages are represented here, that these are the colours of

the South African flag that it's kind of connected to an idea of how Zulu beadwork is put together. All of those little things were part of the concept of working with a graphic designer that came out with this font, the font being collected from the broader precinct of all the street signs that are around Hillbrow, influencing this design font. I mean, there were so many things that went into the consideration of how this building could be of value beyond just, you know, a building. So it's layered and it's so...ja, and for all of us at that time it was an emotional and personal journey. So I don't know what its future is, as a court and as a building, and as a precinct. I mean, the precinct stands there, the building still stands on no-man's land after all this time, with negotiations for ownership, for development rights, who can park in the basement, who can't, how much it costs, I mean, you know, it goes from the petty to, you know, to the ridiculous. So ja, our next meeting will be next month and I'll go, and you know, it remains difficult to keep motivated to do the little schleppey things that inevitably become part of contributing, you know, finding the right light fitting, who's going to put it up? A year later you're still...three or four years later on the same agenda is the same maintenance item because whatever the reason. Procurement, budget, selection, you know...

Int Janina, is there anything I've neglected to ask you that you'd actually like to be included in your oral history?

JM Well, I guess I talked...you asked me earlier and I sort of said about the opportunity, the life changing opportunity, to have been involved in this project. I mean it's...and I look at the archives and we've collected the archive here of all the articles that were published and records that we keep, and we had at the time a wonderful woman who worked in our office, here's the brief, who collected...I mean, this project was close to her heart, Natalie Jasmine, and she collected and filed every article that came out, keeping all the references for us. And ja...and I've got my thing at home to keep for my children to show them so that they can show their children, because I think, well, you know, it's like...it's an important...you know, what we did was huge, it was important, it really was important. And ja...what an honour, and what a fluke, really, I mean, what a fluke.

Int A lot of hard work...

JM Hard work and a fluke, but also the connection of myself and Andrew (Makin) and Paul (Wygers) who I got to work with, that combination, that working relationship and the value and the strength of that at the time was potent. So I'm grateful to that, it continues, and that's great...ja.

Int Thank you so much, Janina, for a wonderful interview.

JM     Okay, pleasure.

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