

Fatima Maal Constitutional Court Oral History Project

13" December 2011

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This is an interview with Fatima Maal, and itâ\200\231s the 13" of December, 2011. Fatima, thank you so much for agreeing to participate in the Constitutional Court Oral History Project, we really appreciate it.

Itâ\200\231s a pleasure coming back, it really is. | feel so...| felt nostalgic when | walked in, a kind of sadness that | left. But absolute joy of just coming back and once again looking at the building and the artwork and looking at the things that have improved, so really itâ\200\231s a pleasure to be here.

Thank you. | wondered whether we could start from early childhood; if you could talk about your memories about where you were born, your experiences of growing up in South Africa under apartheid, a bit about your own family background, and where you think some of your inclinations to do the kind of work that you do, may have come from?

| come from an area that was called Feitas, Vrededorp. We lived there. | had at the time five siblings. The other two came later on, my motherâ\200\231s laat lambetjies, as they call them. but we lived in an area that was totally mixed. | come from, what | had assumed, Malay background, but my mother used to always say that we come from Java, rather than from Malaysia. And as | grew older | started investigating that part of my history as well. My father on the other hand...that was from my motherâ\200\231s side...my father on the other hand comes from India. His grandfather was Indian, his father was a South African born Indian, so my father was the second generation. They come from what they call the caste of Surti, or from the area in Surat, Iâ\200\231ve never been. Want to go. And Iâ\200\231ve read an interesting fact, | donâ\200\231t actually know if itâ\200\231s a fact but Iâ\200\231ve read this on the internet that the Surtis in India, theyâ\200\231re not Indian, they have Arab origination. And | havenâ\200\231t had time to actually investigate that. So it would all go back to me being really Muslim from the Arab continent. But growing up in Feitas, we were very mixed, we grew up with blacks, whites, Indians. Although the blacks lived across where we were, there was a veld, and then you find the bridge and that used to be Mayfair. Itâ\200\231s still Mayfair. And this is where the whites live. But the whites used to come over the veld and we used to all play together as children. | remember my earliest memory was going into town...those years we went into the city of Joâ\200\231sburg, to go and do window shopping. We didnâ\200\231t have malls, and | remember going and seeing black people being stopped and being asked for their passes. And | couldn't get my head around this, what is a pass and why were they only stopped? And the treatment, not just being asked for the pass but the way it was done, and | could feel as a child already that that was wrong. The treatment of these people that in my eyes seemed to have done absolutely nothing. My father

Int

FM

was quite political. He was a breadwinner. Used to talk a lot about, you know, those years, the ANC and not so much the ANC but they had all their own groupings. And I remember him sitting and trying to tune in the radio and trying to get BBC World and this and that. But, you know, those are just like little fragments of who he was. He died when I was quite young; I was seventeen. So I missed out on what life could have been with him in a political kind of way, had I grown, if he had lived. My mother was a housewife, looked after all the children. In my lifetime my mother's never ever gone out and worked outside. She comes from a background where her mom was a housewife but could sew. And (I) inherited that skill from her. So my mother used to sew for us. And we had a very comfortable upbringing. My father's mom...my father's father passed away early, and his mom inherited quite a bit of money. I remember them saying that my great grandfather used to deal in gold. Most probably illegal at the time but they would never mention that but they would say that they had property in the then very bustling 14th Street in Vrededorp. So with my grandmother's financial help, we lived comfortably. And of course came the day when we were all put out of Feitas, and we had to move to Eldorado Park.

So you were forcibly removed?

Forcibly removed to Eldorado Park. As children it was exciting, you know, we didn't know the reasons and the context. To us it was exciting because as they were building the houses...we were allocated houses, and as they were building the houses my dad used to take us through to Eldorado Park, being at the time was like going to a farm. And to us it was like an outing on a Sunday and we'd look and see the houses being built and coming up, and it was exciting because finally now we had a bathroom inside, we had a geyser, we had hot water, whereas in Feitas we were in...we were fortunate because we had two semis that was joined, but the toilets were outside, it was communal toilets. There was no hot water, my mother had a big coal stove that we used to heat water on, and we all used to bath in the kitchen. So when we moved to Eldos that part of it was very nice, the fact that we were going to have a garden, and we had hot and cold water with a bathroom and toilet on the inside, and everybody would have...the girls would have their own bedroom and the boys would have their own bedroom, and mother would have her own space, with a dining room. So ja, and then later on, as we started living in Eldorado Park, we still had to commute to school in Feitas, which was very difficult, because there were only Putco buses and you had to go all the way down to Kliptown, and from our house I think it was about five kilometres. We were fortunate in way that there were other children in the area that we got to know that also had to take the bus into town to go to their different schools. So we'd make an adventure of it. But as time grew, you know, went on, and we grew up, I could actually feel that even though we were there, it wasn't the same kind of community. You know, it just didn't have the same feeling, the nuances were different; coming from Feitas where it was just, you know, it was really closeness, people knew each other's cultures,

Int

FM

people knew each other's families, for years and years generations before. And here we had moved into Eldos with totally different kinds of people, not mixed, they were all Coloured, coloured from different places. The kind of Muslim Coloureds that all moved into the area, starting having, you know, their little mosque groups and trying to raise money for madrasas for the children, and having a house where they could make salaah and, you know, that kind of thing. Which was also nice because now you kind of like started forming a community, but on the other hand you were excluding everybody else. At the time, of course, you know, you couldn't put the words to what was happening because you were too immature. But only looking, like you could actually, you realise the feelings that you had was because of x y and z. My granny then moved from Feitas; they were also forcibly removed...they were all given shops in the plaza, and because she didn't run her own shop, she had rented out her shops below where she was living in, in 14" Street, so when they had asked her if she had wanted a shop in the Oriental Plaza, she declined because she was never a business woman. So the people that had actually run the shops or whose shops were rented from her, they got the shops in the plaza. My granny then moved...they offered her a house in Lenasia, which she refused. Then they offered her a house in Eldorado Park, which she refused, because her son moved to Eldorado Park and she refused to go and live there. So ultimately her daughter bought a place in Mayfair, which at the time was not open to everybody, it was still a nominee...you had to get a nominee to live in Mayfair, and you bought the place on the nominee's name, or you formed a CC (Close Corporations?), I think at the time, to go and live in Mayfair.

And the nominee had to be white?

Yes, the nominee had to be white. So the so-called white places that were like being opened...opening up to people of colour, I think Bez Valley, Bertrams, Judith's Paarl, all those places. So my granny went to live with my aunt in Mayfair, and we found that it was much more convenient to travel from Mayfair to work. I remember when my dad died, I went for... had left school, finished standard eight, left school, I went for an interview with my sister, my older sister, but she couldn't type and they wanted somebody to type. And it was at the South Africa Jewish newspaper. And I could type and they asked me if I'd like to do the interview and do the typing test, and I did and I got the job. And I started working there and I'd just turned sixteen...I was going to turn sixteen in that year. And I started working for the Jewish people and it was so much more convenient to travel from Mayfair then it was to travel from Eldos. So I kind of like lived with my aunt and them for a while, and then eventually I had some friends that I was at school with that also had moved into Mayfair and I'd spend time with them, and so kind of like moved out of Eldos. And the strange thing is, as years went by, everybody that we knew around us, our immediate neighbours, kind of also moved out of Mayfair. The community that formed was never really a tight-knit one, it was a community.

And | think that's why it was so easy for us to move out. Everybody around us just moved out. Can you break for a second?

(Interview break and then resumes soon thereafter)

Int

FM

Fatima, you were telling me about growing up and then moving to Mayfair, and | wondered whether you could pick up that there?

Yes, let me continue. You know, like | said, then | started working, my first job was at the South Africa Jewish newspaper, and he was such a kind gentleman and really taught me a lot. Part of me telling you this is how we moved out of Eldos and like kind of like back to the city and back to Mayfair. But also the other part of me that awakened was the fact of what was happening in Palestine and the Jews and the Muslims, and | still couldn't see it, you know, because here the two of us were working and his wife was working with me, and we had a fabulous time. He had one of these...I've never seen one like that but he had a computer...not a computer, a typewriter...those years we didn't have computers, | was doing an IBM with the golf ball if you wanted to change the font you had to change the golf ball. But he had a typewriter that he used to do the newspaper stories with, and it was in Hebrew. The actual typewriter, but it was an old black one, and | always said, you know, that would make such a beautiful art piece. And they would close...they would close the offices and then go to Israel, and then | would be on leave. | didn't stay there too long. | think | knew early on that | had more of an artistic brain than | had an academic brain, if we can say it that way, because then | resigned and | went to work for...at the time they used to take apprentices. It's not like now where you have to go to college for everything. And a friend of mine's dad, he was the only Indian hairdresser, Valentine's, that studied in Paris, and he was looking for an assistant apprentice type of thing. And when | got there he said to me, can we first start at the...like in the office? So | said, oh, okay, a bit disappointed because | wanted to cut hair straight away, | just, you know...we don't want to do the theory we just want to do the practicals. So | started off in the office and of course the money was very, very low, because apprentices never did get a good salary. But | learnt from him too by just watching. And learning about the equipment. He taught me about your scissors coming from...to make sure that your scissor is very sharp. All his scissors came from Germany at the time. And how to treat them and how to oil them, and pack them away. Your brushes had to be sterilised and things like that. And of course | was very chuffed because those years, you know, to be an apprentice was something. | remember the girls of my age those years used to go work for the bank, and | always thought, you know, I'm not going to go and work for the bank because it was just so stereotypical, if you're Coloured, you go and work for the bank or you become a teacher, you become a nurse. So the hairdressing thing was quite exciting. And then | was offered a position at a white hairdresser in Hillbrow, and also as an apprentice. So now | went and there were quite a lot

of people there. But of course, you know, | did one or two days with them and the attitude and the way they treated me, and | think from an early age, | always felt, not important, but | just felt, you know, | have dignity, | donâ\200\231t need, whether youâ\200\231re white, black, or Indian, or whatever, to be treated badly. So of course my apprenticeship with the hairdressing industry kind of like ended after two days.

(pause in recording)

Int

FM

Fatima, you were telling me about the job with the hairdresser and that that didnâ\200\231t last very long....

Yes. Ja, so, | then started...at the time, after the hairdressing story, so | had now left school, | had finished standard eight and | didnâ\200\231t go back. So now | had to work. And | went to the employment agency and they got me what...they start you off with like a temporary position so that they can see, you know, what youâ\200\231re made of. And so | started with temping, and | quite enjoyed it because | was young and | learnt a lot and | learnt a lot of systems and learnt how to deal with people, learnt what different companies dealt with. And so until eventually | landed in a job where it was a bit long-term. So that was working at the Star newspaper. So | worked at the Star newspaper in the Classifieds. But at the time | had then moved because it was the thing to do, that all young people who were independent and working and earning their own money, could then move into Hillbrow. Because Hillbrow was now open under nominee as well, and | remember getting a flat under a nomineeâ\200\231s name in Highpoint. And the nominee was my friend and she had a white mom and a coloured father. But they had registered her as white, so she signed for me and, you know, | could live in Hillbrow. And it was fabulous because everybody that worked at the time, you know, we all kind of like lived and partied and did whatever in Hillbrow. So | worked at the Star in Classifieds, and | didnâ\200\231t want to be in Classifieds because Iâ\200\231ve never ever thought of myself as a salesperson. | wanted to their, not media buying but media placing. This is where you actually place the content on the paper. And that was my goal. But whilst being there | then decided, you know, Iâ\200\231m in, like very near colleges, the city was safe at the time, Damelin was in the heart of the city, Iâ\200\231m going to finish my matric. Which | then started. | had to do it over two years because | had to do maths. And | wanted to do maths and | always fooled myself saying that | was good at maths and | could do it, so it was more of a challenge than anything else. | did the Damelin thing, but | had to do beginners maths so it wasnâ\200\231t a matric maths, so it was just an introductory to maths for matric. | passed the subjects that | did that year, but it was very convenient because from the Star to college and then to Hillbrow where | lived at the time, the buses ran quite good, so...and then Damelin offered a course in Public Relations and it was a Saturday course and the Star then said, yes, they would pay for the Public Relations course. And then they paid for it and then | did the course whilst still doing my matric. And | felt good, because you

Int

FM

know, it was like | was really doing something with my life and living on my own and yet living on my own | still went to my mom every weekend in Eldos because | just missed the family. So from the Star | then moved on and had a few more positions with advertising agencies, which | loved. It was a very volatile kind of industry, you never knew what was going to happen, there were always blow-ups and blowouts but | met, you know, all the models in the magazines, and at the time that was like very exciting for me. And then | started with the advertising agencies being interested in words and copywriting and because | could speak Afrikaans because | was at an Afrikaans school all my life, although when | went to Damelin | did it in English. And | would help with the copywriting and translate from English to Afrikaans or put like a more humorous twist, or when you say something in Afrikaans it just has, sometimes you can express yourself better in Afrikaans than you can in English. So | worked for the advertising agencies for a couple of years, still living on my own. And then | finally got a job with a friend of mine who owned a...sheâ\200\231s an attorney and she had a law company, and this was also, she needed somebody to help part-time. And | said, well, Iâ\200\231ve got a couple of hours, and I'll go and help part-time. And they had to do their accounts to IDAF at the time, the International Defence and Aid Fund. And | went to go and work part-time for her and | remember her name is...well, sheâ\200\231s still la friend of mine, (Julekha) Julie Mahomed and Hanif Valley. And they had Jerome Mthembu as their other partner. And | found it so interesting, you know, the work that they did, human rights. They did a lot of civic cases and just doing their accounts and doing it to IDAF (International Defence and Aid Fund). So they then offered me a permanent position, which | took. And that is how | ended up doing the legal kind of thing. And also being more aware of what was going on around me. Julieâ\200\231s sister, Zaiboon and | were also very good friends, and they had also lived in Mayfair, and | used to spend a lot of my time at Zaiboonâ\200\231s place. Julie was married to Yunus (Mahomed) who eventually became...| think he was a speechwriter for Mandela, but he was also in the NIA when they started up, and | got introduced to Jacob Zuma because he was one of Julieâ\200\231s clients and she had worked underground and her husband had worked underground. So then really becoming very politically aware. Knowing who the players were, knowing what was going on, following everything.

And this was before the 1990s, right?

Yes, yes. Then | got married and | had a child and went through a divorce and then eventually | left and | said, you know, | kind of like needed a break. And my sister was living in Durban and | went to her that December and | said, you know, this is actually what | need, just, you know, a break. And then | said to Julie (Mahomed), â\200\234look, Iâ\200\231m going to move to Durbanâ\200\235, so | left Julieâ\200\231s (Mahomedâ\200\231s) office and | went down to Durban and | worked for...also in a temp capacity for the City Council. And | lived there for about eighteen months. And then my son was going to turn five, and | thought, you know, Durbanâ\200\231s not going to be my home, | enjoyed living here, it was like being on

Int

FM

holiday because | lived on the beachfront, also...no, it wasnâ\200\231t on a nomineeâ\200\231s name. | lived on the beachfront on my own name, and that was in 1993. My son was born in â\200\23189...1991. He was two years old when we went down. So my mom coming to live with me and it was like really being on holiday. And then | thought, you know, my mom came back to Joâ\200\231burg and | thought to myself, my sonâ\200\231s going to be in school, | have to decide where | want to be. In Durban | didnâ\200\231t have the kind of support structure | would have in Joâ\200\231burg, so | thought, you know, it would be the best for me to come back to Joâ\200\231burg and then kind of settle here so that he can have a firmer foundation once he starts schooling. Which | then did. And that is when | moved back and bought my first house, in Mayfair. We bought a set of semis, so my sister lived next to me with her then three kids and her husband. My mom lived with me and my son. So | kind of like, he had a father figure and he had kind of like his cousins near him, so he kind of grew up with them, and it was good, it was good. My mom was there. Then | went to go and work for Julie (Mahomed) again, and | think by the time | went to work for Julie (Mahomed) again, Jerome (Mthembu) had left and he was running a branch in Bloemfontein. Hanif (Vally) had left the office and he was doing...| think he went to the UK, and he was going to do something in the UK. Julie (Mahomed) was there and it was too much | think at the time, the office was, not in disarray but | think she just needed more people. and | ended up doing a lot of things and it was frustrating, and | had a child and | couldnâ\200\231t give her as much time as | could before. So | left Julie (Mahomed) and went out job hunting, and | went for an interview at a cousin...another cousin of mine said, you know, weâ\200\231re looking for somebody, so come for an interview with us. It was an NGO and | went and | met the person that was doing the interviews, we spoke and she said to me, what we need is somebody that can speak a black language. She said youâ\200\231ve got everything else but you canâ\200\231t speak a black language, so we will most probably give the position to somebody that can speak a black language. But thereâ\200\231s a friend of mine that is looking for a person to work for...so why donâ\200\231t you go and see him, and she gave me Albieâ\200\231s (Sachâ\200\231s) number. And then | came to see Albie (Sachs) and it wasnâ\200\231t an interview as such, you know, it was like quite amazing. We had a conversation. | remember Albie (Sachs) asking me about art and at the time | knew that | didnâ\200\231t know too much about art or the styles of art. And | said to him that | donâ\200\231t like, you know, like the real old fashioned art, | like the now, like what | would term as pop art, and | like...| canâ\200\231t remember if | said to him that it has to have like a social meaning, but to me it had to be like the now. And that is, you know, what the discussion was about, and | remember saying to him, so which hand must | shake and how do | shake it? But very, you know, open and warm and...and | think thatâ\200\231s just the type of person that Albie (Sachs) was. But as | walked into the office, it was in the old building...

Braampark?

Yes, there wasnâ\200\231t a lot of, you know, the offices were like, there was furniture, but it wasnâ\200\231t like an office, it was just furniture put down. And then Albie

(Sachs) told me a bit about, not the Court itself, but just that what he would expect me to do, he had a lot of books that had to come up and to unpack the stuff and things like that. So...I was very positive when I walked away and then he said, you know, he'll let me know about the salaries and things like that, because obviously money is always important. And that is how I actually got to the Court. And I remember Albie (Sachs) said that he has...he's going back to Cape Town and he gave me a bit of background, but I didn't take in too much at the time because it was quite overwhelming because here, there's this new Constitutional Court, and there's all these judges and, you know, it's a democracy and so many things have happened and it was quite overwhelming. So eventually when they said I got the job, the one thing that Albie (Sachs) did was he gave me the salary of the clerks rather than the salary of the secretaries. So the salary of the clerks for me at the time was okay. Because the one thing that Julie (Mahomed) did do, was Julie (Mahomed) paid me very well. And when I got...and then of course Albie (Sachs) wasn't here, he went to Cape Town. I came and I worked and I remember the person that was here was Martie (Stander), and whatever I didn't know I'd go to Martie (Stander). And there was another person, a young person and she ended up being Judge Ackermann's secretary but I can't recall her name right now. And Sheryl (Luthuli), the librarian, and there was another girl that worked with Sheryl (Luthuli)...but not worked with Sheryl, she also worked in the admin office. But those were like the people that I would run to. We didn't have Internet in those days, so whatever we had to do, we had to go and do by fax. The offices didn't have fax machines, each didn't have a fax machine. There was a fax machine in Judge Chaskalson's office I remember, and then everybody else had to use the fax machine in the admin office. And the copiers were in the admin office. Which at the time wasn't difficult because this is what we were used to. I mean, today if you think about it, that I have to run to admin to go and fax something when you have instant emails, you know, then it would be difficult, but those were the things that we were used to, so it wasn't like a difficult situation, we were used to that. But it was amazing that, you know, as the court grew and so it wasn't just people coming in but it was also us getting our computers and getting our files and the types of files we wanted. And I remember Albie (Sachs) being very specific that he didn't want Lever Arch files because he couldn't deal with them really well. And I thought to myself at the time, but I'm going to be dealing with it, you know, and it would work perfectly for me. And we had these units, the drawers, but they never had the sides for your hanging files, so we ordered the sides, and eventually when the sides came we didn't have the hanging files but we had the folders that would go in the hanging files. So it was always like one thing after the other. I also remember in the first days being here, that nobody told us that we could get a state driver to collect Albie (Sachs) from the airport and take him to the airport. And I was here, and Albie (Sachs) had this little Honda, and it was strange because, you know, he was a judge, he didn't have to have a Honda, but he wanted a Honda. And Judge Chaskalson had a Toyota. And all the other judges had nice cars. Judge Mokgoro had a Mercedes I think, and Judge Langa. Judge O'Regan didn't have a Mercedes, she had a Volvo. But Albie (Sachs) had this little Honda,

and it was converted for him, not major conversion it was just handles put on so that he could control the steering wheel better on the left. And I think the gadgets were all on the left hand side in any case. So I ended up, having driven for all the years, driving without a licence, I got to the Court and I said, thereâ\200\231s no way that I was going to get into the judgeâ\200\231s car and not have a

(drivers) licence. And the Court at the time, I remember Martie (Stander) saying that, you know, being in government, you know, youâ\200\231re entitled to do a few courses and the government will pay for the other. And one of the courses they wanted the secretaries to do was something like a finishing course, you know, that kind of thing, and I said, to her, you know, I just want my (drivers) licence, so can you just motivate for them to get me a licence and pay for it? Oh, because what happened was, going back to the salaries...so the first month when I got paid, I couldnâ\200\231t pay my bond because the salary that I received at the Court wasnâ\200\231t enough. And then I said to Albie (Sachs), thereâ\200\231s

something very, very wrong with my salary. And then of course I went to Martie (Stander), and we sorted it out, and then it came back that the salary that he told me was actually the clerk salaries. And the secretaryâ\200\231s salaries were like almost a fifth of it, not even a quarter. And I said to him, you know, I won't be able to manage, even if I stretch myself very thin. And he said, well, heâ\200\231ll pay me out of his own pocket. Which he did. And I thought to myself, okay, even with Albie (Sachs) paying me out of his own pocket, itâ\200\231s going to be a stretch. But itâ\200\231s going to look so good...itâ\200\231s going to be so good to have

this on my CV, and another thing is, it is going to open so many doors for me, not in that way but just to learn. Because when the Court, the first...Albie (Sachs) was away in the December when I...no, it was the January, he was still away in January, and then he came back in February and then the court was going to have its opening. I canâ\200\231t remember the times very well, but I remember him being in charge, then being put in charge of visitors, receiving visitors, and the director of the court, and the court opening. And me liaising with communications department...Department of Communications, I think it was, and enjoying it. And helping with the actual opening of the Court. And I remember people phoning because they wanted to know how can they be invited, and this, that, the other. And years later, I went to the UK...Albie (Sachs) gave me some of his Voyager points, and I travelled on it, business class, to the UK, and when I was there I did a little trip from the UK up to Scotland on one of these Trafalgar bus tours. And I saw this Afrikaans family, I knew immediately that they were South African, and the guy came over to me and he says, â\200\234I know youâ\200\235. And I didnâ\200\231t know him. And he introduced

himself, he was a lawyer, he said, â\200\234you organised me an invitation to come to the Court. Youâ\200\231re Fatima and you work for Albie (Sachs)â\200\235. And that was just so

amazing, here Iâ\200\231m sitting on the other side of the world, and somebody knows me because I helped tell him how to get an invitation to the court. And he was with his mother-in-law and them and we had a fantastic time altogether. So that was the beginning of the Courts, sending out invitations, not really knowing, you know, where to start and how to do it, and who to invite. But of course, that was all said, but it was exciting getting involved in that part of it and also getting to know what the other departments you were working with and head office, Justice head office. And like I said, you know, Martie

(Stander) and all the girls at the time, played such an important role, they were just so hands-on with everything, and they knew, because Martie (Stander) had come from government. And I think the girl that became... just wish I could remember her name...very pretty girl, she had also I think come from government, and Sheryl (Luthuli) and the other lady was also. So they had experience with all these things. But coming back to the (drivers) licence story, so Albie (Sachs) wrote a letter and they motivated and I got my (drivers) licence. Of course, I was driving for years without a licence. And then I would drive Albie (Sachs) to the airport and Iâ\200\231d collect him from the airport, and take Albie (Sachs) if...most of the times he drove himself, but there were times like when he started setting up his flat and Iâ\200\231d take him to go and get things and...so we had...we didnâ\200\231t just have a judge secretary relationship, we had more than that. It was nice, Albie (Sachs) was a very warm person. He used to ask my opinion on things that I knew nothing about, and to me that was so amazing that he listened to it. It wasnâ\200\231t just asking because of the sake of asking, he actually listened to me. And I was really green, you know. Albie (Sachs) would always say, you know, you came here and you couldnâ\200\231t even type a letter. But he schooled me, and he was...! could go to him and ask him anything. I remember the one day I was so embarrassed because I had just gotten my period and I didnâ\200\231t know how to go and tell him that I need to go home because it was totally unexpected. And I went to him after like agonizing, but it was now just something that I had to do. And I said to him, Albie (Sachs), you know, something happened, it was unexpected, and just not knowing how to say to him, you know, and then he said, oh, thank god, I thought you were going to tell me youâ\200\231re pregnant. So to me it was like, that was just the essence of Albie (Sachs), you know, it was like making light of something he could most probably see my unease and difficulty, and then turning it and making it into something so light, that I kind of like went with a smile on my face, and thinking, gosh, you know, also the humour of now being pregnant, I mean, really now, can I now be pregnant. So that was him. And I think I just landed with the right judge, I mean, Albie (Sachs) and Judge (Yvonne) Mokgoro were put in place of receiving visitors, and the décor of the court. It was never an art collection, it was the décor of the court. Which turned into an art collection, and Albie (Sachs) bringing up the first piece, it was a Batik that he had bought and then we had to find a pole to put it on and things to hang it up, and these were the little challenges that...because there was no money for that, there was just no money, even if it meant just to put a batik on a pole, you know, that you would use for curtains, you know, there was no money for it, and even if you went to Martie (Stander) and there were money in the coffers, how would she put it into her line items, because there wasnâ\200\231t a line item for art. There wasnâ\200\231t a line item for art installation. So Albie (Sachs), you know, used to do things out of his own pocket. And I remember him saying, oh, he used to be so excited, â\200\234I met so-and-so on the plane and sheâ\200\231s offered us an artwork. Or, I met so-and-so somewhere else and sheâ\200\231s going to introduce me to an artist and weâ\200\231re going to go to the studioâ\200\235. And it was fantastic. And heâ\200\231d bring and this artwork would come and heâ\200\231d walk around, and weâ\200\231d go and walk around the court, and where will we place it, where must we place it? And I'll hold it and heâ\200\231ll walk back and then, â\200\234no, letâ\200\231s

try it somewhere elseâ\200\235. And thatâ\200\231s how it started. And slowly but surely the

walls of old building started filling up. And it was difficult to say whether people appreciated it or not. And only later on, when we started packing up the artworks, or even...| think as the artworks came off the walls, people would ask, but what happened to my artwork, it was outside...it was theirs, they had claim over it, you know, because it was outside their office. And that was so nice, you know, they appreciated it, they liked it, it was there, they had kind of like ownership because it was on their turf, so that was good. But the years with Albie (Sachs), other than the court, was also like quite amazing. | mean, we would do...! remember us doing and Albie (Sachs) would stand behind me and talk and I'd type, and | introduced him to us doing and writing down on a footnote the drafts because we would go through like twenty-six, sometimes much more, many, many more drafts then, you know...so each draft had a number, we knew that weâ\200\231d be working on the correct draft. And then of course later on when emails came it was so much easier. But prior to the email story, we did the drafts, we printed it, hard copies, circulated hard copies, and then too the other judges could see, yes, itâ\200\231s draft number ten and it was on that date, so even if you had two drafts in the same day, even if the date would not be as important as the number of the draft. But | would read these drafts and | would read the drafts from the other judges, and it was not confusing because they all wrote in such plain English that you could understand. And what | loved, what | really loved, was sitting in court and listening to the arguments, and also sitting with the clerks, the law clerks, prior to the cases, while they were discussing the cases, because with them | felt they would come together and discuss the cases and | would just, you know, listen and butt in and ask my questions, whether it was good or bad, or you know, relevant or not relevant, but | would still ask. So to get an understanding of what was going on. And then | remembered in the early days, | couldnâ\200\231t understand what they were talking about, horizontal application and vertical application. And then | said to Martie (Stander), thereâ\200\231s a course thatâ\200\231s now

being offered at RAU, then Rand Afrikaans University thatâ\200\231s now become Johannesburg University, a human rights course. And | want to do this because part of it is this horizontal application and the vertical application that still, you know, they tried to explain to me. And | went to do the course, and it was...it really opened up my eyes as to what the Constitution was really about and how the application and the implementation, how it all works. | think being a secretary, | also had then started to study law, which | didnâ\200\231t complete. | remember doing law, and Iâ\200\231m sorry that Iâ\200\231m skipping from one thing to the other, because as Iâ\200\231m remembering so everythingâ\200\231s coming back. | started

doing law, and it was the perfect place to do law. | mean, Court was in recess for six months of the year, we had a library, | had all these legal minds around me, | had people, not just the judges, but even the clerks coming from different places with different experiences, with different views. And at the time, you know, it was...the only one that had two clerks at the time was Judge Chaskalson. Everybody else only had one clerk. And it was a smaller group but very close and they would come together and discuss things and | was always, made myself available, not as far as the legal things were concerned, but we had a lot of clerks that came from other places, and | would

always say, you know, this is where you can go and live. Because Albie (Sachs) was in charge of visitors and as the visitors came they would check with me, is there a place that we can go and live, and visiting professors from another university coming to Johannesburg or whatever. And I could help that way. So I did the same with the other clerks as well. This is where this is, don't go and live there, or rather if you don't have a car, take this bus. And good relationships with all the clerks as they came, not just our clerks, Albie's clerks, but everybody else. So I kind of like got a lot from them. I remember Albie's first clerk, Malebo...and then I could like see Albie's...you know when I say brilliance, true brilliance, because I mean, he would remember a quote from a book, the actual book, and he would say to Malebo, it is...this is the author, but this is the quote. And she had to find it, and she was good because she knew what he was talking about and she knew, oh, yes, I remember that. But he would remember things that to me was so amazing, because I don't have that kind of memory. But, so the side other than the art side with Albie (Sachs) was good. He would ask my opinion on what I thought, you know, the different cases that came up, and I think that too made me more conscientious of reading documents as they came in. The other big part of being in his office was making sure his travel arrangements were good because Albie (Sachs) was invited for every recess to travel and to lecture and to open conferences and to give keynote speeches, and I know the one thing that was like a nightmare was to explain to conference organisers that Albie (Sachs), he just, this is him, he speaks from the heart, he doesn't prepare anything, he prepares a couple of notes and that's what he takes with. And conference organisers throughout the world, expect you to send them a paper before the conference. And I was put in a position where I had to say to them, he doesn't do it that way. you will have to record and have it transcribed, send it to him, and he'll edit it, and that is how he operates. But to make sure his travel arrangements and to make sure...and this another area of me learning. I mean, when you think about it, you know, I learnt that when Albie (Sachs) travels you have to what is that...is it a public holiday in that country, what is the weather, travelling from this one to that one? What is the weather in Cape Town compared to Johannesburg, you know? So lots of little things that I learnt from just doing travel things that you take for granted, agh, you're just doing travel. Getting him a very good travel agent, and making sure that he arrives and he has all his things and that it's easy enough for him to take it out and get a sense of what is happening instantly. So that part was good as well. And then of course, on the reverse side, us getting visitors. And Albie knew like I was struggling financially, being a single parent, and having to have taken that big drop in salary, and he made sure that I would do the catering for the court and gave me time to actually do the catering for the court. So we used to have all these events that Albie (Sachs) was in charge of, and I would do the catering for the court that they paid me extra for it. So that helped as well, and also not just that it helped but I also got to meet a lot of the...when we had the in-house with the ambassadors I met most of the ambassadors. We hosted Queen...oh, gosh her name slips me...you see, this is age...she was from the Netherlands, and I remember we had this very tiny boardroom, and we had a spread for her and her son, the Prince Orange, I

think they call him...Queen Beatrix, and she was like a kid, because she could help herself and nobody was going to serve on her, and I asked Albie (Sachs), canâ\200\231t please just be there so that I could tellâ\200\235...and he said, â\200\234yes, of course, come into the room, heâ\200\231s going to check with Judge Chaskalson if it was okayâ\200\235

I went into the conference room and I stood there as the caterer, just to tell them what is what. And she was just so...and I got such a beautiful letter...obviously not written by her, but from them and a photograph just saying thank you and thank you for the hospitality, and that kind of thing. So ja, and we had all these other...when the Indians gave us the books and we hosted a little thing for the books, and the Norwegians gave us money, and forming relationships with the Norwegians, and the Netherlands, of course, we had very good relationships with them. They gave us seed funding for the art collection. But over and above that, even after Iâ\200\231ve left the Court with the Netherlands Embassy, they would still call on me. I remember doing two art tours, long after Iâ\200\231d left the court, because, you know, I would do these art tours voluntarily, of course Albie (Sachs) started the art tours and I just kind of like followed his footsteps, you know. But it was easy because I really, you know, I still have a passion for the art collection at the court, and whoever I meet in the world I tell them about the court and the gifts that I give are the gifts of the art book. So, ja, so we had formed relationships with all these embassies and international people. Bongzi (Dhlomo) and I still get invited to all their dos. I formed good relationships with the Americans, even though their cultural attachÃ©s changed every year, I still have good relationships with them, with the British Council people. So that part as well. And I always looked at it, that this was my university. The other part of it was, because the court was in recess for six months of the year, I felt, okay, the salary that they were paying me, they were paying me for six months because the other six months I could really raise my son. Whilst being at the Court, in the six months that I was really working, if I had to fetch my son and bring him to the Court it wasnâ\200\231t a problem. Not just Albie (Sachs), but all the judges were open to him. Not just to my son but they had that, you werenâ\200\231t just an employee, you were a person, and if youâ\200\231re a mother, so yes, it was important that you raise your children, and if your children didnâ\200\231t have a caregiver, then of course the Court was open to that. Bring your kids. And I thought at some stage that they were really seriously with the new building, going to look, or rather get the JDA to look at creating a little creche or something, on the precinct. But they were open to that, and I remember Judge Ismail (Mahomed) knew my son, and he came...Judge Ismail Mahomed went to India, and he said, â\200\234I found your family.â\200\235 I said, â\200\234where?â\200\235 He said, â\200\234I found them right there in India, theyâ\200\231re doing very well. What happened to you?â\200\235 (/Laughs) So, ja, and heâ\200\231d always ask me about my son, and even though, you know, we were a democracy, he was very religious and he would say to me, you know, like little things, he said, you have to raise your son and make sure he does this, and make sure he does that. So...it was an absolute fantastic place to work at, and the judges, Judge (Yvonne) Mokgoro, an absolute darling. Judge (Laurie) Ackermann, he was my neighbour in the old building. Judge (Laurie) Ackermann...it was Albie (Sachs) in the corner and then it was Judge Ackermann, and then Judge (Arthur) Chaskalson. Judge Ackermann was

opposite the conference room. And Judge (Laurie) Ackermann was like a real sweetie. And whenever I had a function I would go to him because he loved wine, and he had a...it was one of his hobbies and I'd go to him, I'd say, what kind of wines? Because I don't take alcohol so didn't know much about wine.

And he would advise me, okay, so like get some of this and get some of that, and get some of that. So I had that kind of relationship with Judge Ackermann. And I remember him doing needlepoint, Judge Ackermann. Yes, doing needlepoint. And to me this was just what judges were all about, you know, they were real people. Judge Chaskalson, he was an amazing person because, I mean, for...when he became Judge President (means President), for him to have such an open office, you could walk into Judge Chaskalson's office anytime. Dorothy (Fouchie) was his secretary, she was fierce. She was fierce but she had a softer side. And I always said to myself, you know, I had kind of clashes with her in the beginning. And I said to Albie (Sachs), you know, Dorothy (Fouchie), actually she just wants people to think that she's fierce, but she's a real softie. And eventually, you know, we kind of like smoothed out our differences and we worked very well together. But even with all her fierceness you could go and ask her anything and she was very professional. And she would give you, you know, because it's work, it's professional. So that was like our corner, the way the old court was structured, was like, very, it was small, so that was the corner that we had and then of course the other side of it was where all the other judges were. And then you had the upstairs. So I always said, you know, I've got the best corner because I've got Judge (Laurie) Ackermann and Judge (Arthur) Chaskalson and then we've got the conference room, and then the kitchen was quite close, so we kind of like really had a nice little section going there. And then when I eventually left Albie (Sachs)'s office, and I said to Albie (Sachs), you know, as

the collection grew, I said to him, it's just becoming a bit too muchâ\200\235, but we

knew that the collection was like really now getting big and it had to be controlled in some way. And I said to him the one day, â\200\234why don't we ask the

Wits students, the art students to actually come and put a database of the court together...or the collection of the court together?" And we made an appointment to go and see the professors at Wits. So I went with Albie (Sachs), and we waited, and it's like a small waiting area and then like peeping through I could see lots of artworks, it was like a...most probably an office that they had turned into a storeroom, that wasn't like officially a storeroom. So Albie (Sachs) and I waited for one of the professors to come, to come and chat to us, and kind of like sneaked into this storeroom, and we saw this beautiful piece of artwork. It's now standing down in the hall. And I said

, Albie (Sachs), just ask them, ask them, ask them if we can't just house it for them where more people would see it, not to actually give it to us, but just ask them. And so we met with the professors and they were so open to the idea that their students, it will be part of the curricula, the students to come to the Court, and to do this documentation of the artwork. And at the same time we got the artwork. And it wasn't just loaned, it was given to us. And that was just

so brilliant. So we finally now got the artwork documented. So that was like the beginning of, like really, you know, this is now a serious collection, it's no longer just decoration, it's like a collection. I still remember that the first piece

Int

FM

of artwork that was bought by the Court, | think, the Department of Justice gave Albie (Sachs) ten thousand rand. Or rather the court ten thousand rand, and we bought a piece by Jo Ndlovu, a tapestry. And | said to Albie, you know, the name sounds so familiar, and then finally | got to meet Jo Ndlovu. And Jo Ndlovu | met at the Open School, when | worked there for a time during my time of building up as | call it. And | was so excited that somebody from my past had this artwork, and just somebody from my past...Colin Smuts of the Open School is now the chairperson of the Bag Factory, and | met him after thirty years...the other night they had their Chairmenâ\200\231s dinner, and | met him after thirty years. And everybody associates me with the court. They still do. And they still think that | work for Albie Sachs and they still think that Albie Sachs is a judge at the court. And | think that was the one thing that was very sad, that not enough South Africans know enough about the Constitution or the Constitutional Court or what is happening and what itâ\200\231s actually all about. When | also left and | went back to the UK on a scholarship to do an intern to be an intern at a museum. The Department of Arts and Culture in the UK has got a...

Exchange?

Exchange. Itâ\200\231s not so much an exchange but they call it an exchange and they take...it was over three years and they took ten people from South Africa. Ten for each year, and | was one of the ten in the second year. And they open it up to their museums and their galleries and they can choose who they want and the football museum chose me up in the north-east, and Preston, and | went to the football museum. And when | was there, not only did | learn, but | taught them a lot about the country. They were so amazed because when | showed them pictures of, not just the Court, but | had to do a presentation of where | come from and the country, and | gave them this presentation and | opened up with the scene that Iâ\200\231d just drawn from the internet of Johannesburg. And all of them thought it was New York at night. And so | said, no, this is Johannesburg. And then | started talking to them about the Court and my work at the Court and the things that we did, or that | did at the Court and prior to that. And they were so amazed at...and | was amazed at it too, because whilst speaking | could see, you know, that their jobs that they had were very, you know, this is my job description and this is my job, and then | thought about it, you know, and what Iâ\200\231d asked when | just got to the museum that | spend a day with everybody in the museum, to exactly understand what everybody was doing. So when | did the presentation, and I'd covered all this that | had done at the Court, and | was given the opportunity to do, not just done, but given the opportunity to do, because | also had a job description, but because Albie(Sachs) was open and he would allow me to do things that no other secretary did. Then | could see, that | had actually covered a lot of ground. And as | spent time with everybody in the museum, so | knew and | could inform them, you know, this is how | used to do it or this is how we did it. But | could inform them with security, | could inform them with storage and, you know...so | had a very good time with

them. But the other thing that they were very impressed with my presentation and it started off with when I arrived there was Museums Month, but it started off with the manager of the museum asking me if I'd do a presentation on South Africa to his school kids, or rather the school that his daughter was at, to their class. And there was like a ten year olds...their grades work slightly different, so I'm not sure exactly which grades to equate to in South Africa. And I didn't know exactly how I would actually do a presentation. So I went in and I decided, okay, what I'm going to do, is I'm going to get them to ask me questions first, so that I can gauge their level of maturity and also, you know, not knowing what their curriculum is all about, or the level that they're at. And they started asking me, and the questions that they asked me, was like cute, you know, it was like, do you have a McDonalds in South Africa and do you have tarred roads, and do you have cars? And then I had the same presentation that I gave to them and I started...I said, okay, now, I'm going to answer all your questions but I'm first going to show you and we'll talk through the slideshow. And I showed them, not just South Africa and the Constitutional Court and the buildings, but I also showed them a copper mine that looked like an ingrown...a dug out stadium. And I showed them the sun setting over Durban harbour and I showed them the sun rising over Table Mountain. So I think I converted so many of these English kids to want to visit South Africa, and I told them a bit about the Constitution, and I told them of apartheid, and it was still too much for them because they don't know that kind of colour barriers. But that was like the beginning, and afterwards I did a presentation almost wherever I went, because with Museums Month, what they had done was, each museum or gallery or area, region, had something that they gave during that time, and I'd do a presentation. And what I felt good about was that not ever having gone to university...I mean, I did the law degree that I didn't complete...but not having gone to university, a formal schooling, and always being hesitant to partake thinking that, you know, these are professionals, they've got their doctorates, their masters, where do you fit in, what do you know? And yet this was such a good experience that, as I walked in and I'd do my presentation and so the questions get asked, and I could see how much I had learnt at the Constitutional Court, how it had opened me and how it was truly my university. Because the questions I was asked by professors and people with their doctorates and things, were things that I could answer. I could also teach them a few new things. So, even though, you know, it wasn't until I had left the court that I really realised the impact and what it had done for me. But I so appreciate my time here because I just, you know, I didn't get the paper to say that I got the degree but I do feel like I've had a masters in, in not just art but just so in life. It was like truly an experience that was enriching. Still coming back here today, you know, it was just absolutely wonderful to walk into the building and have those beautiful memories. I can't think of a day that I had a bad memory or a bad experience at the Court. You know, when you work and it's a job and you think, oh, god, it's Sunday, tomorrow is Monday. I've never ever felt that when I worked at the Court, it was always, wow, you know, I'm going back to work. It was always, there was some kind of excitement, there was always something different to do, you know, something

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different to learn. And of course | met Bongi (Dhlomo) at the court, and Iâ\200\231m st
ill
with Bongi (Dhlomo) today.

Bongi Dhlomo?

Yes, Bongi Dhlomo. Albie (Sachs) had met her and he was looking for her,
and | had to find all these...phone some people to find this Bongi Dhlomo, that
| didnâ\200\231t know, | just knew from Albie (Sachs) that she was an artist, and she
had done the Biennale, the Johannesburg Biennale, but | didnâ\200\231t know too
much about her. And then of course along comes Bongi (Dhlomo) and there
was instant hit between the two of us. We just clicked, and weâ\200\231ve been
clicking ever. Iâ\200\231ve gone and worked with so many other people. When we
moved to the building, the new building, and we had Jo-Anne Duggan do the
documentation of the court and quite a few other things, Jo-Anne (Duggan)
asked me to come and work for her, and | worked for Jo-Anne (Duggan). And
then | got Bongi (Dhlomo) involved with working with Jo-Anne (Duggan),
because we needed somebody to do presentations and do work. So
my...since the day | met Bongi (Dhlomo), sheâ\200\231s been like Albie (Sachs),
theyâ\200\231ve been in my life all the time, you know. And then of course the...|
should tell you, and this is so nice, about Albie (Sachs) and Vanessa
(September). So Albie (Sachs) gets this Valentineâ\200\231s card and a beautiful
flower to go with it, and weâ\200\231re all so curious as to where it comes from. And |
just canâ\200\231t think because | didnâ\200\231t see anybody and | go to security and
ask, did
they see anybody deliver? And they canâ\200\231t remember exactly who gave it. And
| said to Albie (Sachs), but who is this? Because now this is like really, and |
so distinctly remember the card, and | always thought to myself, this isnâ\200\231t the
appropriate card to send to an older person, this card is so young and vibrant
and...you know, | just...and | was so, you know, | was so curious, it just killed
me because | just couldnâ\200\231t think because, where does this come from?
An(Sachs) | mean, Albie (Sachs)...and | think | was a bit surprised because |
saw Albie (Sachs) in a certain light, you know, he was a judge and he was my
boss and he was this mentor, but | could never see him in a romantic like a
person. | never saw that side. And then Vanessa (September) came on the
scene, and she was such a ray of sunshine, she just was just perfect for him.
And | think what...what like really also helped was Vanessa (September) was
in Cape Town, and whatever | couldnâ\200\231t get right as far as Albieâ\200\231s (Sach
s)
affairs were concerned in Cape Town, personal affairs, whether it was his
rates and tax, or water and lights, Vanessa (September) was there to help.
And | would phone and say, â\200\234Vanessa, can you help?â\200\235 And, you know, she
was just so open. And the fact that she was a Coloured girl, and she was
beautiful, | mean, that was just like the cherry on the top. And | think that was
the best thing that could have happened to Albie (Sachs) as far as, you know,
in my opinion. He was just so happy then, you know. | could just see this
radiance on his face when he went to Cape Town. Vanessa (September)
would come to Joâ\200\231sburg but it was amazing. It truly was amazing and | think
having gone through a divorce myself and not being in a relationship at the
time, it was like new hope, hereâ\200\231s Albie (Sachs), you know, and heâ\200\231s fo
und this

beautiful girl. So ja, thereâ\200\231s hope for that kind of thing as well. So, it was just such an all-round experience for me. And now | met...went down to Cape Town and | met Oliver, their son, and | saw Albie (Sachs) as a dad, like a real dad. And | saw this child give him this hug and this kiss and Albie (Sachs) giving this child unconditional love. He was just...thereâ\200\231s just something that went and his face changed and when he looks at this little boy heâ\200\231s just such a transformed person. Albieâ\200\231s other two sons were always in his life, Alan (Sachs) and Michael (Sachs). But itâ\200\231s different with Oliver. Itâ\200\231s different, thereâ\200\231s just...Albieâ\200\231s always been a gentle soul but with Oliver (Sachs) heâ\200\231s just more gentle. And Vanessa (September) is just...sheâ\200\231s blooming as a mother. So, you know, itâ\200\231s like a real fairy tale, a real fairy tale. And heâ\200\231s always been there, you know, even after | left the court, Iâ\200\231d email Albie (Sachs) and say, â\200\234how are you doing, Iâ\200\231m busy with that, can | come and see you about this, can | come and see you about that?â\200\235 And heâ\200\231s always had this very open door policy. His friends are his friends for life. Vanessa (September) is the same. When | was in Cape Town, | actually saw more of Vanessa (September) than | saw of Albie (Sachs). Albie (Sachs) was, | think, in New York, he did something...he was always doing something. But Iâ\200\231m sad that | havenâ\200\231t seen him for the last year or so. When | started...after the stint in the UK | came back, went to Cape Town, my son was studying in Cape Town, | thought, well, he doesnâ\200\231t have that many years to go before he decides to marry and have a life of his own. And my mother always said to us, you always lose your son to his wifeâ\200\231s family. So | thought, before that happens let me spend some time with him. And | went to spend time in Cape Town, | moved down and | got a job at a company called the Centre for Conflict Resolution, and | organised their public conferences, seminars, and they had organised for Albie (Sachs) to speak at the seminar before | was even employed. But when | took...when | came on board, he was the first person that was my speaker at my first seminar. And of course, that was just...just made it special. And of course we all went to dinner after that with Vanessa (September) and everybody. | didnâ\200\231t have a good evening because it was my first seminar and | was totally exhausted after the nerves and everything. But | had a good time knowing that Albie (Sachs) was the first person that opened and it just made it easier. So that was like reconnecting with Albie (Sachs) and Vanessa (September) in Cape Town and spending a bit of time with Vanessa (September) as well. But thereâ\200\231s so many other things that happened during my time at the court. | remember, like little things thatâ\200\231s got nothing to do with the workings of the court. | remember after a party, | canâ\200\231t remember which party it was, and there was a lot of alcohol left, but | remember that the clerks had to finish a judgment or reading it or whatever they were supposed to do, but we all took the...they took the wine back to their chambers and they were all sitting and drinking; and they moved a full stop that wasnâ\200\231t supposed to have been moved. And it was a small thing, it was a full stop. And | remember Judge (John) Didcott picking up that the full stop was moved, and really giving it to them, and it was all, you know, after the party and drinking and...but it was so much fun then, you know. And then | also remember the Bench that was made for Judge (John) Didcott and how special that was, and just this whole process, and Albie allowing me to go to these meetings with the building

people. I was on the art committee so I was supposed to attend the building committee meetings, and I met the people from the City and I could then understand, or I was taught about things that I never knew anything about. They would speak in their meetings about the weight of the books and the weight of the bookshelves and how many books would be accommodated on one level. Things that you never thought about. You walk into a library, and the books are there and the shelves are there, and you never think about the wood that the shelves are made of. It has to be like a strong wood for books of that weight to sit on. And then we also learnt about how you're going to fumigate books and how to keep it pest free because when the consignment came from India we picked up a couple of pests then of the books. We don't know whether it came like that from the library in India or was it in storage, or when it was in transit, but also how to then fumigate things and how to keep things maintained. When we did the building, you know, it was the water issue that they had and the water not circulating properly and also not having a conventional air conditioner in the building and the reasons for having a building and how the whole water thing works. And it's still, you know, it was one of my highlights when I used to give these art tours, I could explain to people how the water flows over the cool rocks in the basement, and I just kept myself clever because I knew about all these things and it was fascinating because people walking into the building, and especially a modern building these days, expect to have air conditioning. And I'd say to them it's naturally air conditioned but it's controlled; you can switch it off if it's too much cool air, if it gets too hot, whatever. I remember the actual artists working on the front doors and them coming to install the front doors and just the amazing process. And also Albie (Sachs) and the art committee insisting that the name of each carver go on the door because Albie said, you know, all these buildings that are standing for years and years and the pyramids they'll say it was built in Pharaoh so-and-so's time, but you don't know who the builders were. Here you know exactly who did the door. And then of course, one of my very special memories was when the Dumile Feni sculpture was delivered and it had come from New York and we had arranged, because it's very heavy, a crane to open it up because there were special instructions as to how to open the box, and then the crane had to then put it in its place. But what we didn't know, after all the arrangements...we had Dumile Feni's daughter come and it was celebratory, we had like a little celebration because this is one of his major artworks coming back into the country...what we didn't know was that the building...well, the precinct, was still being done, the roads were being done, and the lights in the road, this road here, wasn't working properly, there was something wrong and they had dug up the whole road. And the idea was for the truck to come and bring the sculpture to where the corner is, where it is at the moment, but the truck was supposed to stand there. And of course the media was here and everybody. And that...it didn't happen, it didn't happen until they had re-laid the bricks. And I remember being here alone with the truck driver, it must have been like after eight, it was dark already, and him and I and the guy that helped him, positioning it, and not knowing if Albie (Sachs) had said that...which way the head should face. Should the head face that way? Should the head face this way? I just couldn't remember after the

whole day. But remembering that the three of us was alone, trying to position this thing and we tried to get it right onto the curb, and even though you had this like crane doing it, but it was still a piece of sculpture and you didnâ\200\231t want anything to happen to it, and if it did, for any reason come loose from the crane, it would damage the whole slab at the bottom. But to me that was so special because it was like really just me being there alone, without Albie (Sachs), because Albieâ\200\231s (Sachs) always been advising, do it this way, do it that way, and me having to say, you know, this is fine, and being anxious at the same time, because am | doing it right, am | doing it wrong, if the crane leaves now, thereâ\200\231s no way we can turn it around. And thereâ\200\231s no way th at we have money to get the crane back to come and turn it around. So eventually when Albie (Sachs) saw it he was happy and | was happy, and itâ\200\231s not just because of that, that itâ\200\231s like one of my favourite pieces but just the process . | mean, | never knew what a maquette was and when Albie (Sachs) got the maquettes and we had to enlarge it and had to go to the foundry in upstate New York and he was so pleased that we had a fellow South African working at the foundry and just the whole thing. And the photos, and | get so excited when Albie (Sachs) brought the photos back to see now itâ\200\231s growing, you know, itâ\200\231s in this stage, and you could actually see the scale because Albie (Sachs) would stand next to it and you could see how big it was. So...lots of little things, the sculpture, the Moving into Dance with Mr Almeida, and how we tried to get funding for that one, and it was also a little maquette, and itâ\200\231s somewhere in the court. It used to be in Albie (Sachs)...as you entered Albieâ\200\231s (Sachs) chambers, it used to be in the little alcove there, the maquette. And the amazing thing of how it goes from small to big, and also finding somebody to do it. And Georgie (Papageorge) that did the Ladder in the Court, comes out and we got her brother that worked with the Moving into Dance people. So itâ\200\231s all these little things that | wish at the time that | was actually making notes, really making notes, and documenting photographically of all these little things, and the people, and them coming to meetings and bringing...itâ\200\231s like amazing. | remember the Getty giving us money to do research, and | couldn't understand why they would give us money just to do the research, and not just give us money to do the thing, and then only afterwards | then understood it was important for us to do this part of it before we could move on with the other process. | also remember coming and working in the building and asking the judges which art pieces they wanted in their little hallways. And the kind of like favourites that they had grown used to in the old building and some of them requested the same ones being brought to their offices. And them just being more aware. And | think as the collection grew, so the judges grew to...not the ones that were directly involved on the art committee, but the other judges grew to appreciate that this was now a major collection, it wasnâ\200\231t just decoration. And like | said, as the artworks came off the walls so we could see that there was really appreciation for it. And | actually walked into the Court today and | saw a new piece of artwork, and the artwork that was there previously was on loan from Judge (Pius) Langa, and this new piece is such a striking piece thatâ\200\231s hung there. So | know now that what Judge van der Westhuizen...that was my fear, | suppose, when Albie (Sachs) retired, whoâ\200\231s going to have the passion and the drive to continue and to like really...itâ\200\231s n ot

just maintain but to grow it and to promote it and to make sure people come in. Because to me it's no use having the collection and nobody sees it. So walking in and seeing that piece | just felt so good knowing that Judge van der Westhuizen, actually he has got the passion and the drive and he's going to take it further. These pieces here have got special memories as well with the prisoners, and the women prisoners doing it, and them coming to the court, and they were so amazed to be in this space because...not the prisoners themselves, they worked for the co-op in Kimberley, and the women from the co-op came, and in their ordinary lives they would never have been visitors to a place like this, and of course the project co-ordinator brought them through and we had a little celebration and the pieces went up. And for them just to see their works in this space and in a place like this, was just such a feeling of real, real satisfaction, that it's not just the art but it's how you affect other people's lives as well. And the memories that they've got, and the memories that they will share with their children and their communities. It's like the little pieces, the shutter pieces on the far end, as you come up with the little stories on there. And when | tell the stories to visitors that come, and | say, you know, it's stories of the people living in Hillorow, and people come around and they look. But it's also the reflection that it throws on the court on the inside. So even if you're on the inside and you see this interesting beautiful pattern as the sun catches it, you know, you want to go and see what makes the pattern. The other thing that | absolutely love is the stair nosings, and | never knew what a stair nosing was until the architect explained it. The little lip of the step that gets covered so. And as you walk up, when the sun sets and the sun catches it, and it throws this pattern down. And | still...and as we say in Islam, Inshallah, one day, will still do something, because I've got all these ideas, to me it's about not just commerce but it's taking what is beautiful and just opening it up to a wider world. | still want to do little boxes with stair nosings, you know, and sell it in the gift shop. | want to do little bookends with the sculptures that we have, Moving into Dance, you know, and sell it internationally. | go to every museum that | go in and | look at what they're selling and | feel sad, especially in South Africa, that they sell the normal craft that you see all over, and | think to myself, there's just so many things that you can do, just with the collection of the court, turn all these beautiful pieces into postcards, or turn it into calendars. This is the calendar of the Constitutional Court with a different art piece on each page. But just to get school kids in here. When | was at the museum in the UK, | did a lot with what they had, and old things that they had that we could turn, because their budget wasn't massive, but they needed to have activities for children and everything that went with it. And whatever we found we could turn it around because, you know, it stemmed from me getting the ideas at the Constitutional Court of how you can turn an artwork to be a piece of...a functional item. Whether it's taking the staircase, Georgie Papageorge's stair Ladder and turning it into a ruler for school kids and having the little story on the ruler, and giving that out as a gift when they do visit. Or doing a competition and say, if you spot the Ladder, this will be your gift. That type of thing, you know. So | still have all these ideas bubbling around. And now that I'm back in Johannesburg...| just came back in, well, say, February, and | kind of like settled in so March of this year to

Johannesburg. Bongi (Dhlomo) and I are working on the Steve Biko Foundation, very similar building to...or set-up to building it from the ground and then the content and the...and that's also, you know, the experience I gained at the court, without really consciously going and saying, this is my job description, this is my job, it just came and I always say, you know, I was the most blessed being placed with Albie because he was put in charge of door and receiving visitors. And what more could I ask for?

Int Fatima, I am going to stop at this point...

FM Yes, it's long enough (/augh)

This interview currently stands incomplete.

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