

Indigenous architectural glossary

Collaboration produces first-of-its-kind

A PARTNERSHIP between two friends led to the publication of a new book, *The Illustrated Glossary of Southern African Architectural Terms*.

The book was launched at Killie Campbell this month.

Franco Frescura and Joyce Myeza combined their talents to put together the book, which Franco said not only celebrates architecture of the people of South Africa, but also celebrates the work of people whose drawings of South African architecture has been hidden away, and has now been revived for people to enjoy.

Franco explains that in a way work on the book started in the 80s when he was busy with his doctoral research and was travelling throughout South Africa.

"When I was in Grahamstown, there was no diction I could use and I had to make a list of words to assist in communicating with the Venda people. I interviewed people and words would come up, and I would write them down and translate them. In 1987, when I finished my doctorate I put together a glossary similar to this book for students and people and circulated it. A professor from Durban, Barrie Beirmann from the architectural library gave me a book of drawings of Dutch buildings to use if I republished, as he was an expert on Cape Dutch architecture. These drawings are now included in the new book," he said.

He said the first draft was circulated in 2006 but there were

no takers.

"I circulated to my colleagues in architecture but I had to go beyond the discipline. Luckily, Joyce has been my friend for a long time and we started exchanging ideas. We have a lot in common and share the same common understanding, ideas and concerns about stories in South Africa not being told. We both thought it was a great project and decided we'd just 'do it'! We brought languages together in the book, with Zulu, English and Dutch on the same page, stories of heritage which need to be told," said Franco.

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Joyce said she was pleased to see someone was interested in preserving heritage and found the project very enlightening.

"Research into Zulu architecture and knowledge was very exciting and I took it for granted I would just be doing pure translation. It was hard work as I had to translate entire terms and drawings. The translations had to be approved by the Language Board as there are different dialects of isiZulu in different areas, and the Board had to okay the standard term of use,"

she said.

Working with Franco was also a challenge, she said, as he was very persistent when he put his mind to something.

"He was very patient with me! I had just started a new job so it was hectic, but he said there was no deadline," she said.

Franco and Joyce are pleased with the finished product and proud of the fact this had never been done before.

"We are pleased with the book, a glossary but in indigenous South African languages, it's a Rosetta stone for others to work on. We will be working together producing the book in Sesotho and Afrikaans in future. It gives students basic terminology, which is a beginning, and I will be looking at teaching strategies," said Franco.

Joyce is the director of Libraries and Special Collections at UKZN and admits she is an avid reader.

"I love reading, it's definitely my hobby. I also keep busy looking after my three children and working on my doctorate which I am currently completing," she said.

Franco, an architect has been married for 47 years to his wife, Lesley who was active in the freedom struggle. Working for the Post Office, Franco was responsible for designing stamps. "I like drawing," he said, adding another of his passions is long road trips to Johannesburg for meetings. "I get to play my rock n roll very loudly because rock and roll has to be played loudly!" he said.

Exclusive to print



Joyce Myeza and Franco Frescura have produced a book on South African heritage.