



## PROFILE FOR GERARD M. SAMUEL

### Gerard M. Samuel

Gerard Samuel is currently the Director of the School of Dance at the University of Cape Town (UCT) since May 2008. He holds a Diploma in Ballet which he completed at UCT in 1984. He obtained a Master of Arts degree from the University of Natal in 2002.

Gerard was a professional dancer with NAPAC Ballet Company and The Playhouse Company Dance Company in the 1980s and 1990s. His career move to arts administration for The Playhouse Company sharpened his skills and he was promoted to the senior position of Dance and Drama, and later Arts, Education and Development Manager a position he held until 2006.

He is a pioneer of disability arts and integrated arts projects in Durban, South Africa and in Copenhagen, Denmark with his LeftfeetFIRST Dance Theatre group. He has worked at tertiary institutions including University of KwaZulu-Natal and Durban University of Technology and with some of South Africa's leading Contemporary Dance companies including Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre, The Fantastic Flying Fish Dance Company and Flatfoot Dance Company.

His choreographies include *Prabhati*, *Milky Tears* and *Awaiting Islands* and in musical theatre - *The Sound of Music* for which he won an award. His dramaturgy includes the Indian dance drama *Chalo Cinema*, and *Taal* with the Nateswar Dance Company; *The Coolie Odyssey* with RASA Productions and *West Side Story* with the University of Texas and UKZN. Gerard was the Artistic Director of several Gala concerts for the African Renaissance Trust & the Office of the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, The Traditional Arts Festival and for the historic South African Women's Arts Festivals since its inception in mid 1990s.

He is a recipient of the Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts's Creative Arts Award in 2010 for which he has produced and directed "Place of Grace" a made for dance film.

Gerard is Editor of the *South African Dance Journal*, a peer reviewed, scholarly, bi-annual research publication. He is Chair of *Confluences* - international dance conference based at UCT School of Dance. He is currently a PhD candidate researching Othering in Contemporary Dance in South Africa and hopes to complete his doctorate in 2016.