

# Personalia

## Ine Beljaars

In November, Beljaars defended her dissertation titled “Embodied Encounters: Afro-Latin Dance and Dutch Cultural Identity” at the University of British Columbia. The dissertation investigates the cultural history and politics of Afro-Latin partner dance in the Netherlands, focusing on the intersections between dance, gender, ethnicity, race, class, and cultural citizenship. Dance is used not as an object of study as such, but as a lens to study social relations through dance-related practices and narratives. Drawing on cultural anthropology, dance and performance studies, critical whiteness studies, cultural studies, and feminist, critical race, queer, and postcolonial theory, the study explores questions related to identity, belonging, racialisation, cosmopolitanism, and postcoloniality in the Netherlands. Based on this research, Beljaars received the Selma Jeanne Cohen Award of the Dance Studies Association for her paper titled “Dancing Across Borders: The Impact of Gendered Migration and Postcolonial Connections on the Dutch Salsa Scene.”

## Natashe Lemos Dekker

Dr. Natashe Lemos Dekker (University of Amsterdam) has been awarded an NWO Veni grant for her project “Grief Politics: COVID-19-related Loss and Collective Action in Brazil.” The project investigates the impact of COVID-19-related grief in Brazil. Brazil is one of the most heavily affected countries in the world, where many deaths occurred under traumatic circumstances that continue to affect subsequent experiences of grief. In this context, the deceased have explicitly become incorporated in political protests against injustice. This project ethnographically explores the experiences of people who lost relatives during the pandemic and have become politically active as a result. In so doing, it will shed new light on the relationship between grief and politics, demonstrating how grief may generate political transformation and enhance capacities to act.

## Pieter du Plessis

Pieter du Plessis has received funding from the NWO PhD in the Humanities scheme for the research project titled “Belonging and Unbelonging in Amsterdam’s Het Zuid-Afrikahuis: A Decolonial Study of Dutch Whiteness in Relation to Afrikaner Whiteness.” Du Plessis will be supervised by Eliza Steinbock (Director of Centre for Gender and Diversity at Maastricht University) and Sophie Withaecx (Maastricht University) and Margriet van der Waal (University of Groningen and University of Amsterdam).

On the basis of ethnographic and archival research, Du Plessis will produce a critical biography of “Het Zuid-Afrikahuis”, a cultural and knowledge centre about South Africa. Dutch cultural heritage institutions have faced calls for decolonisation in recent years. Issues of belonging in these institutions and how they are informed by Dutch whiteness have come to be interrogated. Dutch whiteness is mainly understood in relation to racialised and colonised subjectivities, yet, how Dutch whiteness has been constructed in relation to other forms of whiteness still requires exploration. In this study, the relations and co-construction between Dutch whiteness and Afrikaner whiteness will be explored.

## Rahil Roodsaz

Dr. Rahil Roodsaz (University of Amsterdam) received an NWO Vidi grant for the research “Rhythms of Love: Enduring Romantic Relationships at Midlife in Contemporary Western Europe.” Maintaining romantic love can be challenging when people reach midlife, a time when they face mortality and reflect on lost alternatives. In this ethnographic project, Roodsaz investigates the daily rhythms of enduring love in midlife among Western Europeans of diverse backgrounds. She asks how people keep love alive at midlife while simultaneously facing societal challenges: work pressure, parenting expectations, multiple care responsibilities, fear of commitment, and fear of missing out. The insights will enable a (re)consideration of dominant notions of temporality and the good life.

## Lise Zurné

On 13 December, Lise Zurné successfully defended her dissertation “Performing contested pasts: An ethnography of historical re-enactments of war and revolution” at Erasmus University Rotterdam. In her dissertation, Zurné analyses historical re-enactments of war and revolution, a popular pastime in which “weekend warriors,” “amateur historians,” or simply re-enactors, dedicate their free time to simulate histories of armed conflict. Through dress, roleplay and the reproduction of material culture, history is “brought to life.” By selecting, interpreting and (re)building histories, re-enactors negotiate new narratives and perspectives they deem invisible or suppressed in dominant historiographies, such as women at the WWII frontlines or Indonesian civilians during the War of Independence. These performances thereby reflect contemporary debates within public history and broader society.