

## Alumnus and award-winning writer donates copies of her 2016 debut Afrikaans novel to Faculty library

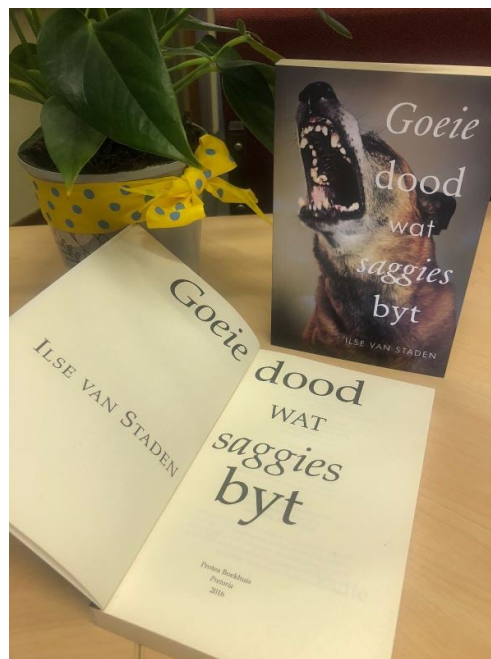
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Dr Ilse van Staden, who qualified as veterinarian at the Faculty of Veterinary Science in 1995, is not only an alumnus of the Faculty, but an acclaimed, award-winning poet, writer and artist who recently donated two copies of her debut Afrikaans novel, 'Goeie dood wat saggies byt' (2016) to the Faculty's Jotello F Soga Library.

Now living in Australia, she was initially known for her poetry collections such as her debut published work 'Watervlerk' (2003) - for which she received the Eugene Marais and Ingrid Jonker prizes, 'Fluisterklip' (2008), and 'Die dood is 'n mooi blou blom' (2009). 'Goeie dood wat saggies byt' was her first attempt at writing a novel in Afrikaans and followed the publication of her first English novel in 2015 entitled 'Simon says'.

The novel tells the story of Hilda, an introverted veterinarian with a passion for working with animals and the influences on her life from her time as first year veterinary student until after she starts practising as veterinarian for about six years. She finds it difficult to confidently assert herself, especially in a male-dominated environment. As the title indicates it is especially death with all its aspects which has an emotional and profound impact on her life.

Hilda experiences deep internal turmoil about responsibility and passion, reality and idealism and her ability as veterinarian. She cannot forgive herself for the animals that she has lost during her career. This leads to a deep introspection about her career as a female veterinarian and these thoughts begin to control her life which results in a shocking conclusion.



Both Ilse's father (Dr Hampie van Staden) and grandfather (Prof HPA de Boom, fondly known as 'Oom Boompie' during his years at the Onderstepoort campus) also qualified as veterinarians and her nephew, Jacques van Staden, is a third year veterinary student at the Faculty. While, for obvious reasons, Ilse could not hand over the books herself, Jacques was at hand to present the books to Ms Myleen Oosthuizen, Manager of the Faculty's Jotello F Soga Library.



*Ilse's nephew, Jacques van Staden (right), a third year veterinary student at the Faculty presents the books to Ms Myleen Oosthuizen, Manager of the Faculty's Jotello F Soga Library on behalf of his aunt.*

Ilse was born in Pretoria, grew up on a farm in the Waterberg and matriculated at Pro Arte High School after which she commenced with her veterinary studies. Her late mother, Marcella de Boom, was a well-known artist before she sadly passed away in 2009. In 1997 Ilse started practising as veterinarian in Cullinan and lived in the unique and well-known environmentally friendly clay-house, 'Woordhuis' which she built together with her mother.

In 2012, Ilse and her husband moved to Australia and they currently reside in the Lake Munmorah area which is part of the Central Coast region of New South Wales.

In 2021 English and Greek translations of her poems were published in World Literature Today and Teflon, respectively. Her latest novel, 'Palimpsest' was published in 2022. Other anthology collections and stories include 'More Than One Way to Kill a Cat' (2019), 'Tafel vir Twee' (2009) and 'Waar die oog van stil word' (2016). In 2014 some of her poems were included in a collection of contemporary Afrikaans poetry in translation, entitled "in a burning sea", compiled by Marlise Joubert.

For more information about Ilse's poetry, books and art go to <http://www.ilsevanstaden.com/>