

# Financial Mail

Did Leeson stash assets in SA?

Cellphone operators deny collusion

Revamping State revenue collection

Will Cape Town have enough hotels?



## WHAT WENT WRONG WITH THE RAND

in practical terms about the consequences of management decisions.

The case studies are interesting and a useful glossary of terms is provided.

The foreword suggests the model has been used in university and business school courses as well as company training courses.

As one element of a full company valuation course, the book probably has considerable value; but it is difficult to see it standing alone. The book is obtainable directly from Goalfix Corp.

Margaret-Anne Halse

## ART

## LETTING THE SPIRIT ROAM

**DANIE BLIGNAUT, KEVIN ROBERTS (Karen McKerron); DAVID MOGANO, SAMSON MUDZUNGA (Gallery on Tyrone); THREE ARTISTS THREE AUTHORS (Standard Bank Gallery).**

**Blignaut and Roberts** are both, in a sense, spiritual artists. Blignaut's mixed media paintings are more explic-



**Man with Oorhare** . . . Danie Blignaut's playful execution

itly so, with the generic title *Icons of the Soul*, though camouflaged by a brightly sensual palette and playfulness of execution that can appear child-like as in the naively drawn *Man With Oorhare*.

Roberts's *Reflections* are less showy, but there is a timeless classicism to his paintings on board. Thinly applied paint and fine brush strokes allow the grain of the wood to show through, not only adding texture but sometimes forming a colour pattern in fabric or flesh.

His madonnas — all the same woman, with serene, contemplative features and long hair pulled tightly back from a centre parting — sit drinking tea or nursing a baby, or lie enigmatically on a kitchen table.

In *Rainy Season 1996*, a woman with a tiara of thorns pours water from a bowl on to the thirsty land. Water and birds, indeed, are recurring motifs of his work, which succeeds admirably at more than one level.

At first glance, **Mogano's** watercolours look like the sort of picturesque township scene Durant Sihlali painted 20-odd years ago. Look more closely and you see the tricks with angle and perspective and subtle underlying social comment.

In *Alexandra Close to Anarchy*, the tyres burning in the foreground give an ominous echo to the smoke rising from the chimneys. The full-breasted women are not evil, but they're certainly not innocent, either.

**Mudzunga's** large wood sculptures are earthily rough-hewn, in the school of Hlungwani, but I was more impressed by another sculptor, not actually named in the invitation. **Julius Mfethe** creates exquisite little wooden sculptures of people and animals.

The show at Stan-



**Peter Schütz's Cuban Madonna** . . . skilled sculptor in wood

dard Bank originated at the Grahamstown Festival last year and is now coming to the end of a national tour. **Neels Coetzee, Peter Schütz** and **Walter Oltmann** are all associated with the Wits Fine Arts Department and their sculptures are accompanied by a book *Three Sculptors/Three Readers*, with essays on them.

Apart from Coetzee's *Crucible*, originally commissioned by the *Sunday Star*, which closed before completion, as a peace monument made from old AK47s, there is little here to extend our appreciation of the trio, but the work is seen to good advantage in this wonderfully spacious venue.

Schütz confirms his skills as a sculptor in wood, notably jolutong. In *Trophy Vehicle*, for instance, an athletic bikinied blonde celebrates her success as huntress. Oltmann's copper wire constructions amaze with their technique and industry but can be emotionally arid. The metal *Hand Bells* and delicate *Lace Mitt* are welcome variations. *Michael Coulson*

## EATING OUT

## BYE-BYE, MRS BALL

**Cape Town** has long been an incubator for the hot, new restaurant idea.

It is where nouvelle cuisine, probably best remembered as novelty cuisine, took root in the early Eighties under chefs like Etienne Bonthuis and John Jackson. It was where the local answer to what the world was calling California cuisine in the late Eighties first appeared (at Blues); and where, as our correspondent Hilary Prendini-Tofoli has pointed out, SA's first true African (Africa Café), Thai (Sukothai, Wang Thai) and café-style Italian (Chariots) restaurants were born.

However, perhaps because it does not have an Indian community to rival the sizes of those in Johannesburg or even Pretoria, not to mention Durban, Cape Town has always been short of good Indian restaurants. Not so now. With the arrival of Bukhara in the CBD, Cape Town has stolen a march in the spice stakes.

Bukhara is no penny undertaking. Instead, it is big, brassy testimony to the fact that restaurateurs from abroad, as well as hotel groups, are eyeing SA's potential as a drawcard for tourists and business travellers. Its owner, Sabi Sabharwar, is from Delhi — where he has restaurants from which he imported Bukhara's chefs — though his wife is South African.

Bukhara, named after a city in the frontier state of Uzbekistan, specialises in the celebrated Mogul cuisine of north-western India as well as of Pakistan. If you have been to Johannesburg's excellent Delhi Palace in Fordsburg, you will recognise some of the ingredients and flavours.

Pakistan, being Muslim, does not countenance pork; but, along with its neighbouring regions, boasts a diet rich in other meats and many sumptuous biryani. Lamb is predominant,

as are the uses of spices and ingredients such as yoghurt and ghee in dishes that are elaborate without being hot.

Bukhara's menu is divided into tandoori dishes, which are served as starters at between R19,99 and R27,99, plain and stuffed breads (R4,99-R12,99), curries (R19,99-R39,99), rice (from R9,99 for plain basmati rice to R39,99 for lamb biryani) and extras such as the sprightly salad of diced cucumbers, tomatoes and onions (R11,99) in a spicy dressing we tried.

In the interests of research, not to say out of fascination, the four of us chose a rajah's banquet of dishes.

This began with starters of tender, fragrant, boneless chicken tikka, milder, more delicately flavoured chicken cheese kebab, spicier, chewier lamb boti kebab and roof-raisingly hot, somewhat dry benarasi seekh, a vegetarian dish of minced cheese, peas, carrots and beans fashioned into sausage shapes and cooked in the tandoor.

We accompanied these with romali roti, an easy-to-tear handkerchief-like wholewheat bread, and to say we enjoyed them is to dance in leaden boots.

We went on to try three curries with basmati rice: saag meat, tender lamb pieces in a blanket of spicy spinach which looks hideous but tastes wonderful; lamb vinadalo, one of the hottest dishes on the menu; and a disappointingly thin

prawn curry. One of my favourite Indian dishes, dal makhani, fragrant lentils cooked to mushiness overnight in the tandoor, was beautifully served in a deep metal container — and delicious.

Though you certainly won't be served anything resembling Mrs Ball's chutney or mango atchar, Bukhara's young waitresses do provide a couple of darkly mysterious dipping sauces.

Unlike the Delhi Palace, Bukhara does not observe the Muslim ban on alcohol; its wine list is, in fact, excellent.

The restaurant has done a roaring trade since its opened in time for the last festive season. And no wonder. Not only is Indian food — and especially Indian food that fights free of the clichés of transplantation — a novelty in Cape Town but this food is so professionally turned out and exquisitely flavoured that it lives on in the memory long after the event.

And, in Bukhara's case, handsome is as handsome does. Set in vast premises above street level, it is divided here and there by square pillars and plants, and has an open kitchen where the tandoors are displayed. It is painted a gorgeous shade of burnt orange and the cream-coloured curtains on its floor-to-ceiling windows are interestingly draped.

Though tables for four are a little too small for the sharing of dishes, side tables are provided to take the overflow. Utensils

are wrapped in striped aprons, which you unravel and tie around your neck before tucking in.

Then, of course, the real fun begins. Don't miss out on it.

□ Bukhara: 33 Church Street, Cape Town. Licensed. Open Monday-Friday, lunch; Monday-Saturday, dinner. Tel: 24-3479. *Linda Stafford*

## MOTURING

### A TASTE OF THE GOOD LIFE

"Jislaaik," hissed the paunchy Free State holidaymaker, "but that's a smart car, hey?" as the rest of his family gazed admiringly at my new Mercedes-Benz E-Class from the confines of their old Ford Cortina. So I pulled back my shoulders and tried to look as if I were in my natural motoring environment.

It must have worked. As he drove off, the chief admirer grinned: "You're a lucky man to have a car like that."

I was in the southern Cape, near George, where Mercedes had lent me a new E-Class to judge the company's latest entrant into the SA luxury car market

As a marque, the E-Class has been in SA for 10 years, during which it has sold nearly 60 000 units. Worldwide, the figure is more than 2,5m.

The latest model offers many improvements on its predecessors. Automatic versions are all equipped with five-speed gearboxes. Bigger fuel tanks, combined with better fuel consumption, offer much improved travelling range.

Acceleration and general performance has also benefited. On the other hand, the bigger fuel tank has resulted in reduced boot space. An "intelligent" braking system also enables all four wheels to react independently to different sur-

faces, particularly in a braking emergency.

The distinctive Merc shape has been watered down. According to Mercedes marketer Eric Scoble: "We wanted a stylish look rather than an up-market one." The result is a sideways profile less distinguishable from other luxury cars. Head-on, the car remains assuredly a Merc, even with the addition of an innovative twin-headlamp design.

#### TOP OF THE RANGE

Internationally, the new E-Class comes in a number of options. In SA, it is available in the Elegance style only. The car, to be built in East London, will initially be limited to the top-of-the-range E320.

But the good news is that the E280 and E230 will follow later this year, as well as the sporty E360.



Starting price for the E320 is R263 500 and for the E280, R226 000. Prices for other models will be announced closer to their launch.

But be warned: orders for the E320 are already building up and customers placing orders now will have to wait until late this year for delivery.

Driving the E320 around George, I was struck by its improved power and handling capabilities. These were particularly noticeable on steep, winding dirt and gravel sections in the Knysna forests — though I could foresee problems for oncoming vehicles trying to pass the Merc's bulk on some narrow tracks.

Longer, more intensive test sessions by others more qualified than I will determine if the new E-Class really lives up to its billing. Mercedes, though, has no doubts. It predicts it will sell up to 3 000 a year and regain more than 50% of the SA luxury car market. *David Furlonger*



*Bukhara's Sabi Sabharwar . . . no clichés of transplantation*