

Willem Boshoff

WORD WOES

History

In May, 2011, I visited Stellenbosch to discuss the envisaged *Twenty* exhibition with SMAC Gallery. Painfully aware of the squabble over Afrikaans as a language of prerogative at Stellenbosch University, I proposed an artwork consisting of one word that makes some sense in both the English and Afrikaans languages, but of which the meanings in the two languages differ significantly. That work was *BOOM*. I envisaged this work to be a big gabion wall (a bulky wall made up of stones stacked in wire baskets) in which two different coloured stones would be so stacked as to spell out the word *boom* on both sides of the wall. The wall would be placed in Jonkershoek, a get-away nature reserve where romantic couples often enjoy sanctuary in the shadows of large trees and the spellbinding vistas of mountain cliffs. The wall had to be large and inviting enough to serve as a refuge for amorous kisses. The word *boom*, in English, is rather onomatopoeic and spells out the noise of exploding bombs, as in the big *boom!* In Russian, *boom!* is an accepted toast, like *cheers!* – celebration laid on thick. In a more sedate sense, *boom* is also a long pole, usually pivoted to go up and down to let traffic through. In Afrikaans *boom* is 'tree' a word

that confirms my life-long interest in and respect for nature. I have tried hard to learn the names of all the plants I come across and I am not doing too badly. *Boom*, however, has another, far more stress-free meaning in Afrikaans. To the unperturbed it spells out *marijuana*. The more easygoing students would immediately chuckle at this usage and might even be tempted to slink behind *BOOM* wall for a whiff or two of the beleaguered stuff. I wanted the work to poke some light-hearted fun at the obsessive linguistic preoccupation of the frantic local academic fraternity. It would clearly satisfy them on one level and most certainly raise eyebrows on another. Unfortunately, or is it fortunately, I never got around to make *BOOM*, but there is every reason why I still might make it one day.

The idea that one can have words of the same spelling in Afrikaans and English, but that differ totally in meaning, stayed with me. When I was again approached by SMAC gallery in Stellenbosch, to have a solo exhibition in 2012, the memory of *BOOM* milled about in my head and I began to collect similar words. After more than a year I had come up with a list of two-hundred-and-forty words.

To stay with the idea of using the earthen substance (stones) envisaged for *BOOM*, I decided to use the sand/

soil from the town of Darling, also in the Western Cape. I mapped out the words on small brick-like plaques and I asked my friend Andrew Munnik to collect the soils and fill in the words and their backgrounds on the plaques. Finally, I had a large collage called *PLATTER ROOSTER* providing a brick wall for the linguistically-minded to run into.

At the time I was convinced that I would not find any new words, but in the two years that followed new words began to surface, and when I was put to bed for months on end by an awful flu at the beginning of 2014, I had time to contemplate new additions. In the end the 240 words increased to 290 and in order to share the work with a wider audience, I decided to turn it into an edition of etchings with the new title *WORD WOES*.

Etymology

If you are English and had never spoken a word of Afrikaans, the list of words in *WORD WOES* will appear totally English to you. If you are Afrikaans and had never seen any written English, which is highly unlikely, you might recognise these words as totally Afrikaans. There is no logical linguistic reason for the choice of words. In a way they are a *Dada* list – a mini *Dada*

dictionary. Their inclusion is strangely dependent on the throw of a dice, in this case, the dice is the fact that the English and Afrikaans meanings of these words of the same spelling have absolutely nothing to do with each other.

The marvel of it all is for the reasonably bilingual person to read a word from one of the two languages, and then, upon reflection, to find the meaning of that word in the other language slowly dawning upon them.

At first I thought of calling the work *LOST IN TRANSLATION* because the words play with irreconcilable meanings. This 'English-only' title would, however, only serve to anger sensitive members of the Afrikaans community and I decided to name the etching after two of the words that make strange sense when combined: *WORD WOES*.

The English often see Afrikaans words next to English signage and because of their expectation that all written expression everywhere must necessarily be English, one often gets quite humorous readings. My son, Willem junior, who lives in the United Kingdom, once tried to draw money from the automatic banking machine in the predominantly Afrikaans town of Parys and he could not because he

thought the prominence of the word *jammer* on the monitor meant that the machine had been *jammed*, when in fact an apology was issued for the fact that the machine could not print paper slips. *Jammer* in Afrikaans means 'sorry'. An old English friend wondered for a while about the meaning of the word *slegs* on a road sign – he read 'only slegs' and could not, for the life of him, figure out what kind of things the *slegs* are. In Afrikaans *slegs* means 'only'.

Casual rules for the selection of words

The etching *WORD WOES* is a small dictionary made up of words of the same spelling in English and Afrikaans but with totally different meanings. The meanings contained in its expressions are meant to be straight-forward, easily understandable, aimed at astonishment and admiration for their linguistic flair. I hope to ambush a certain slice of our bi-lingual society with the work's quaintness and I mean to keep them at a standstill for some time in front of the work, pondering the marvelousness of our differences. Preference is given to words that are more or less easily identifiable and that might cause the greater interest.

My friends playfully came up with two small sentences that read true for both languages: "My hand is in warm water"

or "My pen is in my hand." Unfortunately all these words are totally synonymous for Afrikaans and English and none such totally similar words are admitted in *WORD WOES*. Entries were omitted if they did not succeed as excellent examples of a true kind of *difference*.

Words that might normally be accepted in the game of *Scrabble* are suitable, but note the following relaxed rules:

No synonyms (*PLATTER ROOSTER* works with words spelled exactly the same, but that carry no similarities of meaning):

- Similarly spelled and synonymous words are unsuitable: *hang, arm, hand, bale, was, drank, hinder, note, verse, rose, grief, pan, vat, ring, stand, sending, spanning, slinger, sing, genies, plot, etc.*
- Even a slight sense of synonymity is also reason for disqualification. *Elf*, for example, is good in the sense of number eleven (Afrikaans), but as Santa's little helper (same meaning in English and Afrikaans) it is disqualified. Other words like *slot, pure, blank, mark (market), grade, rose* and *tasting* also have too much synonymity for inclusion. No informal, colloquial or seldom used words.
- *dink* – 'to think' in Afrikaans and a partner in a well-

off working couple with no children in informal English.

- *dwang* – ‘coercion’ in Afrikaans and ‘serious trouble’ in colloquial English.
- *vader* – ‘father’ in Afrikaans and a character from the *Star Wars* films in English.
- *swat* – ‘to hit or slap’ in English and ‘to study’ in informal Afrikaans.
- *gal* – ‘girl’ in informal English and ‘contents of the gallbladder’ in Afrikaans.
- *loon* – ‘salary’ in Afrikaans and ‘silly person’ in informal English.
- *gees* – ‘spirit’ in Afrikaans and exclamations of surprise in informal English.
- *toon* – ‘toe’ in Afrikaans and ‘cartoon film’ in informal English.

* An exception was made in the case of ‘vroom’ because, even though it is informal English, it has a great onomatopoeic ring to it and is often used. I guess that most(perhaps all) words progressed from a time or sense in which they had been informal. The invention of text and printed matter created rules and formality.

No scientific, overly technical or pedantic words:

- *bots* – ‘to crash’ in Afrikaans and in English the plural of *bot*, the larva of the botfly, also an abbreviation for ‘robots’.

- *tor* – ‘bug’ in Afrikaans and a hill or ‘rocky peak’ in English.

No foreign or archaic words:

- *tome* – ‘reins of a horse’ in Afrikaans and ‘book’ in old English.
- *nog* – ‘small block or peg of wood’ and short for ‘eggnog’ in English. In Afrikaans it means ‘more’.
- *brag* – ‘to bring’ archaic Afrikaans and ‘to boast’ in English.
- *rust* – ‘oxidation’ in English and ‘to rest’ in archaic Afrikaans.
- *ween* – ‘to be of opinion’ in archaic English and ‘to cry’ in Afrikaans.
- *lam* – ‘to hit’, a verb in nineteenth century English and ‘lamb’ in Afrikaans.

No proper names or words beginning with capital letters are allowed:

- *Mars/mars* English(two meanings: 1. the planet Mars, and 2. to spoil); Afrikaans(to march)
- *Rooms* is acceptable in English, but the Afrikaans *Rooms* is rejected(a proper name pertaining to the Roman Catholic Church).

Words in which the application is strained or hardly ever used:

- *staker* – in Afrikaans ‘one who ceases to work’ and in seldom used English ‘one who drives in a stake’.
- *suffer* – ‘more mentally worn out’ in strained Afrikaans and ‘to encounter bad or unpleasant things’ in English.

No abbreviations:

- *bros* (‘brothers’ in English)
- *gat* (informal and an abbreviation for ‘Gatling’ gun in English)
- *mag* – ‘power’ in Afrikaans and a ‘magazine’ in English
- *vet* – an exception and included. An abbreviation for ‘veterinarian’ and ‘obese’ in Afrikaans.
- *veg* – an exception and included. An abbreviation for ‘vegetables’, and ‘to fight’ in Afrikaans.

No diacritical marks:

- *reel/reels*, to stagger or a film spool in English is acceptable, but *reël/reëls*, rule and rules in Afrikaans have a dieresis and are excluded.
- *blase*, Blisters in Afrikaans, but *blasé* in English has an acute accent mark and is not accepted.

Where meanings are close for some entries, especially of the same word in its plural or in a certain grammatical sense, only the entry with the most letters will be chosen

- *gun/guns* – take only *guns*
- *die/dies* – take only *dies*
- *kale/kales* – take only *kales*

Exceptions:

- *re-use* or *reuse* is sometimes spelled with a hyphen in British English and without one in American English and because of its rarity in the list (the *eu-*) it is included.
- The word ‘week’ is entered as ‘a period of seven days’ – English and as ‘weak or ineffective’ and ‘to soak’ in Afrikaans. But, *week* is also ‘a period of seven days’ in Afrikaans. In *WORD WOES* this synonymity is of course an oversight.

Willem Boshoff 2014

WORD WOES MEANINGS

ENTRY	ENGLISH	AFRIKAANS
ANGEL	Imaginary celestial being with wings	Sharp-pointed stinger at rear-end of a bee, scorpion, etc.
ARE	Plural present form of the verb 'be'	Veins, arteries
ARTS	Various types of creative activity	Doctor, such as a children's doctor, dentist or veterinarian
BAD	Terrible, depraved, worthless	To wash oneself in water
BALK	Hesitant or unwilling to accept a proposal	Wooden beam
BANE	Reason for anguish or annoyance	Lanes, as in racing or athletics
BANG	Loud explosive noise	To have fear and trepidation
BANGER	Sausage, usually eaten at breakfast	Greater fear; more trepidation
BARING	Exposing or revealing (of secrets, facts, the body)	Having a child or children; parturition
BARS	Metal rods; counters for serving drinks; society of lawyers	To crack up; to burst open
BASE	Bottom support; plinth; main area to operate from	Bosses; persons in charge
BEEF	Prepared meat from cows and bulls	To shiver, shake or tremble
BEEN	Past participle of the verb 'be'	Bone; leg
BEER	Alcoholic drink distilled from yeast, malt, barley, hops etc.	Bear (shaggy, erect animal, mostly northern hemisphere)
BEES	Insects that give us honey	Cow, bull, ox
BID	To make an offer; to greet (I bid you a fond farewell)	To pray
BLARE	Loud, penetrating, mostly annoying sound	Leaves, foliage
BLINK	Quick shut and open of the eye or eyes	Shiny, polished – as a surface
BODE	Sensing of a future event; omen	Messenger; courier

BOG	Soft, marshy, muddy area of ground	Nonsense; claptrap; drivel
BONE	Hard substance forming a skeleton	Edible bean seeds; green beans (in husks); bean plants
BOOM	Loud resonant bang; pole blocking road; surge in prosperity	Tree
BOON	Useful, beneficial item	Singular, edible bean seed; singular bean plant
BOOR	Vulgar, unmannerly person	To drill; a tool that performs drilling
BOOS	Exclamations of sudden surprise; cries of disapproval	Fuming; angry
BOOT	Sturdy shoe; trunk of a car	Boat; ship
BORE	To be dull and uninteresting, such a person	Hand drills or drilling machines
BOUT	Short spell of intense activity	Bolt, as in a steel nut and bolt
BRAND	Name and advertising status of a product, campaign, etc.	Fire, to burn
BRANDERS	Those who promote through advertising	Large waves of the sea
BREED	Animal stock, to rear a line of animals	Broad, wide
BRIEF	Lasting for a short while, underpants	Letter; written note
BROOD	To mope or worry; offspring or litter of one parentage	Bread; basic food that supports life
BULK	Massive size and weight of large items	Characteristic sound of a cow; to make a moo sound
DANK	Offensively damp, mouldy and cold	To thank; thankfulness
DAPPER	Neat and trim in looks, posture or dress (mostly of men)	Courageous; daring; gutsy
DEN	Lair of a wild animal; a room for leisurely or illicit activity	Pine tree
DIES	Stops living; to die	This; these
DIG	To create a hole in the ground, to rummage about	Compact, compressed or dense; to write poetry
DOER	One who acts or does	Far away, way over there
DOG	Canine capable of barking, man's best friend	To have understood; to have a resident thought
DONS	Puts on a hat or piece of clothing	Small piece of fluff, down or fur

DOPE	Banned performance enhancing substance; stupid person	Plural of baptism or christening
DOPING	Administering illicit drugs	Dunking of biscuit into drink; baptism
DOSE	Quantity of medicine or drug; to medicate correct amount	Boxes; packages
DOWER	Widow's share of her husband's estate	More deaf
DRAG	Pull along roughly, usually by force	Wear; clothing suitable for specific purpose
DRAKE	Male duck; artificial or natural 'mayfly' as bait in fly fishing	Plural of <i>draak</i> or ('dragon' in English)
ELDERS	People of greater age as the rest of a group	Elsewhere; in a different place
ELK	Red deer, native to North America	Each; every; both
ELSE	Otherwise; besides	Plural of <i>els</i> (awl - small pointed tool for making holes)
ERE	Before; earlier than	Honour and respect
EWE	Female sheep	Similarly; likewise
FEE	Payment; compensation; tip	Fairy; small, imaginary, winged female creature
FEES	Plural of 'fee' (payment and compensation)	Festival; celebration
FLITS	To move swiftly, lightly (as insects do briefly in the sun)	Battery operated torch
GANG	Band of criminals; group of labourers	Passage in a building; channel of access
GAPS	Breaks or holes between objects; openings; breaches	To steal furtively; to pinch or pilfer
GATE	Movable blockade allowing entrance or exit	Holes; gaps; cavities
GEE	Exclamation of surprise, enthusiasm or sympathy	To give; to award; to donate
GELID	Extremely cold; frozen solid	Orderly formation of troops or detachment of men
GLAD	Content and satisfied; happy	Glabrous, soft and smooth to the touch
GLADDER	More delighted or pleased	More smooth; more slippery; more slick
GLANS	The rounded tip of the penis	Glossy shine; polished sheen
GRATE	Turning food into small particles by rubbing it on a device	Fish bones

GULP	To swallow in one motion; to 'knock back' a drink	Buttoned fastening in front of men's pants; zipper
GUNS	Weapons that shoot bullets	Favour; act of kindness
HAKE	Common fish, often prepared commercially	Hooks; bent and sharp-ended metal fasteners
HARE	Fast running, long eared animal that resembles the rabbit	Hair; locks or curls of hair
HARK	To listen attentively; to call to memory	Rake; to scratch together by means of a rake
HEEL	Back part of the foot below the ankle	To heal; to made whole or repair; to nurse back to health
HELD	Past participle of 'hold'; having grasped or detained	Hero; celebrated brave man
HER	Third person singular pronoun; of the female	Previously; long since; in the past
HERD	A group of animals that live together	Fireplace for cooking; hearth
HERE	In this place; in this position	Gentlemen; men
HITS	To punch by hand, bat or racket; to strike by missile or ball	To foment trouble; to provoke into action
HOE	Long-handled, bladed tool used for weeding and tilling	How, why
HOES	Tools for weeding and loosening soil	Act or sound of coughing; to cough
HOLE	Tunnel or cavity in a solid substance	Hovels; dens for disagreeable activity
HOLLER	To give a loud cry or shout	More hollow; more empty
HOOF	Hard shell that forms the foot of cattle, antelope and such	Forehead; person in charge; most important or main
HOOP	Round or semi-circular band of metal; large ring-like jump	Hope; expectation
HOPE	Expectation; anticipation	Heaps; piles; stacks; mounds
HOPING	Expecting, eagerly awaiting or longing	Piling or stacking up
JAMMER	Transmitter (or person) for jamming signals	Sorry; with apology
JIG	Lively dance, a template for guiding manufacture	Gout; dietary disease causing a type of arthritis
KALES	Cabbages with prominent stem, large leaves, but no head	Naked people; men or women wearing no clothes
KEEL	Bottom part of a ship or boat that is under water	Throat; gullet

KEEP	To have or retain possession; situation necessary for living	Notch; nick; prominent cut-mark
KILLER	Murderer; slayer of animals; an animal that kills	More frigid or cold in attitude
KIND	Items, people sharing similarity, generosity of temperament	Child; youngster
LAG	To fall behind; to trail at the back; time difference	To laugh; laughter; chuckle
LANK	Long, straight and wilted – of hair	Tall; long; extended; lengthy
LAP	Hips, knees when seated; race-track circuit; drink with tongue	Cloth; fabric
LATE	Behind in time; occurring at the very end; dead, deceased	As in: <i>doene and late</i> – things done and things not done
LEEK	Vegetable related to the onion but with elongated ball	Layman; one without expert or specialized knowledge
LEER	To stare unpleasantly, maliciously or lasciviously	Ladder, stepladder
LEES	Sediment at the bottom of a barrel of wine; dregs (fig.)	To read or peruse; to understand writing
LEG	A limb that supports the human body, tables or chairs etc.	To lay out charts; to explain problems
LID	Cover such as of a container or eye; top, as in 'bottle top'	Member; associate; limb of the body
LIED	Having told untruths, having made false statements	Song; music composed in part or mainly of words
LIES	Untruths, false statements, fibs	Groin; the thigh, especially higher up, near the body
LINKS	Connections between things or ideas; rings in a chain	Left, as in 'not right'; to the left-hand side
LINT	Fine, fluffy fibres shed by cloth or woollen material	Ribbon; narrow band of cloth for tying
LIT	Past participle of 'light'	Joint of the body; internode on a reed or grass
LONE	Single; having no companions	Salaries; loans; fees earned
LONG	Extended; lengthy; to have a strong wish or desire	Lung; organ that facilitates breathing
LOOM	Device for making fabric; to appear in large shadowy form	Sense of dull, sleepy languor
LOOP	Curve folding back on itself; repeat of music tape or video	To walk; to stroll; course of a river
LOOT	To burgle or ransack; booty; spoils	Offshoot of a plant; method of casting of the lot
LOOTS	Robs; raids	A hangar for vehicles such as bicycles or aeroplanes

LOWER	Nearer to the ground	Greenery or foliage in a forest or bush
LUG	To carry or drag; peg or hook for mounting or hanging	Air; atmosphere; sky; heavens
MALE	Gender of men as opposed to women; pertaining to men	Times; instances
MANE	Growth or ruff of hair on the neck of a horse, lion, etc.	Moons, especially moons orbiting planets such as Jupiter
MARES	Females of horse, mule or donkey	Skinny or thin ones
MATE	A companion, especially in a pair; friend; to breed	Measurements; dimensions;
MEET	To get together; to encounter	To measure; to size up
MERE	No more than; solely; smallest or slightest	Lakes; large inland bodies of water
MINDER	One who looks after something or someone	Less; fewer; a smaller amount
MITE	Microscopically small tick; small child or animal	Myth; unverifiable historical report; widely held false belief
MOLES	Small burrowing mammals; spies; flat, dark lumps on skin	Fracas; disturbance; quarrel
MOOR	Piece of overgrown upland; heath; to fasten a ship on shore	To murder; to massacre
MOOT	Subject to debate; uncertainty	Valley between two ridges; to cut into pieces
MORE	A greater amount or degree; additional; to a larger extent	Tomorrow; the day following today
NAG	To irritate with continuous demands or fault finding; old horse	Night; hours of darkness
NODE	A point at which lines intersect; knob on a plant stem	Emergencies; crises; urgent situations
NUT	Fruit with hard kernel; edible fruit kernel	Use; usefulness; useful employ
ORAL	By word of mouth; related to the mouth	Everywhere; all over the place
ORE	Rock extracted from the earth for the making of metal	Ears; ear-shaped attachments, for example, ears of a jug
PAD	Material that lessens friction; paper sheets for writing on	Road; highway; pathway; trail
PAL	Friend; comrade	Always; all the time
PALE	Faded or light in colour	Fencing posts; football posts
PALING	Becoming bleak and pale	Eel; snakelike fish

PANT	Taking short breaths in excitement or from fatigue	Pawn; wager; pledge
PARE	To trim or cut away the edges	Twosomes; groups of two
PARS	More than one level to be attained (golf)-	To squash or press grapes in winemaking
PEER	Look intently; person of the same age or standing	Pear; pear tree
PENS	Instruments for writing or drawing	Stomach of an animal; belly
PERK	To increase in cheerfulness or liveliness; a benefit	Boundary; scope; range; lawn
PET	Darling animal; one's favourite	Cap; soft flat hat without a brim but with a front visor
PLATTER	Large, flat plate or dish	More flat and level; smooth and without lumps (surface)
POETS	Those who write verses or poetry	To shine shoes or leather objects; prank; practical joke
POMP	Splendid ceremonial presentation	To pump; to force an answer; a pump
POND	Small area of water, often to keep fish	Unit of weight comprising sixteen ounces; British currency
POOL	Area of still water; a patch of liquid, as 'pool' of blood	Pole as in either of two opposite ends; north or south pole
POP	To make a sudden, explosive sound – to 'pop' a balloon	Doll; term of endearment for a small girl
POWER	Ability or authority to perform; physical strength; energy	Poor; useless; ineffective; under-achieving
PRAM	Baby carriage	Breast, especially on an animal
PROP	Supporting structure or item; to underpin or support	Bottletop; cork or other stopper
PUNT	Long, flat-bottomed boat; to kick a hand-released ball; to bet	Full-stop; point; tip; aim; purpose
PUT	To place or bring into position	Well; hole sunk into the earth to obtain water
RAKER	Person who rakes, collects or gathers	More accurate; more precise
RAKING	Act of gathering leaves or other garden debris	Tangency; contact; touching
RAMP	Slope or incline in a road or walkway	Disaster; tragedy; catastrophe
RANG	Past tense of ring	Rank; position in the hierarchy of army, police, etc.
RANGE	Scope or extent; variety; large complex stove	Ranks; positions in the hierarchy of army, police, etc.

RANK	Position in chain of command of army, police, etc.; to smell	Of plants, to creep; to grow along the ground or a trellis
RANT	To ramble or rage in speech	Extended, sprawling hill
RAPE	To force sexual intercourse; leaves of a kind of cabbage	Turnips; round root vegetables
RAPS	Informal chatters; striking audible noises	To mete out corporal punishment, especially to children
RAT	Rodent resembling a large mouse	Gear; cog; driving mechanism of toothed wheels
RATE	Measure or frequency compared to others; speed; tariff	Remedies for illness, discomfort or problems
RATS	Large rodents resembling mice and moles	Quick and nimble of movement
RED	A primary colour, such as of blood or strawberries	To save (bring about salvation); to rescue
REDDER	More red, especially when blushing	Saviour; redeemer; rescuer
REEDS	Tall, thick grass-like plants that grow near water	Already; before; by now
REEKS	Stinks or smells unpleasantly	Series; sequence
REIN	Narrow leather strap with which to steer and check a horse	Pure of heart; chaste
REUSE	To utilize again; to use more than once	Giants; colossal or gigantic
RIG	To prepare a boat for sailing; apparatus set up for a purpose	To aim; to aspire; to point toward
ROB	To steal, burgle or pinch	Sea lion; seal; a fish-eating, fish-like mammal with flippers
ROMP	To prance about playfully, in an energetic way; to frolic	Woman's dress or skirt
ROOF	Structure covering a building, vehicle	Robbery, especially armed robbery; to plunder and steal
ROOK	Black crow; chess piece in battlement tower shape	Smoke or to smoke; to smoulder
ROOM	Space; habitable or storage area, mostly with walls and door	Cream; soft ointment
ROOSTERS	Male domestic fowls; cocks	Metal frameworks for cooking; time tables
ROT	To become putrid; to decay	Rat, rodent resembling large mouse
ROTS	Putrifies; decomposes	Rock; large stone
ROWER	Oarsman; one who propels a boat with oars	Thief; robber; burglar

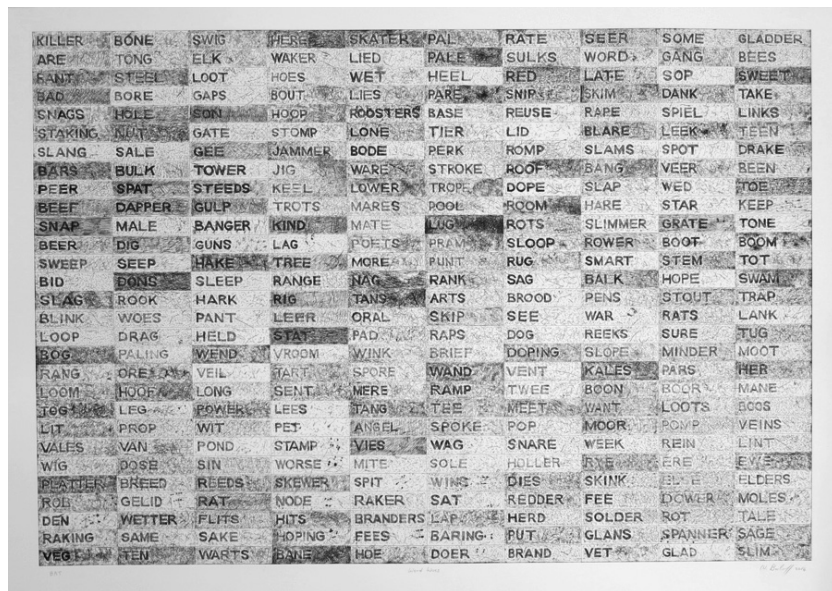
RUG	Shaggy, woven mat covering part of a floor	Back and spine; rear surface of human or animal body
RYE	Wheat-like cereal plant used for whiskey, fodder and bread	Rows; lines of objects or people
SAG	To fold or bend down under weight	Soft to the touch; gentle; smooth
SAGE	Profoundly wise man; aromatic herb	Myth, legend; fairy-tale
SAKE	For the purpose of; expression of irritation (for pity's 'sake'!)	Business affairs; matters (of the heart etc.); court cases
SALE	Transaction in which money, goods or services are traded	Halls for gatherings, meetings and concerts; saddles
SAME	Similar; identical, matching	Together, jointly, mutually
SAT	Past tense of sit; to have taken a seat	Exhausted; worn out; tired; conked out; had it
SEE	To observe visually; region as denoted by a cathedral	Sea; ocean
SEEP	To leak or flow slowly through a porous material or gap	Soap; cleansing material for washing dishes, clothing, etc.
SEER	Diviner; one who can reveal the truth through special insight	Hurtful; painful; sore; aching
SENT	Past participle of 'send'	Cent, the smallest unit of the South African currency
SIN	Immoral act; to transgress against a divine law	Sentence as a string of words; sense; meaning
SKATER	One who glides on ice or moves on shoes with small wheels	To laugh out loud; to laugh with free abandon
SKEWER	Spike of wood or metal on which pieces of food are cooked	More skew; more twisted at incorrect angles
SKIM	To remove the top layer from a liquid; to peruse a text	Phantom; apparition
SKINK	Smooth lizard with short or absent legs	To decant; to pour tea, coffee or other drinks
SKIP	Move with spring in the step; to omit some; large container	Boat; ship; seafaring vessel
SLAG	Waste material at the smelting or refining of ore	Loud bang or clash; to butcher an animal
SLAMS	Shuts with force; smashes; hits suddenly, as slams on brakes	Of the Cape Coloured Muslim people or their habits
SLANG	Informal and colloquial language not used in acceptable text	Snake; long tube-like reptile with no legs
SLAP	To smack – an instance of such; to spank, cuff or clout	Yielding; elastic and limp; lacking rigidity
SLEEP	To slumber; state of rest when we are unaware of the world	To drag; to haul; to pull

SLIM	Thin of posture or figure	Astute; shrewd, clever, crafty
SLIMMER	More gracefully thin; more slender; more slight of build	More clever; more smart; more intelligent
SLOOP	One-masted sailboat	Cushion cover;
SLOPE	Incline; gradient; rise in a surface	Pillowcases
SMART	Elegantly dressed; clever; bright; hurting from insult or pain	Anguish over death; sadness at the loss of a loved one
SNAGS	Unexpected, hidden obstacles; hitches or catches; difficulties	At night; when the dark of night settles in
SNAP	To break off suddenly; to nip at; sudden cracking sound	To understand or grasp; to comprehend
SNARE	Trap for catching birds or animals	Strings, especially on a guitar, violin, harp and such
SNIP	To cut swiftly with scissors or shears; act of such cutting	Girl who makes snappy, often cutting remarks; off-cut
SOLDER	To fuse metal together with tin or lead; tin, lead used as such	Attic; space or room just below the roof of a building
SOLE	Exclusive; one and only; undersurface of a shoe; flatfish	Rubber, plastic or leather bottoms of shoes
SOME	A number of; certain	Hems on garments, tablecloths and such
SON	Male child; boy or man in relation to his parents	Sun; intensely bright star around which the earth orbits
SOP	Piece of bread dipped in soup; ineffective action to appease	Soup; thick liquid dish of vegetables, meat and such
SPANNER	Tool for loosening and fastening bolts	One who erects fences or who rigs high tensile wires
SPAT	Past participle of spit (spew out); petty quarrel	To sprinkle a liquid; to scatter drops of fluid
SPIES	Secret agents; persons who secretly gather information	Spear; weapon with a long shaft and pointed tip
SPITS	Ejects saliva forcibly from the mouth	Mountain peak; climax; top of a pointed tower
SPOKE	Shaft connecting rim of wheel to centre; past tense of speak	Ghosts; spectres; apparitions
SPORE	Minute cell capable of propagation, as in fungi and ferns	Footprints; animal tracks
SPOT	Blemish; small round conspicuous mark; to notice something	To mock or ridicule; to make fun of or tease
STAKING	To mark a territory (as in staking a claim)	To cease work; to strike (as an industrial action)
STAMP	To put foot down with force; official mark on paper	Shove forcibly; crash into a vehicle, thing or person

STAR	Bright heavenly body visible at night; radiating pointed sign	Having a fixed, vacant appearance or stare
STAT	Short for photostat or statistic	Primitive town situated in rural area
STEEDS	Horses available for riding; stallions	Nevertheless; in spite of everything
STEEL	Hard, bluish-grey metal derived mostly from iron ore	To take from others without permission; to steal
STEM	Stalk on a plant; supporting shaft (as 'stem' of a wine glass)	Voice; vote as indication of choice
STOMP	To tread heavily and noisily, often in display of anger	Tree trunk; blunt; having lost the edge
STOUT	Overweight and heavily built; strong and thick, as 'stout' beer	Naughty; disobedient; badly behaved
STROKE	Hitting; heart attack; to move the hand gently across surface	Brush strokes; strips as in longish pieces of paper or cloth
SULKS	Displays bad temper by being silently morose	Such, as in 'as such'; in that case
SURE	Certain; convinced; confident	Acids; chemical compounds that eats away at substances
SWAM	Past tense of swim; having propelled the body through water	Fungal development; mouldy growth
SWEEP	To clean an area with a broom or brush; a swift movement	Whip as a piece of leather on a stick, used for flogging
SWEET	Sugary or syrupy to the taste; lovable and pleasant	Sweat; moisture that appears on skin through exercise
SWIG	To drink in heavy gulps; a sizeable drink as swallowed	To give in; to yield or succumb
TAKE	To lay hold of something; to appropriate; to accept	Chores; assignments; tasks
TALE	Story; fabricated account	Languages; tongues
TANG	Strong taste, flavour or smell	Pliers; tongs used for gripping objects and bending wire
TANS	To cause the skin to darken in the sun; to cure leather	Presently; occurring now; at the moment
TART	Tasty pastry dish; promiscuous woman; sharp tasting flavour	To tease; to mock; to make fun of
TEE	In golf, a small peg holding the ball – to 'tee' off	Tea; hot drink of boiling water and crushed leaves
TEEN	Teenager or pertaining to teenagers	In opposition to; hostile to; adjacent to or touching
TEN	The number 10; a group of ten	At, as in 'at best' (<i>ten beste</i>);
TIER	One of a number of rows, staggered one above the other	Tiger; a huge, dark-yellow cat with black stripes

TOE	One of the five digits of a foot; the lower end of something	At that time or then; whilst
TOG	Football boot; to put on clothes	Yet; nevertheless; in spite of that
TONE	Quality of sound; condition of things like muscles or places	Toes; digits of the human foot or of the feet of birds, etc.
TONG	Chinese secret society; handle used for lifting	Tongue; organ of speech and of taste
TOT	Very young child; small measure of alcoholic drink; to add	Until; in anticipation of; pending
TOWER	Tall, narrow building; to rise to great height, one who tows	Magic; conjuring power
TRAP	Device used to ensnare animals; to catch and hold	Step on staircase; rung on ladder; to step on; to run over
TREE	Large woody plant with branches	Footstep; unit of space measured by a step when walking
TROPE	Word expressing a figurative or metaphoric sense	Tropics; region between tropics of Cancer and Capricorn
TROTS	To move at a pace faster than a walk	Pride; self-importance; self-esteem
TUG	To pull, jerk or tow; a hard or sudden pull; towing boat	To chastise or castigate; to inflict punishment
TWEE	Unduly and affectedly quaint; pretty or sentimental	The number two – one has two hands, eyes, etc.
VALES	Valleys, especially in place names or poetic use	Pale ones; colourless, grey ones
VAN	Covered truck used for transporting goods or people	From or of; belonging to; from the time when
VEER	To change direction; to swerve off course	Feather; blade facilitating spring-loaded suspension
VEG	Short for vegetables	To fight in battle; to dispute an issue
VEIL	Shroud; cloth worn by women to cover the face	To sell by auction
VEINS	Tubes that carry blood in body; ore-bearing streaks in rock	To feign; to pretend; to put on
VENT	To find expression for; opening that allows air or gas to flow	Coarse, uncouth fellow; impolite, annoying man
VET	Abbreviation for 'veterinarian'; to approve critically	fat (as in both 'obese' and in 'animal fat')
VIES	To compete keenly in order to achieve something	Angry; annoyed; irritated
VROOM	Roaring sound of an engine or implement	Pious; living by deep religious standards
WAG	Of animals, to move the tail rapidly; to wave a finger	To wait; to stay; to pause in one's activities; a guard

WAKER	One who awakes from sleep, or academic dormancy	One who keeps vigil against things that might go wrong
WAND	A long, thin stick, especially one that can create magic	Wall; inside wall-surface of a hollow space
WANT	To desire; to wish or yearn for; to crave	Because; for the reason that
WAR	Conflict; state of armed conflict; confrontation	State of bedevilment or confusion
WARE	Ceramics or porcelain of specific type; manufactured articles	Genuine; authentic; indisputable; legitimate
WARTS	Small outgrowths on the skin	Furtively, as in <i>woerts warts</i> (whizz – 'this way and that')
WED	To marry; married to	To wager or gamble; to place a bet
WEEK	Period of seven days	Weak or ineffective; to soak; period of seven days
WEND	To find one's way; to go somewhere slowly or indirectly	To turn to; to fix trust or reliance on a person or something
WET	Damp; drenched; soaked; to drench; to water plants	Law; commandment; rule; regulation
WETTER	More covered or saturated with water or other liquid	Unpleasant, despicable person (pejorative)
WIG	Head covering made of false or real hair	Small child; tapering wedge of some material; to wedge
WINK	To close and open one eye briefly	To motion for someone to come; to beckon
WINS	Wins; experiences victory or success	Profit; proceeds; turnover; advantage, windfall
WIT	Sharpness of reason; intelligent humour	White, as the colour of milk; ashen
WOES	Afflictions; miseries; sorrows and distress	With wild abandon; unkempt and untamed
WORD	Utterance; single unit of expression in speech or writing	To become; to turn out to be; to develop into
WORSE	More bad in any sense, as more awful, evil or sick	Sausages; different types of sausages



Opposite page:

WORD WOES, 2014

Willem Boshoff

Etching

Edition size: 40

Printmaker: Tim Foulds

Measurements of framed work: 1100mm(height) x 1370mm(width)

290 English/Afrikaans words composed to resemble a wall of bricks

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