



Courtesy of the Handspring Puppet Company

Little Amal

When South Africa celebrated Heritage Day this year, Boschendal Estate in Franschhoek provided an ideal backdrop for the first steps of Little Amal, a three-metre puppet created by the Handspring Puppet Company from South Africa to represent the plight of a refugee child.

Guided by puppeteers from Ukwanda Puppetry and Design Collective of the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) at the University of the Western Cape, Little Amal took the first steps of what promises to be a spectacular international event as she will embark on a 8 000 kilometre walk across Europe in 2021.

Little Amal has a special place in UWC's ideals of freedom. By raising awareness about the plight of the refugee child, she animates a longstanding and deeply held

research ethos at UWC.

She also leads us towards a greater appreciation of a decade-long association with Handspring Puppet Company that has guided attention to a worldly shift in the co-evolution of human and technology. Little Amal brings together strands of thinking across the disciplines while asking us to attend to what has shifted in the contemporary configurations of the human condition. For UWC's Greatmore Street Art initiative in the Cape Town CBD, Little Amal serves as an inspiration to enhance mobilities across the rural and urban divides in South Africa. As she sets forth on her journey, she will be in conversation with the CHR's artistic and scientific engagements in documentary film, jazz, and the moving technics of the Laboratory of Kinetic Objects.

– Professor Premesh Lalu