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WEDDING DRESS AND SUIT SUZAAAN HEYNS HAIR FOIL STYLING MAKE-UP MICHELLE-LEE COLLINS WORDS TRACY GREENWOOD

# NO ORDINARY AFFAIR

For Jozi-based fashion designer **SUZAAAN HEYNS** and graphic designer **WILLEM KITSHOFF**, their wedding in the Free State was as much **A CELEBRATION OF LOVE AS AN EXPRESSION OF CREATIVITY.**

**PHOTOS** PIETER VOSLOO **WORDS** MALIBONGWE TYILO  
**DÉCOR & STYLING** SUZAAAN HEYNS AND SYBRAND WIECHERS



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**T**he Suzaan Heyns fashion label has long had a connection with architecture and sculpture. The eponymous designer's Autumn Winter 2013 range took its inspiration from the Indian-style doors and labyrinth alleyways of Zanzibar's Stone Town. In 2012, her Re-imagine Concrete collaboration with cement manufacturer PPC revealed a marriage of fashion and sculpture that had the country's most fashionable tongues wagging. So, when it came to wedding her partner of 14 years, this bride's penchant for art and architecture took centre stage.

The venue was the 135-year-old Prynnsberg Estate in Clocolan on the Eastern Free State highlands. Established in 1881, a century before both Willem and Suzaan's birth year, the estate was the brainchild of Kimberley diamond magnate Charles Newberry, built in pursuit of creating a classic English country estate in Africa. It featured various buildings and facilities: two churches, a vicarage,

the decor and even the wedding cake – doing away with the familiar figurines and instead featuring sculptures of Willem and Suzaan's hands.

For the reception table, Suzaan got in touch with Rial Visagie, founder and creative director of Ceramic Factory. "I asked him for any pieces he wasn't using, maybe because they were chipped or came out the wrong colour. He had so much. So we took a lot of it to the local OK Bazaar's bakery and asked them to stuff the pieces with bread dough and put them in the oven. We had no idea how they would come out." The result was food as art – bread overflowed from ceramic pieces such as cups, bull's heads and miniature dogs.

The couple invited about 60 wedding guests and took full advantage of the setting. Says Suzaan: "It was a full weekend event, with guests arriving on Friday and leaving on Sunday. We kind of treated it as a party for our friends and us. We made up all sorts of games for everyone to play. We wanted to create an interactive experience,



a gamekeeper's lodge, barns and a cricket field. But its star feature was a grand Victorian sandstone manor.

"The house reminds me of a cross between a David Lynch film and *The Addams Family*; I found it incredibly interesting," says Suzaan. "Admittedly, I'm a bit on the wonky side."

The house suffered generations of neglect, until the current owners bought it in 2003 and set about restoring it to its former glory with the guidance of a master plan by architect Michael Scholes.

Much like the house and in true Suzaan style, the wedding was no ordinary affair. First off, there were no flowers. Instead, the decorations consisted of white ceramics. The sculpture theme was pulled through to

so our friends could drink beer and play around and be happy." Although the manor house can accommodate only 24 guests, Prynnsberg has a glamping area set with canvas tents. "It was like a festival, basically," she says.

Avant-garde, bizarre, inventive, boundary-pushing... These are all words that have been used to describe Suzaan's work as a designer. We didn't expect any less from her wedding, and she didn't disappoint. ✓

- **Rick and Sue Melvill, Prynnsberg Estate:** [prynnsberg.co.za](http://prynnsberg.co.za)
- **Pieter Vosloo Photography:** [pietervosloo.co.za](http://pietervosloo.co.za)
- **Artist Sybrand Wiechers:** [sybrandwiechers@yahoo.com](mailto:sybrandwiechers@yahoo.com)

**PREVIOUS SPREAD**

- 01** Suzaan Heyns in her wedding dress, which she designed. She also made all the bridesmaid's dresses, which were in black.
- 02** The 20-room Prynnsberg Manor was built between 1881 and 1884, in a Victorian version of the Elizabethan style.

**THIS SPREAD**

- 01** Johannesburg-based artist Yannis Generalis created the flying hand casts for an installation playing with the concept of shadow puppets – the nostalgic romanticism of using your hands to make moving figures on a wall.
- 02** Prynnsberg Manor features a nostalgic replica of a "Victorian bath house".
- 03** What better place to sleep on a hot summer's night than on a comfortable bed under a mosquito net on the porch?



ITS STAR FEATURE WAS **A GRAND VICTORIAN MANOR.**







THE BRIDE'S PENCHANT FOR  
**ART AND ARCHITECTURE**  
TOOK CENTRE STAGE.

01 The reception was held at one of the two churches on the property. Suzaan elected not to have any flowers on the tables. Instead, she decorated them with ceramic art and copper candleholders made by her father, Thys Heyns. "Art is important to me," she says, "and I think it's far more beautiful to make things that will last forever than having flowers that wilt."