



*Ebina Tatsuo and Yutaka Hirose (Artist's Assistant). 2010. Ear.
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PROCEEDINGS OF THE 'ART and Social Justice' International Conference 21ST - 24TH MARCH 2010

**PATRONAGE GRANTED BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO
FOR ACTIVITIES OF SIGNIFICANT INTERNATIONAL SCOPE**

HUMAN LESSON

Hirose Dai

Japan

When I entered the world from the entrance which
is my mother,
The first man to lift and hug me was a heavy bearded
doctor whom I didn't know.
Because I realized that my first hug was not my
mom's,
I cried as soon as I was born.
The human body is not made to give birth alone,
But there is a vague memory in me,
Like a zebra, a cat, a whale, humans used to give
birth alone more easily.
Bodies which are too weak to bear a baby alone,
Maybe that's God's present to us.
It made our existence such that we can't live
without helping each other.
Humans became humans.
So, strain your ears,
You can hear the first cry of a baby from
somewhere in the world.

ISIFUNDO KUBANTU (Translation into isiZulu)

Mhla ngingena emhlabeni ngingena ngomama
wami,
Indoda yokuqala ukungiphakamisa iphinde
ingigone kwakungudokotela onobhebenene
lwentshebe engangingayazi.
Ngoba ngase ngibona ukuthi ukugonwa kwami
kokuqala kwangungekona okukamama wami,
Ngakhala ngizalwa nje.
Umzimba womuntu awenzelwanga ukuzala nje
kuphela,
Kodwa nginokukhumbula kancane,
Njengedube, ikati, umkhome, abantu babekwazi
ukuzibelethela bebodwa kalula.
Imizimba entekenteke ukugcina ingane yodwa,
Mhlawumbe ukuba khona kukaNkulunkulu
kithina.
Kwenze ukuphila kwethu singakwazi ukuphila
ngaphandle kokusizana.
Abantu baba ngabantu.
Ngakho-ke, gqilaza izindlebe zakho,
Ungezwa ukukhala kokuqala kwengane endaweni
ethile emhlabeni.

Poem and Image from *Dialogue Amongst Civilizations* project published 2010 by Art for Humanity,
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Durban University of Technology Senior Management:

Prof Ngabomzi Gawe	Acting Vice Chancellor
Prof Annelie Jordaan	Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor, Technology, Innovation and Partnerships
Dr Kenneth Netshiombo	Acting Vice Chancellor Institutional Support

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Mr David Sedumedi	Convocation
Nelson Munsamy	Audio Visual Services
Morgan Kristen	Audio Visual Services
Jerry Sylvester	Audio Visual Services
Mohil Ramgovind	Hotel School
Simon Madiba	Transport

Conference Secretariat:

Tony Starkey	Fine Art and Jewellery Design (Chair Conference Secretariat)
Jan Jordaan	Fine Art and jewellery Design (Initiator of the ASJ Conference)
Adv. Anil Naidoo	Art for Humanity
Mr. Themba Shibase	Fine Art and Jewellery Design
Gerhard Mare	Director of the Centre for Critical Research on Race Identity UKZN
Ms. Nichole Erasmus	AFH Coordinator
Prof. Graham Stewart	Deputy Dean, Faculty of Arts and Design
Dr Sabine Marschall	University of KwaZulu Natal

Conference Session Chairpersons:

Prof. Graham Stewart	Faculty Art and Design
Adv. Anil Naidoo	Art for Humanity
Dr Sabine Marschall	University of KwaZulu Natal
Prof Brian Pearce	Department of Drama and Production Studies
Prof Kate Wells	Department of Visual Communication Design
Chair. William Cleveland	Dir. Art and Community
Tony Starkey	Fine Art and Jewellery Design
Debbie Lutge	Drama Studies
Prof Ian Sutherland	Department of Visual Communication Design
Prof Mikhail Peppas	Department of Media, Language and Communication
Dr Dee Pratt	Research Coordinator, Faculty of Arts and Design
J Jordaan	Department of Fine Art and Jewellery Design

The following organizations contributed generously to the success of the Conference:

Durban University of Technology

Art For Humanity

UNESCO

eThekweni Municipality

Australian High Commission for Southern Africa



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Under the patronage of
UNESCO



Australian High Commission, South Africa



CONFERENCE BACKGROUND



A Leading University of Technology in Africa



Art and Social Justice/ 'the Art of Social Justice'

The Durban University of Technology and Art for Humanity hosted a three day international conference on Art and Social Justice from 21 – 24 March 2010 at the Durban University of Technology (DUT), Ritson Rd Hotel School, Conference Centre in Durban.

The conference was held in conjunction with the 'Dialogue among Civilizations' exhibition which opened on the evening of the 21st March 2010 at the Durban Art Gallery.

The 2010 Art and Social Justice Conference addressed a range of critically important issues and themes relating to the arts in promoting human rights and social justice in society. Plenary speakers included leading thinkers and practitioners in the arts, as well as health, justice, education etc. Paper, workshop and colloquium presenters were drawn from researchers and practitioners in all fields of artistic engagement. The objective of the conference was to serve as a platform for art practitioners and organizations to share experiences drawn from a variety of international contexts to discuss mutual concerns and find solutions to commonly experienced challenges.

The conference aimed to arrive at a concrete set of resolutions which can be developed into a policy document about the role of the arts in effecting social change, cultural development and equity.

In line with the hosting institution's commitment to applied research, the conference particularly called for papers that explore theoretical avenues to the credible evaluation of public art and art projects directed at advocacy. This dual approach, which was evident throughout the conference, was intended to bridge a crucial gap which frequently divides scholars and practitioners in the arts.

This conference and the 'Dialogue among Civilisations' exhibition was granted UNESCO Patronage. UNESCO Director General Mr. Koichiro Matsuura corroborates his endorsements to the projects by stating;

"This major event...involving the collaboration between artists and poets...is consistent with UNESCO's principle objective as regards the promotion of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity. It will no doubt contribute to emphasizing the unique role of the arts as a means of dialogue, communication and understanding...giving its aim of promoting ethical values through artistic expression and creativity..."

The 'Dialogue among Civilizations' project is a unique print portfolio that juxtaposes responses from visual artists and poets on issues of social justice. The project involved collaboration between artists and poets from Africa, Europe, Americas, Asia and Australasia on the theme of identity, land, object and belief. The art and poetry resulting from the project will be employed in a public advocacy campaign against racism and xenophobia, highlighting especially the plight of refugees. The exhibition arising from this project opened on the 21st March 2010 at the Durban Art Gallery

For more information please visit: <http://asjconference.dut.ac.za/>

CALL FOR PAPERS

The conference aims to explore the role and relevance of the arts in addressing issues of social justice. In line with the objectives and principles of the conference organizers, Arts for Humanity, the concerns of this conference are primarily directed towards advocacy taking into account the Millennium Development Goals: The goals are: bringing an end to poverty and hunger, access to universal education, establishing gender equity, providing child health to all, providing maternal health to all, combating HIV/AIDS, establishing environmental sustainability and global partnerships.

The conference will serve as a platform for art practitioners and organizations to share experiences drawn from a variety of international contexts discuss mutual concerns and find solutions to commonly experienced challenges. The primary aim is to arrive at a concrete set of resolutions which can be developed into a policy document about the role of the arts in affecting social change, cultural development and equity.

Practitioners and academic researchers with an interest in art and social justice, who critically examine relevant works in the fields of literature, visual arts, music and performing arts, are invited to submit a presentation proposal for one of the following parallel session options: a [20-minute paper](#); a [60-minute workshop](#); a jointly presented [90-minute colloquium](#); or a [virtual session](#). We encourage innovative presentation formats, such as roundtables, staged dialogues, screenings and performances. In line with the Durban University of Technology's commitment to applied research, preference will be given to papers that explore theoretical avenues to the credible evaluation of public art and art projects directed at advocacy. This dual approach, which will be evident throughout the conference, is intended to bridge a crucial gap, which frequently divides scholars and practitioners in the arts.

Important Dates

• Submission of abstracts:	15 Nov 2009
• Notification on acceptance of abstract:	15 Dec 2009
• Final date for early-bird registration:	29 Jan 2010
• Final date for late registration and withdrawal:	21 Feb 2010
• Final date for full paper submission (if to be published in the CD-ROM):	02 Feb 2010
• Final Date for full paper submission to be published in Conference Publication:	31 May 2010

Please submit your abstract of no more than 300-400 words by email to asjconference@dut.ac.za

Registration, program and conference details can be obtained from the conference [website](#).

Scope of Conference

It is intended that the conference will attract a wide variety of role-players to focus on the needs of its many stakeholders, learners, employers, educational institutions and the relevant government agencies. The conference organizers will provide an exciting but business-like environment in which clear objectives can be established for action which will result in development and transformation in the best interests of all concerned. Regional, national and international perspectives are encouraged with the emphasis on a successful future of the arts inspiring sustainable social and cultural transformation.

The conference will include the following interactive styles:

- presentation of formal papers, including keynote addresses,
- papers reporting work-in-progress,
- poster presentation,
- symposia (panel of contributors from significant sectors),
- workshops for discussion and exploration

Sub-themes:

1. Arts and Social Justice in historical perspective
2. Arts as mediator between traditional/religious practices and human rights
3. Arts, communication, advocacy and audiences
4. Arts as expression of cultural diversity in the context of globalization
5. Arts as heritage and the right to identity
6. Promoting ethical values through artistic expression and creativity in arts education
7. The challenges facing arts activism in the 21st century
8. Art activism advancing the Millennium Development Goals
9. Exploring the benefits for donor organizations supporting the arts for social justice
10. Promoting social justice and intercultural dialogue through the arts
11. Exploring the link between art, social justice and health

Abstract Submission Guidelines

Please submit abstracts of no more than 300-400 words via email to asjconference@dut.ac.za

Please ensure that your paper adheres to the following format:

1. Only generated electronic documents
2. NO SCANNED submissions will be accepted
3. All submissions should be in Adobe Acrobat (.PDF) or Microsoft Word (.DOC)
4. A 200 - 400 word Abstract
5. Times New Roman - 10 point font - single spaced

PLEASE NOTE: IT IS IMPERATIVE TO ADHERE TO THE SUBTHEMES ABOVE

Paper Submission Guidelines

The abstract must reach the organisers by the due date. Once you have submitted your abstract a confirmation will be sent to you indicating that your paper has been properly submitted. A copyright notice must then be signed and mailed/faxed back to the committee.

Authors are invited to submit complete and original papers. Papers that may be submitted for consideration include those that have not previously been published in another forum, or are not currently being published or reviewed by another journal or conference. The technical program committee reserves the right to accept a submission as either a paper or poster presentation and the committee may invite panel participation from submitters of papers accepted or not.

All accepted papers will be published in the conference proceedings. In addition, special issues of journals containing 'outstanding papers' from the conference are planned.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Art and Social Justice Conference **PROGRAMME**

Sunday, 21 March 2010

TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	NOTES
09h00	Pick up delegates from airport		
13h00 – 17h00	Registration Tea/Coffee	DUT Ritson Campus	Street Children Soccer World Cup Championship – Final DUT Sport Centre
	Transport delegates to Durban Art Gallery		
17h00 – 18h00	- Launch 'Dialogue among Civilisations' catalogue - Opening address - Poetry reading	Durban Art Gallery – Foyer	Program Director: Mr. Eric Apelgren HOD eThekweni International Relations 'Dialogue' participants to be introduced and delegates to be invited to meet with the participants Exhibitions - Memory suitcase project Include the Bremen Stilt Walkers, introduce by Mr. - Opening address Justice Albie Sachs Speaker introduced Prof. Nqabomzi Gawe VC DUT - Poetry performance Dr Mike Hajimichael University of Nicosia
18h00 – 20h00	- View art works 'Dialogue among Civilisation' including local artists response, curator Ms. Candida Pestana (AFH) - Ethekweni Mayor's Cocktail Reception - DUT Chancellor's response	Durban Art Gallery – Circular Gallery	Councillor Obed Mlaba, Ethekweni Mayor. Ms. Ela Gandhi introduced by Prof Nqabomzi Gawe VC DUT Program Director;
20h00 & 21h00	Transport departs to hotels		

Monday, 22 March 2010

TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	NOTES
08h00 – 9h00	Pick up delegates from hotels		
08h30 – 09h30 <i>continues throughout the day</i>	Registration Tea/Coffee	Ritson Conference Centre	
9h30 – 9h45	Welcome address and introduce keynote speakers	Ritson Conference Centre	DUT Vice-Chancellor Prof Roy du Pré

TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	NOTES
9h45 – 10h10	UNESCO representative (max 45 min)	Ritson Conference Centre	Damir Dijakovic Programme Representative UNESCO Southern Africa
10h10 – 10h30	Keynote address: Australian High Commissioner <u>Ms. Ann Harrap</u> (Cultural policy)	Ritson Conference Centre	Introduction of Keynote speaker: Dr Kenneth Netshiombo, Acting DVC Institutional Support, DUT
10h35 -11h00	Tea/Coffee	Ritson Conference Centre	
11h00 – 12h30	1. Plenary Session Arts & Social Justice: Human Rights	Ritson Conference Centre	<u>Panellists</u> <u>Ms. Ela Gandhi</u> , - Chancellor DUT <u>Ms. Iratxe Astorkia</u> , - Director of the Gernika Peace Museum. <u>Mr. William Cleveland</u> , - Founder and Director of the Center for the Study of Art and Community, Bainbridge Island, Washington <u>Prof. Rajmohan Gandhi</u> , - Research Professor at the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA. Chair. Adv. Anil Naidoo.
12h30 – 13h30	Lunch	DUT Hotel School	
13h30 – 14h20	Justice Albie Sachs Art in the Constitutional Court, South Africa.	Ritson Conference Centre	DVD 35 min – time for discussion; chair Prof. Graham Stewart Acting Dean FAD
14h20 – 15h30	Session 1 Parallel session	Ritson Conference Centre	3 venues X 3 session (19 speakers)
15h35 – 16h30	View Exhibition and talk by artist Kim Berman	DUT Art Gallery – Art as Advocacy: An AIDS Action Exhibition from Artist Proof Studio	Kim Berman
16h30	Transport to BAT Centre		
17h00 – 20h30	1. Dinner 2. Poetry 3. Live Music	DUT Hotel School Restaurant.	- Mbizo Chirasha, - Poetry Chat Room, Zimbabwe - Khona Dlamini - Durban Program manager.
21h00	Transport departs to hotels		

Tuesday, 23 March 2010

TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	NOTES
08h00 – 9h00	Pick up delegates from hotels		
	<i>Registration continues throughout the day</i>	Ritson Conference Centre	
09h00 - 11h00	2. Plenary Session Mayoral Panel (Local Government; Cultural and Social Justice Policy)	Ritson Conference Centre	• <u>Ms. Dinah Clark</u>: Programme Manager , Leeds, UK • <u>Mr. Isiah Magagula</u>: Director Housing & Community Services, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe • <u>Mrs Michèle Lambert</u>, Councilor, in charge of cultural affairs. Le Port, Reunion • <u>Mr. Eric Apelgren</u>, Mr. Eric Apelgren HOD eThekweni International Relations Chair: Prof. Graham Stewart Deputy Dean Faculty of Arts and Design. Durban University of Technology.
11h00 -11h30	Tea/ Coffee	Ritson Conference Centre	
11h30 -13h25	Parallel Session 2	Ritson Conference Centre	3 venues X 5 session (14 speakers)
13h20-14h20	Lunch	DUT Hotel School	
14h30 -15h40	3. Plenary Session Arts, Culture & Social Justice: Policy	Ritson Conference Centre	<u>Panellists</u> <u>Ms. Angeline Kamba</u> - HIFA (Harare International Festival of the Arts), Zimbabwe <u>Prof. Nigel Rollins</u> – World Health Organisation, Geneva <u>Ms. Annabell Lebethe</u> – Dir. National Arts Council. South Africa. <u>Mike Van Graan</u> - Secretary General of Arterial Network, South Africa <u>Ms. Almas Jiwani</u> - President of Canadian Committee for United Nations Fund For Women (UNIFEM CANADA) Chair. William Cleveland Dir. Art and Community
15h45-17h30	Workshops	Ritson Conference Centre	Bill Cleveland Open Space Technology The idea is to maximize opportunities for members of a temporary community to learn from each other and make lasting connections. Presentation by Artists/Poets participating in “Dialogue Amongst Civilisations” Portfolio Facilitated by Jan Jordaan, Lecturer, Durban University of Technology

TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	NOTES
17h30 – 18h00	30min break	Foyer	
18h00- 20h00	DINNER	Ritson Hall	AFH handing over of 'Dialogue' portfolios to major sponsors; DUT; NAC (Jan Jordaan, Dir. AFH)
20h30-22h00	Exhibition and Frontline Theatre production	Courtyard Theatre/foyer	1. Exhibition 2. Theatre
22h00	Transport departs to hotels		

Wednesday, 24 March 2010

TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	NOTES
08h00	Pick up delegates from hotels		
09h00 - 10h55	Session 3 Parallel session (Paper Presentations)	Ritson Conference Centre	3 venues X 4 session (12 speakers)
10h55 – 11h10	Tea/Coffee	Ritson Conference Centre	
11h10 – 12h45	4. Plenary Session Arts & Social Justice: Social Development	Ritson Conference Centre	<u>Panellists</u> <u>Mr. Sershan Naidoo</u> - Divisional Manager: Beneficiary and Player Relations, & Media Liaison. <u>Mr. Taylor Van Horne</u> - founding director of the Sacatar Foundation <u>Ms. Nicky Du Plessis</u> – Art Moves Africa <u>Mr. Bernard Stringer</u> - Vice President, Freedom to Create. <u>Prof. Judith Marcuse</u> - Co-Director of the International Centre of Art for Social Change (ICASC) Moderator/Chair: Tony Starkey, Head, Department of Fine Art and Jewellery Design. Faculty of Arts and Design, Durban University of Technology.
12:45 – 13:00	Summary Vote of thanks / Closing address	Ritson Conference Centre	Prof. Graham Stewart FAD DUT Dr Kenneth Netshiombo Dean FAD DUT
13h00 – 14h00	Lunch	DUT Hotel School	
14h00 – 15h00	Post Conference Meetings	Venues to be confirmed	Secretariat.
15h15	Transport to Airport		

SCHEDULE OF PARALLEL SESSIONS AND WORKSHOPS

PARALLEL SESSION 1 MONDAY 22 MARCH

TIME	Conference Room 1 Chair D Lutge	Subtheme	Conference Room 2 Chair Dr S Marschall	Subtheme	Conference Room 3 Chair Prof I Sutherland	Subtheme
14.20 - 14.40	Lynn Maree	5	Prof Brian Pearce	1	Connor Mullen	1
14.40 - 15.00	Rike Sitas	3	Glenn Flanagan	1	Prof Graham Stewart and Niall McNulty	5
15.00 - 15.20	Grace Kim	4	Nombeko Mpako	10		

PARALLEL SESSION 2 TUESDAY 23 MARCH

TIME	Conference Room 1 Chair Prof K Wells	Subtheme	Conference Room 2 Chair A Starkey	Subtheme	Conference Room 3 Chair Prof B Pearce	Subtheme
11.30 - 11.50	Amira Wasfry	3	Bill Kelly	4	Prof Marie Heleen Coetzee and Dr Alex Schoeman	5
11.50 - 12.10	Samuel Owens and Sharunda Chairse	10	Dr Hajimichael aka Haji Mike	3	Prof Mary Hark	10
12.10 - 12.30	Tamar Meskin and Tanya van der Walt	1	Dr Galia Boneh	11	Dr Kelone Khudu - Petersen	10
12.30 - 12.50	Jose Francisco Lumango	3	Kim Berman	11	Prof Kebedech Tekleab	10
13.50 - 13.10	Candess Kostopoulos	8	Claudius Jocke Vera Zimmermann	5	Heidi Liesl Salzwedel	10

PARALLEL SESSION WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH

TIME	Conference Room 1 Chair Dr M Peppas	Subtheme	Conference Room 2 Chair Dr D Pratt	Subtheme	Conference Room 3 Chair A Starkey	Subtheme
09.00 - 09.20	Dr Pamela Tancsik	6	Debbie Lutge	3	Clare Dowd	3
09.20 - 09.40	Prof Kate Wells	6	Eben Lochner	4	Pfunzo Sidogi	7
09.40 - 10.00	Vedant Nanackchand	6	Danny Myburgh	10	Witty Nyide	6
10.00 - 10.20	Richard Aitken and Nonceba Lushaba	8		10	Maria Palmo	10

WORKSHOP SESSION TUESDAY 23 MARCH

TIME	Conference Room 1 Chair: J Jordaan	Conference Room 2 Chair: A Starkey	Conference Room 3 Chair: Dr K Wells
15.45 - 17.30	Presentation by Artists/Poets participating in ' Dialogue Amongst Civilisations ' Portfolio	William Cleveland Open Space Technology The idea is to maximize opportunities for members of a temporary community to learn from each other and make lasting connections.	Crispin Hemson Difference and the Art of Teaching A workshop that explores difference amongst participants from the perspective of critical pedagogy, and addresses implications for teaching.

**Address by
Damir Dijakovic**

**Programme Specialist in Culture
UNESCO Cluster Office in Windhoek**

**on the occasion of the
Art and Social Justice Conference**

**Durban, South Africa
21st March - 24th March 2010**

Greetings and Salutations

For over a year now, the upheaval of economic and financial structures has prompted us, more earnestly than ever, to rethink the ways in which our extensively globalized world functions. The United Nations and particularly UNESCO, in its role as lead agency in culture, did not await, any more than you did, the advent of a crisis that in a certain way highlighted the important role of culture in development and a better life. This concept is one of the buttresses of UNESCO, where individual dignity and human development take precedence over purely economic considerations. Central to our action is respect for cultural diversity, intercultural and interreligious dialogue regarded both as a protean and essential asset in all aspects of life, and as a fundamental solution going side by side with development projects.

I am very happy to observe once more the extent to which the countries of Southern Africa are engaging in more and more initiatives in this respect.

When requested to provide the UNESCO patronage to this event, the former Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura said:

"This major event...involving the collaboration between artists and poets...is consistent with UNESCO's principle objective as regards the promotion of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity. It will no doubt contribute to emphasizing the unique role of the arts as a means of dialogue, communication and understanding...giving its aim of promoting ethical values through artistic expression and creativity..."

The new Director-General of UNESCO, Ms. Irina Bokova, who took office in November last year, from the onset of her mandate further reinforced these concepts and I would like to share with you on this occasion current directions UNESCO is taking.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In keeping with its mandate, UNESCO gives preference to a broad and integrated understanding of culture, looked on as a unique asset, at once essence and material, an intimate expression and a vector of communication towards the other.

UNESCO's role in the field of culture is consequently very vast. It covers the past and the present alike, the protection of historical and of living heritage as well as contemporary creation. To carry out this array of

activities, UNESCO adopts very broad set of policies that culture requires to be preserved, to flourish and to be strong enough to constitute an important ingredient of development.

To carry reflection and pragmatism further, UNESCO is re-launching the debate on culture and development. By postulating that culture makes the world more human, we can anticipate that more culture will make development more human. Arts and crafts as part and parcel of the wider cultural industries domain that can and should play a major part in resolving the present crisis, and the strong cultural policies promoted by UNESCO are there to turn this axiom into reality.

It seems fitting to outline the road travelled in recent years, which led UNESCO to adopt the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions in 2005.

I am particularly honoured that, among other esteemed speakers, we have Ms. Angeline Kamba, of Zimbabwe, formerly a member of the World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD), whose Report, *Our Creative Diversity*, published in 1995, today represent one of the fundamental documents for the reflection of the developmental role of culture.

At the end of the 90s, UNESCO enlisted a group of intellectuals from various world regions to provide together a dense clarification and a keen and up-to-date understanding of the many dimensions of culture; we were faced with the immediate need to intensify respect for culture, seen as an asset and a benefit, and to incorporate its driving force in the development process.

All that work done resulted, in 2001, in the adoption of UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. It is a very profound text which extends the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It mentions, *inter alia*, "aspiring to greater solidarity on the basis of recognition of cultural diversity, of awareness of the unity of humankind, and of the development of cultural exchanges". The strong point of the text is that it links up cultural diversity and pluralism, human rights, access to knowledge and freedom of expression. It is also postulated that cultural

goods and services are not commodities like the rest since they conduce to identity, values and meaning. The 2001 Declaration is a powerful defence of humankind and of individual dignity.

But UNESCO, in agreement with its Member States, considered it necessary to go further, to go beyond that Declaration by adopting, in 2005, a binding legal instrument, which is the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. It is a standard-setting instrument so far adopted by 103 States Parties and the European Community, which formally pledge to respect its guiding principles. The Convention covers a very full spectrum, and its articles are of very great importance. I should like to cite two of them which are more particularly relevant to what our gathering is about to discuss today. The first seizes the essence of the Convention, as it were, and I quote: "Parties shall also endeavour to recognize the important contribution of artists, others involved in the creative process, cultural communities, and organizations that support their work, and their central role in nurturing the diversity of cultural expressions."

For me, that is an explicit clarification, above all in this period of upheavals where the time has come to introduce or restore humanistic values in order to open the way to a fairer and more harmonious form of development for each and all. By consolidating the role of thinkers, scientists, creative artists and intermediaries, we open the way to a more balanced and more human future.

Another article of the 2005 Convention provides even better contribution to our discussions. I quote: "International cooperation and solidarity should be aimed at enabling countries, especially developing countries, to create and strengthen their means of cultural expression, including their cultural industries, whether nascent or established, at the local, national and international levels." In our globalized universe, international mutual cooperation and assistance is a necessity. To disregard it would be a mistake; none of us is an island unconnected with others. We all benefit from the multiple diversities that coexist. International cooperation is a form of solidarity, of respect and of tolerance that we should consider as fundamental. These are values central to what should be our shared vision.

The 2005 Convention aims to give arts and culture its rightful place in the international political agenda, particularly by recognizing its twofold symbolic and economic nature, which is inherent in human well-being. It sets out to protect the arts and variety of cultural expressions of the various social groups, notably those of minority groups and indigenous peoples. To be sure, it highlights the importance of culture for social cohesion in general, and its contribution to improving the status and role of women in society, which is also a determinant of peace and development.

The 2005 Convention naturally also encourages the development of partnerships between the public and the private sectors. UNESCO has always opened its doors to the intellectuals and the artists of all regions, and now, with help of the forum such as this one, it is the time that we also strengthen cooperation with the private sector, contending that arts and culture are a powerful asset permanently capable of renewal; it is the creativity of individuals and the creativity of societies, from which any form of elitism is debarred.

With the most recent establishment of the multi-donor International Fund for Cultural Diversity, the dimension of the Convention as a cooperation platform even better defined. The specific objective of the fund is the promotion of sustainable development and poverty reduction in developing countries through support for projects and activities that aim to foster the emergence of a dynamic cultural sector.

One of our priorities should be to develop interdisciplinary approaches in which arts and culture though diversity of cultural expressions will have a strategic place. To achieve this we also need to continue to develop and improve our national legislations and policies in favour of cultural expressions thus disseminating internationally the message that culture, as "capital stock" and mainstay of development, is a key for the present and for the future. This indeed can be seen from the World Report on "Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue", published by UNESCO at the end of 2009.

This recognition of the cross-cutting dimension of arts and culture is advancing substantially and very tangibly by being integrated into projects at present under way in connection with the Millennium Development Goals. Development projects rest, in Ecuador, on the promotion of cultural diversity to reduce poverty and facilitate social inclusion; in Cambodia, on creative industries; or, in Mauritania, on heritage, tradition and creativity for

sustainable development; or in Namibia and Mozambique on the development of sustainable cultural tourism; and in each and every one of them arts, cultural industries, heritage resources as well as gender balance are among the key components . Eighteen projects of this kind, throughout the world, are being carried out thanks to funding provided by Spain. Other Member States have announced their intention to make funds available to the same objective of integrating arts and culture for development. Last September, UNESCO with the support of Italy, organized in Monza, the UNESCO World Forum on Culture and Cultural Industries, in order to bring into closer contact decision-makers, creative artists and the private sector around the issues of creativity, innovation and excellence. That meeting enabled pointers to be identified for common action to put arts and culture back at the heart of the revival process.

Colleagues,

In the spirit of our gathering, I went to reflect on what at present governs the relations of exchange, transfer and movement that fashion our humanity. I was recently acquainted with the concept of Ubuntu as a social philosophy, widely recognised in Africa, which promotes an obligation of humans towards one another's welfare, while taking responsibility for the environment. It is recognition of the significance of each and every human life, the need for humans to take care of one another as social beings, and the need to take care of the environment that surrounds them. Often phrased as a belief that *motho ke motho ka batho* ("a person is a person through others"), it emphasises that humanity is not simply biological, but largely a product of socialisation and active promotion of good social values. It enshrines communal responsibility for human rights and human welfare. Together with appreciation of other elements of living heritage such as the performing arts and languages, Ubuntu promotes a balance between diversity and affinity between fellow humans.

It is indeed these thought that brought me to relate our Conference to the symbolism of 2010.

In 2010, *[being above all the year of the FIFA World Cup in South Africa]*, the United Nations will be celebrating the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, under UNESCO's leadership, having regard to its experience of more than 60 years in the work of advancing "the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples".

The objective of this International Year is to help dissipate any confusion stemming from ignorance, prejudice and exclusion that create tension, insecurity, violence and conflict. The task will be, in campaigning for dialogue and mutual knowledge, to foster respect for each other's culture and break down the barriers between different cultures. Exchange and dialogue between cultures are the best tools for building peace.

Four main strategic lines of action for the Year have been devised. They involve promoting reciprocal knowledge of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity; building a framework for commonly shared values; strengthening quality education and intercultural competences, and fostering dialogue for sustainable development.

Given the new challenges of an increasingly interconnected world, our shared task is to build solid bridges, based on solidarity between all cultures so as to create a new universal ethics of living together.

The International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures is a time to renew the global humanist agenda – one that goes beyond economic and political arrangements – one that can advance peace.

Dialogue among cultures holds one of the keys. Together, we will seek new ideas for encouraging dialogue: breakthroughs in our approach to thinking peace. This Conference, the project as a whole and its outcomes may also significantly contribute to the objectives of the IYRC.

I am convinced that each one of us is here to make a difference. We can each reach out, give and receive to shape this new face of peace. Today, here in Durban, across the World Cup, Throughout the Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures and beyond!

I wish you very rewarding debates and I hope that, in the course of this Conference, new paths will be uncovered and new ideas presented, of which I shall learn with the greatest of interest.

Thank you.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION

SOUTH AFRICA

Remarks by High Commissioner, HE Ms Ann Harrap

Art and Social Justice Conference

Art for Humanity

Durban University of Technology

Monday 22 March 2010

Thank you to the Durban University of Technology and the Art for Humanity Director and Coordinator, Mr Jan Jordaan, for the very kind invitation to speak to this conference. I note that the organisers particularly encouraged innovative presentation formats – roundtables, staged dialogues, screenings and performances. Well I'm afraid today I'm going to reinforce every stereotype you have about bureaucrats and I'm going to deliver a speech in a very traditional, non-creative way!

I'm also going to borrow from a speech made last year by the Australian Minister for the Arts, Peter Garrett, to the Australian Press Club in which he outlined some of the substantial and enduring contributions that the Arts have made to the life of the Australian nation.

Ladies and Gentlemen – this is my second tour of duty as a diplomat in South Africa. I was here in the mid-90's following the first democratic election and one of my roles at that time was to promote Australian culture to the new South Africa. And I remember a very poor joke from that time that went something like: what's the difference between Australia and yoghurt? And the answer was that unlike Australia, yoghurt had a culture. It was a stupid joke then and remains so now because it fails to recognise that we have a very proud artistic and cultural tradition in Australia. In literature and visual art in particular, but across all creative art forms Australia has much to draw on, to celebrate and enjoy. We have the extraordinary fact of being the oldest, continuous tradition of storytelling, dance and song by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Most Australians have a reference point of creativity which touches a chord for us, gives us meaning, connects us to our place: whether it be some lines of verse learned at school, a scene from *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, or a *Men at Work* song.

But there are other reasons why Australians are proud to support and celebrate the Arts. Minister Garratt listed his top ten reasons as follows:

1. The arts are fun – from the mosh-pit to the Opera House;
2. The arts are good for you – they keep the mind alert and the body active;
3. The arts help you understand yourself, describe your identity and fulfil your potential;
4. The arts bind communities – creating groups and networks in shared experiences;
5. The arts contribute to the economy – creating jobs, exports, tourism, new goods and services;
6. The arts drive innovation – in new technology and new applications of old technology and in thinking up new ways to express and entertain;

7. The arts nourish learning – boosting literacy and numeracy levels, preserving our great collections and making them accessible;
8. The arts are local - they help you understand your country; and yet
9. The arts are also universal - they speak a common language to every man, woman and child; and,
10. The arts express the zenith of human experience and capacity – they're a source of boundless inspiration.

A country without libraries or galleries, without poetry or music, sculpture or dance, without our stories, without reflection, is simply unimaginable. As an Australian diplomat, I would argue that there is an additional reason for governments and communities to support the arts – and that is to help influence in a positive way, the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of people overseas about Australia's identity, values and ideas. And to make sure that Australia's international image is contemporary, dynamic and positive.

Because, L&G, diplomacy or statecraft is no longer simply defined as negotiations between sovereigns or governments, with the main channels of communication being exchanges between officials. It's about creating links and common understanding – including through the universal language of the arts – to establish platforms for mutually beneficial cooperation. Or as the American academic Joseph Nye would argue it's about also using 'soft' power to convince others to follow, or agree to, norms and institutions that produce the desired behaviour. Soft power can rest on the appeal of one's own ideas or the ability to set the agenda in ways that shape the preferences of others.

Many governments, including my own, have recognised the value of Nye's words and have put in place what we call 'public diplomacy' actions to inform and influence the populations of other countries. While we have done this in part because of a belief in the intrinsic value of the arts, we have also done it for hard-headed national interest reasons. Our public diplomacy programs are firmly tied to the advancement of Australia's foreign and trade policies to benefit all Australians; to promote a better understanding of Australia's identity, values and ideas *overseas*; and to promote a better understanding of Australia's foreign and trade policy agenda *within* Australia. To me the logic is very simple – if people have outdated, stereotyped perceptions about Australia being a white, racist, unsophisticated country that only grows things or digs them out of the ground they are much less likely to want to visit us, trade with us, source their product from us, form alliances with us – and that has implications for the security and economic well-being of Australia and Australians.

Public diplomacy contributes to our national security by helping to build understanding about Australia and its place in the world as a stable, sophisticated, tolerant and culturally diverse nation. It contributes to our economic prosperity by promoting Australia as a source of innovative and high quality goods and services, as an attractive place to visit and as a country which offers international students first rate educational opportunities. Both countering misconceptions about Australia, particularly those that threaten to damage our interests and promoting a positive national image are vital – and frankly, are my bread and butter!

But how do we go about making sure that the world knows that: Almost one in four of Australia's population of over 22 million was born overseas, and 43 percent have one or both parents born overseas – and the languages most commonly spoken in Australia are English, Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic, Vietnamese and mandarin?

And how do we, amidst the most challenging financial and economic conditions the world has faced in 75 years, get across messages about the resilience and strength of the Australian economy, messages like: that Australia maintained stronger growth through the worst of the crisis than any other advanced economy; that Australia's unemployment rate is lower than nearly all advanced economies; that Australia remains one of the easiest place to do business in the world and that our competitive advantages are numerous.

Well, obviously one way is for me to use speeches and platforms like this to very subtly plug Australia! But perhaps more importantly Ladies and Gentlemen, we need to think about who we work with and be flexible in our approach. Many of the Australian government's public diplomacy programs would not be possible without the active involvement of state and territory governments, foundations, and various private bodies from cultural groups and companies through to universities and think tanks. The nature of the cooperation with these bodies varies. At times, the government enlists the assistance of other bodies to help implement a particular program. On other occasions, we will support the public diplomacy activities of other bodies which can play a role in promoting our foreign and trade goals. Obviously too we need to be conscious that globalisation and the rapid changes in information technology mean that a country's image can be shaped by various sources that are not necessarily working in partnership with government – sources that we cannot control. The mass media and popular culture affect how overseas audiences view Australia. At times, this creates challenges for the government's public diplomacy efforts. But this is an inevitable and natural feature of a pluralist society and indeed, this very diversity reflects one of the key messages about Australia – that it is a tolerant, open, democratic society based on the rule of law.

So I've outlined who we work with to help shape images of Australia – but what do we actually do? How do we go about using the arts to effect a change in attitude, a new mindset, a freshness of approach in the way in which Australia is viewed overseas? How do we build long-term relationships and an understanding of Australian culture and values?

In Southern Africa, we particularly seek to promote a positive image of Australia:

- through the media and in broader public discourse – my attendance at today's conference for example;
- by showcasing Australian culture and art, including through visit exchange;
- by fostering and encouraging greater linkages and collaborations between the artistic communities in Australia and southern African countries.

I'm particularly pleased for example that Australian artist and poet, Mr William Kelley, is a contributor to the 'Dialogue among Civilisations' exhibition which opened last night and that we at the Australian High Commission were able to support his participation in a modest way. But there are other examples which I

briefly want to share with you which I believe demonstrate the integral role of the arts in framing the debate about the modern day Australia, including in the area of social justice.

Australia and Social Justice for Indigenous Australians

Many of you may be aware that indigenous Australians have inhabited Australia for more than 60,000 years but currently Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up less than three percent of Australia's population. You may also be aware that through persecution, and as a result of shameful and divisive policies of successive governments, there now exists in Australia a disgraceful gap in life expectancy, health outcomes and access to education between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.

But I hope you also know that in February 2008, the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a National Apology to the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal People – and so helped to start the healing and reconciliation process between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. As the Prime Minister stated at the time, the Apology was a 'first step' and he acknowledged that much hard work remained to be done to redress serious disadvantages experienced by many of our indigenous peoples – and to close the gap with non-indigenous Australians.

To me, it is so important that South Africans – of all races – have a better understanding of racial issues in Australia; have a better understanding of the changing attitudes of many white Australians; have a better understanding that we are no longer trying to ignore past injustice but seeking to redress those wrongs and look to new beginnings; have a better understanding of the pride that most Australians take in the richness, diversity and dynamism of indigenous culture. At the High Commission in Pretoria we have sought to broaden that understanding in a number of ways. Late last year, the High Commission sponsored the South African premiere of the Australian film 'Samson and Delilah', a multi-award winning film directed by indigenous Australian, Warwick Thornton. The film, currently showing in South African cinemas, is a hard-hitting story of the challenges of life for indigenous adolescents in central Australia, including the themes of drug dependency and poverty. The first screening of the film in South Africa also coincided with a visit by the 2009 Australian of the Year, Professor Mick Dodson, a well-known and widely respected indigenous leader and Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia. As part of this visit, Professor Dodson held a successful and well-attended public forum with former South African Human Rights Commissioner, Mr Jody Kollapen to discuss each country's respective reconciliation process. We have also been fortunate enough to have had two indigenous dance groups tour South Africa in recent years. White Cockatoo, from Arnhem Land in Northern Territory toured South Africa in May 2007, performing at Africa Day concerts in Soweto and Mary Fitzgerald Square. The year before that another indigenous group called Descendance shared their unique music, culture and dance with South African audiences.

The screening of the film, the Dodson visit and the indigenous dance groups are clear examples of how international cultural interaction, prompted by exposure to the arts, can expose different perspectives and help shape understanding. Such activities can, of course, also encourage self-reflection for those able to experience them. I was very struck during Mick Dodson's visit by the number of South Africans who

commented with renewed pride about the South African Truth and Reconciliation process – particularly as it compared with Australian approaches.

Xenophobia and Racism

I am hopeful Ladies and Gentlemen that there will be further self-reflection, as well as some eye-opening about Australia during the World Cup 2010 when – in addition to all the excitement about sport – there will be an opportunity to showcase international artistic performance. We are particularly proud to be sponsoring a visit by a multi-media, one-man play called (appropriately) the “The Football Diaries”

The play will feature:

- at the National Festival in Grahamstown (28 June – 4 July);
- at the Football for Hope festival in Alexandria in Gauteng (6 & 7 July); and
- at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg (8-10 July).

The play tells the story of a young Sri Lankan-Australian footballer’s foray into professional football in Europe. Based on five years of journal entries and video blogs, the play is a meditation on art and sport in which an engaging personal story merges with new dance, popular culture and contemporary life in Australia and Europe. But the story also addresses issues of racism, particularly in sport, and xenophobia - very current topics for both Australian and South African audiences. To my mind, it will make a valuable contribution to the discourse on social justice issues for refugees and displaced persons.

Conclusion

Ladies and Gentlemen – I hope I have given you some sense of what we diplomats see as the significant contribution of the arts in helping to shape attitudes and beliefs – as well as the link between those international attitudes and the achievement of broader foreign and trade policy goals designed to bring security and economic prosperity to Australians.

Of course it is extremely difficult to measure the impact of the sorts of public and cultural diplomacy programs that I have described earlier. As Edward Murrow a leading American broadcast journalist once quipped in the 1960’s ‘no cash register will ring when a mind is changed’.

Building trust and shaping a national image require patience – the dividends of a successful visit or artistic exchange may not become apparent for years – but with public diplomacy now such a standard arm of statecraft there is no prospect that

Australia’s support for the arts as a key element of any public diplomacy program will change.

Thank you.

“GUERNICA”: THE POWER OF AN ARTWORK AGAINST WAR AND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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Abstract

In this paper I will like to present, first of all, the work done on the field of Art and Peace by the Gernika Peace Museum Foundation and secondly introduce how powerful can be an artwork to remind people all over the world, the tragedy of an small but symbolic city of Basque Country (Spain) as it is Gernika-Lumo (completely destroyed the 26th april 1937, during the Spanish Civil War), and how an artwork has become it a symbol --as Picasso's "Guernica" is nowadays (Icon of the art on the XXth century)— of the atrocity and of a cry against all kind of wars. The power of an artwork against war and for Human Rights.

1. Introduction: Gernika Peace Museum, a museum to remember the past, a museum for the future

In 1998, The Town Hall of Gernika-Lumo opened a museum inspired by the history of the town, and what it had happened there during the Spanish Civil War.

In the year 2002, the museum upgraded its profile and enhanced its potential, rapidly becoming an institution in accordance with the needs of the modern world. This led to the establishment of the Gernika Peace Museum Foundation (www.peacemuseumguernika.org), of which the Basque Government, The Regional Council of Bizkaia and Gernika-Lumo Town Hall are trustees. The Museum has grown into an attractive, dynamic space, a scenario which seeks not to impose any absolute truths, but rather poses questions and prompts dialogue in relation to peace.

So, the Gernika Peace Museum does not intend to act as a narrator of war stories. It is, rather, a space which helps us to believe in peace, invites us to seek out peace, observe peace and confront it. It is a theme museum conveying a culture of peace, transmitting the ideas and sensations of interaction between history, creativity and human emotions.

The Gernika Peace Museum compares and proposes a number of universal aspects in relation to peace. From an absence of peace when Human Rights are violated, to the presence of peace when, after the conflict, comes reconciliation or the right-thinking ideas of the world's pacifists.

So, the permanent exhibition of the museum operates around three major questions:

1. What is peace?

A wide selection of ideas, concepts, thoughts and points of view in relation to peace –particularly a contemporary idea—in which peace, to solve conflicts, flourishes in terms of relationships between human beings. The history of peace must not be the history of the end of conflict.

2. What is the legacy of the bombing of Gernika? A reading of the history of Gernika-Lumo and the Spanish Civil War, the bombing of Gernika, and the fine lesson in peace taught to us by the survivors of this tragic event through their reconciliation with their attackers, in addition to other instances of reconciliation and mediation for peace all over the world (South Africa, Northern Ireland...)

3. What about peace in the world today? We take a look at the world through Picasso's "Guernica" using Human Rights and the Basque Conflict as prisms to study the current state of peace in the world today.

Apart from this permanent exhibition the Gernika Peace Museums offers **other services** to its visitors as:

Temporary exhibitions during the last years, as:

- Art and Human Rights
- Picasso-Gernika, 70th anniversary
- Failing to make the grade: The Spanish Civil War in school text books
- In Security: The nuclear dilemma
- The Ringelblum archives: The hidden history of the Warsaw ghetto
- From Apartheid to Democracy: The struggle for liberation in South Africa
- S.T.O.P Surviving in the occupied Palestinian Territories
- The promised route (new immigration waves to Spain)
- Hiroshima and Nagasaki
- Guatemala: So all that shall know
- Dia Tekhné: Dialogue through art

Travelling exhibitions

The museums offer several travelling exhibitions (Bombing of Gernika....)

Educational department (hezkuntza.museoa@gernika-lumo.net) that organizes several workshops and other activities to work with school children, adult groups, families interested on go deeper into the subjects tackled on the museum: History and Memory, Peace and Human Rights.

Specialized documentation centre about the bombing of Gernika and the Spanish Civil War (dokumentaziozentrua@gernika-lumo.net) that preserve, investigate and exhibit all existing documentation on the bombing of Gernika, the history of Gernika-Lumo within the context of the Spanish Civil War and the repercussions on exile.

Guided tours in four languages (Basque, Spanish, English and French)

Museum shop

Conferences, symposiums ...

The Gernika Peace Museum belongs and has a very active involvement in some international networks as:

- **International Network of Museums for Peace (INMP)**
www.museumsforpeace.org
- **ICOM: IC-MEMO** www.ic-memo.org
- **International Coalition of Sites of Conscience** www.sitesofconscience.org
- **AIPAZ: Spanish Peace research Association** www.aipaz.org
- **Forum of Associations for Peace and Human Rights of the Basque Country**
www.ddhhypaz.org

2. Gernika and Art & Peace

Art and Peace (www.artandpeaceguernica.org) is a project and line of work developed in Gernika-Lumo (Bizkaia, Basque Country), declared by UNESCO as "City of Peace", by three institutions involved in cultural activities and to the causes of Peace. These three institutions (Gernika Peace Museum Foundation, Gernika Gogoratuz Foundation and Gernika Cultural Center) decided in 1999 to start a research, education and diffusion initiative on the close relationship between art and Peace, on all forms of art, and from the perspective of art, it is possible to contribute not only to culture but to the construction of a culture of Peace in the world.

From the very beginning, these three institutions worked hand in hand with two artists (William Kelly, Australia) and Alex Carrascosa (Basque Country) materializing the following activities:

Exhibitions

Exhibitions organized by this three institutions or brought from other places that talked about this relation between Art and Peace and Art and Human Rights

- ***"Art towards reconciliation" (2000)***
- ***"Kids' Guernica" international project (2003)***
- ***"Humanist Art symbolic sites"*** by William Kelly (2005)
- ***"Signs for Peace"*** by Claus Miller (2007)
- ***"Art and Human Rights"*** by Art for Humanity (2008)
- ***"DIA TEKHNE: Dialogue through Art"*** by Alex Carrascosa (2010)

Performances and installations in Gernika

- **Plaza of fire and light: place of peacemakers (2001).**

Installation made by the Australian artist William Kelly with the collaboration of the Gernika Peace Museum, the Gernika Culture Centre, the schools of Gernika and many survivors of the bombing. More than 1.000 candles were lit on commemoration of what had happened in Gernika.

- **Spiritual figures: Passages of Peace in the Plaza of Fire and Light (2005) .**
Installation made by the Australian artist William Kelly.

- **Bombing of poems (Gernika)** by Colectivo Casagrande (Chile), 2007

International Conferences

Every two years the three institutions in charged of this project called "Art and Peace" organise an international conference to address several issues of Art and Peace, as Painting, sculpture, photography, theatre. For these occasions many artist from all over the world (Europe, America, Asia, Oceania, Africa) have come to Gernika to share their projects.

- **I International Gathering on Art and Peace: "From the "Guernica" to Gernika" (2003)** celebrated in Gernika, Bilbao, San Sebastian and Vitoria
- **II International Gathering on Art and Peace: "The contribution of Art to a Culture of Peace" (2005)** celebrated in Gernika
- **III International Gathering on Art and Peace: " "Citizen participation in Peacebuilding through Art" (2007)** celebrated in Gernika
- **IV International Gathering on Art and Peace: "Art in the middle of conflict" (2009)** celebrated in Gernika

The V International Gathering on Art and Peace will be celebrated in Gernika in 2011.

The Gernika Statement on Art & Peace

After the celebration of the first and second International gathering on Art and Peace, many artist wrote the "Gernika Statement on Art and Peace" as a contribution to many people and artist in the world that think their artistic project can help building a better world.

"Gernika Statement on Art and Peace:

Believing that it is the highest goal of human creativity to work to shape the world in a positive way, where peace always ascends over war, generosity transcends meanness of spirit and understanding eclipses misunderstanding; we, the undersigned artists and related professionals who have gathered at the international Conference on Art and Peace in the symbolic city of Gernika, and those others of us who have signed in support of these aims, feel it is our responsibility and honour to express our human -artistic, intellectual and spiritual- resources to help ourselves and others. Further, we believe that the expression of art helps humankind achieve a better understanding of its potential and therefore contribute towards a peaceful development of humanity.

We recognise that there are those in our professions and in society who feel art and life are independent entities and, while honouring and respecting the views of others, we ourselves feel fully and passionately that the significant direction for the 21st Century Art will reflect humanist ideals which will significantly contribute to reconciliation, peace and increased human understanding of all peoples and all cultures. We also express our support to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We are clear in our understanding that art is the expression of significant ideas achieved through forms to be understood and embraced by all.

Art is a practice that achieves its best when it helps lead humanity to greater understanding. We recognise that there are many levels, as there are in all other disciplines such as science, medicine, humanities, politics... being makers, constructors and builders -rather than destroyers of things- we realize that peace is not one of many options but, that peace is truly the only sustaining option.

We know that significant art must equally do two things; express an acknowledgement of the possibilities of the human dimension; and do so in an appropriate and visual language that can take us into a positive reflection about peace.

It is important to state that such work need not be limited to a particular medium or style; that ideas can be realised in paint, print and 3 dimensional media as well as installations, sound sculptures, text based work, performance art, computer imagery, video, concrete poetry and other media including those yet to be explored by artists. We believe and support an art which expresses our cultural diversity.

We recognize our indebtedness to thousands of people -historical and contemporary- artists, philosophers, poets, play writers, novelists, filmmakers, storytellers and workers for humanist principles and understanding between people worldwide. The responsibility and the honour to be part of this continuum and the challenge to contribute to the celebration of life, humankind and to peace are here for all of us."

3. Picasso's "Guernica": The power of an artwork against war and for Human Rights

The Spanish Civil War started in 1936 and ended in 1939.

The 26th April 1937, the symbolic village of Gernika (Basque Country, north of Spain) was completely destroyed by the bombing of the German aircraft of the Condor Legion and the Italian Aviazione Legionaria.

The genius of Pablo Ruiz Picasso contribute to become Gernika¹ an universal symbol against the horrors of modern war, being the prelude of massive bombings of cities during the II World War, when he immortalised the event in his masterpiece "Guernica" made for the Pavilion² of the Spanish Republic for the International Exhibition in Paris, in the year 1937.

After Picasso read about the bombing of Gernika in the French press (specially after the article of Georg L Steer was disseminated around the world and published in several newspapers), Picasso started working on his masterpiece (1st May 1937) . The process for making "Guernica" was an extraordinary adventure made in an extremely short time. Only twenty-four days had passed from the time he began to paint the canvas until it was hung on the wall of the Spanish Pavilion.

And as Gijs Van Hensbergen³ says on his article "Guernica, the Theatre of War"⁴:

¹ Gernika written as in Basque language, Guernica in spanish.

² "The Pavilion was designed by Luís Lacasa and Jose Luís Sert and was a small architectural jewel, integrating harmonically the most modern rationalist building techniques, with elements from popular architecture. The central idea of its contents intended to transmit the message that republican Spain had modernised the country with a series of important economic, social and cultural reforms, and that these progressive values were really endangered. (...) The Pavilion, with all its splendid content and the bright colours of the whole building; white, black and red, was a permanent publicity advertisement and a call to attention for the nations of the world." ALIX, Josefina; "Guernica, the gestation of a Myth" in *Picasso-Gernika. 70th anniversary*, Ed. Ayuntamiento de Gernika-Lumo, 2007

³ Expert on Picasso's work.

⁴ VAN HENSBERGEN, Gijs; "Guernica, the Theatre of War" in *Picasso-Gernika. 70th anniversary*, Ed. Ayuntamiento de Gernika-Lumo, 2007

"It is one history's great ironies that "Guernica" born in the crucible of war and deliberately created to commemorate a specific catastrophe, has become the most powerful and universal symbol of our collective desire for peace and reconciliation (...) "Guernica", his great masterpiece, has gradually been transformed into nothing less than the moral lighthouse and compass of our troubled times. Both prophetic and shocking, its powerful and insistent message is as relevant today as seventy years ago. "Guernica" demands, above everything else, that we bear witness. It insists that we must never look away and turn our backs on the hypnotic image to avoid gazing at the horrors its represents. It demands we look."

Picasso's "Guernica" has become such a powerful tool against war and for Human Rights that many artists of the world, inspired by his masterpiece and/or by the fact of the bombing of Gernika, have made its contribution too, using a copy of the painting or several parts of it to create a new artwork.

Here I will present some examples of these artists and artworks:

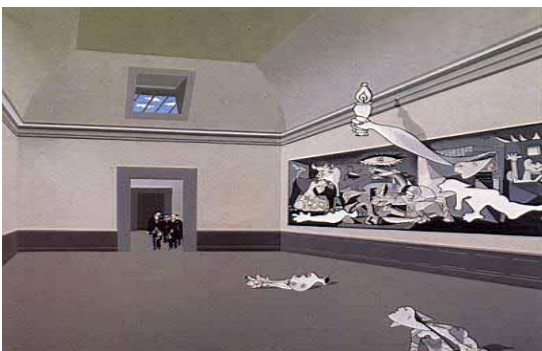
Equipo Crónica: Artwork against Franco's dictatorship

Equipo Cronica or *Cronicas de la realidad* was a group of Spanish painters who were active between 1963 and 1981 (especially during the Spanish Dictatorship of Franco). Founded by three artists Rafael Solbes, Manolo Valdés and Juan Antonio Toledo with the critic and historian Tomás Llorens

The *Equipo Crónica* departed from the informal art to cultivate a figurative painting in the Pop Art trend. Critically analyzed the political situation in Spain and the history of art inspired by artworks like Picasso's "Guernica".

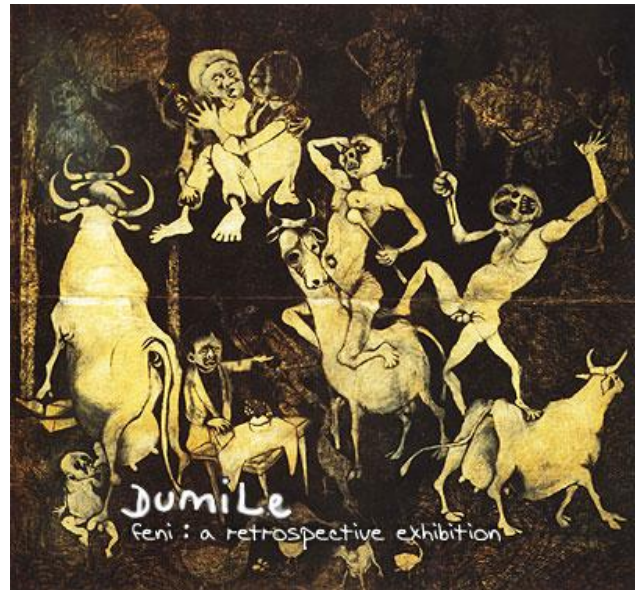
Facing the magnificent and picturesque image of Spain that the Franco regime wanted to project, *Equipo Crónica* impacted on a more somber resorting to irony.

Equipo Crónica produced large-format paintings, sculptures and prints.



The African “Guernica”

An African artist called Feni Dumile made too his contribution with an artwork called “African Guernica”⁵



Guernica artworks against Iraqi war



In 2003, when Iraqi War was going to be announced by Colin Powell on the United Nations room⁶, in which there is tapestry (copy of Picasso’s “Guernica”) , this was covered with a blue curtain. This action expresses very well the power of the artwork that was behind.

This action of covering “Guernica’s” copy to announce a new war was very much criticised from Gernika with the

public campaign “No more Guernica”.

Other artist all around the world, made his own artworks and performances because of this action. One example is the performance of Goshka Macuga , called “Nature of the beast” that was shown at the Whitechapel gallery (London) from the 5th april 2009 to the 18th april 2010

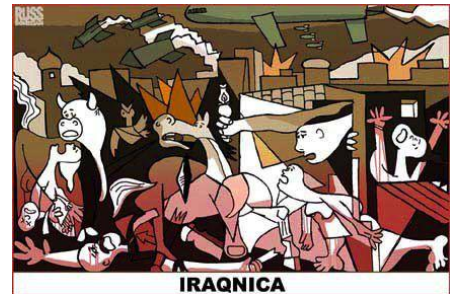
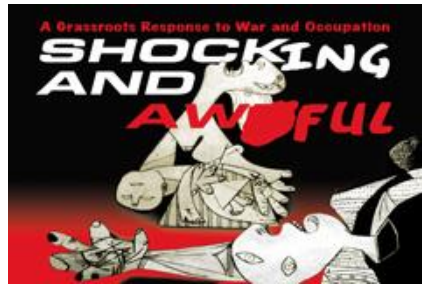
The exhibition of Macuga entitled "The Nature of the Beast" shows the Picasso tapestry and a sculpture of Colin Powell made to the Cubist manner. It is known that Colin Powell, sent to cover the tapestry of "Guernica", before announcing the imminent invasion of Iraq by the United States in 2003

⁵ © Feni Dumile, “African Guernica” (no date). Charcoal on paper, 330x270 cm.

⁶ Painting of the same size as the "Guernica" by Picasso, created by Jacqueline de la Baume Durbach and Picasso to satisfy the request of Nelson Rockefeller and, since 1985, when it was donated to the United Nations, hangs in the Council Chamber Security in the UN building in New York.



The war of Iraq too, made that several fragments or versions of Picasso's "Guernica" were used in different ways as a protest against it (cartoons, anti-war banners...)



“El grito” (“The Scream”) of Adriana Schmied

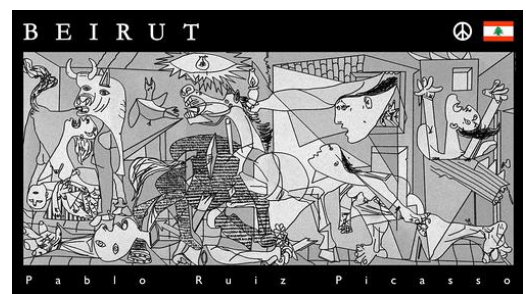
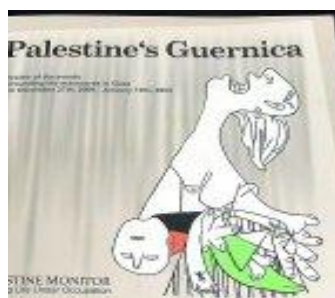
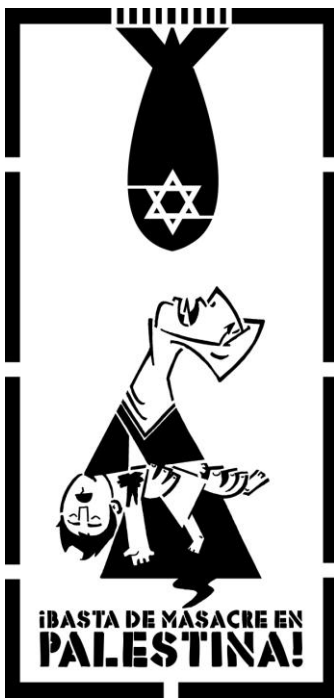
The work done in 2003 (stoneware mounted on painted wood), based on the "Guernica" by Picasso, compares the events of the town of Gernika to the events in the Middle East after the Twin Towers.

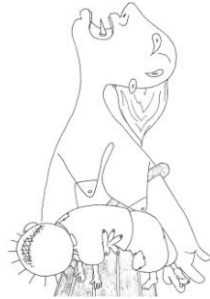
At first there is the "Guernica" in a version as close as possible, as we descend into the work looks like the figures "talk" to get out of the plane, looking at us and, finally, her maternity leave to be who he was and becomes an Arab woman, a woman who screams the same cry of so many years to realize what this contemporary image. Where the cry is always the same, who scream, no more violence, no more horror.



Guernica – Palestine / Lebanon

As well as in the case of Iraq, the fragment of “Guernica” has been used too as artworks to denounce the situation in Palestine and Lebanon.





Guernica and the Billboards: Ron English ...

Ron English is an American artist whose work, though with a reception on a smaller scale, is still as controversial as *Guernica* itself. English is considered one of the key figures of American pop art, characterized by its eclectic and subversive dimension. It is especially known for what he called "billboard modification, misappropriation and illegal modification of posters on streets, roads or any public highway, and vindication for artistic purposes, an activity that has been dedicated since the early 80's and through what has come to "hack" nearly a thousand billboards ("it's time to return to the streets belong to pedestrians, not the multinationals," says English). This multifaceted artist has exhibited in galleries and museums around the world and also worked as a photographer and underground music.

Ron English uses in, several of his creations, the elements of the original *Guernica* as a basis on which to build an oppositional discourse, drawing on contributions from mass culture and icons of pop culture. Their protest was directed not against the atrocities of war but slaughter against other, less obvious and subliminal, the society produced by multinationals and exacerbated by consumerism erecting false idols taken from trash culture.



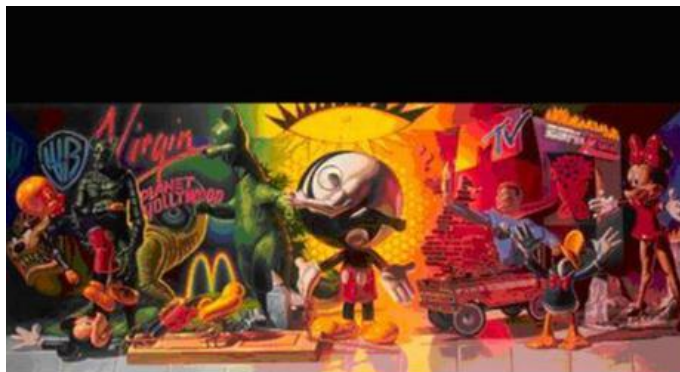
Cowgirl Guernica © Ron English



Bombing begins in 5 minutes © Ron English



Fire Guernica © Ron English



Times Square © Ron English
Guernica 3D © Ron English
Snoopy vs The Symphon © Ron English



Here there are some other examples of Billboards that has been used with the image of "Guernica" and a slogan to denounce something as these in Cuba, United States...



Kids' Guernica project

Kids' Guernica is an international children's art project to create a peace mural on a Picasso's "Guernica" size (3.5m x 7.8m) canvas.

Kids' Guernica peace mural is also painted on a movable canvas. Murals are usually painted on walls, which often imply separation. The movable mural is a metaphor for removing separation. World peace can not be accomplished without removing separation among nations, races, religions, cultures and people.

Kids' Guernica is an artwork on a global canvas, expressing the spirit of peace and connecting people. More than 160 peace paintings were already created in 40 countries of the world.



© Kids' Guernica, France 2009



© Kids' Guernica, Gernika-Lumo, 2003



© Kids Guernica, Sarajevo-Bosnia Herzegovina, 2001



© Kids Guernica, Hiroshima, 2007



© Kids Guernica, Polgahawela, Sri Lanka, 2000



© Kids Guernica, Kabul, Afganistán, 2005

William Kelly “Dialogue with “Guernica”



Project of the Australian artist William Kelly, who projected two large banners to be installed on the façade of the Culture Centre of Gernika under the title “Dialogue with *Guernica*”. At the first banner you can see fragments of Picasso’s “Guernica”, the second shows the Gernika today as seen by the artist. A blooming Gernika, who works for peace, where life prevails over death, where instead of war planes, there are flying birds of the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve and, where instead of the mother with the dead child there is a mother breastfeeding her child.

To summarize, we can say that the power of this artwork against the war and for Peace and Human Rights, is much bigger and stronger than Picasso could never think about.

4. International Project: “Gernika-Guernica: Source of Inspiration to Art and Culture”

The bombing of Gernika (26th April 1937, during the Spanish Civil War) and the picture *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso have made an imprint on history.

Many local, national and foreign artists have drawn inspired by this historical event or by this masterpiece, in order to express their condemnation of, solidarity with and outrage at the injustices committed by human beings when they strive to dominate and to exclude others solving this by war.

So, the objective of this international project, launched by the town of Gernika-Lumo itself, is to recover and compile artistic and cultural expressions from all over the world that have been influenced or marked by the historical event that sparked Picasso’s masterpiece, or by the painting *Guernica* itself.

With this in mind, the project “Gernika-Guernica: Source of inspiration to Art and Culture” seeks to compile material worldwide, in the following areas of art and culture:

1. Painting	7. Unpublished projects
2. Sculpture	8. Dance
3. Graphic works	9. Music
4. Films and audiovisual work	10. Literature
5. Theatre	11. Historical essays
6. Performances and street actions	12. Various cultural events

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The Shaman at the Gates: Art and the Power of Story

William Cleveland

Center for the Study of Art and Community

I'd like to begin with some group calisthenics, if you're willing. The muscles I'd like us to exercise this morning are pretty easy to find but often overlooked. Some people call them the imaginative muscles. So here we go. Just relax. Close your eyes if you like and open your minds as you consider the following scenarios.

- Imagine using drama to introduce democracy to decommissioned child soldiers of a war torn nation
- Imagine a poet and army officer using poetry to combat gangsters and terrorism in rural villages
- Artists helping homeless and hunted children in Rio's favelas to use media to tell their story
- Imagine a solo exhibit of paintings as one of the only visual records of a reign of terror in which over 2 million people died.
- Imagine an internationally recognized writers program, forced into bankruptcy and burned to the ground at the hands of an undercover government agent.
- Imagine having to sit down with rival militia leaders to negotiate the individual lines of your community play.
- Imagine poetry readings conducted at the barrel of a gun.
- Imagine waking up everyday knowing that your work as an artist, as a curator, as an arts administrator even, is critical to the survival of your people.
- Imagine knowing that your art making could get you killed, and doing it anyway.

These scenes are snap shots from a journey of inspiration and learning that I have had the privilege of taking over the past ten years. This journey that has taught me a lot about the power of animating the struggle for justice with the human creative spirit. It has also taken me to some amazing places---from the US to Asia, here, South Africa, Europe, Australia and back. The book chronicling this journey called *Art and Upheaval: Artists on the Worlds Frontlines*.

I would like to share one of these stories from my own country

In 1965, Watts CA which is actually part of Los Angeles was very much like the townships here in pre-apartheid times. It was overcrowded and underserved and ignored by the larger community. Crime and unemployment were high, prospects for educational and social advancement were low and the largely white Los Angeles Police force operated in the community of 600,000 souls like an occupying military.

In the summer of that year the raw and festering wounds of decades of economic and institutional racism exploded in an upheaval of violence and destruction that left 28 dead nearly 600 wounded and caused over \$280 million (in 2007 dollars) in damage. Beyond that, the conflagration left an already struggling African American community in ruins.

One of the few bright spots to emerge in the aftermath of what some call the Watts Rebellion was the creation of the Watts Writers Workshop.

Starting small as the smoke was just settling on 103rd St. the workshop became a magnet for writers of all kinds in community that, believe it or not, had not one library for more than 600,000 souls. For some the workshop was an introduction to the power of words. For others it was the launching pad they needed to give voice to powerful stories that would need to change their community. Regardless of the motivation the work that rose up from the Watts Writers Workshop revealed a mother lode distinctive and talented voices.

One of those voices was a young man named Amde Hamilton. Here's what Amde had to say about the power of words.

I learned the power of words in the insane asylum. I had a doctor who was insane. And he had control of me. When we first met. He told me I had a problem and I said I didn't have a problem. He said; explain it all to me then. . I thought I had a pretty nice gift for gab so I started laying it out about living in a poor community and in the ghetto in LA and this and that. When I got through, he sat back and he took every word that I said, and tore them into little pieces and threw it back into my face. He destroyed me with my own words. It made me see the power of words. I walked out of that room I said to myself, 'some day am going to learn how use that power.'

After he was released, Amde joined the Watts Writers Workshop. There, he not only learned how to write but also met two colleagues Richard Dedeaux and Otis O'Solomon And formed the legendary Watts Prophets. The Prophet's 40 year history as pioneering urban poet/ activists who also laid the foundations for rap, hip hop, spoken word performance, and mentored multiple generations of Los Angeles writers is one of the stories in Art and Upheaval.

One unfortunate aspect of that story was that an FBI undercover agent named Darthard Perry sabotaged the organizations finances and set the fire to the Workshop's facilities. The lesson here, of course, is that making art in support of justice and change can be dangerous.

This unfortunate incident is just a small part of a complex and ultimately uplifting story of the Watts Prophets and the larger fabric of stories of artists working in communities facing extreme, social, economic, environmental and military upheaval that I encountered in Cambodia, Australia, Northern Ireland, here in South Africa, Serbia and the US-stories that are still unfolding.

Before I go any further I should admit to you that this art and social change work I have been doing for the past 30 years is as personal as it is inspiring. I was born into a life of upheaval. I literally stumbled in to art making, music actually, and it would be safe to say that Art saved my life. So exploring how our creative efforts help make caring, capable and just communities seemed like a useful path. So I have been making music, writing,

teaching, doing research and running programs related to this subject most of my life. The last 18 years of which have been spent at the Center for the Study of Art and Community. Yes, it's inspiring work—But, It also provides a powerful antidote to the idea that we humans are blight on the earth. My work has taken me into neighborhoods, schools, factories, prisons, mental hospitals, lots of places where according to conventional wisdom, art is not supposed to be.

So, naturally the more I learned about the power of human creativity --- the more questions I had— Questions like:

What spurs creativity? Is the healing power of human creativity equal to our obvious genius for wreaking havoc? Is trauma a creative trigger? Why are artists so universally feared by despots? Can the arts help change our worldview? What is the relationship between human creativity and social change? And what about the damage done using art?

With questions like that it was probably inevitable that I would end up with artists working in communities facing extreme social, military, and environmental upheaval, like, Soweto, Watts, Belfast, Phnom Penh, and Belgrade. Places where artist have been in the trenches doing what they do-- telling stories, raising questions, challenging, revealing, getting thrown in jail, getting killed.

When I look at the headlines these days pretty much all I see is a failure of imagination ---- on all levels. 'But then there are these stories that keep rising up from organizations like Art for Humanity or a Serbian Theater company name DAH, which means, breath or whisper.

Can you imagine working in a theater company for no money 12 hours a day six days a week crafting performances that few will ever see and will likely land you in jail.

Or having to cancel your afterschool dance class due to local bombing

And then having your street performance contribute to the fall a brutal despot and end a decade of war.

We live in a world with a giant chasm between world people want and the way they think it works. Most folks agree that the world should be less violent, less predatory, more just. Most folks also believe that the violence and greed behavior that we see all around is humans being human--- So, it just follows, ---striking first and “looking out for number one” is how we have to operate if we are to survive. My experience working in prisons, social institutions and in ravaged communities over the past 25 years have led me to conclude that this is an old and dangerous view of the world that that needs to change.

I think that it's possible that in some small way these stories about the surprising things that happen when the forces of creativity and destruction meet in places like Phnom Penh and Belfast could help to shift some dark assumptions about human nature and maybe open us the potential power of human creativity.

I have always known that art making could be powerful and dangerous. But I over the past decade I come to appreciate the depth of that danger and that power.

I had always known that tyrants fear artists but I had never imagined a regime like the Khmer Rouge would dedicate themselves to killing all of a country's artists in a few short months.

I had known that the creative act could heal – but I had never imagined the depths of healing that I saw in Cambodia, in Belfast. I knew that art could move and motivate, but had never known the intensity of inspiration that I saw in here South Africa or in Belgrade. I knew art could bear witness and change minds—but not like the work I saw in Watts and Australia's nuclear desert.

I have come to know—that if you scratch the surface of a human disaster you will find artists doing amazing work in the most difficult of circumstances for a whole host of reasons. -----

To live, to eat, to kindle the human spirit, ---
to bring peace, or to resolve conflict,
to manifest beauty in the face of horror,
or to reveal the ugly truth in the face of denial,
to rally, or bring order
or to educate and inspire,
to entertain, to heal, ----
and most of all to tell the story,—
directly, obtusely, in code, as a joke,
as a song in a pub,
a poem or a painting on the wall,
as a play unfolding in cramped a living room –
as a dance in the streets.

This is what we have come here to Durban explore. So in the course of our deliberations let us not forget that this simple thing that we humans do every day is the key. The story is the key.

FH The story is the oldest
and most powerful resource
for human transformation.
Stories are nimble, versatile, malevolent, multivalent and ...
well, you fill in the blank.

Hold “the story” and you hold power.
Defining “the story” is defining power.
Subjugation is story killing.

Individuals, families and communities
are all defined by their stories.
If we don't tell our stories
we lose our dignity,
our humanity,
our souls
as in East Germany,
as in Chile,
as in Cambodia.

Tyranny is story subjugation driven by fear. Here's how it works:

One-- Keep them from telling the story.

Two-- Ignore the story.

Three-- Control the story by altering or editing it.

Four-- Romanticize the story

Five-- Simplify the story,

Six-- Trivialize the story

Seven-- Buy, then sell the story

Eight-- Kill the story

But, stories do not die.

Good partners join stories

At the hip

At the shoulder

At the third eye intersection of self interest and common ground

Partnerships are democracy zygotes

Democracy is the practice of collective story making.

Democracy says:

"Here is the story to this point—Let's decide together what's next."

The arts are the tools humans use to craft stories.

Story making is the reason---for art.

Got a mystery, get a Shaman to

stitch it to the rest

of your cosmology with a story.

If you don't, the mystery, unaddressed,

and out of context,

will literally scare you to death.

Untold stories are nascent shadows.

The shadow grows as the story is smothered,

stifled.

Untold stories,

unpeeled stories,

unexamined stories,

left to fester---

are very dangerous.

If you don't examine and tell your own stories

you can't help others tell theirs.

Stories reveal humanity in all its frailty, power, ugliness,

passion ...

you fill in the blank.

Some stories archetype, others lie.

Everything in the world is translated for us,
to us, by us
through story.
Everything we see, hear, taste and feel
has a story attached.
Meaning makes its presence felt
through the story.

Imagination is cold fusion,
generating more power than it consumes
as it chugs along raising the temperature
in the hot house of stories.

Privilege is the ability to manifest ones story, unabated,
to the exclusion of other's stories.
Dignity is the unfettered capacity
to make and share stories.
If you have great material wealth
you can buy the story you want.
If your story holds great meaning
you can acquire power
out of proportion
to your material status.

Empathy happens when
I tell you my story
and you tell my story back to me
and I nod my head.

Art contains the story, but only just--- for a while
The artist says, "This is how the story goes at this time and this place."
Sometimes the story sticks around
Sometimes it mutates or migrates.
Sometimes it escapes

Improvisation is fishing for fugitive stories
New stories get born
when improvisation and imagination converge
bending time and space wide enough
for story sperms and the story eggs
to find each other and join.

But of course there are no new stories
And all stories are new

Some artists say
Have a seat while I tell my story
Some artists say
Have a seat while I tell someone else's story
Some artists say

Have a seat while I tell your story
Some artists say
Stand up we have a story to tell

I say

Once upon a time...

**“NOTES ON TOPIC (‘LOCAL GOVERNMENT:
ARTS, CULTURE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY’):
DISCUSSANT: ISAIAH MHLATSHWA MAGAGULA: CITY OF BULAWAYO**

**CONFERENCE ON OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE DIALOGUE
AMONGST CIVILISATIONS ART PROJECT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: HELD AT
DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, ETHEKWINI ON
TUESDAY 23RD MARCH 2010 AT 9 – 11.30 AM**

APPROACH

My approach of the above topic will be on the basis of Best Practices in tackling the above using Bulawayo in particular and the country Zimbabwe in general as the case studies of my presentation/discussion.

- Local Authorities’ consider themselves as enablers and to a certain extent custodians of culture and Social Justice.
- We are bureaucrats.

My Presentation will dwell more on Local Authorities’ facilitation on Social Justice and being custodian of culture.

Defined in the Wikipedia as the virtue which guides us in creating those organised human interactions we call institutions. In turn, social institutions, when justly organised, provide us with access to what is good for the person, both individually and in our association with others. Social justice also imposes on each of us a personal responsibility to work with others to design and continually perfect our institutions as tools for personal and social development. Social Justice also encompasses economic justice. ⁽¹⁾

Starting with Housing, Council acknowledges that it has a Social Responsibility to its disadvantaged citizens to provide Housing, as such

The Local authority keeps a Central Housing Waiting List (current at over 90 000 applicants) to identify, vet and allocate stands/plots and housing (both Social and Rented).

Recognise the need to forever engage in affordable housing designs.

Offer family homes as well as single persons’ accommodation.

On family homes (encourages spouses) to include both their names on property (man have been known to dispose of houses without knowledge of wives).

Single parent families are given equal status with those of both parent headed families.

Of late, due to HIV and Aids scourge, and other pestilences, child headed families are recognised and assisted.

An active Social Service manned by professional Social Workers is established in Council to monitor and assess the needs of the destitute families, and the infirm.

For a long time Bulawayo City Council has been Home of Jairos Jiri Association started by a benevolent individual and supported by Council.

HIV and Aids orphans, the unemployed, elderly etc. are assisted wherever possible.

This Pro-poor policy extends to the senior citizens whose rates are reduced by 50% of their bills.

On the Economic Front – it promotes –

Informal Trading

With unemployment topping the 80% level countrywide, informal trading is turning out to be the salvation to most families.

The city has over 200 informal trading sites, flea markets, tuck shops and other vending facilities.

Garden Allotments and Urban Agriculture are all efforts the City is making to alleviate poverty.

In places like Mzilikazi **Home Industries**, Council -

Train and engage (mainly women) from destitute families in production.

Involves them in batik, ilala and grass basket weaving, making of mats, embroidery, hand bags, tapestry, wall-hangings and most of all, more-hair jersey making. The goats from which more-hair is obtained are reared by a Council Section.

Mzilikazi Art and Craft as well as Training School

Production of pottery ware, dinner ware, and decorative ceramics, etc. are produced. All for sale in Zimbabwe and abroad.

Training School

The school and factory both started in the early 1960's.

Trains students with or without basic education to produce pottery, and ceramics in fine arts, commercial arts, wood and soft stone carving, basic carpentry, etc.

CULTURE

As stated earlier that Council has a responsibility in enabling and being part custodian of Culture. Zimbabwe has now got a cultural policy which is defined in the Zimbabwe Culture Manual as the sum total of a way of life a society can offer in terms of material implements and possession, in terms of intellectual and educational level of development; in terms of standards of living and ways of life, in terms of values and value systems, and in terms of social relations between members of the society, in terms of arts and crafts and in terms of religion ⁽²⁾

Recreational Youth Centres

In the light of the above, Bulawayo City Council has Recretational Youth Centres.

There are 16 Recreational Youth Centres city wide.

Activities include the following:

Soccer, netball, slogger tennis, drum majorettes, grass roots skills training, table tennis, drafts, chess, snakes and ladders, drama, cookery, computers, TV and Video sessions, behaviour change programmes, Imbube music, modern type and traditional dance, marimba music, weight-lifting, theatre, athletics, peer education and training, reproductive health programmes, volley ball, etc

There are a number of professional groups and individuals that have excelled in their field who came from these clubs. The likes of: Peter Ndlovu, Benjani Mwaruwari and Joel Luphahla, who ply their trade here and abroad,

Insingizi Emnyama, Mthwakazi's Cont Mhlanga. Iyasa are Theatre Groups examples from Council/s Institutions.

To continue with this enabling policy of Social Justice, Council has built Stadia, Halls and other recreational amenities.

There are three Council built stadia

Numerous sport fields, club houses run by different interest groups but benefiting from Council grants.

There are nineteen entertainment halls all built by Council and six swimming pools as well as several recreational parks all sponsored by Council

In Education, whilst education is a Government Responsibility, in Zimbabwe Council has taken upon itself the provision of science and primary school facilities to meet one of the UN Millennium Goals.

A dozen schools benefited from Council sponsorship of Science Classroom Construction and of nearly 110 primary schools in the city, Council has built 29 since 1986.

There are 9 Council constructed libraries with a couple of national libraries in the City benefiting from Council's annual grants.

Adult literacy classes are conducted. Payment to teachers is provided by City Council through the Bulawayo Welfare Fund.

Council is also Gender sensitive and has developed Women's Home Craft Centres. There are 15 Women Homecraft Centres.

Young women and some destitute older women pursue skills training to enable them to be self-sufficient.

Craftwork and sewing of household linen is undertaken and products sold nationally as well as exported.

Some women have formed cookery and catering clubs to provide service at weddings and other functions.

There are also five school leaver girls clubs, training in Home Economics, Hotel Catering, Dress Making, Cutting and Designing as well as Home Décor.

PART B

NB: Unfortunately the Social Justice Policy stated above is dented by lack of tolerance for informal settlements, even though both nationally and within the City, it is known that it is impossible to satisfy the demand for housing. Demolishing of Informal Housing in:

- (i) Killarney and Ngozi Mine settlements in the city and Epworth, Chulu and Pota Farm elsewhere in the country took place in the 1980's with thousands of families losing their homes.

And as recent as the 2000's (thousands) Operation Restore Order (dubbed) (Murambatswina or Hlalani Kuhle) – was conducted where thousands of shanties and backyard dwellings were destroyed. This also affected Economic Justice Policy in that it interrupted informal trading in the City and elsewhere in the country.

People lost homes and small businesses. Some of these had been official permitted. It has been argued that planning laws had been ignored at construction. However, the plight of families and children were ignored.

The narration above will show that as much as Council may have engaged in the aforementioned interventions, only for benevolent reasons ie. Helping the poor in its society, the infirm, destitute children, the unemployed adults and the elderly, it seems to have at the same time fortuitously engaged in Arts, Culture and Social Justice Policy. 'These programmes are subsidised from rates (citywide), sometimes ago Government used to advance grants and Council used their Liquor Undertaking profits to fund these projects and activities. Nowadays Government grants have dried up and the Liquor profits have dwindled because of macro-economic melt-down in the Country.

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THANK YOU –

GOD BLESS!

**'Art and Social Justice' International Conference and Exhibition
Durban University of Technology, 21 – 24 March 2010
Presented by Angeline S Kamba**

**Art and Social Justice – Policy (Third Plenary Session: Panel
Discussion - 22 March 2010, 1400 – 1600)**

May I start by thanking the organizers of this Conference for inviting me to participate. I consider it an honour and a privilege, and I think the overall topic of Arts and Justice is a timely and a fitting acknowledgement that culture, which includes the creative arts is pervasive in all aspects of our lives. Art is a powerful communication tool in the search of peace, good governance and justice and equality.

I must, at the outset confess that my own thinking and views regarding matters of culture and the arts have been greatly influenced by my serving on the World Commission on Culture and Development – the WCCD which was established jointly by UNESCO and the UN in December 1993. The then Director General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor, invited me in my own personal capacity, which was indeed the case with my other twelve fellow commissioners. The Commission was tasked to prepare a policy-oriented report for both the UN and UNESCO on the interactions between culture and development

“Between March 1993 and September 1995, the Commission consulted in all the regions of the world, (the African Consultation being held in S Africa in 1995). On each occasion, scholars, policy-makers, artists and NGO activists presented specific regional perspectives and concerns. These exchanges allowed the Commission to test its own questions and working hypothesis.”

(World Commission on Culture and Development Fact Sheet. UNESCO, 1995)

In November 1995, the WCCD's Chairman, Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar, former UN Secretary General, presented to both the UN General Assembly and UNESCO's General Conference the Commission's Report : 'Our Creative Diversity'. That title remains valid in its message – cultural diversity is a reality, must be accepted, respected and harnessed for its ability to enrich creativity not only in the arts but in progressive ideas, and thus promote peace and harmony.

Without wishing to summarize the Report, may I point out this is indicated in the Chapter Headings, which show clearly the broad presence of culture in all aspects of life. They are: Ch. 1. A new global ethics. Ch.2. A commitment to pluralism. Ch. 3. Creativity and empowerment. Ch. 4. Challenges of a media rich world. Ch. 5. Gender and Culture. Ch. 6. Children and young people. Ch. 7. Cultural heritage for development. Ch. 8. Culture and the environment. Ch. 9. Rethinking cultural policies. Ch.10. Research needs

These plus a final section headed: The Commission's International Agenda containing actions recommended for implementation by the global community.

From the beginning, the Commission agreed on a working definition of Culture as 'A way of life' or 'Ways of living together,' not necessarily disagreeing with the more scholarly and elaborate definition which emanated from the Mexico Conference at the start of the Cultural Decade, but that simple definition enabled the Commission to look comprehensively at the whole spectrum of human interface.

Development was understood along what the UNDP has elaborated as the 'improvement of the quality of life', and not necessarily the accumulation of wealth.

Needless to say, the report of the WCCD triggered an ongoing discourse – directly or indirectly, some of which continues today, but also taking into account today's circumstances. The Report also led to the setting up of various structures and instruments, and this brings me to the specific subject of our Panel's discussion – Policy.

Though the Report was received with interest and enthusiasm, studied and discussed at national and international levels, the need for a high level meeting on policy to enable the implementation of some of its recommendations but also to enable deeper analysis of some of the issues raised in it soon became apparent. The Commission had also stated that 'when culture is understood as the basis of development, the very notion of cultural policy has to be considerably broadened.

In 1998 the Swedish government responded to UNESCO and the international community by hosting the The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policy for Development held in Stockholm , 30 March – 2 April 1998.

The Conference, which was convened by the Director General of UNESCO... 'brought together 2,400 participants representing 149 governments, 23 international inter-governmental organizations, some 135 non-governmental organization, foundations, voluntary associations and other civil society entities, as well as many individual artists, scholars and experts...'

At the opening Federico Mayor (then UNESCO Director General) emphasized the fact that the conference would contribute significantly towards the challenges of “rethinking and reshaping our cultural policies and of bringing culture from the margins and into the heart of all policy making.”

In her summary of the Conference, Lourdes Arizpe, then UNESCO's Assistant Director of Culture , but also a member of the WCCD noted that 'Culture should look beyond a purely national emphasis and take, in addition, a broader international, inter-regional and global perspective. New partnerships between governments, corporations, private voluntary associations and other stakeholders should be developed.”

She goes on to say “Culture goes far beyond the field traditionally assigned to ministries of culture. Culture is indeed concerned with artistic creation and with ethnic and indigenous issues...but it must be directed to social integration, political democracy and economic equity...”

Since the Stockholm Conference underlined the importance of policy, various other national and international initiatives have taken place, as well as new international instruments being put into place to buttress the already existing ones such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

One of the most important one has been UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2000, followed by the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression in 2005.

The emphasis on cultural diversity in recent years is intended to focus on it as a force on which peace and social harmony can be built instead of it as a cause of divisions,

tensions, violence and conflicts as we have seen in recent years, when intolerance has raised its ugly head.

Article 9 of the Declaration states that “ It is for each State, with due regards to its international obligations to define its cultural policy and to implement it through the means it considers fit, whether by operation, support or appropriate regulations” - and I would say very likely starting with a progressive Constitution.

The recently published UNESCO's World Report: Investing in Cultural Diversity and the Inter-cultural Dialogue takes us a step further by emphasizing the importance of a dialogue to bridge the diversity. In plainer language than the declarations and the conventions, it points out specific areas in which cultural diversity should be accommodated – languages, education, communication and cultural content, creativity and the market place.

I am pleased that our own OCPA, the Observatory for Cultural Policies in Africa, of which I am a Steering Committee member, apart from its Guidelines to Design and Evaluation of National Policy , has recently cooperated with the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation to produce Cultural Policies in Africa: Compendium of reference documents

Yet despite all these official guides and pronouncements, declarations and conventions which are ratified by any number of states, social injustices abound – cases of xenophobia affecting economic migrants, religious intolerance, discrimination of and abuse against women despite constitutions which purport to protect women and other minorities, sexual abuse against children and young people, human trafficking and of course restrictive measures which hamper artistic creativity such as censorship laws and media restrictions despite claims of democratic government by states. It is therefore not enough to have policies or progressive constitutions, but they need to be monitored, continuously revisited to ensure that they do 'respond to the democratic impulse' as the then Chief Justice of Zimbabwe , Mr Justice Gubbay put it in one of his judgments. Citizens need to be empowered to question and fight such injustices. Social media activism has to be applauded in this regard in the manner that it brings all these to public attention and by so doing eventually force some action on the part of governments and the international community.

It is itself, as Ralph Nader put it on CNN: 'a motivating action' and CNN's Becky Anderson urging viewers to respond to media coverage of social injustices says: “If you see a story which makes you want to take action”

The xenophobic activities directed at migrant workers in SA and indeed in other countries have been given a fair amount of publicity in the media and in drama, thanks to media and artistic activism – where it is allowed to exist.

The Zimbabwe Media coverage on the Women's International Day – 2010 was remarkable in that it carried strong statements by Civil Society organizations deploring discrimination against women and calling for equity in all areas of public and private life, even against any cultural practices which are seen to disadvantage women. Indeed, any culture which is seen to be unjust towards certain sections of the community is not worthy preserving.

Then there are the injustices against cultural workers and artist, and good examples were recently recounted by a Zimbabwean journalist, Godwin Muzari – who is Arts and Entertainment Editor for The Standard newspaper. His article was in The Arterial Network weekly blog on African Culture under the title: Dancing out of tune: Democracy and the

development of arts in Zimbabwe He refers to the fact that despite the post colonial birth of democracy in Africa, leaders have in certain cases flouted the very principle of democracy which they claim to uphold. He writes:

“The Arts have suffered under various political phases in Zimbabwe. Artists have endured arrest and torture while some of their products were crushed and burnt because they did not tally with prescribed political notions...” Artists' voices have been silenced and information suppressed because these artist 'danced out of tune'...”

He gives examples of the film Flame which was banned in 1996 because it was 'controversial' and its producers Ingrid Sinclair and Simon Bright were threatened and yet it went on to enjoy international recognition Playwright Conte Mhlanga has had a number of his plays banned but he refuses to be silenced Super Patriots and Morons, a play from Rooftop Productions was banned in 2003 “Musician Thomas Mapfumo now lives in exile in the US after his album 'Chimurenga Explosion' pricked sensitive political soft spots...”

Again I quote Lourdes Arizpe's closing remarks at the Stockholm Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development – she says:

“We need freedom to create” and at times that freedom is withheld. Sure, cultural policies abound, and yet often they are silent on issues of censorship, copyright, etc.; or there is just not enough monitoring and reviewing of such policies, and not enough 'feed in' by those affected.

Yet the Arts remain vibrant, thus demonstrating the 'power of Culture and the Arts'. The most important Arts event of the year in Zimbabwe is undoubtedly the Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA) who's Board I currently chair.

The Festival is multidisciplinary and truly international, bringing together performing and visual artists from within and from without Zimbabwe. I say it brings about a true social transformation, and I am certain that the effect is felt long after the week of the Festival.. In recent years the opening shows have been considered controversial in certain quarters, but in truth Hifa is applauded for its inclusiveness and for building bridges. Something worthy mention in this discussion is the way the Festival makes use of Street kids – gives them tasks to do so that they may feel useful and be part of the whole thing and therefore be part of society. A lot of young lives have been changed, their dignity restored, criminal ways abandoned.

In 2009, the Festival marked its 10th Anniversary in a horrifically inclement economic environment in which a number of its corporate partners could not play the roles that we had come to associate with them, and yet it was dubbed 'the best'.

There is no Govt input in the festival, it is a private civic initiative, but each year we seek 'the enabling environment' from govt through various relevant ministries – in other words, we try to hold it within the prescribed policy so that when we encounter problems, we can go back to the policy makers, and ask - what is the problem?

The most common problems have been to do with censorship and restrictions on foreign media.

I have in other platforms said that the Artistic community must continue to engage government. The power of the arts is such that they have to be listened to – it is up to us how we state our case.

Hifa 2010, under the theme 'About Face' takes place from 27 April to 2 May.

The theme is an invitation to all Zimbabweans to turn things around – to look with hope and optimism for transformation and new beginnings, both artistic and personal. It is a call to artists to consider new vantage points, ideas and inspiration at a time when moving forward is about facing the past and about facing the future...

I am also pleased to say that the Culture and Arts Community is very much involved in the efforts of the GNU's efforts to rebuild the country.

Veteran Playwright Stephen Chifunyise 's plays 'Waiting for the Constitution' which closely followed his 'Heal the Wounds' are indicative of the role that the arts can play bringing about national unity . The productions were meant to illustrate more vividly the Constitution making process and the the activities of the National Healing and Social Integration Organ

The Arts Community are determined to have a say in the making of the new Constitution to ensure that their needs and interests are safeguarded.

Policy is not crafted by the policy makers alone – they can only shape it after the input of the citizens, hence artists must speak out. The new Constitution must be 'a framework for Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities' and result in 'Progress for all' as per the statement of the Non State Actors Forum of Zimbabwe for a stronger Zim. Civil Society...'

In the same vain, I should end by mentioning the work of an NGO whose work I admire and applaud – the African Community Publishing and Development Trust (APCDT) It is a "Development NGO whose mission is to facilitate research, publishing and capacity building in marginalized communities and the institutions that support them for democratic development, good local governance, poverty reduction, peace building, gender equity and children' s rights." The publications which emanate from these activities are authored by the communities as they grapple with the issues and provide their own answers. - they may be on local governance, democracy, human right, etc. Some of the more recent titles are : A People's Guide to the Agreement; A People's Guide to Constitution Making, A People's Guide to Transitional Justice.

Most times, the works bear traditional proverbial titles and similarly accompanied by traditional illustrations which help in conveying what would be otherwise difficult concepts such as democracy, human rights, global governance.

Titles such as: Restoring our dignity: community views on basic rights and responsibilities.

Sowing seeds: strengthening citizens participation in local decision-making Rising again: community views on local control over local resources

Follow the river and you will reach the sea: community views on communication

Lighting our unfolding way: constructive relationships, conflict transformation and peace building

Reviving our hopes: community view on poverty and economic survival

Belonging" A guide to local governance...

Calming the storms: community views on responsibility

Bridging the Divide: Community views and recommendations on peace-building

The Rainbow encircling the people: an African guide to democracy

These books are in the first instance published in the original language of the community

and then translated into English so that they can have a national circulation. Their impact is without doubt.

The APCDT has continued to its remarkable work, despite an environment which has not always been kind to NGOs, when in fact the policy framework should be accommodative as it plays a role which government alone would find impossible to do i.e. engaging the communities in development strategies and ensuring their participation . They should be viewed as a partner rather than adversary of government.

NB: I returned home to find two disturbing incidences depicting serious violation of both artistic freedom and social justice.

“On March 23, ZimRights director Okay Machisa was arrested by police at the Gallery Delta while preparing to launch 'Reflection' - a photographic exhibition based on the national healing programme. The show sought to inculcate in the public that violence and intimidation are unfruitful...”

“Only 24 hours later police raided the Bulawayo Art Gallery and arrested Owen Maseko, the organiser of an exhibition of artwork that showcased the Gukurahundi massacres of the 1980s which President Robert Mugabe himself described as an 'act of madness'

The exhibition showed pictures of the victims and their relatives, and those of disused mines where bodies of the victims were dumped by the 5 Brigade, a private troop created and trained by North Korea to exterminate opponents of Mugabe's dream of one party state,”

The Standard, April 4- 10 2010. (Standard Comment)

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Taylor van Horne

Founding Director of the Instituto Sacatar

The Instituto Sacatar is an international arts residency program which operates out of a beautiful seaside estate on the island of Itaparica, in the bay of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. In operation since 2001, Sacatar has hosted over 160 artists from 42 countries. Competitively selected artists receive airfare, studio, room and board, and logistical support to realize their artistic objectives while in residence.

Artist residencies formally began just over one hundred years ago in the United States, with Yadoo and the MacDowell Colony. These isolated estates provided and continue to provide artists the time and space to dedicate themselves to uninterrupted work. In the last ten years, due to the internet and the resultant ease of inexpensive and rapid international communications, there has been an explosion of residencies around the world. Two umbrella organizations represent the informal network of residency programs: Res Artis, www.resartis.org, and the Alliance of Artists Communities www.artistcommunities.org. While all residencies continue to provide artists the time and space to pursue new work, many also stress ecology/sustainability and/or community interaction, such as we do.

Itaparica is in Bahia, the Brazilian state that was the nexus of the sugar cane / slave economy of this former Portuguese colony. At one time, Salvador was the second largest city in the kingdom of Portugal. Due to the great influx of slaves, Salvador remains arguably the most African city outside of Africa, where African music, dance, religion, and martial arts have flourished and evolved---historically covertly, and now overtly---with great vitality and fearless vigor. This characteristic led us to establish a residency program in Bahia.

While the primary purpose continues to be to provide artists space and time, a corollary purpose of Sacatar is to provide artists the opportunity to interact with the rich cultural milieu of Bahia. To date, our experiences in the community have been the result of actions initiated primarily by the artists themselves, which we facilitate. There appear to be three kinds of community activities, which may or may not lead to social change.

The most obvious form of community interaction comprises workshops, in which artists share their knowledge through imparting skills with members of the local community. Some result in an ephemeral one-time event, such as a circus workshop that involved thirty local children, the students from a circus school from Salvador and seven of our artists in residence, who collaborated on this spontaneous project. Another type of workshop seeks to train the local community in techniques that may lead to new economically viable

activities for this socio-economically depressed community. For example, the Salvador-based artist Viga Gordilho proposed bringing four artists from various nations (Spain, France and South Africa) to work in conjunction with a women's cooperative in order to develop new viable product which the women of the cooperative could sell. While the result of the workshop led to an exhibition, and while for some of the older women it was the first time they had ever stepped into a museum or had been interviewed on local television, this project, like many others, faded with the absence of the mentors. The four international artists, however, who did not really know each other prior to the workshop, continue to collaborate to this day, realizing a traveling exhibition involving small works the size of a human heart submitted by over seven hundred international artists. One never knows what the results may be from any kind of workshop environment!

A second kind of intervention is what I would consider art with a dual purpose, serving the community at one level while serving the aesthetic or political aspirations of the artist on another level. I submit the example of Erik Göngrich, a German architect/sculptor, who worked with a community of squatters to build a public park at the center of the squatter settlement. The park that he and members of the committee built was a scale model of the center of Brasília, the seat of power of the nation. The various ministry buildings were reduced to benches. The double towers of the Congressional offices were made of mud and sticks. The famous dome and inverted dome of the House of Representatives and Senate were rendered in clothes-washing basins. The artist left the park to the residents. After six months the park was dismantled to create space for the rehearsals of a traditional dance pageant performed annually on January 7 in Itaparica. Since then, a squatter has built a home on the former site of the park.

A third kind of intervention reinterprets and /or re-contextualizes elements of the local culture in a complex and sophisticated way, open to multiple interpretations that raise a multitude of questions. The Turkish photographer, Pinar Yoloçan, created portraits of the elderly women of the community, whom she interviewed and subsequently created costumes for out of meat by-products. The resulting portraits are poised on a knife edge, simultaneously dignified and repugnant. This challenging series has been exhibited in New York, at the National Museum in Istanbul (the youngest female artist ever to receive a solo show at this venue) and is currently in Finland. The local women, many of whom seldom leave their houses, all received modest modeling fees and left the artist's studio, according to Yoloçan, strutting like super-models. The reverberation of this art in the hearts and minds of viewers around the world brings the reality of Brazil into a fresh and enigmatic perspective.

Did any of these examples result in long term measurable change? These things are immeasurable. There is a cultural inertia---resistance to the new, comfort in the familiar, and a lack of interest---in most of humanity, through poor education and fear of change. Art is a very weak force for change but one of the very few and, on rare occasions of great need, can be truly galvanizing. Art can make physical, make visible, fundamental shifts in our shared field of human understanding. Art can interpret and communicate new social paradigms, as we continue to enter a non-hierarchical, non-patriarchal social order. These changes are slow, even glacial. While artists labor towards revealing ways to perceive these changes, it is the occasional artistic genius that lays these new orders bare for all to see.

Art and Social Justice
Durban University of Technology and Art for Humanity
Durban 21 – 24 March 2010

Reclaiming lives: learning from the art of prisoners

Richard Aitken
Nonceba Lushaba

Phoenix Zululand: Restorative Justice Programme

Abstract

The paper outlines the woefully violent national and predominantly rural contexts of the work of Phoenix Zululand, which is to sustain projects in the ten prisons of Zululand. In these, some 600– 800 serving offenders participate in projects each year and many hundreds of members of families also join processes of family conferencing.

In describing the reasons and ways that the Programme has made several forms of artistic expression pivotal in its conception of restoration, the paper outlines accumulated evidence from its work that shows the following impacts of prison on people, the effects of which must be material to the way projects are formulated.

- Memory steadily erodes in prison, which includes long-term memory of people in families and communities, and also short-term memory involved in accomplishing learning in day-to-day project tasks.
- With the cognitively diminishing ability of memory, levels of concentration are also attenuated, thus making complex learning tasks arduous.
- Exclusion from social and religious rituals, especially from funerals of members of families, has an impact on positive attitudes to society and how ex-prisoners might seek help from others.
- Nonchalance about the actions of fate seems to ensue, which subverts the core question of any rehabilitative prison programme: what is it to be an agentive, moral citizen?
- As a consequence of these effects of imprisonment, serving prisoners begin to think of the future in fanciful ways that are unrealistic and improbable. Speculation about the future breaks free of a mooring to a purposefully conceived reality.
- Ideas and commitments to altruism wither under the persistent strategic and manipulative thinking that is characteristic of daily prison life, especially as individuals are always on the lookout for their own safety. One overriding motive colours thought and all commitments: this involves how to get out of prison through parole. The idea of “self-disclosure” that may be in touch with the verities of family life becomes alien and the idea of “personal sincerity” is thwarted.

Against these effects of imprisonment, all of which make ex-prisoners less able to live in society, the paper describes the evolution of the curricula of the organization’s prison projects. These have become orientated to the awakening of creativity and the evocation of narrative as core ennobling activities, in contrast to narrowly conceived vocational training, which too often is deemed to be the core of rehabilitation work amongst serving offenders.

Deriving predominantly from insights of narrative therapy, the paper therefore focuses on what we have learned about art from prisoners in the service of human recovery amidst the baleful influence of prison. Using several examples from the organization's Healing Through Art projects, the authors show how the latent awareness of a ritualized and ceremonial society, characteristic of much rural life in South Africa, is an immense resource that can be drawn on as a means to personal reflexivity, thus leading to a profound understanding of the socially structural underpinning of violence. Artistic expression, in contradistinction to manipulative and discursive forms of linguistic expression, is shown to be more illuminating of individuals' sense of a personal assertion through the growth of self-declaration and the recovery of sincerity. Growing up in ritual and ceremonial society gives people, the authors postulate, a profound grasp of the dominant metaphors and symbols by which they live their lives – life lived as art leads to an understanding of the shaping power of metaphor in our lives. The authors consequently discuss the significant implications for the curricula of prison projects and show how art helps rhetorical declamation give way to expansiveness in thinking about oneself, and self-forgiveness. The paper also shows in the Programme's collective experience of a large amount of prison art how it has the power to be diagnostic of society's social pathologies. Particular examples are used to show men in their art, perhaps in spite of rational intentions, questioning a dominant patriarchy as the source of illegitimate familial power, and the imaginative and supple commitment to forgiveness by women who are thus best able to tackle apparently intractable matters of violence and crime in families. Examples are shown to illustrate how art is often the means by which people have shown themselves to be culturally iconoclastic as they grapple with what it is to take back their lives.

Reclaiming lives: learning from the art of prisoners

Richard Aitken

Nonceba Lushaba

Phoenix Zululand: Restorative Justice Programme

The revelatory quality of speech and action comes to the fore where people are with others and neither for nor against them – that is, in sheer human togetherness. Although nobody knows whom he reveals when he discloses himself in deed* and word, he must be willing to risk the disclosure, and this neither the doer of good works, who must be without self and preserve complete anonymity, nor the criminal, who must hide himself from others, can take upon themselves. Both are lonely figures, the one being for, the other against, all men; they, therefore, remain outside the pale of human intercourse and are, politically, marginal figures who usually enter the historical scene in times of corruption, disintegration, and political bankruptcy. Because of its inherent tendency to disclose the agent together with the act, action needs for its full appearance the shining brightness we once called glory, and which is possible only in the public realm.*

Hannah Arendt, ***The Human Condition***, Chicago, 1958; p 180

[* We deem “action” and “deed” to refer also to artistic action – the authors]

A. Background and context

This paper explores the potential for artistic expression in the context of Zululand prisons where Phoenix Zululand runs many projects with serving offenders. We begin with a brief account of what we see happening in the lives of prisoners, and how these perceptions influence the principles that underpin Programme design and enactment.

In many anecdotal and professional accounts, South Africa is a violent country. For the purposes of this paper, we do not establish the factual, historical and sociological conditions of this reality, nor do we offer international comparatives; we merely assert this as a commonplace. Rural South Africa does not escape the social turbulence and it is rural Zululand predominantly defines the context for the projects of **Phoenix Zululand**, which aims to sustain these projects in the ten prisons of Zululand. In these, some 600 – 800 serving offenders participate in projects each year and many hundreds of members of families also join processes of family conferencing, one of the most important ancillary projects to in-prison work with serving offenders.

The Programme is committed to promoting a multi-faceted understanding of Restorative Justice, as expressed in the following passage from the organizations' constitution:

The primary objective of **Phoenix** is to promote Restorative Justice. The philosophy and practice of Restorative Justice is understood to involve work with people in their communities in the aftermath of crime. The restorative approach recognizes that crime can have profound effects on individuals, on their families and communities, on the offenders themselves and on their families. Therefore, Restorative Justice seeks to redress the harm done to each of these parties, and directly to empower each to make decisions about reparation and future behaviour rather than having such decisions merely imposed by courts or professionals.

Restorative justice is frequently contrasted with the more dominant Retributive Justice which in its broadest sense requires the State to enact retribution against those who have done wrong; retributive theory posits the cautionary and deterrent role for this form of justice.

The Programme has made several forms of artistic expression pivotal in its conception of restoration. In this paper, we describe some accumulated evidence from the Programme's work that shows in detail how artistic expression can be efficacious in helping to achieve diagnostic insight into the pathology of society, and the predicaments of individuals who have suffered the retributive wrath of the criminal justice system; art also has the potential for the revaluation of persons as ends in themselves, not instruments to ends. It is self-evident that the retributive judicial system is "instrumental" in the sense that it is deemed to work by punishing wrong-doers principally as exemplary action – as reproofing examples to others lest they offend against the social order.

Before moving into the substance of this paper, it is necessary to outline some conclusions gathered over a number of years about the impacts of prison on people, the effects of which must be material to the way projects are formulated.

B. What does prison do to people?

We have been able to show the following cognitive and social effects in individual people in prison. Depending in individual family circumstances, these effects can extend to their families.

- a. Memory steadily erodes in prison; this includes long-term memory of families and communities, and also short-term memory involved in accomplishing learning in day-to-day project tasks.
- b. With the cognitively diminishing ability of memory, levels of concentration are also attenuated; it is striking how accomplishing complex learning tasks in project groups can be arduous, far beyond the assumptions one might employ in non-custodial educational environments. Prison circumstances impose a burden that derives from the conditions within prisons, more so than relating to the individual talents and commitments of participants.
- c. Exclusion from social and religious rituals, especially from funerals of members of families, seems to have an impact on positive attitudes to society and how ex-prisoners see themselves, and seek help from others when inevitable difficulties arise in their post-prison lives. Having lost a “place in society” in not only their own minds but in those of others around them, prisoners comes to be nonchalant about events that happen to them, as if gripped by an inscrutable fate. This subverts the core question of any rehabilitative prison programme: what is it to be an agentive moral citizen?
- d. Possibly as a consequence of these effects of imprisonment, serving prisoners begin to think of the future in fanciful ways that are unrealistic and improbable. Imagining, conceiving and talking about the immense hurdles that ex-prisoners have to face in daily life become ever more difficult as the years of a sentence pass by. Fanciful notions of how prisoners see their return to family take hold and a piecing together in mind of probable links between cause and effect in a post-prison world become ever more illusory. Speculation about the future breaks free of a mooring to an accurately conceived reality, or breaks free from a reality seen as something which is positively malleable in their hands through co-operation with other people.
- e. Ideas and commitments to altruism wither under the persistent strategic and manipulative thinking that is characteristic of daily prison life, especially as individuals are always on the lookout for their own safety. One overriding motive colours thought and all commitments: this involves how to get out of prison through parole. The idea of “self-disclosure” (in sense implied in the epigraph to this paper) that may be in touch with the verities of family life becomes alien and the idea of “personal sincerity” is thwarted.

C. Given the effects of imprisonment, what principles shape Phoenix projects?

There are four principles underlying Programme vision and project formulation. These have emerged from the enactment of specific programmes in Correctional Centres and Units (prisons); project design has always been reciprocally “in dialogue” with programme enactment – in other words, the conception of programmes allows ample scope for listening to the narratives of travail that they occasion, which in turn bring amplification to the design of projects. We shall show in due course why art is important in giving structure to the listening process.

- a. **The agency of rehabilitation – its sources and its answers:** We try to put into the hands of offenders ideas, processes and things that will enable *them* to refashion, re-vision the way families and communities perceive them. This is to move the agency of rehabilitation into the hands of serving offenders themselves. *It also locates work in prison primarily in the domain of social experience, not individual conscience and makeup* (in contradistinction to assumptions about crime in the judicial process.) Group processes, (and the creativity of the artistic projects are central to this) to develop capacity and techniques for self-disclosure and self-revelation as a moral activity are central, especially as there can be no innocent individual motives in the psychologically deformed environment of prisons.
- b. **Bringing society’s “weak” people to the fore:** We try to use people and ideas that come from the “soft-underbelly” of society. Useful discourses come from the non-dominant members of society – for example, women, children, the elderly, AIDS sufferers, victims. The dominant patriarchy too readily betrays men and defeats creativity of character and personality. Crime evolves from a misuse of power and those who have most to give in influencing others in their lives are people thought by society to be “weak”.
- c. **Listening to and understanding peoples’ stories:** we build projects deriving from the narratives of lives and not around the propagation of moral injunctions. *We aim to make all projects foremostly celebratory, not cautionary or monitory* – in the generality of rehabilitation programmes in the prison of the world, this is particularly distinguishing of the Programme. Phoenix is especially interested in the richness of social life in rural contexts and finding within this the resources of ritual, symbol and metaphor by which offenders can create the discursive space for self-disclosure, and contribute to an environment of trust where this is possible.
- d. **A co-operative view of the relationship between civil society and the State:** the Phoenix Programme sees this to be essential to the field and sets out to open discursive space within this relationship.



D. Finding within rural ceremonial life the artistic resources to make self-disclosure possible

In this and the following sections, we briefly explore the social grounds for the ways in which artistic understanding takes shape in peoples' minds. We do this by means examples from the prison world.

We believe from the evidence of Phoenix Programme activity that people lend depth to insight an understanding of the symbols and metaphors of art from an immersion in social, ritual activity. With this core of understanding firmly developed in communal process, the symbolic substitutions of art as these are developed as modes of understanding, by which one can think about oneself and one's motives in relation to other people, are well understood. We explore this in the next section.

In an example of one prisoner's strategy, one sees his awareness of the importance of social ritual to formulate very clearly his own personal restorative project.



The creativity of Michael Xaba

Imprisoned for a lengthy sentence for a failed bank robbery, Michael Xaba had participated in a number of Phoenix programmes, including ***Doors to the World***, and English-learning programme for vocational purposes. He is shown here with members of a group and their Phoenix Facilitator, Vivienne Garside.

Thinking complexly about his predicament, Michael came to believe that the biggest restorative challenge for him was to maintain his role within the social context of his extended family. With his being in jail, members of his family, he reasoned, are the greatest victims. They have been left without his creative and

celebratory influence, and his daughters lack his protection. Also, he risks losing both his ritual and practical position in family and society, and being forgotten in an important way.

With the coming of his daughter's *umkehlo* ceremony – in some ways the reciprocal of the *lobola* ceremony as the gifts and celebratory exchanges move in reverse – he evolved a plan. This resulted in his asking Vivienne and a Phoenix team of Facilitators to take his part at the ceremony, “to be him”, and to return with a full account and photographs of the day's events.

This duly happened:



The *umkehlo* ceremony is joyful, richly colourful and is predominantly feminine in celebratory purpose and in the accretion of its dominant symbols. Perhaps most interestingly, Michael's presence was genuinely felt, and there were many expressions suggesting that his surrogate and plenipotentiary presence was applauded. Here was a ceremony that secured in the minds of family and community his restoration to social responsibility. It raised him up, and the photos that went back to him in prison spoke to him and made him walk tall. Facilitators reported subsequently that new awareness in Michael that he



had, by surrogate substitution, secured his social place – this was evidently transformative in the way he spoke and interacted with others.

The photographs, both of Michael in prison that were taken to the community and those that came back to him showing the Phoenix team in action, were central to the restorative influence of the symbolic unfolding of the events to which they “stood witness”. Yet they were more than mere “witness” or passive record of past events: they were in fact the medium of the social and ritualised transaction that took place between individual and community, thus constituting the grounds for ontological validation. In this sense, these images intimated the power of art when it is socially engaged. The process of image making – in this case photography – that is allowed as carrier of one’s being invokes a quite profound understanding of trust between people; we deem this trust to derive from an understanding of personal affirmation that is accorded to all members of a community participating in the ceremonial. In this sense, Vivienne is emblem of this trust, and is more than simply a functionary carrying the messages and photographs.

Interestingly, the life of traditional ritual has embedded within it amplitude of distributive economics that so characterises the mutual responsibilities deeply felt in ritual life. Not only was there a profusion of material gifts, people also collected a substantial basin of cash gifts for the bride-to-be. This is richly suggestive of another aspect that is so important for ex-prisoners returning to families. They will need, perhaps for a long time, the material support of families and their surrounding communities. For the majority of ex-prisoners, there will not be immediately the self-sufficiency of economic activity, and they will need to take up social positions that allow them to depend on families’ support, crucially without the erosion of dignity this might imply.

Michael Xaba secured his active presence within family and community that was inspired by traditional symbolic knowledge systems in order to embark on both his social and spiritual restoration. This was indeed Restorative Justice brimming with creativity, and a justice shaped by the momentum of heritage. Notably, the idea of heritage is endlessly malleable, especially when the dominant symbols are enunciated by women, and is therefore responsive to the present needs of people. At the core of this creativity lay the symbolic substitution which everyone readily grasped at the occasion. The ceremonial seamlessly constructed a stage on which Michael could, through the substitution by another’s surrogacy, proclaim his presence and self-worth within the extended family: it is appropriate to term this “life lived as art”.

E. Exploring human interaction can apparently run counter to firmly established social patterns of human relationships

Restorative projects within the Programme that evoke traditional knowledge systems can also exploit the inherent creativity of communal relationships in order to expand and deepen the range of emotion that may have been stultified by wrongs committed and humiliations inflicted by individuals’ actions. In this sense, culture can also “take issue with itself” and show itself to be dynamic. This is

illuminating when the dead weight of behaviour that is felt and expressed as “traditional” effaces the creativity that Restorative Justice seems to entail in the activity of relationships.

One of the most difficult tasks for a central Phoenix project, **Family Conferencing**, is to help participants, both serving offenders and their family members, to explore unfamiliar modes of communicating. Programme Facilitators often believe that the culturally sanctioned ways in which people express emotion restrict and constrain self-discovery. Thus Phoenix work occasionally seems to entail actions that are “culturally iconoclastic” in the sense that the project inspires people to speak and act in ways that run directly counter to expected ways of behaving and communicating.

We now know from extensive experience that the group dynamic created in the **Family Conferencing** is immensely important in giving people an opportunity to try out for themselves unfamiliar ways of saying things, and an unfamiliar grammar of interpersonal interaction. We need the “safe” warmth of these conferences - usually of forty to fifty people - for them to work well.

The emblematic poignancy of an experience during a recent **Family Conference** – hauntingly beautiful in its ordered emotional impact - captured so much of this. The first indications from contact with a family suggested that the deeply humiliated, angry, and frustrated father would not attend a conference with his imprisoned daughter. He had apparently shut her out



of his life. However, remarkable work by a Phoenix mediator resulted in his arriving at the prison on the appointed day. On an impulse, almost as if mediator had turned “priestess-therapist”, the Facilitator used a moment of warmth in the father’s statement to bring them together physically. The contact between all three as they held hands resulted in a torrent of radically new and unfamiliar language from both, fundamentally restorative in its intensity. Both asked for forgiveness. The experience of astonishing self-expression was all the more elevated for being public – we believe the intensified expression was made possible by the resonance granted to it by communal witness. Yet, there was at this particular conference of families a strongly felt sense that they witnessed and participated in a moment of family ennoblement that was unusual, perhaps even alien in the form of expression. Others, not directly connected with this family, wept under the impress of the emotion of the moment.

The key to this moment however was perhaps not so alien after all: it is possible that the members of the family enacted interpersonal depth of feeling in a context that bestowed sacramental dignity upon the moment because it was

fundamentally social and witnessed by many others: in this sense, the form of the interpersonal interaction, in contrast to the actual transaction of words and explicit meaning, borrows from other social rituals. This idea is the foundation for our assertion that art draws on social and ritualised understanding of how relationships are sustained. Art also draws on such understanding when it enables people – in our experience serving prisoners - to create a cognitive reality in order to understand aspects of destructive relationships.

In the following section, we offer an account of art that is deeply imbued with social purpose in this way: it is an art that is predicated on widely held assumptions about the creation of a “social space” in which one can find a place to lend lustre to one’s own life, an unlikely and immensely ambitious aim given the destructive influences of imprisonment on the personality.

F. Expanding the realms of self-expression: posing curriculum questions for art in the prison environment

It is striking how intensely moral language is in prison group work; the danger in this is that such language can be platitudinous and accomplish very little in the emotional lives of serving offenders. This may also be especially true of religious expression. Phoenix Facilitators are encouraged to be inventive and experimental in encouraging forms of expression, symbols and metaphors that expand ways in which prisoners might think of themselves.

Artistic work of varying kinds has therefore been particularly valuable. We often see an implicit acknowledgment that verbal language for prisoners is “corrupted” as bearing the heavy imprint of manipulative and strategic motives we allude to earlier. Language evokes police dockets, the conventions of adversarial courts of law seen to conspire to entrap, and all the deleterious aspects of prison life we enumerate.

Illustrative examples are given below of how art can contribute to an expansion of an ability to think about past and future, perhaps also about the social causes of present predicaments and therefore also where individual volition might begin to count and have effect.

The first example comes from a series of drawings by a young woman participant in the project ***Starting with Us***. In the project, she spent a great deal of time drawing pictures of her family. The first impression from these portrayals is of considerable harmony and good order. The artist places herself contiguously with her parents, depicted here in an affectionate embrace. The relative size of mother and artist is probably significant. Generally, the picture is colourful, exudes a sense of well-being, and is drawn on a large piece of paper. Each member of the family is named, suggested of a heightened awareness of social place within the family, not least her own.

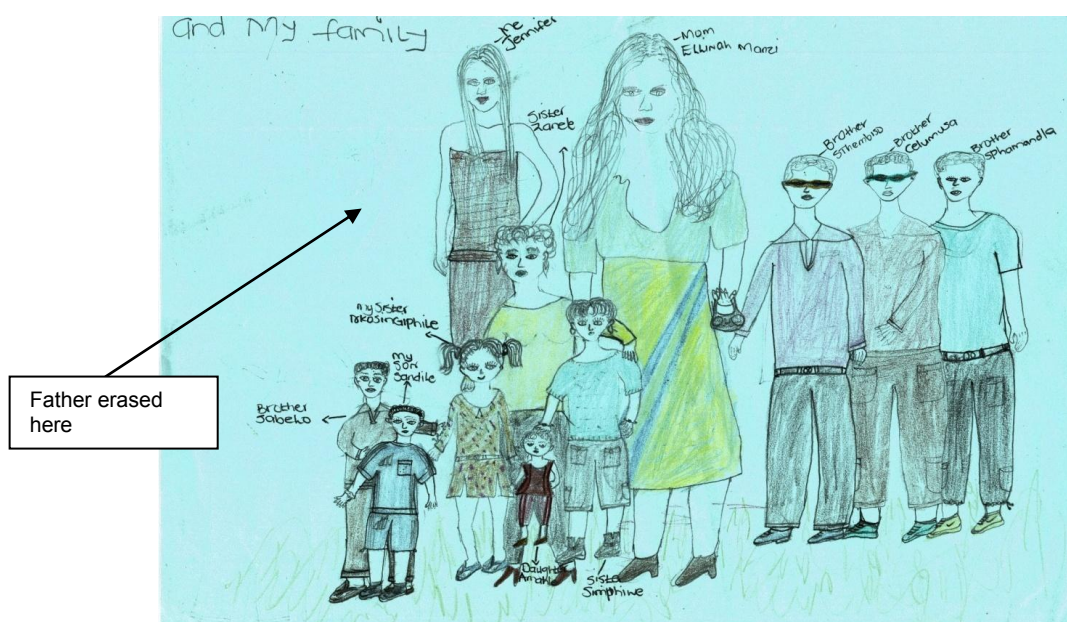


Pencil crayon on A2 cartridge paper

Many weeks later, in a following project, ***Conversations in Families***, the artist again drew her family. The Facilitator was astonished to see changes coming about in the subsequent picture, this time drawn on a much smaller piece of paper.

The most consequential change came about in the actual execution of the drawing. A great deal of time was spent drawing the father figure in the blank space in the left part of the picture, and then an even longer period was spent erasing the figure, line by line, substantially wearing out a rubber eraser in the process. What is left is merely the deep pencil indentation in the paper where the father figure once was.

Note also the change in colouring, now a much more sombre palette.



Pencil crayon on A4 blue cartridge paper

Apparently, we have here a reversal of what we generally seek in ***Conversations in Families*** in which we attempt to create scope for imaginative attempts to integrate family and the agentive role that the subject could have within a supportive harmony. The progress through the differing conceptions of this family in the drawings is in fact doing the opposite – fragmenting concord. However, the art is shaping resolute and courageous thought: the first picture was an expression of sheer fantasy, perhaps wishful thinking. The most significant aspect of the fantasy was possibly reluctance, even inability, to conceive of the reality. This started to emerge in the group discussion about the second picture, which is a story of abuse, the illicit and manipulative use of witchcraft and a thoroughly dysfunctional family. Note how the young men in the picture have had their inscrutability highlighted by the depiction of sunglasses although in her narrative of their place in the family, the fact that they are twins shields them from their father's illicit use of witchcraft, protection the artist does not share.

Implicating her father in her predicament, by drawing attention to his nefarious activities, at first glance suggests an attempt to alienate her own culpability for wrongs committed. Nevertheless, the unfolding art in this instance seems to be getting near the core of matters, perhaps disturbingly so – whatever the details, the fact of perversity is manifest. In a real sense, “the art is doing the thinking”, and bringing a version of reality into focus that may, in the end, be more therapeutic and more useful to the artist. The conception of art here is more than simply “illustrative” – it is the foundation of the thought and allows it to take shape.

We raise the question for Phoenix projects as a whole, (like the poet) can we bear too much reality, especially in a prison world that sets out to vitiate any human being's cognitive ability to start making sense of the social world? In our example, the travail of that social background, at the end of a long sequence of lived events, has ended up with one person going to prison in which the philosophically long view may well conclude that it is the wider social context that must bear the culpability. The power of self-elucidation that has gone into making sense of this life in this family has come about through the transformation of prisoner into artist, who goes to work on the blank paper in her quest to understand how she has ended up in prison.

The Phoenix team is aware of the enormity of the task they set themselves in constructing programmes that try to help participants bring “strong verbs” back into their lives – being assertive enough to describe and picture their circumstances with the force of veracity, which at the same time makes an active role for their own personalities. It may be presumptuous to try to do so, and we are alert to the idea that without substantial professional skills in our Facilitators, we should be cautious in embracing therapeutic objectives. The burden on “curriculum construction” for Phoenix Zululand is therefore considerable.

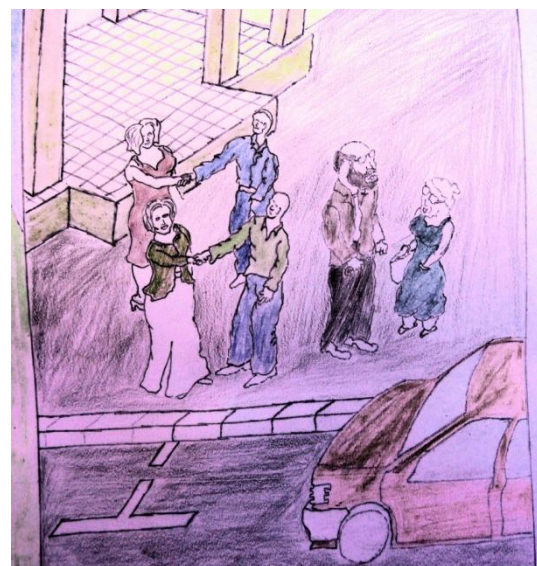
The second example in this section depicts a story of violence.



Pencil crayon on A2 paper cartridge paper.

This drawing is a narrative of a car hijacking at gun point with the astonishingly evoked violence of this in the top row of scenes. It is replete with guns, speeding cars, and a car crash, and a subsequent arrest resulting in a jail sentence. The images of the violence are quite evidently burned ineluctably into the memory of the artist. Our discussion with the Phoenix Facilitator from whose group work this drawing emerged suggested to us that there are crucial areas of silence: it is as if the drawing deliberately forecloses on awareness of the planning that the hijackers put into the events shown. The artist would certainly be able to muster the technical ability to deal with this aspect of the tale but has chosen not to do so. To help the artist develop a creative awareness (which would bring to mind all the woes of his background that lead him to criminal activity) must surely require of him that he deals artistically with the potential scenes *antecedent* to those portrayed.

There are further connections to be made. The bottom sequence of scenes entails jail, and then a restorative process with victims and perpetrators shaking hands (magnified below).



We guess that the artist's mind races on speculatively to play with ideas about how he might leave jail; perhaps, he seems to reason, if he could demonstrate that his victims shake his hand, parole would come all the sooner!

The scene comes from the artist's fantasy-world and as such is facile. The force of violence is cogently remembered and shown in the drawing. Yet the future with some putative "reconciliation" apparently so easily achieved has cut adrift from any probable reality. His interest in restoration has a utilitarian logic to it. We believe that there is a connection between a failure to depict (and confront) all the things that went into conceiving and planning a major criminal act, and the resolution imagined once retribution holds sway through the criminal justice system. Herein lies the problem. Phoenix Facilitators repeatedly find themselves saying in their prison group work that post-prison life is mercilessly tough and unyielding, and the key to successful social reintegration will often be in the ability to express a sense of personal vulnerability and in knowing how to ask for help from those around. This is more valuable than proclaiming contrition for crimes committed and extolling the virtues of Restorative Justice. In any case, restorative acts are never easily achieved, as suggested by this tendentious drawing. It is an immensely difficult point to demonstrate in working with prisoner groups.

The next example is rich in metaphorical resonance. In the considerable Phoenix collection of prisoner art, there is a variety of pictures depicting the "magical" potential that awaits one's post-prison existence following parole. The following drawing plays ironically with the hypothesis of a "glorious" material liberation after prison. Yet the visual grammar of motifs present here is repeated many hundreds of times across many different prisons. Material affluence is to be flaunted before others - this drawing goes so far as to depict glass walls so the possessions can be publicly displayed; there is a domestic servant readily visible; but perhaps most common of all motifs, there is a strong perimeter to keep it all safe from criminals and as bulwark against chaos!



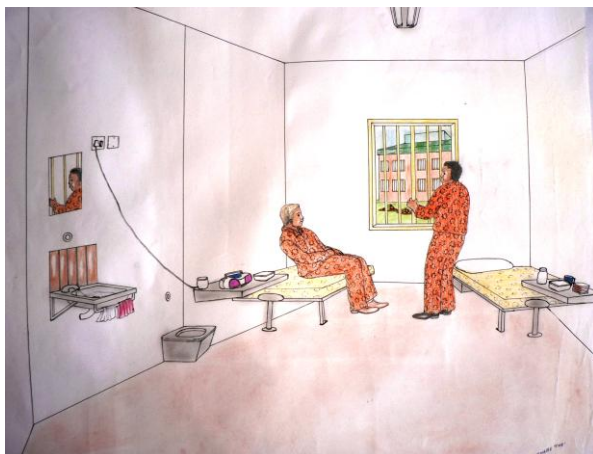
Pencil crayon on A3 cartridge paper

The salient point about this drawing is that memory is working here in a precise and accurate way, even to the point that the makes of cars are clearly evident. How does this square with our assertion in this paper that the functioning of memory is damaged by prison? Perhaps it is that memory under the cognitively disabling conditions of prison does indeed hang on to some things in all their precise detail: a person will remember with considerable clarity all the things, symbols and experiences that register his economic humiliation and failure.

This seems to be the agonisingly poignant burden of this drawing.

G: Personal reflexivity grasped as a social imperative: building self-esteem as artistic project

Some of the project's most forceful examples of prisoners struggling with their futures are astonishingly articulate about the hurdles lying ahead in the future. The task of rebuilding self-image under the immense force of social obloquy is brilliantly grasped in the following picture.



Oil pastel on A2 cartridge paper

In this drawing, the sparseness of the cell reflects emotional desolation and the apparent impossibility of finding a creative way back to society after prison. The drawing's most poignant thought occurs in the image in the mirror. The implicit thinking of the drawing was by no means fully formed in a verbally explicit way. It was when the drawing became a catalytic agent for discussion within the group that both artist and others started to grasp what had been drawn. "Before you present yourself to the mirror", said the artist in statements that came finally to be formed under the influence of the social commentary, "it has a *predetermined* idea of who you are, and you feel that you will be forever trapped in your own denigrating self-image". "The mirror is society", echoed the group, "ever present in your prison cell". "There is nothing to look at that might help you to think differently".

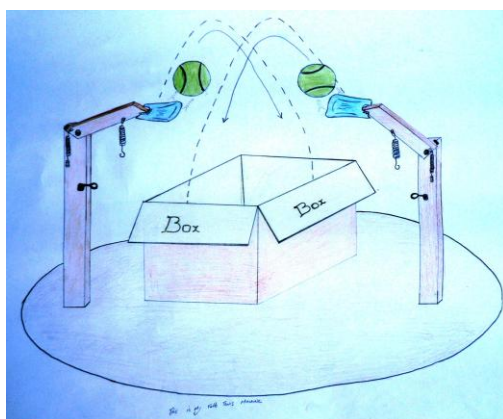
In another drawing (**left**), a young prison artist depicts his own self-understanding as trapped tennis balls trying to bounce out of a box.

Social determinism - felt as a personal reality to constrain and diminish personal horizons - is a complex social and philosophical subject. Yet we are often surprised by the inventiveness by which ill-educated young people grasp the idea so well, as in the symbol of this curious machine whose only purpose is to keep balls bouncing back into a box after they have tried to bounce out. As we teased out the picture's thought in group work, we understood that the metaphor was profound, and was shaping the artist's thinking more extensively than he himself actually realized at the time. Prison offers a version

life in which adults make no decisions for themselves, even of the most trivial kind. It represents ultimate infantilization of life which seems readily to corroborate an idea – widely held amongst prisoners - that life in society offers no opportunity for personal volition to have an outlet.

While the objective in the work we do is to make self-revelation and expression possible as *a social accomplishment to be transacted between people*, an implicit hypothesis is that in an undefined way, this will address the damaging effects of imprisonment and make a return to family and society feasible. Art in this vision is not merely illustrative; it *is* the embodied thinking.

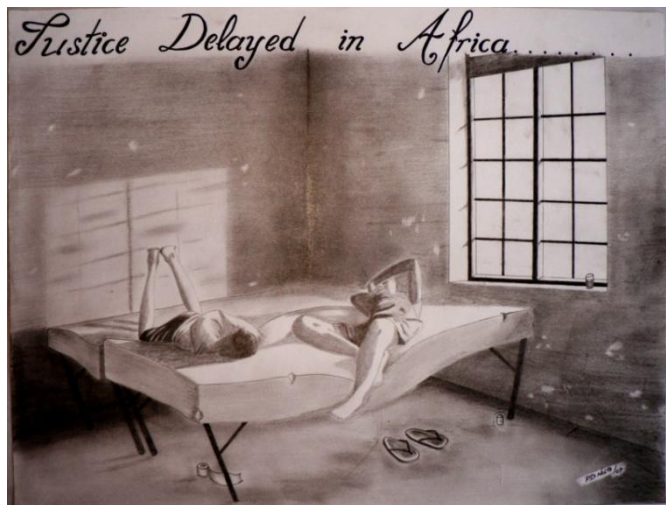
We met Simon during a second sentence in a remote rural prison. With no background in art at all, and struggling to grapple in words with the challenges of his life, he surprised the Phoenix team with the complexity of his drawings. In the example above, he shows himself crouching at the side of his family home. He feels himself to be so emotionally crippled, he cannot stand up and be seen in the open. Yet he believes his beloved wife is the only person who has the power to



beckon him to participate fully in life once again. *Such portrayals of vulnerability are valuable in the project discourse and set the scene for new discoveries by others, particularly given the strongly patriarchal culture to which the artist ostensibly subscribes.*

The expressions of despair and hopelessness have been produced in all projects in profusion. Two examples are given here and it may be quickly discerned that, while there is a measure of technical

competence in these drawings, there is little to summon new understandings of personal histories. They seem trapped by sentimentality rather than being motivated by an urgent quest for self-understanding. They yield meaning too quickly, perhaps flippantly.



Soft pencil on A3 cartridge paper



Pencil on A3 cartridge paper

Soft pencil on A3 cartridge paper

In the final example, the drawing is by contrast elliptic and puzzling. Yet its effect on the group in which it was produced was dynamic and resulted in new levels of self-expression amongst all the participants – *this social effect of art within the prison group is the key to its stature, as in so many other examples of prison art*. The drawing started to show its burden of thought slowly, evoking considerable interpretative intensity along the way over several days. The artist himself, inarticulate in verbal discursive ways and frequently prone to violence, seemed at times puzzled by his own drawings. A powerful consensus emerged in the group, to which the artist himself finally subscribed:

"I come to a gated door. That door is made only for me and it is there to block my way forever and there is no hope. No hope - until I learn to call forth from within me all the power I have left. Then, as I stand before that iron gate, the cold iron starts to dissolve, and for the first time, I think I can walk through those bars. I hope I can take the first step into my resurrected life."



Pencil crayon on A3 cartridge paper

The metaphor of the force of personality making iron dissolve seems to offer a paradox: “we are the damned forever”, or “we could embody undiminished hope”. The intensity of the paradox provides the drawing with its interpretative energy. One can look at the picture and decide that the bars are newly forming to jail the subject in perpetuity, or, at another moment, one might decide they are beginning to dissolve. It is the conditionality of the latter perception, given the immensely disabling circumstances of imprisonment in the mental frameworks of people, that stands ready to cast a deep pall of pessimism over the way one might view this drawing.

H: Conclusion

In describing the reasons and ways that the Phoenix Programme has made forms of artistic expression pivotal in its conception of restoration, we have outlined evidence from the Programme’s work that shows the deleterious impacts of prison on people, the effects of which make it less likely rather than more so that ex-prisoners can live successfully in society.

Against the effects of imprisonment, we have described aspects of the evolution of the organization’s prison projects. These have become orientated to the awakening of creativity and the evocation of personal narrative as ennobling activities; this stands in contrast to narrowly conceived vocational training, which too often is deemed to be the core of rehabilitation work amongst serving offenders.

Deriving predominantly from insights of narrative therapy, we have therefore suggested some aspects about art that we can learn from prisoners in the service of human recovery amidst the baleful influence of prison. We believe that a latent and active awareness of a ritualized and ceremonial society, characteristic of much rural life in South Africa, is an immense resource that we are able to draw on as a way to engender the trust necessary as a condition for self-disclosure. This can lead to a profound understanding of society’s structural underpinning of violence. Artistic expression, in contrast to manipulative and discursive forms of linguistic expression, is illuminating of individuals’ sense of a personal assertion through the recovery of sincerity. Growing up in ritual and ceremonial society gives people, we postulate, a profound grasp of the dominant metaphors and symbols by which lives are understood. We term this “life lived as art”, which

leads to an understanding of the shaping power of metaphor and symbol in relationships between people.

We believe significant implications follow for the curricula of prison projects, in which we seek ways for rhetorical declamation to give way to expansiveness of thought about relationships, oneself, and self-forgiveness. At the core of all the Programme's projects is the key task of creating a learning environment that makes the risk of self-disclosure possible.

Art in the Programme's collective experience has the power to be diagnostic of society's social pathologies in the lives of individual offenders. We have also shown particular examples in which the artists, perhaps in spite of rational intentions, question a dominant patriarchy as the source of illegitimate familial power. A large amount of the Programme's art shows a dialogue with putative "cultural" understanding; this can be imaginative and supple. Prison artists are able to be culturally iconoclastic as they grapple with what it is to take back their lives.

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DUT CONFERENCE:

Art and Social Justice: Exploring the link between art, social justice and health

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ABSTRACT

The visual arts offer creative and innovative methods to approach social justice challenges and in achieving attitudinal and behaviour change among individuals and communities. Artist Proof Studio, a printmaking centre in Newtown initiated the Paper Prayers as a nation-wide HIV/AIDS awareness programme in 1998 which has since developed into a craft and arts based training programme that responds to the impact of HIV and AIDS and is implemented nationally. Paper Prayers uses simple printmaking techniques to encourage individuals to express their emotions about loss and illness. The workshops help individuals to overcome their fears and correct misinformation about HIV/AIDS. Over the past twelve years the Paper Prayers programme has achieved significant results by inspiring participants to become educators, activists or caregivers in their communities, increasing Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), and providing skills and confidence to generate income and improve their livelihoods. This paper argues that development approaches can be enriched and deepened by incorporating arts-based interventions that use creativity, not only as remedial therapy, but as a call to action.

Artist Proof Studio in partnership with a range of development or advocacy organisations has engaged communities and projects on social justice issues such as xenophobia, children's rights, gender justice and HIV/AIDS Action. The training programme uses the methodology of Participatory Action Research (PAR) and the research partnership with the University of Johannesburg provides the tools for monitoring significant change. For instance the responses documented in the narratives of some of the Paper Prayers and Photovoice images provide evidence that participants have understood and integrated the knowledge and have found ways to transform information into an action. The Paper Prayers printmaking initiative has expanded into social and visual mapping projects as well as public advocacy murals. The visual arts, when used as a methodology in combination with a holistic and multi-disciplinary training team, further contributes to the ideals proposed by such theorists as Amartya Sen and Arjun Appadurai that nurture the development of voice and the means to navigate one's way out of disabling environments.

Paper Prayers: Twelve years of Awareness and Advocacy Programmes at Artist Proof Studio

Introduction

The visual arts offer innovative methods for approaching social justice challenges and for achieving attitudinal and behaviour changes among individuals and communities. Initiated as a nation-wide HIV/AIDS awareness programme in 1998 by Artist Proof Studio (APS), a printmaking centre in Newtown, Paper Prayers has since developed into a craft and arts based training programme that responds to the epidemic of HIV and AIDS and is implemented nationally. Paper Prayers uses simple printmaking techniques to encourage individuals to express their emotions about loss and illness, and the accompanying workshops dispel ignorance and misinformation about the disease of HIV/AIDS.

Over the past twelve years the Paper Prayers programme has achieved significant results by inspiring participants to become educators, activists or caregivers in their communities, increasing Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) and providing

skills and confidence to generate income and improve their livelihoods. This paper argues that development approaches can be enriched and deepened by incorporating arts-based interventions that use creativity, not only as remedial therapy, but by focusing on the agency of artists and women, can galvanise action and catalyse individual and social change.

For instance, the creative act of producing a print in the form of a paper prayer opens a path to the kind of confidence and empowerment that enables proactive self-creation, and ultimately the engineering of positive change at the community level. Such creativity constitutes the enactment of what Arjun Appadurai terms “futurity”, that is, imagining a better future, which is a necessary step in the process of social healing or upliftment (Appadurai, 2004:84). In this way, by working with the complex psychological dimensions of participants (often ignored) the paper prayers workshops create the conditions for participants to achieve the agency necessary to make choices that improve their health, social welfare and livelihoods.

Background Context

Paper Prayers began as a national outreach campaign by Artist Proof Studio (APS) in partnership with some of the founding support and service groups working in Johannesburg and nationally at the time. The includes the National Association of People Living with HIV and AIDS(NAPWA), Township AIDS project (TAP), Community AIDS Response (CARE) and AIDSLINK (Esselen Street Centre) and the Art Therapy Centre¹. In its first year the project reached over 1 200 people through printmaking workshops in which each participant produced a small ‘paper prayer’ artwork. Prints produced through the outreach campaign were exhibited and sold on World AIDS Day, 1 December, raising funds for the above local AIDS activist groups. Paper Prayers has continued as an outreach program of APS for over a decade. Self-funded through commissions and sales of craft products such as embroidered cloths, quilts and soft toys, Paper Prayers today supports the livelihoods of up to 30 women infected or affected by HIV. From an intensive awareness campaign, to income-generation through the sales of embroidered or sewn products, to an accredited skills training and activist program, Paper Prayers was one of the first South African visual arts-based HIV/AIDS initiatives. It quickly expanded to include international and local exhibitions and fundraisers, the creation of the first AIDS remembrance wall outside APS, and training workbooks for schools.

Despite the fact that initial government funding for this programme ended after only one year, Paper Prayers has continued to find ways of sustaining itself over the past twelve years, including annual events to mark World AIDS Day.

Applying art as a tool for learning has a demonstrated history of effectiveness in South Africa: during the apartheid years, it promoted the healing and growth, self-confidence and imagination needed to sustain the struggle.² In the post-apartheid era art continues to contribute substantially to confronting and surmounting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, but, as with Resistance Art of the 1980s, it can only be one part of a larger political effort. The central question explored here is: what is the special

¹ The Paper Prayers Founding committee included Peter Busse, Simon Nkoli, Shawn O’Shea, Carol Hofmeyr, Bart Cox and myself from APS who all contributed to the design and outreach of the campaign.

² Some authors who address the issue of arts and AIDS in South Africa are Allara and Martin (2003), Schmahmann (2006, 2007), Wells *et al.* (2003), Arnold and Schmahmann (2005).

capacity of the visual arts that has succeeded in breaking the silence about HIV/AIDS and contributing to social justice action? Through the extensive arts initiatives in many media from billboards and posters to art exhibitions and documentary photographs and films, the HIV/AIDS crisis has been made visible throughout South Africa. However, the impact of this increased visibility is difficult to gauge³. Visually based campaigns such as Love-Life have conducted evaluations of impact, but these do not clearly enough explain findings, nor do they recognise explicitly the difficulties of really measuring behaviour change (e.g. negotiating safe sex) and reducing prevalence. Nevertheless, the goals of the Paper Prayers campaign have changed over the years from awareness to the need to make explicit the participatory processes of activism, agency and therapeutic approaches that achieve attitude changes such as reducing stigma and discrimination through counselling and group discussion.

The context of HIV/AIDS Interventions

When the Paper Prayers campaign was launched in 1998, HIV was largely an invisible disease. The decade of the 1990s was one of government inaction, denial, and poor delivery that saw the numbers of infections and deaths increase uncontrollably, causing enormous frustration and anger among activists, NGOs, health professionals and civic society in general. The social dimensions of the AIDS pandemic in South Africa has been well documented. This paper will focus primarily on the value of the arts in challenging the 'culture of denialism' that has pervaded government leadership, and the impact this has had on the general population – increasing stigmatisation, fear and denial – and making the challenge of tackling HIV/AIDS even greater.

In her authoritative history of the pandemic, Virginia van der Vliet argues that: AIDS is doing to 'Mbeki's African Century' what the slave trade did to the continent in centuries past. It is snatching away the young and able-bodied, and it will take generations to recoup the losses. Faced with such a painful reality, denial, or grasping at the prospect of some alternative explanation, is understandable. However, both can lead to 'genocide by omission' (van der Vliet 2004: 86).

The most rapid increase in South Africa's HIV prevalence took place between 1993 and 2000. In 1997 Mandela established the Inter-ministerial Committee on AIDS in 1997, which recognized that AIDS was not just a health problem, but one affecting all sectors of society. Each ministry received funding to formulate AIDS programs that were specific to their mandates, and the Department of Arts and Culture had an allocation of resources to support initiatives such as Paper Prayers to promote prevention and awareness. Artist Proof Studio was awarded a one-off grant to implement a nationwide campaign using the visual arts.⁴

The AIDS pandemic poses an unprecedented challenge to the whole nation. As Alan Whiteside and Clem Sunter argue in *AIDS: The Challenge for South Africa* (2000: ii), citizens need to acknowledge that the call to action must be answered by everyone. Without a broad sense of ownership of the problem, most solutions are doomed to

³ Some active visual arts projects implementing AIDS awareness include Arts for Humanity, Artists for Human Rights, Siyazama, Voices of Women

⁴ See APS website: <http://www.artistproofstudio.org.za/artist%20proofstudio/outreach.html>

fail. If people continue to see HIV and AIDS as issues 'out there' that 'other people' have to deal with, then existing support programmes will never be successful. The role of artists and educators is to challenge denial, and can play a critical role in changing attitudes and behaviours. It is not only a problem of lack of information and delivery on the part of the state. In the end, the challenge lies also with individual citizens in society.

In a small way the Paper Prayers campaign, alongside the many other initiatives by citizens, exemplifies the ability to contribute to change in society. These small initiatives aim to tap into the talent, ingenuity, energy and local knowledge that South African citizens have to offer. Projects like Paper Prayers, the Siyazama Project,⁵ Break the Silence⁶ advocacy billboards and other visual arts strategies for addressing the impact of HIV are effective in that they do not function as bureaucratic structures that co-ordinate and direct the work of others. Rather, they are facilitative and assist to unlock the capacity and resources for people to experience themselves as agents of change.

The Paper Prayers Campaign has functioned on the belief in the force of creativity to empower people. I argue that participation in the workshops and campaign built people's confidence and enabled them see themselves as part of the solution to the crisis. However, I would argue that Paper Prayers, like many other AIDS education initiatives, did not have a significant impact on prevalence rates, nor could it demonstrate clearly the impact of its interventions at a wider societal level. This is to be expected. Unless taken to scale, small project initiatives like Paper Prayers can have an impact only in the limited sphere of those it directly affects. Wider social change requires not only that such initiatives are delivered at scale, but that they are indeed multi-sectoral, involving all elements and sectors of society and the state.

Paper Prayers was established to encourage agency and action in response to HIV/AIDS education and support through the visual arts. It has achieved these outcomes in four key areas: a) awareness – increasing understanding of HIV/AIDS; b) empowerment – supporting visual artists to act with greater agency; c) therapeutic - helping participants to overcome the negative emotions of fear and denial resulting from loss due to HIV/AIDS; and d) economic: enabling participants learn an art or craft skill to help them earn an income.

A further theoretical assumption on which the Paper Prayers intervention is based is the feminist argument that the agency of women is key to poverty alleviation (Sen, 1999; and Alexander and Mohanty, 1997). Although the trainers from Artist Proof Studio were predominantly men, although this has changed over the years, the participants, especially in the rural areas, were predominantly women. Studies by Mohanty (2003), Albertyn and Goldblatt (2007) and Ramphele (2008) suggest that female education, reproductive agency and economic empowerment enhance not only the position of women, but that of society as a whole. This work confirms Sen's assertion that the "changing agency of women is one of the major mediators of

⁵ Siyazama Project 'Striving to make a positive difference' is a collaborative intervention with communication and design education to transfer HIV/Aids awareness to rural women through workshops

<http://www.siyazamaproject.co.za>

⁶ Art for Humanities <http://www.afh.org.za/>

economic and social change, and its determination as well as consequences closely relate to many of the central features of the development process” (1999:203-204). Sen’s claim that leadership amongst women is a crucial aspect of “development as freedom” is convincingly demonstrated by the longevity of a number of women’s groups that were initiated through the Paper Prayers Programme. Many have been going for over a decade.

Research Design and Methodologies

The Paper Prayers Campaign, 1998-2004

The idea of making a paper prayer is derived from the Japanese practice of offering an artwork as a gift of healing and well-being. Making a paper prayer to achieve emotional healing, as well as to provide an indication of support for those who are ill, is intended as a fundamentally therapeutic act. The structure of each workshop depends on the profile and circumstances of each group. The Training Manual for facilitators conducting the workshops, (available from Artist Proof Studio) describes particular exercises and techniques in practical detail (Antonopolou and Sellschop, 2008). For example, in communities where resources are scarce, printing is done with cut-out stencils, found or waste materials such as string, and found objects such as plants and items with different textures. The facilitator explains how emotive words and adjectives can be translated into formal elements such as line, colour, symbols and shapes. This becomes the stimulus for a visual narrative and artwork. The images and symbols facilitate an open discussion of participants’ fears and concerns in a safe environment.⁷

Impact and Outcomes

Thousands of paper prayers were made during the campaign of 1998. Every workshop began with an interactive AIDS awareness workshop with a trained counsellor and included role-playing, drawing, quizzes and awareness sessions. Each artwork responded to the challenge of: ‘what can I do as an individual?’ Examples included giving a gift of caring, offering the work to exhibit in order to raise money to assist another person, creating awareness through discussion with neighbours, or holding a workshop in a school. The campaign’s ideal outcome was to have each person leave feeling that they had been empowered to make a difference. Participants left the workshop with at least one image to keep for themselves, and one to give as a gift. The workshops were introduced into rural embroidery or sewing groups in remote villages in Mpumalanga (Bushbuck Ridge and Tzaneen), and Limpopo (Giyani) and the North West Province (Winterveld). All of these projects had originally been formed as a means of income generation through craft, and Paper Prayers were introduced to expand the scope of the groups. In the rural embroidery projects we worked with, (for example the Karos, Chivurika, Bushbuck Ridge and Mapula projects), the introduction of HIV Awareness workshops in 1998 was, in most instances, the first opportunity the women had for an open forum that permitted discussion about the disease. In every rural community we approached, we found a reluctance to acknowledge the impact of HIV/AIDS. Nevertheless, the Paper Prayers Campaign required the women to respond to the information provided by the workshops with visual imagery and metaphor, that is, to process their knowledge emotionally.

⁷ (This methodology is discussed in greater detail in the article by Berman and Allen 2009:224-225)

Art historian Brenda Schmahmann has chronicled the history of one of the collectives, the Mapula project, and has documented how the Paper Prayers Campaign influenced the change of subject matter of the decorative embroideries:

The Mapula Embroidery Project has provided employment to women who were born into poverty-stricken households, deprived of access to a proper education, restricted by apartheid laws that limited their mobility and job opportunities, and made subject to gender iniquities that denied them the freedom to control and manage their own lives. It has furthermore provided members with opportunities to speak of issues that they would not necessarily articulate in everyday discourse, and through the awards and accolades it has won, has acknowledged the creative capacities of its members (Schmahmann 2006: 117).

Methodologically Paper Prayers workshops make use of both visual and narrative approaches. Our findings have shown that visual literacy can compensate for the possible limited ability amongst many participants to express thoughts and ideas using words. The interventions require participants to produce explanatory verbal narratives alongside their visual art works. This process generates two positive outcomes: first, participants often deepen their understanding of their predicament through the process of articulating it; second, the collaborative, interactive process of explaining their paper prayer tends both to generate discussion and to strengthen group support. This process provides opportunities to 'break the silence' in a safe and supportive environment. Although for some groups initially the resistance to engaging in discussions about HIV and AIDS is high, and participants feel threatened to disclose or share their status for fear of gossip or marginalisation, this fear generally dissipates during the discussion process because a platform for describing personal feelings in a non-threatening way has been created.

AIDS Action: Cultural Action for Change: 2006-present

In 2006 the Ford Foundation funded a multi-disciplinary approach to conduct AIDS Action interventions with monitoring impact to provide evidence of change over the course of a span. The target was to apply the Paper Prayers programme using additional participatory tools such as Photovoice⁸ and interactive group workshops to fifteen Phumani Paper craft enterprise sites. Funding was awarded to collaborating partners, Artist Proof Studio, my research programme at the University of Johannesburg and its community engagement partner, Phumani Paper. Phumani Paper, although initiated as a research and community engagement project in 1998, it is a Section 21 company operating out of the University of Johannesburg and servicing the training and marketing needs of 15 craft enterprises across South Africa. Through participation from the Development Studies Department at the University of Johannesburg, I was able to appoint a researcher to establish a monitoring and assessment strategy that could involve student and community researches. Data was collected from a sample of 15 Phumani Paper enterprises in seven provinces in South Africa where Paper Prayers workshops had been conducted, as well as ten schools in which the Paper Prayers methodology was used in implementing HIV/AIDS awareness and action training. Lilo Du Toit, conducting the survey using a traditional social science approach, found the

⁸ More information on the history, theory, and applications of Photovoice can be found on Caroline Wang's website, see website: <http://www.photovoice.com> See also workbook and reference materials used to introduce Photovoice to the groups.

participatory art-based methodology to be successful (Du Toit, 2008). Qualitative evidence in the form of artworks, narratives and testimonies by participants was collected by multidisciplinary teams and has been archived. The methodology has been documented in recent article "Paper Prayers: An Arts-Based Methodological Approach for HIV/Intervention and Action" (Berman and Allen 2009). The exhibition and catalogue for the Art and Social Justice Conference provides an extensive overview of the range of qualitative evidence.

The AIDS Action programme, now called Cultural Action for Change, was catalysed by the death of 60% of project members over six years of the original participants in the Phumani Paper supported group in Eshowe Kwa-Zulu Natal. The Ford Foundation renewed its support to extend the interventions into the 15 Phumani Paper craft enterprises as well as art-based advocacy programmes in allied schools and community centres. The use of the different visual strategies such as Paper Prayers and Photovoice which expanded to include the making of visual maps, though resource mapping and murals, helped to ensure that the majority of the participants found a vehicle needed to articulate their concerns and visions for the future. Community mapping has proved to be an effective visual tool in the third phase of the intervention and has been documented in a recent Masters dissertation by one of my student researchers and community facilitators.

Photovoice enables researchers to more accurately perceive the world from the viewpoint of the people who lead lives that are different from those usually in control of the means for imaging the world. As such, this approach to participatory appraisal values the knowledge put forth by people as a vital source of expertise. It confronts a fundamental problem of community assessment: what professionals, researchers, specialists, and outsiders think is important may completely fail to match what the community thinks is important. Most significantly, the images produced and the issues discussed and framed by people may stimulate policy and social change. According to Caroline Wang, Photovoice is a methodology to reach, inform, and organize community members, enabling them to prioritize their concerns and discuss problems and solutions. Photovoice goes beyond the conventional role of community assessment by inviting people to promote their own and their community's well-being.

Finally, the academic component of Cultural Action for Change was structured to test the efficacy of participatory learning that employs students as researchers and teachers as well as learners through PAR methodology. This project forms a case study to my own PhD research which explores some of the following questions; What is gained academically from engaged learning? What is the unique role of the creative interventions of Photovoice and Paper Prayers in this process? The fundamental challenge the research teams faced in engaging research with Phumani Paper groups revolves around the following questions: How can this endeavour maintain an equal exchange of value and not result in exploitative power relationships? How does this research resist the perpetuation of the norm, which often involves researchers using institutional research resources to exploit a community to further their own career development?

Exploring the link between art, social justice and health

Overview of projects at APS 1998 to 2010

As described in the methodology section above, the Artist Proof Studio has expanded the scope and focus of the original Paper Prayers programme to engage with issues beyond HIV/AIDS through its AIDS Action/Cultural Action for Change programme. The modes of engagement with communities include paper prayers prints, Photovoice, mapping and mural making. Through donor funding and partnerships, APS has moved the Paper Prayers programme into advocacy and education, and maintains ongoing interventions in schools rural communities, the inner city, and after-care programmes for orphans and vulnerable children. This is implemented with experiential work placements for senior students and graduates from APS to promote socially responsible agency among emerging artists. This kind of broad based engagement recognises the need for partnerships and a multi-modal approach to address the broader issues of social justice. These are documented in the catalogue and exhibition accompanying the Art and Social Justice Conference. However for the purposes of this paper this section will point to a selection of the projects and interventions that APS has embarked on over the past twelve years.

In an attempt to touch on the four outcomes of the programme stated above, namely awareness, empowerment, therapeutic resources and income generating skills, the examples chosen will describe an overview of the Paper Prayers Campaign, the AIDS Action/Cultural Action for Change programme, and an example of an AIDS advocacy project at APS that led to an involvement with mural painting to provide solidarity and action during the period of xenophobic violence. The overview draws on the basic premise of the Paper Prayers campaign that uses the visual arts in a participatory and multi-dimensional way to address personal and social change. What was not achieved, nor could be measured in this intervention are the broader HIV/AIDS challenges of reduced prevalence, the wider impacts on stigma and discrimination and women better able to negotiate safe sex. What has become clear and applicable, is that this programme has developed specific art-based methodological tools, applicable through the training manual and a skilled multi-disciplinary team of artists, AIDS counsellors, researchers and community facilitators that results in the agency of participants able to make purposive choices that changes behaviour.

The Paper Prayers Campaign: Outcomes

The Paper Prayers program required ingenuity and imagination to keep it going after funding ended in 1999. The networks created through the expansion of the program not only permitted it to survive, but to evolve. The government funded a one-off program for one year; but a decade later Paper Prayers is still confronting the AIDS epidemic.

Paper Prayers itself has spawned independent programs such as Kopenang (2000), a women's embroidery collective that houses an AIDS orphanage,⁹ Keiskamma Trust (2002) a remarkable initiative founded in the Eastern Cape by Carol Hofmeyr,¹⁰

⁹This was started by Sister Sheila Flynn, contracted as a coordinator for Phumani Paper from 2000-2005. See Kopenang Women's Project website <http://www.kopenang.org/aboutus.html>

¹⁰ Carol Hofmeyr was the coordinator of the Paper Prayers Campaign in 1998/99; see Keiskamma Trust website <http://www.keiskamma.org>

and Ikageng (2003), a collective of women in Johannesburg who received training from a Paper Prayers skills program and who successfully make and sell felt toys¹¹

Anecdotal evidence from the campaign suggests that Paper Prayers workshops resulted in a significant change in attitudes both for individuals and their communities. For example, during a workshop held in the TshiTsonga village, Mphambo, in the area of Giyani in Limpopo Province in 1998, the women requested that the young men present leave the room, as it was improper to discuss sex in the company of men. The women then opened up and asked questions that revealed the prevalence of the myths surrounding what was referred to as “slims disease.” Some of the questions included “Can you get AIDS from bathing in the same water, from toilet seats and from hugging?” Women also asked what they can do if they are aware that the man has multiple sex partners in the city and yet refuses to use a condom. How could they protect themselves? How could they organize other women to be aware of the problem and to support each other? One woman shared a story of being beaten up by her husband for asking about condom use. To counter these fears, the HIV facilitator engaged the group in role-playing, and humour, laughter, singing and fun became key strategies for participation. The trainer demonstrated the use of male and female condoms amid great amusement, and offered examples of women blowing a whistle to gather a group of supporters when threatened with violence. At the end of the workshop the women requested Paper Prayers T-shirts and started wearing the red ribbons to identify themselves as members of the group who have the knowledge to help and support others.

Today, some of these women are AIDS activists and home-based caregivers. For example, the Mphambo AIDS project was established in 2001 as an offshoot from Chivurika embroidery in Giyani. Some of the members of the group had been volunteering in home-based care, and wished to expand their skills. With the proceeds from a Boston-based auction of their embroidery work, they sent six other members of the group to receive training in home-based care from the Red Cross. Today, ten women from Mphambo Village receive a small grant annually to distribute food parcels, to care for the sick, to assist the orphans of the village, and to receive support and training from the local clinic. They identify themselves as having the creativity, skills and sense of self to make a difference, and in turn their efforts have had a positive impact on their entire village.

Activism and Action: Paper Prayers, 2006-8: The Reclaiming Lives project

Having provided that initial base of support for change, however, it became clear that something more was needed. The concept of agency – the ability to make purposeful choices, to find the conviction to act with conviction on newfound knowledge – this was the challenge to any further expansion of the program. A major stumbling block to instilling agency was the structure of the first phase, which primarily targeted women. Except for the APS workshops with students and street children, men were rarely full participants during the first two phases. The new intervention asked the question: if art is to contribute to saving lives, are different approaches needed when the audience is primarily young men rather than rural women? APS has a population of 75 to 80% young men as students. Many gender-based issues that have surfaced over the years can be traced to the urban and

¹¹ Ikageng is an outreach project of Artist Proof Studio:
<http://www.artistproofstudio.org.za/artist%20proofstudio/outreach.html>

township culture from which the majority come. The machismo of township youth has many negative manifestations: among them gangsterism and violence against women. Therefore, APS began to focus gender training on men, and shifted the emphasis from AIDS awareness to the gender-based issues surrounding this disease.

In 2006, I was nominated as a finalist for the Sasol Wax Art award. A young art teacher from the APS community had recently died from an AIDS related illness, but what killed him was the fear and silence that contributed to his denial of the disease. I used this opportunity of the Sasol award to involve 100 artists from APS to confront their own fear and participate in a project that asked the question “Can art save lives?” During the first phase of the project, each artist was asked to create a symbolic portrait, an etching that would pay homage to someone who had died of AIDS. Each participant’s choice of honouring someone in relationship to oneself – whether a relative, friend, or neighbour – normalizes and personalizes the pandemic. As with the Paper Prayers Campaign, the process required that each participant attended pre-counselling workshops and focus groups to discuss the process of choosing to undergo an HIV test. The studio members were divided into small groups; each breakaway group was asked to interrogate facts, discuss fears and myths, and to imagine a changed social culture. Their conclusions were shared with the group as a whole, and their questions answered and clarified by professional counsellors. The etched portraits were compiled as a tribute wall on panels with waxed monoprint overlays that grappled with their choice to undergo a test and to honour their own lives. Their prints were exhibited in composite panels and a bound book to accompany my etchings in the resulting Sasol Wax award installation.

Through the journey presented by participating in the Reclaiming Lives project, artists were able to consider their own lives and act in ways to prolong them. They were able to find meaning and peace with the untimely and often unacknowledged deaths of loved ones, and to create a catalyst for families and friends to begin to re-examine their own lives, fears, biases and actions. (Nchabaleng, August 2006).

According to one participant:

I have a healthier relationship with myself [after the testing process]. I value myself; I still want to live and share myself with people. I made one choice that enables other choices (APS participant 2006).

Paper Prayers workshops continue at Artist Proof Studio, with its predominantly male student population; these young men consistently reveal ignorance about AIDS, despite their participation in the workshops. In order to address the gendered nature of the disease, partnerships have been established with Engender Health and its subsidiaries, Men As Partners (MAP) and Sonke Justice (One man can), in order to integrate HIV/AIDS education and activism into the APS curriculum. Over the past decade, the trajectory of Paper Prayers has been from awareness to advocacy, and from female-based to male- and female-based education. This has led to the designing public of murals that envision gender equality and honour the stories of victims of xenophobic violence and discrimination.

Cultural Action for Change: 2008-2010

An additional objective was to achieve an increase in productivity and income for the enterprises as a result of greater group trust, information, networking and agency.

The Phumani Paper program intervention aimed at empowering the groups themselves to better manage their enterprises, whereas the Phumani Paper national office and regional staff were challenged with investigating and accessing markets. The AIDS Action intervention of 2006-2008 was extended to a broader based Cultural Action for Change programme supported by the Ford Foundation up to June 2010. The project is designed to use a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, and continued to use the tools of Photovoice and Resource mapping. The result has been visual mural maps in each enterprise that locates the group in relation to health and market resources. Examples of outcomes from the different locations are available in the catalogue and exhibition accompanying this conference.

Experience from the Paper Prayers Campaign suggests that people are saturated with information on HIV, yet infection rates continue to be high. In response to this puzzling and frustrating phenomenon, the Cultural Action for Change takes the position that there is a pressing obligation to find new approaches. The standard information workshops with condom demonstrations have been conducted repeatedly for more than a decade now, and there does not appear to be much change in sexual behaviour. What arts activists have found, and which is reinforced by the interviews with various stakeholders and beneficiaries, is that a participatory approach is better received than simply 'learning a lesson' (Gould 2007: 5). The conceptual view of using artistic methods in healing and teaching was corroborated strongly by various stakeholders in the program, such as those involved at a program level as trainers, coordinators and managers:

'It has done so in a way I never expected. I have seen the most powerful articulations of HIV-related issues than in any other intervention I engaged in.' and '... if empowerment means being able to make more choices, then yes, I think these interventions contribute to empowerment' ¹² (HIV counsellor, Stakeholder Interview 2007).

The lessons the research team have learnt in the Cultural Action for Social Change is that, for cultural processes to be powerful, the use of visual arts approaches such as printmaking, photography, mural making and mapping are tools that have the capacities to create identities, narratives and practical actions. The programme outcomes over the past four years have demonstrated that the kind of positive social change that takes place within the groups and their individual members as a result of these interventions is characterized by innovation, agency and restoration. The results confirm that artistic forms of expression such as Photovoice and Paper Prayers offer a rich and intense form of inquiry, and are effective in facilitating the expression of voices that have not been heard.

Along with the common perception shared by the training team members, these results support the contention that visual and narrative materials when applied as a training intervention can systematically increase the achievement of social and behaviour change. Since the intervention, some of the members of the groups have participated in VCT, and some have initiated ARV treatment for themselves or others. The encouraging interim findings from the questionnaires conducted by the researchers on the project support the proposed objectives of the intervention. The

¹² Du Toit (2007) Phumani Paper/ Artist Proof Studio Stakeholder Interviews

Phumani groups indicated that, apart from the information on HIV, the creative methods used in the APS interventions taught them skills that they can use in their papermaking and craft businesses. Du Toit notes that the ability of the methods used by Artist Proof Studio artists to access deep, emotional issues of the participants in a non-threatening and participatory way, was the main benefit cited by stakeholders. Its ability to “bypass language”, its “therapeutic” effects, its access to people “when language falls short” and its ability to “inspire agency” in the participant was cited by more than one stakeholder (Du Toit 2008).

This requires a multi-disciplinary and multi-skilled team to facilitate and prioritize themes and actions that emerge from the Photovoice and Paper Prayers narratives. The methodology will continue to develop the educational and new knowledge generating potential of Participatory Action Research.

Findings and Conclusions

HIV/AIDS is a human tragedy on a terrifying scale and there is no end in sight. The social and political response has been denial. As Susan Sontag writes: “That even an apocalypse can be made to seem part of the ordinary horizon of expectation constitutes an unparalleled violence that is being done to our sense of reality, to our humanity” (Sontag 1998: 134). Educators face a generation of students, at least a quarter of whom are statistically HIV-positive. Denial can no longer be the *modus operandi*. I look back to the impact of the Paper Prayers campaign and know it has made a difference to the lives of some of the participants. There is no statistical data as a measurement tool to prove this, but there is powerful qualitative evidence in the anecdotal accounts of the empowerment of individual men and women. The artwork produced can also be seen as evidence of empowerment.

For meaningful change to be sustainable, the value of time and an ongoing engaged and participatory process using a phased approach is necessary for inculcating agency. The Paper Prayers program has evolved from an expression of awareness to countering denial through action.

Visual voices do not have to illustrate issues of the day, but developing multi-modal literacies equips artists-as-citizens to engage productively, effectively and often profitably with society. Artists choose their own modes and subjects. But the application of voice to ‘do good’ for society, is, I argue, part of the responsibility of our new democracy. The Paper Prayers slogan we adopted from Margaret Mead “Just imagine the potential if we all hold hands,” suggests that when citizens communicate, much more becomes possible.

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MAKE ART/STOP AIDS – Africa: Empowering People Living with HIV/AIDS through Performance

by Dr. Galia Boneh

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Abstract

Artists are masterful communicators, able to tackle complex issues in sophisticated ways, and trigger thought and discussion in a manner that is engaging, inspiring, even mobilizing. Based on this belief, MAKE ART/STOP AIDS – Africa is an arts-based stigma reduction and HIV/AIDS education program built upon a performance collaboration model. Piloted in Ghana and Malawi, the model brings together people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and performing artists to undergo an intensive creative process, culminating in an AIDS themed performance to be delivered to local communities.

The model is based on the supposition that if PLWHA are equal and active participants in the creative process and performance, together with professional artists, both the process and performance will be more profound, grounded in reality, and empowering for participants and audiences. Rather than rousing compassion for PLWHA as is often the goal of stigma-reduction campaigns, this model seeks to empower and give voice to PLWHA, thereby promoting social justice and equality.

Sub-theme: Exploring the link between art, social justice and health

Introduction

An image is created and sent out to the world – through a performance, a painting a song. If it is a powerful image, it lingers in the mind of the observer. In that mind, it may enhance or challenge a previously held notion. Where previous notions are challenged, discussion is triggered; change is invited.

The images associated with the HIV/AIDS epidemic shape the attitudes and behaviors towards People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). The Make Art / Stop AIDS (MASA) – Africa project aims to challenge previous notions of PLWHA by offering new images through performance. Following a discussion of old and new images, this article will present the principles of the MASA model for creating performance through collaboration between artists and PLWHA.

Fear and Compassion



(Left to Right: Painting by Ghanaian artist Almighty God - Photo by Doran Ross; Photo by Galia Boneh; Photo by Galia Boneh)

In the 1980s and 1990s strategies of prevention campaigns were to create enough panic and fear to scare people into changing their behavior. Although images and slogans such as “AIDS Kills” can still be found (the pictures above were taken in Ghana in 2007), it is now widely agreed upon that these kind of signs do not help counter the epidemic, especially because they fuel stigma towards People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).

Instead, we are now being asked in campaigns to show compassion for PLWHA.



(Photos by Galia Boneh)

While compassion appears to be a positive sentiment to evoke, a closer look may question this assumption. Let us consider these images of billboards that were also photographed in Ghana in 2007: In Both images, the person living with HIV/AIDS appears as a victim. He appears to be dying and shows signs of weakness and powerlessness. In both images, the people showing compassion are situated higher than the PLWHA, looking down at him or her.

The concept of compassion as framed in HIV/AIDS campaigns sets in stone the uneven power dynamic in which the receiver of compassion is rendered powerless, needy of mercy or pity, and dependent on the goodwill of the giver of compassion, who in effect holds the power. This observation leads us to question: Is it compassion that PLWHA need from their families, general public, and government – or do they need the power to exercise their own human rights, demand fair and equal treatment, and not be dependent on the goodwill of others? Does this use of “compassion” not fuel the cycle of victim-hood, and if so, what alternative concept would be both more inspiring and liberating, and more useful in countering the spread of the epidemic?

Empowerment



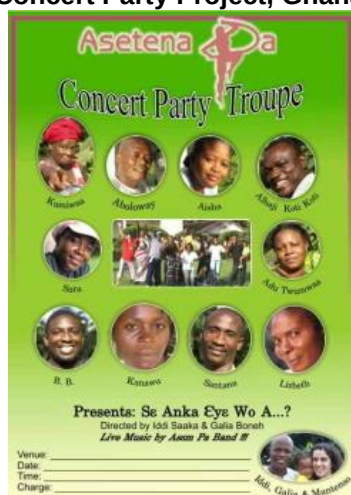
(Photos by Galia Boneh)

Jo Rowlands (1998)¹ defines three types of empowerment: personal empowerment (developing individual consciousness and confidence to confront oppression), relational empowerment (an increased ability to negotiate and influence relational decisions), and collective empowerment (collective action at the local or higher level to change oppressive social structures). Empowered PLWHA will not only assist themselves and others like them to live fuller, happier lives, but will also assist in countering the epidemic: The notion that people can live full lives with HIV/AIDS can give courage to others to test themselves for HIV, seek treatment if necessary, and gain confidence in confronting oppression (personal empowerment). If their empowerment leads to a shift in the attitudes of the general public towards PLWHA it is possible that revealing one's HIV positive status to one's partner will become easier and more widespread, thereby preventing future infections. An empowered PLWHA can generate discussion, educate, and share personal experience that can be useful in encouraging preventive behavior (relational empowerment). Finally, collective empowerment in the form of a functional network and lobby may bring about improved facilities, access to treatment, legislation, and other structural changes.

In this presentation I wish to share a project that engages PLWHA and local artists in a collaborative process leading to the creation of a performance. The project, which took place in Ghana and Malawi, gives direct voice to PLWHA, empowers PLWHA on stage and in the audience, triggers lively dialogue in the community, and offers an alternative image of PLWHA to the one offered through the compassion campaigns.

¹ Rowlands, J. 1998. *Questioning empowerment; Working with woman in Honduras*. London: Oxfam.

Asetena Pa Concert Party Project, Ghana, 2006:



(Photos by Galia Boneh)

The Asetena Pa Concert Party project engaged five Ghanaian popular artists and five PLWHA collaboratively in a deep artistic process that delved into the complexities of issues related to HIV/AIDS, and through that process created a performance that was largely based on the personal experiences of the participants. The performance, titled “Se anka eye wo a... (meaning “If it were you...?” in Twi, the most widely spoken local language in Ghana), followed the “Concert Party” tradition, a local popular art form that includes music, comedy and melodrama. The Asetena Pa Concert Party toured eleven towns across Ghana.

The performance started with two hours of live music to attract the audience (a live band joined the troupe for the tour). The opening act by Santana, the comedian, broke the ice about sex and gender relations, and included a funny - but proper - condom demonstration. The drama was about an HIV positive woman, Adu, whose husband died of AIDS, and didn’t tell her of his status for fear that she would leave him. A year later Adu meets Aboloway, a handsome and well-to-do man who wants to marry her. Adu faces a dilemma, and asks the advice of the audience: Should she tell him of her HIV status or not?

The cast included the PLWHA participants and professional artists, but the audience came to know that some of the cast were HIV positive only in the last few moments of the show when the protagonist declared “we are a group of five professional actors and five PLWHA.” As the performers formed a line embracing one another, the audience was presented with the question: “can you tell who has HIV and who does not?” The performers then each gave short testimonies, stating their name, HIV status (positive or negative) and a short statement about themselves.

CHANCO-UCLA Performance Project, Malawi, 2008:



(Photos by Galia Boneh)

The CHANCO-UCLA Performance Project engaged fourteen University students majoring in Drama, six local PLWHA and three University of California interns. The group underwent a similar process, and created a performance titled “This is My Story”, which was performed at Chancellor College in front of the student body and faculty, and at a nearby Teachers’ Training college.

"This is My Story" was about a female University student troubled with suspicion that her boyfriend is not faithful to her, to the extent that she failed her exams. When she approaches her Professor, he pressures her into going out on a date with him, resulting in what is known as "Sexually Transmitted Grades". When she hears that his newborn baby died of AIDS, she becomes worried and withdrawn. The situation gets more complicated when her boyfriend, sensing that she is avoiding him, wants her even more. Here as well, the audience learns that some of the cast are HIV positive only at the last part of the show, when one by one some of the actors come to stand by the character they most identify with and say "This is my story because I too, like so and so in the play, am HIV positive", adding a few sentences about themselves. Some of the students also come forward stating why it is their story as well (for example "This is my story because I once had a boyfriend who cheated on me"). The performance was followed by a Question and Answer session with the performers and directors.

Rationale

The primary principle of the project is the active and equal engagement of PLWHA in the creative process and performance. The rationale for this is that the input of the people that have first hand experience of the medical, social, cultural, economic and political challenges of HIV/AIDS can help in creating deep understanding of these issues. PLWHA bring real stories and rich material for creation that are grounded in reality. In addition, performance on the topic of HIV/AIDS will necessarily include some form of representation of PLWHA, and it is only right that PLWHA will take part in shaping that representation.

The image of PLWHA as vocal, confident personas – singing, dancing, acting, ALIVE - counters the deeply engrained images of PLWHA as passive victims, sick, dying, etc. Moreover, if the performing PLWHA undergo a process of personal empowerment during the production, the content of their messages, and even their body language, will enhance the general movement from compassion to empowerment. More profound than what they say is the image of them speaking up. Hence, the experience is empowering for the participating PLWHA and PLWHA in the audiences. Finally, the very collaboration of people with HIV and people who do not have HIV, and seeing them together on stage touching, embracing, joking, singing, and acting together, sends out a clear and loud message of acceptance.

Another principle of the model is working with relevant local artistic and cultural forms. In Ghana, we chose Concert Party as this is the most popular artistic form among the masses. In Malawi, since the target audience for this project was University students, who tend to belong to the urban, modern elite, the relevant artistic form was conventional drama.

The last principle that guided us was to move away from messaging towards critical thinking and dialogue. We were not interested in preaching and offering ready solutions to terribly complex problems. Instead we were interested in triggering dialogue and critical thinking among audience members. We designed the process in such a way that it would acknowledge and delve into the complexity of reality, and question widely held assumptions, stereotypes, preconceptions, and common opinions. Inevitably the content and manner of engagement in the process would be reflected in the performance.

The Model

Recruitment of Participants

Ideally, the project should engage an equal number of PLWHA and artists/students, as was the case in the Asetena Pa project in Ghana. PLWHA participants were recruited through support groups. We went to meetings of a few groups, presented the project and invited those who were interested to join auditions. In the auditions we looked for people who had presence or talent for the stage, who had interesting ideas and opinions, and who represented a variety of ages, genders, classes, etc. In Ghana, recruitment of professional artists was targeted: we approached individuals who we knew were popular actors and chose those we sensed had the right personality. In Malawi, students were recruited through auditions announced in their department. Out of 50 students who attended the auditions, we selected fourteen. It should be noted that students did not get credit for their participation, nor any other benefits. On the contrary, they had to commit almost all their free time during the period of the project. And yet it was a highly competitive project for students.

After recruitment of participants and meeting with each group separately to address any anxieties they may have, the participants underwent an intensive training of approximately 100 hours. In Ghana the group worked eight hours a day for two weeks. In Malawi the 100 hours spread across five weeks since the students were not available to engage in the project full time. The structure of the workshop was as follows:

1. Basic knowledge: delivered by a professional counselor or Doctor specializing in HIV/AIDS. The information sessions can take place before or during the first days of the workshop.
2. Breaking barriers: The first couple days of the workshop are devoted to getting to know one another, creating one group out of the two groups that came together for the project, and creating an atmosphere of trust. This is done through music, movement and theatre games. Throughout the workshop, each day opens with a few of these exercises, in order to maintain the positive group dynamic.
3. Depth of Understanding: Deep understanding, both intellectually and emotionally, of the challenges, problems and issues surrounding HIV/AIDS, are achieved by three major activities: 1. sharing of personal stories; 2. holding debates on related topics; 3. theatre exercises that stimulate discussion and understanding of the complexities of reality.
4. Empowerment: Empowerment of the participants, particularly the PLWHA, is achieved throughout the whole process, especially through the relationships formed in the group, and culminating with their experience on stage. However, during the creative process, participants engage in exercises that explore possibilities and sources of power within oppressive situations.
5. Theme Development: The activities noted above take approximately 50 hours (half of the workshop). After forming intimacy, discussing, listening, gaining understanding, insights and ideas, participants brainstorm on the issues that had come up and seem most important to treat in the performance. They first list every idea that comes up, and then vote and choose a major topic, recognizing that some of the other issues can be represented as sub-topics.
6. Processing: Processing of the material generated throughout the workshop and the chosen theme into a storyline is done by the director. The director presents the storyline to the group and adjusts it according to their feedback.
7. Rehearsals and Production: In the CHANCO-UCLA project the work of production was also done by the participants: they were divided into groups and each group was in charge of a different aspect of production such as set design, costumes and props, and advertisement.

The important feature of the project is that the product is a reflection of the process: the relationships between the participants are reflected on stage; the complexity of reality we discovered during the first phases of the creative process is reflected in the content of the performance; the spirit of group work is reflected in all aspects of the production.

Research Methods

The project in Ghana was evaluated through focus groups that took place in four of the towns in which we performed during the day after the performance. The towns were Yapei, Damongo, Bole, and Bamboi, all towns in the Northern part of Ghana. In each location four focus groups were held, two with females and two with males, totaling 16 focus groups in all. Attendance in each group varied from 6 to 11 participants roughly between the ages of 18-35. Moderators followed an outline of eleven questions (first unaided questions and later aided questions) that were devised initially. PLWHA and artist participants were interviewed after the workshop and during a reunion in Accra in 2007.

In Malawi, participants were interviewed by film maker Mark Eby after the project, and more thorough research was conducted a year following the project. Questionnaires were administered to people who participated in the project, watched the performance, and did not attend the performance. Data from this research is still being analyzed. Below are some of the findings from the research conducted in Ghana.

Research Results

Empowerment of PLWHA

Interviews suggest the early development of our three operating definitions of empowerment: personal empowerment, relational empowerment, and collective empowerment. In relation to personal empowerment, after the workshop a PLWHA participant commented on her newfound confidence:

Before the project I used to feel very shy about the fact that I have HIV, but now I feel very confident and proud of myself. I don't care – if I am not depending on you for food, you can say what you want. I have decided to live the number of years God has given me.

In terms of relational empowerment, we learned of how participants were able to support and counsel others. For example, L from Aburi talked to Ama (Asetena Pa performer, PLWHA) after the performance and they exchanged phone numbers. Five months later, L called Ama, sharing that she wants to get tested for HIV. Ama traveled an hour and a half to meet and take her to an HIV clinic. L tested positive, but took it well due to Ama's counseling and support.

While a more longitudinal analysis will be required to evaluate collective empowerment, we know of three support groups, each numbering approximately 30 people that were formed in three of the towns where we performed, as a direct result of the performance. For example, D from Navrongo had been suspecting he had HIV for a while, but did not have the courage to get tested. After the performance, he went and tested positive. He formed a support group in Navrongo numbering 27 members.

In these and other instances we can see how the empowerment of individual PLWHA can not only better their own well being, but also affect the well being of other individuals and indeed the collective stance and status of PLWHA in the country. The formation of support groups by individuals who were inspired and encouraged by the performance, is a sustainable and important result of the project, as it continues to give PLWHA social and emotional support as well as assistance with food, medical treatment and income generation.

Images of PLWHA

The image of the healthy looking bodies of the performers, vocal and confident on stage, provoked a lively debate among audience members regarding whether or not the testimonies of the PLWHA were true. This debate led to discussions of these images of PLWHA juxtaposed against the images they had in mind prior to the performance; of the implications of the fact that all performers looked the same; on the impacts of coming out boldly to the public; and on the significance of HIV-positives and -negatives performing together. The following excerpts illustrate the ways the performances provoked discussion and thought amongst audience members:

- A: I was happy because if they hadn't disclosed to us we wouldn't know, so it shows that you can't tell someone's HIV status from the way their body looks.
- B: There wasn't any difference between them [the HIV positives and negatives], so it means that what a normal fellow can do, a person with AIDS can equally do.
- C: It has given courage to people living with AIDS that after all they can still continue with their lives.
- D: I was so happy because though some were positive and some were not, they all came together to act the play and related very well with one another. This means that we can also do things together with our own folks who are HIV positive. (Men's group, Bamboi, 1 December 2007)

The above testimonies of audience members attest to the fact that the message is delivered primarily through the *image* of healthy looking bodies, of confident personas, and of people with and without HIV interacting with one another rather than through words that would literally state the message.

Conclusion

Compassion towards PLWHA has been advocated in campaigns worldwide, perhaps as an attempt to correct the damage caused by the scare campaigns that were highly stigmatizing towards PLWHA. However, this seemingly positive sentiment sets in stone the weak and passive image of the PLWHA. Instead, empowerment of PLWHA can be more useful both in promoting the well being of PLWHA and in countering the epidemic.

The Asetena Pa Project in Ghana and the CHANCO-UCLA Performance project in Malawi brought together professional or student performing artists and PLWHA to undergo an intensive creative process culminating in the creation of a performance based on the personal experiences of the participants. The very collaboration between PLWHA and artists and the image of PLWHA performing on stage, shatters preconceptions and offers alternative images of empowered, lively and active PLWHA.

About the Author

Galia Boneh holds a PhD in Culture and Performance from UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures. For her B.A she graduated with distinction from the University of Ghana's School of Performing Arts. Prior to that she served a year long internship living in a Maasai village in Kenya as part of the Minnesota Studies in International Development (MSID) Program. Boneh has been studying, traveling and working in Africa for the past fifteen years, and has specialized in HIV/AIDS and arts for the past six years, under the guidance of Prof. David Gere. Currently she is serving as Director of the Make Art / Stop AIDS-Africa Project, with UCLA's Center for Art | Global Health.

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Art and Social Justice International Conference and Exhibition

The French Presence in KwaZulu-Natal: a cultural tourism research development initiative – a contribution to redress for social injustice.

Abstract:

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, declared on 20, 21, 23, 24, and 26 August 1789 and accepted by the King of France at the Assemblée Nationale in Paris, forms a corner stone of our constitution in South Africa.

This very concept is also an integral part of the cultural tourism research development project, "French Presence in KwaZulu-Natal: La Route du Prince Impérial, Louis Napoléon". Through its efforts, this project has extended its community outreach to help educate the *gogos*¹ of the Uqweqwe community (the community that lives next to the Prince Imperial monument) about their civil and social rights.

Furthermore, the project through its research component focuses on these RIGHTS in its exhibition in The Old Prison, Project Gateway, Pietermaritzburg, in the King Dinuzulu cell which marks the passage in prison of the king, subsequent to his exile in St Helena and prior to his imprisonment for his activities in the Bambatha Rebellion. The Old Prison also incarcerated other political activists who struggled for social justice in our era.

By a curious turn of historical events, the cultural tourism research focus of the "French Presence in KZN" started with the story of the Prince Imperial, only son of the Emperor Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie, and the great nephew of Napoleon I. The Prince was killed in an ambush by Zulu warriors in the closing stages of the Anglo-Zulu War and a monument, ordered and paid for by the English queen, Queen Victoria, marks the spot.

While Napoleon I was one of the Prince's heroes in the true tradition of the Bonaparte cult, he was also seen as an oppressor of great magnitude (or liberator, depending on one's political persuasion). Furthermore, for the context of this conference, Napoleon I also blighted his humanitarian copy-book by reinstituting slavery which had been abolished by the Convention² in 1794. The anti-slavery campaign in France finally succeeded in 1848 when it was decreed that this assault on human dignity was to be abolished. The French colonies were made territories

¹ *Gogo* means *grandmother* in Zulu

² The National Convention replaced the Legislative Assembly (which had been elected under the rules of the Constitution of 1791 and replaced the National Assembly). One of its first actions was to abolish the French monarchy on 12 September 1792, and declare the French Republic on the next day. The radicals who replaced the moderates in the subsequent "Reign of Terror" disposed of any potential enemies – mostly aristocrats and clergy. Over 250, 000 people perished.

<http://www.ohio.edu/chastain/dh/frenchco.htm>

and given representation in the national assembly. Unfortunately, this representation disappeared during the Second Empire (1852-1870), when Napoleon III governed France, first as President, then as emperor. Given this added blight on the human rights' record of both the Prince Imperial's father and on his great uncle, it is fitting that the "French Presence in KZN" project should have attempted to address some of the social issues and rights of inhabitants of that poor rural Uqweqwe community that lives next to the Prince Imperial monument.

Besides a 15 year old project outreach program of mostly infrastructural³ and skills' development, a formal frame work to the community outreach has been manifested in three ways:

1. Two weekend workshops initiated by Marion Soreil, an French internee for the Pietermaritzburg based, "Lawyers for Human Rights" to coach the gogos on their social and human rights⁴ and to document the impact of Aids on their lives⁵. At the same time, a vegetable garden was started with the co-operation of the Headmaster of the Uqweqwe Secondary School, Mr Siyaya. To date, there have been three successive donations of seeds by Starke-Ayers, Stockists of Seeds, through this project's intervention. A recent attempt to elicit feed-back from the gogos had limited success (the Lawyers for Human Rights organization having only made two visits to the gogos). Of the original thirty+/- gogos, only thirteen arrived to report back on 29 January 2010. In an age range of 48 years to 81 years, only eleven are accessing social grants – the Esimashwini office which distributes the grants is 5 kilometres away. Grants have increased from R1000 to R1080, but there is now talk of a 5% "levy" on this grant to swell the national coffers⁶.

Nine of the thirteen gogos are looking after thirty three AIDS orphans; these orphans range in age from 3 months to 26 years. In other instances, orphans without caring family members are living in "orphan colonies"- often in houses bereft of roofs⁷.

The inherent difficulties of accessing funding, sustainable hands-on intervention on a regular basis, are compounded by having to observe

³ Classrooms, underpinning, fencing, gates, a water pump, reservoir tanks, guttering, window reparation etc.

⁴ In keeping with Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 20,22,28, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the Assemblée générale of the United Nations on 10 December 1948

⁵ A series of reports on the Joint Oxfam HIV/AIDS Program (JOHAP) 2005. Case Study Number 4 *Has the impact of HIV and AIDS affected the lives of rural 'Gogos'?* Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) – HIV and AIDS Project. Documented and presented by: Urvashi Rajcoomar. Edited by: Margaret Roper.

⁶ Information supplied by Mme Beauty Sekete

⁷ Information supplied by Mme Ntefileng Buthelezi, Uqweqwe community

traditional protocol. The Chief of the area fully expects the project to deliver a French car, and as it has not, he remains fractious!

2. Visit and dialogue with Abaqulusi Municipality and the Uqweqwe community by M. Gabriel Morin, Co-operative Development, French Embassy, to submit a “Civil Society Development Fund” application. This is to be submitted through the NGO, “Amis Siyakhula” (Friends, we are growing together).
3. Collaborative project in co-operation by the 3rd year DUT Public Management Class, courtesy of Mme Joy Kistnasamy with the cultural tourism research development project, “French Presence in KZN; La Route du Prince Imperial, Louis Napoleon. Topic: Needs Analysis - Abaqulusi Municipality, Vryheid. The assignment is due on 28 April 2010.

While the direct Bonaparte connection provides glaring discrepancies in social justice because of the revocation of slave trade custom and representation, at the same time, the resultant humanitarian action in the Uqweqwe community has seen other international co-operation with this project, through the intervention of the French Embassy in South Africa.

Reunion Island, an overseas department of mainland France, has been one of the most significant and appropriate participants in this project. This Mascarene⁸ island shares a history of slave traffic with the Bonaparte past and with Nantes⁹, our most recent partner in the project development. Reunion’s “Slave Museum” and “Slave Route” were seen by the island’s Director of Tourism as a parallel ‘cultural’ tourism development with ‘La Route du Prince Imperial, Louis Napoleon’. While our local authorities have been slow to hearken to the synergy, Reunion, through its International Youth Exchange and the outreach of the Lycée Professionel, Julien de Rontaunay, Ste Clothilde, has shown itself to be sensitive to the social needs of an impoverished community. Infrastructural assistance funding has done much to alleviate some immediate maintenance requirements in the high and junior schools. Reunion funding has also seen the erection of an Interpretive Wall at the Prince Imperial monument - a lasting testimony to cultural tourism development potential for that community.

On another front, the Old Prison at Project Gateway, Pietermaritzburg, forms part of the convoluted “French Presence in KwaZulu-Natal (Bonaparte+)” tapestry inherent in this project. No where else in Pietermaritzburg is there grouped together such a stark reminder of the transgressions of the “Universal Declarations of Human Rights”,

⁸ The Archipelago of Mauritius, Reunion and Rodrigues was named *Les Mascarenes*, after the Portuguese navigator Pedro de Mascarenes in 1512.

⁹ Nantes, historically implicated in the “Slave Trade”, is not only directly linked through “Les Anneaux de la Memoire” with “Art for Humanity”, but is also twinned with Durban.

from Colonial times through Apartheid, through Liberation struggle, through Political struggle to questionable¹⁰ democratic South Africa, as within its dank walls.

This link with the province's "Freedom Route", testimony to five liberation icons - Alan Paton, John Langabibalele Dube, Albert Luthuli, Mahatma Ghandi and Nelson Mandela - also bears testimony to many other notables who were incarcerated within for protesting against the status quo¹¹. King Dinuzulu, twice imprisoned there¹², once, before being exiled to St Helena, and later on, for his complicity in the Bambatha Rebellion¹³, draws the threads between the KwaZulu-Natal French connection / St Helena / Reunion island and Nantes even closer. St Helena, Reunion and Nantes were repositories for the human traffic of slaves from our continent and beyond, along a route that stretched from the South Atlantic ocean to the Indian ocean, into the northern hemisphere and across the seas.

Another dimension to the French Presence / Project Gateway connection, besides its "Human Rights" / "Freedom Route" tag, is its refugee¹⁴- shelter status for those Francophones from the countries of "the great lakes" in Central Africa. While the Refugees have a base at Project Gateway, efforts made last year and this year to conduct French classes for the children of these Refugees, have fallen on logistical hard ground. Nevertheless, there exists a fervent vocalized desire amongst the adult Refugees to preserve their "culture", to safeguard the "identity" of their children, which they see as being inextricably bound to the ability to communicate in French (should they ever return "home" and then, any propulsion to do that, would be because of the xenophobia they have experienced in South Africa). Curious fact that the language of the oppressor becomes the welcomed lingua franca of the oppressed!

The combination of the various factors that make up the ramifications of a "French Presence in KwaZulu-Natal", is a rich tapestry of provocative, tragic and commendable historical events, which map out an evolution of the concerns for Human Rights and remind us of their origins in the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* as promulgated in the French Assemblée Nationale in August 1789 and accepted by the King of France. That these rights did not extend to the

¹⁰ *State of the arts*, Mike Van Graan. Opinion & Analysis, The Witness, Thursday 11 March 2010.p. 12.

Article 2, Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948.

Rufus Suah, a DUT employee and refugee from Liberia, whom the State will not allow to attend his only sister's funeral in his home country. If he leaves South Africa, he will not be allowed back in.

¹¹ The status quo, for King Dinuzulu, as seen in the later 1948 charter would be a transgression of numerous Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 18, 19, 20, 27, 28, 29).

¹² He was imprisoned there from 15 – 20 November 1888 before his trial in Eshowe and subsequent exile to St Helena and then again in 1907.

¹³ The Bambatha Rebellion was a protest against the imposition of the 1905 Poll Tax, an added financial burden for the Black population (already paying a Hut tax) after the post Anglo-Boer War economic depression.

¹⁴ Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

thousands held in servitude in the colonies until 1848 and did not extend to French women until the adoption of the 1946 Constitution of the French Fourth Republic¹⁵, is a daunting reflection of the evolution of the liberation struggle, both there and here and more so in our rural areas. And not to speak of the blatant infringement of human rights¹⁶ within the sacrosanct walls of our own university where this project leader was served confirmation of non-extension of contract, after 15 years of service, in an unforgivably inhumane, cavalier and unprofessional manner. To date there has been no apology.

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The Old Prison Pietermaritzburg From Darkness into light Project Gateway

Glenn Flanagan

12 March 2010

Building Community Through the Book Arts in the Greater Ashanti Region of Ghana: Art, Craft, and Environmental Conservation

Mary Hark, Assistant Professor, Design Studies Department,
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

Sub-theme: *Promoting social justice and intercultural dialogue through the arts.*

Abstract

The Kumasi Center for Book and Paper Arts (KCBPA) is a grass roots arts organization that seeks to build international collaborations and to celebrate cultural activity in the Greater Ashanti Region Ghana. A guiding value of this scheme is the collaborative nature of book arts: drawing from both the literary and visual arts, and the fine craft community. KCBPA functions with strong ties to the papermaking initiative at KNUST, SaNsA-Ghanaian artist collective, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Design Studies Department, USA.

In 2006, supported by a Fulbright Senior Research Grant, Mary Hark worked with Mr. Adashie at KNUST, towards the development of a high-quality handmade paper made exclusively from local materials. Hark and Adashie's research led them to the pulp-mulberry plant: the most invasive non-indigenous woody plant in the closed forest zone of Ghana, and also a botanical capable of producing exquisitely beautiful, strong paper. Adashie and Hark's work supports the conservation efforts of Forestry Institute of Ghana in dealing with this invasive plant by establishing a cottage-industry paper mill that will productively use the pulp-mulberry. This initiative, housed in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at KNUST, and supported by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, has developed high quality papers appropriate for fine press and artists books and has the long-term goal of inviting local farmers to train as papermakers.

The first publication of KCBPA, (expected publication March 2010) is a collaboratively designed, limited edition fine press book that will be printed using high quality handmade papers developed by the papermaking initiative at KNUST, and include printed artwork created by artists in Ghana and the US. The book will be intended for special collections and exhibition internationally.

This project supports sustainable conservation practices and is contributing to local and international collaborative artistic endeavors. Working with a breadth of stakeholders has been deeply rewarding and challenging. Adashie and Hark, both practicing artists, will share their experience of developing this community project with a presentation strongly supported by visual material, a portfolio of the handmade papers and the artist book.

Introduction

Mr. Michael Adashie, MFA and PhD candidate from the Department of Painting and Sculpture at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana, and I are working to create a model cottage industry hand paper mill. We are working to develop a strong, beautiful handmade paper, unique to Ghana, made entirely from local materials. Our intention is to produce handmade paper with the physical qualities appropriate for use by professional printmakers and other artists. We are also interested in identifying, training and supporting local farmers interested in practicing the fine craft of Hand Papermaking, using abundant, free, local materials to produce these papers for sale. Finally, we intend to assist in a larger initiative that is focused on containing the growth of an invasive plant. This project has drawn together the university art community, the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana, and local subsistence farmers. This presentation is the story of the first part of this project.

I am a practicing artist / craftsman, as well as a member of the Design Studies faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. My studio work is two fold. I work as a production papermaker, designing and making small editions of high quality flax and linen papers for fine press books and unique papers commissioned for special artists projects. I also create one of a kind artworks: constructed paintings made of heavily worked paper and fabric,

which I exhibit. I am a studio artist with a practice that draws heavily on textile traditions and processes. In 2006, supported by a Fulbright Senior Research Grant, I lived and worked in Kumasi, Ghana for one year with the intention of studying the vibrant and historic cloth traditions. During this year of research and studio production I studied the Adinkra cloth making tradition in the small village of Ntonso, sat with cloth vendors in open air markets, made friends with seamstresses, and moved about in a place where cloth is fully appreciated. I lived and worked in this place where making things by hand is understood and practiced to some degree by almost every families.

Kumasi, Ghana is in the center of the Greater Ashanti Region. The Ashanti culture has an historic and lively entrepreneurial arts and crafts scene. Weaving, dying, basketry, printing, painting, sewing, woodcarving, bronze casting and other activities are very much part of an active local market place. All of this activity is produced in family workshops. Having spent a year living with an Adinkra cloth-making family, in a village where virtually every family was also involved in this production, I have seen first hand how the family enterprise is a strong and elemental part of the rural economy. People here understand and value craft activity; and these items are valued for their aesthetics as well as their usefulness.

Beyond these master weavers, cloth-makers, carvers and so on, the role of making is understood as the most economical way to get the items one needs for daily living. While money is tight, time is available. Shoemakers, key cutters, woodworkers, sign painters, tin-smiths, seamstresses, and many others provide the necessary goods and services households use everyday. This is a place where making things is deeply embedded in ordinary life.

During 2006 I was also invited by the Department of Painting and Sculpture at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi to conduct a workshop in hand papermaking for fine arts students. Teaming up with Mr. Michael Adashie, lecturer in printmaking, and forty, third-year undergraduate art students we set out to make a paper from indigenous material that would be strong, beautiful and have an aesthetic particular to this area. For six weeks, with just a few basic tools that were shared among all the students, we focused on botanicals found on or near the K.N.U.S.T. campus. We wanted a to develop a handmade paper with the integrity appropriate for use by professional printmakers, bookbinders, sculptors and others, and that also had an attitude that was unique to this place.

A Few Words About Handmade Paper

Paper might be most commonly thought of as substrata material, understood as a platform for drawing, printing or other content, a modest material, easily taken for granted. The paper historian Dard Hunter describes true paper as “ thin sheets made from fiber that has been macerated until each of the individual filaments become a separate unit; the fibers are then intermixed with water, and by the use of a sieve-like screen, are lifted from the water in the form of a thin stratum, the water draining through the small openings of the screen leaves a sheet of matted fiber on the screens surface. This thin layer of intertwined fiber is paper.”

Handmade paper is made in individual sheets, one at a time, using historic processes that have changed very little in hundreds of years. Briefly, this process involves making the pulp, forming a sheet, then pressing and drying. Before becoming pulp, the raw fiber is softened by cooking and/or retting. Then the fiber is beaten while it is suspended in water, breaking

down the fibers and becoming paper pulp. This beaten fiber is then put into a vat containing roughly 90% water and 10% fiber. At this stage a mould – which is essentially a frame covered with a mesh – is used to scoop fiber from the solution in the vat, disperse it evenly, and allow the water to drain. Finally the pulp is pressed onto a felt, and the process is repeated until a stack of felts is ready to be pressed. The papers are pressed, and dried. The process is slightly different following the Asian traditions.

While this process of making a sheet of paper is relatively simple, making high quality paper requires a thorough understanding of the raw materials, of the processes and physical control of tools. It requires practice and discipline to do well, and a vision, an aesthetic, a clear idea of the physical properties that the finished product will carry. A handmade paper can be tough, bark-like, tactile, and aggressive. It can be smooth as ice with a hard, dense, surface. It can appear to be fragile and airy. It can be soft, pithy, and absorbent. Do you want your paper to carry ink, to be able to fold? Do you need transparent qualities? How will the sheet sound as you page through a book? The qualities possible with handmade paper are limitless. The fiber one chooses is the major component in the attitude the final sheet of paper will carry. Color, elasticity, and tensile strength can all be products of the raw fiber choice. Other qualities such as tactile qualities, weight, density, and absorbency can be affected by processing choices. Making informed decisions and maintaining high standards of craftsmanship are critical.

Making Paper in Ghana

In our initial papermaking workshop in Kumasi, the participants teamed up into twenty pairs. Paper is made from bast fiber, which may be the inner bark of a plant, or leaf or grass fiber. We looked for plants that were abundantly in and around the KNUST campus, and began the processing: cooking, rinsing, beating, pulling sheets, pressing and drying. We kept records, paying attention to strength, smoothness, color and processing particulars. Collecting and documenting the fibers, cooking to clean and break down the fibers, rinsing and beating the cooked fiber by hand in the large mortar and pestles used to prepare the traditional fufu or palm oil. We processed plantain, avocado, cashew, kapok, maize, and many others. When we found a beautiful color, we tried to mix it with a fiber that might have less-attitude but great strength; and so we worked for six weeks. By the end of the workshop we had produced papers with a great many compelling qualities, but it was also clear much more work was necessary to truly develop a high quality product. It had been a very labor intensive experience, but we had generated some very serious interest in the craft of papermaking and the work suggested that there was great potential to develop a high quality local product.

In Ghana high quality paper is just not available. Artists have to order paper at great expense from Europe. Even ordinary printer paper is not the ubiquitous, throwaway item that I am used to in Madison, Wisconsin. Many of the fine art students, as well as the faculty who worked with us on this first attempt, had never worked with a high quality paper for printmaking, drawing, or other purposes. Most had not understood the great range of possible physical properties a handmade paper could yield. As we finished this first six week workshop, Michael Adashie and I realized that not only was there a great quantity of appropriate raw material available, but tremendous and serious interest. If we developed a product, the largest and most important Department of Fine Art in Ghana would clearly be interested in purchasing it as substrata. Beyond that, the students had had a taste of the possibilities for using pulp as an art medium in and of itself.

When I came to Ghana in 2006, I brought many studio supplies, not knowing for sure what I might need over the course of a year. One of the boxes I shipped from the States was full of Kozo fiber. Kozo is a traditional Japanese or Asian papermaking fiber; a bast fiber from the inner bark of a plant related to the common Mulberry bush. Papermakers use the inner bark of a two or three year old plant. I order this inner bark from the Philippines or Japan, partially processed –stripped from the stalk and slightly cleaned - and that is what I had with me. The Kozo fibers are long and strong. A very thin sheet of Kozo, what we often call rice paper, has the air of fragility but tremendous strength, and can have an elegant, smooth translucency. Adding a bit of Kozo to other botanicals exponentially improves the strength of a sheet of paper without adding bulk. We processed some of this Kozo, and added it to some of the local plants that yielded interesting textures or color, but did not on their own have strength - and the results were beautiful. Michael Adashie and I took the Asian Kozo to the Forestry Department on campus and asked them if they knew of any botanical in Ghana that was similar.

To our astonishment, Kozo was growing in Ghana. Growing out of control! *Broussonetia Papyrifera* or Paper Mulberry, a woody perennial native to Japan and Taiwan, thrives well in a wide range of habitats including humid tropics, sub-tropics, and temperate environments. In 1969, the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (FORIG) brought fourteen pulp-mulberry plants into the country and planted them in a forest preserve with the intention of evaluating their potential for paper production. Before this plan could be implemented, those directing it fell from political favor. For several years the plants languished in the forest preserve under the thick forest canopy. In the mid seventies a severe drought in Ghana led to forest fires that raised these dense jungle covering. With access to the sun, the Pulp Mulberry began to thrive.

In Ghana, both male and female Mulberry plants were introduced, increasing the invasive potential exponentially. The tree fruits twice a year and the seeds are dispersed over long distances by birds and bats. While the seeds rarely germinate in dense canopy forest, in farmlands, roadsides, and gaps in the canopy regeneration is prolific. The rapid spread of Pulp Mulberry in Ghana has also been facilitated by the high rate of deforestation in recent times. In addition, Pulp Mulberry has the ability to re-sprout from roots. Trees form a dense mat of roots, which shoot up randomly at short intervals when growing conditions are right. Paper Mulberry competitively prevents the regeneration of most indigenous species.

These plants have thrived, dominating the forest preserve and aggressively moving into plots of land that are used by farmers growing food for their families as well as to sell at local markets. Talking to several of the men who at the beginning of their careers had hoped to facilitate a paper industry, we learned that forestry and conservation officials had been working now to identify ways to manage and control this plant whose alarming growth is dominating the areas in and around two forest preserves, and whose original use had never been tapped.

Pulp-mulberry has become the most serious, invasive, non-indigenous woody plant in the closed forest zone of Ghana is the very plant that has been used for hundreds of years in Asia to produce a lovely, fine-textured, soft, naturally warm colored, lightweight paper. Mulberry has a long fiber and thus produces a strong paper that has traditionally been the choice of printmakers, used by sumi painters, for lithography and chine colle. It stays strong when it is wet which makes it appropriate for water or oil based block printing. This invasive weed is one of the very plants that have yielded some of the most beautiful papers in history.

For the past two years Michael Adashie and I, along with a group of dedicated art and biology students have been experimenting with the Ghanaian Kozo, the invasive Pulp Mulberry plant, and other botanicals, working towards the development of a viable paper. Using the university site as our pilot studio, we have been focused on setting up a model cottage industry paper mill. Our goal is the introduction of a hand papermaking cottage industry that supports the control of this serious nuisance plant, provides beautiful and strong papers for the fine art community and beyond, and generates additional income for local farmers.

To this end, we have worked to enlist the expertise and professional support of members of the university art and forestry conservation communities who have a vested interest in a successful outcome. With input from the Forestry Institute of Ghana (FORIG) we have identified local farmers who interested in expanding their small farming enterprises to include papermaking as a way of increasing family revenue. FORIG has helped to identify areas to harvest the Kozo, and offered support in harvesting, storing, and transporting this bast fiber. Members of the Art Education Faculty at KNUST, who see the production of handmade paper as a great resource for teachers throughout the country, coordinated a colloquium this past August, inviting scholars from a variety of disciplines to learn about our efforts and advise us on such critical issues as water conservation. They have invited us to work with their faculty to develop curriculum around the paper mill.

As we focus on the development of our tools and processes, and fine-tune the quality of the paper, we are also cognoscente of the importance of having an understanding the marketplace that we want to access. There is a specific and pressing need for high quality paper within the art community. Art students and art professionals have enthusiastically used the papers that we have produced in our work to-date. This is a market we are confident of, that has expressed significant interest in our product, and that have used the first papers produced. The art department at the university has 40 faculty and several hundred students; it is the largest and most important art department in the country. The initial product development will be focused on this market.

This past summer with support from the University Wisconsin-Madison, we were able to purchase and import a Hollander Beater. This machine was originally used as a tester for industrial papermaking in Wisconsin. Michael Adashie is working with local machinists in Kumasi to develop an affordable replica of this Hollander. The machine will allow the workshop to produce larger quantities of high quality pulp. In the coming year we hope to have this affordable design ready, and with support from the Forestry Institute set-up the first workshop in the vicinity of the Forest Preserve, at the heart of the Pulp Mulberry infestation area.

In the community of artists affiliated with the university, a small, grass roots arts organization is being established, fueled by the possibility that the hand papermaking activity has suggested. The Kumasi Center for Book and Paper Arts is seeks to build international collaborations and to celebrate cultural activity in the Greater Ashanti Region Ghana. This group, with strong ties to the papermaking initiative, SaNsA, the Ghanaian artist collective associated with Triangle Arts, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Design Studies Department in the US, hopes the collaborative nature of book arts - drawing from both the literary and visual arts, and the fine craft community, will encourage and enliven local and global artistic conversation.

The first publication of KCBPA, is a collaboratively designed, limited edition fine press book that will be printed in Kumasi and in Madison, using the high quality handmade papers developed by the papermaking initiative at KNUST, and include printed artwork created by artists in Ghana and the US. The book, celebrating the music of Koo Nimo, the legendary Palm Wine musician from Kumasi, will be intended for special collections and exhibition internationally.

Conclusion

Having established keen interest among several communities, generous availability of raw materials, and a need for this paper, our current goals are gathering and producing well made and efficient tools, nurturing a culture of attention to high quality craftsmanship, and continuing to gather support from a variety of communities who will lend expertise and support long-term success by becoming stakeholders in the outcome. Once this foundation is securely in place, attention will be focused on paper products beyond beautiful sheets, and on marketing these products in practical and respectful ways.

This project supports sustainable conservation practices and is contributing to local and international collaborative artistic endeavors. Working with a breadth of stakeholders has been deeply rewarding and challenging. While papermaking is not indigenous to Ghana, the resources to develop high quality paper craft production exist in abundance. Working within a culture that understands the value of making things by hand, and within an economy that includes fine craftsmanship, supports the success of this project. Add to this the unexpected partnership with the conservation community in addressing the environmental crisis posed by the invasive Pulp Mulberry plant.

The challenges include financing these start-up activities, keeping the standards of craftsmanship high while introducing this non-traditional activity, and using water efficiently. Mr. Michael Adashie, the team of Kumasi papermakers, and myself are very hopeful that within five years I can return to report on a lively paper production center in Central Ghana.

The Flag on the Hill – reflections on semiotics, popular memory construction, and online resistance in Cyprus'

By Dr. Mike Hajimichael

Introduction

I had returned from ten day stay in San Francisco, USA. Coming home after a tour and such a long flight was a relief. Leaving the airport lounge the thickness of the atmosphere, that combination of aircraft fuel, night heat and humidity brought home back to me with a deep but somewhat asphyxiated breath. A taxi driver waited. He was in his late fifties, short, skinny with a ragged unshaven face and a half smoked cigarette hanging from his lip. Taxi drivers, as the author Lawrence Durrell once noted are such key people when trying to understand any cultural and historical scenario (pg 23 & 251).

As the large Mercedes sped through the night on the highway I nodded off to sleep awaking near the village of Nissou, which is situated about 15 kilometers from Nicosia the capital. When I woke a few moments later a star shape appeared to be lit up in the night sky in the distance. This was followed by a crescent then surrounded by a square. A huge Turkish flag lit up the darkness on the indistinct and dark Pendathactylos mountain range. Two bars then appeared at the top and bottom of the square. 'What's happened, have they lit up the flag?' I asked the taxi driver naively knowing full well that I had been away for ten days and some time in local politics this can be a life time. He then spewed the most vitriolic anti-Turkish discourse for the remainder of the trip which made me regret starting the discussion. The last thing I wanted at three in the morning after 18 hours worth of flying and transit time was hatred talk.

As this was happening something struck me. His attitude based on decades of 'common sense' (Lawrence, 1982) half baked myths on the 'Turks' had been sparked by the image ahead. He was receiving the message in such an objectionable abhorrent manner that went beyond the parameters of interpretation into something more substantive. The psychology of propaganda came to my mind and how successfully, from the point of view of ideology, an oppositional reading of such a huge symbol could become uncontested 'truth' or as he put it in the vernacular 'en altithkia tounta bramata' – which loosely translated into English means 'these things I am saying are the truth'. It became impossible then for the taxi driver to accept let alone tolerate any challenge these notions. I attempted to get a critical word in edgewise by saying maybe things are not that simple but he insisted on the correctness of a very patriotic 'Greek' notion of Cyprus without as he said in a racist manner 'the filthy dog Turks'.

From this moment 'the flag at night' quizzed me. What was the logic? How did it all happen and why. It was also important for me to explore the impact on everyday people and their different interpretations. The 'flag at night' was also just an extension of the 'flag by day'. Since 1983 an image roughly the size of three football pitches was painted on the mountainside with the blessing of the authorities that rule northern Cyprus. Originally a star and crescent had been carved out engraved on the mountain range shortly after the events of 1974, when Turkish armed forces invaded Cyprus following a military coup led by Greek Cypriot extreme nationalists. After 1974, symbols and slogans on mountains were common throughout Cyprus. Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots held verbal semiotic wars from mountainsides. A large plateau like hill, directed north proclaimed 'Den Xecho' – 'I will not forget' (referring to the Turkish Invasion) and the star and crescent went up on the

Pendathactylos mountain range facing south with a quote from Kemal Attaturk which read 'How happy is the person who can say I'm a Turk'.

By the 1980's following the failure of several rounds of peace talks and the non-implementation of High Level Agreements between Makarios and Denktash (1977), and Kyprianou and Denktash (1979) the diplomatic deadlock and intransigence that ensued stifled any kind of step forward to a solution. The Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, a central uncompromising figure made matters worse by declaring UDI on 13th November 1983. New dynamics and complexities over recognition or non-recognition of northern occupied Cyprus emerged and with time these would be quietly wrongly connected to the isolation of Turkish Cypriots. Denktash slyly attempted to turn 'The Cyprus Problem' into solely an issue of recognition for the 'north' and an end to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.

This act of propaganda became a stage, a kind of farce for the recognition of a state only recognized by Turkey. How loud can a statement be then, if it is painted on a mountainside. In this paper I will explore the flag on the hill as a double edged phenomenon. Clearly my introduction thus far politically tainted and for this I have no excuses other than that like many people who live in the shadow of the flag my subjectivity is closely related to my position in all this relative to forms of oppression and resistance. I would like to stress that this is not based on a sense of 'Greekness' or 'Turkishness' or an aversion or connection with either. Rather it is based on an aversion to different forms of nationalism and empathy to forms of solidarity and creative expression which advocate a different kind of agenda. The poetry of Nazim Hikmet comes to mind at this point with the powerful verse of *The Strangest Creature One Earth* or the thoughts of Bertolt Brecht on the role of art in society who said which have been so widely quoted that they have become like a hymn of resistance worldwide: *Art is not a mirror to hold up to society, but a hammer with which to shape it.*¹

At the same time, oppression and forms of empathy and action that oppose it always have to be re-contextualized in order for people in different societies to be able in some way to relate to matters as acts of solidarity and resistance. Imagine the role for example The Anti-Apartheid Movement in contributing to change within South Africa from far away, outside places. In an effort to do this about the 'Flag on The Hill' at the inaugural Arts and Social Justice Conference hosted by Durban University of Technology I started my PowerPoint version of this paper with a series of re-constructed scenarios. Imagine the White Cliffs of Dover with a Union Jack carved out on the rock the size of 3 football pitches and the slogan *How Great It Is To Be British* beneath it. Or The Eiffel Tower with a large billboard on the bottom which states *Quel bonheur d'être français* and a huge French Flag fluttering on the top.

These hypothetical scenarios, as nationalist forms of discourse and text would seem odd given the two aforementioned contexts as neither the BNP or National Front in Britain or France are in power. Cyprus however, for a number of historical, ideological and contextual reasons has a flag on its barren mountain landscape, on the range often referred to as Pendathactylos in Greek – Beshbarmak in Turkish – or the 'Five Finger Range' in

¹ I must admit that I heard this quote first in Greek on a vinyl release by composer Thanos Mikroutsikos in the early 1980's dedicated to the works of Brecht 'Musical Praxis for Bertolt Brecht' 1979, Lyra Music

English.² It is this context which this paper is dedicated to as a way of contributing to a more dialogic discussion on everyday manifestations of nationalism and how these are questioned and challenged through local artistic activity through the virtuality of the Internet.

Flags – text – context, semiotic reflections and popular memory construction

Before analyzing the text and context of Cyprus, I will focus on a few thoughts on flags and their iconic status in society. They are the national symbol par excellence, and as such as the biggest text in our identity in terms of the magnitude and depth. Semiotics as the study of signs and their meaning poses a number of questions on how we interpret and understand the world around us. Semiotics is above all else about communication and every cultural phenomenon can be studied in this way according to Eco. A statue for example says something simply by existing. However what we understand, how we interpret, relate and digest messages is not monolithic or uniform. It is 'polysemic' (Hall) and contested (De Carteau). Everything is open to interpretation, through differences of opinion, struggle and even resistance. Within such a framework meaning is never absolute – despite what many politicians often tell us as voters. Meaning is always disputed and in divided societies such as Cyprus, Korea, and Ireland, this argument carries more weight as it enables us to understand not only that differences exist between different communities but also within them. These kinds of nuances are what make the study of national symbols like flags, monuments and statues in divided societies that much more challenging. There are for example nationalist and majoritarian renderings of contemporary history in Cyprus. At the same time there are alternative understandings and readings that question the legitimacy of differing forms of 'Greek' and 'Turkish' majoritarianism. Conflicting readings on history reflect different perspectives on what national identity represents. Peristianis for example, distinguishes between Cypriot nationalism, deeply rooted in the history of the left in Cyprus as something in contest with Ethnonationalism based on the concept of 'enosis' or 'union with Greece' which had the Greek Orthodox Church as its main focal point (pg 102).

Reichel in an inspiring study of 'The Union Jack' leads us to question flags as forms of axiomatic truth. National identity and semiotics are intricately woven together as expressions through experience in ways which Anderson terms 'imagined communities'. We do not all know each other in a national context but form part of an imagined sense of being. At the same time semiotics is defined by a continuum, an axis of encoding and decoding. My example at the start of this paper, the encounter with the taxi driver is an example of this. Meaning then is always contested. The people who made the flag on the hill, the taxi driver and me are in more ways than one all at odds with each other – as Reichel states:

Whether a flag is associated with aggressive nationalism, regionalism or resistance is totally dependent on the 'producer, viewer, and the context of the situation, and this makes it even more polysemic' (p212)

In understanding these intricacies it is also pertinent to consider the significance of popular memory, again as a constructed, contextually bound and fluid phenomenon. Here much of

2 This can be rather misleading as each hill on the northern range has a name. Pendathactylos, given its imposing image and mythical history is just one of these hills. Pendathactylos was according to ancient myth was created by Digenis Akritas who reached out from the sea, gripping onto Cyprus and thus making the 'five finger mountain'. The range as a whole is really The Kyrenia Mountains. Pendathactylos being one of these located in the western region of the mountains. In a more scientifically realistic sense they were created through a collision between the African and Eurasian plates

my thoughts on these issues are a direct effect of having studied at Birmingham University in the 1980's. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) Popular Memory Group argued 'popular memory is an objective of study and a form of political practice' (pg 894) As a result the reflexive/subjective axis is important in understanding popular memory and how it is shared as a lived experience.

Popular memory then can also be paradoxical. What is considered great, historic, and phenomenal by one group, a historical monument for example can be interpreted radically different by another. Turning this approach more to focus on Cyprus it is important to consider these arguments as a line of questioning.

Angastiniotis for example in his reflexive documentary on the mass killings of Turkish Cypriots states by way of introduction:

In a conflict like that in Cyprus where two nationalities refuse to resolve their differences so that they may co-exist in peace, propaganda becomes each sides most powerful weapon. ³

Papadakis considers this in relation to forms of official news propaganda within each community in

Cyprus as a "well known verdict shared by both sides was verified and reinforced: "our" truth, "their"

propaganda" (pg 67)

In such a context, who says and believes something and why is intricately related to the construction of

meaning and political power relations. Angastiniotis for example interviewed survivors of the Tochni

Massacre of 1974 – a process which enabled him as he says, as an individual to reflect on and challenge some of the nationalist discourses he had been brought up to believe in as a Greek Cypriot. A key illusive element in this upbringing was the idea that not one single Turkish Cypriot has been 'harmed let alone killed' by a Greek Cypriot. At this point I would also like to argue that these myths are widely spread on contemporary Cypriot history. The Turkish Invasion of July 20th 1974 is defined through 'official' Turkish military discourse as a 'peace operation' when in fact it was a full scale military onslaught. Indeed the flag itself on the Pendathactylos range contains its own form of hotly contested narrative. 'Official' discourse indicates a set reading of experience and history:

This giant 'TRNC' flag is not just a statement of existence by the people of North Cyprus. It is a memorial to a harrowing incident that took place during the violent summer of 1974. The village of Tokhni lay to the north east of Limassol, where five hundred Turkish Cypriots and an equal number of Greek Cypriots lived and worked. By the 14th August, the struggle was at its height, and the two sides were engaged in bitter attacks and reprisals. On that morning, a group of armed Greek Cypriots from an EOKA-B contingent rounded up all the able-bodied Turkish Cypriot men of military service age in the village, and fifteen others from the nearby villages of Man and Zyyi. The men were put onto buses, and thought they were being taken to a prison near Limassol. Instead, all were shot and their bodies dumped in a mass grave.

³ Angastiniotis, Tony, Voice of Blood II, Searching for Selden <http://video.google.com.au/videoplay?docid=-7695688617775364591#>

Only one man survived the massacre, and eighteen others escaped from the villages to the mountains.

The remaining Turkish Cypriots in Tochni fled north to the village of Taskent (Dohni or Vouono to the Greeks) and safety in the new North Cyprus. It was these survivors, the widows, orphans and few surviving men, who painted the rocky mountainside to form the flag.⁴

The narrative explains the existence of the 'TRNC' flag as an act of remembrance for the victims of the Tochni Massacre committed by EOKA B Greek Cypriot nationalists against innocent Turkish Cypriots in 1974⁵. The text relies heavily on language that accentuates heroism/dedication. The metaphorical reference to survivors, mothers and orphans of painting the flag in remembrance of Tochni carries a lot of symbolism, pain and suffering but at the same time one senses a feeling of these experiences being used for political gain. The use of victims of the massacre in the context of painting the flag alludes from actual reality as the image is made up of thousands of painted barrels, assembled together on the mountainside re-painted on a regular basis by soldiers serving in the Turkish Army.

Taking the flag on the hill as an attempted form of memorialization I would argue that this is hotly contested. Not because events in history did not happen but because all memorials are open to interpretation, and as possibly the biggest memorial in the world, the flag on the mountain is paradoxical as what may be considered as a form of memorial by one side is viewed as the symbolic and actual epitome of oppression by another group of people. That being said, I would not argue that these are the only two ways of seeing things, in fact there are many viewpoints and interpretations. Aganstinotis attempt to reconsider the official silence over Tochni provides a valuable alternative, clearly showing that by revisiting events in history we can question their false sense of validity. There are also survivors of The Tochni Massacre who by their very political actions contradict the argument that all Turkish Cypriots believe one sided-attempts at memorialising history on mountainsides are the way forward. Sener Elcil for example is from Tochni. As the head of the Turkish Cypriot Teachers Trade Union KTOS he attended a bi-communal teacher's retreat in Platres in 2005. He had no surviving relatives - all of them had been killed in the massacre. He told me how a whole generation of his relatives did not exist, that there was a whole gap in his family as a direct result of the massacre in the village. And yet here he was attending a retreat with Greek Cypriots in the Republic 'south' of Cyprus. This action alone, symbolically and politically defied the expectant conformism of the flag on the hill. While some Greek Cypriot propagandists may claim 'Tochni' did not happen – Sener Elcil is just one example of living proof that it did. Reconciling differences about the past is central to mapping a possible common future in Cyprus.

In 2009 for example, two Cypriots told their unique and rather disturbing story through a book by Neocleous called '*1974: The Ignored*'. Yiannis Marateftis, a Greek Cypriot would sit down with Fat'hi Aknici, a Turkish Cypriot for lunch. The last time they had 'met' Fat'hi had shot Yiannis in the head during the war in 1974⁶. He had presumed his Greek Cypriot 'enemy' was killed but miraculously, Yiannis Maratheftis survived. Decades later they sat down and ate at the same table. Their story highlights the irrationality and pain of war.

4 <http://flagspot.net/flags/cy-TRNC.html>

5 EOKA B was a nationalist terrorist organization directly linked to the coup d'etat of 1974. They aimed to unite Cyprus with Greece at all costs. For more details see Eoka B and CIA by Drousiotis, M

6 <http://www.visionworks.co.uk/two-men-now-friends-a-bullet-to-the-head-and-an-olive-tree>

Similar narrative experiences exist in many conflicts throughout the world, such as Rwanda and Israel-Palestine. In this kind of way hearing the other person's story without relying on taking a side on a macro level is significant. Neshe Yasin, a celebrated Cypriot poet says about the difference between literature and politics:

*"Politicians analyse the events and fix positions which fits the needs of their own side. The position of the other side is fixed with the same way. But literature does not work with positions and it rather deals with the human needs and experiences underneath these positions. This is the place where you can reach unity. I think many writers of countries of conflict are already playing this role by disconnecting themselves from the side taking and self-centred aspect of the conflict."*⁷

There are many scenarios and people around the world and throughout history where this degree of compassion has in some cases made significant and historic difference. Nelson Mandela, for example, as paradoxical as it sounds, recently celebrated 20 years of freedom by inviting one of his ex-jailer's, Christo Brand to the celebration⁸. Rigney makes an interesting analysis of the dynamics of the Irish National War Memorial established in the 1930's to commemorate Irish soldiers who died in the First World War (1914-18). It took ninety years for the memorial service to include heads of state, representatives of the British Legion and Northern Irish administrations. This act, in 2006 was part of the broader 'all Ireland reconciliation' prospective memory process (Rigney:92).

The notion that all Turkish Cypriots identify monolithically is just as incorrect as saying all Greek Cypriots do the same. Clearly popular memory is contested, debated, disputed. Is it possible to see memory as prospective? Rigney argues that this is possible and necessary. Unlike often vain efforts at conflict resolution which can be completely alienated from the past prospective memory as a practical and utopian ideal actually addresses previous inconsistent narratives in an attempt to bring people together on a sense of common ground. It may appear idealistic for Cyprus or even out of touch but prospective memory is I will argue part of a wider process of exploring a more dynamic and inclusive sense of history and it has been occurring in Cyprus through the arts, primarily poetry and music, as a form of 'peace culture'. This existed for a number of decades, primarily after the catastrophic events of 1974. The critical thought of Neshe Yashin for example in the historic poem *Which Half* develops "the ability to see both sides of an issue and common elements of transcultural identity"⁹

Nationalist narratives in both communities in Cyprus always speak of an absolute sense of collective truth. This, as has been argued earlier reflects a constructed 'imagined community'. Without being able to revisit the past, to hear some of the voices that may have been silenced in the process, we are unable to get a fuller picture or impression of what may have actually occurred. The notion of utopia is also what is often missing at a much higher level of track one diplomacy for a settlement, for a solution to the 'Cyprus Problem' and this can only happen if all concerned parties can at least start to understand each other's different narratives. I would like to now move onto another area in which I believe utopian and prospective thoughts have been put into practice, through forms of advocacy and resistance, and that is the virtual cyber world of the Internet.

7 Yashin, Neshe, speech at World Conference on Literature, 1998 http://www.klys.se/worldconference/papers/Neshe_Yashin.htm

8 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8501149.stm>

9 Ungerleide, John «Music and Poetry Build Bi-communal Peace Culture in Cyprus» http://www.gppac.net/documents/pbp/7/4_mpcypr.htm

Advocacy, arts, resistance through the Internet

The Internet was first introduced in Cyprus in the early 1990's but it did not become freely available across the island until the late 1990's. Imagine the contradiction. The appeal of the global village and having the world at our finger tips existed practically and philosophically. But up to the late 1990's I could communicate online with a user in say San Francisco or Durban but not from 'the other side'. When the cyber world became more connected for Cypriots locally a range of bi-communal projects emerged online but most important of all Cypriots could, and this was several years before the opening of the checkpoints in 2003, actually communicate in a more direct sense. Collaborations began to emerge in the arts, culture and technology from 2000 onwards. For example, Poetz4Peace, a music and poetry project was established by Zeki Ali and me, initially from sharing ideas in emails. The group led to the establishment of Olive Tree Music, recording two full length CD's and touring in the USA¹⁰ The process of people coming together online in Cyprus should also be linked to the power of the Internet, its attraction and impact over the last 10 years, particularly in relation to social media, online collaborations and notions of the unlimited boundaries of the arts.

The Internet as a communications medium has changed radically over the last decade. While retaining a certain allusiveness it has in many ways overtaken conventional electronic media such as TV and Radio and been radically incorporated into their existing formats. In many ways we have all witnessed a revolution at our fingertips. The first phase of the Internet as a medium is characterized as Web 1.0. In a very Voltairian sense we all tended to our own sites with interaction being limited to emails and comments being approved or disapproved. Web 2.0 which began emerging more over the last decade had a more defined user friendly approach best characterized by the notion of media synergy. Different platforms such as, text, image, sound, video have merge into a daily interactive and more social media forms of usage. Web sites like Facebook, Youtube and Twitter enable users to reach out through the Internet in ways that were unimaginable ten years ago. There is an infinite vastness to these new innovations. For example, the I-pod application had 1 billion downloads in 9 months. Facebook also had over 100million users during the same time period and Youtube is currently the second largest search engine in the world, with over 100,000,000 videos online.¹¹

The previous section may read like a blatant advert for The Web 2.0 Revolution. Like most phenomena it also has negative qualities. The idea that who has access can express can at times lead to grey areas which in more conventional media are much more clear cut. Online we can assume anonymous personas and write and say whatever we want. Expression can mean views which would by most people be considered extremist. It also means the most mundane and often 'dumbed-out' distractive views becoming immensely popular which many people may view as 'just entertainment'¹². There are also bigger questions such as is the Internet really that free, unfiltered and uncontrolled? While pages such as Myspace began as novel ideas due to popularity it was purchased by established media mogul Rupert Murdoch, who also owns Fox and a whole host of other media outlets. It could even be argued that the Internet is just as manipulative in that real power resides in search engines, what they include and exclude.

¹⁰ See <http://www.myspace.com/olivetreemusic>

¹¹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIFYPQjYhv8>

¹² This idea is based around Noam Chomsky's notion of media distraction

Despite these questionable areas where one stands regarding the positive versus the negative effects of the Internet will largely be determined by one's approach to the medium and what one uses it for creatively. Gauntlett views the glass as 'half-full' by exploring the radical idea that we create identities online and become more empowered to express, create and participate in forms of social change.¹³

In the context of Cyprus such qualities give more power to advocate and articulate alternative views, which are often bypassed or filtered out by more established media such as TV, Radio and the press. In exploring this I would like to share two examples, as case studies in artistic advocacy and resistance to the established ordering of 'the flag on the hill'.

If one enters the term "TRNC' Flag' in most online video browsers, the page that usually comes first is called 'KKTC Bayrak / 'TRNC' Flag' – which is a short vodcast by a producer called Sis(t)em – who is an anonymous video maker¹⁴. Amidst a plethora of largely nationalist video texts this particular 51 second clip stands out for its innovative production technique and critical approach. Depicting the Pendathatylos-Beshbarmak skyline at night from a busy northern Nicosia background the clip begins dynamically with a vibrant ska beat in Spanish. The music is a snippet of song called 'Tio Sam' by Ska-P from Spain. Translation of the verses quoted in the clip can be found in Appendix 1. It may seem odd in a way that such a militant anti-war song has been chosen for this clip. Perhaps the choice relates more to the energy of the music and how it gels with clip. Or it could also be interpreted semiotically as a form of affinity or solidarity against the existing order of a divided status quo in Cyprus. Only the first two verses are quoted which refer to the US led invasion of Iraq with an oppositional anti-war and anti-Uncle Sam tone.

The flag lights on and off partially, as do the surrounding street and domestic lights. The more the flag lights up the less the streets and houses have electricity. The more houses and streets use electricity, the less the flag lights. Until of course the flag lights completely, reaching the end of its routine cycle as the 'TRNC' flag, and then everything turns to complete darkness. The sound of the music becomes more rock oriented, with a punishing climax until the whole image fades into darkness from a systematic propaganda overload. The original song by Ska-P at around 37 seconds enters a brass horns rift which takes us back to the next verse. This indicates the music in the video clip has been edited for the purpose of the visual narrative when everything collapses into the dark of night. Ironically the original song appears, at least in terms of hits on YouTube at the time of writing, to have had less viewers 17, 776 in total. Whereas "TRNC'/Flag' by Sis(t)em had 27,877.¹⁵

The implied critique of life in the "TRNC" is cleverly worked in this short but highly effective clip made by an independent Turkish Cypriot film maker. The illegal/non recognized/isolated state, which due its own infrastructural weaknesses has frequent and inconvenient power cuts and the subjectivity of this experience, is perfectly reflected in the clip. Despite the innovative approach, after all satire is a powerful tool of resistance in all societies, many people who have left comments on the web site at YouTube seem to be missing this point. Different audiences interpret the clip differently and from my own experience of sharing this clip with various audiences it is evident that people who 'get it'

13 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-l1ccF2UXVw>

14 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgB_oJ_D4as – this clip made by an independent film maker, who I am still trying to meet physically, was first published on You Tube 09/01/2007. It has had over 27,809 views when last accessed on 10/02/2010 at 1.50 pm.

15 Viewer statistics registered on www.youtube.com 17/02/2010 at 9.07 am

straight away are often Turkish Cypriots. Indeed the next stage of this current paper is to conduct several focus groups with different participants to ascertain the possible impact and manner in which the clip is interpreted. What is important however the clip exists, and with a large degree of success it has flourished outside the mainstream media of Television where for a number of obvious reasons it has not been shown. *The Revolution* as Gil Scott-Heron once stated so powerfully *will not be televised*. Would for instance this clip be played on Bayrak Radio Television (BRT) the official broadcaster in occupied northern Cyprus? Coincidentally, Bayrak actually means flag and the station has been 'covering' Turkish Cypriots with a mainly nationalist output for many decades.¹⁶

The existence of such a media text is a statement to the impact of social media as a radically different tool of expression. Indeed it is possible to argue that social media, and in this case youtube.com provides a platform to individuals in Cyprus to express ideas which often run contrary to the respective logics of the establishment and consensus building. The fact that the producer of the clip remains anonymous is an obvious political statement; particularly given the reality of existing laws in Turkey on the flag.¹⁷

I would like to turn lastly to my own work, as a parallel contextualization of my argument on the power of social media and challenging the status quo.

Bandulu Dub is a producer Bruno based near Braga in north Portugal who I encountered online through www.myspace.com. Despite not initially meeting physically, we began a creative writing process in January 2008 that resulted in the creation of 15 songs. The process usually took the form of me receiving an Mp3 file as a dub which I would usually get inspired to write lyrics for. These were then recorded at my home studio in Nicosia and then sent back by file transfer (ftp) to Portugal for mixing and mastering. In production terms this is known as a virtual studio technique. When we finally met later in the spring of 2008, we toured Cyprus and Portugal. What struck Bruno most about Nicosia was the green line that divides the capital and the flag that dominates the skyline. As an outsider, he found it hard to understand why the flag existed on Pendathactylos-Beshbarmak. I too found it harder to explain, without getting into a long reflection on contemporary Cyprus history. Inspired by these conversations and exchanges I started to write a song called 'Flag' in a way to explain this as a theme to my cyber music production friend Bruno of Bandulu Dub. In writing this I wanted to give a different understanding, one that did not as I stated by way of introduction rely on stale nationalist discourses and counter arguments leading nowhere. My intention was to share a different kind of counter or oppositional reading through the medium of dub poetry. The track was recorded, by the same virtual process, with the addition of sonic input from Jah Billah, a dub producer based in Zagreb, Croatia. A year later, the finished track was released on a compilation called *Spiritual Evolution*, by French net based Label Fresh Poulp, and made available as a free download¹⁸. Thirteen collaborations by Bandulu Dub with artists from China, Norway, Japan, France, Germany, Montenegro, Croatia and Cyprus make this a unique internationalist dub and spoken word project. The release also features my poet friend and collaborateur, Zeki Ali on 'Ayurveda' – a whispery ambient love poem with vocals from Isadora Lazarevic. In creating such a work and being fortunate enough for it to be shared in such a dynamic manner, the intention was to share a poem with a more universal value.

¹⁶ More information on Bayrak can be found at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayrak>

¹⁷ „Under the 1983 Turkish flag law, burning the flag is strictly forbidden, punishable by a prison sentence of three years. Displaying or pulling a torn or discoloured flag to flagpole is also illegal. Taking down the flag is prohibited and punishable by a prison sentence of eighteen years.” cited from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_desecration#Turkey

¹⁸ <http://www.fresh-poulp.net/2.0/releases/fpr038/>

As a form of resistance, 'The Flag' simply questions the existence of a flag on a hill from a humanitarian, non-partisan and environmental perspective. It advocates a more critical awareness and sensitivity through a sceptical chorus that can be interpreted in a number of ways as the intention is for it to read like an open book:

*See the flag on the hill
See by day and night
It is there to remind you
What is wrong?
What is right?
See the flag on the hill
Its is there to get you vexed
So just meditate relax and chill
Never let them know what's next....*

I live in a place where to a large extent many politicians state more than the obvious. With the positions taken throughout Cyprus, some times it is so obvious how people from the 'other side' will react that they may have all given each other the scripts beforehand. That critical thinking is often shunned, marginalised or even discouraged forces people like myself to consider alternatives outside the mainstream. A song like 'Flag' has hardly been played in Cyprus by radio stations located on either side of the green line. Whereas online, through social media websites, Internet and land based radio stations it fits into an alternative environment much in the same way as a dub poem by Benjamin Zephaniah or Linton Kwesi Johnson.¹⁹

By engaging diverse audiences in online social media sites these kinds of texts universalize the specific as a form of counter narrative. What makes something so specific to or on Cyprus universal is influenced to large degree by how the text is delivered through the accessibility of a free download or view on the Internet. In this sense division and conflict is universal in every society and sharing concerns about a specific place is a contribution to a wider and more diverse awareness on these issues.

Social media web sites give space for expression and resistance. They empower artists to advocate through the arts by creating and sharing works more freely. In the process Internet users are themselves given greater access to a wider range of views. This gives these kinds of cultural texts a different momentum and place in history as they are more than anything examples of critical and inspired thought which can pave the way for the development of a more prospective approach to memory and reconciliation.

In this context, video, poetry and music become a form of advocacy, an act of resistance which flows and is inspired by opposition and critical thought on the status quo. One person's interpretation or understanding of 'what is wrong' may be another's idea of 'what is right'. Or ideas through a more critical approach may converge in different ways. From my stance an artist dependence on political dogmas is a worrying thing. People should not have that need in this day and age to wear their identity in such a provocative manner on a

¹⁹ For example Zona Reggae Radio show in Portugal <https://zonareggae.wordpress.com/category/playlists/page/3/> and Radio Sarajevo in Serbia <http://forum.radiosarajevo.ba/index.php?topic=701.170;wap2>

mountainside in northern Cyprus. But the fact that this phenomena exists should lead us to question why and how things have happened in our shared past with the objective of perhaps writing a common shared future history.

I would like to end this paper with a comment from Alana, on another poem/song produced by Bandulu Dub:

In Nicosia it covers The Pendachtylos/Beshparmak Mountains. It is easily visible from any side of the Greek side of the capital city – especially at night. At the bottom of the flag it reads 'happy is he who can say I am a Turk'. At first I found this antagonistic, but lately I'm not sure. I do think though, if it were removed a huge breath of relief would be exhaled on both sides.

(Hate Breeds Hate, Haji Mike & Bandulu Dub featuring Alana, Dan Dada Records 2009)

For many decades, since the first ethnic conflict of the early 1960's countless United Nations Resolutions on Cyprus have contained elements of confidence building measures, and building trust and co-operation between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. As one step, in this direction, it would seem logical, given the recent climate and efforts at a solution made in Cyprus by Cypriots themselves, that the taking down of the flag from the hill or mountainside, would be just one small step in a much needed change of direction. This in itself should be an island-wide process of revision on how Cypriots think and relate to national symbols. Flags are everywhere. Their existence does not simply mean we approve particularly when they are such an affront to the natural environment. The right to discuss, question and if needs be challenge is a universal human right. Only when that is understood and respected can we change our shared present and future landscapes.

Appendix 1

Lyrics from 'Tio Sam' / 'Uncle Sam' by Ska-P taken from the "Planeta Eskoria" album written by Roberto Ganan Ojeda (pupul) Jose Miguel Rendil (Joxemix) and Ricardo Delgado (pipil) (2000),

Tio Sam

Tio Sam, juguete de homicidio
Tio Sam, jugamos a matar
Tio Sam, comienza el exterminio
Tio Sam, operacion Iraq

Suenan los pepinos en Bagdad
Inician la ofensiva militar
La sangre ha comenzado ya a brotar
Ciudadano no te vaya a salpicar!!

Uncle Sam

Uncle Sam, Homicide toy
Uncle Sam, Play to kill
Uncle Sam, began the extermination
Uncle Sam, Iraq operation.

Cucumbers sound in Bagdad*
Military offensive initiated
The blood has begun to sprout
Be careful do not go to splash you!!

* *Cucumbers in this context mean missiles, army or soldiers*

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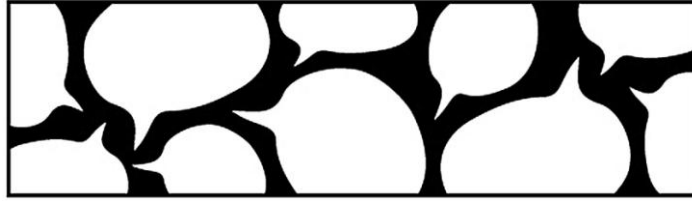
Media

Bandulu Dub, Haji Mike & Alana, *Hate Breeds Hate* released by Dan Dada Records, 2009

Bandulu Dub & Haji Mike, *The Flag On The Hill* released by Fresh Poulp Music, 2009

Sis(t)em, *KKTCTBayrak/TRNC Flag*, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgB_oJ_D4as

DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS



SUITCASE INSTALLATIONS WITH REFUGEES ON THEIR ORIGIN, ARRIVAL AND FUTURE

Mr. Claudius Joecke, Mrs. Vera Zimmermann, Culture Educators and Art Directors of the Kulturladen Huchting and the Suitcase Installations

This project focuses on migrants who live as refugees in Bremen (Germany) and Durban (SA)

People from other countries of origin tell about their cultural background. By sharing their view and experience, they enrich Bremen and Durban. Beyond that they tell about their arriving and their future in Bremen/Durban.



Perceived are migrants rather with their shortcomings and their noticeable problems as with their potency.

In this project, suitcase installations, which are created under the direction of artists, shall emphasise the cultural background as a presentable characteristic and individual strength.

The suitcases are designed with objects which are connected with the personal history of the migrants.

The main questions were:

- What can I tell about my roots and my origin?
- How has my arriving succeeded here in Bremen or Durban?



- What does it mean to me to live as a migrant/refugee from Iraq, Russia, Ghana, Albania, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, ...in a foreign country such as Germany or South Africa
- How do I wish my future to be?

The answering of these questions directed the planning of the design and the creative process.



Another focus of the created suitcases are sound installations in form of audio portraits. The audio portraits are designed as a short characteristics in which the participants of the suitcase installations introduce themselves, their place of origin, their profession and the languages they speak - which are often many - in their mother tongue. Some of the audio portraits may include short poems on ORIGIN – ARRIVAL – FUTURE

During a workshop in September 2009 Vera Zimmermann and Claudius Joecke worked for 10 days together with artist and journalism students of DUT and 11 refugees from DRC, Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania on their suitcases – the main focus was on listening and giving “room, space and time” to the stories of the refugees.

Artists from the DUT completed the work on the suitcases.



For the Dialogue Exhibition at the Durban Art Gallery V. Zimmermann and Cl. Joecke brought 11 suitcases from migrants who found their new home in Bremen in Germany – to meet with the suitcases from Durban for being part of the Initiators and art directors of the suitcase project: Vera Zimmermann, Claudius Joecke

DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS



Intercultural Arts Education in Action: Gap Closing and Stage Sharing



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Abstract

This paper discusses the intervention 'Intercultural Arts Education (ICAE): Initiating Links between Schools and Ethnic Minority Communities in Botswana'. ICAE was preliminarily implemented in 2004/5, in twelve primary school classes in collaboration with class teachers and several local cultural practitioners and further piloted more intensively in one school in the Kweneng West Sub-District of Botswana. The ongoing two-year follow-up pilot study was grounded on the findings of the first and it commenced in June 2009. The rationale for the intervention was the discovery of low school attendance and high dropout rates of ethnic minority pupils in the research area as well as their low academic performance.

Making reference to previous studies as well as information gathered from research collaborators in the preliminary data collection, the researcher established that a cultural gap exists between school and the community in the research area. Like previous researchers, collaborators attributed problems of absenteeism, academic failure and high school drop-out rate directly and/or indirectly to the existing cultural gap between school and home. Considering the suspected cause of the problems in the education of ethnic minority learners, the study aimed to trial ICAE, a program designed to bridge the cultural gap between school and community, thereby alleviating problems associated with cultural alienation. In implementing ICAE, the formal school's culture of dealing was supplemented by the community's culture of dealing; the educational stage was shared. The use of mother tongue, cultural games, dance and dramatization were appreciated in class. Villagers were invited into the classroom in order to collaboratively conducting arts lessons. Teachers were encouraged to meet cultural practitioners in the village for tapping skills.

The methodology in both studies followed constructivism, feminism and postmodernism as the main epistemological frames. The results revealed that by tapping indigenous knowledge, ICAE has the potential to promote dialogue on equal level and mutual respect between teachers and community members. By using more open norms of discourse all people involved are lifted to more powerful positions, helped to find voice and to gain an improved sense of self-worthiness. Hence, ICAE implemented through collaborative action research approach, could facilitate ontological security, thereby contributing towards the provision of a socially just education.

Introduction

This paper presents the background of an on-going two-year pilot project which is based in a primary school in a remote settlement in the Kweneng West Sub-District in Botswana. The pilot study entitled '*Intercultural Arts Education in Action: A Pilot Study in Serinane Village*' which commenced in June 2009, is an investigation of the feasibility and efficiency of implementing 'Intercultural Arts Education' (ICAE). ICAE is the collaborative intercultural teaching of Creative and Performing Arts, involving adult members of the community who represent the local 'ethnic minority' cultures. The pilot project is a follow-up of a previous study with the same intension, which I carried out on a larger (12 schools) but less intensive scale in the same sub-district in 2005/6. This preliminary study served as the basis for my PhD thesis submitted to Edinburgh University in 2007.

Statement of the Problem

Primary school children in the Kweneng West Sub District of Botswana show poorer academic performance and higher school dropout rates than the average pupils of the country. The research was based on the premise that the prevailing social injustice in the education of Kweneng West learners is caused by the systematic lack of recognition for their differing ethnicity (languages and cultures) in the design and execution of the mainstream (Tswana) based curriculum.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the intervention was to find out whether ICAE could contribute towards a move towards social justice through the development of positive self assessment, a higher academic performance and an improved attitude towards school in pupils, and whether it improved teachers' attitudes towards their duties at school, the general community and the pupils.

Background

To introduce the on-going pilot project, it is imperative for this paper to elaborate on the preliminary study that prompted, informed and provided the basis of the current study. As background for the pilot study, the rationale of the preliminary study, its methodology as well as a summary of its findings will be presented. In the paper I will proceed by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the preliminary study, which led to the adoption of new strategies in the current pilot project, before introducing the development of the current study.

Preliminary study

The study *'Intercultural Arts Education: Initiating Links Between Schools and Ethnic Minority Communities, Focussing on the Kweneng West Sub-District in Botswana'* published in (2007) was based on the already established discovery that primary school children in the Kweneng West Sub District of Botswana, who are predominantly of BaSarwa and BaKgalagari ethnicity, show poorer academic performance and higher school dropout rates than the average pupils of the country. The study sought to explore the possibility that in the Botswana education system, where the dominant culture determines the school's culture of dealing, failure to recognise and embrace the culture of the ethnic minority learners may contribute to the afore mentioned imbalance. The research was based on the premise that the prevailing social injustice in the education of Kweneng West learners is caused by the systematic lack of recognition for their differing ethnicity (languages and cultures) in the design and execution of the mainstream (Tswana) based curriculum.

The study centred on an intervention carried out in six standard four classes in six primary schools in the Kweneng West Sub-District of Botswana – six other schools function as comparator schools. The intervention was an introduction of an educational program that I designed and termed 'Intercultural Arts Education' (ICAE) with the aim to close the cultural gap. ICAE was implemented in co-operation with one Standard Four (Year Four) teacher per school and several local cultural practitioners. ICAE is 'the interdisciplinary teaching of the arts in primary schools in a project with compositions predominantly based on cultures which define the community and with the involvement of community members representing diverse cultural perspectives'.

In the context of the study 'Arts' are taught as an interdisciplinary subject area encompassing visual art, drama, music, dance and literary art.

Issues of Social Justice in Education in Botswana

For the theoretical backing of the premise upon which the preliminary study was based, literature on ethnical (in-) equality in Botswana's socio-political system, which has implications on the education system of the country, was explored.

For the sake of peace and stability, the government of Botswana strives for a harmonious nation which is unified in cultural homogeneity, resulting in singling out Setswana as the only national language alongside the official language English being taught at schools. Critics point out that this policy disadvantages some ethnic minorities. As Chebane (2007) put it in *'Mmegi - The Reporter'*

Independence saw the creation of "One Botswana, one monolithic nation". It was very simple, he said, Botswana translates to Setswana. One Motswana: all Batswana - to achieve national unity. It negated all other communities in Botswana, from the Kalanga to the 16 San languages (p.1).

Drawing reference from more recent governmental policy documents including the Revised National Policy on Education (1994) and the Vision 2016, the country pledges its commitment to a multicultural nation and the promotion of linguistic diversity: (Botswana-Government, 1997):

Botswana's wealth of languages and cultural tradition will be recognised, supported and strengthened in the education system. No Motswana will be disadvantaged in the education system as a result of a mother tongue that differs from the country's two official languages [Setswana and English] Vision 2016 (p.5).

However, a number of studies carried out by local researchers point out policy imbalances disadvantaging the ethnic groups of my research population, more especially the San. The imbalances were particularly in aspects such as land usage, national language and cultural representation through traditional leadership, all factors that have impact on economic power (Good, 1999; Le Roux, 1999; Lebotse, 2002; Mazonde, 2002a; Nyati-Ramahobo (2002), Scanlon (1997)). Regarding inequalities in education and institutional care especially for pupils from the research area, reference was made to reports from authors including Kann, U., Mapolelo, D., & Mbere, N. (1990), Mogapi (2004). This literature supported the premise of the study, it revealed serious shortcomings in the setting up and upholding of ethnic equality in Botswana hereby violating social justice in the country's education system. Based on these readings, I argue in the thesis that:

The hierarchical ethnic structures that exist in Botswana are interpreted as socially unjust because they create an imbalance in political and cultural power (Good, 1999; Le Roux, 1999; Lebotse, 2002; Mazonde, 2002a). In this system of 'cultural imperialism' (Young, 1990), the politically and culturally dominant ethnic groups create economic opportunities for themselves while pushing ethnic minorities to the lower end of the socio-economic divide. My research population falls under the ethnically subordinate groups in Botswana society; many members of these groups suffer extreme poverty (Khudu-Petersen 2007).

Against the background presented, and in line with Thompson (2003), I realized that supporting empowerment involves helping people to break free from

...powerful ideologies and other social forces that limit opportunities and maintain the status quo;....and traditional practices which, although often

based on good intentions, have the effect of maintaining inequalities and halting progress towards more appropriate forms of practice (p.42)

The design of Intercultural Arts Education was based on ideas of Banks (1994) and Hernandez (1999), who are critical of the reification of cultures in multiculturalism and rather promote the use of the term 'interculturalism', Mason (1999), who promotes the development of cultural identity and self-esteem to raise resistance towards uncritical adoption of popular cultures, Whitecliffe (1999), who emphasizes the preservation of 'cultural sovereignty' and Richardson (1982), who argues for liberation of learners from external dominance and internalized acceptance of being culturally subordinate.

In implementing ICAE further focus was sharpened onto the school-community collaboration in the implementation of formal education, using the arts as medium for this purpose. The literature sources for this part included: Robinson (1999), in 'The (British) National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education' (NACCCE), Neperud & Krug (1995), Casanova (1987) and Kagan (1983). The epistemological direction underlying Intercultural Arts Education (ICAE) included postmodernism. Sources on this theme included Griffiths (2000), advocating for 'constructivism – which hinges on the accommodation of multiple solutions' and Hicks (1990), arguing for learner empowerment through sensitivity to cultural diversity. Finally, the inclusive nature of ICAE was further anchored on contemporary models such as the principles of 'Whole School' as formulated by the 'Whole Schooling Consortium' (2004).

Research Methodology

The methodology followed constructivism, feminism and postmodernism as the main epistemological frames. The research journey was purposely structured in a systematic and traditional manner at the beginning, but was allowed to develop into a more flexible approach, encouraging adaptations to unfold. One of the characteristics of the research methodology was 'reflexivity', a feminist perspective which acknowledges the researcher as a significant actor amongst the people traditionally referred to as 'research participants' (Griffiths, 1995) and (Tetreault, 1993), and triangulation, which refers to deployment of various data collection tools and various perspectives in data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to increase validity, reliability and credibility in the research.

Elements of bricolage which were employed in the research included components of emancipatory approaches (Robson, 2002), intervention, action research, multiple case study approach (Yin, 2003) and collaborative action research. Data collection and analysis employed aimed to find results for each singularity in the multiple case study with the aim of achieving an analytic generalisation.

Data Collection

Data was collected through questionnaires, filled in pre- and post intervention by Standard four pupils and all teachers of the 12 schools. Semi-structured and open interviews were conducted with selected pupils, teachers, cultural practitioners, parents/guardians, village authorities and education officers. In addition, I extended my data collection devices to include systematic observations and narratives collected through coincidental encounters. The focus of the data collection was on the stakeholders' attitudes towards school and the community and their self assessment in regard to cultural identity. The pupils' academic progress over the research period was recorded.

Data Analysis

Data was presented and analysed partly using the programme QSR NVIVO2. The narrative was included as a vital tool in the analysis of information acquired from stakeholders (Walker & Unterhalter, 2004). Results obtained from teachers and pupils were partly aggregated, grouped according to schools, gender as well as ethnicity and comparisons were drawn between these groups. Data collected pre-intervention were compared with post-intervention data. Microsoft Excel was found to be a sufficient tool for this numerical analysis. Information obtained from teachers by means of additional written comments were coded and included in the analysis. The academic performance of pupils was recorded in form of results of the Standard Four National Attainment Test (SFNAT) and observations of pupils' progress during lessons.

Results

Results show that all, but especially the most marginalized group of pupils, the BaSarwa, profited from ICAE lessons: Questionnaire results reflect that self attributed positive attitudes amongst this group rose by the highest margin of all groups over the research period. My observations correspond with these results: Pupils responded positively to ICAE lessons, especially BaSarwa children.

In project schools far less teachers complained about parents' lack of cooperation and pupils' lack of motivation than in comparator schools. And in project schools teachers more often saw the need to improve cooperation with parents than in comparator schools. I assume that my modest attempts to introduce ICAE in schools already had the effect that some teachers changed their attitude towards an increased cultural understanding.

In the final interviews all coordinators acknowledged that academically poor pupils in particular benefited from the project lessons. They had adopted, at least temporarily, a more positive attitude towards pupils, reduced reprimanding and rather praised pupils' efforts. Coordinators acknowledged, or even appreciated, having learned new crafts skills from villagers.

Including Community-Based Education, collaborative work based on dialectic reason, child centred approaches, community involvement in classroom teaching preferably in form of project teaching based on communities' cultural capital and interdisciplinary teaching, ICAE may provide a way to bridge the cultural gap between learners and the school, contributing towards the promotion of social justice through striving for equality and ontological security. Observations were made to the effect that introducing ICAE has led to more open and inclusive norms of discourse, lifting all involved to more powerful positions with an improved sense of self-worthiness. This allowed teachers to open up, accommodating stage sharing in the classroom context.

In the case of pupils and members of the community, ICAE seemed to have increased their confidence as they experienced that their cultural knowledge/skills were valued in the formal education context. This was evident through their openness in the presence of teachers. This openness was demonstrated by pupils freely presenting songs, dramatising stories, giving verbal answers and offering visual illustrations in class. Adult community members showed increased openness by volunteering to visit school more often to share the formal educational stage by active involvement in classroom activity. In this way, the findings of the study indicated positive influence of ICAE in bridging the gap between the formal schools' culture of dealing and the informal communities' culture of dealing, hence paving the way for improved academic performance.

Pitfalls along the Way

Although findings of the preliminary study show a positive effect of ICAE on all stakeholders, they also reveal shortcomings of the intervention regarding sustainability. ICAE was seen by many stakeholders (teachers, parents as well as pupils) as the researcher's brainchild. Once the researcher withdrew, the situation was 'back to normal' as one teacher exclaimed. From finding solutions for improvement through collaborative work, the interactive pattern regressed increasingly towards defending one's stand and blaming the other for failure.

Evaluative data collected towards the end of my preliminary study reveal that even though all stakeholders basically welcome the idea of ICAE, many felt overwhelmed with the task of taking over responsibility for its implementation:

Teachers find it difficult to initiate cooperation with villagers on a common level. Many villagers feel insecure in the school environment mainly due to the fact that they are not familiar with the schools' culture of dealing, including the two official languages Setswana and English.

Another stumbling block on the way of attempting to implement ICAE was posed by the confusing design of the current CAPA curriculum. Teachers deplore lack of skills in teaching Arts as a truly integrated subject. While ICAE requires an interdisciplinary and thematic approach to the teaching of the arts and related subjects, the CAPA syllabus does not offer an interdisciplinary structure illustrating the commonalities between the CAPA components. On the contrary, the curriculum is fragmented to the extent that content relating to 'Health and Safety' is presented in isolation, misleading teachers into holding health and safety lessons totally out of context. Topics such as pattern, rhythm and movement in visual art are offered in separation from rhythm and movement in music and in drama.

Shortcomings in teacher education in the area of Arts Education aggravate and complicate the problem. Considering findings of my study, I have made recommendations specifically targeting issues of the curriculum in my PhD thesis (Khudu-Petersen, 2007). The challenges posed by the design of the CAPA curriculum fall beyond the scope of this paper, they require discussion at a forum addressing matters of interdisciplinary curriculum development.

The Current Study: Intercultural Arts Education in Action

The practice as we observed in schools is mostly quite distant from implementing concepts such as equal dialogue, respecting diverse forms of knowledge, involvement of the community in deciding upon and controlling matters of education, learner centeredness, child-friendliness or avoidance of violence. I believe that the main hindrance towards change in the Botswana education system, particularly in my research area, is the adherence to the 'top-down model' through which interventions are imposed on practitioners and local community members, who are both not consulted prior to the implementation of the interventions.

Daigle (1997) sees community based education as a form of social action within a community framework that extends beyond schools as institutions. Corson (1998) argues that community involvement is often frustrated when people from indigenous backgrounds find that all the major decisions are made by remote officials, who do not share the culture of the place, and might not care very much about it. He further cites Freire (1972) arguing

that Community-based Education tries to put into practice many of the reforming educational ideas, urging people to become self-aware and active political subjects. In this mode learners were to be enabled to become active participants in shaping their own education.

I see another hindrance for successful innovation in the lack of follow-up, on-going in-service teacher education and support, as well as internal and external evaluation of educational interventions. Appreciating the governmental attempts for change as well as the positive work done by various individuals and groups, I feel the need to advocate for constant reflection and evaluation in order to avoid pitfalls previously experienced, as I agree with Thompson (2003) who argues that

One of the benefits of evaluation... is that it helps us to remain open to new learning, to recognize that our work, however good, is never perfect. There are always ways in which we can improve, ways in which we can go a step further. This is particularly important relating to emancipatory practice. This is because issues of inequality, discrimination and oppression are so complex, and so prone to change over time, that we should never rest on our laurels and assume that we have 'arrived'.... The field of inequality is a constantly changing one, with new challenges arising all the time. What is needed, then, is a degree of humility, a recognition that, however skilled, experienced or well informed we are, there is always a margin for error, and always scope for learning – an important principle on which to base all our attempts to promote equality (p.236).

These thoughts on involving stakeholders in collaboration on all levels of education and ensuring continuous evaluation and reflexion upon praxis have influenced my revised concept of ICAE. Offering clearly designed recommendations of structural implementations including fixed strategic plans would jeopardise my basic concept. ICAE demands flexibility regarding area and time: it cannot be put into practice following one identical structure for all villages; it cannot be put into practice following one structure once and for all; it needs to take into consideration unique circumstances in each community and the change of circumstances over time. Communities, including the learners, need to be enabled, in line with Paulo Freire's thoughts, to actively shape their own education. Each community needs to be included in a process of constant evaluation of the implementation of ICAE in order to initiate a constant process of re-adaptation.

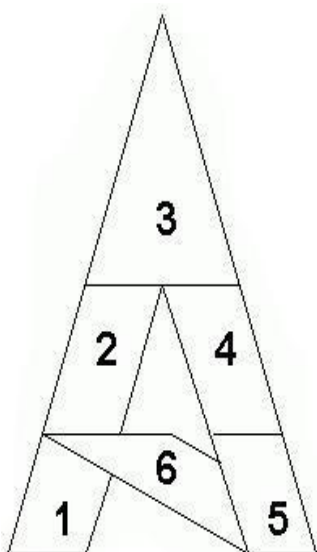
Considering these thoughts regarding collaboration and continuous reflexion, action research suggests itself as an optimal tool for striving towards social justice in the education of culturally mal-recognised ethnic minority pupils. I recommend the involvement of all stakeholders, teachers, pupils, community members, education officers and lecturers from colleges of education and the university in an action research project for implementing ICAE in a primary school.

Such approach is challenging as it demands dialogue, hence, the demand to listen to all respective project collaborators' voices: the challenge lies especially in the need to listen to voices of people with a lower social status, to children's voices and to voices of members of non-recognised ethnic minorities. Dialogue also demands the readiness to express needs, ideas and to make suggestions. Hence, another challenge lies in community members', including the pupils', (dis)-ability to freely express themselves in their own cultural discourse in their communication with officials from the field of education. The prevalent top-down system might even hinder teachers from engaging in an open dialogue with their superiors.

Initiating action research demands from my side openness to consider these difficulties of the stakeholders in engaging in dialogue. It demands from my side facing the challenge and functioning as a mediator. In my intended mission of 'gap closing and stage sharing', I foresee temporary setbacks especially because I assume some stakeholders may fear to lose ground in a power struggle; with patience and collegial support I hope to succeed in initiating action research based on stakeholders' mutual respect and constructive dialogue.

Carrying out the current study, I decided on more active involvement of all stakeholders in introducing ICAE on all stages: planning, conducting, evaluating and adjusting. By concentrating on the one village Serinane, hereby increasing the frequency of visits to one to two days per week, extending the duration of the intervention from one to two years and by involving the Village Development Committee (VDC), my collaborative action research has been extended to explore the inclusion of political aspects of Community Based Education. To 'foster early collaboration along the commodity/value chain' (ICT for Development) I intend to include the regional education officer, pupils, teachers, parents, health- and social workers in collaboration in "whole-system-in-the-room" (WSR) planning workshops.

In my pursuit for new strategies to approach the implementation of ICAE, I found the 'Frame for Advocacy' from John Hopkins University, Centre for Communication Programmes to be a plausible approach to guide me in organising the workshops:



This text and diagram were adopted from the 'Communication Initiative Network' website.

1. **Analysis** - The first step in effective advocacy, starting with accurate information and in-depth understanding of the problem, the people involved, the policies, the implementation or non-implementation of those policies, the organisations, and the channels of access to influential people and decision-makers.
2. **Strategy** - The strategy phase builds on the analysis phase to direct, plan, and focus on specific goals and to position the advocacy effort with clear paths to achieve those goals and objectives.
3. **Mobilisation** - Events, activities, messages, and materials must be designed with your objectives, audiences, partnerships and resources clearly in mind.
4. **Action** - Keeping all partners together and persisting in making the case are both essential to carrying out advocacy
5. **Evaluation** - a team needs to measure regularly and objectively what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.
6. **Continuity** - Articulate long-term goals, keep functional coalitions together and keep data and arguments in tune with changing situations.

First project lessons have been taught in cooperation with a teacher and four cultural practitioners. I held separate meetings with the education officer, the pupils, the teaching staff and the Village Development Committee (VDC). All collaborating partners basically supported the project idea and showed preparedness to get involved in ICAE. Unfortunately, a standard four teacher did not adhere to the agreements on collaborative work and he finally withdrew from the project after a few weeks. A standard three teacher showed interest in the project, offered her support and replaced the former project teacher, a move that demanded also a shift from standard four to standard three pupils.

In May 2010 a “whole-system-in-the-room” (WSR) workshop is planned, involving ten pupils from the research class, all ten teachers of the school, the village chief, three members of the VDC, seven cultural practitioners and the principal education officer from the Regional Education Office. This workshop is aimed to foster direct dialogue amongst the various partners, and through group/partner exercises facilitate and exemplify the actual hands-on collaborative work which is required in the ICAE project.

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“THE ART OF BRIDGE BUILDING”

WILLIAM KELLY



It is axiomatic that bridges cannot be built without connecting one side to the other.

We may not be who we thought we were and we may not be going where we thought we were going. Permeable boundaries exist now not only through war and military aggression, through tourism and travel but also through economic and media colonization, communication satellites, cell phones, cell phone cameras, the internet and the arts. To negotiate our journey we need to link one side of a river to the other, one side of a canyon to the other side and one view of the world to another.

Once we learned all, as children in our villages and towns, from our parents and elders. We grew up on these stories, these arts, this music and on that particular way of life.

In school we were taught of other lands and history from a perspective of our own culture.

This was, in many ways, wonderful – comfortable, secure and unquestioning. But there was a dangerous side to this. An example: When I grew up in America, the indigenous peoples

there – “Native Americans,” “Indians,” were still written of in books, pictured in imagery as savages, often in art and almost always in films and media of the era and as a hindrance to “civilization” when they resisted takeover by Europeans. This view became deeply embedded in the American psyche. Confusion even existed within some young “native Americans” who like other young people played “cowboys and Indians.” A Native American I once spoke with said that on the reservation when he and his Indian mates played ‘cowboys and Indians’ - “even we wanted to be cowboys!”

This view was transported across the world to others of European background. As late as the 1970’s in a Department of Education book in Australia, the Indigenous Americans were referred to as ‘a very savage race of people.’ My wife, Veronica, protested strongly to the Education Department and this reference was removed. Years later in 2007, Linda Burney, the first Aboriginal Minister in the New South Wales Parliament, recalled that when she went to school she and other children were taught that “my people were savages.” Stereotypes.

Indigenous cultures worldwide experienced this labeling; a second example from my country. British colonialists declared Australia to be Terra Nullius (in the Greek ‘no man’s land’). English Common Law of the time allowed for legal settlement of “uninhabited” land. Reinforcing this, Aboriginals were not counted in the census and were governed, until the Referendum of 1967, under the “Fauna and Flora Act!”

So this is the world in which I grew up. For many whites, as I said, it was considered “comfortable” and “secure.” Even desperately poor whites like me – **un**-comfortable and **in**-secure in the cultures in which we lived – believed that we, impoverished, undereducated and exploited were somehow truly superior to ‘the other’ because of race, ethnic background or religion.

For many of my generation it wasn’t until we were much older that we were exposed through the visual arts, through books and theatre that we found out that many artists were saying things quite different from what we had been being told as children, different than what our school books had told us. I was deeply moved. How was it that art could change that which I had been told to believe in for the first 17 years of my life?

After having left my home in New York State, my neighbourhood and its contradictions I discovered:

Picasso’s “Guernica” on a visit to the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Gunter Grass’s “The Tin Drum,” Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s “Gulag Archipelago,” Hugh Masakela’s “The Promise of the Future,” Miriam Makeba’s “Bajabula Bonke” (‘The Healing Song’), Kurt Vonnegut’s “Slaughter House-Five,” Vine Deloria’s “Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto,” Daniel Berrigan’s “Trial of the Catonsville Nine,” Elie Wiesel’s “Night,” Louis E. Lomax’s “The Negro Revolt,” Harper Lee’s “To Kill a Mockingbird,” Alan Paton’s “Cry the Beloved Country,” Kathe Kollwitz’s anti-war prints, Arthur Miller’s “The Crucible” and John Lennon’s “Imagine,” to name a few. This was the world I found myself in after my 17th year. These were some of the works which helped me bridge rivers that my family found were too difficult to cross.

It is no secret that when regimes wish to control the first thing that is taken away is freedom of expression and it is no surprise that of those above many were exiled or lived under strong political pressure.

Free speech has a high price.

I came to realize that each of them, and hundreds more, like you who are here now, have been building bridges across cultures, across time, across oceans, across generations.

The examples I give above are some of those who influenced me as a young artist and so they are not contemporary but the flame has been passed to others whom I consider to be fellow humanist artists and colleagues. I am so in awe of their commitment and contribution and I am moved by their work and reinforced by the knowledge that art can change hearts - that images have power.

I recall a story I read, of a young and impetuous newspaperman's encounter with a Native American Chief on a reservation, which I will try to recount for you here. He was, a 'Plain's Indian,' whose tribe once hunted buffalo.

The reporter asked the now very old Chief "What caused the great change for your tribe?"

The Chief sat silently thinking.

The reporter said, "Was it when your tribe was moved to the reservation?"

The Chief sat silently, continuing to think.

The reporter then asked, "Was it earlier when the cattlemen & farmers started fencing off the plains you lived on?"

The Chief sat in deep thought.

The reporter, now impatient, said "If it wasn't those times, was it when the first settlers began to arrive...or when the army came and built forts in your territory...or when the "iron horse" (the trains) first came to the west...or...."

The old Chief raised his hand to stop the anxious reporter and said "Before reservations, when I was a small boy, I remember a white man came to our village. He had a book with empty pages and a magic stick, and with this magic stick he filled all the pages with herds of our buffalo and one day he closed his book and took the buffalo away.

There is power in an image.

As artists and those of us associated with the arts, we know that art has authority. We know that a painting, a film, a play will never stop a bullet BUT we also know that a work of art can stop a bullet from being fired.

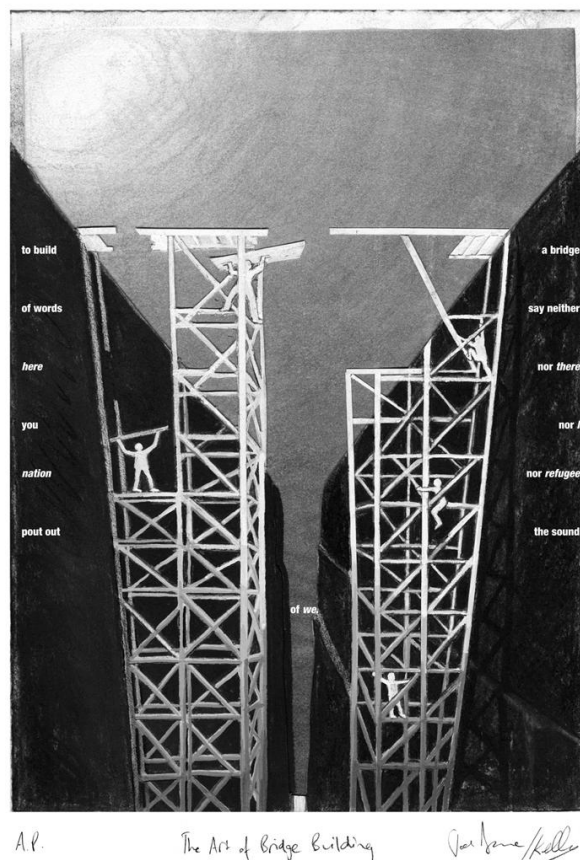
In a world of permeable, fragile and contested boundaries, constant military and economic incursions, 'free trade,' where children aged 3 or 4 in the formative years of their lives can have more input from Japanese or American children's programmes and advertising than they do from those of their own communities: And those in their early teens may have more input from MTV, Disney Channel, CNN or YouTube than they do from within their own

culture. In a world where we now have phrases like “multicultural,” “rainbow,” “multi-ethnic” and others for our increasingly diverse populations; in a world where the old (yet continuing) politics of military and economic colonialism seems so crappy and continues so many injustices, we need alternative views for our future and that of our children.

Art in its various forms can link, connect and reconnect people to ideas within their own culture and transmit the ideas of their culture to others. It can help provide a space of understanding and pride and celebration AND it can help to bring people of differing backgrounds together.

As all South Africans in the arts know, Justice Albie Sachs has contributed to a lively and meaningful debate on the arts over the past decades. This has included questions of art seen as an instrument of political struggle and, in Sachs’ words, the power of art being its “capacity to expose contradictions and reveal hidden tensions.”

Art can make contributions in many ways. For me art can **provide options for the future and show aspirations**. In our collaborative print “The Art of Bridge Building” for the Dialogue Among Nations print portfolio, the poet Joel Deane and I worked long and hard on this. The image is of a simple construction – no cranes nor high-end technology. The viewer is instructed to say “neither you nor I” but rather to ‘pout out the sound of we.’ We are not individuals in ‘remote’ nor ‘unimportant’ countries nor individuals in ‘major’ and ‘powerful’ countries. We are no longer isolated from each other. We are human beings sharing this journey. We, all of us, are the “we” in Joel’s and my artwork.



Art making is constructive. We are builders of the future.

The 'magic stick' took the buffalo away and put cultures in jeopardy. With the same 'magic stick' **we** can retrieve cultures, remove divides. **We** can take down barriers and build bridges. It can show us where "we" have come from and help us to map our future.

Paraphrasing my own earlier statement -- a conference, this conference, will never stop us from making a wrong turn but it can provide a map which, if we draw it correctly, will take us in the right direction.

With your pencil, with your guitar, with your music and films, with your belief in the power of the image – we can help create this map and, when we come to divides which seem impossible to cross, we can help each other build bridges towards a remarkable future.

William Kelly / Melbourne, Australia / kelly@williamkelly.com.au

Art of Social Justice Conference 2010
“Should we let them eat art?” Or, a philosophical account of “art activism” and its (im)possible advancement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on Plato’s metaphysical critique of the poets in the *Republic*, most negative philosophical accounts of art have continued to use variants of the following arguments: (a) art is “unreal”, and by implication untrue or “false”; (b) art is “sensuous”, and by implication dangerous and corrupting. Reactions against this view have historically followed two divergent argumentative paths, namely: (a) “positive” arguments which stress that art either *is* or else *should be* essentially real, true, rational, and morally useful; (b) “negative” arguments which stress that art either *is* or else *should be* essentially unreal, sensuous, anti-utilitarian and subversive.

Positive arguments are personified by art theories/practices which stress art’s “indebtedness” and subsequent moral, political and pedagogical duty, for example Soviet “socialist realism”; whilst negative arguments are personified by art theories/practices which stress art’s “uniqueness” and subsequent radical autonomy from all other life spheres, for example the “*L’art pour l’art*”-movement. Both approaches have disadvantages, for whilst an emphasis on art’s uniqueness has often led to elitist, individualistic or socially irrelevant art, an emphasis on art’s social indebtedness has often led to censorship, state-control and a general de-emphasis on artistic quality and aesthetic impact.

When speaking of an “art activism” which can advance the so-called “Millennium Development Goals”, one is not only confronted by practical concerns, but also by *philosophical* question pertaining to “*aesthetic autonomy*”, i.e. art’s “special-ness” and relation to other spheres. Art can, for instance, not literally feed the hungry. Art can also be misused as propaganda; and activist art may also be “bad” art. How do we answer these, and various other questions? I believe, by the various available accounts of aesthetic autonomy.

In this presentation I will therefore give a *philosophical* account of aesthetic autonomy and activist art which mediates between “positive”/“negative”-arguments by introducing a *new way of looking* at the relationship between *art and reality*, on the one hand, and *art and non-artistic* life spheres on the other hand. I will use insights gleaned from the work of Paul Ricoeur to argue that, based on a proper philosophical view of *imagination*, it is possible for art to advance societal goals in a *truly aesthetic manner* because of the specific and *special* way art and reality, on one hand, and art and non-artistic activities partake of each other. The actual bread needed to feed the hungry and artworks which envision “bread” for the “hungry” are, in other words, intimately related.

“Should we let them eat art?” Or, a philosophical account of “art activism” and its (im)possible advancement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Can art help advance the so-called “millennium development goals”? A philosophical account of art activism which tries to answer this question is invariable compelled by the history of thought to begin with what Ben Davies (2006) calls “that old bugaboo from the philosophy of art,” Plato’s banishment of painters and poets from his ideal community in Book X of *The Republic*.

Plato banishes artists from his utopian society for two reasons: (1) artists are liars; (2) and artists are corruptors. Most people, and hopefully most of us in this room, find his arguments repulsive, or at least laughable. But, there is a reason for this old bugaboo’s enduring influence on our most cherished thoughts on art. What we must understand and appreciate is that Plato’s severe reaction to art, presupposes something most artists and art lovers hold dear: the power of art to affect and influence society. It is telling that Plato actually admits to enjoying and being affected by art in Book X when he says: “... you know how even the best of us enjoy [poetry] and let ourselves be carried away by our feelings; and we are full of praise for the merits of the poet who can most powerfully affect us in this way” (605d).

Right at the end of Book X, Plato also let it slip that it might be possible for the painters and poets he’s just banished to someday, and in some way, return to the ideal community: “It is only fair, then, that poetry should return, if she can make her defence in lyric or other metre ... And we should give her defenders, men who aren’t poets themselves but who love poetry, a chance of defending her in prose and proving that she doesn’t only give pleasure but brings lasting benefit to human life and human society” (607e).

If Plato likes art so much, what is his big problem with it? Plato’s big problem is that art (or at least the art of his day) cannot give us *true knowledge* of reality and, therefore, *misleads* us; and entirely devoid of truth content, it also *corrupts* us by awakening feelings which are, in themselves, irrational. The poems of Homer present us with false information about reality, and these lies (which Plato calls *pseudos*) awaken powerful feelings in us, which weaken us and entice us to imitate the immoral behaviour represented there. The details of Plato’s argument does not concern us here; but the way art has been defended against this argument is of utmost importance, for most, if not all, positive evaluations of art can be read against the backcloth of this very “prototypical” argument against art.

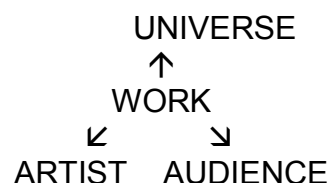
Reactions against Plato’s “prototypical” argument have usually follow two divergent argumentative paths, namely: (a) a “positive” argumentative path which stress that art either *is* or else *should be* essentially real, true, rational, and morally useful; (b) and a “negative” argumentative path which stress that art either *is* or else *should be* essentially unreal, sensuous, anti-utilitarian and subversive. Positive arguments are found in art theories and/or practices which stress art’s ontological “indebtedness” and subsequent moral, political and pedagogical duty. These types of theories/practices pay heed to Plato’s request that defenders of art prove “that she doesn’t only give pleasure but

brings lasting benefit to human life and human society” (607e). Positive defences of art can be fruitful, but also very debilitating, as it runs a gauntlet from the engaged writing of a Camus to the extreme state-control and propagandist undertones of Soviet “socialist realism”.

“Negative” reactions against Plato’s prototypical critique are personified by art theories/practices which stress art’s “uniqueness” and subsequent radical autonomy from all other life spheres. These types of theories/practices ignore Plato’s request that art be proved useful and morally wholesome. Negative defences of art can also be found running a gauntlet from the fruitful emphasis on art’s uniqueness found in van Gogh or a Picasso, to the elitist, individualistic and socially irrelevant art characteristic of large parts of bourgeois society.

When speaking of an “art activism” which can advance the so-called “Millennium Development Goals”, one is thus not only confronted by practical concerns, but also by a set of *philosophical* questions pertaining to what philosophers of art call “*aesthetic autonomy*”, i.e. art’s “special-ness” with regards to empirical reality and other spheres of human interest. Art can, for instance, not *literally* feed the hungry. Art can be misused as *propaganda*; and activist art can also be *bad* art. Asking the question whether art activism and/or activist art can be both art *and* activism, is asking about the nature of aesthetic autonomy – a philosophical question which transcends the stale debate between theory/practice. In this paper, I want to give an account of aesthetic autonomy which renders an engaged art possible, but places a few question marks behind the notion of an art’s activism.

M.H. Abrams (1953:6-7) identifies four elements in “the total situation of the work of art” which are discriminated and made salient in most aesthetic theories, and arranges these in a triangular framework. This framework consists of the “artist”, the “work”, the “universe” and the “audience”. The work of art is placed in the centre of the triangle with the three other elements arranged around it:



Taking this framework into consideration it becomes clear that the problem of activism or engagement also brings into its theoretical orbit questions pertaining to the relation between the artist and the work as well as the relation between the work and its audience. On closer inspection these relationships can be viewed under the auspices of aesthetical autonomy, for in each instance the central question remains whether the work of art, situated in the middle, is autonomous with regards to the three points of the triangle. Take for example the problem of the relation of the artwork to its audience: does the artwork reveal an essential truth merely to be deciphered by a

passive audience, or does the meaning and significance of the artwork rely on what is brought to it, or activated by the audience?

The central problematic underlying the question of activism/engagement thus comprises the relationship of the work of art to reality, audience *and* artist; and aesthetic autonomy should be understood as the autonomy of the work of art in relation to these three points on Abrams' triangle. The idea of aesthetic autonomy is, however, as Terry Eagleton (1990) points out in his brilliant study of the ideological dimensions of the very concept of the Aesthetic, "radically double-edged" (1990:9), it is an "amphibious concept" which on the one hand sequesters art from social praxis and on the other hand becomes, in Marxist discourse, the anthropological foundation of revolutionary opposition (Eagleton, 1990:9). Yet autonomy, as a central Enlightenment concept, today seems both radically outdated and politically suspect.

During the first stirring of critical post-Enlightenment thought the idea of autonomous art became the "guerilla tactics of secret subversion" (Eagleton, 1990:369) but at the same time something "fearful and wretched", having turned to advantage what its commodity status had forced upon it; "making a virtue of grim necessity" (Eagleton, 1990:370). As complete social functionlessness, autonomy was wrenched into a productive sense: "art as a deliberate turning in upon itself ... a mute gesture of resistance ... a negative politics" (Eagleton, 1990:370). Personifying this so-called "negative aesthetics" is Adorno's descriptions of modern art's contributions: expression of suffering, broken promise of happiness, inexplicit knowledge of society, negative embodiment of utopia (Zuidervaat, 1990:65). According to Lambert Zuidervaat (1990:61) it seems as though autonomy is viewed as here as an "evil" necessary for some greater good. Indeed, he singles out Adorno's version of aesthetic autonomy and social significance as sometimes resembling a theodicy of autonomous art.

But as often happens with theodicy its unresolved tensions liquidate the object of contention: after negative aesthetics, in Eagleton's words (1990:370), proved too feeble a basis on which to found a politics, the only route left open was one which rejected the aesthetic, namely the revolutionary *avant garde*. Postmodernism, however, quickly brought an end to "the adventure of the international avant-gardes of the twentieth century" (Compagnon, 1994:132). It is specifically the loss of historicity which the post-modern brings about, according to Antoine Compagnon (1994:121), which subvert the notion an *avant garde*. The post-modern exemplifies the absence of faith in the future, and no longer tries to make history or change the world. Activism/engagement, in these circumstances, becomes problematic. Having resolved the so-called "theodicy of autonomy" by cancelling the aesthetic, as well as the subject, out in its entirety, the post-modern theorist often finds questions about activism/engagement epistemologically invalid and, one can say, crude.

Yet there must be a different way of approaching the so-called necessary evils of aesthetic autonomy or (in the context of the discourse opened by hermeneutics) the antinomy between alienating distanciation and belonging,

the paradoxical co-existence of detachment and opening-up. Paul Ricoeur (1981:131) attempts to find an alternative to the hermeneutical problem framed by Gadamer's *Truth and Method* as an either/or choice between distancing and belonging: "either we adopt the methodological attitude and lose the ontological density of the reality we study, or we adopt the attitude of truth and must then renounce the objectivity of the human sciences" (Ricoeur, 1981:131). To my mind there are striking parallels between the "paradox" of aesthetic autonomy and this "antinomy" between "alienating distancing and participatory belonging".

Ricoeur's subsequent rejection of the either/or alternative and his attempt to overcome the alleged antinomy altogether, can thus be explored as an alternative to the parallel problem of aesthetic autonomy. Interestingly enough, Ricoeur overcomes the either/or set by Gadamer's *Truth and Method* by returning to the autonomy of the work (in the sense of Abrams' distinction), in other words to the *text* as a "productive notion of distancing" which is "much more than a particular case of inter-subjective communication" (1981:131). His is thus a type of dialectical take on the traditional theodicy problem, and read as parallel to the question of the autonomy of the artwork, it provides for the interesting thesis that aesthetic autonomy is a productive and positive notion inscribing itself as the condition or *possibility* of social relevance, activism/engagement and connectivity.

According to Ricoeur (1981:139) writing renders the text autonomous from the writer as well as from the audience. An essential feature of the text is thus that it transcends its own psycho-sociological means of production. Why? Because writing is not fixation, it is rather the freeing of material with respect to the dialogical condition of discourse. This implies that the relation between writing and reading is no longer a particular case of the relation between speaking and hearing. This distancing (in the language of aesthetics "autonomy") is not seen negatively, but positively: "it is not the product of methodology and hence something ... parasitical; rather it is constitutive of the phenomenon of the text as writing" (Ricoeur, 1981:139). Distancing as a constitutive element also alters the functioning of reference. Writing modifies reference to the point of rendering it entirely problematic; what we call "literature", for example, is made possible by the abolishment of reference to a given reality (1981:141). Yet this abolition, Ricoeur contends (1981:141), is "the abolition of a first order reference", it is the "condition of possibility" for the "freeing of a second order reference" designated by the Husserlian *Lebenswelt* (life-world) or the Heideggerian "being-in-the-world". Through art new possibilities of being-in-the-world is opened up, providing an impulse for real-life liberating praxis. The third form of productive distancing is thus exactly this alienation from the "universe", in Abrams scheme. The last dimension of the notion of the autonomous text Ricoeur points to is the "moment of distancing in the relation of self to itself" (1981:144). Here hermeneutics links up intimately to ideology critique, the traditional bedfellow of artistic activism/engagement. The question is one of exposing the self to the art and receiving from it an enlarged self, with which one can engage in real-life liberating praxis.

Art can thus not literally feed the hungry, but the productive distancing which characterises it as a *work*, can open up new possibilities of being-in-the-world which provide the impetus for real-life liberating praxis. Art does not change the world, but art can very much change people living in the world and it is it people who, having been shown new possibilities of being, change the world.

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The Community Arts Project (CAP): The Role of the Arts in Building Community and Artistic Development.

By Eben Lochner
Rhodes University

Sub-Theme 3: Arts as an expression of cultural diversity in the context of globalisation.

Abstract

The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa asserts that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes freedom of artistic creativity. Furthermore, the South African white paper on arts and culture states that, "rooted in freedom of expression and creative thought, the arts, culture and heritage have a vital role to play in development, nation building and sustaining our emerging democracy". Education in South African township schools are seriously lacking in any form of art education. This being the case, how can we expect individuals from the townships to be able to enjoy the above mentioned rights? Within the history of South Africa community art centres have played a vital and indispensable role in giving people a voice, and in addressing the cultural and educational imbalances brought on by Apartheid. However many art centres collapsed with the withdrawal of foreign donors in 1991, and the problem of funding remains to this day. According to Lize van Robbroeck, "some of the fundamental ideals of community arts need to be revised to enrich, democratize and diversify [South Africa's] cultural practice." The aim of my paper is to investigate this statement in relation to the contribution the Community Arts Project (CAP) in Cape Town (1977-2008). Centres such as these offered a rich space for multi-racial sharing and the creation of communities centred on the arts and for many was a healing space in the midst of a traumatic South Africa. Further, this paper will consider the role community art centres have played, and can, indeed, continue to play in addressing the educational and cultural problems which beset this country. With South Africa's reincorporation into the international art scene, the work of grassroots organizations has been overlooked and underfunded. These centres offer a rich opportunity for continuing the process of democratising the South African art scene, which remains an elitist practice that is alienating to many. The democratisation of art is essential to the diversification of the field, and to the development of a more locally reflective arts scene that can engage, on its own terms, with the international interest in contemporary 'African art'.

Within South Africa there have been many artists who have come from disadvantaged communities and have greatly benefitted, or even relied on, the presence of community art centres to begin their artistic careers. By focusing on the Community Arts Project in Cape Town, I will argue how such centres encourage an expression of local cultural diversity in the context of globalisation. Some of the artists which came from this project include: Xolile Mtakatya, Tyrone Appollis, Solomon Siko, Billy Mandindi, and Mandla Vanyaza.¹ Lize van Robbroeck (2004:41) reminds us that

Anyone familiar with the historical development of South African art would recognize that arts centres played a decisive – in fact indispensable – role in the establishment of modern 'black' art praxis in South Africa. Pioneer centres such as Polly Street and Rorke's Drift, and the later, independent and highly politicized centres of the struggle era provided a current of cultural output that ran parallel to, and at times vitally intersected and dovetailed with, the dominant mainstream of academically trained and institutionally validated 'white' art.

¹ Other artists include: Lionel Davis, Hamilton Budaza, Thami Kiti, Ishmael Thyssen, Dathini Mzayiya, Willie Bester, Cameron Voyiya, Sipho Hlati, and Thembinkosi Goniwe.

In the course of my research I have come across many stories of individuals from the 1980s to the present that had no formal artistic training at school, nor were encouraged in any way to pursue art, but had the desire to become artists nonetheless. Community art centres gave them the space, materials and input needed to develop their talents, and contribute to the local artistic diversity of South Africa. In this paper I will argue for the importance of art centres for social justice, as spaces for creating community and finding healing. I will also suggest a few things that can be learnt from the history of the Community Arts Project in Cape Town throughout its long years from 1977 until 2008.

When Mike van Graan presented a paper at a SIDA conference in 1991 he claimed the following:

Development priorities such as housing, health care, infrastructure, etc. which deny the importance of culture generally and art in particular and which are not linked fundamentally to human rights and democracy, still regard people in two-thirds of the world as essentially physical entities with little, if any, emotional, intellectual, aesthetic or psychological needs...The non-prioritisation of culture and the arts in development perpetuates....the lack of artistic skills and resources for the majority to find and maintain identity, to make meaning of their world and to articulate their aspirations, fears and ideas...if development is designed to overcome the legacies of colonialism and apartheid, then it must have its philosophical premise, not self-serving economic or political interests, but of human beings as holistic and equals...

In theory the ANC government seems to agree with this statement. Paraphrasing former president Thabo Mbeki, Gerhard Hagg (2004:58) says that, "it is generally agreed that without the arts we run the risk of becoming a nation of houses and taps only." This is further affirmed by the South African white paper on arts and culture according to which the arts have a vital role to play in development, nation building, and sustaining our emerging democracy. The contribution of art centres was recognised by the ANC government and plans were made from 1991 throughout the 1990s to have them continue playing a central role (Hagg 2004:54). However with the legal apparatus of apartheid being abolished in the 1990s, many of the centres suddenly found themselves without funding as the arts were no longer seen as serving the anti-apartheid struggle. Many art centres collapsed and only a few managed to recover and adapt to the new funding environment. The ANC government put R50 million into the establishment of 40 new art centres in nine provinces (Hagg 2004:55, Gaylard 2004:70). The independent art centres, however, were not included in government funding or programs and continued to struggle on (Hagg 2004:55) Most of the new art centres became defunct, since as Joseph Gaylard (2004:71) explains the centres were erected without having anyone with the leadership and passion to lead and manage any of these spaces effectively. Many of the centres became used for other functions or were simply closed.²

Writing on the role of community art centres before the end of apartheid Gerhard Hagg (1989:n.p.) states that

2 For a more in depth discussion on the problems faced by community art centres in the last 15 years I highly recommend the two most recent studies done by Gerhard Hagg and the one text by Joseph Gaylard in my bibliography.

Community Arts provides an outlet for self-expression, an opportunity to develop an alternative culture and to create new symbols as well as to provide educational and economic networks. Centres allow people to participate at grass-root level, with an emphasis on workshop process rather than end-products. Ordinary people can become participants in efforts to redefine culture and bridge the gap between First and Third Worlds. Participation in the arts breaks down barriers, thus making the art centre an important means of intercommunity communication.

The function these centres served for intercommunity communication is worth elaborating on, since it is that which brings the 'community' together for the purpose of networking and art making. Marschall (2002: 16) writes that the term "community" is a fluid concept and it is neither homogenous nor a clearly circumscribed or static body. Further, the fluidity of the concept makes it particularly problematic to say something is done for 'the community'. She continues by explaining that with any attempt to empower a community, "there will always be some who dissent, others who do not care and perhaps a few who may actually be disempowered/ disadvantaged by the venture" (Marschall 2002:17) This was recognised at CAP in the 1980s and Shirley Walters³ (1986:10-11) asks,

what does the word community mean?...we wanted to believe that [the] community is the 'oppressed' and 'exploited', but is that true? One organisation can't serve all the 'oppressed'....We decided that in reality [the organisation's] community is its members- the students, staff and all who use it

CAP was recognised as a place where people from different areas could meet and share in a safe space, and it brought a lot of diverse people together.⁴ CAP's community consisted out of people from Mannenburg, Michell's Plain, Khayelitsha, Guguletu, Nyanga and other township areas⁵ Furthermore, the ages of participants ranged from 12-72 and the participants were, housewives, township youth, unemployed workers, nurses etc.⁶ and included all 'races'. Owen Kelly, a participant in the British community art movement further complicates the idea of community when he writes that it is

not an entity, nor even an abstraction, but a set of shared social meanings which are constantly created and mutate through the actions and interactions of its member, and through their interaction with wider society...The community is not available for "development" by funders or "management" by externals. Rather it grows by member participation...One does not work "with" a community. One participates in bringing a community into being. (Peffer 2009:169)

3 Shirley Walters was very involved at CAP at a time when there was a push for democratising the organisation and there was no director. The quote is taken from an educational recourse she developed for community centres and tells the story of a fictional community centre. It seems however that CAP came to the same conclusions.

4 Interview with Mpathi Gocini (27/05/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton.

5 Interview with Hamilton Buduza (08/05/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton.

6 Interview with Hildur Amato (09/12/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny

Peffer (2009: 152) writes that alternative art spaces “facilitated a pattern of cross-influence and interpersonal relationships between artists that brought a *community of artists* into being”. These spaces “allowed the possibility of thinking beyond immediate needs of the present, beyond producing art for a market (or a political program) that made demands on content in black artists' work. A door was opened about thinking what else art could be [by the community created around it]” (Peffer (2009:169). Lize van Robbroeck (1991:18) also explains that these centres democratised art by allowing, “equality in access to the means of cultural production and distribution”. As such they facilitated communication between artists causing a cross-fertilization of ideas and shared experience, thus acting as an empowering force and producing a locally relevant aesthetic which did not necessarily conform to the mainstream (Van Robbroeck 2004:50). For many artists these spaces would be the only place that allowed them the space and materials to develop their artistic abilities. These centres have benefitted and developed people by creating artistic communities for nurturing the talents held by many people in disadvantaged communities.

When the Community Arts Project, also known as CAP, started running classes in 1977 the use of the centre was largely determined by the community⁷. A request could be made and the organiser would try to facilitate a course in the area in which interest was expressed. Priority was given to art, but the centre also ran karate and yoga classes at times. Due to the part-time nature of the teachers there was always a high turnover of teaching staff that equipped learners in the ways in which seemed best to them. CAP was established in response to the lack of suitable accommodation and facilities to run workshops and provide opportunities for creative expression. This was at a time when there was a spontaneous growth in the arts, much of it which was related to the burning social and political issues of the time. As such CAP played a largely facilitative role by responding to requests around it. One of its greatest strengths in the early years was the way in which it remained relevant by attempting to be largely defined by the needs of the community. As such it developed in an ad-hoc fashion in accordance with the numerous demands that were made on it for services and training in the arts. As a result of this however CAP often tried to take on too much and had no clear vision of its own. Jacqueline Nolte (n.d.:4) writes

People came together at CAP in an effort to change the circumstances of their lives and to share skills with those denied them, to change themselves through creative encounters fuelled by a belief that the creative process is a transformative process, and thus linked to the process of transformation and liberation. What was evident in the 1970s was a belief in the inherent power of individual creativity, associated with recognition of both intuition and political awareness.

Christine Walters, the assistant organiser in 1978 explains that, “The whole idea is that there is a relaxed atmosphere and no rules. Although the classes are structured we are not a school or an institution but a place where people can come and develop their creativity” (Blumenthal, Sally). An artist's residency was established whereby, “emerging black artists were provided with space and an allowance to pursue both their own work and pass on their skills to others” (De Wet et al. 2001). During these early years and throughout the 1980s, CAP students would also teach one another since it would not be unusual to have already-skilled individuals joining specific workshops, including teachers from other departments in CAP (Pissarra 2009). As De Wet et al (2001) explains:

⁷ As noted earlier this refers to the people who used the centre, and not necessarily the people within the immediate vicinity of the centre.

The principles of 'learning by doing' and 'each one teach one' informed the character of these activities, and represent the first formulation of one of CAP's enduring concerns: the development of learning processes rooted in participatory democracy.⁸

CAP also provided a space for networking and a cross-pollination of ideas and techniques between a community of artists which allowed people the means to try and define artistic practice in their own terms. Jacqueline Nolte (n.d.:3) writes that

It was a training ground for understanding the meaning of artistic production in relation to struggles for political freedom and basic human rights. It was an attempt to understand the meaning that art has for building community in a country which had made it its task to intentionally destroy black community life and to make impossible a cross-flow between communities of different cultures and racial designations.

Peffer (2009: xi) further explains that, "from the 1930s and well into the 1990s, the art scene, particularly the black art scene, was one place where black and white, rich and poor could meet and together form the kernel of a different society". It was such 'grey areas', outside apartheid ideas of racial segregation, where progressive art was often made (Peffer 2009: xxi).

Hamilton Budaza and Lionel Davis are both individuals who received their first art training at CAP during 1978. CAP continued to be a very vibrant space in the 1980s, which passed on artistic skills and produced a number of now well known artists. However, from the very beginning there was a concern with qualification. Dimitri Fanourakis⁹ said at the end of its first year that it is, "not offering any degrees and a lot of people want concrete results" (Swift, Keri 1977). Throughout CAP's history there was a mix between offering full-time and/or part-time art training. While these were successful, the qualification itself was not worth anything. In the 1990s the establishment of the NQF framework by the new ANC government attempted to rectify the problem of qualification in all areas, including the arts.

The perceived role of community art centres changed after the end of apartheid. Peffer (2009:88) writes that this was because, during the 1980s,

political groups were banned under successive states of emergency, [and] cultural groups such as churches and art organizations became conduits for laundering money into the country from overseas donors. Cultural events also became a platform and a cover...for more directly political actions...at a time when there were few other avenues open for free expression

Once the objectives of politically motivated funders were achieved, they withdrew financial support for community art centres. It was also erroneously assumed that the government

8 Theorists of community-based arts projects, such as Owen Kelly, stress that teaching processes are often "reciprocal, and democratically organised...a mutual education in which there are no trainers and trainees" and that one must avoid the situation of "the externally validated teacher imposing [his/her] will on the class, and is never a participant in a democratic group" (Van Robbroeck 1991:19).

9 He was CAP's first organiser in 1977.

would take on the task of art education and that the role of such centres would become redundant. CAP was now challenged to reposition itself and define its role in a way that would make sense in the new socio-political environment, so that it that both contributed to the development of South Africa, and drew money from funders. As such they focused on people would be left out of the school system and targeted the unemployed. The two issues that were prioritised were qualification and income generation and CAP looked at career paths for which they could equip learners. However, there were problems with implementation on the side of qualification since they read policy documents on the NQF and saw the arts falling through the cracks.¹⁰ Mario Pissarra who was passionately pursuing this direction and who was the CAP director until 1999 felt that he had been able to achieve very little in terms of their goals in his years there. He said that it was very difficult to receive any tangible support from the government and that extensive motivation for their role was required.¹¹ According to Hagg (2010:169) this was as a result of an ideological shift

from socialist to market-driven principles, as formulated in the Growth, Equity and Redistribution (GEAR) policy... In order to obtain state funding, the centres had to back up their demands by increasingly arguing for their utility in terms of social and economic investment... The shift to market-related utility was highly problematic due to the location of the RDP centres in African townships [that were far from art markets].

To try and satisfy the outcome-based nature of the NQF system CAP began taking a far more 'scientific' approach to art. It was run like a business and the focus was on results in response to the market driven nature that centres took on. There was a very conservative emphasis on how to achieve spatial depth, or how to mix paint as opposed to the exploration of theme and subject matter to try and define a new and personal aesthetic.¹²

In recognition of the need for individuals to do casual work, different classes were run each day of the week from 9am until 5pm. Hence if you wanted to learn to paint, but not to make prints you would come on Tuesdays and not on Wednesdays. CAP managed to benefit a number of people at this time and sent some through to Ruth Prowse for further training. However, the director, Mario Pissarra is not sure how many artists they trained. In the later years of CAP's history, from at least 2001, the qualification systems seemed to be effective and once again and successful artistic individuals such as Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi emerged. However, many complained that CAP had become more like a school and had lost the vibrancy of a community centre.

According to van Robbroeck (2004:45), art centres during apartheid were all, "to a greater or lesser degree concerned with redressing educational and cultural imbalances wrought by decades of systematic neglect and marginalization under the system of apartheid". Many still suffer from educational marginalisation especially with regards to art education within schools located in townships and rural areas. Art centres can still play the essential role they have played in the past through using informal as well as formal education. At every

10 Personal interview with Mario Pissarra at the University of Cape Town, 28 April 2009

11 Ibid.

12 While teachers of this later period did develop creativity there was a strong emphasis on achieving specific results such as the ones mentioned. This is in contrast to a 1989 profile of Mike Rautenbach, who involved with CAP, which explains that he grapples "with difficulties such as knowing when to give direction and when to allowed learners' creativity to emerge" and that he "believes that direction should be kept to a minimum and that it is his task to create the right conditions to convince the learner that she can draw and be creative" (CAPtions 1989: 07)

stage of CAP it seems that there was a concern to give people the technical and mental skills to engage with the art world in a critical and informed manner and enabling them to embrace it or reject it¹³. Furthermore, both formal and informal education strategies throughout CAP's years allowed people to develop their artistic talents. However, in a conversation I had with Lionel Davis he noted how the problem with a qualification system for the arts is that the qualification does not make you an artist. Rather it is what you do with the space and resources you are provided with, because more emphasis is placed on the quality of one's work rather than on your formal qualification.¹⁴ In every phase of CAP, those who succeeded as artist were those with the mindset to make the most of the space and opportunities given to them.¹⁵

It seems evident that it is possible for such centres to use the NQF to equip learners for career paths, however questions remain as to whether this is the best path for the fine arts. The complex qualification criteria are crippling to many small art centres who do not have the capacity or experience to deal with the bureaucracy. One example is the Xolelanani Youth Centre in Port Elizabeth which in the short five years of doing ceramic training from 2000-2005 was able to equip 40 youths with the means to become creative, employable individuals. This centre struggled to conform to the government criteria for funding, and despite many efforts, the project was never able to give students learnership qualification. Those who were qualified were those who were streamed through PE Technikon¹⁶ from the project. This demonstrates how the learnership qualification was not an essential part of success of the project. Two factors that were vital however were the passionate leadership of Meshack Masuku and effective budgeting and financial management.

Artists such as Meshack Masuku and Lionel Davis are grieved about the current lack of art centres to act as a safety net for those youths who have dropped out of school and have nothing constructive to occupy their time with. These youths often end up in crime-related gangs, and spend much of their social time at shebeens.¹⁷ Masuku explains his motivation for using the arts through Xolelanani in the following way,

I deliberately focused on people who are not just unemployed but people who have to change their mindset [i.e. change the way they think about themselves and others]. That was my target group. I was targeting the young, the vigilant, the dangerous, that was my target, to work with those minds...you can't just ignore them, because the more you ignore them the more you push them into crime¹⁸

Although the youths were not motivated for an art education at first, he felt that he just needed to persevere with them, "because when you persevere they do learn, they do change slowly, some later than others" He personally went out and found people to come and learn ceramics, persuading them to try and change their lives. The emphasis of the project was not merely on qualifications, but on providing a space for people to be transformed.

13 Graham Falken interviewed in Voyiya. V & Magee, J. 2003. *The Luggage is still labelled*.

14 Personal interview with Lionel Davis in Muizenberg, Cape Town on 02 February 2010

15 In my interview with Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi he noted how he has become a successful artists partly because he put in extra time with friends to develop their work and give each other input. Other students simply did the bare minimum to get the qualification.

16 Now the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

17 Personal interview with Lionel Davis 02 February 2010 and Personal interview with Meshack Masuku 16 September 2008.

18 Personal interview with Meshack Masuku, 16 September 2008.

Lionel Davis also testifies to the therapeutic nature of his time at CAP which helped him recover from seven years of being imprisoned on Robben Island and the years of traumatic house arrest which followed. Elise Eggart (2008) writes that in the community arts project

through drawing and painting, many of Davis's students were able to freely think and create for the first time in years. Often, this opportunity set [his] students on the road to attaining a much stronger and more profound sense of self. 'Through the medium of art,' Davis explains, 'you can begin to dignify a person.'

Masuku shares this sentiment and experienced how, through his project, the arts dignify people. He says the following:

I still believe that if you've got your hand on yourself and still re-educate, and that is what I set myself to do, and the record speaks for itself, I had less unsuccessful people that I had taken out of the township and tried to change them. To be quite frank ... I can only count three people [who didn't make it]. The rest of the changed and got their education

This testifies of the need of such projects and possibilities for successful development. What seems to be widely agreed upon is that government needs to play a facilitative role to create an atmosphere wherein it is possible to gain qualification and apply for funding. However, what is also agreed upon is that formal qualification in the arts is not the only route that is worth funding. It is the lack of money for these projects is the single biggest threat to their survival. What has been suggested by those formerly involved in CAP to help art centres navigate the unstable nature of the funding environment is a small flexible unit that is able to hire teaching staff and offer courses on a part-time basis as the funding allows. In addition to this, a passionate and skilled leadership and financial manager are needed to explore ways in which to be relevant to the community while drawing money from funders. (Minty 2010, Pissarra 2009)

There has been, and can still be great benefit for people in an informal meeting place for the creation of community around the art. Jacqueline Nolte (n.d.:3) writes that "the concept of a 'community arts project' implies a place of access for all people who wish to exercise creativity, bound neither by academic nor economic strictures. It assumes, as well, a cross-flow of ideas between people engaged in all manner of creative activity." These centres can greatly enrich the life of those around them, even if they never become professional artists. As I noted in the beginning, by only focusing on economic needs it presumes that people in two-thirds of the world have no cultural needs. However, as has been demonstrated, informal training is also able to give artists the space, mentoring and materials needed to develop their creativity and to expose them to art networks. David Koloane, co-founder of Thupelo, speaks about the fundamental ideals of such workshops as well as, by extension, community art centres when he describes it as

a collective form of learning and teaching which is sensitive and adaptable to the social conditions which are found within the communities. Our objective is to inspire artists to research and experiment with medium and technique so they are able to expand their creative vocabulary (Peffer, 2009:151)

Lize van Robbroeck (2004:50) argues that these ideals need to be revised, “to enrich, democratise, and diversify [South Africa's] art practice” If we desire to see art practices which are relevant to their local context, art centres will be essential, not only to give those who do not study through universities the needed skills, but also to allow sharing of opinions and ideas between artists. Sidney Kasfir writes that the key to creativity lies in encounters with unfamiliar cultural models and artistic practice, and that art workshops enable artists on the periphery to engage with local and international networking and practice, facilitating such creative encounters. (Peffer 2009:152-3). Many benefitted from the presence of community art centres, not only to start their careers, but also to build community and to find healing. To deny the existence of such spaces for the use of future generations will not only impoverish our local artistic diversity, but will also be a social injustice.

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Social Justice Through Arts Advocacy Elicited in Decoding and Encoding the Codes in the New South African Play *Deconstructing Hamlet* By Genbia Hyla: The Written Text versus the Performance Codes

Paper by Deborah A. Lütge

ABSTRACT:

Genbia Hyla's Hamlet Deconstructed provides a tool for examining the 'colonizing impact' through the reconstitution or reconstruction of four texts: Shakespeare's Hamlet, Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Müller's The HamletMachine, and Atwood's monologue "Gertrude Talks Back". The examination in this paper of the new performance text lies in the combination of the texts, the directorial concept and the audio-visual effects. Central to the discussion is the expectation and the reception of Hamlet as this is the work that harnesses academic preconception and links the reconstructed texts. Clare Asquith notes "the most condensed version of high-low, dark-fair images" in Hamlet's comparison between his father and uncle (2005:34).

It is in this re-examination of class and race that Hamlet Deconstructed may be termed a postmodern production as it deconstructs grand narratives and reframes the context through "fragmentation and multiplicity" (Klages, 2007). The title signifies the taking apart of texts but the new work as textual signifier, suggests the reconstruction of texts. The splicing and re-mixing alters the focus and the work becomes defined as much by the inclusion as well as the exclusion of dialogue.

Barbara Johnson in her book The Critical Difference (1981) disavows synonyms such as destruction and disassembly. This supports the reconstruction theory. Hamlet as the dominant play becomes reflected in a new way by shifting the 'gaze'. According to Johnson, "[a] deconstructive reading ... analyses the specificity of a text's critical difference from itself." Therefore the paradigm of Hamlet is refocused in Hamlet Deconstructed not only to examine choice and fate while the tragedy takes on an quasi-Aristotelian alignment, but with a predominantly modern twist as the black and privileged Hamlet's choices are all defined by his addiction to cocaine. This power point presentation purports therefore to examine the contextual ramifications of this reconstruction in a post-modern context as a means to uncover fresh insight from the performance text and examine how the social gaze shifts in a post-modern, post-colonial context.

The Arts: Encoding and Decoding

Hamlet Deconstructed advocates social justice through commentary and codes. The work combines: Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1967); Heiner Müller's *HamletMachine* (2001) - an interpretation by Dennis Redmond of *Die Hamletmaschine*, 1977; Margaret Atwood's "Gertrude Talks Back" (1994: 16-19); and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The re-splicing of four texts, all dependent on familiarity with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, provides a fresh context for all four texts. Directing this unpublished manuscript allowed the director to extend contemporary codes signified in the signs; symbols and associations alluded to in the audio-visual spectacle advocated in the directions. These audio visual codes include the textual, vocal, physical or kinesthetic interpretations of the performances. "Codes, devices and punning allusions were everywhere – in street songs and ballads, conversation, poems, plays, woodcuts, portraits, jewellery, costumes. Entire buildings were constructed in riddles" (Asquith, 2005:21). The recognition of these coded inferences pervades many Shakespearean texts. Directly after the 2008 South African Polokwane "*exhilarating and brutal: ... practice of democracy ... a regicide*" (authorial italics), Gevisser, Thabo Mbeki's official biographer, signals a line from Mbeki's favourite Shakespeare *Coriolanus*, analogizing the storming out of Rome and Polokwane through the Shakespearean quote: "You common cry of curs ... I banish you!" (Gevisser, 2008:1). At the commencement of 2009, in directing the first production of *The Tragedy of Coriolanus* ever staged in KwaZulu Natal, it was obvious that the production abounded in political codes evoked simultaneously by Shakespeare and Polokwane. Similarly, Hyla's text (2007)

reflects back on socio-political historical perspective. South African associations derived from two sources: a dichotomous socio-cultural experience of conventions and associations concerning Shakespeare as both the artist as well as the signifier of the refocusing of British colonial imperatives directed at establishing colonially aesthetic canons. Ironically the notion of Shakespeare as a 'man of the people' is carried forward in the multi-media re-engagement of *Hamlet*, where the stylized clothing and running commentary engages a contemporary gaze through screens uncovering hidden imperatives. The 2007 world premiere of Genbia Hyla's *Deconstructing Hamlet* (2007) in the Durban University of Technology Courtyard Theatre introduced a complex web of marginalized misfits or persona extraordinaire: a circus ringmaster; fascist cross dressers; prostitutes; hobos; cocaine addicts; dealers; suicide survivors; asylum escapees; Russian Roulette gunslingers and defunct artists parading their silent confusion. *Hamlet* in true Shakespearean style continues to invoke responses centred in social justice or in the political reflections of contemporary re-interpretations clearly signified in the *Hamlet Deconstructed* storyline (Hyla, unpublished manuscript, 2007).

Hamlet Deconstructed -The Story

The play starts with the funeral of *Hamlet*. The audience is the participant in the resurrection of Shakespeare's classic. By merely arriving to view the memorial ritual the audience becomes passive extensions of the action. The ringmaster (HamletMachine) whose whip controls the sequence of the action, after an "O that this too too solid flesh would melt" (Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, 1988:657) rap, tells us: he's *been* Hamlet; talked "BLABLA"; seen Western decline and the popularization of wealth (Müller 1977 as cited in Redmond's translation, 2001: 1). This sets the tone for *Hamlet* of a different sort.

Two clowns emerge playing a game of heads and tails. The odds are being thrown in a game of dice. "I'm afraid it isn't your day" declares one clown (Stoppard, 1967:10). The privileged classes in *Hamlet* retort: "I'm afraid it is" (1967: 10). Wealth covers all bets in life's game plan. The Royal Court presents a façade of lament, and grief is cushioned by the comfort of money. The insincerity implied in the rapid change of tone from lament to rejoicing, is noted by our ringmaster. The clowns bemused by fate seek an answer: What causes their discomfort? Is the unease self inflicted, a choice, or a mere rolling of the dice? Is it merely a consequence of repeated historical cycles that ignore any forward movement implied via a horizontal timeline? Is it divine intervention? The ringmaster interrupts suggesting "putrefaction" (Müller 1977 as cited in Redmond's translation, 2001: 1).

In response the clowns note the imbalance in the laws of social probability. Laertes echoes the fine layers of distinction even within single class strata. He warns Ophelia to be wary of Hamlet's intentions since a Prince may toy with the affections of a lady without repercussion. Polonius continues the warning. Simultaneously a guard dealing cocaine sells Hamlet his next fix as if justifying the warning.

Horatio arrives to commiserate with Hamlet, and the ringmaster playfully interjects, second guessing the female Horatio's real agenda: To divorce Hamlet from his affections for Ophelia. Polonius plots to secure Ophelia's future and the ringmaster notes the empty sky, thus foreshadowing Hamlet's ending, his disgust with Polonius' double standards and Ophelia's betrayal.

The Rosencrantz and Guildenstern clowns from the *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* script, recall being sent for, but the ringmaster warns they'll "be too late for [their] ...

paycheck”, or a “part in [this] my tragedy” implying individual self-preoccupation’s precedence over communal working class pathos (Müller 1977 as cited in Redmond’s translation, 2001: 2). The players arrive and account their worth, confirming the clowns’ suspicions that chance decides, and simultaneously the *HamletMachine* manuscript’s conclusion that money attributes significance and worth.

Claudius and the court arrive to welcome Shakespeare’s duplicate Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who only appear in the sections of the Shakespearean play. Their shadow characters from *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* exist like dead shades echoing the living, portrayed as clowns, surviving rather than living in the pompous and unsuspecting world of the young university ‘wits’, derived from the ‘black diamond’ or ‘nouveau riche’ echelons. As they exit, their dead counterparts, the clowns, who inhabit the coffins of the underworld, interrogate the actors further, ironically about how to remain ‘in character’, and the coin flips surprisingly to tails. One set of actors traverse Shakespeare and Stoppard’s worlds, and in true actor performance mode cross from one play script to the other in the new deconstruction, appearing as if assigned both plays scripts to learn. The ringmaster, drunk with power, intrudes and mocks the turn of luck, while a bride symbolizing Gertrude’s past and future hovers. The shadow in bridal gown, suicidal bandages and holding a telephone receiver continues her repeatedly mimed phone conversation, as Atwood’s monologue waits pregnant for the final moment in the play when it may be delivered (Atwood, 1994:16-19).

At each turn Müller’s chief protagonist cracks the whip, controls the cuts, and shifts the direction, while the overriding plots remain unchanged. Polonius claims Ophelia as the reason for Hamlet’s irrationality. The clowns reaffirm facts as they know them, and as they try to escape the confusion, they conclude it’s all a game. The whip lashes out and Polonius plots with Claudius and Gertrude to use Ophelia as bait. The ringmaster notes the betrayal of Hamlet, by all the women in his life, and a new game of questions transpires between the clowns. The game is one of semantics and the ringmaster mocks our attempts to protract ‘the final moment’

The clowns await the reappearance of Hamlet. He enters teasing Polonius and suspiciously welcoming Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Polonius re-enters announcing the arrival of the players at court. The ringmaster acknowledges the anger Hamlet feels towards his mother. Hamlet admits his sanity to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the dead clowns, from *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, who are listening in, predict a “[d]ouble bluff!” as they settle in to watch the actor’s rehearsal (Stoppard, 1967:45). The ringmaster, bored and distracted, withdraws (to the chagrin of the clowns, who feel tricked into believing someone is watching). They ask advice of the actors – so accustomed to being watched – but actually focus on the mime artist, who says little and learns juggling tricks for a livelihood in order to survive. All the while a silent ballet dancer in a glittering short black ‘swan lake’ tutu traverses the background in a limping dance suggesting ignorance of the form and appearing much like a child wanting to assume the grace of a trained ballet dancer. Occasionally she/he tries on a clown’s shoe and appears confused by the inappropriateness of the design. The racially cast black ballet dancer is additionally in ‘black face’ covered with blood red geometric designs.

The ringmaster observes the monumental impact of the epoch and the tragic flaws of the human protagonists shaping the historical settings. History acknowledges repetitive cycles. With declarations of ideological hope, merely erasing and eradicating that of their

predecessors. The ringmaster HamletMachine is flanked in this work by two sets of Ophelia: the wild insanity of one set of twins in asylum smocks is juxtaposed against the seductive twin whores in corsets and suspenders who raise the character of Hamlet from his coffin at the beginning of the play. Perhaps this signals the prostitution of all values? Shakespeare's Ophelia pauses as the bait is set up. The ringmaster notes that uprising follows the toppled monument. For every action there is reaction.

A suspicious Hamlet questions the meaning of life 'to act or not to act', after which he evades Ophelia's trap. Claudius exits astutely acknowledging the revolutionary ploy: "[m]adness in great ones must not unwatchèd go" (Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, 1988:671 [Act 3, sc. 1, l 190]). The whip commands the clowns, who arise to discuss their mortality and the horror of their unrewarding eternity. As the coin drops the ringmaster describes the rebellion and the actors begin the preliminary entertainment. The 'play within the play' follows, inviting the deposition of King Claudius. Claudius calls for lights and withdraws. Hamlet proceeds to his mother's chamber, where he inadvertently murders Polonius. Claudius decides to ship Hamlet to England. The ringmaster alludes to the internal death that indifference breeds. The clowns' consumed with their own indecision which forces them to wait miss all the connecting dots and even miss seeing Hamlet crossing the stage with Polonius' dead body. Their counterparts Rosencrantz and Guildenstern from *Hamlet* interrogate Hamlet in order to find the body, and the ringmaster ascribes the mental scaring this murder brings.

Ophelia, rejected before the court and unable to face Hamlet's seeming inability to accept responsibility for his actions, appears insane while the clowns bemoan their confusion. Laertes bursts in, demanding justice from Claudius after learning of his sister's death, and exits restrained for the intermission.

Act II begins with Ophelia's funeral song. Simultaneously *The HamletMachine* Ophelias describe their repeated plight in history and their status as sacrificial victims. The clowns awake with the sudden realization that they're dead. There's a hint, the clowns accepted a bribe. The gravediggers' converse with one another and the ringmaster decries the lies and manipulation. Hamlet confronts Laertes. The ringleader declares "A kingdom for a murderer" and the actors retreat as if in response to dictatorship and absolute powers consequent muzzling of the arts (Müller 1977 as cited in Redmond's translation, 2001: 6). The clowns in this kingdom face a "dead end" (Stoppard, 1967:91). The ringleader describes the prisons dictated by privilege, as the clowns open the letter declaring their demise and retreat to their coffin boxes in order for the Russian roulette to occur uninterrupted.

The ringleader determines the need "to overthrow all existing conditions" (Müller 1977 as cited in Redmond's translation, 2001: 7). *The HamletMachine* Ophelias, featured as the wombs of the world, turn into butchers, and as the final killings in *Hamlet* occur, they move into central position, signaling the cycle and impact of 'blood for blood'. Laertes, Hamlet, Gertrude, Claudius, and in this work Horatio, are all now dead. The unfertile Gertrude Bride appearing throughout the play alongside the Hamletmachine cast begins the "Gertrude Talks Back" telephone conversation with the dead. The inability to accept responsibility is broken too late for recovery. "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like a god – the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals! And yet to me what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me - ..." (Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, 1988:667 [Act 2 Scene 2: 305 –

310])). This is followed by a blackout. In this production destiny is not merely the universe seeking a balance, but the unknown, the dark underbelly, the grotesque.

Textual Comparisons

Mounting new works supposes the text as blueprint. In production the codes are invested in both the written and performance text. In this new work the text is compiled from four texts remixed into one single text. The textual impact derives from: 1. the acknowledgment of the reinterpretation of the original four texts; 2. Meeting the audience's expectations and the new angle dictated in the remix; and 3. the performance text comprised of the audio-visual text, both performance and design texts. The four texts woven together in this postmodern production are: Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*; Heiner Müller's *HamletMachine* (Müller 1977 as cited in Redmond's translation, 2001; Margaret Atwood's "*Gertrude Talks Back*"; and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. These are further fractured by the codes invested in the remix of these four branches signifying the shift from the colonial to the postcolonial gaze in South Africa.

Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* questions at what point choice intersects with destiny? The characters appear unaware that they have a choice. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are plebeians who never fully acknowledge the consequences of their choices. Terry Neinhuis, associate professor of English at Western Carolina University postulates that Stoppard's "themes of uncertainty and confusion [in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*] make his play appealing to twentieth century audiences who easily identify with his characters' doubts and fears", particularly as Hamlet and his noble origins are relegated to the background (Neinhuis, 2006: 1). Their clowning antics appear not to afford Aristotelian dignity. There is no real: 'Hubris', 'Harmartia', 'Peripeteia', 'Anagnorisis'. The work, full of procrastination, existentially portrays confused characters travelling inexorably to their doom. A reference familiar to 20th Century Audiences particularly since the concept was well explored in Samuel Beckett's 'tragicomedy in two acts': *Waiting for Godot*.

Atwood's *Gertrude Talks Back* asks if we are aware of, excused from or above the consequences of our choices? The work advances a contemporary gaze since in this work Gertrude nonchalantly admits to murdering Hamlet Senior. This ultimately leads to a number of deaths. Does gender becomes the determinant in her choice, one that fulfills many characters' destinies? Does her socialite status automatically infer callousness, thoughtlessness and doom? Pilar Cuder Dominguez (Universidad de Huelva) holds that Margaret Atwood's monologue challenges past (character) interpretations - including: the wantonness implied by the Oedipal complex and "female submissiveness to [the] male principle[s]" reflected in both Hamlet and Claudius (Dominguez, 2003: 1).

In *Hamlet Deconstructed* Gertrude is pictured in her contemporary context as dysfunctional – a bride that is attached to a telephone receiver which allows her finally to communicate, with the cord attached to a bandaged wrist suggestive of her, (matriarchal), suicidal past. Further, she represents a woman juggling a multiplicity of roles. Contemporary 'Gertrude' is simultaneously: mother; bride; adulteress; socialite. Atwood attempts a reinterpretation but how far have women come?

Müller's *The HamletMachine* queries the consequences and just desserts imposed by birthright which is factored in as the determinant of destiny. The deconstructed character of our Hamletmachine confronts us with a military cross-dresser in a clown's wig, Hitler

moustache, false eyelashes and whip - surrounded by vamps, loonies, a dysfunctional ballerina, and a suicidal bride.

Laurence Wright in reviewing a production of *The HamletMachine* at Rhodes University Theatre on 28 September 2007 acknowledges Heiner Müller's "... despairing take on the collapse of western civilization ... where intellectuals felt trapped between the total failure of '... socialism' – that ideological mirage - ... and the horrors of emerging bandit capitalism" (Wright, 2008: 66)

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* associates destiny with tragedy, since we all finally die. The original content sets up the same three central premises as in *Hamlet Deconstructed* therefore the playwright's intentions have been retained even though the context has shifted: The play is still within the play; The Oedipal Complex remains suggested; Hamlet's inability to act continues.

Contextual Concepts

The change in context goes beyond assumptions: towards common contemporary associations. In *Hamlet Deconstructed* characters are cloned. There are five Ophelias: four appearing in *The HamletMachine* and one in *Hamlet*. In certain cases one set of characters suffices and traverses two texts. In this instance 'the play within the play': the actors in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* feature in the play and 'the play within the play'. In *Hamlet Deconstructed*, the same cast of actors appears in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* as well as in the *Hamlet* sections, travelling seamlessly from one play into another in this new work. Conversely the lead characters, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are duplicated. In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* they are portrayed as clowns of the underworld while they appear as Hamlet's university fellows in *Hamlet*. In *Hamlet Deconstructed* the two sets of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are distinctive; perhaps even mirror images of the real and the veneer. The supporting characters of *Hamlet*'s Rosencrantz and Guildenstern suggest the duality of mind and body; life and death. These potential confidantes are active if ultimately impotent, unable to shift Hamlet's course.

In the 'Oedipal Complex' Sigmund Freud argued Hamlet is portrayed in "sudden outbursts of rage, ... completely unscrupulous ... [unable to exact revenge due to] ... the repressed desires of his own childhood" and that his "sexual aversion" in respect of Ophelia is consistent with Hamlet's being an "hysterical" subject (Dukore, 1974: 830). In *Hamlet Deconstructed* Hamlet is driven by his cocaine addiction and its consequences. Finally 'the inability to act' remains intact. Goethe maintained Hamlet's hesitancy derives from "active energy ... paralysed by excessive intellectual activity" (Dukore, 1974: 830). One wonders what conclusion Goethe would draw in *Hamlet Deconstructed*. *HamletMachine* holding the whip offering notions on exactly who controls the traffic! Ordinary citizens dare not cross international airport lounges with liquid in excess of 100 ml. The inability to act remains. Tons of illicit contraband cross borders with frequency, and addicts respond to the controlling whip.

Contemporary reconfiguration in the deconstruction determines that *Hamlet Deconstructed* may be termed a postmodern production as it deconstructs grand narratives and reframes the context through "fragmentation and multiplicity" (Klages, 2006: 1-5). The title signifies the taking apart of texts but the new work as textual signifier, suggests the reconstruction of context. The splicing and re-mixing alters the focus and the work becomes defined as much by the inclusion as the exclusion of dialogue. James E Faulconer in his paper

Deconstruction (revised 15 June 1998) attributes Jacques Derrida's 60's philosophy taken from Martin Heidegger's lecture course published under *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* - to a methodological 3 step approach: reduction; construction; destruction (Faulconer, 1998: 1). Barbara Johnson in her book *The Critical Difference* (1981) disavows synonyms such as destruction and disassembly in favour of "analysis ... [meaning] 'to undo'" (Johnson, 1981: 5). Johnson holds that "[i]f anything is destroyed ... it is ... the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another". (Johnson, 1981:5)

This supports the reconstruction theory. *Hamlet* as the dominant play becomes reflected in a new way by shifting the 'gaze'. According to Johnson, "[a] deconstructive reading ... analyses the specificity of a text's critical difference from itself." (Johnson, 1981:5) Therefore the paradigm of *Hamlet* is refocused in *Hamlet Deconstructed* to examine choice and fate and the tragedy takes on a quasi-Aristotelian alignment with a predominantly modern twist as Hamlet's choices are all defined by his addiction to cocaine, his class and his humanity since everyone in the play is really awaiting the 'final curtain'. James S Moy in *Marginal Sights: Staging the Chinese in America* describes how clowning and buffoonery is used to inscribe cultural stereotyping (Moy, 1993:130).

Hamlet Deconstructed may be perceived to invoke a number of encoded uncertainties. It may:

1. Ask if the plebian ranks are disenfranchised?
2. Allude to actors as being portrayed as inconsequential clowns?
3. Reinforce that the emulation of traditionally western art forms prove artistically defunct if the inscribed meaning is divorced from the context?
4. Insinuate Gender and race are inter-changeable, but culture reinterprets their perception?
5. Propose meaning is transferred in the reframing of a significant text as the paradigm shift alters the 'gaze'?
6. Conclude systems of alternative social ideologies dictate the movement of change?
7. Find humanity only responds to force?
8. Advocate that any assumption is governed by the presiding contextual notions against which it is juxtaposed. Therefore Shakespeare is iconic in South African and perhaps world theatre?
9. Imply *Hamlet's* Euro-centric roots are dominated here by the position of 'other' implied in the cultural identity 'South African' or the Marxist positioning of Müller's work?
10. Assert the 'cartoon', the 'norm', the 'circus', the 'cultural enclaves', all babble on in contrast to the silent limping dysfunctional artist whose blackness is identified by the painted identity that is further adorned with red and bloody geometrical shapes. These shapes, suggestive of a child's co-ordination toy in which blocks are crammed into matching apertures, inscribe the symbolic stamping, branding, tattooing of thought patterns or linguistically shaped meanings reflecting our colonial history?

Audio-Visual Associative Assumptions

Associative Reinterpretation, although central to the discussion, is reliant on the expectation and the reception of *Hamlet*. In *Hamlet Deconstructed*: The character Hamlet is raised from the colonial past by *Hamletmachine* in a ritual regeneration of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* at the beginning of the production. One play conjures the other. The stage is littered with coffins. *Hamletmachine* a contemporary criticism of *Hamlet* allows and disallows the action.

Literally, plays occur within the play: so interwoven texts affect the movement of each work. The entrances and exits of the *Hamlet* characters (cushioned by wealth and social status) interrupt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, clowns who retreat into their boxes where they remain the unseen and unheard marionettes, rather than central protagonists in another work. The contemporary performance gaze moulds the work's signature. The circus of images is complete with Hamletmachine, the character as the ringmaster. Just as the ringmaster cracks his whip for shifting scenes so too he controls the transitional lighting states.

In *Hamlet Deconstructed* the mechanization implied, translated well into a symbolic 'traffic light' system of subconscious codes messaged through the blue, red, (the combination resulting in mauves), and ambers imposed. This subtly signified the regulation of the viewer and society through the subliminal systems encoded. Occasional flashes of yellow were thrown in to maintain a non-realistic atmosphere lending further dimensions to the eclectic nature of this post-modern work.

The pre-occupation with the regulation implied in the 'colonial gaze' is equally reflected through sound. The classic melody and dialogue prevail. *Hamlet Deconstructed* merges Hamlet's 1st soliloquy, performed as rap, with the classical "O Fortuna" from *Carmina Burana*. The rap struggles to free itself of the preconditioned comfort implied in the rhyming codes of the iambic pentameter. The rap escapes in moments of repetition rather than through contemporary dialogue. Has thought been preconditioned by past artistic canons? Is thought-patterning a response to the regulation implied in 'us and them' colonial identification, as well as through the resultant re-interpretation? Are we as the products of a colonial history: breaking the chains; shifting the weight; or merely changing locks? Is 'revolutionary movement' merely a response to constricting boundaries, and thereby reactionary rather than revolutionary in its form or mode?

The reinterpretation ironically extends to wrap around contemporary gender and transvestite alienisms. The focus begs us to examine which is the more progressive age. In the new work the ringmaster like a samurai warrior wears both trousers and full skirt in order to assume an androgynous military dictator shape. The transvestite actors remain in the theatrical context. Horatio and the grave-diggers are depicted as transvestites or women. Horatio is portrayed as a confidant in love with Hamlet and unable to face life without him. He or she shoots herself. Further traditional elements as in the case of the duel reinterpret through the game of a spinning revolver barrel in the 'Russian Roulette' scenes. The gun assumes a direct suicidal association. There is no doubt here as to the final outcome. The production's director's note postulated: "If 'all the world's a stage' and 'all the men and women' merely 'players', then: what's the script and who's the playwright? How many interpretations have already been mounted in our history or are possible in the future? Who is the current director and who is the audience? Is the genre, tragedy since we all die in the end? Are we the characters (and therefore without choice) or the actors whose choice is limited by time, space, controlling features and framework?" (Lutge, 2007: Director's Programme Note). Further a dysfunctional ballerina representing the state of art, hobbles about the set, without seeming to have any sense of direction. The codes are endless.

The stage apron and hidden compartments under the high upstage rostra conceal television screens that run an alternative script. These visual bites feature either symbolic or missing action texts: Ophelia running from Hamlet, Hamlet chasing shadow images of

himself down a wide road, Gertrude and Claudius draped in a black sheet making love on the granite grave of Hamlet's father, the dysfunctional artist conducting a silent fast forward interview with the group of mime artists, etc. Theatre and screen are read iconically (direct representations), indexically (by association), and symbolically (by convention). The audience's desire to cut between the media, theatre and screen, stimulated by the eclectic nature of the work, juxtapositions the real and unreal, that which we confront and that which we escape from. Further, media's semiotic nature accesses a secondary reality, as well as the possible transfer of corporate messaging and hegemonic conditioning.

The next question arises: Are we preconditioned to respond to the authenticity of screen as perceived in reality shows, news footage, etc. without questioning selectivity? Screen invades our living spaces with sponsors' messages and melodramatic sagas drawn out from one suspenseful cliff-hanger to the next. In his chapter "Points of Contact" from *Between Anthropological and Theatrical Thought*, Richard Schechner acknowledges: "When the consumer audience comes in, the 'spiritual power' departs" (Schechner, 1985:5). Old canons of theatre literature purport to vibrate authentic critical voices that remain outside the commercially viable. Theatre's elitist nature has been accused of - and feared for - providing an under-current of intellectual revolutionary challenge, communicated to the converted (particularly apparent in 'Protest Theatre'). Conversely the argument holds that Theatre allows for artistic integrity - outside corporate dictates and company endorsement - to advance a theatrically appealing aesthetic, consequently producing dwindling audiences in search of entertainment.

Mirroring The Gaze

The broader textual gaze in *Hamlet Deconstructed* insinuates that: Main characters begin to fill new roles. Hamlet's spontaneous and seemingly irrational responses attributed to his addiction to cocaine cause not just Hamlet's death but a barrage of other deaths besides his. The shadows that exist here - are the reverberating ghosts of all the productions of Shakespeare's *Hamlets*, rather than merely the shadow of Hamlet's father. The shadows are those of former canons with a new twist. Hamlet as a privileged member of the aristocracy is not concerned with broader social issues. The ringmaster's angry reproach in *The HamletMachine*, shows the disillusionment of the proletariat under corporate manipulation and the pursuit of wealth. Gertrude the socialite, becomes more than mother and whore in the final monologue, she becomes a woman with a voice and an opinion, rooted in her gender and her privilege. Conversely: The Ophelias depict women in control of speaking to the unborn. As mothers of culture and harbingers of social awareness, they realign the paradigm in the changing Diaspora: shift the understanding of the 'post-colonial gaze', thereby affecting choice and future destiny. The Rosencrantz and Guildenstern clowns are depicted, in their grass roots ignorance, as disempowered, stumbling forward, contributing nothing -insignificant in the greater scheme of things, but plodding on regardless.

As a director it was my hope that the audience would engage with the questions posed by this contemporary deconstruction of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and in so doing grapple with the choices made, the debates entered, and the balance sought by mortal existence. In decoding Hodges' 'deep structure' the art of stage direction provides a multiplicity of semiotic indicators that audience consciously and unconsciously deconstructs and reconstructs. These are integral in first publications. Terry Eagleton in *Literary Theory: An Introduction* states that in "interrogating the ruling definitions of literature", "working class writing" is an emergent movement, where:

“Community and cooperative publishing enterprises are associated projects, concerned not simply with a literature wedded to alternative social values, but with one which challenges and changes the existing social relations between writers, publishers, readers and other literary workers.” (Eagleton, 1993: 217)

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A XENOPHOBIA ART PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

A presentation including visual photographs and artworks of the xenophobia art projects in various schools in Johannesburg. It covers the mechanisms of the art workshop. I discuss the findings of the various workshops – looking at the similarities and differences. I look at how art education can be used to engage in social issues; how art can be used as an advocacy medium for marginalized people; how art can be used as a means of communication between different communities; how art can be used to contain anxiety and fear; how art can be used to find creative solutions to social problems. Finally I present the consequences of the projects.

I am the art teacher at The Ridge School in Westcliff, Johannesburg. It is a private primary boy's only school. I have facilitated the project in The Ridge School and in Salvazione School which serves the Joe Slovo Informal Settlement. I will be facilitating the project later this year in Observatory Girls Primary in Yeoville which services a community of largely Congolese refugees.

I commence the workshops by introducing myself and a grade 7 Ridge School learner and we all start to get to know each other. We discuss what it means to be a South African or a non-South African living in South Africa.

Using Marlene Dumas' work as a starting point I teach primary school learners her mental and technical modus operandi. I also talk about her role as an international contemporary artist. I use photojournalistic reference of the 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa. We do not discuss the images – it is important that the learners interact with the images in a personal way. I supply a limited range of art materials to the learners – paper, different black inks and various applicators. I encourage the learners to look at the photographs of the perpetrators, victims, police and bystanders of the violence and to put themselves in their positions and to then create an image reflecting what they think the person is feeling using Dumas' techniques. The learners learn about empathy and looking at xenophobia from different perspectives. The learners are then able to discuss their artworks with me on a one to one basis and to describe how it makes them feel.

The Ridge boy has done a presentation of the Salvazione workshop to his peers. I discuss his feelings and his peers' reactions.

Salvazione School has requested me to facilitate art workshops with their teachers in how they are able to hold the feelings of their learners using art. The Bag Factory in Fordsburg, Johannesburg has expressed an interest in funding such a long term project, but this still has to be approved.

INTRODUCTION

This is a presentation including visual photographs and artworks of a xenophobia art project which was facilitated in various schools in Johannesburg. The presentation covers

- the rationale for running the workshops;
- the mechanisms of the art workshop;
- the similarities and differences in the findings of workshops;
- and the consequences of the workshops.

I also consider:

- How art education can be used to engage in social issues;
- How art can be used as an advocacy medium for marginalized people;
- How art can be used as a means of communication between different communities;
- How art can be used to contain anxiety and fear;
- How art can be used to find creative solutions to social problems.

THE PROJECT

I facilitated xenophobia art projects with grade 7 learners at

- **The Ridge School**, Westcliff, Johannesburg in May 2008.
- **Salvazione Christian School**, in Crosby, Johannesburg, in June 2009; and
- **Observatory Girls Primary School** in Yeoville, Johannesburg, in November 2009.

The projects took place in large open rooms, devoid of furniture. The floor was covered with large sheets of painters' plastic.

The materials supplied were:

- large white adhesive name tags;
- kokis;
- pencil crayons;
- crayons;
- oil pastels;
- Sheets of white A3 paper;
- selection of various types of black ink;
- varied selection of brushes and applicators;
- variety of wooden sticks;
- large containers of water.

We started the projects by making our nametags. Our nametags were drawings of our names that expressed something about ourselves. We introduced ourselves to the group and stated where we came from. I summarized that we all came from different places but that we were all at the same school in Johannesburg, South Africa.

RATIONALE FOR A XENOPHOBIA ART PROJECT

Very often children feel like foreigners within their own families. They feel misunderstood, marginalized and treated unfairly, like the whole system does not only not support them, it is against them. I thought that an art project about xenophobia would resonate with a universal and common childhood lament.

I chose to discuss Marlene Dumas's work as part of the xenophobia art project for the following reasons:

- She is an internationally renowned contemporary artist. In other words she has something relevant to say to and about the world.
- She was born in South Africa and now lives in the Netherlands.
- She had recently held her first solo exhibition in South Africa, called **MARLENE DUMAS: Intimate Relations**, at the Standard Bank Gallery in Johannesburg.
- The co-curator, Emma Bedford of *MARLENE DUMAS: Intimate Relations* said:
"Dumas's work deals with the cycle of life, and with issues of gender, sexuality, pleasure and pain, amongst others. While intellectual, ethical and moral questions stimulate and absorb her, it is her awareness of how these are experienced in and through the body that is central to her work. Through her paintings and texts, Dumas reflects on, and takes pleasure in, all aspects of life from birth through to death. She rarely shies away from uncomfortable truths. Images appropriated from diverse sources, including the media, reflect

the world back at the viewer. To the extent that she continues to show the world to itself, she may be considered a significant public intellectual in that, through her chosen medium of drawing and painting, she articulates engaging responses to some of the most pressing issues of the day.”

- Mary Corrigan reviewed the exhibition and wrote:
“Dumas’ art suggests that admiring or consuming ‘the other’ is burdened by emotional and social baggage, which gnaws at the viewer, creating tension and a mood of discomfort that cannot be casually forgotten.”

“Much of Dumas’ art features women who are the willing and unwilling prey of the viewers’ penetrative stare. In *Misinterpreted* (1988) a woman lifts her skirt back to reveal a triangle of her white knickers. One’s gaze is automatically drawn to this intimate part that she is revealing – isn’t she offering it to one? However, as one moves one’s gaze up the pictorial plane, one notices that Dumas’ subject is watching, creating a vicious cycle in which the watched is watching the watcher, thereby engendering a role reversal in which the viewer becomes the subject. It’s an ambiguous relationship, a stalemate in which neither party is able to get the upper hand.”

“This brand of ambiguity is a defining characteristic of Dumas’ art and one can’t help feeling that it is driven by more than stereotypical observations about gender. As the title of the exhibition implies, Dumas is interested in the ambiguous relationship between the self and the other and the constant level of negotiation between the private and the public.”

“It initially came to my attention while watching a documentary on Dumas at the exhibition in which she articulates the idea that reality is not her source; that is was cinematic renditions of reality that initially inspired her. That she continues to work from Polaroids and images from popular culture further suggests that it is a mediation of reality that interests her.”

“Painting is always assumed to be the ‘mediated’ version of reality, but Dumas employs it rather as a medium to mediate other mediated realities. So it is no longer the source of reality that is of significance but rather how our relationship to ‘the source’ is obfuscated and warped through various sets of filters engineered to maintain the status quo or to challenge the norm as Dumas attempts.”

- In the review of *Intimate Relations* by Alex Dodd in the Business Day supplement, December 2007:
“You can make wonderful things out of ignorance, but when you become aware of it, you cannot go back on your awareness. Somehow you intuitively seem to react to what you know.”

“If a painting works it has to work on one’s senses.”

- In “*Marlene Dumas – the artist and her work*” by Emile Maurice in ArtTalk published by the MTN SA Foundation:
“Dumas is described by Patricia Ellis of the Saatchi Gallery in London as ‘championing the under-represented classes.’ ‘Her characters,’ she

continues, 'occupy unholy ground where the viewer's individual morality and adherence to ideological convention are questioned.' This is the value and strength of her work. In raising provocative questions about beauty, gender, identity, oppression, sexuality and eroticism, and ethnic violence, she obliges us to think about our own platforms and understandings."

- Dumas's modus operandi makes her an obvious means to cause a shift in perceptions. It therefore made sense to me to enable the children to create images about xenophobia using her methodology.

XENOPHOBIA

For xenophobia to exist there has to be an 'us and them'. And as soon as this divide exists it is difficult for people to see beyond their prejudices. How does one get people to see another's point of view? By getting them to empathize. But this is nigh impossible in the face of prejudice. How do you get someone to walk a thousand miles in another man's shoes (American Indian proverb)? How do you enable someone to step out of their comfort zone and to try and understand the 'other's' point of view. Who would want to do that? But this is the ONLY way to overcome all cases of prejudice and human rights abuses.

But the power of art came to the rescue.

The people in Dumas's collections of themed paintings, look the same at a glance.

The Next Generation, 1994-5;

Blindfolded, 2002;

Young Men, 2002-5

And what is more, there are many of 'them' and only one of 'me' the viewer. I am immediately excluded from this group. They are not 'us' they are 'the other'. But on closer scrutiny they are individuals with distinctive features and personalities. They all differ from each other. And yes, they might be part of 'us'. How did this mind shift take place? No words were used; no directives issued, no academic enquiries took place. It happened silently, subconsciously and suddenly - whilst we were looking at the paintings. It did not even matter what the subject matter was.

Could it be that by showing people photographs of ALL the people affected by xenophobia – a mind shift could take place? We know the answer. We have all seen the photographs in the media. No mind shifts took place, still xenophobia exists.

But the physicality of art materials also causes things to happen in people.

PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

I asked the children to look at the various press photographs of people affected by the xenophobic violence: South African citizens, foreigners/amakwerekwere, policemen, bystanders, children, old people, men, women, different races. The photographs were taken by press photographers and appeared in various local newspapers during the xenophobic attacks in 2008. The images were already in the public domain – we had all seen them, if not first hand, then in the media. We could not plead ignorance. We did not discuss the photographs; it was important that every child interacted with the images in his/her personal way with his/her prejudices and baggage.

I encouraged the children to put themselves in the shoes of the subject of the photograph and to try and imagine what feelings the subject might be experiencing. I asked them to paint the feelings using the materials provided; that the ink, water and brushstrokes should say it all. And that they were not to illustrate the feeling. Many of the children, at all 3 schools, said that they found it a strange request and that it was 'not really art'. That it required no skill. And that they were not learning anything.

The children were able to discuss their feelings about their paintings in general and xenophobia in particular with myself or one of the facilitators in a private and confidential manner during the course of the workshop. We took extensive notes of our discussions.

THE RIDGE SCHOOL



I am the art teacher at The Ridge School. It is an ISASA school. It is a primary school. And there are only boys at the school. The majority of children come from affluent homes. Most of the boys are from South Africa, but some boys come from Europe, America, Africa and Asia.

Initially the boys could not understand how they could paint feelings. I explained that the art materials could be used to physically emulate a feeling, rather than a diagrammatic representation of the expression of a feeling. Their first art works were controlled and concrete. But as they put their own preconceptions aside and thought more about the people in the photographs, their art works became more expressive. The results were magnificent. The boys created over one hundred paintings of feelings. It was overwhelming. The boys had been able to stand in the shoes of the people in the photographs and feel empathy for them. They gained insights that they did not have from just looking and listening to news reports. When the paintings were exhibited at The Ridge's annual art exhibition, it was as if all the people in the photos affected by the xenophobia were present.

SALVAZIONE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



At the time of the art project, the school was housed in a church building in Crosby. Every day the staff and pupils had to unpack and pack up the school equipment so that the Church could function in the afternoons and weekends. They moved to permanent dedicated teaching premises close by in July 2009. The school is an independent co-educational primary school that serves the Joe Slovo Informal Settlement. Most of the children come from poor families. I have facilitated other art projects with the learners of Salvatore, and am not a stranger to them. My co-facilitator was Daniel Dix a grade 7 learner from The Ridge. We worked with 30 Grade 7 learners in a cleared classroom. The workshop took place during school hours. They had all witnessed and experienced the xenophobic violence first hand in 2008. Bokomotso had witnessed two necklacings.

Most of the learners are from South Africa, but the vast majority of learners are not from Gauteng. They come from North West, Limpopo, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga. Three of the learners are not from South Africa. Peter is from Zambia, Prince is from Zimbabwe and Lulu is from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I gave them the same art materials, photographs and brief. Daniel took many photographs during the course of the project and interacted with the children constantly. Many of the learners painted and then came and explained their artworks to me. Initially they were concerned about their artistic abilities until they understood that it was their feelings that were important.

They created artworks about physical and emotional pain which they found hard to tolerate. They also created artworks of horrific violence. It seemed to me that a lot of their pain was about being young and vulnerable and not knowing who could or would protect them. They were concerned for children without parents and that the police were perpetrators of much of the violence that they had witnessed.

Most of the children came from the Joe Slovo Informal Settlement which is a very poor community and where basic resources, such as food, shelter and clothing is scarce. The xenophobic violence seemed to have increased their stress levels regarding basic survival needs. The children seemed to have conflicted feelings regarding the xenophobia – they were unsure whether they wanted competition for scarce resources or not. And they seem to have felt guilt about their own xenophobic feelings.

But I think what caused the most anxiety were their feelings of helplessness, of being witnesses to such abuse and not doing anything. Many of the children felt that if such violence could happen to 'foreigners', it could happen to them next, as they are not from Gauteng. When they could no longer tolerate the pain, which made them feel anxious and helpless, they resorted to making protest posters to make them feel empowered and in control. The posters were also an attempt to make sense of the mayhem.

Although many of the South African children lived with foreigners and had foreign 'friends'; many of them referred to them as 'they' and 'them'. Only one of the South African children, Nobuhle, said that she had a foreign friend with whom she shared secrets.

Peter, from Zambia, is a tall boy and has a light brown skin. He said that he did not feel threatened by xenophobia as he had a light skin and he spoke like a South African. He painted an incredibly detailed artwork of all the different kinds of attacks that he had witnessed in 2008. The attention to detail and the pervasiveness and persistence of the attacks, made me feel that he had to put on a brave face and that he was in fact scared.

Prince, from Zimbabwe, is a smallish child for his age. He has a very dark skin. He is quiet and introverted. He said that he was very afraid and was convinced that the violence would flare up again, but he did not know when it would happen.

Lulu from the DRC is a tall, pretty girl. She has been living in South Africa for 5 years. She is outspoken but guards her words. She told me that two of her family members were killed in the xenophobic attacks last year. Their home was set alight whilst they were sleeping. She says that she is desperate to go back to the DRC, but her parents will not hear of it. She says the worst thing for her is that she can trust no one, not even her friends in her class. She said she could especially not trust Wonder as she keeps telling her to go back to the DRC. Wonder said that she is only joking. Lulu said that she does not believe her. Ironically, all Wonder's paintings were of the angst that mothers must feel about protecting their children. Lulu felt completely demoralized and that only God could solve the xenophobia problem.

Daniel said that he felt overwhelmed – he was astounded that children his age had been exposed to so much hatred and violence. It made him question his identity. He feels he is a South African but has recent ties to France, and would that qualify him as a ‘foreigner’? It also made him wonder how he would be treated in another country if he were to emigrate.

Daniel presented the workshop to his peers at The Ridge. They were not the boys who had taken part in the initial Xenophobia art project. They hardly gave him an audience. They were disinterested and could not relate to the subject matter, artists or art works at all. Which proves my point about how powerful art making can be.

OBSERVATORY GIRLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

We worked with about 60 grade 7 learners in the very large school hall. The girls were between the ages of 11 and 15. About 30% of the learners said that they were not South Africans and most of the other learners were from Gauteng. I did not verify these facts. They had all volunteered to stay on after school.

Many of the pupils at Observatory Girls Primary are children of refugees particularly from the Democratic Republic of Congo, but also from Mozambique, Malawi, Angola and Kenya. I worked as an art counselor at the school 4 years ago. The Suitcase Project runs art therapy with pupils at the school. I received permission from them to work with the children on the basis that I would collect empirical data only. My co-facilitators were Daniel Dix, Jordan Wheeler, Joseph Savegny-Terblanche, David Gundelfinger and Liam Leonard – all grade 7 learners from The Ridge.

The girls appeared to be excited about the art project, and the presence of the boys. They appeared to be relaxed and welcomed us warmly. They were talkative amongst each other and with us. They talked a lot whilst creating their images. They were very eager to talk to me about their images and waited very patiently. When the time was up, and we had not yet taken down all the stories, we agreed to return the following week to continue. When we arrived the next week some girls had decided not to come back. The girls that returned were very friendly and spoke a lot to the boys whilst they created artworks which they were able to take home. Many of the girls came to tell me their stories. They were very concerned that they should be heard.

Josepha is from the DRC and came to South Africa 7 years ago. She was one of only 2 foreign girls that came to school during the xenophobic violence as she was determined that the violence would not affect her. But she was very worried that she would get hurt. She was also confused as she did not know where she would run to - it does not matter whether you are in the Congo or South Africa – people are being chased away. She felt that the only thing that can help is for the government to put a stop to the intolerance.

She was taken aback by the ‘could not care less’ attitude of particularly the hospital staff who were meant to care for people who were hurt and other people not directly involved in the xenophobic violence. The hospital staff sent people home to just sit and wait instead of treating them.

Sakhile told me that a friend of hers was killed in the xenophobic violence, and she feels terrible. She is from Zimbabwe.

Megan is South African. Her artwork is of a man who is heartbroken and is crying alone on the pavement. He has nowhere to go and no one is helping him. She said that we don't appreciate what we have – some people have nothing. She does not like name-calling and discrimination as we have no right to destroy other people or their possessions.

Siduduzile was born in South Africa. Her father was South African but he has passed away and her mother is Zimbabwean. She really missed her father during violence as she wanted him to protect her. She was particularly worried about her mother during the xenophobic violence. She felt that black against black racism is worse than white versus black or black versus white racism as we all come from the same continent. God made us the same – how can there be discrimination?

She could not make sense of the xenophobia. People she knew swore at her during the xenophobia. She forgave them because she has to and because she cannot live with a grudge. But she still wonders if it will happen again.

She was confused that the police could not help and that they were told to go back home when they reported violence. She felt that the police were complicit by omission.

Zinhle was born in Zimbabwe. Her father is Zimbabwean and mother South African. She felt helpless during the violence, that she could do nothing. She worried about her family and wanted to protect them. But in fact it was she who wanted to be protected. I wondered as to what had happened that this young girl had taken on the responsibility for her family's safety? She felt that there was no one that she could rely on for protection.

Kitso is a South African and said that she could not put herself in the shoes of the foreigners as she would die it would hurt so much. She said that everyone was asking for help, especially the amakwerekwere, but for them there was no one they could ask.

Anne said that everyone was screaming for help, but no one stands up for foreigners. Her despair in our humanity was summarized by her parting shot: "Love them all but trust no one." I was starting to feel that we have failed our children.

Nonhlanhla is a South African and found the xenophobic violence disturbing. She cannot understand why people would want to chase away children. And what effect does this hatred have on the children in the long term.

Promise is a Malawian. She just wanted to cry because she was confused and tired from trying to make sense of the xenophobia. She was burdened with responsibility way beyond her years.

Tshepiso is a South African. She said that the xenophobic violence has kept South Africa bound to its racist apartheid past. It seems that we have learnt nothing and that the world should continue to isolate us. She thinks that only a miracle from God can save South Africa and that we need to pray constantly.

Nomthandaza is a South African. She said that South Africa is home to many foreigners and therefore they had nowhere to go. She felt overwhelmed by exhaustion and helplessness. She wished that sometimes she could be happy.

The girls wanted to talk - they were forthcoming, articulate and spoke a lot. But I was left feeling that they had told me what they thought I wanted to hear, or what was safe to say, or only what made sense to them. I was left feeling overwhelmed, confused and trying to make sense of the situation. I think they were projecting their collective feelings into me. Upon reflection I think the underlying problems are the following:

1. The girls can trust no one! So they are careful what they say, and to whom. I felt that they felt the xenophobia in the venue of the art project – we were not part of them. And in fact, who were we really? That they could not afford to admit that they were foreigners.
2. Overwhelmingly I felt that they were scared and confused, that they could not make sense of what is going on. They felt trapped and that they did not have options. They cannot go back to their countries of origin, but they do not feel safe in South Africa. And it did not matter where they came from.
3. The girls feel vulnerable and do not know how to express it. They are children but feel responsible for more than they are able to cope with. They did not know who they could rely on to protect them. They did not for a moment think that they could rely on their parents, as their parents had got them into this mess.
4. The girls are struggling in present circumstances and cannot afford to take on another stress. They were cut off from their true feelings as they are just too overwhelming.
5. I know that for a lot of these girls the xenophobic violence could have been reminiscent of the tribal violence that their families had experienced in the DRC and other countries at war in Africa. It is a case of out of the frying pan into the fire. Even though they may not have personally experienced violence in the DRC or in South Africa - they know that their lives are constantly at risk. In addition the girls may have suffered some of the following:
 - the stress of leaving your country of birth, often by means of very difficult circumstances e.g. long hazardous journeys, sexual abuse, etc;
 - the pain and guilt of leaving family members and friends in a country at war to an uncertain future;
 - the difficulties of having to make a new start in a hostile country with no resources or support;
 - the normal stresses of going to a new school, and learning in a new language;
 - the daily struggle for basic resources such as accommodation, schooling, clothes and food.

These girls are suffering from numerous serious stressors. One of the first symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder is a shutting down and avoiding the pain. We cannot allow the normal flight or fright

response to a stressful situation, as our systems are overloaded and we will have a breakdown. These girls are all at risk.

Joseph was fascinated by the workshop process. He loved talking to the girls about their artworks and learning something about them and their feelings through this mediation. It opened a whole new world to him, which entranced him. He has subsequently contacted me to find out whether he can continue to co-facilitate the xenophobia project.

Jordan found the workshop boring and switched off. He created his own artwork of his inner world, a fence around himself. He was completely overwhelmed by the girls' life experiences and could not bear to hear their stories. He shut it all out. However, some time after the workshops, and after some debriefing and processing, he was able to talk about what amazing process it was.

CONCLUSION

I know this project is not yet over. I will continue to do xenophobia projects with The Ridge School grade 7 learners every year. As South Africans we cannot afford to forget our past in case we repeat the same wrongs.

A colleague and I are presenting monthly art workshops to the teachers of Salvazione School. The aim of the project is to teach the teachers:

- art skills;
- art projects which they can do with their learners;
- how they can use art to diagnose emotional problems;
- how they can use art to hold children's emotional problems. That they can create a safe space for children to express their feelings without fear of judgment or reprisal;
- but most importantly a space for the teachers where they can feel held and understood. That they feel cared for.

The Bag Factory in Fordsburg, Johannesburg has expressed an interest in funding such a long term project, but this proposal has still to be approved.

With regards to the girls at Observatory Girls Primary, I know that they are able to receive counseling if they need it at the school. The school also works closely with organizations that work with refugees – places of safety; and organizations that can offer financial, food and accommodation support. I know that they are not adequate or enough, but the children are in a safe and caring environment.

But I also know that the girls felt heard. That people came especially and took a lot of time and effort to hear their traumatic stories. I also know that a lot of their anxiety and fear is held within their art works – they do not have to hold onto everything. Yes I am yet another adult in their world that may not be doing anything – but I stood beside them for just long enough to listen and feel.

I have subsequently found out that a school for Congolese children only has been started on the premises of Sacred Heart School in Observatory which operates in the afternoons. I would like to take the project there and see what happens.

And the Ridge boys who helped to facilitate? It has been a life changing experience for them. They have learnt so called soft skills way beyond their years. They will go on to become insightful, empathic citizens who will make a difference in the world.

FrontLines: Cartographies in/of/as action

ABSTRACT

FrontLines was the product of the first ever theatrical collaboration between the Drama and Performance Studies programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) and the Drama Studies programme at the Durban University of Technology. This paper examines the process by which the performance was created, and locates the production within a practice-as-research paradigm, interrogating a number of issues arising out of the work.

The core thematic concern of the production was dramatically to explore notions of war and conflict, and in particular, the human cost of such conflict, in a wide range of global and local contexts. Using the conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries as a structural frame, the production sought to create an imagistic narrative, employing text, dance, music and visuals to engender an evocative and critically engaging work of theatre.

The paper interrogates the performance product in terms of its structure and content. The material used for the project is derived from real testimony of combatants, civilians and eyewitnesses, interspersed with published and original poetry and music. The style of the work resonates within the postmodern ethos, drawing on physical theatre styles (Fleishman, 1996), discourses from the theatre of images (Shevtsova, 2007; Bradby & Williams, 1988), Brecht's Epic theatre methodologies (Willett, 1978, 1984) and theories on directorial praxis (Bogart, 1983; Stanislavski, in Merlin, 2007). The work utilizes a technique of layering through juxtaposition, collage, and fragmentation in framing its content, and to negotiate the relationship between theatre and testimony. Thus, the paper explores the metaphorical journey that occurs in transferring life and history into the written/performative text, and subsequently into translated stage action. The core premise is to explore the potential inherent in the act of processing history through the present frame, in order to understand the notion of our shared humanity, in spite of the divisions and differences that are so evident within our social milieu and which drive conflict.

The paper finally explores the pedagogical aspects of the process, as both stimulus for the teaching and learning of contemporary and historical material, and, more specifically, as an experiment in bringing together students from different learning institutions with different working methodologies and practices. The different pedagogical approaches and the varied emphases of their learning programmes, impact on how students approach both cognitive and performative tasks, and the paper attempts to draw some broader conclusions regarding the learning process for both students and lecturers involved in the project.

INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to examine the production of *FrontLines* from a number of viewpoints, including the nature of the project, the methodology employed in the making of the work, and the pedagogical implications derived from, and contained in, the process¹.

A useful place to begin the exploration is with the following:

I don't know. I don't know if it was worth it. Because you know, when I was in the concentration camp, and even after, I said to myself, "You know, after the war, people will learn. They will know. They will – they will see. We will learn." But did we really learn anything? I don't know. I don't know if we learned anything. Or if we ever will - I don't know. (In Greene & Kumar (Eds.), 2000: 250)

These are the words of a Holocaust survivor known as Helen K and they encapsulate in many ways the purpose behind the *FrontLines* project. The notion of learning is critical and, in particular, the potential – and necessity – to learn from the narratives of history in order to generate the desire for meaningful change in the present context. This idea contains the crux of the authorial/directorial focus for the production of *FrontLines*. The intention of the piece is to involve both performers and audience in an experience which encourages and stimulates an engagement with the world as a whole, and with their position in it, in order to generate an awareness of the socio-political dialectics that underpin our world view.

The first *FrontLines* evolution took place over a four week period in August-September 2009, with the second phase of the process taking place during February and March 2010. *FrontLines* is the product of the first ever theatrical collaboration between the Drama and Performance Studies programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) and the Drama Studies programme at the Durban University of Technology. This paper seeks to locate the production within a practice-as-research paradigm through exploring a number of threads of analysis. Firstly, we will describe the generation of the project in terms of its subject matter and the connections between historical documentary material and performance modes. Secondly, we will explain, analyze and contextualize the working methodology engaged in developing the project. Thirdly, we will discuss the pedagogical underpinnings for the project in relation to the collaboration between the two universities involved, and interrogate some of the results of the process.²

In examining the evolution of the *FrontLines* project, we make use of Jack Whitehead and Jean McNiff's methodologies of self-study, presenting as they do an approach to the process of reflection upon one's own practice:

The idea of self reflection is central. In traditional forms of research – empirical research – researchers do research on other people. In action

¹ Please note that we have written elsewhere about the *FrontLines* project in an unpublished paper entitled *Photography, Archaeology and Representation: Chronicles of conflict, and the architecture of action*, and some of the ideas expressed here are also explored in that paper.

² For the conference presentation of this paper, we were accompanied by two cast members from the production Pieter de Beer and Nhlakanipho Manqele; they performed some sections from the text and also offered their comments and insights on the production process. While it is not possible to include these here, we do acknowledge their contribution and have included some of the pieces they spoke in the effort to capture that aspect of the work.

research, researchers do research on themselves. Empirical researchers enquire into other people's lives. Action researchers enquire into their own. Action research is an enquiry conducted by the self into the self. (McNiff, 2002: 6)

Thus, our enquiry here is one which seeks to reflect on what we did, and why, in order to ascertain the value and/or efficacy of the project – critically and pedagogically – from our point of view.

GENERATING THE PROJECT: CREATING AN AESTHETIC

The core thematic concern of the production was dramatically to explore notions of war and conflict, and in particular, the human cost of such conflict, in a wide range of global and local contexts. At the centre of the piece is the notion of the individuality of history: the grand historical narrative contains the global socio-political chronicle of war; however, we are interested in the personal narrative that underpins the recognized record. It is an old, but apt, cliché that history is written by the victors; this is no doubt true, as any objective examination of the historical record would establish quite clearly that those who win are the ones who get to articulate their rationale and justification. The narrative and causes of the defeated are often lost in the aftermath. This, however, offers an incomplete picture in terms of our purposes; for us, the personal narratives from our material offer a palimpsest over the official historical record – effectively demonstrating the political through the personal (to appropriate the familiar phrase) – through which we can view the history in a way that engages the individual in a more profound and effective way, as well as generating multiple viewpoints. As Anne Bogart so aptly puts it

We are a culture in danger of losing our ability to remember. . . . The Theatre is a form of present memory. Our job as artists is not as glamorously independent as we might believe. Every time we address a theme we are bringing it again into the collective consciousness and developing it further into our version of the present. If we don't address these themes, they will be forgotten and swallowed up into a terrified apathy. . . . Our theatre has lost touch with the *linear* development of history. We *can* allow ourselves to fall through the cracks of time, unbalance the brain until it remembers its origin . . . theatre as present memory . . . theatre gives us the present of memory . . . present memory . . . distanced yet close. . . . We can meet in the theatre to confront ourselves with our society and ourselves and reflect upon influences. We can be accomplices in the collective act of memory. Our theatrical forms, structures and techniques are just toys and games of perception with which we can meet *issues with substance*. (1983: 27)

In order to do this, we have consciously chosen not to engage a particular ideological perspective, other than the subjectivity of pacifism. We are concerned here to articulate the almost too apparent truth that the reality of death – the ultimate consequence of war – and the suffering generated by it, is the same for all concerned, no matter what side of the political divide one falls on.

With this principle as a starting point, we embarked on the research journey for the project. We conducted extensive research at the Imperial War Museum in London, mined the Holocaust archives, and read pages of testimony from the multiple conflicts in Africa, and elsewhere, as well as many other sources, looking for first-hand accounts of war. We

began with the idea of letters, and expanded into testimonies, eyewitness accounts, newspaper reports, and other factual data. We added to this documentary material, another layer derived from poetry, music, and contemporary responses. Additionally, much of the material has a personal base: three of our grandfathers fought in the World War II, two were prisoners of war, and we included material that came from their personal experiences. All of this was gathered in an unfiltered form and brought to the rehearsal room as stimulus for the creation of the work.

The sheer volume of the material was literally terrifying: the more we found out, the more we realized that the scope of the project would have to be huge to accommodate the complexity and vastness of the narrative. It also brought home the necessity for such a project: the knowledge and awareness of history is needed if we are ever to learn the lesson that war, just or otherwise, can never result in anything finally but suffering. Initially we had intended to cover the full historical scope of war, but we soon realized that we would have to limit the range of the project to the 20th and 21st centuries, beginning with the First World War. This conflict marked a major shift in the way war was fought, in particular because of its scale and impact as a global event, and thus seemed an appropriate place from which to begin. In its final form the production touches on the two World Wars, Vietnam, the South African border wars, the anti-apartheid struggle, genocide, terrorism, the Holocaust, xenophobia, Eastern European wars, Afghanistan, Iraq and the numerous recent conflicts throughout Africa. The final text of the production is derived from actual testimonies, letters and responses from combatants, civilians and eyewitnesses, interspersed with published and original poetry and music. To this we have added a series of photographic images to create the visual counterpoint to the stage action.

The central starting image for the piece is a map, and the notion that it is the lines on maps that metaphorically cause wars: cartography has a lot to answer for! Simplistic that may sound, but it is critical to the context of the production. To support this contention, it is useful to examine the following:

The European Union has only 23 languages. Africa has at least 2000, and between 6000 and 10,000 political or social entities...Africans played no part in the creation of their nation states. Their boundaries were drawn on maps in Europe, by Europeans who had never been to Africa, with no regard for existing political systems and boundaries. Half a century later Africans were given flags and national anthems, airlines and armies, and told they were now independent. (Dowden, 2009:52)

This apparently random exercise in line drawing drove much of the colonial imperative and filters into our consciousness in the making of the piece. While the above statement refers specifically to the African continent, much of the sentiment regarding the arbitrary nature of borderlines on maps may be extended to other contexts, particularly in Eastern Europe.

To dramatise this idea, we created a framework for the piece relating to notions of maps. We thus bookend the piece with two pieces entitled 'The Maps of the Old World' and the 'Map of My New World'. The opening piece establishes clearly the foundation for the argument:

The maps of the old world are etched in sorrow,
Ink the colour of blood shaping contours

Carved with weeping;
Lines that mark frontiers of grief
Traced through generations of conflict
Born of hatred –

It was not, of course, the cartographers' fault:
They placed their keenly crafted patterns
Only where they were told
By those who guarded jealously the pen's strokes
Framing their ownership in government hallways
Shaping the world this way or that –

When the first astronaut gazed on our planet
Spinning silently in the vastness of space
He must have wondered
At the absence of those so important borders
Whose fierce protection chronicles
Our history . . .

And when I scan my small and private space
It occurs to me that the lines I labored over
In geography class,
The boundaries that govern who and where
And what we are, marking territory
Like dogs,

Are, in the ambit of
My single perception
Invisible
Appearing only in that faded textbook
Whose pages illustrate the excuses
For what has come to pass.

In the lines on the maps
Is the history of the world
The frontlines where past and present meet
(Meskin & van der Walt, 2009)

The piece was performed as voiceover against the backdrop of images of ancient maps; these were slowly suffused with red light, creating a powerful – and obvious – signifier for the consequences being referred to in the text.



Figure 1. Lungani Malo, in the 'Map of the New World' section

For the concluding section of the performance, we asked the cast members to write individual pieces, commencing with the phrase 'When I make the map of my new world . . .', reflecting upon what they would want to see on the maps they might draw for the future. From the vast amount of material generated, we selected some of the most interesting, and they were spoken at the end of the piece by individual performers, again against the backdrop of a map, but one from which all the lines had been erased and replaced by a question mark. Additionally, all cast members were present on stage and the song *Hot Gates* (performed by Laurika Rauch, composed by Christopher Torr, 1995) played underneath the text. The examples included below illustrate the kind of sentiments involved:

When I make the map of my new world, I will use the past as my path,
because it's important to know where you are coming from in order to go
forward. (Thobani Mbhele)

When I make the map of my new world
I will ensure that the borders run through old battlefields
As reminders of the blood lost
The lines we must never cross again
When I make the map of my new world
I will tear down the walls. (Julia Wilson)

When I make the map of my new world, I will not make it alone. One man on
his own cannot change the world. When I make the map of my new world, I
will start with the map of my heart. When I write the map of my heart, I will
use pencil so when I make my mistakes I know I can rub it out and start again.
(Radwinn van Wyk)

When I make the map of my new world there'll be no
borders, no boundaries, no fences. . .
no pounds, no dollars, no cents
it'll all make sense, believe me
there'll be no races, no losers, none beneath me

no latitude, just the right attitude to love in magnitude
now: now just gotta find a large enough piece of paper.
(Nhlakanipho Manqele)

(In Meskin & Van der Walt, 2009)

Hence, we see the piece as a kind of cartography in itself – charting the past and the present, and offering a blueprint for a new map of a future world. The study of history can and must have a contemporary purpose; in performing history we can create a format for the act of processing history through the present frame, in order to understand the notion of our shared humanity, in spite of the divisions and differences that are so evident within our social milieu and which drive conflict.

STYLE AND STRUCTURE: NEGOTIATING AESTHETICS

Having gathered the material, we embarked on the project as performed action. We initially considered working the material into a single narrative with a linear structure, but very soon rejected the idea for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the scope of the narrative mitigated against such a potentially reductive strategy, being too varied in style and content to allow for a singular narrative to be constructed. Secondly, the nature of the material is so extreme, that we believed it needed a degree of stylistic and imaginative distance in order for it to communicate to an audience. How does one tell the story of the Holocaust or of the Rwandan genocide in a way that does not reduce its significance? How does the artist convey the immensity of the idea without inuring the audience to it by making the horror too overt? In answering these questions, we decided to employ an anti-realistic style that would allow us to engage the material with a degree of aesthetic distance which would work in a Brechtian way, seeking to move the audience emotionally but simultaneously to engage them critically.

Structurally, we created a three-pronged narrative using the notion of chapters, chronicles, and meditations. The chapters consist primarily of the letters from the various wars and follow roughly the linear structure of a soldier's experience of war from recruitment to remembrance. The twelve chronicles – one for each month of a year – are used to reflect on actual historical events from many different contexts. Hence, in June, the Soweto Riots of 1976 in South Africa can be juxtaposed with the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing of 1989. Finally, the mediations are used to reflect on five key components of the piece that we felt were too important individually to place in either a chapter or a chronicle. These include the map sections from the beginning and end of the play; a commentary on the Middle East tragedy, centred around the image of Jerusalem; a focus on the continent of Africa and its vastly conflicted history; the Holocaust, the horrors of which are so graphic and pervasive, that we felt they needed a singular representational forum to be expressed and conveyed; and finally a mediation entitled 'The Soldier' which was included to establish the historical connectivity between all those who fight in wars, no matter on which side, whose memory, as individuals, is so often overlooked. The core text for this final mediation is a piece entitled 'The Soldier Without A Name' and it resonates the words on countless cenotaphs the world over denoting the graves of the Unknown Soldier who made the ultimate sacrifice but is not remembered as a singular specific human being, this being, perhaps, the greatest tragedy of all. The repetition of the phrase 'I am the soldier without a name', together with the multiple direct references across the chronology of warfare, reinforce the point as may be seen below:

I am the soldier without a name
Who fought for all of the causes
In all of the wars, through all the pages of history.
I am the soldier without a name
Who bled for my country and died alone.
I am the soldier without a name
Who battled for Helen's sweet eyes at Troy
And marched in the glorious legions of Rome.
I am the soldier without a name
Who swarmed off the steppes in the Mongol horde
And sailed the longboats to pillage and burn
And carried the cross and fought the jihad.
I am the soldier without a name
Who braved the Incas for Christ and gold
And cried 'Independence' from Imperial rule.
I am the soldier without a name
Who fell before the impis at Isandlwana
And stood proud in the laager at Blood River
And saw the red shirt bleed at Rorke's Drift.
I am the soldier without a name
Who died in the trenches, bloody and cold,
At Ypres, Dieppe, Verdun and the Somme
And left my body in Flanders' poppy fields.
I am the soldier without a name
Who saw the Nazi wave break over Europe
And stormed the beaches of Normandy
Who froze in the snow at Stalingrad
And shivered in bunkers while Dresden burned
Who piloted the plane that dropped the bomb
And watched the cloud mushroom over Hiroshima
Who flicked the switch of the ovens of Auschwitz
And spoke of my orders at Nuremberg's trials.
I am the soldier without a name
Who trudged through the jungles of South-East Asia
And loosed the napalm in scalding flame
Who was missing in action in Viet Nam
And ploughed the killing fields of Cambodia.
I am the soldier without a name
Jew and Arab, Hutu and Tutsi,
Muslim and Croat, Russian and Chechen
Hating and cleansing, killing and fleeing
In Palestine, Israel, Kosovo, Chat
Bosnia, Congo, Rwanda, Sudan
Forgotten, ignored, applauded, and cursed
In Columbia, Cuba, the Lebanon
And Haiti, and Serbia, and Sierra Leone
I am the soldier without a name
Who unleashed the dogs in the streets of Soweto
And drove the bulldozers through District 6
Who marched in the townships, guns ablaze

And carried the Spear of the Nation with pride
 Defending apartheid, fighting apartheid
 Who can remember which was which?
 I am the soldier without a name
 Who carried my weapons with banners ablaze
 In Belfast, Sarajevo, Tiananmen Square,
 Zimbabwe, Madrid, New York and Kashmir,
 Terrorist, Freedom-fighter,
 Cold-War warrior
 Waiting for history to decide my fate.
 I am the soldier without a name
 Who smoked out the enemy in Afghanistan
 And searched for the weapons that didn't exist
 And mixed my blood with Iraq's black oil
 And wondered why bombs continued to fall
 And waited and prayed to go home . . .
 I am the soldier without a name
 Who fights for freedom and justice
 Liberty and democracy
 Equality and civilization
 I am the soldier without a name
 Who fights – and dies – for you. (Meskin *et al.*, 2005)

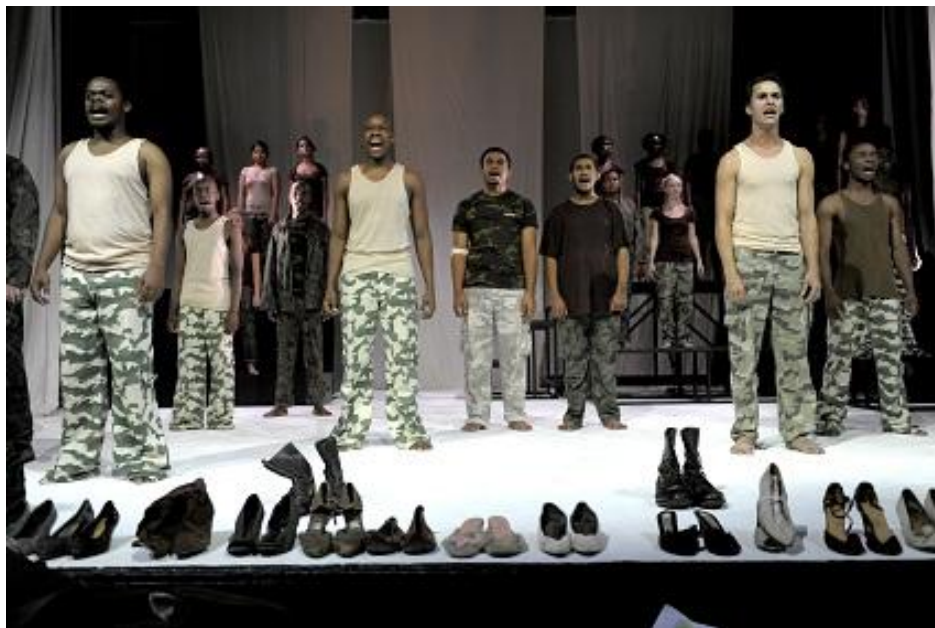


Figure 2. The Soldier without a Name

The final two lines, addressed directly to the audience, suggest all of our culpability in the continuing narrative of war thus engaging the audience in the experience and generating the critical response we were seeking.

The style of the work resonates within the postmodern ethos; this is reflected in the form of the piece which draws on physical theatre styles (Fleischman, 1996), discourses from the theatre of images (Shevtsova & Innes, 2009; Bradby & Williams, 1988), and Brecht's Epic theatre methodologies (Gray, 1976; Willett, 1977, 1984). The work utilizes a technique of

layering through juxtaposition, collage, and fragmentation in framing its content, as well as negotiating the relationship between theatre and testimony. Thus, the performance, (and by implication, this paper) explores the metaphorical journey that facilitates the transferring of life and history into the written/performative text, and subsequently into translated stage action. Through these stylistic choices we sought to create an ethos of imaginative identification and empathetic engagement.

In each fragment we attempted to create a multifocal perspective, layering various modes of representation in order to generate the holistic aesthetic experience. Using Robert Wilson's ideas of the interior and exterior screens (Counsell, 1996) we explored how to create a performative experience that would allow for several different visceral impacts to be generated simultaneously. Hence, we juxtapose a piece of text with a dance piece, or underscore a poem with music, and the like, while also creating a visual accompaniment using the images gleaned from our research. Three screens form the backdrop for the action, which are filled throughout the performance with images gleaned from hours of research into the photography of conflict – we began the process of constructing these projections with over 1000 images – and which counterpoint and comment on the performed action on stage. Thus, the experience for the viewer becomes three-dimensional in both a metaphorical and a realistic manner – they are literally being asked to look at the action on the stage as a multilayered, multiplanal event, where all of the senses are engaged in an Artaudian sense of the word.

As well as trying to engage the emotional connectedness and necessity of serving the words of these real people with integrity, we also wanted to explore Brechtian devices of distancing in order to allow the audience time to digest and process the multiple narratives they were experiencing. We wanted to ensure that the distance between the narrator and the role remained evident, making visible Stanislavski's notion of the dual consciousness of the actor (Merlin, 2007). Here the actors are very definitely 'actors' rather than characters in the traditional sense of the word; they are asked to inhabit multiple skins, as it were, over the course of the production, all of which belong to people from different cultures, contexts and subjectivities. What links them all together is the core through line of the play that is examining the consequence of war on ordinary individuals directly, rather than the socio-political events that so often form the focus of traditional history.

The core premise of this Brechtian approach is described best as reorientation in order to create an active audience member who will respond from a position of engagement as opposed to apathetic passive viewing. This is very difficult to measure in any reliable way. However, it was evident in the performances and from the responses garnered, that much thinking was stimulated in the audience body as a whole, and, perhaps more importantly, in the cast members' experience as they worked.

The directorial methodology we used was guided workshopping, using techniques derived from Stanislavski, Michael Chekhov (in Chamberlain, 2004), Brecht, Peter Brook (1987), and Ann Bogart (1983, 2005). For the original production, we cast the play in June and began rehearsing in August; during the break we asked the students to research the historical record, asked them to read a series of poems and generate creative responses to them, and to write letters and poems around particular stimulus points. When we began the rehearsal process, we worked for a week with the two sets of students separately working on improvisations and creating short pieces of performance that we could use as building blocks for the piece. We gave them no text initially, working rather with images and ideas

at the outset. After a week, we brought the two sets of students together and they showed each other what they had worked on and then we began to unite the two sets of action. We then began to add the text and work with the structure we had selected.

The rehearsal process was intense: working with the cast of 47 for a very tight period of three weeks was deeply challenging, both for us and for them. Negotiating effectively the mix of text, dance, music and images necessitated a detailed and complex period of experimentation and development, editing and re-editing the vast amount of material that we had to hand. Additionally, the performers had to learn to negotiate multiple performance models.

The musical score was essential to the developmental process, often providing the stimulus for sections of the piece. A wide range of musical genres were covered, including acid jazz, rock, punk, folk, and traditional songs. In addition, some original pieces were created for the production, offering a powerful counterpoint to the existing texts, emerging as they did from a completely contemporary context and experience, but in reaction to the historical material. Much of the music is performed live, while a recorded soundtrack is also integrated into the action. Some of the musical choices drove the action directly: for example, for the May chronicle, we chose the battle of Gallipoli because we had found a piece of music (*And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda* by Eric Bogle, 1971) which then generated a performative approach that utilized the idea of a waltz with a solo male voice singing the text. Another example is the opening section of the piece where the cast members entered carrying various types of luggage as the song *Masters of War* (Bob Dylan, 1963) was sung.



Figure 3. Waltzing Matilda

The most important aspect of the methodology was the attempt to allow the work to emerge organically. In the devising process, this manifested itself in the way in which the various sections were transformed from text into performed action, but also in the development of material. For the chapter on 'Waiting', we had originally intended to use a series of extracts from letters. In rehearsal, however, the action seemed to drag at this point and we felt it to be quite predictable. During an informal conversation, one of the cast members asked us

whether we would consider using some rap material; we responded that we would love to do so. Within in the space of half an hour, the student had gathered together a group of colleagues and written the following piece:

Chorus: I'm just waiting to go to war. . .
Kill a soldier make his whole family sore . . . (X4)
Soloist: Wait . . . I'm actually going to kill that. . .
Means that I'm gonna be a murderer . . . that's fact . . .
This ain't a play . . . there's no second or third act . . .
Just one scene of blood spills and that's that . . .
Killing is winning and winning is all that . . .
Losing is not an option . . . see that's wack . . .
Kill a few people and head right on back . . .
Home . . . have a celebration wearing top hats . . .
Rats in trenches . . . I eat here. . .
Mud on trousers . . . I sleep there . . .
Cold or hot air . . . it's not fair . . .
Just go there . . . if you die there . . . they don't care . . .
So . . . why am I going to kill Bill. . . ?
Or John . . . whatever his name is . . . he's young still . . .
Got a whole life ahead of him at God's will . . .
Chorus: So . . . why am I going to war?
I don't want to kill a soldier make his
Family sore . . . (X3)
Soloist: So . . . why am I going to war?
I don't want to wait anymore . . .
(Nhlakanipho Manqele, in Meskin & van der Walt, 2009)



Figure 4. The Waiting rap

We restaged the section to start with this piece which created an appropriate mood and context for the extracts that then followed, also establishing the variation in rhythm and tone so necessary for the piece to work theatrically.

In another example, we gave two female dancers the task of creating duet to accompany what was the final piece of the production, the letter to Charlie. This was one of the very first letters we had selected and we knew that we wanted it to occupy a central place in the final work. In the first version, it was positioned as the last section in the chapter on 'Remembering' and it was accompanied by the dance duet performed to an original piece of music played on a solo guitar. An excerpt from the letter reads:

In all those hundreds of letters I wrote to you, I always told you how much I loved you. I probably didn't tell you: You are the finest human being I have ever known.

Please be at peace and remember that I've always loved you.

Your loving wife

Olwyn (Carroll, 2006, in Meskin & van der Walt, 2009)



Figure 5. Dear Charlie – Mandisa Tshiqi (rear), as Olwyn, with Slindile Hlengwa and Julia Wilson.

The duet that was performed evoked feelings of great longing and peace, supported by the music, which counterpointed perfectly the tone of the text. When we envisaged the letter in action, we had not imagined its final construction; it is a good example of the evolutionary process engaged in the formulating of the work.

This evolutionary development is particularly important in relation to the revision of *FrontLines* that took place in March 2010. This version was an entirely new piece built on the structural blueprints of the original. The flexible working process allowed for moments of great synergy and creative inspiration in reimagining the work. For the second version the cast was reduced from 47 to 27, some of the sections were reworked completely, the original text was cut extensively, and new pieces were added to refine and heighten the overall impact of the work. The production also had to change significantly in a pragmatic way, given that it was performed in an entirely different theatre. The original venue – the Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre – has a larger stage than the Courtyard Theatre; additionally there are no flybars in the Courtyard. This necessitated a complete revisiting of the staging of the piece and a redesign of the setting. All of this was possible because of the flexible working methodology.

What was particularly exciting about the process was the way in which the synergistic energies generated by the cast members – in both versions – created new approaches to the material which surprised us and allowed for a multiplicity of performance techniques to be utilized ranging from praise poetry to slam.

Central to the stylistic choices was the desire to engage multiple modes of representation ranging from direct audience address, spoken word performance, hip-hop music, slam poetry, dance (both contemporary, traditional, and classical), choral verse, interactive dialogue, and tableaux. The performance style is thus enormously difficult to define in a singular way: we consider the piece to blend image theatre and physical theatre forms in its attempt to generate a unique visual, auditory and sensory experience. in a kind of total theatre which communicates in multiple modes simultaneously.

One example of the physical element is the February chronicle on the Dresden Bombings, which utilized a single performer speaking the poem *High Flight* (John Gillespie Magee, Jr, 1941) while a male dancer performed a dance with a toy aeroplane; this metamorphosed into his speaking of a piece of text from Randall Jarrell's poem *Losses* (1948) which suggested his transformation from innocent child to disillusioned soldier:

We read our mail and counted up our missions –
In bombers named for girls, we burned
The cities we had learned about in school –
Till our lives wore out: our bodies lay among
The people we had killed and never seen.
When we lasted long enough they gave us medals;
When we died they said, "Our casualties were low."
They said, "Here are the maps"; we burned the cities.



Figure 6. Wiseman Mncube and Julia Wilson.

The transition after this piece into an eyewitness account of the bombing with photographs of the devastation caused by the raid was particularly evocative.



Figure 7. Fortunate Dhlomo

Similarly simple, but equally moving, is the Holocaust section, where the narrative is told primarily through the body rather than any spoken text, performed as a ritual laying down of shoes as Eli Wiesel's Nobel speech (1986) is delivered in voiceover.



Figure 8. The Holocaust section with the parade of shoes.

Brecht's notion of historification (Gray, 1976; Willet, 1977, 1984) is also a critical theoretical base here: we needed the performers and the audience to witness the material as historical data, but at the same time to draw the parallels between historical and contemporary contexts. Thus, even though, for example, Wilfred Owen's *Dulce et decorum est* (1917) was written in a First World War context, the performance of it should generate critical empathy for any experience of conflict, as well as recognition of the commonalities within the nature of war, no matter what the context.

A clear example of such juxtaposition is in the following section: in the chapter entitled 'Suffering', one of the letters is from a young American soldier stationed in Korea who received a 'Dear John'³ letter from his girlfriend ending their relationship. He responds to her letter in a fury of pain and rejection:

Dear Babe

I just received your last letter in the morning's mail. I held it in my hand for a minute while a little voice in the back of my head whispered, "This is it. This is the one."

You tried to "let me down easy". Well, if it's any consolation to you, you did it about as well as a thing like that can be done. . .

You ask me if I understand. I do. I never said I was the greatest guy on earth; you did. I just agreed with you. . .

"Be careful," you tell me. "Take care." I almost laughed out loud. We wouldn't want to see me hurt, would we? There's no need to worry about me. I'll be all right. I swear it. You have other things to think about now. Hopes to hope. Wishes to wish. Dreams to dream. A life to live; and I wish you the best of all there is. . . .

³

The term 'Dear John' letter refers to letters sent by women at home to soldiers ending their relationships. Believed to have been used as a term for the first time during World War II, it has come to be a culturally iconic term for letters of abandonment sent during war time.

Do I say something brilliant like “may all your troubles be little ones”? . . .
How about “If you ever need a friend”?

That presumes a future. There are 500 000 North Koreans and Chinese on the other side of that hill bound and determined to make sure I don’t have a future. Over here where your past is your last breath, your present is this breath, and your future is your next breath, you don’t make too many promises. Which leaves me what?

Goodbye, Leon

(Carroll, 2006, in Meskin & van der Walt, 2009)



Figure 9. Pieter de Beer as Leon.

A few days later he single-handedly charged an enemy gun placement and was killed. In the production, this letter was included along with the song *Letters to Dickie* (Jennifer Ferguson, 1986) – a song written from a woman to her boyfriend on the SA border.



Figure 10. Busani Mbili and Lihle Cele (foreground) with Julia Wilson singing in the background.

The first verse of the song was sung while a couple performed a silent *pas de deux*, where they begin as lovers, the man is rejected and leaves saying goodbye; then the letter was spoken; following the letter, the final verse of the song was sung:

Dickie Baby
The soldiers carried you
Slowly on their shoulders
Slowly marching
And the shots rang out in the clear blue sky
And in my best black dress
On that hot afternoon
Sun burning my eyes
Oh, if you only knew
That bullet that you put into your head
Was meant for me
Not you
My soldier Dickie-blue
My soldier Dickie-dead
(Jennifer Ferguson & Christo Leach, 1986)

While this final verse was sung, the single spot on the female dancer remained as she performed the reading of the final letter and the final goodbye.



Figure 11. The final verse of *Letters to Dickie*.

Staging the section in this manner, even though the two texts are entirely unrelated, facilitated recognition that the experiences – while in different times and different places – can be paralleled.

The examples above refer to the chapters and the chronicles. A detailed discussion of the meditation on Africa is perhaps useful finally to demonstrate the stylistic imperatives of the work. Initially, we had intended to use a large number of testimonies and eye-witness accounts from the numerous conflicts that have bedeviled the African continent in the 20th and 21st centuries. However, in rehearsal it became very apparent that such a performance choice was simply not theatrically effective, creating too static and unrelieved an experience

for the viewer, as well as running the risk of alienating the spectator through an overload of information. Instead, we decided to utilize a framing mechanism similar to the bookends idea of the map sections. Two poems were used as the base material, but instead of being spoken as singular texts, they were intertwined in a semi-choral narrative. In the first version, the two poems were both original works, one written by a South African cast member, the other by an American cast member in South Africa as an exchange student. Both poems were written in response to a question about the students' individual responses to what it meant to be living in Africa and the notion of an African. The latter piece was written from a specifically American viewpoint and the two pieces together offered a unique perspective on the historical and social narrative, as may be noted below:

[South African poem]

As I dig through the depth of decapitated spirits
To find my organic roots-
I burn my hands with their acid like tears.
The pain of the dead seeks revenge through me
Piles and heaps of Sudanese and Angolans
Stacked like the shoes of the Jewish – remember me?
I too, was once a legitimate human being.

As I sieve through the rubble of
Bones and burnt flesh the scent
Of their fate fills me.
I tend to question “human beings”
That constantly perplexes me with
Their inconceivable minds to create
Atrocities of greatness.

As I familiarize myself with the actions
Of my equal
The act of attempting to eliminate an entire race –
Enslaving and reducing man to eat his young
Like an extraordinary breed of greed they hunt for more
To devour and deplore.

My organic roots tell me that I can never be satisfied –
Like a planet on its own – Hotel Rwanda gives
Birth to skeletons that walk and think like me.
I am not apart of it. I do not
Recognize the Congolese need to duck bullets
From men in khaki and forget my way home.

My roots have bled and rot to pave my way into
A universe that exterminates –
I seem to have no place and so I wait . . .

(Kivithra Naicker, in Meskin & van der Walt, 2009)

[American poem]

From my vantage point across the ocean
Africa
Is just one place
All the same
Glazed with blackness
Dotted with strife

The images I see of
Africa
Are of pitch black men with machetes
Starving babies with distended bellies
Scores of people infected with HIV
Young boys wielding AK-47s
Where are these people from?
Africa
Not a specific place really, just
Deepest, darkest
Africa

Paris Hilton put it simplest,
When she said:
"I love Africa in general
South Africa and West Africa
They are both great countries"

Africa
Is at war with itself
Congo, Sierra Leone, Angola, Rwanda, Darfur, Chad.
What do you mean Darfur is not a country?

In America
The 6 o'clock news
Recounts every single American fatality
In Iraq, Afghanistan, the Middle East.
In America
The 6 o'clock news
Says that the black people are still fighting each other
In Africa.

Congo, Sierra Leone, Angola, Rwanda, Darfur, Chad.
Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda.
Algeria, Zimbabwe, Togo, South Africa.
What do you mean Darfur is not a country?

They all run together.
Nothing specific.

The numbers of people
Dead and displaced

Never quite seem to hit home
To reach the core of the American heart.
And why should they?
Two American soldiers were just killed in Iraq.
(Robin Willis, in Meskin & van der Walt, 2009)

For the revised production, the American student was not in the cast and so we decided to replace that text with another poem entitled *Rwanda: Where Tears Have No Power* (Haki Madhubuti, 1998)⁴.



Figure 12. Kivithra Naicker and Mandisa Tshiqi speak the opening poems of the Africa meditation.

This combination created a different, but equally interesting dynamic and testifies to the flexibility and elasticity of the piece.

In performance, the mediation was performed as follows: at the beginning of the section, the entire cast entered chanting a song in isiZulu and carrying one another in a stylized rendition of the pictures of the refugee lines that have marked the African continent repeatedly. This image, interestingly, grew out of an improvisatory exercise during the workshopping process where the performers used the idea of shoes to suggest endless journeying. Once the performers were in place, they sat in a still tableau that echoed the shape of the map of Africa which was projected on the central screen above them. The two poets then began to speak; as their words were heard, the central screen displayed images from the various African conflicts while the two side screens scrolled through an

⁴ The poem may be sourced on the internet at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.htm?id=181758>.

alphabetical list of names of countries in Africa with the dates of conflicts therein and the death toll from those conflicts. The juxtaposition between the cold factual data, the still images of war, the two female voices speaking text, and the still image of the bodies of the performers, created a multilayered piece of theatrical complexity. At the conclusion of the poems, the group sang another song to allow the two poets to join the group, and transitioned physically into a more confrontative shape facing the audience directly. From the centre of the group, a single female performer stood with two other performers holding on to her legs – the image of a single maternal figure with her children being deliberately engendered – and she spoke the following text:

My name is Beatrice. On the surface, if you look closely at my face and body, I could pass as a Hutu. I tried, but eventually my identity document gave me and my children away. The Interahamwe eventually found us out. We were all at church at the time. I remember machetes flying around right and left as they cut people in every part of their bodies. I woke up many hours later to see that I was still alive. On top of me were the bodies of my seven children – mutilated. I recognized them only by their clothes, clothes that I had made for them. I ran and ran but they eventually caught up with me again. They put me in a cage with other Tutsi women stripped naked. We were raped again and again, as if the men were using us to urinate into. I was left for dead. But I survived. I bore the child of my rapists and I am determined to love him. I have adopted another 5 orphans – all of us are Rwandan and I have never asked to see their original identity documents. They are my family now. In war it is always the women who are sacrificed – I will not let history do this to my children again. (Loots, 2005, in Meskin & van der Walt, 2009)

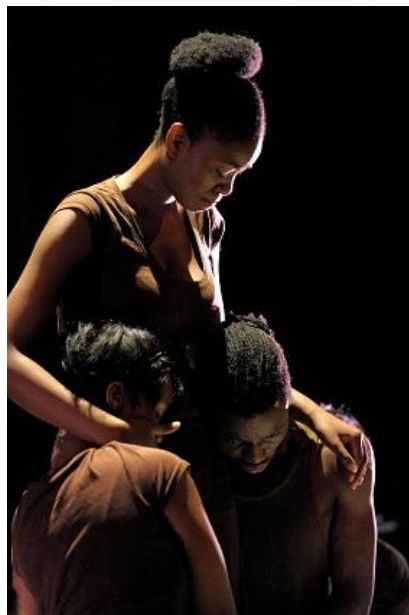


Figure 13. Fortunate Dhlomo as Beatrice.

While she spoke, images of the Rwandan genocide remained projected on all three screens, unchanging, allowing the audience no room to escape the full horror of the situation. At the conclusion of the text, the group sang the full version of *Nkosi Sikelela i'Afrika*. The lyrics we used were a combination of the original Xhosa hymn (as composed in 1897 by Enoch Sontonga, a teacher at a Methodist missionary school in Johannesburg),

some of the isiZulu elements as sung today, and the Sesotho version. We were very conscious that it should not be the South African national anthem, as the intention was to reflect on the African continent as a whole, given that *Nkosi Sikelele* has frequently served as the unofficial anthem of Africa.



Figure 14. The cast singing *Nkosi Sikelele*.

As they sang, each cast member stood up individually as the sound swelled and faced the audience directly, and then, to the final strains of the singing, exited the stage. This detailed description should clearly suggest the kinds of visual, aural and emotional stimuli that we were seeking in the piece. Additionally, the juxtaposition between original text, traditional music, graphic imagery, and factual data, encapsulates the kind of aesthetic we were seeking in the making of the work.

PEDAGOGY AND THE AESTHETIC

One of the most important aspects of this project was to explore the collaborative potential of the two student bodies at UKZN and DUT. It is our contention that all theatre is a collaborative act and in making a formal collaboration like this, the research goal was clear: to investigate how the different institutional teaching paradigms could operate together in formulating an artistic project from scratch.

Traditionally, there has always been very little contact between the two groups of students, even on a social level, and it is evident that a large degree of rivalry exists between the two different student bodies. Some of the crucial issues that we found to impact on the process are as follows:

- The demographics of the student body: at DUT, the vast majority of the student body in the Drama Studies department is black and isiZulu-speaking. There are a small number of White, Indian and Coloured students who make up the minority. At UKZN the racial demographic tends to be much more mixed. In addition, students at UKZN tend, in general, to come from homes which occupy a more affluent socio-economic profile than those of the DUT students⁵.

⁵ We are aware that these are very sweeping and overly generalised statements, but do not feel that it is appropriate here to discuss in detail the exact breakdown of the racial and socio-economic demographics of the students involved.

- The different training methodologies employed: DUT, as a University of Technology, offers a National Diploma in Drama, with the focus on specific, practice-based vocational training. UKZN, on the other hand, offers Drama as part of a general Bachelor of Arts degree, with a closer focus on theory, (partly this is because they also have far higher students numbers, which would make the intensive practical focus of the DUT course logistically impossible).
- The very disparate levels of technical skill: the cast featured students from all three levels of undergraduate study at both Institutions, as well as a few post-graduate students from UKZN, including one MA student who is American, and who has had quite a different undergraduate training, as well as some professional experience. This meant that students were at very different levels of skill development, but also that they were able to learn from each other.
- The different approaches to academic and theoretical aspects of the work: we discovered that there was a clear difference in approach at the beginning of the process, with the DUT students, whose training is more practical, finding ways into action quicker, while the UKZN students, who are receiving their training in a traditional university setting, with a stronger theoretical focus, tended to have a more analytical and thoughtful response to the material presented. However, what became clear as the process unfolded was that the two groups of students were learning as much from each other about working methodologies, as they were from us.

In addition, the combination of the two student bodies took all the students out of their comfort zones, forcing them to find new ways to communicate their ideas and exercise their creativity. Removing both groups from the safe familiar space drove a need to prove and demonstrate work ethic. The process engendered a symbiosis amongst the students allowing for the whole to be greater than the sum of the individual parts. Most students expressed surprise at what they found they could do without knowing they could do it, which supports Dorothy Heathcote's contention that people know more than they know they know (Wagner, 1999), and that drama provides a key to unlocking this knowledge, both in the body and in the mind.

What was especially exciting for us was the fact that, in the actual performances, audiences could not tell which students were from DUT, and which from UKZN testifying to the success of the project in blending the two groups. The connections made and relationships built during that initial process have continued to unfold in ways that are completely separate from this particular project, allowing students to form new collaborative ventures which we hope will serve to enrich their professional lives once they graduate.

For us, the ultimate aim of the production is about learning: it is clear that students have learnt a range of theatrical styles, techniques and approaches. However, they have also had an intensive and eye-opening lesson in world history. We were astounded by the lack of general knowledge in both student bodies, especially in regards to their awareness of history. The need to realize the reality of the material was quite intense for the students – seeing the real images that underpinned the words they were speaking brought home to them the shock that they were speaking the words of real people, who had suffered real horrors. This confronting of the reality of the past forms a very important part of the learning process, and part of the development of socio-political conscientisation that is part of the intention of the pedagogic experiment.

What is also interesting is that the project seems now to have taken on a life of its own with at least two further iterations of the production in the pipeline, and a whole range of other opportunities arising to dialogue about this important material

CONCLUSION



Figure 15. Sifiso Ndlovu and Menzi Mkhwane

The words of Elie Wiesel, Nobel Laureate, that we use in the Holocaust section of the piece best sum up why this project is so important in both aesthetic and ideological terms:

Because I remember, I despair. Because I remember, I have the duty to reject despair. I remember the killers, I remember the victims, even as I struggle to invent a thousand and one reasons to hope. (1986)

In this message lies the power of *FrontLines*; we make works about history to ensure that history is remembered; we make a work that transcends the recorded narrative in order to ensure that the individual stories will be remembered. Only in the remembering can we make a real difference to the world we all inhabit, the world we must bequeath to the future generations, a world where true social justice is possible.

Tamar Meskin & Tanya van der Walt
March 2010

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CULTURAL RIGHTS OF MINORITIES

Lynn Maree
KZN DanceLink

Conference sub-theme: Arts as heritage and the right to identity.

ABSTRACT

The paper discusses what constitutes a culture? And what are the rights that need strengthening where that culture is either in a minority or has no power?

In acknowledging these rights, our brief must be to decide whether current international agreements, UN Declarations, state constitutions, go far enough in protecting and supporting those rights. And if we find them wanting, to attempt to reach agreement on recommendations to be made,

- given the tension in many countries between multi-culturalism or pluralities, and nation-building, it argues that specific politics and economics and history are always relevant: you cannot define cultural rights so generally that as a legal concept it will be progressive everywhere.
- Because it has South Africa as its focus it attempts to unravel the overlap/conflation of race and culture, as well as our stringing together into one concept “artsandculture”

If we are not careful we may all be back in even smaller boxes than apartheid put us in; we may have less freedom to cross boundaries. Respect is required, dignity needs to be preserved, but then how do we debate freely, and create freely when perhaps there is disagreement on what constitutes respect and dignity? For when we talk of “cultural rights” whose rights, and what type of rights, are we wanting to see protected? And who are “we”?

PAPER

It is essential that in the world today, cultural rights need to be protected, and cultural diversity needs to be celebrated. Cultures have been trampled on, destroyed, assimilated, reviled. I come from a society where until 1994 the rights of the majority were non-existent, that majority had no rights, and small minorities were the owners of all the rights. And I, as a White South African, am a part of that once-dominant minority, if I am defined by my racial or my cultural identity. My perspective on the cultural rights of minorities comes from this background and from the way this past is impacting on South Africa now.

What constitutes a culture? And how important is the protection of that culture amongst the other human rights? Does it trump any of the others?

It seems to me that there can be no argument about different communities having different needs and these needs must be accommodated. It is most unlikely that there would be any argument at a gathering such as the Arts and Social Justice Conference, when we consider

- ✓ freedom of artistic expression
- ✓ the right to practice one’s religion
- ✓ the right to use one’s language
- ✓ the right to access education, and the right to have indigenous knowledge systems respected, though open to the norms of debate, logic, scientific

- ✓ experiment (cf. traditional healers and their claims to cure Aids, or a belief that exists among the isiZulu that if you are a twin it is dangerous to swim in the sea)
the right not to be moved from ancestral lands (or resettled back onto them if you have been removed (cf. the San in Botswana).

In acknowledging these rights, our brief must be to decide whether current international agreements, UN Declarations, state constitutions, go far enough in protecting and supporting those rights. And if we find them wanting, to attempt to reach agreement on recommendations to be made.

BUT where there will be argument, and has already been argument, is how much further should the rights of particular cultural formations be guaranteed, *given* the dynamic, unfixed nature of cultures and within them, customs, *given* the contestation that exists within them, *given* the contestation as to who has the power to speak for a culture, and *given* the tension in many countries between multi-culturalism or pluralities, and nation-building.

SPACES FOR ARGUMENT

I take South Africa as my example

We have an amazing Constitution where every right is protected, and where some of those rights have already been found to bang up against each other, such as freedom of religion, and the rights of people not to be discriminated against on the grounds of sexual orientation, **so** some years ago, the ANC government had to use a three-line whip in Parliament to push through a law permitting same-sex marriages, with every religious group in the country utterly outraged and calling down God's wrath. And we have traditional chiefs and their land and communal/collective rights enshrined in the constitution (land and communal rights which clash with the rights of women to equal treatment).

Apartheid and the reification of race: then and now

Apartheid South Africa classified everyone racially, and then ranked those "races" in a hierarchy of worth. The Struggle against apartheid was a struggle for non-racialism: for a society where individuals would not be defined by "race", where all human rights would be respected and where human dignity would belong to everyone. Clearly this is not so easy to do when the boxes and hierarchy are hard-wired into the mind-set of almost every South African adult and hence their children, and the act of redressing - actions needed now to put things right and make the playing-fields level - seems to require quotas for different boxes, at least for a while. And so these racial categories continue to have a reality.

In South Africa the grand apartheid scheme of Dr. Verwoerd depended on breaking up the black majority into smaller units, different cultural groups with different cultural needs, forms of expression, identities, DIVIDED geographically into the Bantustans AND into tribal groupings within large conurbations like Soweto; educationally into the "tribal colleges" (a university for Zulus, a university for Indians, etc). This was resisted by almost all the black political groupings but it had the effect, nonetheless, of ghettoizing language groups and reinforcing rivalries and differences. We began our democratic existence in 1994 - our attempt to pull together what was a fragmented and oppressor/oppressed society - just as "cultural identity" was starting along its pathway around the world to becoming a rallying cry of the left? (or at least those people who consider themselves to be progressive).

South Africa also achieved democracy as the Cold War was ending, with the admission of the failure of communism, at a moment when "class identity" had lost its meaning and

seemingly its usefulness as a concept (perhaps because it is too real); we shy away from loaded terms like “ethnic” and so we find “cultural identity” a useful way to distinguish groups. Then, too, Huntingdon-type notions like “clash of civilizations”, while we mock them, have an insidious way of shaping our thoughts.

Nation-building

Officially in South Africa we are engaged in nation-building, though currently there are many distractions: Aids, crime, corruption, non-delivery, the leadership of the ANC. And we were and are a fragmented society. A school-teacher friend brought me a wonderful story about ‘the bird that couldn’t fly’ written by two eight-year-old girls: bosom pals, one Black, one White. They had worked together solidly over three days, inspired by their idea, and lit up by their creative collaboration. I don’t want any value system that elevates cultural identity and puts people into watertight boxes to stop that sort of shared excitement of the imagination.

Notions of respect and dignity: cultures need to be respected

Apartheid South Africa was a very authoritarian society. People learnt to obey and not to question. Afrikaner ‘culture’ is itself an authoritarian, patriarchal culture: the instruction or opinion of an older person, particularly a man, is not open to discussion or up for debate. In fact, argument is not brooked so very few people get any experience in it: how to reason logically, how to disagree constructively; how to play the ball not the person.

Many of the African groupings found in South Africa have similar characteristics: the father disposes, and the women and children obey. And he disposes, this all-powerful father, long after his children are adult. So that once we buy into respect for cultures, we potentially foreclose on any discussion about them, or within them. They become reified themselves, and their representatives, their spokespeople, can claim almost any characteristics that suit them. For instance, Jacob Zuma, who is now South Africa’s president, claimed during his rape trial that a Zulu man must have sex with a woman whom he deems he has aroused. It is his cultural duty. (This particular cultural practice is disputed by every single Zulu I know but it carried weight and played a part in his acquittal).

As part of a training course I was on, I gave a lesson on sex discrimination, and in the evaluation of that lesson, some of my male fellow-students said I should have been more sensitive to cultural norms, and a female fellow-student said that in the rural areas where women did the work on the land and in the homes it was the norm and she didn’t mind, As a result it wasn’t, it couldn’t be, discrimination. This notwithstanding the Constitution and our laws of equality and equity. By granting respect and dignity to cultures as entities (and are there any that are without flaws? ... like families: there is where you are at home and where you belong but there are likely to be bits you don’t like), we close the door on debate, we put people who may not want to be there back into boxes, only this time they are cultural boxes, the boxes in which we are told we belong, and the other boxes to which we can never belong. **We even risk** foreclosing on freedom of artistic expression if it looks as though a culture (or its self-appointed representatives) might be angered. (compare the Arts Minister’s reaction to the Lesbian Photographic Exhibition held in late 2009).

How we use the word and the difficulties of getting it right

“in my culture we own our women” (men and possessions: no one else in the culture/kikuyu and female circumcision: not in the culture if you are not circumcised)

the xenophobia towards Africans from across the Limpopo who are ‘other’, and who currently keep their heads down in preference to asserting their cultural rights. (if you are an immigrant you need a degree of security in your new society before you start to assert your cultural rights, even if you know you have them in theory)

Afrikaner culture, made manifest in language claims (all the children who come to this school must be able to speak Afrikaans) and separatist rights (we want a bit of South Africa where we can live as Whites Only)

youth culture (hoodies are what we wear....so if you can't see us on a cctv camera that's not our fault)

disability culture, and gay culture, both of which cut across language or religious identities. (I understand that the disability support office at UKZN is under threat from a new dean)

We use the word loosely and this has its own dangers for trying to issue declarations or to protect powerless groups. The legal definitions try to make for clarity, but popular usage is very powerful, especially if this same loose usage is also used by leaders.

Whose rights will we be protecting?

Some years ago a team of experts in the United Kingdom were called together by the current Labour Government to advise on a law to protect common-law wives. The scenario: you, the woman, live with a guy for years, look after his home and his kids, then he leaves, and the house was in his name and his assets are all tied up. Currently every time a woman wants to fight for her rights, an expensive and acrimonious court case ensues, and she is lucky if she ends up with anything. The experts deliberated for years but in 2005 they abandoned their efforts, saying that they could not define a law that achieved the desired objective without also privileging, for example, the lay-about son who carried on living at in his parental home, would not leave, paid no rent, had his washing done and his meals prepared, and was resident when the house was to be sold, or the assets split up.

And this is what I fear if we raise the status of cultural rights (of both minorities and majorities) any higher than they are right now. We have to find a way where the humanity in every person is seen, even in those who look and sound different, where by allowing people to belong in their groups, we do not elevate exclusion.

I chair an organization called KZN DanceLink, an umbrella organization for dance that brings together and provides a shared space for many kinds of dance and dancers from all backgrounds. In 2006 we debated what is meant by indigenous dance. We agreed that indigenous could embrace some celebrations and dance forms that have come to the country from the time that the San were here or the first Nguni arrived since South Africa's population included Malay slaves and others, and (in opposition to right-wing politicians in Britain's BNP who are involved in a search for the pure Englishman)!! We concluded by deciding that the whole population, and not just those with black skins, could participate in the communal dances of African traditions: that they could be invited to share in that

collective experience, that form of cultural expression. In other words that the protecting walls should be porous.

Two quotes: One from a conference on African contemporary dance, and the other from the same thoughtful dancer, whose piece on Xhosa circumcision has been to many festivals around Africa, and who performed a piece at the Barbican Theatre in London in 2007:

‘I also mentioned that I grew up into a culture of silence where, if you are a youngster, you remain a youngster. But the fact that, at this point in time, I’m noted as a young choreographer - somebody whose voice is emerging and talking about issues - shows that I have taken a step forward to discovering a voice. What I am trying to do is break through from the tradition of *KwaMaphumulo*. I am trying to break through the culture of silence so that obviously means breaking away from the tradition... What I do is question what happens. Just like tradition says “you have to follow”, I say, “Do I have to follow without questioning”*

And then the same dancer, who spoke at the Indigenous Dance symposium held in September in 2006, and I paraphrase:

‘when I go home I want restoration, I want the familiar, I want to sink into home and be a little boy, but they look up to me, they giggle today, but by tomorrow they are imitating’.**

As artists, and as people, we want to straddle and we need to straddle. We want to critique and to celebrate. And sometimes that straddling makes us uncomfortable and creative. All of that is social justice.

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* Musa Hlatshwayo, interview in *African Contemporary Dance?* Published Papers from the Conference held at University of KwaZulu Natal, August 2004, UKZN ISBN 1-86840-586-9

** *Indigenous Dance Symposium Report*, September 2006, published on KZN DanceLink Website: www.kzndancelink.co.za

Lynn Maree

This paper was first given on 27th November 2006 at the World Cultural Forum in Rio de Janeiro and updated for the Arts and Social Justice Conference in Durban in March 2009.

Title of Paper: *Self-realization and Social Justice Aspects: Mapping the Impact of the Caversham CreACTIVE Initiatives within the KwaZulu-Natal Rural Communities.*

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Organization: Caversham Centre for Artists and Writers

Sub-Theme 6: Promoting ethical values through artistic expression and creativity in art education

Abstract

This paper maps aspects of self-realization and social justice through a study of selected Caversham CreACTIVE Centres¹. Against the backdrop of the overall historical contributions of community-based art education within the KwaZulu Natal area, the paper highlights the impact of these initiatives within the present state of our transitional democracy.

The CreACTIVE Centres bridge the gap between formal academic structures and the community at the periphery, and they stimulate meaningful involvement of fine art graduates within their community contexts. It is a model that works from grass-root developments towards grand curriculums. Furthermore, the centre's creative interventions in impacting inclusive teaching methodologies within the contemporary classroom and beyond are critically measured.

Women, as the encompassing leadership network structure of these centres use art as a vehicle to achieve social justice and empowerment beyond gender, class and other traditional hierarchies within South Africa.

Unpacking the notion of 'self-belief through self-expression' imbedded in the CreACTIVE vision statement as a departure point, the paper outlines the varied roles of visual expression in building self-empowerment and stimulating active participation within a transforming society. Further engaging this notion, the paper discusses the CreACTIVE Centre as an Eco-museum.

All in all, the paper addresses a crying need for community art based education to be acknowledged as a means to forge new ways of making significant change, thus acknowledging marginalized individuals as vital cornerstones within mainstream praxis. This is done through documenting the CreACTIVE initiatives as a transformative tool that inspire, inform, heal, provide dignity and recognition, as well as questioning the evolving processes of collective becoming, constantly linking to the self, in personal and social contexts.

As these initiatives form an integral part of a lived experience within under-resourced communities, the paper evidences the aspects of social justice and self-realization through inviting a multitude of voices other than the authors.

Keywords: CreACTIVE Centres, Self-realization, Social justice, Community-based art education and Ecomuseum.

¹ CreACTIVE Centres are complementary community initiatives that foster creative expression, positive action and attitude. Seeing this as a vehicle for individual inspiration, collaborative empowerment and self-belief, these are innovative centres providing space for reflection, renewal and refuge towards self-expression. There is currently 9 of these centres and they're situated in 9 different KwaZulu Natal Communities. Most of them are based at individual homes, community halls, some at primary and secondary schools and one at the University of KwaZulu Natal's Centre for Visual Arts

Introduction

In unpacking the inter-link of social justice with the arts, I would like to highlight the common threads with the vision statement of Caversham CreACTIVE Centres, which is 'Self-belief through self-expression'. Social sense of shared belief and other laws of living constitute us as part of a community and reinforce our individual sense of belief, that which is based not only in how we relate to the external social world, but rooted in our perception of who we are. (Bar-Tal, 2001: 5) On the other hand, self-expression carries the voice and language with which one makes sense of both the internal and the external landscape.

Within the CreACTIVE Centres, social justice is realised as "giving dignity to individuals and acknowledging them as cornerstones of society. It is about building, rather than demeaning the human spirit." (Christian, 2010)

The intangible nature of these aspects, in many ways, presents a challenge in this paper's quest to prove, measure and make accessible the effectiveness of the Caversham CreACTIVE initiatives. A multitude of voices, instead of my own, will need to come through. Therefore, case studies will be used to map Caversham's contribution to the wider world of the most ordinary individuals that occupy the farthest and often "forgotten corners" (Cleveland, 2000: 32) of KwaZulu Natal.

I will be looking at artistic activism being echoed in places outside the traditional mainstream of art education and production. Thus, the main focus is the rural communities.

South African visual culture has long contained a particular niche for rural artistic expression, particularly, by women. They have been viewed within domestic and rather inferior realms. A clear aesthetic hierarchy that ascribes low level of importance to objects and images, such as beaded dolls, beer pots, and high value to painting and sculpture. Be it due to national, regional, cultural, political, gender and class stereotypes, how do we demystify, dignify, maintain a balanced reception of, or preserve a sincere dialogue with, the marginalized self?

Where a collective identity is often presupposed or imposed on these communities, this paper highlights individual activism as a platform to magnify voices where dignity has been previously denied. It is a map of how each individual's quest to question the unjust is amplified, owned and transmitted to the wider community context. Because artistic creativity can serve as a catalyst for a healthier and confident community, the CreACTIVE Centres are meant to redress systematic injustices imposed to rural artistic development.

Inter-generational memories and relationships within the post-colonial socio-cultural contexts affect not only the notion of self, but constantly bind together the community and nation. How do we best capture, make sense of and articulate the balance between the old with the new experiences?

Caversham according to me

In this paper, the story of Caversham's evolution is told from the perspective of a woman who is its exact contemporary. It is a view parallel to a schooling life and a journey I walked in search for artistic development in the outskirts of the seemingly disempowered rural Bulwer. It is a view, seeking to respond to the ongoing birthing of many a generations through creative engagement within the rural KwaZulu-Natal.

Having started school in 1989 at Nkwezela Primary School, STD 3 (grade 5) in 1993 was when I began to describe myself as a creative person. When I made my own dolls out of mealie-cob, wire and grass, and when my English teacher responded with inquiry to the dancing figures around a yellow, pink and white birthday cake I drew, I realised that I had found a substitute first language where verbal-expression was discouraged. It is this same philosophy, which I believe, runs through the Caversham CreACTive initiatives.

In my earliest first hand involvement with the CreACTive initiatives, I came to understand the complexities that underpin each community beyond my own, that it is never a one size fits all situations.

Disempowerment, hurt, hopelessness and lack of self-realization are among the many vulnerabilities within the individuals I interacted with in places such as Lidgetton, Mtubatuba, Bulwer and Rorke's Drift, young and old. CreACTion provided an insightful window into the psychological impacts that the apartheid legacy held on individuals at the very bottom of South African communities. Definitions of 'community' according to Mr Verwoed's vision, when most of the elderly we work with came of age, still creeps in, and draw an opaque curtain of self-doubt.

In that light, the application of the Caversham's Hourglass Process² in the workshop processes became a re-vitalizing seed where self-expression had been denied.

To these women, limited expression amounted to readily assigned roles and destinies. To them, dreams remained neatly packed in the corrugated or wooden suitcases they brought as was customary to a *makoti* (newly-wed woman) then. Theirs are dreams meticulously stitched onto the very symbolism of their dresses. My mother is in that generation. She, and many other young girls born in 1948, was forced out of school in STD 4 (grade 6), her father adamant that she would adopt wayward ways and loose sight of her 'naturalized' place within the hierarchy of culture.

The highlight for me was to see the elderly (60 years and above) re-claiming their self-worth through creativity. When each acknowledged with a satisfied smile, the beauty revealed from chipping away the linoleum plate as metaphoric of their life circumstances. Or through transforming their own family praise names and totems into the most lyrical images, poems, songs, or stage plays. That moment of realising that "yes, mine is an important story too. I never thought that through the ordinary activity of gardening would unlock such profound things about my life at this age" 73-year old Gogo MaNgubane (2008) said.

All in all, the CreACTive forum became a vehicle through which the old could realize themselves as an integral part of a still healing whole.

From the young participants, I saw and understood firsthand the CreACTive Centre forum being received as a refuge for positive joint action to meet daily challenges such as playing the role of parents to younger siblings due to HIV/Aids, or lack of financial resources for pursuing education. Most of these issues were accompanied by constant decision on whether to refrain from or succumb to pre-set paths and standards regarding career choices. Choices ranging between nurse, cashier, teacher or police have dominated most

² Hourglass process simply signifies the notions of the self as both a container as well as a reservoir. When incorporated in a lived context within the CreACTive Centre, its symbolism translates into self-reflection, dialogue and ownership that lead to positive action.

of these communities. Therefore, CreACTion was navigated as a place where their individual destinies could be re-directed and voices harnessed and honoured through self-expression.

In January 2008, my first year of being involved in running workshops at the CreACTIVE Centres, I developed an interest in women. I came to learn that their roles have remained at the bottom of the power pedestal, seldom acknowledged or even involved as active agents in socio-cultural, let alone political policy-making. Their roles remain receivers of 'readily cooked' laws, without any necessity of knowing the ingredients. It became clear that, whether at a home environment or beyond, development often happens around them, or through them. As a result, women are seen as cultural-vessels, susceptible to being containers, rather than definers of culture.

For me, the Caversham CreACTIVE forum becomes a vital tool to address domestic hindrances that spread out to the national context. Opening access into women as well as children's creative voices to be viewed as vital and "complex palimpsests of social information." (Arnold, 1996: 121) For instance, the drawing by Snenhlanhla of Isidleke CreACTIVE Centre (Rorke's Drift) a winged knobkerrie, where the roundness of its head suggests a human face.

As candidate for an MA (Art History) programme at the UKZN, I see this paper as an opportunity to explore "community engagement as participatory action research methodology that engages a more radical pedagogy" (Berman, 2006: 1)

Community-based art education³

There is a long tradition of community-based art education running through South African History, such as the establishment of Polly Street in 1949. In KwaZulu Natal, Ndeleni Art Teacher Training Course (1952) and Marianhill Catholic Mission also made their significant mark. For the purpose of this paper, a brief discussion of the E.L.C. Arts and Craft Centre's ethos at Rorke's Drift in context to Isidleke CreACTIVE Centre based there.

In her *Study of Selected Community-Based Arts Projects in KwaZulu Natal* (1997), Bronwen Vaughan-Evans's conclusion that South African community art has mostly always been linked to a political context carries an inseparable layer. The National Party's strategy of unequal opportunities and limited access has formed a motivational basis for the establishment of many community –based-projects. They constituted themselves as the "alternative institutions within Black communities, especially since, with a few exceptions, art was not catered for in Black schools" (Koloane, 1999: 330)

³ **Definitions:** With regard to definitions of **community-based art education**, several concepts come to mind. One might initially envision organized community art programs to improve art skills, or alternatively, outreach programs to empower special groups of people. With more thought, we might consider programs that promote contextual learning about local art and culture (Kincheloe, et al., 2000; Neperud, 1995).

Community-based art is creative expression that emerges from communities of people working together to improve their individual and collective circumstances. Community-based art involves a wide range of social contexts and definitions, and includes an understanding of "communities" that includes not only geographical places, but also groups of people identified with historical or ethnic traditions, or dedicated to a particular belief or spirit. (DeNobriga and Schwarzman, 1999)

However, a shift in content and context calls for us to revisit the purpose and relevance of these centres beyond the racial or political sphere. We must speak from the bottom up, where dominant voices once made their mark and imposed themselves, where the marginalized self seeks to reposition and reclaim, reconstruct and re-affirm. It will therefore be important to unpack the impact of Caversham's CreACTIVE Centres against the overall historical contributions that have been made before. For us to map the varying purposes of a community based art education initiative, then and now. To map possible shifts, synergies and concerns that have given shape to content, particularly to the life story of rural South Africans at different times.

To explain briefly what Rorke's Drift was, According to Lize van Robbroeck's paper, *Women and Community Arts* (1990), one of the stated aims when Rorke's Drift started was to give work to the local people, especially women and to prepare female students as art and craft advisors to work with patients in the hospitals. Initially, the school concentrated exclusively on weaving, but later added pottery, textile design and in 1967, started a school of Fine Arts. While a few men initially joined the weaving classes, it became exclusively women's work, once the Fine Art School was established. (Robbroeck, 1990: 24)

Despite these historical gender and aesthetic divides, considering the status quo of Rorke's Drift today, that of women practitioners continuing to form a pillar of what once was. Their continued role as carries of an important legacy of rural-based image- and object- making opens up an impetus for this paper to discuss the role of a Rorke's Drift based *Isidleke* CreACTIVE Centre now. This is led by Lindiwe Shabangu and is situated in a local Primary School next door to the now dilapidated art school.

What is left of Rorke's Drift's visual culture today is tapestry, textile design and ceramics. All of which are dominated by women, with the exception of Gordon Mbatha, one of the earliest products of the School of Fine Arts who became a well-known component of Rorke's Drift Art and Craft Centre initiated in 1962 as a project of the a Swedish Mission Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa.

In unpacking the mingling of the historical with the contemporary voice, this paper hopes to highlight not only a shift in content, but also the function of the art reaching out beyond the confines of the traditional studio.

"When I saw the increasing number of the youth involved in smoking drugs during weekends, as well as the overall ignorant lifestyles that is rife amongst my community, I thought this was an opportunity to use 'self belief through self expression' as a catalyst. There seems to be a gap between the existing artistic heritage and the general community, particularly the growing generation, so I structured my CreACTIVE workshops around promoting the use of waste and throwaway materials to create extraordinary things. The wealth of history that characterise Rorke's Drift constantly runs through in our themes, which also allows us to connect our contemporary concerns with the past visual voices." Lindiwe Shabangu (2009)

CreACTIVE Centre as an Ecomuseum⁴.

⁴ An Eco-museum is a museum focused on the identity of a place, largely based on local participation and aiming to enhance the welfare and development of local communities. (Fuller, 1992: 327)

Within Egugwini (Harding) Nomandla Nodola's home, and many other rural KwaZulu Natal communities, innovative ways to preserve and pass on the tried and tested ways of existence in form of material culture, as well as oral expressions has been another successful means to address succession. From generation to generation, the tangible of these expressions have existed as historical reference to be consumed, mediated, and re-navigated as a springboard for collective and individual definition.

"It all started with a bottle that lay quietly at the side of the gravel road. As a collector and maker of things, its unusual green and thread that wrapped its body drew me to this object. I took it to the CreACTIVE Centre, and explained my intuitive response to the kids, how it had resonated with my research on the Nhlanguwini tribe, as well as the traditional artefacts that I'd been making. It allowed me to further explain the unrestrictive nature of our vision. I then asked them to draw and create their own stories from the bottle. The unique imaginations that came through excited and inspired me to compile these into a book and the 'found' bottle to be the central object in the library section of the museum." Nomandla Nodola (2010).

Weaving ordinary day-to-day lives or allowing community engagement into a museum context is a challenge facing many museums in South Africa. (Hooper-Greenhill, 1995: 3). The relationship that the rural community has with museums is limited to grand facades in which stereotypical accounts of past life are frozen. By zooming into and engaging directly, the lived identities of Egugwini (Harding), the CreACTIVE museum, in many ways, mediates exclusion.

"I have set up a museum in a two-roomed space my family has dedicated for my community and own work. I have very strong ties with my history of Nhlanguwini tribe and am driven to research it. I also explore this in my art, as well as in the work that I do with the youth at the CreACTIVE Centre. Through this permanent display, I invite the youth and the overall community. Not only to experience 'self-belief through self-expression', but immense themselves firsthand in a story by, for and about themselves. I want the youth to understand and take full ownership of Ingcambu Ezikile CreACTIVE Centre's vision, which is why they are responsible for arranging this display. Money remains our challenge, but that does not stop us from pursuing our dream, instead, I allow all my problems to push my dreams forward." Nomandla Nodola (2010)

Making ends meet

Unemployed individuals, who often act as heads to overcrowded households, constitute many of the participants in the CreACTIVE centres. Skills development workshops focusing on embroidery, doll making, beading, sewing and printmaking, allow Caversham to address that need. However, because the relationship with between the CreACTIVE catalyst and Caversham is inter-dependent, each leader, within their resources, tackles the socio-economic challenge uniquely. Khululiwe Mabanga, who built Isipho CreACTIVE Centre (fig 5& 6) out of her very, limited pension fund and family support, sums her situation by saying;

"Isipho has grown bigger from that tiny room we started with. My work here has direct effect to my family. Despite having to adjust some of their deep-rooted beliefs, like my full-time role in the kitchen as a mother, they have been very helpful and supportive of my vision, which I still wish to grow.

In our recent project in Isipho, we have been sewing together grass-woven pillows. The women from whom I learnt the weaving used an industrial machine, so when I said I would go home and use hand sewing to put them together they laughed at me. But we have done it and it is successful despite bruised fingers. Isipho is always like that; we try out even those things deemed inconceivable by people.”

University- Based CreACTIVE Centre

The link with the formal structures, such as the University of KwaZulu Natal based Gabisa Indlela CreACTIVE Centre allows the initiative to “prioritise inclusion, access, diversity and collaborative knowledge production, with the overall goal of nation-building” (Berman, 2006: 39)

“In 2002 the University of KwaZulu Natal, Centre for Visual Arts and the Caversham Centre for Artists and Writers entered into a partnership. The partnership was at first centred on the expertise of individuals who had direct and close ties to education and the community and also had an interest in community and community redress. Vulindlela Nyoni, lecturer in printmaking and the late Gabisile Nkosi, renowned artist, led this partnership, which involved a series of workshops governed by the notion of introducing new skills to other individuals/artists from the greater Pietermaritzburg area, particularly the township.” (Nyoni, 2008)

Nyoni recently merged his visual conversations with the work of these young artists in an exhibition he held at Kimberly. Taking a further step in addressing the economical imperative as well as seeking public forums through which these individuals can grow their artistic careers.

Currently, Mr Sibusiso Mvelase, community artist and resident intern at Caversham, has filled the co-facilitation from Caversham. Mvelase has been one of the consistent participants since the workshops began, and therefore, in the context of the CreACTIVE Vision, his participation not only addresses issues of sustainability and carrying the vision forward, but, partly, a distillation of Gabisile’s vision.

This stage of the bi-annual UKZN workshop, formerly known as HIV and Me, the name Gabisa Indlela marks the commemoration of Gabisile and Vulindlela’s contribution over the past years. Also echoing Caversham’s vision statement of ‘Inspiration in the individual and the individual as Inspiration.’

The phrase Gabisa Indlela (‘flashing the path’ in IsiZulu) derives from the two co-founder’s names Gabisile and Vulindlela. The participants coined this name during the first workshop that I co-facilitated with Vuli just after Gabi’s passing. Here are the personal testimonies that came:

“This workshop has been a life guider though art. Having a fellowship with artist partners inspired me. I have realized that it’s been a heart of togetherness.” Mbongeni Duze (Imbali)

“This workshop is not about drawing, there’s more to it than that. It’s about vision, expressing, communicating, learning and exchanging ideas. Let’s take it to another level!” Sbusiso Terence Mvelase (Mafakatini)

“The workshop this year was extremely fantastic! As an artist, I have learnt many things at the workshop. We were drawing each other’s portraits but it went beyond that. I was taught to understand not only myself but other characters as well. Printmaking was pretty

good, as a painter, I'm encouraged to combine painting and printmaking. Thanks to Caversham Centre and CVA." Muzikayise Ndlela (Mpophomeni)

"I would like to comment about the outreach program that Caversham and the CVA has given to our group, as this is my first time. It gave all of us an opportunity to showcase our artistic flare as individuals and share our personal ventures, life, loves, and most of all reflections of the future to come. This programme is very skill based and most productive. We learned about lino-cutting, silk screening and most of all we walked away with a sense of achievement on social grounds, personal and beyond. May this workshop grow from bound to bound.

I have been humbled and blessed to be part of this wonderful experience." Mfundo Curtis Radebe (Imbali)

CreACTion as a Contribution to the Contemporary Classroom

Schools have been one of the successful links and hubs for CreACTIVE Centres. Allowing these initiatives to impact onto the arts and culture curriculum, particularly through the use of 'self-belief through self-expression' to blend the curriculum with indigenous knowledge systems and wisdom. This is another marker of interlinked shifts in purpose and vision for the community-based art programme with that of the 1950's and the 21st century South Africa. Opening "a dynamic educational arena that requires a rethinking of the way knowledge is taught and retained." (Berman, 2006, 1)

CreACTIVE Centre as Arts Teacher Training

In 2008, Jill Sachs, Caversham's Early Childhood Development Specialist designed and ran an arts course for pre-school and primary teachers. Here, she looked at growing facilitation skills and focused on the Arts as a tool for teaching numeracy and literacy skills. Also, unpacking art objects as carriers of vital psychosocial and cultural residues in the earliest developmental stages of the young ones. Most importantly, this programme strived to make its content available to these teachers. All of who had no previous training in the arts and therefore no access to the 'arts discourse'.

Social justice and the hourglass process beyond South Africa

In early 2009, Amy West, Project Manager for the Academy for Education Development, based in Washington, approached Malcolm with regards to designing a leadership programme for young female lawyers from the middle east. Looking at the socio-cultural positions that affects their professional lives and beyond, a 5-day workshop was co-designed using WILpower as a theme. Constituting the group was Kuwait, Lebanon, the United Arab, Emirates and West Bank young women lawyers aged 22- 35.

Seeking to incorporate creativity and develop leadership training, the Hourglass Process was blended in as the key component of the workshop and culminated in simple book-making methods, which were used as tools of self-affirmation and exploration.

One of the realizations brought by the WILpower workshop is the common cultural challenges that woman face globally as they attempt to stabilize their previously marginalized positions as integral agents within positions of power.

Using the self-expression to address such complexities, WILpower workshop became a model to be replicated here. Once again, affirming Caversham's role in instilling social justice through the arts, particularly, links with the Centre for Criminal Justice (CCJ). This is

a University of KwaZulu Natal based initiative, whose partnership with Caversham saw its 4 female paralegals undergoing the Hourglass Process in 2006.

Background Information on Caversham and Malcolm Christian, CEO and Founder.

When Malcolm Christian decided to attend art school, his father felt that he should pay his own way, the result being Malcolm's realization that life was "a lesson in trusting your instincts." So he worked for a builder while he qualified in Sculpture and Photography at the Natal College for Advanced Technical Education. Malcolm won the Emma Smith Scholarship and decided to study at Croydon College in England. He had intended to do filmmaking and sculpture but on arrival, discovered that the courses had changed, so he joined the printmaking programme. During this year abroad he and Ros married. On their return to South Africa, Malcolm completed a Master's Degree in Printmaking while teaching at a number of different institutions. In 1980 the Head of Department at the University of the Witwatersrand asked him to set up screen-printing and lithography sections at the university. He remained a full time member of the faculty until 1985, when he established The Caversham Press. (Caversham Centre booklet, 2009)

Caversham (Fig 1, 2 & 3)

In the move from Johannesburg to the Caversham Valley in 1985 to start The Caversham Press, Malcolm hadn't begun to envision its evolution into Caversham Centre for Artists and Writers. The process started quite simply and grew in vision.

The idea of Caversham was conceived in 1984. While passing through the Caversham Valley, Malcolm and his friend, David Walters saw an old derelict Methodist church and the seeds were planted. Inspired by the small printmaking collaboratives he had visited in England while studying there, Malcolm thought this little church could be transformed into a printmaking studio. As he already had a home-based studio and had begun editioning prints for artists, this was the next step. He and Ros purchased the property, built a house next to the church and moved their young family to the Caversham Valley.

When The Caversham Press began in 1985 it was the first independent, comprehensive printmaking studio of its kind in South Africa. With no prototypes to reference, the following years were a lesson in innovation and trusting in intuition. In the beginning the studio occupied the space in the church building, equipped with a small etching press and a screen-printing press. Malcolm took care of the creative and technical aspects of the studio, while Ros managed the administration as well as food and accommodation for the visiting artists. Malcolm began working with artists whom he already knew, the first being Robert Hodgins, who died on 15th March, just short of his 90th birthday.

The evolution of The Caversham Press was an organic process. In working only with invited artists, Malcolm realized the inherent social and economic exclusivity of the studio. As he wanted his studio to be inclusive of all artists regardless of background or economic standing, in 1989 he began running workshop programs, inviting artists from township communities to participate. (Caversham Centre booklet, 2009)

As Caversham's success increased, Malcolm was able to expand on programmes offered, to the extent where it became necessary to expand the capacity with the management of the programmes. Luck brought Gabisile Nkosi to Caversham as part of an International Residency programme. Malcolm recognised Gabi's huge potential, and she became the Caversham Programme Manager in 2002.

A History of the CreACTIVE voice: Gabisile Nkosi's story

It is in Umlazi, South of Durban, where the roots of Gabisile Nkosi (1974-2008) reside. It was here that she was brought up, schooled and cultured into a unique creative being that was to rise and touch lives of many in a treasurable way. The fifth of seven children, six girls and one boy, Gabi discovered her love of art at a very young age and recalled her love for making things. Such were her own toys, designs for her own garments as well as greeting cards for friends and family. As an active child of many talents like ballroom/modern dance and fashion, she naturally took up visual art as a subject at high school level. She was certain it would lead to a bright career path.

Having her passions mirrored in her mother's dressmaking skill fuelled Gabi's interest. Sheer adoration would inscribe on her face as she recalled her late mother's words of encouragement and faith in her aptitude. Just as her fascination with her mother's dressmaking abilities, to turn a nonentity into something, she was to grow into a woman who turned ill treatment into transformational images of captive beauty through her outstanding prints. Like in her *Gida Nami*, a linocut print in "which black chairs look like weapons." (Wylie, 2010) (Fig 4)

Some of her work is now featured amongst valuable collections of not only women of influence such as Oprah Winfrey and Maya Angelou, but also prestigious visual arts institution in South Africa and abroad. In 2007 she was invited to once again exhibit in England, this time as part of the 200th *Celebration of the Abolition of Slavery*.

Her influential destiny reflected so clearly the determination to share herself wholly with others and be able to get from her professional life exactly what she'd hoped for. She had a remarkable ability to achieve all the goals she had set herself since as a student. Foremost of these goals was to "help my community to understand Art through workshop-running", as was expressed by Gabi in her interview at Technikon Natal (now Durban University of Technology) where she'd applied to pursue her Fine Art course. Further succinctly expressing her mature grasp of the artist's essential qualities as well as role at that time Gabisile (1997) said;

"To understand the world of art and what it means as a first step so that other people will understand it. That Art is a language through which man can express his feelings, ideas, dreams and beliefs around the whole wide world"

Driven by her immense capacity and powerful impact as an artist, mentored by Malcolm, and a firm belief in selfless contribution to the development of others, 2002 saw Gabi implementing her vision to run art-based workshops in the community. The youngsters from Lidgetton were to be blessed with her patient activism as she aimed at providing a platform to allow them expression. This was the beginning of Ulwazi, the very first CreACTIVE Centre.

Caversham Residencies as impetus for CreACTIVE Centres

In recounting the journey and history of CreACTIVE initiatives, Caversham Residencies become a consistent umbilical cord and hub for re-charging the CreACTIVE Catalysts⁵.

⁵ CreACTIVE Catalyst refers to a person who runs a CreACTIVE Centre. This acknowledges them agents of change within communities as well as individuals.

Seeing that CreACTive Centres are community-oriented extensions of Caversham residencies, it is imperative to unpack the vision underpinning these.

They are two-fold in that they not only transfer skills, but also become agents of inspiration and change, which result in tangible products as well as resonating the journey undertaken. The categories that define the residency programmes include the Creative Cultural Dialogue, Masabelaneni (IsiZulu for let us share), Skills Specialist and Internships. (Caversham Centre Booklet, 2009)

Creative Cultural Dialogue is a theme-based residency that runs for three weeks and usually has four participants, who comprise artists and writers. The residency provides the participants with focused personal time and facilitated creative interaction to share cultural diversity, personal stories, insight and images or objects. These are used as sources of inspiration and result in products of meaning. Past themes have been Baggage, Routes, Personal Vocabulary, and A Woman's Vision. (Caversham Centre Booklet, 2009)

Masabelaneni aims to manifest the Caversham vision of 'Inspiration in the individual and the individual as inspiration'. Through a two-part residency process, an intense forum based on individual passion is set. The first one is defined by a collective means to inculcate growth of potential as a source of inspiration for others, becoming a vehicle for self-realization. Notions of personal awareness, creativity, innovation and leadership skills form a basis for personal vision. (Caversham Centre Booklet, 2009)
The other one is based in Vision-Sharing and is a week long process. This provides a co-facilitated platform where a community catalyst invites one or two members from their home area, with whom they share their visions. Ideas of legacy and sustainability inform this residency, which is seen to add richness and depth to individual visions. From this residency develops an organic exploration and in a long run, the implementation of the CreACTive Centre Network. (Caversham Centre Booklet, 2009)

Skills Specialist also runs for a week. They are skills-based workshops that accommodate 8-10 participants. The aim of this residency is to invite those with deeper skills and experience, be it in printmaking processes and other areas of expression, to facilitate. Thus it encourages mentorship of emerging talent and simultaneously brings together individuals from diverse background in the exploration of the relationship between creativity and the challenges of education, leadership and legacy. (Caversham Centre Booklet, 2009)

Internships are the most organic of the residential programmes. These vary from 6 weeks to 6 months and aim to provide a mentored, experience-based learning environment. These encourage interns to become involved with all Caversham programmes and to share their own areas of skills and passions. (Caversham Centre Booklet, 2009)

Conclusion

The participation of the fine art graduates in the Internship programme has proved to be a significant success. Having joined Caversham straight from art school myself, I was enabled to step away from academic context and discover where my acquired skills could be best applied in the community context. Questions of how do we best integrate

indigenous knowledges and wisdom into the art teaching methodologies remain a stimulating challenge though.

Creating a balance and providing equal dignity to a variety of voices amidst our ever-evolving everyday lives is part of an ongoing process. The amplification of social justice, therefore, resides on the individual self, which then ripples through the collective and vice versa. Whether it's through dance, singing, drama, poetry, drawing or making prints, the impact of investing in 'self-belief through self-expression' is simply a process of reflecting potential in individuals. It is allowing the CreACTive vision to craft itself into the values and dreams of the young and old.

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Illustrations



Fig. 1 Caversham in 1984



Fig. 2 Areal view of Caversham now



Fig. 3 In Studio during a Skills Specialist Residency

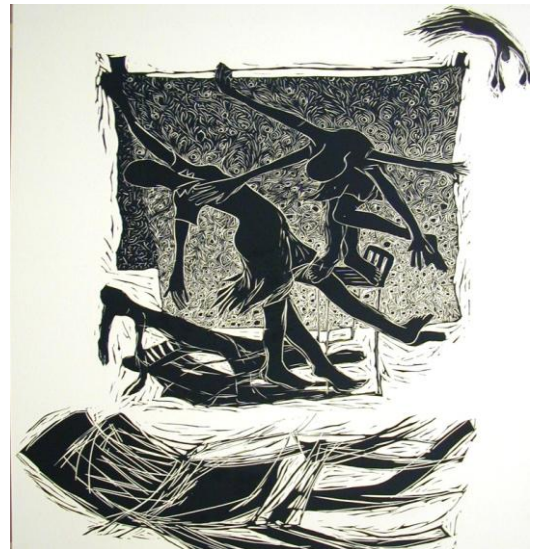


Fig. 4 Gabisile Nkosi, *Gida Nami*, linocut, 2002

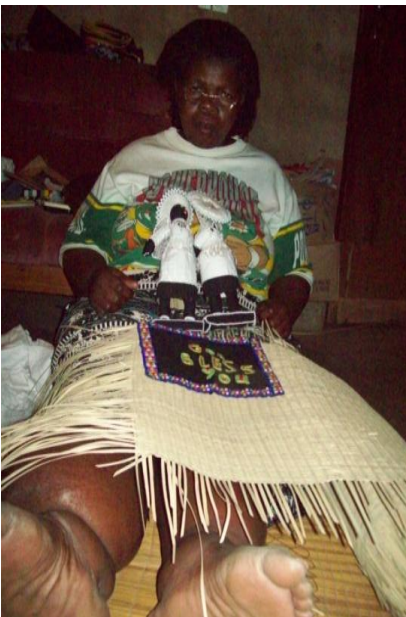


Fig. 5 Khululiwe Mabanga, with her work



Fig. 6 Isipho CreACTIVE Centre

“Shakespeare and social justice: critique and conformity during apartheid”

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Abstract

In both colonial and apartheid South Africa Shakespeare were used in the education system as part of the ideology of the state in order to promote an elitist and colonial concept of education. However, the texts were sometimes used more subversively by teachers, theatre practitioners and politicians in order to undermine conservative ideology. This paper looks at some of the diverse and contradictory ways in which Shakespeare was used during apartheid, both as cultural icon and as a means to criticize issues relating to social justice.

During the last ten years, research has brought new information to light about productions during the apartheid years, or the way a copy of the complete works of William Shakespeare was read by political prisoners on Robben Island, or that Shakespeare was an inspiration to black South African writers. Shakespeare was also a figure in the Marxist literary debate in the 1970s and 1980s at some South African universities, among scholars who were critical of apartheid and colonialism. In this paper I will be reflecting on current research in the field of Shakespeare and colonialism.

Was Shakespeare a writer who was particularly concerned with issues relating to Human Rights and Social Justice? One answer might be that Shakespeare was a Royalist who supported the Tudor Monarchy. His company was known as the King's Men and enjoyed Royal patronage. Both under Queen Elizabeth I and King James I, Shakespeare made sure his plays aligned themselves with the ideology of the English monarchy, for example, he presented a relatively sympathetic portrayal of King Henry VIII, one of the greatest tyrants in history. Unlike John Milton, who in a slightly later age, challenged the authority of the state, writing pamphlets on religious toleration and freedom of speech, Shakespeare, dramatized conflicting viewpoints in his plays, but kept his own views relatively private, avoiding public statements.¹

Where, during the civil war in the seventeenth century, Milton aligned himself with Cromwell and the parliamentarians, Shakespeare, in contrast, expressed the Elizabethan fears about a King being deposed. A.C. Grayling writes of Shakespeare's conception of kingship: "as he describes it, kingship has a status that is part-holy, part-magical, far above the ordinary, untouchable except at peril, where everything normally human is magnified by that status into epic and – when things go wrong – tragic proportions." (Grayling 109-11) Grayling's description here is based on a reading of *Macbeth*, yet it is true that the Divine Right of Kings is a doctrine which is the basis of many of Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare problematized this doctrine in his plays: what happens if a King without a male heir abdicates his position and divides his kingdom as in the case of King Lear? What happens if a divinely appointed King happens to bring about the usurpation of his position through his own actions as in the case of Richard II? Although Shakespeare problematizes the concept of the Divine Right of Kings, he does not ever reject it. Christopher Marlowe on the other hand, a much more radical thinker, dispenses with the Divine Right of Kings altogether, not even giving it a moment's thought. The Divine Right of Kings or a belief in God has no place in Marlowe's universe. Hence, in Shakespeare's day, Shakespeare might be seen as a conservative figure when compared to Christopher Marlowe.

¹ A.C. Grayling describes John Milton and John Locke as "two champions of liberty" (Grayling 63). See also his account of Milton's contribution to Human Rights (Grayling 63-70). Anna Beer writes that Milton's *Areopagitica* "remains one of the most eloquent defences of a free press ever written." (Beer xvii)

Yet the plays themselves certainly open up questions about social justice, however ambiguous Shakespeare's response may have been on the Divine Right of Kings. Unable directly to criticize his own society in the English History plays, Shakespeare sets his plays which are critical of tyranny or social injustice in the distant past, in classical Rome or Greece, or in foreign settings such as Venice or Vienna, or on a fictitious island.

Furthermore, Shakespeare was able to dramatize the tyranny of English Kings like Richard III, precisely because he was not of the ruling House of York, while other tyrants feature in his plays, such as Leontes in *The Winter's Tale* or Angelo in *Measure for Measure*.

One of Shakespeare's portrayals of tyranny occurs in the play, *Macbeth*. Perhaps it was acceptable to present a usurping Scottish King as a villain, especially as the opponents of his villainy look to English forces for their support. In Elizabethan England, a Scottish Queen, Mary Queen of Scots (1542-67), was imprisoned in the Tower by her cousin Queen Elizabeth and summarily executed. Yet it was the German dramatist, Schiller, who in a subsequent age was able to write that tragedy.² It was a play that Shakespeare could easily have written, yet wisely chose not to.

Shakespeare lived in an age of social injustice, of religious persecutions, where traitors were hung, drawn and quartered and where various instruments of torture abounded. Many of the plays contain prison scenes, such as *Richard II* or *Richard III*, while there were metaphorical prisons as well, for Hamlet, "Denmark is a prison". As in South Africa during the apartheid period, a prison was not the safest place to be. You were likely to be murdered in prison as was the fate of Richard II, of Clarence and of Steve Biko in South Africa in 1977.

However, Shakespeare reveals that he did not simply dramatize scenes of social injustice, thus realistically reflecting the nature of his society, but provided insight and a moral perspective on violence. For example, in *Troilus and Cressida*, which might be described as his anti-war play, the Prologue very clearly announces his intentions regarding a perspective on the absurdity and horror of war. Athens and Troy have gone to war on the most slender of pretexts, figuratively speaking, Helen of Troy, wife of Menelaus. Yet countries both before and since have gone to war, sacrificing young lives, for even less seductive reasons.

During the Nazi era, certain plays of Shakespeare were hijacked by Fascist ideologists in order to promote their own interests. For example, *The Merchant of Venice* was interpreted as an anti-Semitic play, while *Coriolanus* was interpreted as a justification for a disregard of democracy. Catherine Belsey writes:

While new historicism (mostly American) has been busy pushing Shakespeare firmly back into his own period, cultural materialism (often British) has concentrated on the way the plays have been put to work since then, and enlisted or appropriated in support of specific causes. Shakespeare has been invoked to defend political passivity (*Julius Caesar* can be played to show resistance as hopeless), as well as imperialism (Prospero, the colonial oppressor, has been held up for admiration), in addition to Nazism (*Coriolanus* was a favourite in Germany between the two wars). Cultural materialists have also scrutinized the education system to discover that Shakespeare has been interpreted on behalf of right-wing individualism and a divisive class structure, not to mention racism and sexism. The case is now incontrovertible: in the course of time Shakespeare has been made to speak from a range of positions, some more appalling than others, and each masquerading in its day as the truth about Eternal Man. (Belsey 5)

Precisely because Shakespeare's plays are dramatic works, they are open to interpretation and can be distorted according to the perspective of directors or the ideology of the day. Such interpretations offer a one dimensional approach to Shakespeare, concentrating on only one strand of the dramatic context and depend on manipulating the audiences' sympathies. Apart from being viewed as a justification for anti-Semitism, *The Merchant of Venice* can equally be interpreted as a play that is sympathetic to the predicament of Jews, as

² Schiller's *Maria Stuart* dates from 1800.

Roman Polanski observed in his film *The Pianist*, where one of the Jewish characters, the brother of the main character, reads some of Shylock's lines from the play:

Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? – fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us do we not laugh? If you poison us do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? (*The Merchant of Venice* 3.1.56-63)

The Christian characters in the play are hardly exemplary in the way they behave towards Shylock, in their lack of mercy and their racism, while throughout they are governed by self interest and capitalist principles. The play can be interpreted as a critique of racism.

Hence, whether or not Shakespeare's plays inform us about issues relating to Human Rights and Social Justice depends entirely on how they're interpreted. During the years of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, Shakespeare was enlisted in support of a conservative outlook. Either the plays were seen as having no direct relevance to the situation of social injustice in the country, or they were seen as exemplary texts, cultural icons to be revered rather than criticized. Of course, this depended entirely on who you were and what context you were in. Some teachers of English, risking their careers, brought out the parallels more clearly than others, bringing out, for example, the racial prejudice in *Othello*, which Iago uses to his advantage. Shakespeare's texts stimulated intellectual debate and discussion among scholars and students and whether or not Shakespeare was seen as directly relevant to the political situation in South Africa, any form of intellectual debate was bound to have an effect beyond the classroom, whether it was in the observation of the emotive speech of politicians or the way in which newspapers reported events through the haze imposed by state censorship. In an authoritarian state, any form of intellectual enquiry becomes a threat to the hegemony of the state: why should there be censorship when students are expected to think critically and are assessed on that basis?

A number of teachers and professors of English were directly involved in the political struggle. One of these was Derek Marsh who was imprisoned in 1960 on account of his anti-apartheid activities and used the time to complete his PhD on Shakespeare's late plays (Johnson 155). His colleague, Professor Durrant, noted this fact in the flyleaf of Marsh's book based on the thesis:

Mr. Marsh wrote the greater part of this book whilst imprisoned, without charge or trial, in the Pietermaritzburg jail during the troubles of 1960. It says much for the liberality of the South African government that he was allowed access, during the months of his imprisonment, to the unexpurgated text of Shakespeare's *Plays*. The result is something more than a work of criticism; it is also a work of rare humanity. (quoted: Johnson 155)

However, David Johnson writes that in his discussion of the plays, "Marsh makes no explicit connection between his opposition to apartheid and his devotion to Shakespeare..." (Johnson 155). What Johnson misses here is that it was a time when the study of literature was itself an act of defiance, a plea for liberal-mindedness. People like Marsh and Durrant did not need to make their rejection of apartheid explicit. Durrant's comment about "the liberality of the South African government" is pure irony which could be picked up by any intelligent reader, but which would defeat the intellectual prowess of the security police. Durrant's comment also points to another interesting fact. The unexpurgated text of Shakespeare's *Plays* was allowed in prison, precisely because it was not perceived as a work of social criticism or a threat to the state, such as the *Communist Manifesto* may have been. Yet a seemingly harmless text could become a symbol in the struggle. Marsh's book, *The Recurring Miracle*, stands out as a symbol of defiance against a totalitarian government.

In much the same way with Shakespeare's texts, the silences "speak". Shakespeare's silences about the injustices of his own society speak profoundly. A writer who could be so aware of injustice in other contexts

could not help but notice the injustices around him. In this sense, his portrayal of King Henry VIII did not need to offer criticism. Silence may be a way in which one can subtly undermine the authorities.

On Robben Island in the 1970s, a copy of the complete texts of Shakespeare's plays, the Alexander Edition, did its round among the prisoners. After having viewed the volume on display in Stratford-upon-Avon in 2006, David Schalkwyk wrote:

The volume currently on display in Nash House is the 1970 imprint. What makes it so special? It is not owned by the Shakespeare Birthday Trust which sponsored the exhibition, or the Shakespeare Institute of the University of Birmingham, which has its offices down the road, but by a South African: Sonny [Sunny] Venkatrathnam. It is the so called 'Robben Island Shakespeare' (also known as the Robben Island Bible). A political prisoner on Robben Island during the 1970s, Venkatrathnam was able to smuggle his copy of Shakespeare's works into the prison by persuading his warders that it was a religious Hindu text. He then surreptitiously passed the book to a number of his fellow prisoners in the single cells. Over a period of four or five years (this process took a long time) each prisoner marked his favourite passage, and signed it with the date. The Robben Island Shakespeare contains thirty-two signatures, including those of Walter Sisulu, Neville Alexander, Billy Nair, Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Masondo, and Mac Maharaj. The page on which Venkatrathnam's Shakespeare is open for display in Stratford was signed on 16th of December 1979, with the name 'Nelson Mandela': 'Cowards die many times before their deaths / The valiant never taste of death but once' Shakespeare, 2005: *Julius Caesar*, 2.2.32-3) (Schalkwyk 2)

In 2008, at the request of Professor Laurence Wright of the Institute for the Study of English in Africa at Rhodes University, accompanied by a photographer, I met Mr. Sunny Venkatrathnam at his home in Durban with the purpose of photographing the individual pages of his book as a permanent record for the National English Literary Museum. The individual entries made fascinating reading. In some cases, the comrades had simply indicated their favourite lines from the plays or the sonnets, but in many cases they had left messages by selecting passages which had specific meanings in the context of the struggle. Mandela's choice of quotation could be read as words of encouragement to other prisoners to remain brave throughout their adversities. Kadir Hassim chose the opening of the Editor's Introduction where the view is expressed that Shakespeare "ignored the Rules". Another interesting choice (among many) is Joe Quabi's choice of lines from *Richard II*: "Not so; even through the hollow lives of death / I spy life peering; but I dare not say / How near the tidings of our comfort is." (2.1.270-273) Hence, this volume of Shakespeare was used as a form of communication among the prisoners, words of encouragement in adversity and perhaps also for posterity, for the history of the struggle.

Shakespeare has also been a source of inspiration to many South African writers, both black and white, English and Afrikaans, including many who were directly opposed to apartheid. A significant figure is Solomon T. Plaatje, a founder member of the ANC, who wrote scholarly articles on Shakespeare and translated some of the plays into Tswana. Another interesting phenomenon which has come to light thanks to the research of Natasha Distiller is the influence of Shakespeare on the *Drum* writers of the 1950s, under the editorship of Anthony Sampson. They included Ez'kia Mpahlele, Can Themba, Don Mattera and Bloke Modisane. For these writers, the Shakespearian idiom was used to describe life in Sophiatown. (Distiller 21-27). Hence, Shakespeare has been appropriated by South African writers in ways which are sometimes quite unexpected and hardly in line with the efforts of colonial education.

David Johnson, in his book *Shakespeare and South Africa* (1996), stressed the links between Shakespeare and a conservative, colonial approach to the teaching of English in South Africa, yet subsequent research has shown that Shakespeare was used in much more inventive and critical ways. Johnson does not refer in detail to productions of Shakespeare and as Rohan Quince has shown, there were stage productions which were "deeply subversive of the dominant apartheid ideology" (Quince 157).

Shakespeare was also a key figure in the Marxist literary debate at South African universities in the 1970s. However, one of the negative aspects of this debate was the historicisation of Shakespeare. Shakespeare

was seen as needing to be read in the light of the ideological and economic forces at work in his day. Hence, although this debate moved the study of Shakespeare into a political context, it also moved Shakespeare away from the South African context. To see Shakespeare as having relevance in contemporary South Africa would invoke a “Universal Shakespeare” of liberal tradition. Hence, Marxist criticism was often surprisingly reluctant to see the contemporary relevance of Shakespeare.

In 1987, towards the end of the apartheid years, Martin Orkin published his book, *Shakespeare Against Apartheid*, a seminal work which first articulated a view of Shakespeare in South Africa which was both radical and historical. In the same year, Janet Suzman directed *Othello* at the Market Theatre with John Kani as Othello in an otherwise white production. Both the study and the performance of Shakespeare had moved into a new realm where Shakespeare was seen in terms of direct opposition to apartheid. However, the apartheid state was already on its last legs, thanks to many other factors including the economic boycott, the armed struggle and the increasing cultural and political isolation of South Africa. To what extent then did Shakespeare play a role in the dismantling of apartheid? Perhaps “Shakespeare” did no more than hold a mirror up to our own times?

In the post-apartheid period, Shakespeare remains popular, his plays performed more frequently than those of any other dramatist. Productions today are often post-colonial and post-modernist, often highly inventive, exploring matters relating to race, culture and gender. They have become outstanding vehicles for young actors and directors to explore and develop their talents. The plays have stimulated creativity among young people, helping us to see that this is one of the most important principles in a democratic country.

Although the study and performance of Shakespeare’s texts may not have contributed directly to the dismantling of apartheid, they served as inspiration to activists and poets directly involved in the struggle. In much the same way, in the context of his own time, Shakespeare may not have directly challenged the authority of the State, but he certainly influenced those who did, including Milton. Shakespeare seems to represent a level of reasoning and feeling which social injustice tends to deny. Under apartheid, as under far worse systems of tyranny, the prerequisite of the system is that the individual may not think and feel except in ways that are officially approved. In such contexts, Shakespeare remains a catalyst to thought and expression.

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Critical Hermeneutic Participatory Research Protocol: Exploring the Creative Process of Community Art Development in Uganda¹

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Abstract

Based on my fieldwork in Uganda, I present the theoretical underpinnings of the research process, which is drawn from the tradition of critical hermeneutics. Critical hermeneutics readily lends itself to a participatory style of inquiry, which fits well within the medium in which community development takes place. Participatory research is often used to explore artistic processes, but critical hermeneutic participatory research includes an argumentative aspect that challenges preconceived ideas of both the researcher and the research participants. Hermeneutics is the art of interpreting texts, yet interpretation can easily become subjective unless contradictory opinions are included in the research process. An objective approach to research inhibits the researcher from discovering hidden truths. Critical hermeneutics places the focus of interpretation on what is disclosed in the "world of the text." In critical hermeneutic research the text is created from the worlds of the researcher and the research participants.

In this research, both the research protocol and the subject at hand are creative in their nature. The creative process has long been heralded as an important part of social transformation in art practices used in community development work. Art narratives formulated in the spirit of social justice are discursive, engaging, participatory explorations. Narrative, identity, and imagination are widely recognized themes that surface in community art development and represent significant considerations for the community art maker. I support the importance of these themes and propose that a critical hermeneutic research methodology is a viable way of delving into the nature of the creative process in community art development.

Introduction

Hans Georg-Gadamer (2004) states the case for reconsidering the validity of scientific research. Gadamer disputes the positivistic method that focuses primarily on statistical data to support a hypothesis or a widely held belief. Gadamer proposes the example of art interpretation as a metaphor to promote an ontological orientation to the understanding of phenomena. On art interpretation Gadamer posits that in order to understand artwork the receiver of art needs to engage intimately with the artwork. When we bring ourselves to the interpretation of an artwork, we may find significant meaning that opens up the possibility to form connections. In other words, Gadamer argues that knowledge stems from one's life experiences and when greater attention is given to this experience during art interpretation a sort of truth may surface that extends beyond aesthetics to the heart of the matter. If the spectator is able to resonate with art, then what is communicated is meaningful to the receiver of art. If we entertain that there is an engaging nature to art interpretation then art may be understood as a dialectic medium.

Gadamer formulates his theories drawing from his teacher, Martin Heidegger. Heidegger (2001) delves deeply into art from the vantage point of the artist. For Heidegger the artist is inseparable from the artwork. There is a connection between the artist and the artwork that gives life to what might otherwise be dismissed as an inanimate art object. Further, Heidegger posits that there is a kind of dynamic presence embedded in an artwork and draws a correlation between the energy at the core of an artwork and the core essence that we possess. This core essence is always present, but it needs to be disclosed. Heidegger (2001: 35) states that, "if there occurs in the work a disclosure of a particular being, disclosing what and how it is, then there is here an occurring, a happening of truth at work."

Once the very heart or essence has been revealed, we have uncovered a profound truth that is meaningful to who we are. In other words, we cannot deny that our life experiences have a presence that is part of us and of how we understand our world. The significance of Heidegger and Gadamer's theories of art for my research on community art development is that there is something beyond aesthetics that warrants investigation. From the standpoint of critical hermeneutic research, it is the understanding that we are historical beings and we bring this aspect of ourselves to the art of interpretation.

The hermeneutic theories of Gadamer and Heidegger refute the idea that knowledge is attainable by being neutral or objective, yet one can argue that an inward focus applied to interpretation can easily slip into subjectivity. Paul Ricoeur acknowledges this and takes interpretation a step further by considering the "world of the text." Ricoeur (1998: 112-113) proposes that in order to avoid retreating into our inner world or separating ourselves completely from the subject at hand, one must interpret the meaning of the text created by the authors of the text. The critical hermeneutic participatory research method developed by Ellen Herda (1999) allowed me to enter into the world of community art development experientially and with the participation of artists working in the area of community development. Hermeneutics is the interpretation of texts and in critical hermeneutic research the text is critiqued using interpretation. Critical hermeneutic participatory research is a search for a deeper meaning about a research topic.

The critical hermeneutic research methodology is grounded in critical hermeneutic theory and is dependent on empirical data derived from interacting with others. Yet the research is also creative in nature. There is freedom to imaginatively explore complex topics such as art without detaching oneself from the topic. It is the use of critical hermeneutic theory that simultaneously takes the researcher inside the topic and allows the researcher a necessary distance to take the research topic to a new level of understanding. The unique dynamics of this research model is similar to the creative process used in art-making.

Critical Hermeneutic Participatory Research

As stated above, critical hermeneutic theory is the foundation for critical hermeneutic participatory research. Using this theory Herda (1999) creates a dialectical, linguistic, and anthropological research schema. The research process is participatory and includes both the researcher and the research participants. Together they explore the research topic by exchanging personal insights and experiences about the research inquiry. This particular research is not driven by a hypothesis, it is not technical, nor is there a pursuit to prove a specific point. Through engaging dialogue the researcher and the research participants challenge their pre-understandings about a particular inquiry. When we engage in discourse with others, we potentially open up new worlds that are interpreted for meaning. It is important to stress that this participation in this research is inclusive of the researcher and the research participant. Participation goes deeper than physical presence and extends to a collaboration between interested parties. Interconnectedness is a characteristic of critical hermeneutic research. The researcher establishes a relationship with the research participant. In the hermeneutic tradition, we learn in relation to each other, not in isolation. What we learn does not come from quantitative data; it develops out of understanding ways of being. As a result of the research process, the researcher is transformed to the extent that how he or she thinks informs future action. Said differently, ethical action is informed action, not an altruistic reaction.

The concept of critical hermeneutics includes an ethical and moral dimension. It is vital that the researcher commit to a responsible position about the issue being explored. Of utmost importance is that the researcher acknowledge that mistakes in the past and present should be allowed to come forth in conversation. When problematic events of the past surface they will need to be openly addressed in dialogue and included as part of the data collected. When the data is critically interpreted, lessons can be learned that add to the researcher's knowledge about their inquiry. Another area of ethical consideration is the inclusion of people who are intimately connected to the topic. Herda (1999: 5) explains that, "we do not judge as one individual apart from others... a moral act involves another person as we undergo a particular situation together, including research, where we make a judgment that mediates between universal ideas and particular contexts." In the case of a research study that includes a foreign culture the researcher needs to make a deliberate effort to reach out to the local people. The people and their culture are important considerations for future actions that the researcher makes in the field, because lasting and meaningful change can only be sustainable when the proposed solutions resonate with the developing community.

The critical hermeneutic participatory research is field-based. In order to reach new understandings about the research topic, the researcher needs to step into the world of their participants. Field research was particularly important for me because I wanted to understand better the socio-cultural significance of art in Uganda. Palmo (2009: 7) states that, "in the context of culture, works of art provide meaning for the culture at large. How we interact with members of our culture and how we are within our culture are all symbolically represented by the art of the culture." Based on my own creative experiences in other cultures, I support the belief that art, when considered in the context of social change, goes deeper than aesthetics. Equipped with a sound participatory research framework and with my feet planted on the soil of Uganda, I embarked on my scholarly adventure.

In June 2009, I traveled to Uganda to conduct field research on the creative process used in art practices with an eye on how artists create art specifically for use in community development work. While there are merits to the aesthetics of an artwork, the process of creating community art is an experience that is personal and that serves as a medium to address social challenges. Exploring the creative process is a difficult undertaking because the process is not tangible, nor is it accessible by focusing solely on aesthetics. I chose critical hermeneutic participatory research because the research protocol allows the researcher to adapt the parameters of his or her research while following a general set of research guidelines. This is an optimal research model for exploring the dynamics of the artistic process. This particular research is grounded in critical hermeneutic theory. Hermeneutics takes into account interconnectedness, genesis and change. These are all important aspects of the artistic process. The incorporation of critique to interpreting the data expands the potential knowledge one may acquire. The research protocol I describe below includes how I decided upon my research categories, chose my research participants, and how I carried out the collection and analysis of the research data. Along with this information, I incorporate important hermeneutic theories that underpin the development of Herda's critical hermeneutic participatory research methodology.

Research Categories

The research categories are crucial to the research framework. Herda (1999: 103) says that the research categories "provide the circumference of conversations, and serve as points or themes for discussion in analysis. They need to be well thought through; otherwise they

detract from the primary issue at hand.” Critical hermeneutic research begins with a selection of research categories that are drawn from critical hermeneutic theory. The choice of theory may be linked to the general themes that emerge from the literature review (Herda 1999: 103-104). I chose the theoretical concepts of narrative, identity, and imagination because these are concepts shared by community art practitioners and researchers who write about community art development. Palmo (2010: 42) explains the theoretical importance of these research categories saying that, “narrative [is] important because it is temporal, and provides an interface for reflection, and the construct for storytelling. Identity is personal, cultural, and revealed in the stories we tell. Imagination is interwoven in both narrative and identity.” Herda (1999) suggests that the researcher conduct research conversations prior to the research to test out the research categories. I learned from the preliminary conversations that the theoretical research categories of narrative, identity, and imagination allowed me to focus on the heart of the creative process in community art development.

During my research conversations with Ugandan artists, the different layers of the creative process gradually surfaced because of the theory embedded in the research categories. Sometimes, the artist began to think deeply about how they approached a community artwork. The themes associated with the critical hermeneutic theories of narrative, identity, and imagination came through as I presented the data collected from the research conversations. When I began to analyze this data using the research categories, I was able to explore truths about the artistic process that are concealed by a simple viewing of the aesthetic qualities of an artwork. The theory behind the research categories provides the researcher a rich set of parameters. In order to gather data about narrative, identity, and imagination as they are related to community art development, I needed to reach out to artists and developers in the field.

Research Participants

My research participants were selected for their background in community art development. I began my search for research participants before leaving for Uganda. Through networking and based on my preliminary research, I secured the names of some artists who were working with small communities throughout Uganda. After my conversations with these contacts, they recommended to me other artists and developers who could add to the body of data I was collecting. All of the research participants were very knowledgeable about the creative process used in art practices geared toward community development. The experience of the research participants coupled with my experience as an artist brought in the historical dimension to my research. In critical hermeneutic participatory research the past is a necessary point of departure because it is part of the knowledge base I want to critique and eventually build upon (Herda 1999).

One of the key theories under-girding critical hermeneutic research is Gadamer’s (2004: 390) concept of a “fusion of horizons.” Each research participant and the researcher bring to the inquiry their own perspective of the research topic (Herda 1999: 90). These viewpoints are what Gadamer refers to when he talks about a “horizon” (2004: 303). Our horizon includes the knowledge we have acquired over time. In other words, there is a historical nature to a horizon. Gadamer posits that we cannot separate ourselves from our history and traditions because they inform how we think and feel about an issue. However Gadamer believes that our horizons do not remain in a fixed state. There is always the potential to expand our limited horizon. In short, Gadamer brings in a human element that is

often discarded when a positivistic approach drives research. In critical hermeneutic research, the potential to expand our horizons is possible when we call into question our pre-understandings from both the past and the present (Herda 1999: 89). There is a temporal consideration. The researcher does not discard existing knowledge; rather he or she questions the validity of this knowledge.

The research participants are actively involved in the research process. Herda (1999: 90) explains that, "in critical hermeneutic research, our attempt is to bring biases out into the open, not to technically reduce or control them." In other words, the researcher and the research participant do not seek a consensus. When the horizons of the researcher and the research participant come together in discourse the researcher may come to a new understanding that helps him or her to see the research topic otherwise. The researcher is looking for a deeper meaning so his or her awareness of the research topic becomes more encompassing. In short, the researcher is looking for a fusion of horizons. The importance of a fusion of horizons may be described as letting go of what is no longer relevant and embodying something new about the research topic. Exposure to new ways of thinking about the research topic may take the researcher on a path that expands their horizons and thus their knowledge base. However, without the participation of others who have experience with the research topic, the potential to expand our horizons is stymied. Further, there must be a willingness to reach new understandings.

Participants engage willingly in an exploration of the research topic. In critical hermeneutic participatory research the research participants voluntarily enter into a conversation with the researcher. Before conducting the research conversation, I provided each research participant with an explanation of my inquiry about the creative process. Included in this explanation were some of the questions I chose to guide our conversation. The research conversation began with requesting permission from the research participants to audio record the conversation. At any time the research participants could have asked me to stop recording our conversation. The participants also signed a consent form to release the information disclosed in the conversation. I transcribed the research conversations into a written text and gave a copy of the transcript to the research participants for review. This allowed the research participants the opportunity to edit, add, or delete any part of the transcript. The data collection process was a joint effort between myself and the research participants.

Research Questions and Data Collection

In critical hermeneutic participatory research, the primary source of data is acquired from the research conversations. I compiled questions under each of my chosen research categories to guide the conversations. I developed questions using theoretical concepts to keep the conversation oriented toward the research topic. The research questions are not structured as they are in a traditional interview. In a classic interview, the questions are strategic in nature and this creates the conditions for discourse that is static. In critical hermeneutic research the research questions are not arranged in a specific order. Posing questions in a fixed order stifles the flow of the research conversation and places the researcher in control of what is shared during the conversation. In an interview, the questions are often addressed in pursuit of disproving or confirming a predetermined hypothesis. During a research conversation, not all of the questions may need to be raised because there is a natural flow during the conversation about the research topic. Other times, unanticipated questions may arise as the conversation unfolds. New curiosities that

previously were not taken into account may contribute to the richness of the data collected. In critical hermeneutic participatory research the research questions are designed to keep the conversation directed toward the research topic. This form of communication is similar to what Gadamer (2004) describes as “play.”

Gadamer explains “play” using the example of art interpretation. For Gadamer, the nature of an artwork is an interpretive encounter between the spectator and the work of art. In other words, the viewer enters into an intimate experience with the art and the receiver of art brings something to this occurrence. Gadamer (2004: 104) describes the nature of play by stating that, “what is intended is to-and-fro movement that is not tied to any goal that would bring it to an end.” Play is interpretation set into a circular motion that opens up possibilities that were previously undiscovered or remained hidden. In play it is the topic that is the immediate concern. In other words, the aesthetic objects of interpretation take a secondary position to what lies at the heart of the work of art. The theoretical concept of play is characteristic of the dynamics between the researcher and the research participant during the research conversations (Herda 1999: 123). In fact, it is the idea of play that distinguishes a conversation from that of an interview. The research topic is the point of reference for the conversations and discourse revolves around this topic. This provides the researcher and the research participant the opportunity to raise to the level of discourse the insights each person has acquired over time.

The inner working of play creates the necessary conditions for the researcher and the research participant to critique what is being exchanged through discourse. In research conversations there is an element of argumentation done in the spirit of reaching new understandings as opposed to validating a belief about the research topic (Herda 1999: 107-108). What we seek as critical hermeneutic researchers is to gather data above and beyond statistical information. Through conversation, there is an exchange of ideas. Like play, research conversations are not a means to an end, but a dynamic interplay of insights about the topic. The interest of both parties in the topic takes the focus away from subjective monologues to a meaningful dialogue between the researcher and the research participant. My most meaningful conversations were those that remained true to the concept of play. This was especially true when the artists used their work as a point of reference. There was play about the community art work that in turn propelled the conversation about the research topic.

The task of the researcher in critical hermeneutic research is to delve into the particular world of the other. In addition to the research conversations I maintained a research journal (Herda 1999: 98). In the journal I wrote about my reflections on the research conversations and observations I made about the sociocultural sites I visited in Uganda. In order to understand community art in Uganda, I needed to also engage in art experiences there so I could gain a better understanding of what art means to Ugandans. Clifford Geertz (2000: 109) posits that “it is out of the participation in the general system of symbolic forms we call culture that participation in the particular we call art, which is in fact but a sector of it, is possible.” Every culture is uniquely grounded in art, but this art is not an aesthetic object. Cultural art opens up a world that is intimately connected to the people of the culture. I learned a lot from this aspect of my field research. My journal entries disclosed aspects about Ugandan culture and art that added meaning to the data I collected through my research conversations.

Data Analysis

The researcher creates a text from the data that is collected during the research conversations and from the journal entries. Ricoeur (2007: 106) states that a “text is only really a text when it is not restricted to transcribing and anterior speech, when instead it inscribes directly in written letters what the discourse means.” It is here that the theoretical research categories are very important. First, the researcher presents the data. The conversations are read for themes that fall under the rubric of the theoretical research categories. These themes are substantiated by quotes from the conversations. In my research, the critical hermeneutic theories of narrative, identity, and imagination served as the framework for the data presentation. In turn, these same theoretical concepts served as the parameters for data analysis. The data was analyzed for meaning using interpretation. It is important to note that during data analysis the researcher critically interprets the data. In order to understand the process of data analysis, it is important to introduce the concepts of *world of the text*, *distanciation*, and *appropriation*. The world of the text, distanciation, and appropriation are intertwined.

The world of the text is the meaning of data drawn from the research conversations and presented to the researcher. Herda (1999: 75) states that the “text, created from transcriptions of previous conversations, provides a proposed world that the reader or researcher could inhabit and in which they could project possibilities.” When the researcher analyzes the world of the text, he or she is trying to reach new understandings based on the possibilities provided by the text and the pre-understandings of the researcher about the research topic. Inherent in this process is the dynamic of play introduced by Gadamer. At this point, the data that has been co-created by the researcher and the research participant becomes the focal point. There is a fluid movement shifting between the data presented and the researcher’s interpretation of the data. Having fixed the conversations into the form of a text, the researcher can then begin to analyze the data revealed through conversations with the research participants. When the researcher reads the text, he or she is actually interpreting the text for meaning; it is the precursor to reaching new understandings about the research topic.

The world that the text opens up is one of possibilities that can only fully be realized through distanciation. Distanciation begins when the researcher transcribes the recorded conversations into written form. The research text allows the researcher a comfortable distance for analysis. Ricoeur (2007: 86) explains that the world of the text “constitutes a new sort of distanciation that could be called a distanciation of the real from itself.” The researcher is still connected to the data yet awarded space to interpret the data for meaning relevant to the research inquiry. Another way to comprehend distanciation is to consider the dynamics that occur when the researcher engages with the text. Ricoeur (2007: 87) draws a correlation between dialogue and reading text. Ricoeur posits that there is a dialectic that occurs between the reader and the text. Attention is taken away from the speakers of the research conversations and the heart of the research topic is placed at the disposal of the researcher. What sets this dialogue apart from verbal communication is the fact that the dialogue is an intimate one between the reader of the text and the text itself. In other words, Ricoeur says that the text is directed to someone in particular. Distanciation opens the communicative nature of reading the text so the researcher may begin to appropriate the data.

In critical hermeneutic research, it is during analysis that the researcher’s way of thinking

and being is transformed because this is when the researcher appropriates the data. Appropriation is an important part of data analysis. The researcher must own the text first before he or she can begin to interpret the data for new understandings about the research topic. Ricoeur (1998: 185) posits that, "appropriation is the concept which is suitable for the actualization of meaning as addressed to someone...it takes the place of the answer in the dialogical situation." While the data collection was a collaborative effort, in the stage of analysis, the research becomes the product of the researcher. The act of appropriation is when the researcher digests the data for meaning. Once the researcher has found meaning from the data, it is then possible to critique and interpret this meaning for new understandings about the research topic. Herda (1999) explains that what transpires in the reading of the text by the researcher is both the act of owning the meaning of the text and recognizing the possibilities disclosed in the world of the text. Through interaction and interpretation of the text, the researcher may come to new understandings.

Conclusion

Critical hermeneutic field-based research is a creative process that is participatory, dialectic, and interpretive. The research is not done in isolation; it includes the active contribution of research participants and a willingness to move beyond the confines of our comfortable world. The quest for new meanings and a deeper understanding of the research topic is not confined to the limited paradigm of scientific analysis. A scientific orientation to research distances the researcher from what is being studied. Critical hermeneutic research protocol provides the researcher the opportunity to delve into the heart of a research topic so that new insights may be revealed, brought to the open, and critically interpreted for meaning. Critical hermeneutic theory provides a framework to explore in depth a particular inquiry. Instead of settling upon our limited horizons and trying to validate existing knowledge by acquiring supportive facts, critical hermeneutic researchers seek for truth that will broaden our horizons based on what has been disclosed through interaction with others. The research is a quest to reach new understandings through the process of critical interpretation. New understandings lead to a new way of thinking about the research topic. Those who choose this research protocol must be willing and eager to call into question their existing beliefs and search for truth that transforms the way one thinks.

Critical hermeneutic participatory research is dialectic and serves as a model for how we may raise social issues to the level of discourse. The theoretical concepts that underpin critical hermeneutic research may assist us when we enter into dialogue about social issues. Critical hermeneutic participatory research is oriented toward the worlds opened up through dialogue. Through a share of knowledge a narrative is configured based on discourse between the researcher and the research participants. The world of the text that is presented to the researcher is one of a myriad of possible understandings that are interpreted for meaning. It is through dialogue, a share of insights about a topic, that together we may reach new understandings about each other and the world we share. What the researcher learns from the experience is then manifested in responsible actions that better serve others. Further, the new understandings that emerge from the research serve as a base for future study. This is an important consideration for intercultural dialogue because cultures are dynamic. As new discussions about culture continue, we use what has been learned to build upon an ever deeper understanding of others.

In critical hermeneutic research guiding questions energize the conversation. So we must reflect upon the nature of the dialogue we have with others. Are we speaking at each

other or are we raising questions that engage others and encourage their contribution as we converse about the issue at hand? In critical hermeneutic research, we do not detach ourselves from the research topic or from the world of the research participants, nor do we work from a clean slate and observe or analyze from afar. Working with others, we explore a shared world that is brought to the level of discourse. An important consideration for transformative dialogue is to be open and willing to reach new understandings. Therefore, we may also reflect upon whether or not the dialogue is oriented toward a search for meaning that will change how we think and act or are if we are trying to validate our current beliefs? In critical hermeneutic research, the researcher does not stop at what is readily available. The researcher embraces history and current understandings and considers these new understandings using both a critical and interpretive lens. This orientation creates the conditions for thinking differently. When we begin to think differently we see our social world anew, which in turn guides us to act in the spirit of social justice.

Intercultural dialogue that follows the theoretical underpinnings of this research protocol can potentially allow us to reach new understandings. This requires that we as researchers and community development artists submit to the cultural art form that binds a community together (Palmo 2010). Part of the dialogue between cultures can include the art forms that reveal the identity of a culture. Art has a communicative nature that can disclose the very being of a people group. We must learn to tap cultural art as a dialectic resource because it holds a particular truth that is not readily visible; it is revealed through interaction with the other. Equipped with this new understanding, the development artist may make informed decisions about their actions as they work toward social change.

Note

1. Some of the contents of this paper are drawn from my doctoral dissertation.

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TITLE: AN ANALYSIS OF AN INSTITUTION AT THE CROSSROADS

Sub-Theme: The challenges facing arts activism in the 21st century

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Abstract

The paper will report on a supportive intervention into an arts educational centre located in Gauteng. This intervention investigates internal and external forces which threatens the demise of this historically important establishment. The paper will present a historical perspective of this centre with regards to its establishment and the role it has played in the development of some outstanding South African contemporary artists. Furthermore, a discussion of the methodology used in this study to unearth the challenges faced by the centre will be presented. Finally the paper will argue some recommendations on how this centre could be resuscitated as a centre of excellence for a community based arts education centre.

The Centre has been in the forefront of many arts related projects and programmes directed at addressing critical social challenges, and even its very formulation was a reaction to the horrific phenomenon of 1976. As part of numerous organisations that have dedicated their time and resources to arts education, the establishment aims to redress the present social disparities. This paper argues that the major challenge, among numerous others, confronting arts activism in this century is the disintegration and resultant closures of arts educational sites located in township and rural areas.

Methodology

This ongoing research employed an intervention research model. Intervention research requires, amongst other criteria, participant observation, a method widely used in ethnographic research types. Much criticism has been directed towards the validity of findings obtained through this technique because of its highly subjective nature (Ball, 1988: 508). Due to the nature of this study, participant observation represented the best research method as it “employs the researcher as the main tool of investigation” (Ball, 1988: 507). Data was collected by way of frequent consultations with the current and past management staff of Funda, current and alumni students, and those who have strong links with the centre.

Intervention research demands that the researcher establish and articulate an exact role within the social phenomenon being investigated. According to Taft (1988: 60), “a participant observer, by definition, plays an obtrusive role and this fact may influence the behaviour of the group”. This outcome can be potentially harmful if the researcher has not “approximated the proper boundaries of a problem” during the intervention (Dunn, 1994: 59). The main aim of the researcher in this study was to strengthen the position of the rapidly fading centre by taking on the role of a support staff member. The success of such a research strategy hinges on a “co-operative” partnership between the researcher and the subjects of the social setting being investigated (Cohen & Manion, 1994: 190). A literary survey of articles and written material relating to the centre was also done, whilst access to the archival documents of the centre was granted to the researcher.

Historical overview

The centre came into being during the highly charged political landscape of the 1980s. The then state, together with industry, sort to stifle the violent and often costly politically motivated events that occurred in and around the major township regions at the time by

establishing various educational sites, providing basic social services, and unlocking support for aspiring entrepreneurs, so as to win over of a section of the black population (Kallaway, 1984: 22). The placement of these developments was very strategic, a vast majority of these improvements occurred in townships surrounding the major economic and industrial cities, where many of the workers who fuelled industry resided. Unfortunately the rural areas were largely neglected since minimal political unrest occurred in those regions.

Townships in the Gauteng Province, especially after the wake of the 1976 Soweto uprising, became the biggest beneficiary of these developments, most notably in education. A renowned propeller of these developments was the Urban Foundation, a funding agency “formed as the business community’s response” to the countrywide turmoil in 1977 (Murray, 1987: 4). Jan Steyn, former Supreme Court judge and the first executive chairman of the foundation, remarked that “the foundation was not to be some kind of charity”, but rather an accelerator of sustainable co-operative projects for the Black population group (Murray, 1987: 18). With funding from the Urban Foundation and its partners Funda Centre officially opened on 31st March 1984 with a mandate to offer alternative educational opportunities in Soweto.

Funda centre’s main purpose was to provide “facilities where already existing agencies, organisations or companies can conduct courses and programmes to improve the skills, qualifications and professionalism of educators” (Funda Forum Publication, c.1984). Organisations such as the Science Education Centre, the Wits Centre for Continuing Education, the Council for Black Education and Research, Read Educate and Develop (READ), and Teachers Opportunity Programmes (TOPS), were some of the initial tenants to offer their unique services on the impressive campus. During the 1980s the centre housed in excess of 25 autonomous bodies demarcated into 4 major operational fields: the Teachers’ In-Service Training Centre, the Adult Education and Training Resource Centre, the Teachers’ Centre, and the Arts Centre (Murray, 1987: 87). The Arts Centre was made up of three separate yet complimentary organisations: the African Institute of Art (AIA), the Madimba Institute of African Music and the Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre (Nkosi, 2008a: 4).

During the early 1990s Funda Centre slowly moved away from the feeding hand of the Urban Foundation. In 1995 Funda Centre was reconfigured into a community college, an institutional innovation within post-secondary education native to the United States of America (USA). Walter Smith, an expert within this educational arena from the USA, was seconded by the Joint Education Trust (JET) to help setup the community college (Nkosi, 2009). After numerous feasibility studies and with the vital monetary support from JET, Funda Community College (FCC) became the first comprehensive community college in the country. The AIA was subsequently renamed to Funda Art Centre, which became the official visual arts department of the new structure. Funda Art Centre must, therefore, be viewed within the context of the greater FCC.

Contribution to South African art

During the 1980s art centres within the Black communities existed in pockets and their mandate, as cited by van Robbroeck (1990: 2), was to “serve as resource centres where participants can, with the help of expert advice and free materials, become economically self-sufficient and provide sufficient artistic skills and education to enable students to serve as art teachers in their communities”. The Arts Centre at Funda began its teaching activities

in 1984 through the 3 schools operating within the varied disciplines. The first coordinator of the Arts Centre was Matsemela Manaka who also doubled as the head of the Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre (Nkosi, 2008a: 4). The centre became the first school located in a township to offer specialized training in drama, music and visual arts. The first Chairperson of Funda Centre's management structure Prof. ESKIA Mphahlele, "contributed immensely in the development of the arts centre" (Nkosi, 2008a: 5). Under his apparitional leadership the centre embodied a philosophy of excellence, as recollected by Charles Nkosi (2008a: 5), the current head of the visual arts department who has been at Funda since 1985:

The Centre upheld the fact that profound and tangible development should be interwoven with theoretical and practical components. Extended key measurable performance was chain linked to workshops, both rural and urban, and art exhibitions. The development of a learner in the arts was also given value enhancement through a lecture-series of visiting academics and highly regarded tacticians and practitioners in the arts for lateral growth.

The three departments worked hard to maintain a strong alliance, giving students the opportunity of a complete arts experience by often working in unison on various undertakings. According to Nkosi (2008a: 4), "besides departmentally driven operations these units instilled the culture of creative and gainful overlaps in collaborated projects that collectively hoisted the image of the centre". Besides the teaching aspect, the centre also played the crucial role of activist. Art was one of the avenues used to speak out, albeit subtly, on the social injustices of the Apartheid system. Franks and Vink (1990: 1) assert that "the arts are a major site of political ferment and expression, the urban black communities another". By virtue of being in the township, whilst promoting arts education, the arts centre became a prime site for activism. However, Makhene (2010) notes, rather insolently, that Funda never had any police presence on site between 1984 and 1994.

In 1985 Steven Sack became the first director of the visual arts section (AIA) within the arts centre and implemented numerous programmes in line with the injunctions provided above by van Robbroeck. They included the University Support Programme to aid B.A. Fine Arts students who were registered with the University of South Africa (UNISA), regular workshops in visual art making techniques for educators, non degree full-time courses, part-time courses, an artist in residency programme, the Khula Udweba Teachers Training course for Soweto educators, which led to the publication of the highly successful Khula Udweba training manual, and mostly famously, Sack curated The Neglected Tradition Exhibition, which recognised the contribution of Black artists in South African art (Nkosi, 2008a: 4).

The arts centre was an innovator of visual arts education in the country. Many leading contemporary artists, arts administrators, curators, educators, and designers find their roots at this iconic establishment, whether as alumni students and/or past staff members. Sydney Selepe, the former Deputy Director-General of the Department of Arts and Culture, Jacob Lebeko, assistant curator at UNISA's Art Gallery, renowned artists Mbongeni Buthelezi, Pitso Chinzima, Happy Dlamé, Senzo Nhlapo, and arts administrator Frank Ledimo have had an association with Funda.

In October 2009 the 2nd and 3rd year students were involved in a *Freedom and Responsibility* project initiated by The Under Pressure Agency. Each student produced an artistic representation of a chosen theme from the country's constitution. The final artworks were exhibited at The Museum Africa in Newtown, Johannesburg. A painting by 2nd year student Victor Mofokeng was selected for reproduction purposes and reprinted on t-shirts that were to be distributed to select members of the public, the artwork commented on the rights of workers within democratic South Africa. This project is reflective of the role the centre plays in setting up a platform where young artists can comment on critical social issues.

Challenges

1. *Lack of recognition from the democratic government*

1994 can be best described as a 'paradigm shift' experience for all South Africans and such drastic change can often be traumatic. The new Democratic Government's main desire was to do away with all policies and institutions having strong ties with Apartheid, effectively attempting to overhaul the entire country. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) document became a political Quran of sorts used as a policy compass. One of its recommendations was the need for more community orientated development initiatives and this impacted heavily on existing arts centres.

In 1994 only a handful of arts centres were operational and as part of a policy move by the then Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology 41 new RDP arts centres were built throughout the country at a cost of over R 50 million (Hagg, 2004a: 53). This massive investment signalled a shift towards rural development by the new state, but also presented some challenges for the existing institutions. Firstly that of identity and secondly, interlinked with the first, the allocation of funds. Hagg reveals that during the oppressive years "community arts centres emerged in opposition or as an alternative to the Apartheid education and cultural system" (ibid), but in 1994 the goal posts shifted somewhat. Hagg (2001: 12) provides an apt description of a post-1994 arts centre:

A community arts centre is a facility or a physical structure that offers members of a community, without prohibitive educational entry requirements and at a minimal cost, opportunities for informal or non-formal art education and training, participation in artistic and creative activities and experiences, and access to resources, while this community is significantly represented and influential in the governance and management of the centres. *The community arts centre as an entity is an institution, but in practice the organisational structure can be so underdeveloped that it does not achieve institutional status. [Emphasis added]*

Post-1994 centres were viewed as an integral part of the education system, not an alternative. However, the promotion of an underdeveloped organisational structure led to the demise and subsequent closure of most of the newly established RDP community arts centres. It should be noted that the organisational component of Funda Art Centre was fairly secure, because of its positioning under the larger community college structure. Institutions like the one being investigated were already providing some of the traits stipulated by Hagg even during the Apartheid years, yet with the new wave of investment into community arts programmes only one of the existing centres was earmarked, which

was the Katlehong Art Centre, but its selection was later revoked (Hagg, 2004a: 55). Effectively, this exclusion from the RDP funding pot was indicative of a certain degree of neglect levelled towards institutions like Funda by the state. The funding situation of community arts centres has yet to improve. The only major grant the centre has ever received directly from the national Department of Arts and Culture came in 2004 as part of the 10 years of democracy celebrations (Nkosi, 2008b). It is rather puzzling that institutions like Funda which were quoted as being “institutions of excellence” by a former Minister of Arts and Culture did not feature in the budget allocation of the RDP community arts centres (Nkosi, 2008b).

2. High tuition fees

As a community college, the institution is expected to provide educational services on par with a formal state subsidized institution, but without the same backing. Educational institutions like universities and Further Education and Training Colleges rely heavily on public financial aid, whilst only a portion of their operating expenses are actually covered by tuition fees. Operating under the revised model of a community college, Funda is allowed to charge a ‘minimal’ tuition fee to ensure sustainability, however, even this discounted price, which was R 8, 800 (inclusive of working material) during 2008, is too steep for a majority of the aspirant students. Most of the learners can only afford to pay about 10% of the tuition fee, which hampers the centre from providing a specialized service (Nkosi, 2009).

3. Status as a non-profit making entity

As a community college, Funda was again expected to “compete with private business without the right to operate on pure business principles” (Hagg, 2004a: 57). Since minimal funding comes from government, the college has to devise income generating methods which will keep it afloat and this can only be done by adopting a robust business model, but the problem is that it is not a profit making entity. This identity crisis coupled with the changing economic landscape locally and internationally has made the situation at the college dire. Sadly, the situation has not improved, even 10 years into the new millennium. The college is officially recognised as a non-profit making entity, requiring it to lobby for funds like any other Non Governmental Organisation (NGO). As an NGO, avenues to partner with government are rather scarce. It can therefore be argued that the institutions legal standing as an NGO is blocking, albeit unintentionally, various avenues of partnership which could be explored with the state.

4. Poor participation in programmes

The syllabus at the visual arts department is divided into four study areas; the Teacher Training Programme, Foundation Programme, the Children’s Programme, and the Diploma Programme (Funda Business Plan, 2002: 7). All these modules were designed to meet the specific needs of any individual interested in pursuing a career in the visual arts fraternity. Since 2002, Funda has been trying to implement the Children’s Programme aimed at primary and high school learners who have an interest in visual arts. Unfortunately the programme has never taken off the ground, but it was received with wide anticipation when briefed to the schools within the surrounding communities (Funda Business Plan, 2002: 8).

The Teacher Training Programme focuses on promoting better teaching standards within the schools in Soweto by giving teachers an opportunity to train at Funda on a part-time

basis for a year. As per the Funda Business Plan (2002: 7), “the Teacher Training Programme provides in-service training for teachers from local elementary schools”. The Teacher Training programme is an extension of the Khula Udweba project started by Sack in 1985 and Funda aims to train at least twenty teachers each year. However the response from educators within the local schools has been disappointing, classes are scheduled for Saturdays, but very few educators attend, citing “personal commitments” as being the major obstacle (Nkosi, 2008b). Mpako (2004: 6) attributes this apathy to false perceptions about arts education; during their training years many educators “believed that Arts was a talent subject and should not be made compulsory” for themselves and even the learners. The failure of such projects represents a missed opportunity to further cultivate the already disregarded arts subject within the public schools located in the townships.

5. *Reforming the content*

During the past decade the syllabus at the art centre has evolved but Nkosi (2008b) admits that it has been a difficult task trying to “incorporate more contemporary black artists into the Art Theory subject” due to the short supply of books on such artists. The centre possessed an amazing collection of books, but unfortunately most of them engaged exclusively with Western art. This is a serious concern, because a student artist must have an understanding of contemporary artists working on similar social phenomena. The challenge of Africanizing the literature, a systemic problem within South African educational institutions, threatens the artistic development of the students. Manaka (1989: 9) asserts that “an artist has to be true to his environment”, strengthening the fact that students should also learn about artists from their immediate context, because “there is an interplay between the artist and the environment”.

Another huddle has been that of trying to bring up the standard of the content being taught without the risk of being irrelevant or being out of touch with students who come from highly underdeveloped schools. Nkosi (2008b) reveals that some students find it challenging to adapt in the beginning, especially to the medium of instruction, since all subjects are conducted strictly in English. Most of the students come from schools where English is taught as a second language by undertrained and overworked educators, resulting in poor literacy skills. This is one of the biggest challenges faced by the educators at the centre.

6. *Lack of a proper staff compliment*

In 2001 Funda had a Human Resource complement of 6 individuals (Funda Business Plan, 2002: 13), but that number has steadily declined over the past few years because of financial constraints and currently stands at 3. As the head of department, Charles Nkosi ensures that the centre is fully functional at all times and also doubles up as a fulltime lecturer, of which, there should 4. The Funda Business Plan (2002: 13) indicates that there is a need for two more members to be added on their team, but due to financial constraints, Nkosi has been unable to appoint people into those positions. This has led to a gross overloading of duties on the current personnel, straining them and in a way promoting the delivery of below par teaching to the students as lamented by former student and teacher Mbongeni Buthelezi (2008). There are gaps in the Art History module (the researcher is currently helping in this area), the sculpture, and the print-making module. However, Funda has managed to curb this predicament slightly through staff commitment and by forging partnerships with other artists, who occasionally give workshops to their students.

7. *Poor remuneration*

The visual arts and music departments have been the “actual anchors” of the college (Lebeko, 2009). Since the turn of the century these two departments have aided in supplementing the running costs of the other structures within the college. According to Lebeko (2009), during a tough year the college “had the big pot, where any money that came in through any department was shared. There was a struggle for paying the staff and we could not, at the visual arts department, use the donors’ money to pay our own salaries and neglect the rest of Funda”. Although this strategy helped sustain the college it unfortunately deprived the visual arts department of much needed and fully deserved money, further fuelling its demise.

Whilst this speaks volumes of the *Ubuntu* (humanity) spirit inherent at the Centre, it does not reflect the type of pressures in which the educators had to work under. Lebeko (2009) reveals that his official remuneration was around R 3, 000 per month, but he only received his full pay for the first 2 years of service. As funding money dried up during 2000/2001, Lebeko would end up getting R 1, 800 instead of R 3, 000, and sometimes it would strictly be only 30% of the stipulated salary (Lebeko, 2009). The situation was a conundrum for the lecturers who on the one hand had to consider the livelihood of their own families, but similarly had the heart to not simply neglect their duties to the students. This irregular payment trend has continued for several years and led to the resignation of more staff members. No organisation can survive without a paid workforce and in 2009 Funda witnessed two resignations from long serving staff members who had to pursue greener pastures after not receiving their remuneration for several months (Nkosi, 2009). The resignations have crippled the centre and left students in the dark with regards to their immediate future. Sadly, as mentioned above, the current staff compliment in the visual arts department is at 3, whilst the music department buckled under the pressure and closed down.

8. *Invasion of campus*

The 2008 financial year can be best described as ‘catastrophic’ and a potentially defining 12 months for Funda Art Centre. The academic year proceeded like any other, until a few months in when the Senior Citizens Focus Co-operative, acting upon a directive from the mayor’s office, seized partial control of the centre’s buildings. In 2006 the organisation had occupied a number of classrooms where they conducted their educational programmes, namely, carpentry, beauty therapy, engineering and nursing (Nkosi, 2009). However, the Funda Community College Board at the time terminated their lease “due to the fact that the Senior Citizens did not meet their obligation of paying rent” (Funda Annual Report 2008: 2). The eviction seemed to anger the Senior Citizens and they engaged the office of the mayor, where they were handed a long term lease for the Funda property. According to the Funda Annual Report (2008/2009: 2) “they were granted leasehold of the institution besides the fact that their *modus operandi* in matters of education and development left much to be desired”. Armed with the legal documentation, the group initiated a coup d’état by forcibly entering the Funda building site and effectively taking over.

The management at the Community College tried all in sundry to stop the invasion, but it was to no avail and “the Information Technology, Matric Rewrite, Arts Departments and

Central Admin Unit Building were subsequently occupied by the Senior Citizens” (Funda Annual Report 2008: 2). The problem was further compounded by the fact that Funda did not possess any proof of their entitlement to the land:

Funda did not have a title deed. A file was put together which had important documents on the history of Funda and its educational delivery track record. Funda could not support its case through the title deed which could not be found on existing filed records. Consultation with Stan Khan (former Director of Funda) drew a blank. He had not in his period of service seen the title deed. Efforts on probing this matter with Urban Foundation, which was a conduit that helped found Funda, were unsuccessful because archival records had been shredded and the whereabouts of most senior staff that served Urban Foundation were hardly traceable. (Funda Annual Report 2008/2009: 1)

Even though Funda could not present this vital charter, the manner in which the Senior Citizens conducted their ‘take over’ is very questionable, so much so that Funda sought legal counsel on the matter, which is currently still under way. Casualties of this horrific developments have been the music school, the Vega Programme and the Matric Rewrite Programme which all had inadequate teaching space because “locks were changed and all programmes locked out” (Funda Annual Report 2008/2009: 2).

Attempts to negotiate with the Senior Citizens have been futile and all consultations with The Johannesburg Property Company, the property wing of the Municipality, have also drawn blanks (Nkosi, 2009). Unfortunately the Senior Citizens have not displayed willingness to cooperate with the college; in fact their actions can be interpreted as overt sabotage:

Virtually all equipment owned by the College was forcefully confiscated for use by the said organisation. Its staff and students staged a protest against management by toyi-toying. There was superlative abuse of Music and IT Departments’ instruments and computers. Theft was rife. This matter was reported to Diepkloof Police Station but no effective follow up was realised. Metal sculptures, furniture and desk metal frames were destroyed and sold for recycling. (Funda Annual Report 2008/2009: 2)

This description of a scene right out of 1976 was conformed during a recent visit to the Funda campus. One would think that such events of blatant and senseless destruction of precious educational assets would not feature in our democratic dispensation, but it seems like some still believe that the only way to be heard is through violent upheaval. Some of the equipment, such as pianos and printing presses, were tampered with or destroyed, and these items are absolutely vital for arts education. The library was ransacked; most of the books were burnt and looted by the invaders (Nkosi, 2009). For more than 20 years thousands of students have used the iconic Funda library to advance themselves, the library used to be the heart of the centre, were great researchers and practitioners engaged in gainful discussions and debates, but that entire legacy was wiped out in a few senseless moments.

9. *Low student numbers*

Historically, the centre had high enrolment rates, with hundreds of students utilising the facility, but due to the increasingly harsh conditions mentioned above, Funda Art Centre can only cater for ± 20 fulltime students across all three levels, which is disappointing, considering that the institution is the only port of entry into arts education for many under privileged students in Soweto. Over the years there have been numerous non-South African students who trained at Funda, coming from neighbouring countries such as Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Angola (Nkosi 2008b). The Centre still caters for part-time students, attending classes on Saturdays, and their number averages at about 25. The low student numbers are, amongst other factors, influenced by the minuscule number of educators and the high tuition fee. However, each year the centre receives a grant from the National Arts Council for bursaries to needy students (Nkosi, 2008b).

10. Inadequate funding

A survey of the annual income obtained from donors over the past two years reveals that the centre is severely under financed. Research indicates that it costs between R 1.2 Million and R 3 Million for a community centre to effectively carry out its mandate (Hagg, 2004a: 60). Table 1 and Table 2 show the figures for 2008 and 2009 respectively, which fall way short of Hagg's estimations:

Table 1: Funding received during 2008

No.	Funding Source	Function	Amount
1	National Arts Council	Student Bursaries	R 50 000.00
2	The Goodman Gallery	Student Bursaries/ art material	R 100 000.00
3	The Bond Exchange of South Africa	Student Bursaries/ art material	R 50 000.00
4	William Kentridge	Student Bursaries/ art material	R 25 000.00
5	Siemens South Africa	Johannesburg Art Fair	R 100 000.00
6	Seippel Gallery	Student Bursaries	R 8 800.00
7	Warren Siebritz Gallery	Student Bursaries	R 8 800.00
TOTAL			R 342 600.00

(Funda Annual Report 2008/2009: 4)

Table 2: Funding received during 2009

No.	Funding Source	Function	Amount
4	William Kentridge	Student Bursaries/ art material	R 25 000.00
5	Siemens South Africa	Johannesburg Art Fair	R 100 000.00
5	Siemens South Africa	Bursaries	R 88 000.00
TOTAL			R 213 000.00

(Funda Annual Report 2008/2009: 6)

These numbers confirm the strong support Funda enjoys from members of the local arts industry and selected businesses, but similarly they also confirm the poor commitment from government and its various funding agencies in this regard, especially the National Lottery. The Johannesburg Municipality, the operations wing of government on a localised level has not come to the party either, and Hagg (2004b: 1) notes that "funding of the arts by municipal councils is rare in South Africa, and if funds are made available, they do not

compare to housing, community services or sport, as any analysis of a municipal budget will show". However, The National Arts Council has helped by giving bursaries to pupils at Funda, Linda Givon former owner of the Goodman Art Gallery has contributed immensely, so too has one of South Africa's best known artists, William Kentridge. Because the centre is registered as an NGO it is largely dependent on these grants and sponsorships to survive. It must be noted though that one of the major challenges facing Funda is that of sustainability, which is a pandemic facing most NGOs (Nkosi, 2008b).

The decline in revenue over the two years can be attributed to the tainted image of the centre induced by the debacle with the Senior Citizens, which has added further strain to the Funda management and crippled the delivery of a previous service to the community of Soweto.

11. *Relevance*

Some argue that the centre has been around for long enough and is not relevant to the current situation; a prominent former lecturer voices his opinion in this regard:

During Apartheid these initiatives were good because they were there to serve a particular purpose. But with the changing of time, *these centres became irrelevant somehow*. When access for black students to attend the white schools was opened the main purpose of the centres died. After 1994 schools like Funda became irrelevant to the society and things like funding also stopped. *In my opinion, Funda should actually close down completely, because I think it has served its purpose well during the days of the struggle, but now that we are in a different era all together, it is no longer relevant in the community*. I know that the majority cannot afford to go to these expensive art schools in town, but then maybe something different should be structured for these people using the same buildings, *but the whole setup should just change*. [Emphasis added]

Such strong sentiment could be easily translated as a betrayal of the great strides centres like Funda have made in arts education, but certain parts of this argument need serious consideration. I concur in that the setup at Funda needs to be reviewed and even the current director advocates the urgent need for change if the centre is to remain relevant. The recent turbulent years have prompted the centre to re-evaluate its existence, Nkosi (2008b) reveals:

We are at this moment in time trying to build up a unit that is going to look at a broadened delivery format of the visual arts so that there can be a component aimed at empowering the youth, as you know that sometimes when you are looking at visual art for art's sake, career paths can often be very limited.

Essentially, any attempt to expand the training opportunities hinges on the capacity to deliver those programmes and the management also need to consider this element.

12. *Accreditation of programmes*

During the past 4 years the centre has been trying to develop the capacity needed to deliver new programmes by obtaining the relevant accreditations from the educational and training authorities, and it was entering the final phase of accreditation negotiations with the Media Advertising Publishing Printing and Packaging Sector Education and Training Authority (MAPPP SETA) when the above mentioned invasion occurred. This study is rooted in the desire to see Funda make progress in this regard, by exploring the avenue of merging or being incorporated into a public FET College. It should be noted that Funda had attempted to make inroads with the Department of Education during the late 1990s but the negotiations failed. Lebeko (2009) provides some contributing factors to the failure:

We actually approached the Department of Education several times and had a few meetings with them to find out if there was a way Funda could actually be registered with the ministry, but there were problems in that regard because Funda was so fragmented in its self. It provided for the arts, it provided for matriculants, and also offered several other unrelated activities, which presented accreditation problems.

Fast forward ten years and Funda is still struggling with the same question of accreditation or lack thereof. Although the agreement the centre has with the University of Witwatersrand dating back to 1988, where the university provides a quality assurance stamp by examining the Funda students, is noteworthy, it is still too limiting for Funda graduates wanting to explore alternative career and educational opportunities in the arts. None of the current programmes offered at Funda are recognised by The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), which is a major drawback and deterrent for possible partnerships with the Department of Education and the SETA.

Conclusion

Visual arts education for the Black population in South Africa has been neglected for many decades and the situation seems to be worsening. There seems to be no let up for sites pursuing the ideal of equal arts educational opportunities. But why are things not improving, especially when considering that the arts industry in general has been on an upward trajectory over the past 15 years of democracy, why has this trend not engulfed the township and rural parts of South Africa? Why have most of the arts centres opened so enthusiastically after 1994 gone stale? Hagg contends that one of the fatal errors has been the unclear guidelines on the exact government authority responsible for funding arts centres, stating, "After the opening of the RDP arts centres, most provinces left it largely to municipalities to decide whether and how to keep them functional, without providing any funding. This 'devolution by stealth' resulted in the closure of many centres" (Hagg, 2004a: 58). A more national approach is required if arts education in the peripheral areas is to ever gather sustained momentum.

Education plays a major role in the promotion of social justice, as lamented by Hoppers (2001: 3):

For its part, social justice rests on a virtual contract founded on principles of equity. Education in particular is tied to the remedial principle that requires it to work in the service of compensating for inequalities of birth and social conditions. When applied to basic education, the social justice concept

demands that education compensate for inequalities in social background and for inequalities that may have been built up since initial education.

For 26 years Funda has been on the forefront of arts education initiatives within the Soweto Township. The centre is in danger of total disintegration and with it will go a major site for the exploration and promotion of arts activism. It can be concluded that the challenges being faced by the centre are repercussions of internal and external events (Nkosi, 2009). This paper disclosed some of these challenges, which are semiotic of the problems being faced by similar institutions throughout the country.

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Title: *Urban Interactions*
Presentation on *Urban Interactions* 2009
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Heidi Salzwedel
ASJ Conference, DUT, South Africa

Sub-theme 10: Promoting social justice and inter-cultural dialogue through the arts.

Abstract:

The aim of Urban Interactions, a public art initiative in Grahamstown 2009, has been to examine the antagonisms within a given urban space. After choosing a specific location; High street, as a public art 'venue', I then took note of the awkward instances of interpersonal tension within it, being particularly interested in how individuals are responded to through the lens of their respective stereotyped societal roles. In this instance; a well known street trader, a local beggar, and a parking marshal. Exact sculptural replicas are placed in the street and a hidden camera captures the public's interaction with them. The project aims at interrupting public spaces with unusual stimuli thus disrupting daily routine. This may cause people to cross social boundaries and catalyse thought. The sculptures are placed in the street as a silent invitation for the community to question whether they are real. They intend to catalyse reconsideration of what it means to inhabit an urban space which houses both wealth and poverty.

An art exhibition entitled "Urban Interactions" took place in October 2009 in a venue on High Street, the main road of a small Eastern Cape community; Grahamstown. The exhibition was the documented culmination of a year of work on a public art initiative which resulted from an ever increasing and exceptionally gnawing personal frustration at the socio-economic crisis in the city. To enlighten you briefly on its history and context; the city of Grahamstown depends on the National Arts Festival for a significant part of its annual revenue, yet beneath the façade of diversity in arts and culture that is temporarily crammed into one city bowl, is the reality of its fluctuating unemployment rate; which oscillates between sixty to eighty percent. This reality, which is evident to local civilians, can be highlighted briefly as follows:

When one encounters a beggar in Grahamstown's High street, an odd space of self-conscious tension can arise between the two individuals. There is a habitual reluctance to venture across that interpersonal crevice; to consider the possibility of interaction beyond the norm of fumbling about your bag for a coin. If one were to reproduce an exact replica of a beggar/busker as a sculpted form, and place him as public art on the street corner where he would usually sit; it would open the opportunity to observe interesting results. Would people then interact with the 'person'? At the National Arts Festival 2009, people stopped to look at a local beggar/busker, throwing money into the guitar case of a dead mute object that wouldn't move. Similarly, the daily act of having to pay a largely ridiculous tariff to one of High Street's parking marshals is also a site of potential antagonism. Closely observing what might initially appear to be insignificant spaces between every day people; could imbue these awkward social fissures with value. The aim of this public art initiative has been to examine the antagonisms and also the seemingly insignificant interactions within a given urban space.

After choosing a specific location, namely Grahamstown's main thoroughfare; High street as a public art 'venue', I then took note of the awkward instances of interpersonal tension within it, being particularly interested in how individuals are responded to through the lens of their respective stereotyped societal roles.

In this instance; I focussed on three distinct roles: a well known street trader, a local beggar, and a parking marshal. Exact sculptural replicas are then placed on the street and wait for public response. The aim of this project has been to interrupt public spaces with unusual stimuli thus disrupting daily routine. The sculptures are placed in the street as a silent invitation for the community to question whether they are real. They intend catalysing reconsideration of what it means to inhabit an urban space which houses both wealth and poverty.

The act of interrupting public space with art forms; how can the artist do this?

- I chose to form an interpersonal connection with three people from High Street. I did this by crossing personal boundaries by casting their heads and hands and making a cement sculpture of each of them by means of mixed media (cement casts, welded armature and a paper body), and then quite literally *replacing* the 'people' on the specific street sites where they would usually be seen.
- I then placed hidden cameras in shop windows and captured the physical reactions of Grahamstown local people toward the artworks.
- I hid sound recording devices in the clothing of the sculptures to capture the public's audio response to the 'person'; the sounds that the sculpture (person) experiences as people come toward him/her.

This is the first person who was replicated, Andrew Hamilton Peterson, otherwise referred to as Hammer (see fig 1). He sits on the street corner at the tip of High street and busks his guitar, but mostly defaults into begging as it is a lot easier. He is a well known Grahamstonian. The sculpture (see fig. 2-4) is an exact replica of the man resulting from an extensive and tiresome casting process. The sculpture's clothing results from us purchasing him new clothes in order to dress his sculpture in his YSL jacket and Hilton school peak cap. Many observers found this rather ironic as a beggar would not ordinarily wear a Hilton peak cap and a YSL jacket, name brands which clearly connote the opposite economic strata to his daily 'occupation' of begging. 'He' / it is essentially a site specific artwork as he belongs in a public space, ideally on his specific street corner thus replacing the living man. The guitar case was placed beside him to collect money. The sculpture was filmed for a total of 7 hours at various times over the ten day period of the National Arts Festival, 2009.



Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.



Figure 4.

Note: the video documentation of each sculpture in its public environment is key to an accurate presentation of this exhibition. However, due to the nature of the publication, the videos will be described. A nine minute video of one of the sculptures can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rb5ignvdqnU>

Observations of intercultural dialogue (1).

The final edited video documentation/artwork, “Hammer” (02.m21.s) evidenced many significant instances of intercultural dialogue. More specifically, a form of interpersonal dialogue was evident in the public reaction in that it became apparent that the predominant question was whether it was real or not? Each passer-by needed to determine within them self whether the man would jump out at him/her and needed to question the purpose of his presence. At every annual National Arts Festival, many street kids and youths decorate their faces and hands with white paint, and dress up in strange clothes. They stand dead still on street corners with money cartons/bowls set out in front of them. When tourists and viewers throw a coin in their money bowl, they respond promptly by doing a dance or moving briskly, changing their standing position to a different stance, which determines how they wait dead still for the next coin. It seems that people confused the sculpture, “Hammer”, for a mime boy, and in a sense, paid a dead object to move by throwing money into his guitar case in eager anticipation. This was quite amusing for those who stood filming the scene behind the camera.

A significant instance of intercultural dialogue is that observers from varying cultures and backgrounds began to dare each other to venture closer. There was strong group dynamic and it became somewhat theatrical, with a groups comprising of a large gender, age, and demographic mixture, all interacting and questioning each other as to what the human/sculpture was doing there. A different form of dialogue was the language of tangibility and pushing limits with regard to physical touch. It seems that people will commit actions toward or possibly against the replica of the person, not realising that they would never act out some of these gestures toward the real man. Instances such as adolescent boys kissing the man and touching him below the belt as a dare amongst themselves became a form of entertainment to them. Groups of young women would pose with the sculpture/man and allow their friends to take pictures of their pose with mobile phones and

cameras. Another instance shows a little boy surreptitiously approaching the man, hesitantly putting a coin in his guitar case, and then quickly stepping away in anticipation. Once he realised that his slight hope or belief that the man was real had failed him, he turned around and shyly walked away, only to turn back and reach out to touch the sculpture's arm briefly with one finger, testing its texture. Once he was sure that it was fake, he turned around and walked off confidently without looking back at all. A further significant factor to mention is the underlying or indirect socio-economic dialogue of the interplay between entertainment and money. This is evident in that I earned R100 in 2 hours off a dead object 'busking' for entertainment purposes and this can be contrasted with the man, Hammer, daily pestering people to buy his CD for a R100 for his personal sustenance and livelihood purposes. His musical abilities are superb, yet people tend to be reluctant to buy a CD off the street.

The second person or subject that was involved in this public art initiative is Zimkitha (see figure 5), a 24 year old Parking Marshal from a formalised parking company in High street. Many people in the suburb where she currently resides resent her for having this job as it is seen as a good job and many strive to be in her economic position. Individuals with motor vehicles in Grahamstown experience a great deal of frustration with the particular parking service in that the tariffs are far too exorbitant and drivers would rather park far away and walk than pay the fee. Some quotes indicating the attitude toward the parking marshals include; "I never pay them, why should I, I just drive off", and "R1.15 for two minutes, I'm not paying that!" The opposite side of the consistent dialogue over financial frustration can be seen in the following comment made by one of the parking marshals: "I feel like people don't see me".



Figure 5.



Figure 6.



Figure 7.



Figure 8.



Figure 9.

Observations on intercultural dialogue (2)

These observations are taken from 6 hours of filming the sculpture (see Fig 8-9) at two different sites along High street; the two sites that Zimkitha is assigned in order to carry out her daily car guard duties. The final video piece "Zimkitha" is 02m.32s in length.

Interesting debate that arises from the video documentation is the question as to whether the respective parking company elicits parking solutions as it intends to. Their formalized and stated vision asserts that they strive for **"employment equity and pride and to be an efficient proven system, to be an outstanding nationally-respected parking service which proudly affirms its African identity and commits itself to creating sustainable jobs, kerbing urban crime, creating parking turnover, and serving it's clients in a professional manner"**.

The sculpture being placed in the street awaiting reaction from civilians raises the issue of questionable service delivery which results in potential urban antagonism over financial difficulties. A socio-economic dialogue is therefore highlighted in the issue of stealing from these parking marshals. An example of this difficulty is that drivers often drive off without paying, and in so doing they are indirectly stealing the commission of the marshals. Naturally, this is to be expected, as the general consensus amongst local drivers is that the fees are far too exorbitant and that the marshals, essentially, don't watch their cars adequately. This issue can ironically be reviewed alongside the scene in the video which shows that passer-by civilians will pretend to take the money (R10 note which purposely sticks out of the car guard's moon bag/money bag) yet never actually dare to take it. In other words, no one will visibly 'steal' a cash note, yet will steal by omitting to pay their parking fee.

The dialogue of physical touch is also highlighted in this video (as it is in "Hammer"). The public pushes the limits yet again in the incident of a cheeky man assessing whether the androgynous looking sculpture is in fact a woman. He does this by slowly sneaking into the scene, smiling mischievously, and then touching the sculpture's breast just to check if it was in fact there.

It was interesting to note in the filming process that it was a lot harder to capture footage as a lot less activity took place toward the car guard sculpture in comparison with the other two artworks. This is presumably due to her being dressed in the same uniform as the real car guards and many people simply did not notice “Zimkitha”. I found this particularly significant in that the parking marshals have expressed that they do not always feel **seen** as a person, and are regarded according to their job or role.

The three sculptures were successively placed in their ‘gallery’ space of High street between the months of July – October. Only “Hammer” was displayed at the National Arts Festival. Most civilians only saw one, or at most two, of the public art sculptures. An article (see Figure 10) therefore appeared in the local public newspaper, Grocotts Mail; which explained their sudden presence in the streets, enabling people who had only seen one piece to form thematic links between the three ‘people’. It furthered public awareness.



Figure 10.

Gary Quinton, otherwise referred to as Gary Grocott is a well known local civilian and is the subject of the third sculpture. Most people in Grahamstown know who he is as we walks up and down the length of the street on a daily basis selling sweets or handing out pamphlets to earn a living.



Figure 11.1



Figure 11.2

Observations on inter-cultural dialogue (3).

These observations result from the video piece “Gary” (02.33) and the sound piece (01.46) which is the outcome of a recording device being placed under the clothing of the sculpture.

Intercultural dialogue becomes evident in that the video documentation and the sound piece show evidence of paying tribute to or monumentalising a known local by means of cement/stone as a sculptural medium and the public ‘figuring out’ who he is through interaction. Interesting comments which show this in the sound piece include:

“Shoo it looks like uGary”.

“It is... you remember that old man, who walked around with a pram, it’s him...did he die... I hope not”.

“He used to sell sweets and stuff....shame”.

“I thought it was an old man”.

“What is it? I thought it was real”.

There is, once again, a pushing of personal limits and social boundaries, the evidence of physical dialogue, in the somewhat humorous act of an intoxicated Xhosa youth kissing a 50+ presumably English speaking street trader. He would most certainly never do that if it were the real man.

The socio-economic dialogue surfaces once again in that school girls steal sweets from a man that they would never think of taking from were he the real person trying to earn a living. This scene unfolds with a group of girls casually walking past the sculpture on their way to a local shop in the vicinity. One young adolescent stops shortly after she has passed the sculpture and turns back to look intently at the ‘man’. She is partly acting in front of her friends yet also seems to be genuinely interested in whether he is real or not. She touches him with one finger quickly and pulls away. She touches him again on the other hand and then, after he evidently has still stubbornly refused to move, decides that it is safe to take a sweet from his trolley. A few seconds later, she re-enters the scene taking another sweet as, after all, the man isn’t real so they must be a free give away. She returns a third time, this time taking a handful for her friends.

Unwitting conversation is evident in all three videos in that people are unaware of the camera and are therefore unaware of what their actions and gestures signify with regards to their personal attitudes and values.

The one night exhibition (October 2009) which presented the year's work; the sculptures, video documentation, and sound pieces pertaining to each sculpture offered entertaining opportunity for reacting to the reactions eliciting a process of re-action and a re-capture of what had taken place. This signifies a certain cyclical continuation of interaction and response in an urban environment.



Figure 12.



Figure 13.

Promoting social justice and intercultural dialogue through the arts;
How?

1. Intercultural dialogue:

- The attitudes and values which divide people, and which people share are highlighted through interrupting public space with external stimuli. This promotes awareness of **spaces between people**. The video pieces are deliberately devoid of sound to place emphasis on the visual aspect of the spatial playground that people of an urban setting inhabit.
- Space is a contentious issue and its complexities have been discussed for centuries. Drawing on the spatial theorist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre, I would like to comment on the **importance of space in producing social relationships**. He claims in his work; "Productions of Space", that there is a problematic "projection" of the social onto the spatial field. He suggests that it should rather be seen as a two way relationship; the social projecting onto the public space which it inhabits, and the space projecting back onto the social dialogue. The public space is the playground of dialogue. He asserts that "space and the political organisation of space express social relationships but also react back upon them".
- I deliberately wanted to examine the **awkwardness and subtle** gestures that indicate spaces between people.
- Interruption therefore invites reaction.

2. How does this art exhibition "Urban Interactions" hope to contribute to social justice?

- As an academic pursuit, one could be observing intercultural dialogue as a distinctly measurable and cognitive discussion of existing cultural biases and prejudices comprising the spaces between people in urban settings. Social climates of cities can be

observed and practical endeavours such as these could contribute significantly to research, and consequently, formal decisions underpinning social justice at large.

- Initiatives such as this could have their place in terms of catalysing thought within the individual researcher, thus contributing to a reformed society.
- As a social pursuit, utilising public space as a means of impressing upon the public to individually reconsider their presuppositions and socio-cultural attitudes.
- It is also an immeasurable means of intercultural dialogue pushing individuals toward attitudes which contribute to social justice.
- **Interruption** therefore invites **reaction** which allows for *re-vision*.

Lefebvre, H. 1991. *The Productions of Space*. Oxford: Wiley- Blackwell, pg 8.

Tribe of colours - reclaiming identity via the Web.

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ABSTRACT

“...straight ahead

*the memory beckons from the future
you and I a tribe of colours
this song that dance
godlike rhythms to birth
footsteps of memory
the very soul aspires to.”*

(Keorapetse Kgotsile, “Origins”, 1969:3)

Now in the second year of its development, the Encyclopaedia of South African Arts, Culture and Heritage (ESAACH) is both traditional encyclopaedia and hypertext web. Published volumes will emerge from the collaborative writing space provided within the wiki database. “You and I a tribe of colours” - by tapping into the collaborative spirit of social networking, ESAACH is emerging as a communal knowledge base that is far more than the sum of its parts.

ESAACH is intended as a work of reclamation scholarship to address the dearth of reference material in South African arts, culture and heritage studies, and flights a number of concepts of importance in knowledge production for social transformation - notions that represent a fundamental shift in perspective: “panoramic, inclusive, democratic, and non-canonical”.

An encyclopaedia, by its very nature, can never be complete. An online encyclopaedia never needs to be complete. Users can continually add entries or edit existing ones while an open-source community, (e.g. Media wiki) is continually improving and developing the management framework. An active community that has bought into ownership of the encyclopaedia, and has an interest in maintaining and growing its content, ensures its sustainability.

This paper reports on work in progress, outlining the founding principles of the encyclopaedia and presenting the current state of the development and usage of the Verbal Arts section of the wiki. Later phases of the project include the Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Heritage.

Collaboratively writing our cultural history

Winston Churchill was alleged to have said “History is written by the victors.” Cultural history too can be said to be written by the victors, or at least by the dominant cultural group in any society. The danger of this as we have seen in South Africa’s past, is that certain writers and artists can be marginalised or even written out of history. The solution is an inclusive work of encyclopaedic scope that encourages input from all sectors of society. The *Encyclopaedia of South African Arts, Culture and Heritage* (ESAACH) wiki allows for this through its built-in functionality.

A wiki is a browser-based collaborative writing environment, in which a community can create and exchange information on particular topics, and to which anyone can contribute

without having web programming skills. In other words, a wiki is a piece of software that is used for collaborative content creation.

This definition comes from Wikipedia, currently the best-known example of a wiki. “The free encyclopaedia that anyone can edit” is the slogan of Wikipedia, and it is now the largest multilingual encyclopaedia available online - containing over two million articles - and still growing. Wikipedia is managed with the open-source Media wiki software, which is exactly the same software used to run the ESAACH wiki discussed in this paper.

Tribe of colours

While it was Nelson Mandela who most publicly bestowed the identity of “rainbow nation” on the newly-democratised South Africa, twenty years before, Keorapetse Kgositsile had already invoked the “rainbow tribe” image in his poem “Origins”. Since then, Kgositsile has himself become woven into the tapestry of post-apartheid South Africa, as Poet Laureate, from which vantage he articulates a profound challenge for an emerging nation: how to nurture an inclusive cultural identity where before there was only division and oppression.

“ ...straight ahead

the memory beckons from the future
you and I a tribe of colours
this song that dance
godlike rhythms to birth
footsteps of memory
the very soul aspires to.”

(Kgositsile, 1969:3)

Kgositsile’s words combine transcendent vision with deeply-felt cultural rootedness, resonant with an encompassing spirit of arts and culture which is irresistible. In this light, it may seem presumptuous of the present authors to claim any similarity between the inert scaffolding of an electronic database, and the creative aspirations of a diverse people. Drawing the parallel takes us on a perilous path, but we will tread it, nonetheless. We justify this identification with Kgositsile’s imagery because the words speak to our own sense (and possibly many others of us in the creative arts) that what we produce is significantly more than the sum of its parts. While this may be more readily apparent in a painting than a wiki, we contend that within the myriad connections in a relational database of artistic references, there *is* a ghost in the machine. Kgositsile’s image of a creative collective unconscious, outside conventional space and time (“Time flows in all directions in your work” - Synder, 1995) maps easily to early notions of the Web as an essentially non-linear information-sharing virtual space. As Hypertext pioneer, Ted Nelson memorably states: “the structures of ideas are not sequential” (Nelson, 1974). A common thread in post-modern theory and hypermedia theory, is the notion of non-linearity. The non-sequential nature of hypertext is its most important distinguishing feature: “Hypertext is non-sequential; there is no single order that determines the sequence in which the text is to be read” (Nielsen 1995: 1). Hypertext theorists emphasise the democratic, non-teleological and relativistic character of their conceptual frameworks. Deleuze and Guattari offer a beguiling image of the interconnectedness of hypertext – the medium of the web, and of the wiki – as a rhizome, or the dispersed root system typical of grasses. A rhizomic structure is a chaotically distributed network rather than a regular hierarchy of trunk and branches. “Many people

have a tree growing in their heads, but the brain itself is much more a grass than a tree.” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Rhizomic structures satisfy the seemingly contradictory elements in hypertext that on the one hand point towards chaotic randomness but on the other hand, to nodes of significance and meaning.

What better space, then, in which to store references to artistic work? Even before the advent of Web 2.0’s collaborative, social networking tools mid-way into the first decade of the 21st century, we were driven by a conviction that the growing web of references that constituted the Verbal Arts section of ESAACH manifested a uniquely valuable knowledge base, constructed by its contributors (writers of entries). Furthermore, the sweeping range of listed authors and works had the potential, by virtue of multiple associations and cross-linkages, to empower researchers and inspire fellow artists. One of the characteristics of the book-based library (as opposed to the virtual online library that has become increasingly familiar to us) was that as a consequence of its physical layout, it was conducive to serendipitous discovery. In other words, while we may have been earnestly searching for a text on post-structuralism, we may have come across a traveller’s account of Tibet, or a history of public transport. Alphabetical arrangement can in itself be used subversively (see the reference to Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* below). Such coincidental finds on the library shelf may prove to be entirely insignificant, but as the very coinage “serendipity” suggests, such discoveries may sometimes be inspirational and capable of launching a new line of thought, or provoking an unexpected conceptual leap that may otherwise never have been realised. To take up Kgositsile’s image again, the memory beckoning from the future may be summoned from the ESAACH wiki’s configuration of categories and summaries – cultural snippets and soundbites – that together constitute a cumulative platform from which to explore new work and to discover accidental but provocative correspondences between times, themes, names, tropes, colours and landscapes. They are, in effect

“you and I a tribe of colours
this song that dance
godlike rhythms to birth
footsteps of memory
the very soul aspires to”

In this sense, the wiki becomes the epicentre of powerful conversations between different cultures. Just as the advent of the photograph and the telegraph in the 19th century ushered in a “new epistemology” (Postman, 1985:48), the web has brought with it a new way of constructing knowledge. It is not surprising that the success of the World Wide Web coincided with the ubiquitous appearance of colour computer displays and audio capabilities. Social networking has now intensified these benefits, by adding community to the web’s audiovisual palette, and thereby offering new scope for the wiki database to develop. Web 2.0 has transformed the angular scaffolding of the old database into something more organic (see the discussion of Lessig’s Read-Write culture, below).

An encyclopaedia is an ambitious project and the pursuit has not gone uncontested. For instance, encyclopaedia-writing risks imposing new grand narratives that could either perpetuate outdated thinking about South African art and culture, or create new, equally stifling, politically-correct edifices inimical to fresh and unfettered discourse. With respect to the SALIT Web Database project that was the prototype for the Verbal Arts section of ESAACH, literary critic Leon de Kock (2005: 3) has questioned “... the very possibility, or

the desirability, of pursuing literary history as an encyclopaedic act in the first place, with all its attendant implications of coverage and completeness.”

While there is validity in de Kock’s observation that there is an inherent contradiction in the synchronous promise of a de-canonised listing of South Africa’s writers in the post-colonial nineties, amidst a prevailing suspicion of meta-narratives (including those with an encyclopaedic slant), we would argue that the Two point zero zeitgeist unsettles this assumption. Wiki technology resists the impetus from the rest of the Internet “universe” to flood the user with so much information that it actually obstructs clear thinking. Wikipedia itself is a notable compromise that filters information overload, thus serving to allay de Kock’s misgivings. As has been noted, Wikipedia has become a successful Internet reference, but remains controversial, attracting both adulation from open-Internet supporters, and opprobrium from the custodians of authoritative publications like Britannica, or scholarly presses like Elsevier. The debate over the reliability and provenance of Internet information notwithstanding (see Stewart, 2007, for more on this issue) Wikipedia technology nevertheless mitigates the excesses of the Internet while retaining the unique capacity of the medium to defy the privileging of one piece of information over the other. The Wikipedia model also subtly alters the connotation of encyclopaedia as a constraining Enlightenment meta-narrative by opening up the publication to unlimited participation. Grand narrative it may be, but it can be seen as a progressive grand narrative, like Feminism or Ecological Responsibility. Wikipedia founder, Jimmy Wales, and Diderot may have more in common than we might imagine. It is arguable that Diderot’s intention with his 18th century *Encyclopédie* was profoundly participatory – a tour de force of collaborative writing explicitly aimed at sharing objective knowledge as widely as possible and with as little organising authority as was feasible. While our 21st century familiarity with reference works may leave us unsurprised by the alphabetical arrangement of the *Encyclopédie* entries, to the contemporary reader it represented a radical levelling of the established epistemological playing fields by juxtaposing entries on, say, “bug” and “bishop”. Admittedly, the editorial policy of the new ESAACH wiki places various gatekeeping and limiting barriers in the way of infinitely wide participation, but it still challenges the conceptually imperialistic notion of “encyclopaedic” by inviting virtually infinite inclusivity – a chaotic aggregate of all information in which no meta level (or canon) may be arbitrarily imposed or remain unchallenged. As Borges has observed: “Obviously there is no classification of the universe that is not arbitrary and conjectural.” (Borges, 1964: 104).

Another of Deleuze and Guattari’s notions is helpful here: that of “smooth” and “striated” cultural spaces. They describe “striated space” as rational and rule-orientated and dominated by hierarchical structures. Smooth space, by contrast, is one in which “the points are subordinated to the trajectory” (Deleuze and Guattari in Moulthrop, 1994: 303). The open-ended ESAACH wiki can thus be seen as “smooth space” because it is designed to be dynamic, alive with possibility, and promote discursive creativity. As in Kgositsile’s poem “Origins”, memory can indeed “beckon from the future”.

From database to wiki

Fundamental to the web component of the ESAACH project is its evolution as a child of hypermedia. The Verbal Arts segment of the ESAACH wiki is built on the foundation of the SALIT Web, a project conceived in 1995 – heady days when the Internet was firing up – somewhere on that steep incline of the curve between the four net hosts of 1969 and the 60 million of 1999 (BBC, 1999). (By 2009 this figure had reached over 560 million – Photius,

2009). The SALIT Web project had a simple but ambitious set of goals: to collect and integrate information on South African literature in all its languages in one place, add the full texts of as many previously marginalised and suppressed books as possible, then make these more accessible by using the medium of the computer. The advent of free Internet browsers, easy navigation and the open-source coding of HTML made hypertext the inevitable choice for disseminating the material to as wide a readership as possible.

The mid-nineties promise of hypertext then, opened up an intriguing new environment for literature and for learning. As developers, we pondered the extent to which hypertext might be classed as a medium, like film or television. Unlike these older media, and unlike the printed book, hypertext is almost transparent, neither image nor word, but more of a dynamic mechanism that gives access to either or both. In contrast to established media, “technologies like hypertext are difficult, discontinuous, and inherently unsettling, less committed to sovereignty than discursive unfolding” (Moulthrop, 1997: 670). Vannevar Bush’s vision in the 1940s of the Memex (Bush, 1945) accurately forecast the now familiar hypermedia environment of the Internet. In particular Bush’s notion of the “associative trail”, foresaw the power of networked knowledge management as exhibited in wiki technology.

Two unrelated circumstances influenced the selection of a wiki as the online basis for the ESAACH project. Firstly, the social networking and collaborative writing features of the wiki signalled the possible resuscitation of the South African Literary Database - SALIT Web (Stewart and van Wyk, 2000) as an interactive online resource. Secondly, and most significantly, however, the opportunity arose to integrate the database into the newly established ESAACH project led by Mbulelo Mzamane. Online accessibility is a central principle of the ESAACH project.

The previous (SALIT Web) database project was conceived in the mid-1990s as a set of research tools that would resist the legacy of apartheid and begin to address the absence of a unifying narrative of South African literary and cultural output. Accounts of South African literary history were firmly polarised into racial and language groupings, and were similarly divided into separate university departments. The SALIT Web database was founded on two equally important premises: that an electronic repository of literary data – a hypertext web of bibliographic entries, full-text articles and audio visuals - was the most suitable medium for the creation of an encyclopaedia in the late twentieth century; and that a new South African encyclopaedia of literature had to be inclusive and comprehensive, assuming a structure that deliberately subverted the racial divisions that had hitherto bedevilled local studies. It also had a reclamation role – actively seeking and re-publishing the banned, the marginalised and the ignored.

Even with its beta status and with no attempt to alert potential users to its existence, the ESAACH wiki has already started to attract users. Between January and October 2009, the website had over 9000 visits, primarily from South African users, but with a significant number from Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. McNulty (2009) reported that amongst the search terms that had led visitors to the site were “South African culture”, “heritage for nation building”, “isiswati”, “1920s Afrikaans culture”, “19th century South African literature”, and “black protest 1910 – 1948”.

The ESAACH wiki is designed so that submissions are subject to moderation by a panel of editors responsible for the four major sub-divisions, and then within themes and specific authors and works within the themes. While it is acknowledged that the wiki will always be

in a fluid state of construction, with possible disputes about the reliability and authority of some entries, the editors have adopted Snyder's (2007:6) criteria for measuring reliability:

Accuracy of information provided within articles

Comprehensiveness, scope and coverage within articles and in the range of articles

Susceptibility to, and exclusion and removal of, false information

Susceptibility to editorial and systemic bias

Identification of reputable third-party sources as citations

Collective intelligence and the wiki

So what are the features of wiki software that make it so attractive to a project such as ESAACH?

Firstly, it is simple to create new pages and has a very intuitive editing environment. It allows authors with limited online experience to create content. Links can be created to other entries in the database or indeed to external websites providing further entry and exit points to subjects of interest. Also, it allows anyone to edit or add to an already established entry. The wiki requires no additional software from the user, only an Internet connection and a browser, freely available from most local libraries in South Africa. It also allows a number of people to work on a single entry and, crucially, keeps a history of all changes made to that entry.

The ESAACH wiki can display images, audio and video alongside text allowing the presentation of a number of different artworks, such as music, animation or photography.

The software provides an excellent set of management tools. There is a built-in user management system which allows the creation of user accounts with differing access levels and privileges so, for example, the panel of editors responsible for the four major sub-divisions can have more control over the content in their sections than a member of the public who is only editing a single entry, while spammers can be blocked completely from using the ESAACH wiki.

The ESAACH wiki also keeps a track of all activity in the database, including the creation of new entries and any changes to existing entries. Importantly, it also allows you to roll back to a previous version of an entry or compare the difference between two versions. What this means on a practical level is that all changes are saved and can be reviewed at any time, and if necessary, reverted to an earlier version of the entry.

Lastly, and this is vital in a multilingual society such as South Africa, the software allows entries to be published in many languages and allows the user interface to be set to a number of different languages, including isiZulu and Afrikaans. This means there are no language restrictions to participation and entries in previously marginalised languages are encouraged. An example of the success of this approach is in the large number of searches for information on literature in African languages. Search terms such as “xhosa drama”, “setswana poems” and “zulu literature” regularly send visitors to the ESAACH website.

The benefit of writing an encyclopaedia in this way is that the editors can tap into the collective intelligence of the country. For example, someone may have a personal interest in the writer Bessie Head and might have information that would not be freely available in academic circles. This information could be added to Bessie Head’s entry through the wiki and later substantiated by a researcher or ESAACH project member.

The Bessie Head entry is, in fact, a good one to look at in terms of what I have discussed above. The entry originally came from a KZN Literary Tourism author profile and, if we look at the page’s history section, has since been edited seventeen times by four different users. It now includes images, of the author and her work, as well as extracts, links to other sites with further information, a short bibliography and learning materials for download. Any

relevant audio or video clips that are submitted to ESAACH could also be added to this page.

Being open to a large contributor base and drawing on a number of editors from diverse backgrounds allow projects like this to significantly reduce regional and cultural influence found in many other publications, and makes it very difficult for any group to censor or impose bias. If we look at the Google Analytics map, we can see that ESAACH attracts visitors from across South Africa, from the major metropolitan areas to small towns and rural villages. Each of these visitors will have their own idea of what South African culture is and which writers and artists to feature in the encyclopaedia. Getting this input is vital to ESAACH's success. A large, diverse editor base also provides access and breadth on subject matter that is otherwise inaccessible or little documented.

We are also using the website to generate discussion and comment on individual entries, and the collection process as a whole. An important aspect to a project like this, which aims to create an authoritative reference, is to get comment from as many different stakeholders as possible. The wiki facilitates this through the discussion section of each entry's page. Here users can query changes made to a particular entry or the validity of information given as fact. The ESAACH section editor can keep track of these discussions and use them to formulate the most correct version of an entry.

While the published volumes will constitute complete editions in themselves, the wiki database will continue to grow and adapt to the changing cultural landscape of South Africa, and potentially could feed into the creation of a more vibrant creative industry in this country.

The Read-Write Society

Notably, wikis are also products of the open-source software movement, built and maintained by a network of volunteer programmers and made freely available to the general public with relaxed or non-existent copyright restrictions. Other examples of widely used open-source applications are the blogging platform WordPress and the operating system Linux. By using open-source software ESAACH aligns itself with a movement that shares similar ideals to those they hope to foster through the project. Ideally, ESAACH would also want a group of volunteers – working independently but also collaborating on certain entries – submitting content through the ESAACH wiki. ESAACH would also want the information collected to be as widely available for use as possible.

Along the same line as volunteer contributions would be the sharing of data between cultural organisations. Since its inception, ESAACH has relied on donations of content from other projects, most significantly the SALIT Web database but also KZN Literary Tourism's author profiles. Both these resources were available digitally, allowing a relatively seamless importation of the data into the wiki. Other South African cultural and heritage resources are also currently available online – many hosted in universities across Europe and America – which, if permission is obtained, could be incorporated into the ESAACH wiki. The South African Rock Art Digital Archive (SARADA) is one such project. The Rock Art Research Institute has a substantial collection of historical documents, photographs, re-drawings and slides in addition to its large working collection of slides, tracings and re-drawings. In the past few years, these have been digitised by SARADA, along with images from collections from across Southern Africa, with the archive now containing 9685 digital images of South African rock art. These images would form a valuable component of an encyclopaedia on

Arts, Culture and Heritage in South Africa and would complement the extensive entries on Khoisan Oral Literature already part of the encyclopaedia. For example, images could be selected to illustrate a certain story or a linked gallery could be created which would give users a broader understanding of the Khoisan people's creative legacy.

However, this sharing of resources – particularly in an online environment – raises the thorny issue of copyright. One way to combat this is to use the increasingly popular Creative Commons license. Creative Commons is a nonprofit organisation whose aim is to facilitate the sharing of creative work online. They provide free licenses to mark creative work according to the wishes of the creator, so others can share it, remix it, use it commercially, or any combination thereof.

The South African chapter of Creative Commons takes it further, linking the idea of free use of cultural content to the philosophy of ubuntu:

Although new to the western world, the idea that collective knowledge should form the starting point of a fluid, continuously-evolving creation process is not new to South Africans.

Living by the philosophy of “ubuntu”, South Africans have always created in collaborative groups. “Ubuntu” is most effectively encapsulated in the phrase: “umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu”, which can be roughly translated as: “a person is a person through other people” or “I am what I am because of you”. This philosophy engenders itself in song, dance and music, where all individuals in the community participate in the creation process.

The philosophy of Ubuntu is perfectly linked to the philosophies of open source and open content development – embracing a process where creation is acknowledged as evolving out of the community, and recognising that at least some of the value coming out of that creation process needs to be given back to the community in order to strengthen future contributions. (Creativecommons.org.za, 2009)

These licences are being used on websites across the world including Wikipedia, Flickr, Al Jazeera, Whitehouse.gov and MIT OpenCourseWare amongst others, and to a lesser extent, in South Africa.

The most lenient license that Creative Commons offers, but possibly the most interesting for cultural practitioners, is that of Attribution. This license lets others distribute, remix and build upon an artist's work as long as due credit is given for the original creation. A key word in this statement for me is “remix”, a concept that Lawrence Lessig, founding board member of Creative Commons and Stanford law professor, has used as subject for his book *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy* (Lessig, 2008).

As Lessig sees it, if intellectual-property law is left as it is an entire generation will be criminalised. The concept of copyright itself is outdated in today's digital world while the ways in which young people break copyright laws, by sharing, editing and re-using data, helps them to become the sort of people society wants them to be – creative, collaborative and independent.

Lessig further defines a difference between Read-Only and Read-Write cultures. Read Only culture is the current standard in today's world whereby creative works can only be used in specific ways as defined by copyright law and enforced by government treaties, i.e. it can be read, viewed or watched. Read-Write culture is, however, a participatory medium where users can change, improve and distribute creative works, which could be derivatives or remixed versions of existing work. This, he argues, has been around for as long as humans have communicated with each other and connects back to Creative Commons South Africa's link to the philosophy of Ubuntu and collaborative creation. Culture, Lessig argues, develops and grows when we build on the creativity of our ancestors.

This free culture movement, of which Lessig is a major proponent, promotes the freedom to distribute and modify creative works by using the Internet, with its ultimate aim, as defined in its unofficial manifesto, "to build a bottom-up, participatory structure to society and culture, rather than a top-down, closed, proprietary structure" (Freeculture.org, 2010).

What does this then mean for the cultural industries in South Africa and the possible direction in which ESAACH could evolve? Under this model, works of art are no longer mere reference materials but the building block of new artworks. ESAACH then becomes an encyclopaedia, a gallery and publishing platform in one, with new work uploaded and added to the ESAACH wiki, referenced back to the work that inspired it, and sitting alongside "reclaimed" artworks, all forming part of an inclusive cultural record of South Africa. A resource such as this, offering the opportunity for the creation of new and remixed artwork, could potentially stimulate and energise the cultural industries in South Africa for generations to come.

Conclusion: "*Under Africa's Moon*"

The ESAACH project has been described as "reclamation scholarship" (Pallo Jordan, 2009) encouraging a new mix of culture, languages, history and heritage by re-connecting South Africans with previously banned, ignored or marginalised creative work. By opening up a new discursive space, protected from the imposition of grand narratives of the past, and with the promise of inclusiveness and free expression, the ESAACH wiki aspires to provide a rich base for research and a shared sense of cultural identity.

Although this paper foregrounds the Verbal Arts wiki, the project represents only a sliver of a much more ambitious attempt to revitalise studies across the full spectrum of Southern African culture, languages, literature, music, performance and the visual arts. The ESAACH project as a whole aspires to the ideals of the historic Asmara Declaration (2000) which although it addressed itself specifically to literature, may be extended to include all creative output. Amongst the Asmara statements are: "African languages are essential for the decolonization of African minds and for the African Renaissance" and "Promoting research on African languages is vital for their development, while the advancement of African research and documentation will be best served by the use of African languages." To this end, the wiki's unparalleled coverage of South African authors across all languages creates an invaluable foundation on which to build such research. In common with another local initiative promoting Asmara-like ideals - the re-printing of South African classics – the word "writers" in the following statement of intent may be replaced *mutatis mutandis* with "artists" or "musicians". The re-printing project aims to:

Instil love and respect for South African writers and their works; expose learners, the youth and aspirant writers to the richness of South African literary heritage.
(Mzamane, 2009).

In this paper, we have invoked Kgositsile's verse not only to find an imaginative correlative for the wiki space, but also to invoke his numinous sense of the participants in this new social network (ideally all of us) and our relationship within a shared cultural landscape. "You and I a tribe of colours" are invited to share "this song that dance".

Lines by another South African poet evoke a similar imaginative landscape:

Under Africa's moon there dreams a strand
older than old the ancient poets keep.
We both walk it under Africa's sun.
There a glad profusion of brow and hand
- struck from one Mind - strikes deeper than the one
hundred or so microns which spell skin-deep;
where we could wake those old ones from their sleep
with such poems we have not yet begun
to sing: the love which Africa has fanned,
to hymn the earth perhaps, something as grand.

(Douglas Livingstone, "The Waste Land at Station 14")

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The Possibilities for Participatory Public Art in Post-Apartheid Urban Spaces



ABSTRACT: Creative interventions in cities vary from institutionalised public commissions in the name of heritage and urban renewal, to the more fragmented and illegal splatterings of spray cans and stencils. Increasingly a variety of creative practitioners are recognising the potential for public art in transforming city spaces to foster more liveable and humane cities and, innovative new forms of interdisciplinary urban art initiatives tackling these issues are becoming prevalent the world over. Creative interventions in urban spaces have the potential to (re)negotiate notions of space, place and responsibility – thereby challenging normative power relations. In the context of South Africa, public spaces are still marked by the scars of apartheid urban planning which are exacerbated by neoliberal approaches to urban development. Public art has the potential to act as a catalyst for imagining and constructing creative alternatives to the use and perception of these spaces.

In the context of the 'south', and specifically in post-apartheid South Africa, global collaborative initiatives have explicit intentions, functions and responsibilities regarding the spaces and communities in which they engage. These initiatives may prove to be powerful commentators on, and transformers of space and thinking about place, but power relations are not always equal and often reflect uneven processes of globalisation. The participants are usually diverse – in terms of age, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality – and unless this diversity is understood there is the possibility of unequal power relations being perpetuated, or even exacerbated, through this process.

This paper explores participatory public art as a specific approach to working within public space which holds participation and democratic dialogue at its core. Participatory public art involves three interconnected qualities: firstly it is art that thoroughly engages, questions and challenges uses and perceptions of public space and urban aesthetics; secondly it is art that fosters strong participation where citizen power is paramount; thirdly it is art that, as a critical social practice, holds a transformative agenda – the renegotiation of power – at its core. Using the Cascoland, D'urban Experience (2008) as an example of a recent public art event, this paper will unpack the possibilities for participatory public art in post-apartheid urban spaces.

Introduction

Despite the vibrancy in public art practice, the challenges in South Africa are many: the poverty of debate around public art, the lack of diverse and skilled voices, a poor level of discourse and writing, uneven coverage by the media, poor marketing, a lack of methodologies specific to the local context and conservative views on sculpture. The importance of documentation of processes and products, the recording of audience reactions to work, a sustained approach to training and publishing are all necessary to grow a vibrant public art (Minty, 2006: 438).

In the light of this challenge and in the interest of furthering art as a critical social practice (Miles, 2001) this paper explores the possibilities for participatory public art in post-apartheid urban spaces. It is a field that has largely been under-researched in academia, and specifically within the field of fine art in the 'south'. Much of the literature produced around these issues resides in catalogues and has not been subjected to rigorous interrogation through research, theorisation or publication.

Recognising that art is inherently political, this paper argues that in order to foster more just and humane cities, public art needs to foreground a transformative agenda, especially in post-apartheid spaces that are still fraught with inequality. I argue that strong participation is key in this process. Participatory public art involves three interconnected qualities: firstly it is art that thoroughly engages, questions and challenges uses and perceptions of public space and urban aesthetics; secondly it is art that fosters strong participation where citizen power is paramount; thirdly it is art that, as a critical social practice, holds a transformative agenda – the renegotiation of power – at its core.

In order to argue the importance of participatory public art, the paper is structured as follows: firstly I will give a brief theoretical background that led to my definition of participatory public art; secondly I will describe some of the activities of the *Cascoland D'Urban Experience 2008*, focusing on the *Parade* and the *Drop-In Centre*; and finally I will analyse these moments within the context of my definition of participatory public art.

Public art

Broadly, public art is seen as art in public space or 'describes works commissioned for sites of open public access' (Miles, 1997: 5). 'Art' in this context is not only confined to fine art, but encompasses a variety of forms of creativity; from visual art, architecture, design, performance and urban planning. The definitions of public art are therefore contested and fraught with complexity, raising questions such as: is a public gallery a site of public art because it is open to the public? Is public art always outside? Access to an art work does not only refer to the physical or spatial accessibility to the physical object; as important is the contextual, intellectual and emotional accessibility of art and the many ways in which it becomes manifest. Public art is therefore

not simply art placed outside... (it) is art which has at its goal a desire to engage with its audiences and to create spaces – whether material, virtual, or imagined – within which people can identify themselves, perhaps by creating a renewed reflection on community, on the uses of public spaces or on our behaviour within them (Sharp, 2005: 1004)

Despite its growing prevalence, art in the public realm is often marginalised from other art practices as it offers very little interest to the curator, dealer or critic (Miles, 1997:1). Public art has also not been recognised as a 'serious' form of art often being 'regarded as simple monument and too functional to be considered as a worthwhile art form (Clements, 2008: 19). It is therefore a field which only recently (1960s) began to undergo rigorous theoretical engagement, specifically within the field of fine art in the 'south'. Working within post-apartheid urban spaces that are still scarred with socio-spatial and economic inequality, a transformative agenda seems imperative. In the light of this, I became more interested in the potential of process within public art initiatives, than merely the physical outcome.

Public Art and Participatory Theory Practice

Engaging the public space of cities

Cities are not merely the sum total of the physical architecture present in a space. They are made up of complex relationships between time, spaces, places, objects and, most importantly, people. South African cities are largely colonial constructions in some of their physicality, but not in entirety in their personality. Working in South Africa means encountering and attempting to understand the complex relationships that have emerged through the construction of our city spaces. Apartheid urban planning fundamentally shifted the way in which South African cities were structured. The Group Areas Act (1950) had a profound impact on where people were allowed to live, work, play and move through the city. Forced removals resulted in the racialised zoning of city spaces. The effects of this are still present in our cities. Cities in South Africa are still segregated and inequality is still visible.

Cities also increasingly show the interconnectedness of the world through the increased mobility of people, goods, capital, technology, information and ideas (globalisation). It is therefore important to understand the relationships between the local, regional, continental and global in order to understand how the city functions. Perspectives on understanding contemporary cities are multi-faceted and varied. There are contesting theories of space, from Castells' (1996) technocratic and dichotomised perception, to Soja's (1989) postmodern perspective. Understanding space in this research is informed by the thinking of Henri Lefebvre (1974) and Doreen Massey (1994).

Much thinking about space has been influenced or inspired by the writing of the French Marxist philosopher, Henri Lefebvre (1974). In his seminal text, *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre re-describes space 'not as a dead, inert thing or object, but as organic and fluid and alive; it has a pulse, it palpates, it flows and collides with other spaces.' (Merrifield, 2000: 171). Essential here is that space is socially constructed. Lefebvre describes a 'spatial triad' ('representations of space'; 'representational space' and space as a production of social practice) in order to understand this production of space. For Lefebvre, it is the relationship between all three that shapes the cities and spaces we encounter, live, work and play in. It is everyday life that internalizes the spatial triad. Here Lefebvre offers an active process with the engagement of space, where interaction has important implications. Within this paradigm, space is socially constructed by numerous actors and is not only dictated by a number of economic, or academic, elites. Engaging and rebalancing the spatial triad is important for structuring more humane and liveable cities, and inspiring conviviality in neighbourhoods. Participatory public art has the potential to be a powerful catalyst in reasserting Lefebvre's agenda, as all people are reasserted as active agents of social and spatial change.

Extending Lefebvre's thinking, Massey's (1994) central argument throughout her publication titled, *Space, Place and Gender*, centres around the notion that both space and time are constructed through social relations and are 'inherently dynamic' (Massey, 1994: 2). As social relations are 'imbued with power and meaning and symbolism' (and largely gendered), space too is constructed, and reconstructed in many and diverse ways. Massey also questions the notion of place as being physically constituted and bounded. When Massey addresses gender, her fundamental argument is that analysis needs to move away from using dichotomies to understand social processes. There has been a tendency to associate a gendered dichotomy of masculine vs feminine, in labelling various aspects of the world and how things work within it. These dichotomies are for Massey hugely problematic and she sees them as over simplistic analytical tools. Participatory public art has the potential to interrogate normative social constructions, and in so doing, challenge unequal power relations. Participatory public art offers an important platform to (re)imagine and (re)conceptualise how places can be more equitably constructed.

Implicit in this exploration is an aesthetic / functional engagement. Aesthetics are a contested territory. In the context of participatory public art, the emphasis is more on questioning normative assumptions of beauty in the public realm.

Imagining a convivial, or sustainable city entails a reformulation of the aesthetic, or beauty, as something integrated in and expressing the possible fulfilment of everyday life, not something outside it acting like an opiate (Miles, 1998: 24)

These become critical explorations of spaces, materials and meaning in the context of the city.

Redressing this balance might then, be part of a re-visioning of design education; this could, possibly, involve new technologies of representation which take as a point of a departure the view not from above, but in the street. But it will also entail, in a re-integration of design and everyday life, a new approach to professional expertise, in which the expertise of urban dwellers on their lives is given equal value to the knowledge of professionals. And a new approach to aesthetics, in which beauty is related to need. Imagination is not the preserve only of artists and designers, it is the potential of every citizen to foresee a future' (Miles, 1998: 21)

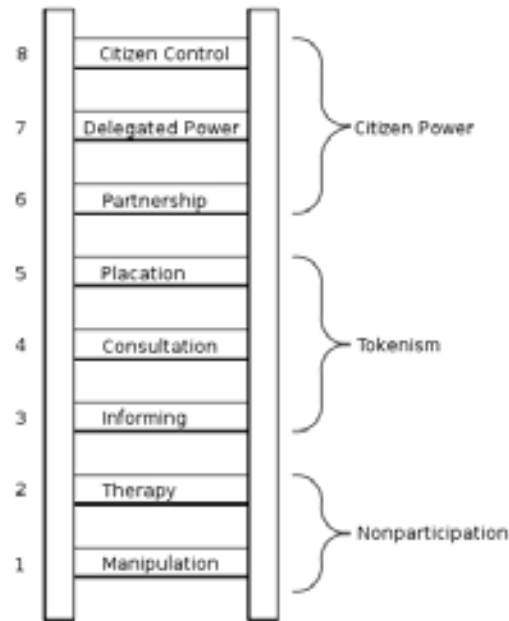
If we are to rebalance the spatial triad and imagine new senses of space and place that do not perpetuate problematic power relations, it is of utmost importance that anyone working within the public realm engages with the socio-political and historical context of Durban. It is clear from this thinking that participatory public art cannot (and does not) merely occur in public space; it should engage the spaces of, and in between, and, most importantly, the people that populate our cities. In order to do this, clear strategies for inclusion need to be developed.

The process of participation in public art practice

Increasingly, contemporary discourse on art in the public realm focuses on the processes by which works are conceived of, made, and installed in public spaces. Sharp (2006: 1003) believes that 'in the deployment of public art it is the processes through which it becomes installed into the urban fabric that are critical to inclusion'.

Sharp argues that participation / inclusion is essential in the installation of any public art process if the intervention is to be relevant for society. It is therefore important to understand how participation is defined. Arnstein (1969: 216) argued that 'citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future'.

Arnstein's ladder of participation is useful in this context. 'Manipulation and 'therapy' are both seen as forms of non-participation as they largely amount to 'engineering support' as they are based on the assumption that people need to be taught or cured. 'Informing', 'consultation' and 'placation' may be starting points for participation, but unless they are reinforced with other kinds of strategies, they remain token gestures as opposed to fostering democratic inclusion. For Arnstein, 'partnership', 'delegated power' and 'citizen control' are forms of strong participation where citizen power is paramount.



Anstein, A. 1969. Arnstein's **Ladder of Participation** [Figure]

Citizen power in public art programmes opens up more democratic processes of Freirean dialogue and ultimately means that responsibility and ownership of creative interventions – be they institutional, corporate, resistance or independent projects – lie with citizens. For Freire, democratic participation and dialogue is paramount. Freire (1972: 98) asserted that to carry out a revolution for the people

is equivalent to carrying out a revolution without the people, because people are drawn into the process by the same methods and procedures used to oppress them.. Dialogue with people is radically necessary to every authentic revolution... Its very legitimacy lies in that dialogue.

If a public art process is to be revolutionary / transformative in this sense, participation is fundamentally important. If art is made on behalf of people, then the power structures and status quo are being maintained, and sometimes even reinforced. Strong participation requires that platforms for democratic dialogue be established. This requires a shift from individualist art practice and requires artists to renegotiate their role within these processes.

Participation is the activation of certain relations that is initiated and directed by the artists and often encouraged by art institutions, and that sometimes becomes the sole goal of certain art projects... While inviting the audience to actively participate, the artists of the participatory projects create certain interfaces that are well prepared in advance and highly contextualised in a certain social, cultural and political environment (Milevska, 2006).

An inclusive and participatory process that fosters democratic dialogue means that relationships between institutions, organisations, individual artists and the people that populate cities must be fostered with the aim of bettering society and nurturing more humane and liveable cities. To foster participatory public art means to develop strategies and structures for collective decision-making. Baca (2005: 168-9) asserted that there is an important link between criticality and participation.

Moral education is participatory. It is a creative, critical and analytical process. We must tell our stories, and teach the young to tell their stories in any language they

...speak, especially non-verbal languages, such as the visual arts or dance, which can reach past intellectual obstacles. We must teach ourselves and others to listen and to hear our stories because it is in the very specificity of the human experience that we learn compassion. (Baca, 2005: 168-9).

What Baca is asserting is that participatory public art is instrumental in developing an inclusive approach to critical thinking and learning. In this context, the role of the artist needs to be challenged; as Sharp (2006: 1014) asserted, '[t]raditional notions of the artist as creative genius have to be reassessed and the artist has to find a position between ingenious creator and creative facilitator'. The roles of the participants also need to be reconsidered where they are active agents. A child may not be able to produce a large scale public sculpture, but working in collaboration with a sculptor, a child's drawing may emerge in its form. Here authorship also becomes an issue. The sculpture is no longer the work of an individual, but rather becomes collectively owned. This poses a challenge to many an artist's ego, but in challenging this relationship, the hierarchical and elitist realm of arts can be renegotiated. Ultimately, what Baca (2005), Lacy (1960s), Sharp (2006), Miles (1997, 2001) and others are saying is that participation allows for public art to become a critical social practice.

Public Art as Critical Social Practice for Transformation

It is important to remember here that, regardless of the scale and type of intervention, the installation of public art within the urban fabric is inevitably a political exercise. (Sharp, 2006: 1020)

In this sense, participatory public art needs to be self-critical and foster an agenda for social change in the interest of more just cities. Change and transformation still needs to be actively on the agenda if we are to build more democratic and humane city spaces. Transformation is not a symbolic hand over of power, but is rather a renegotiation of power itself. It involves an active engagement as the balance of power is shifted from an elite-centred, to a people-centred approach to creating more equitable societies.

Art has been instrumental in both expressing and motivating for changes in society throughout history and across the globe. Art and struggle have worked hand in hand all over the world. As has art and Fascism. Sue Williamson's (1989) book *Resistance Art in South Africa* chronicles the relationship between art and change in South Africa, specifically focusing on how art featured as an important commentator and catalyst in the anti-apartheid struggle. Post-1994, the relationship between social movements, struggles and the arts has become somewhat fragmented. Yet, the world is still marked by racial, economic and gender-based inequality. Global processes of neo-liberal capitalism have worked to entrench these inequalities on both a local and global level. Within this context, there has been an increasing movement towards fostering spatial as well as social justice. For Soja (2009):

Critical spatial thinking today hinges around three principles:

- a) The ontological spatiality of being (we are all spatial as well as social and temporal beings)*
- b) The social production of spatiality (space is socially produced and can therefore be socially changed).*
- c) The socio-spatial dialectic (the spatial shapes the social as much as the social shapes the spatial)*

Participatory public art offers interesting possibilities as a catalyst and vehicle for this kind of change. If ordinary people are being reasserted as active agents for social change through their actions, then using creative means is one of the avenues through which to activate civic creativity (Landry, 2006: 1).

Challenging power relations and the role of the artist also provides a critique on what forms of creativity are recognized as art. What is often forgotten is that there are numerous creative processes already in existence that may not be recognized by the dominant contemporary and fine art canon. According to Miles (2003:177),

[p]olitical art (as understood on the social democratic model) assumes that those whom the art work is destined for (the fantasized working class) need art in as much as they need Ideas in order to understand capitalism and class society. There is never a moment's recognition that people are already engaged in practices in the world which are critical and transformative (Roberts, 2001: 6).

This challenge to the canon does not necessarily mean replacing the canon, and

As Dorothy Rowe explains Pollock implies that 'differencing the canon' is not about the replacement of one set of canonical works by another as devised by feminism, but that it is a rather more nuanced activity that continually questions the borders of knowledge, desires and power (Rowe, 2003, p. 28). (Sharp, 2006: 1008)

Participatory public art then becomes a way to talk back to existing theory in creative ways and using innovative methodologies. Contemporary consumer culture seems to have been accepted to such a degree that alternatives have been difficult to imagine. However, with the current convergence of financial, environmental, social and political crises, people are increasingly starting to question dominant thinking on socio-economic and political models. It is in this space that contemporary art has a place to explore, as

...imagination is what, above all, makes empathy possible... imagination is the one thing that permits us to give credence to alternative realities... We also have our social imagination: the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society... This kind of reshaping imagination may be released through dialogue... (Greene, 1995: 3&5)

For Greene, people need to develop their social imagination, and as she asserts, '(i)t is simply not enough for us to reproduce the way things are' (Greene, 1995: 1). In order to harness this imagination and foster transformation in our cities it is important to look at public art as a critical social practice, 'which, like critical theory, questions its own assumptions, operating within the dominant society to reveal contradictions... these contradictions can undermine false authority to open a space in which other stories are told' (Miles, 2001). Miles argues that like critical theory that 'seeks liberation through critical reflection, critical of its own assumptions and the conditions in which it is itself produced', art as critical social practice can offer powerful processes of social critique and social change. Public art as critical social practice has an agenda that goes beyond beautification and merely demonstrating a particular viewpoint on society. Participatory public art in this context has a responsibility to change society in meaningful ways.

What is important for public art is the notion that to change society, the process should be one of learning, where theory and practice are inseparable in the endeavor to change the circumstances (Marx, 1947: 198). Baca (2005: 168) echoed this when she wrote about the learning she has experienced through her engagement with murals. Here, learning 'is a creative, critical and analytical process'. This resonates with what Schon (1987) advocated as a methodology of 'reflection-in-action' in a presentation entitled 'Educating the Reflective Practitioner'. For Schon, learning occurs as part of action and how these inform each other. This resonates with what Freire (1972: 99) asserted when he said that '[c]ritical reflection is also action'.

For participatory public art to foster transformation, it therefore needs to acknowledge itself as a critical social practice. Miles (2001) asserted that 'critical theory seeks liberation through critical reflection, critical of its own assumptions and the conditions in which it is itself produced'. It is in the engagement of participatory public art as an ongoing process of action and reflection, action in reflection and reflexive action, that possibilities of social change can be imagined.

Participatory Public Art

My research therefore argues that strong participatory public art should be informed by these three interconnected qualities. Firstly, **it is art that engages public space** with the intention

of exploring site, space and people. Implicit in this is an exploration of the relationship between aesthetic and functionality in a specific context. The spatial and conceptual context will shape how this negotiation evolves within a project. Secondly, **it is art that is based on strong participation** throughout the entire process, from conception to implementation. Strong participation implies that democratic dialogue and collective decision-making are key, in order for collective responsibility and ownership of both process and product. Thirdly, **participatory public art should work towards being a critical social practice** where the agenda is ultimately transformative, thereby challenging normative perceptions on the experience of spaces and the power structures that shape our society. All public art is inherently political and occurs within a framework of different kinds of power relations. Participatory public art engages these power relations in order to address inequality. It is this engagement that enables the possibilities for public art as a critical social practice for transformation. All these qualities are aimed at providing a platform for collectively creating more humane and liveable cities where participatory public art projects enable creative interventions that open up dialogue around specific social issues in context.

Cascoland D'urban Experience 2008

In 2008, the Dutch public art organisation, *Cascoland*, came to Durban to implement their third project in South Africa. *Cascoland* is “essentially an improvised, spatial ‘collage’, rooted in the desire to research, address, intervene, alter, celebrate and confront the practices of the everyday use of public space, its rules, spatial aesthetics and functions” (*Cascoland*, 2006a). It is an inter-disciplinary collaborative initiative involving artists, architects, researchers, urban geographers, designers and performers, amongst others, whose ultimate aim is to change perspectives on, and shape public space.

In the kind of public art Cascoland promotes, inter-disciplinary artists engage themselves in communities to collaborate with audiences and members of the communities in shaping their public space through dialogue and participation [Emphasis mine] (Cascoland, 2007a: 13).

This statement implies that *Cascoland* promotes a particular kind of work method, where a group of artists from diverse practices work together in addressing a particular issue / set of issues within a specified community. And further, not only do they collaborate with each other as artists, they collaborate with and within the community, as well as the audiences they attract in the implementation of the project. As this collaboration is based on dialogue and participation, it implies that all collaborators participate equally in developing the work that ultimately shapes / re-shapes public space. In many ways this principle speaks directly to the definition of participatory public art I had developed. Being a local artistic coordinator and a participating artist, it provided a unique opportunity to conduct qualitative ethnographic research into this emerging critical field.

For the purpose of this conference, I have selected two examples from *Cascoland* to reflect on the possibilities of participatory public art in post-apartheid urban spaces: the *Parade* and the *Drop-In Centre*.

The circus is coming to town

The opening performance (Fig 1¹) as part of *Cascoland's* 10 day festival was a *Parade* starting at Nicol Square. Previously known as Red Square, Nicol Square was an empty lot that was used as a meeting point and site of resistance, specifically against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act (1946). The *Parade* was a concept developed by the Dutch director of *Cascoland* inspired by the design concept, ‘the circus is coming to town’. The idea borrows from street carnivals and public parades. According to a Scott (2008) (Fig 1 and 3),

¹ Please see appendix for images.

[t]he purpose was to entertain, create curiosity, gather and involve the locals in fanfare and into taking a route through the city to celebrate it's people and industry and to bring them to the first festival site. To disrupt daily routine...

Implicit in this is challenging the perceptions of the audience about public space in Durban, and more importantly the people who inhabit those spaces. The *Parade* therefore, in line with *Cascoland's* methodology, set out to be a collaborative process between artists, people local to the area, and the audience invited onto the *Parade*. In contrast to much of the other *Cascoland* work, the artists involved worked predominantly in a studio on performative pieces and objects to be used, purely for the duration of the *Parade*. The *Parade* consisted of a variety of mobile installations. These were used as somewhat gimmicky objects of interest to attract an audience for the *Parade*. These were pushed, pulled and played along the *Parade* route through Warwick Junction. The purpose of the *Parade* was to attract an audience for the festival and showcase parts of the city (it was assumed) few people traverse (Machen, 2008). The *Refunc* garbage architects made furniture out of tyres, and reconditioned municipal rubbish bins into a variety of mobile sound and entertainment devices (Fig 2). Cape Town-based Mark O'Donovan constructed the *Zebra Zipper* (Fig 4), a mobile zebra crossing, which was used as a performative vehicle to guide the paraders along the route, along with the *Bin to Bin* Street performance (Fig 1). The *Mosquito Bin* (Fig 5) and the *Mobile Movie Bin* (Fig 6) were used to document the parade. Situated at the end of the *Parade* route, was the *spaza-de-move-on* (Fig 7), a mobile vending unit designed through a collaboration between Doung Jahangeer and local Vendor, Moses.

On one evening, the street children from the *Drop-In Centre* were allowed to come on the *Parade*. They were provided whistles and t-shirts and became part of the *Parade* through the city. They ran chaotically through the streets blowing on whistles instead of glue bottles. For a brief moment, these children who were usually harassed by police were being chaperoned by the very same people who are normally seen as their enemies. They were also allowed to walk, run and dance side-by-side with the public who usually choose to render them invisible, or regard them a nuisance. Their presence was for once legitimised. Many of the participants / audience were surprised to find out that these were the very same children they pass, and often ignore, on a daily basis.

Unfortunately they were not invited on the *Parade* a second time as they were perceived as being too unruly. It was at this moment where the contradiction and cracks between *Cascoland's* methodology and the reality on the ground began to emerge.

Despite its intentions, some confusion about the *Parade's* purpose was expressed. Passers by were sometimes more confused than enthused. 'What is this demonstration about?' or 'what are you complaining about' were questions that were muttered in the wake of the spectacle.

I think bystanders thought we were on a march but were obviously confused about what we were marching for. They recognised us a bunch of "internationals"... not sure if the connotation was good or not (Scott, 2008).

In a more critical response, Abels (2009) felt that the *Parade* had failed to define itself and in many ways undermined the overall aims and objectives of *Cascoland's* methodology.

All the different kinds of parades share one main point: A parade contextualises itself (Ruben)... the concept of our parade was too difficult, the wrong message at the wrong location... in itself the parade was hardly a Cascoland product.

The *Parade* should have been able to speak autonomously about itself; the meaning should have been self-evident.

In a way a predominantly cynical circus metaphor becomes apt in this context. The question it raised remains as to who were the performers and audience members? Were the paraders the performing monkeys or the voyeurs of the urban poor at work and play? What did people

learn from their interactions? For de Bell (2009), '[t]he people walking in the parade become participants. The spectators looking at this phenomena, the parade, are the audience'.

Despite its participatory intentions, the *Parade* seemed to serve to entrench barriers as much as they were 'exposed' (de Bell, 2009). Mark O'Donovan's *Zebra Zipper* provides an interesting metaphor in this context:

For me, the working metaphor for the Cascoland festival is the 'zebra crossing': creating protected access to 'other' territories, facilitating controlled crossing-over. The fragility of this routing is in the roll-up zebra-stripes: temporary, a little precarious and somewhat slippery (von Kotze, 2008).

The *Zebra Zipper* hinted at a desire to provide meeting points, pave the crossing between one space and another. The *Parade* provided just such a fleeting moment of intersection. In this case it provided the middle class a platform to momentarily intersect with 'the other'. There were those who had never walked through the inner city before, but who felt safe enough with the police escort and spectacle. Many an audience member commented on this thrilling experience, of the excitement they felt at seeing their city for the first time. There were also many people who visit these inner city spaces on a regular basis. This made local arts and entertainment journalist, Peter Machen, uneasy. In an article in the *Weekend Witness*, Machen (2008) wrote about how the process had made him feel alienated in a space he normally felt completely at home in.

Dropping in

Nestled in the corner of the boulevard bordering the harbour on Margaret Mncadi Avenue, the *Drop-In Centre* is not a shelter, but rather a space where children can drop by to have a simple meal, shower and take part in some of the activities that are on offer. The purpose of *Cascoland's* involvement at the *Drop-In Centre* was to challenge the misperceptions of street children and to address some of the infrastructural needs of the *Drop-In Centre*. One cannot work with street children haphazardly (Trent, 2008). A certain amount of time and dedication is needed in order to build an element of trust necessary for collaboration. The artists involved in the *Drop-In Centre* spent three months researching, building up relationships and developing interventions for the site. A series of performance workshops were held; animation workshops developed into a number of films; and a series of furniture installations created more convivial spaces for the children. Gitte Nygaard (Danish jewellery designer) and Jair Straschnow (Israeli industrial designer) aimed to tackle the issue of seating (*Howzit* swings – Fig 8) recreation (games tables and soccer goal posts – Fig 11) and storage (*Postbox Lockers* – Fig 9). Addressing the invisibility or silencing of the children, the *Moving Hands* (Fig 12) developed a series of flipbooks, stop animations and live-action films in collaboration with the street children. The *Screen Kids* (Fig 13) project focused on providing a performance space for the children as part of the festival. The *Street Theatre* (Fig 14) project used performance as a means for storytelling about life on the street.

At the beginning of the *Cascoland* involvement at the *Drop-In Centre*, planning for the *Talent Show* (Fig 15) process was implemented after discussing the concept with a number of children and the coordinators on the ground. What emerged is that some of the children were involved in dance groups and music groups. The *Talent Show* was not intended as a competition, but rather a showcase of creative abilities of the children who are so often just seen as urban detritus. Running concurrently with the projects being initiated by artists, these groups were rehearsing for the final performance.

The audience was ushered from the taxi and shown around the *Drop-In Centre* by a group of the children acting as chaperones. The *Talent Show* was introduced by one of the directors of Umthombo, an ex street child herself. According to Scott (2008), '[t]he live performances arranged with the children provided a platform for showcasing their talent and provided more direct contact with the audience'. According to Vega student Makhubo (2008), '[i]t was an evening which reminded you of the beauty in the inbetween [sic] that showed off the talent in the cracks'.

Poets, *Street Theatre* performers, choir and gospel singers, gumboot and hip hop dancers took to the grassy stage, showing off their talent. Von Kotze (2008) asserted that, '[t]he talent show allowed them to step out of everyday drudgery and stress and shine! And be appreciated'. The audience, being predominantly 'white' and middle class, were quite taken aback by their experience at the *Drop-In Centre*, but there was an overwhelming sentiment that it was a humbling experience. According to von Kotze (2008), 'they applauded and I sensed a bit of unease (can we trust these kids?) and patronising goodwill'.

Another Vega student, Smith (2008) had this to say,

I think one of the fundamental lessons I'm learning from the Cascoland project is humility... It's seeing the hope that's burning in their eyes and the desire to succeed that brings about the humility, with the world in front of them these kids are looking at life as opportunity not a burden, and just waiting for the chance to become something.

These kinds of responses show how audiences were confronted with their own preconceptions and prejudices. The audiences' perceptions may have been challenged through this process, but it is unclear if this translates into action through a change of behaviour.

Participatory public art in practice

At this point it is important to return to the definition of participatory public art provided by this research, and reflect on the definition provided by *Cascoland*. I will look at moments within the Parade and the *Drop-In Centre* in relation to the following: the relationship between public art and public space in the context of *Cascoland*; the relationship between participation and power in public art processes during the Parade and the *Drop-In Centre*; the possibilities for change and transformation through participatory processes.

Engaging Public Spaces of the Parade and Drop-In Centre

Engaging with public space entails more than merely being in public space; it involves actively addressing the physical, social, political, spatial and economic dynamics that shape public life. To engage public space means being actively involved in its complexity and there should be some form of activism in this kind of engagement according to Miles (1997: 187). And as Minty (2006: 423) asserts, '[i]t is virtually impossible for artists working in public art in South Africa to avoid the burden of history embedded in the landscape'.

The *Cascoland Parade* largely ignored all of these dynamics and was devoid of genuine engagement. The notion of a circus coming to town is not a familiar phenomenon in South Africa which makes it a little difficult to find local resonance. Circuses are the realm either of picture books and Hollywood movies, or the dilapidated caravan and moth-eaten animal of Bryan's Circus camped near the Durban beach front. South Africans have a different association with public gatherings; they have predominantly taken the form of public marches addressing social and political issues. The *Cascoland Parade* was therefore a confusing form of intervention. The idea of a police escort for a cultural event is not common; demonstrations are serious things, addressing serious issues. There are a set of protocol and practices from dress, to songs, slogans and political paraphernalia. The confusion of the bystanders, the anger of some of those trying to get home, and the poor attendance demonstrates how local relevance was missing. Had the Parade engaged the context at a deeper level through addressing dynamics of public life, interesting possibilities for a meaningful intervention may have been explored, asking questions such as; how will a parade in this context raise broader local and global questions around the use and perception of public space and power in our cities?; and how does one intervene in an already vibrant place?

This lack of engagement with context also extends to an avoidance of addressing the historical context. The *Cascoland Parade* route has important spatial, social, political and historical relevance which was almost entirely ignored. Nicol / Red Square was a prominent site of political resistance in the 1940s. Dr Yusuf Daddoo Street (formerly Grey Street) has

been, and still is, a celebrated political and cultural hub in Durban². The *muthi* market is one of the very few open air traditional medicine markets in Africa and is a significant cultural and spiritual site. The Early Morning Market is a 99 year old fresh produce market. Instead of engaging in the spaces, their histories and their stories, the *Parade* bombarded through them, much to the frustration of some passersby. *Cascoland* both ignored the history of the landscape and the contemporary perception and use of the spaces. None of the artists were engaged on the route during the laboratory phase, as a result, the *Parade* appeared, seemingly out of nowhere, during the festival period.

As the spaces were ignored, by implication, so too were the people. The definitions of the participants were vague. In this context, who were the audience that needed to be 'mobilised' through the interventions (Cascoland, 2007: 13)? There are contradictory messages. One the one hand it was asserted that, 'what is of important [sic] is that you attract attention for your project to a larger audience. Once you got [sic] the attention you can put the spot light on these informal routes and the citizens who work and live along these routes' (de Bell, 2008). This suggests that the audience is those on the *Parade* viewing the performance of the everyday under the spotlight. On the other hand, 'the people walking in the *Parade* become participants. The spectators looking at these phenomena, the *Parade*, are the audience' (de Bell, 2008). The message is somewhat confusing. Although never explicitly stated as such, the main purpose, it seemed, was to draw the predominantly middle-class 'white' audiences through an area they would never normally traverse. A potentially powerful movement of people through the city was ultimately an often poorly attended cluster of predominantly 'white' tourists escorted by the police, looking in at a snapshot of the poor, 'from the yellow submarine' (Abels, 2009). These assumptions of who the audience was also problematic, as many of the people attending the *Parade* know the area well Machen (2008). Here the *Parade* process was alienating, as opposed to invigorating.

In contrast, working in the *Drop-In Centre* involved a longer-term engagement with the space and people. The *Drop-In Centre* was identified early in the process. It was therefore possible to spend more time conducting both primary and secondary, research on the site and conditions of street children in Durban. The artists became engaged in the site early in the process and the brainstorming sessions became platforms for discussing possible interventions. Here the process was as important as the eventual products.

It was hot and the rubbish bags were rapidly growing maggots. The piles of rubbish alongside were strewn with flies and were starting to sweat in the sun. Equipped with gloves and black bags I had bought from the petrol station across the road as the Drop-In Centre had run out a few days prior, I started methodically clearing the litter outside the centre. Within 5 minutes 2 +/- 8 year old boys had joined me. Within 10 minutes there were 5 of us, chatting, and cleaning (Field notes, 4 March 2008).

This simple collective action developed a set of relationships and this group of children became some of the most active in the *Cascoland* project. Shortly after *Cascoland*, according to one of the staff members of the *Drop-In Centre* (2008), this group of children joined a rehabilitation programme to get off glue. They have subsequently been reintegrated back into society and are attending school again³. It is difficult to say whether these events are linked, but I believe that they are all parts of broader movements to get children to enable themselves to move beyond the cycles of abuse that led them to, and keep them in, street life.

This action of cleaning was also an invisible one and does not appear in the glossy catalogues; yet it is these small things that build relationships that underpin the possibilities for participatory public art in transforming society. Miles (2003: 169) pondered this when he said that, 'I wonder if an art of intimate encounters is more revolutionary than efforts to mimic displays of power in a new genre of public monuments (public art)'. Unlike the *Parade*,

² See the Grey Street Trails which celebrate prominent writers from the area (<http://www.literarytourism.co.za/index.php/Trails/>).

³ In subsequent projects with Umthombo, this group of boys has not re-emerged, suggesting that they have been re-integrated into society in some form or another.

working at the *Drop-In Centre* involved a series of these intimate encounters, as working with street children involves an investment of time and energy into the process (Dybicz, 2005).

If we return to Leferbvre's spatial triad, we can see how participatory public art has the potential to engage the relationship between 'representations of space', 'representational spaces' and the ways in which space is produced through social practice. To understand the context, one needs to understand how the space is physically constructed; how it is emotionally experienced; how social interaction produces both the conception and perception of space; and most importantly, how these three intersect. The purpose here is to highlight, challenge, or subvert, unequal power relations through Freireian dialogue. Participatory public art can function as a catalyst in this context. *Cascoland* largely addressed the 'representations of space' and the 'representational spaces' through developing products and experiences. It largely neglected the possibilities for facilitating dialogue and new spaces for interaction in its approach to shaping the space of social practice. The *Parade* involved no interaction. The work at the *Drop-In Centre* attempted to open up a transient or transitional space for interaction, but did not necessarily foster spaces for broader and long term (re)negotiations of power. A misunderstanding of the notion of participation meant that spaces of social practice were not necessarily fostered.

Participation and Power

One of the critical elements missing in the *Parade* was collaboration and participation. *Cascoland* claims an inter-disciplinary approach; this implies an integrated approach to finding solutions from a variety of disciplines. As very few artists collaborated with other artists or community members, let alone across disciplines, this claim is immediately compromised. In this context, participation merely meant being there. *Cascoland's* concept of 'audience' seems incongruent with the language of participation. Audiences are generally recipients, even in the context of interactive performance. De Bell (2008) hints at this when she talks of 'demanding' actions from the audience on the *Parade*. They may take part, but they do not participate in the sense Arnstein (1969) speaks of. Strong participation or what Arnstein (1969) calls citizen power, is only present when there has been some form of collective action. In order to engage public space effectively with the intention of challenging problematic power relations, partnerships, delegation of power and citizen control are essential. This fundamentally shifts the role of the artist, where the artist relinquishes individualistic ego and becomes a facilitator, an intermediary, and a co-participant. This is a difficult thing for most artists to do, and ultimately did not happen as part of the *Parade*.

Strong participation involves some form of collaboration and collective decision-making in order to facilitate democratic dialogue. The conceptualization of the *Parade* itself did not involve collective decision-making, and at most involved what Arnstein (1969) would deem tokenism. Artists may have been consulted as to how the *Parade* would develop, but no consideration was given to whether this was a relevant form of intervention in the first place. The interventions were largely results of discussions that occurred after hours in the accommodation of the foreign artists, and therefore excluded local participants that may have been able to offer insight into the local context. The discussions also excluded the masses of people that live, work and move through the *Parade* route. The *Parade's* vague notions of those involved meant that spaces for participation did not emerge. The artists were not engaged in the spaces, or sites, along the route and therefore no contact was made with any of the communities of people along the way. The artists tended to work in isolation and the interventions were predominantly developed at the studios and then implemented in public space only during the 10 day festival period. This approach does not allow or enable collective-decision making in public space.

In this context it became clear that the definition of participation for *Cascoland* was incongruent with contemporary discourse on participation and the definition provided as part of this research. For *Cascoland*, participation meant being there. De Bell (2008) asserted that, '[s]ome artists chose to make installations where audience could participate in'. This quote makes the prevailing attitude to participation in the project explicit; the artist makes something for the audience to 'participate' in. The audience is a recipient of something with which to play. They are not necessarily afforded participatory decision-making power as part of this

process. The purpose of participation is to foster an inclusive approach to developing spaces. Implicit in this is fostering public dialogue in renegotiating the perceptions of space. In this sense the people who were on, or witnessed the *Parade*, willing or unwilling, were all participants. For Arnstein (1969:3), this level of engagement would constitute non participation.

The bottom rungs of the ladder are (1) Manipulation and (2) Therapy. These two rungs describe levels of "nonparticipation" that have been contrived by some to substitute for genuine participation. Their real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable powerholders to "educate" or "cure" the participants.

Here the issue of power comes to the fore: for *Cascoland*, participation is not about a democratic redistribution of power. *Cascoland* was attempting to 'teach', middle class audience about their city through putting a spotlight on the route. The assumption is based on an unrealistic perception of a homogenous and largely ignorant or naïve middle class. It also raises questions about why this particular group of people needs to be taught; it suggests that by 'teaching' those with economic power, they are enabled to 'help' the working classes by understanding their plight.

Massey asserted that the notion of both space and time are constructed through social relations and that they are 'inherently dynamic' (Massey, 1994: 2). As social relations are 'imbued with power and meaning and symbolism', space too is constructed, and reconstructed, in many and diverse ways. Massey talks about understanding both local and global power dynamics within specific contexts, and how these are shaped by broader socio-political and economic processes. In the case of *Cascoland* it is also important to recognise how 'north-south' power dynamics intersect. Historically there has been a tenuous relationship between international collaborations underpinned by coming from the 'north' to 'help' the poor 'south'. Apparent in this relationship is both a romantic and patronising attitude that underlies the desire to participate in these kinds of projects in the context of the global 'south'. This was evident in both formal and informal interviews with visiting artists, and is reflected at numerous points in the field notes and research journal. Although it is often unintentional, this attitude shapes the ways in which foreign artists interact with local artists and the general public.

On a visit to Amsterdam with *Cascoland* as part of the Kunstvlaai Art Festival, a conversation arose about working in contexts of the 'north' vs. contexts of the 'south' (Research Journal, 7 May 2008). The overwhelming opinion of the European artists was that everything had been done in the 'north'; that there was nothing new to learn or do in public spaces in cities such as Amsterdam. In contrast, the 'south' was seen as a new frontier, brimming with creative possibilities and funding opportunities. Working in Africa gives organisations like *Cascoland* a competitive edge in the funding arena (de Bell, 2008)⁴. It also gave the European artists the impression that their work was somehow more meaningful as it was 'helping' the poor (Straschnow, 2008).

During *Cascoland*, the parallels to global inequality fell into stark relief. The 'north' once again imposed itself on the 'south' in what Machen (2008) called a new form of cultural imperialism. This may not have been the intention, but was an unintended consequence. It is no surprise then that locals think of the paraders as a bunch of crazy 'whiteys' or '*umlungus*' invading the city (Nsele, 2008). The name, '*D'urban Experience*', becomes ironic in this context, referring to the colonial namesake of Durban.

⁴ Many of the funding opportunities have some form of developmental agenda attached. Some are more explicit than others: some stipulate collaboration and participation; others foreground 'north' – 'south' dialogue. The tension between funding requirements and the developing of working methodologies needs more rigorous investigation, and is not the focus of this research. It is however important to note as it may have had an impact on the ways in which projects choose to represent themselves.

Unlike with the *Parade*, where there was no redistribution of power, the work at the *Drop-In Centre* involved a more participatory process, with the distinct intention of redressing power issues. The *Moving Hands* and *Street Theatre* had a child-centric approach and artists worked closely with the children. The stories came from the children and the artists became facilitators, as opposed to directors. The outcomes of these creative processes were then screened and performed in public space for an audience that would normally perceive the children as being invisible, inaudible or surplus.

Children are largely inaudible, especially in conservative societies, where the motto 'seen but not heard' is still prevalent. Children living on the streets are even more marginalized in this regard. This is evident in the children's perceptions of themselves as being worse than vermin. Many members of the public would prefer it if street children were not even seen as the encounter confronts them with a set of emotions difficult to reconcile (Interview with audience members, 15 March 2008). The *Moving Hands*, *Street Theatre* and *Screen Kids* were all working towards addressing this issue. Participation was vital in order to ensure a redistribution of power that enabled children having a voice in representing their lives and their city.

Although Nygaard and Straschnow produced largely in isolation in the studio, their interventions were based on thorough research and were installed collaboratively. The *Post Box Lockers* spoke directly to the legitimization of street children in challenging the white picket fence stereotype of 'home'. The children scampered up the trees to help position the *Howzit* swings. One child volunteered to help paint the games tables and the goal posts which became multi-functional objects as soon as they arrived. The nature of their interventions also involved interaction: sitting, swinging, playing, posting.

The *Talent Show* as a culmination of all the processes that occurred at the *Drop-In Centre*, allowed for the children to take some sense of ownership and responsibility for their space. They were momentarily in charge. The *Talent Show* provided a meeting point between the street children, the public in and around the site, and a group of middle class people who would never normally interact, in or with, these spaces, or people. The performances became a catalyst for a different sort of interaction from the usual encounter of street children's performances as begging. The act of performing humanised the children in the eyes of the audience and opened up the possibility for a conversation. The hosting of this audience by the children allowed for the normal power dynamics of adult as expert to be challenged.

The more people are visible the more they're accepted, the more positive that visibility the greater the likelihood that they will become more valued members of the community (Lacy in Fryd, 2007).

The more the children are seen as valid members of the community, the greater chance that they will be involved in decision-making practices enshrined in the constitutional rights of the child.

If, as Freire (1972: 99) puts it, '[d]ialogue cannot exist without humility', then artists must learn this humility in their practice. The *Parade* lacked this humility, whereas the *Talent Show* presented a culmination of processes where the artist, in foregrounding the children, was largely invisible.

Change and Transformation: Public Art as Critical Social Practice

Recognising and measuring this change in public art projects poses a number of challenges:

Two interrelated factors help to explain the problems: first, the contribution of public art is often deliberately symbolic; and, secondly, following from this, there are methodological problems in evaluating its impacts (Sharp, 2006: 1005).

Despite these challenges, there are ways in which change can be seen, even if this is sometimes momentary. Change in this context refers to a renegotiation of power relations. It is at the moment of intervention, activation or mobilisation that the possibility for change may

emerge. In this light, the *Parade* needs to be looked at from two perspectives: in terms of the individual interventions within the *Parade*; and the *Parade* as an intervention, or moment, in itself.

We were driving past Nicol Square parkade and had to stop mid-traffic to take a photograph of the tyre chairs. On the pavement sat a row of empty chairs. On the edge of the pavement sat a row of people. Why would people choose to sit on the floor instead of the chairs the garbage people [sic] made? (Anon Vega student, 2008).

This observation and question posed by the student highlights how, from the very starting point of the *Parade* route, the interventions were not adequately activated. Stemming from a discussion and further student research, two reasons for the non use of the chairs were identified. Firstly, their design was not perceived as functional, the seats were too low, and being made from tyres, were thought to rub dirt onto clothes. Secondly, they were not recognized as seats; they therefore had no meaning within that particular context.

This was typical of many of the interventions, despite their experimental and interesting design, their functionality and relevance were lost. Alongside the tyre seats, the *Bin Band*, *Mosquito Bin*, *Movie Bin*, and *Zebra Zipper* were all objects that were not activated, or mobilized, as part of the *Parade*. They appeared in the *Parade*, and were perceived as fun and interesting objects, but did not enable the kind of change necessary for a shift in power dynamics, essential for meaningful transformation. Here the aesthetic experiment becomes vacuous; an experiment with materials as opposed to a collective exploration and expression of re-imagining spaces. Miles (1998: 24) critiques this when he suggests that imagining more humane and liveable cities entails an integrated approach to urban creativity, where anything else fulfils a pacifying role.

Imagining a convivial, or sustainable city entails a reformulation of the aesthetic, or beauty, as something integrated in expressing the possible fulfillment of everyday life, not something outside it acting like an opiate. (Miles, 1998: 24).

In contrast, Jahangeer's *spaza-de-move-on* was born out of a different process. It focused on the concept of mobility as a driving force behind the *D'urban Experience*. Whereas the *Parade* took a literal approach to mobility, moving from one place to another, Jahangeer engaged the concept of mobility as a more complex process that is shaped by the socio-economic climate. In a sense the *Parade* reflected a normative, 'western' conception of time and space which is primarily destination based, where the nodes and hubs (Castells, 1996) are the indicators of mobility. The artworks and the *Parade* were mobile, whereas the *spaza-de-move-on*, although physically immobile as part of the *Parade*, was addressing more complex issues of mobility and informal livelihoods in a sustainable context.

The *Parade* aspired to this kind of thinking, but unfortunately ended up being a diluted version. Resonating with the theme of mobility, any of the interventions could have become inspiration for collaboration, yet artists chose to work primarily in isolation. The *Refunc* garbage architects were partially successful in their use of materials. The *Pimp my Bin* project is one such example. The mobile bin devices demonstrate a keen sense of experimental design and are interesting objects that subvert the usual meaning associated with rubbish bins through creating a series of mobile objects. Unfortunately they held little purpose and function outside of the *Parade*. Here the interpretation of mobility is taken in a very literal sense of moving objects. The *Mobile Movie bin* and the *Mosquito bin* are two other objects that became part of the spectacle of the *Parade* with little engagement. These had the potential to be powerful commentators on public space and urban innovation, yet with no engagement, they became expensive toys. The documentation of the activities ended up in the catalogue and reports, but were never re-activated in the city. All of these objects are sitting in a store room almost two years later.

In line with Miles, *Cascoland* (2006a: 13) claims an engaged and participatory approach within their methodology, where the purpose is to 'motivate and mobilize audiences to become an active participant in the process'. *Cascoland* did not however live up to their own

methodology: the objects of the *Parade* were pushed and pulled by *Cascoland* members with little, or no, interaction with the audience. In hindsight, even de Bell (2009) admits that the *Parade* was not about interaction.

I don't think the parade was meant to be a social interaction. It was an infiltration rather than an interaction and the visitors (the audience) became part of the infiltration, out of own desire or forced.

What she is suggesting is that the *Parade* itself was an intervention or 'infiltration' as she calls it. Overall the *Parade* did momentarily impact on the use and perception of public space during the festival. It was a spectacle that some enjoyed and broke the monotony of every day life. But it did not foster the spaces Minty (2006: 426) talks of as 'public space, where people may congregate and meet each other, becomes symbolic space and within which public art could create opportunities of new ways of interacting'.

This was echoed by von Kotze (2008) who wrote about how being there is not enough and standing side by side does not imply, or result in, interaction.

Just being in the same place doesn't make a new space: not physically, nor mentally, emotionally. The real productive encounter that may follow the entry often does not happen by itself.

In order for such interactions to be transformative, the democratic dialogue Freire speaks of is essential. In the context of the *Parade*, these meeting points were not enabled. The process may have challenged the perceptions of the middle class, 'white' audience who had never explored these parts of the city, but as von Kotze (2008) questions, what kind of challenge emerged?

The metaphor of the zebra crossing shows the tentative first steps of mainly privileged whites into others' places, and for many this became a meaningful confrontation with their own privilege. What we still have to learn is how a 'being there' - in the same place - can become an encounter with both the other and the self. If I define myself through you, how do I meet you? Walking through your places and spaces may be facilitated by zebra-stripes, but the very transitory and flimsy nature of roll-out presence is not likely to generate meetings of a more substantial kind... I can say 'I've been there' (the muti market, the squatter camp, the notorious embankment), but who got to speak when I was there, and whose perspective directed my seeing? Was the 'other' just an exotic backdrop for self-production, the opportunity for new story-telling material about the 'I'?

What von Kotze is suggesting here is that the questioning that was enabled did nothing to challenge power relations. In many ways it reinforced the unequal power relations of the privileged 'subject' and the marginalized 'object'.

One of the moments that did entail the potential for a renegotiation of power was when the street children were included in the *Parade*. For a brief moment, the presence and participation of these children, who are usually ignored by most, and often harassed by the police, were legitimized. Ironically they were not allowed back, thus entrenching their exclusion.

In contrast, despite being marginalized as a festival site and the children being excluded from other sites, the work at the *Drop-In Centre* did foster moments of transformation, albeit fleetingly.

Nygaard and Straschnow's interventions provided design solutions to some of the infrastructural challenges at the *Drop-In Centre*. Public furniture is rare in South African public spaces (specifically those predominantly peopled by the poor). Public furniture with a distinctly modernist design aesthetic, more familiar in European art fairs, is largely non-existent. This raises interesting questions about the relationship between aesthetics and functionality in marginalised spaces of the 'south'. The furniture and *Post Box Lockers* both

visually transformed the bleak and transient space of the *Drop-In Centre*, but surprisingly never realised their full potential. Despite engaging the space and the issues emerging out of the research on the space, Nygaard and Straschnow still followed an insular and exclusionary work method. For these artists, participation only started in the process of installing. The solutions were not developed collectively and this may have impacted on the staff's willingness, and interest, in activating the lockers. There were also ongoing tensions with an overworked and partially disinterested compliment of staff. It is clear, however, that the power the children gained through owning the space throughout the festival, disappeared once it was over. They returned to being objects of care. Despite this, some children did attempt to activate the lockers themselves. Some children bought their own locks, and the lockers were personalized with stickers and graffiti.

One of the main objectives of working at the *Drop-In Centre* was to challenge public perceptions of street children. The approach that was predominantly used was to create an environment for the children to speak for themselves. Sharp (2006: 1009) talks of the importance of addressing stigmatization:

If giving voice through the vehicle of public art can be the means of drawing the invisible into the urban narrative, it also has a role in drawing in those citizens and spaces whose marginalisation stems from other causes. That is, marginalisation in the city is not just a product of being invisible. The poor, those living in deprived neighbourhoods, are not so much invisible as inaudible. Stigmatisation, the stereotyping of particular groups and the urban spaces they occupy, is a commonplace source of marginalisation.

In order to make these voices audible, a participatory approach is essential. This involves a transfer of power from the artist to the street children; where the artists become facilitators of a process whereby those involved are able to speak for themselves.

Arnstein (1969) asserted that 'participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless'. Whereas the *Parade* did not involve a transfer of power, which became frustrating for some, the *Moving Hands*, *Street Theatre*, *Talent Show* and to some extent the *Screen Kids* (during the festival) projects, attempted to address Sharp's (2006) challenge by dealing with stigmatisation head-on. Here, the children were enabled to speak for themselves. The children's flipbooks, videos and performances were all geared towards foregrounding the children as creative and productive beings. Engaging people in and around the *Drop-In Centre* space, and entertaining people during the festival, all contributed to de-stigmatising the spaces within which the children live. For a brief moment Clement's (2008) revolutionary potential of public art was realised.

It is at moments such as these, that participatory public art can become a critical social practice as Miles imagines it. Unfortunately, the process was short-lived and often financially and technologically dependant. Despite the potential for 'further democratic possibilities', the moment was fleeting, and it is difficult to measure whether anything had any real impact. At the end of the project, the artists left and the children went back to spending the night in the streets. The keys to the *Post Box Lockers*, the flipbooks and DVDs were handed over to the organisation, and the children returned to being recipients of care. These are difficult issues for artists to address and Sharp (2006: 1019) suggests, that, '[p]erhaps too much is expected of public art'. Lacy may have agreed with Sharp when she said all we can hope for is to 'impact on an individual's experience and that experience might cause change'.

Echoing many other thinkers and practitioners, this research argues that participatory public art has the potential to address issues of socio-spatial inequalities, through nurturing the social imagination, in an endeavour to imagine alternative realities in post-apartheid urban spaces. As Greene (1995: 22) asserted, 'imagining things being otherwise may be a first step toward acting on the belief that they can be changed'.

Although *Cascoland* was partially successful in achieving its objectives, this research argues that had the entire process followed the principles of participatory public art, the potential for

developing a critical social practice that is reflective and reflexive, would have been more possible.

Greene (1999: 80) argues for recognising 'art making as an intellectual, scholarly endeavor'. According to Miles (2005: 7) 'critical theory offers a process not an end'. Participatory public art as a critical social practice, therefore, involves an ongoing engagement. In this context, participation is core to this process as it is a means to foster dialogue and build a collective 'social imagination'. 'This kind of reshaping imagination may be released through dialogue...' (Greene, 1995: 5). Core to a critical approach is a transformative agenda. For Freire (1972: 99), critical reflection is also action. Schon (1987) also argues for thinking and doing as an integrated process. One of the core contradictions, and inhibitors, of a critical process in *Cascoland* was their vehement dichotomisation of theory and practice. Despite working with complex concepts and issues, de Bell (2008) asserted that 'I believe very much in the power of doing instead of theorising about it'. This approach was echoed by a number of artists, especially the Refunc garbage architects. This dichotomous approach to thinking, theory and practice hampers the possibilities for a critically reflective process. As Minty (2006: 426) asserted:

The reimagining of the city through cultural activity – resulting in permanent fixtures in public space, temporary projects or processes-driven ones – it has been proposed should ideally rest on community-rooted cultural action reflexive of the contextual changes for it to have its greatest strength in terms of symbolic restitution.

Whereas the *Parade* did little to address urban transformation, the work at the *Drop-In Centre* did begin to open up spaces for moments of the 'symbolic restitution' Minty talks about.

Overwhelmingly, it became apparent that a number of contradictions existed between the *Cascoland* methodology and what occurred on the ground. Contrary to *Cascoland's* methodological approach, during the *Parade*, there was little engagement with public space, non participation and no transformative renegotiation of power relations. The work at the *Drop-In Centre* was: more engaged with public space and the people using it; there was some participation; and there were moments of transformation, albeit temporary.

Conclusion

One of the biggest challenges to public art, and organisations engaging in projects such as *Cascoland*, is sustainability. Although *Cascoland* do not claim that their projects are sustainable, and prefer not to enter into conversations about sustainability (de Bell and Schoenmakers, 2009; Cascoland, 2008), questions of sustainability always emerge when dealing with developmental projects in South Africa. Although sustainable interventions may not be implicit in *Cascoland's* focus, *Cascoland* itself must remain sustainable in order to continue undertaking projects. This raises an important ethical consideration regarding how this sustainability is maintained. As these projects are reliant on external funding, the organisation, in this case *Cascoland*, is beholden to its funders to remain in existence. An important component of these projects is, therefore, documentation. *Cascoland* has produced a plethora of publications, such as catalogues, zines and a book on their conceptual and methodological practice. Much of the visual documentation from *Cascoland* Durban was generated during the *Parade*, and the focus is primarily on the 'community'; in this case the poor, predominantly 'black' traders and commuters. These images reinforce *Cascoland's* appearance of living up to its methodology, and perpetuates the problematic 'north' – 'south' power dynamics based on the perception of Africa in need. The many photographs that were taken do not return to these communities, but rather adorn the pages of glossy catalogues that are used for marketing and further funding applications by *Cascoland*. The catalogues work to ensure the sustainability of *Cascoland* as an organisation, but do not afford the same long-term approach to the projects and processes initiated on the ground.

Despite the shortcomings evident in *Cascoland*, ultimately, this research argues that participatory public art has the potential to foster a kind of sustainable transformation congruent with Arnstein's (1969) thinking on citizen power. The idea of participatory public art provided in this paper is more than an analytical tool for *Cascoland*; it is also a way forward

for thinking and working in public spaces. The implementation, and systematic enquiry, of projects such as these, opens up a myriad of possibilities for further reflective and reflexive research in the field of participatory public art.

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APPENDIX



Figure 1: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Bin to Bin [Performance] Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 2: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Bin Band [Mobile Installations] Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 3: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Parade [Performance] Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 4: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Zebra Zipper [Mobile installation]
Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 5: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Mosquito Bin [Performance] Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 6: ascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Mobile Movie Bin [Performance]
Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 7: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. spaza-de-move-on [Mobile installation]
Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 5: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Howzit Swings [Installation] Documentation from Cascoland collection Gitte & Jair Howzit Swings



Figure 6: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Postbox Lockers [Installation] Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 7: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Modified Postbox Lockers [Installation]
Documentation from private collection



Figure 8: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Games Table [Installation] Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 9: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Moving Hands Animation [Stop Animation videos] Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 10: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Screen Kids [Video installation]
Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 11: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Street Theatre [Performance]
Documentation from Cascoland collection



Figure 12: Cascoland D'Urban Experience. 2008. Talent Show [Performance] Documentation from Cascoland collection

Title: Puppets fight against crime- ‘Proudly not a Bully-Play’

Subtheme:

Promoting Social Justice and intercultural dialogue through the arts

Abstract Art and Social Justice Conference

I agree with freedom fighter, judge Albie Sachs who exclaimed in his famous article ‘Preparing ourselves for freedom’: What are we fighting for, if not the right to express our humanity in all its forms, including our sense of fun and capacity for love and tenderness and our appreciation of the beauty of the world`?’¹

A Love for fun and the appreciation of the world in all its forms was always the incentive to get my creative energy as a children’s performer going.

Conveying the message of possible changing of social behaviour was content of my Anti-Bully-Puppet play.

The term ‘bullying’ is used for offences which are mostly taking place in a school environment. It is a violation of a child’s right to physical and psychological safety. The fact that bullying in South African schools by learners and teachers has increased dramatically in the past years, urged Pinetown Police services to take action and to start an anti-bully-campaign.

In the week from 1 June to 5 June 2009 a unique collaboration between funder, initiator and artist took place in the form of the ‘Proudly not a Bully campaign’. The funder, Pinecrest Shopping Centre in Pinetown, the initiator, Inspector Solomon Mbele from SAPS Pinetown and puppeteer Pamela Tancsik (Tekweni Puppetplays) got together to produce a puppet show, followed by an interactive presentation by Pinetown Police to teach young learners (Age 9 to 11) that a small act like bullying at school level can spark criminal behaviour at a later stage. The play with its strong visuals, dramatic interactive script and entertaining songs proved to be the perfect medium for learners to take a stand about their own social behaviour in their environment at school. Overall, the demonstration had an intensive effect on the learners as they experienced a real life scenario and the consequences of crime.

The puppet play ‘Proudly not a Bully - Today a bully - A criminal tomorrow’ gives examples of social ‘good’ or ‘bad’ behaviour and is a perfect example of the important role that can be played by the arts (in this case puppet theatre, music and acting) to address issues on social justice.

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¹ Albie Sachs, Spring is Rebellious, arguments about cultural freedom by Albie Sachs and respondents, edited by Ingrid de Kok and Karen Press, Buchu Books, Cape Town, 1990, page 21.

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Shopping Centre in Pinetown, the initiator, Inspector Solomon Mbele from SAPS Pinetown and puppeteer Pamela Tancsik (Tekweni Puppetplays) got together to produce a puppet show, followed by an interactive presentation by Pinetown Police to teach young learners (Age 9 to 11) that a small act like bullying at school level can spark criminal behaviour at a later stage. The play with its strong visuals, dramatic interactive script and entertaining songs proved to be the perfect medium for learners to take a stand about their own social behaviour in their environment at school. Overall, the demonstration had an intensive effect on the learners as they experienced a real life scenario and the consequences of crime. The puppet play '*Proudly not a Bully - Today a bully - A criminal tomorrow*' gives examples of social 'good' or 'bad' behaviour and is a perfect example of the important role that can be played by the arts (in this case puppet theatre, music and acting) to address issues on social justice.

Introduction

South African freedom-activist, Judge Albie Sachs who was on the forefront in the fight for social justice and human rights all his life, asks rhetorically in the article 'Preparing ourselves for freedom':*What are we fighting for, if not the right to express our humanity in all its forms, including our sense of fun and capacity for love and tenderness and our appreciation of the beauty of the world*?³

A Love for fun and an appreciation of the world in all its forms was always the incentive to get my creative energy as a children's performer going.

I started off as a puppeteer 32 years ago in Munich/ Germany, but left my home country and came to South Africa in 1998. Soon I realized that the working conditions as a puppeteer in South Africa were extremely different from those in Europe. When I started my career as a puppeteer in Munich's famous Marionette Theatre in 1978, I performed in a beautiful house of stone which was then nearly 100 years old and consisted of 200 seats. The Marionette Theatre in Munich still features characters and puppet plays which were seen and enjoyed by a number of generations. Performing in South Africa on the other hand meant performing mostly outside, sometimes in the open with no shade or allocated space for a stage.

I. Puppets and education in South Africa

Unlike Germany and in most European countries, where one can find a very old and established tradition of puppet theatre, sometimes going back for centuries, nothing like this exists in South Africa. South African children do not relate to traditional puppet characters that a puppet story could be based on, such as Punch in England, Guignol in France or Kasper in Germany.

To my big surprise during my first performance in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal children ran away in fear from my hand puppets. They had never seen puppets before and took it for a '**Tokoloshe**'.

*'In Zulu mythology, **Tokoloshe** or Hili is a dwarf-like water spirit. They have only one arm and one leg, the face of an old man on a boy's body. They can become invisible swallowing a pebble. It is a small, child like creature that fights people, usually killing them when seen by humans.. A Tokoloshe will teach the human magic and healing when he loses a fight.*

³ Albie Sachs, Spring is Rebellious, arguments about cultural freedom by Albie Sachs and respondents, edited by Ingrid de Kok and Karen Press, Buchu Books, Cape Town, 1990, page 21.

*The creature is well known in KwaZulu-Natal, especially in Durban, but every African knows what a Tokoloshe is. Some call it Tikoloshe. Only a person who is cursed will be able to see the Tokoloshe.*⁴

Instead of enjoying my puppet show the children thought they were cursed and ran away. However – the traditional South African art form of storytelling, the love and appreciation for drama, music and dance in this country made it easy for me to invent other concepts of puppetry. While during the era of Apartheid, African art forms like story telling and songs in African languages did not get much exposure, the new democratic Government in 1994 started a profound reorientation in arts and culture. New policies in education were established by the department of education to introduce all South Africans to African history, heritage and cultures. The traditional African art form of ‘storytelling’ nowadays plays an important part in TV and radio programmes for children and is also taking place in school curricula and various cultural events.

After 1994 the other African languages (there are 11 official languages in South Africa today), were incorporated into the regular TV and radio programmes of the SABC (South African Broadcast Cooperation).

Although puppetry is a fairly new medium it gains more and more popularity among youngsters. African puppet characters are on their way to become role models and idols for South African children, in particular since 2003 when the SABC co-produced together with the US *Sesame Workshop* a genuine African version of ‘*Sesame Street*’⁵. The children’s programme *Takalani Sesame* meaning ‘be happy Sesame’ in the Venda language, incorporates all 11 official South African languages and muppet characters such as *Musho*, *Zikwe*, *Kupukeji* or *Neno*. It tackles health issues such as HIV/AIDS and educates in numeracy, literacy and life skills. Despite puppet shows on TV there are still not many puppet companies in South Africa. This is the reason why I did not specialize in a puppet technique like in Munich. The lack of other puppeteers and equipment for puppet theatre in South Africa forced me to write my own stories, build my own puppets, puppet booth and invent my own songs. It is in reality a ‘Gesamtkunstwerk’ in its best tradition.

My puppet company ‘Tekweni Puppetplays’ was founded in 2000 and all my plays consist of three elements: puppetry, story telling and song.

⁴ Nhlanhla, Mkhize: *Mind, gender, and culture: A critical evaluation of the phenomenon of Tokolosh ‘sightings’ among prepubescent girls in KwaZulu-Natal*, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 2008

⁵ *Sesame Street* is well known for its Muppets characters created by Jim Henson. It premiered on November 10, 1969, and is the longest running children’s program on television.

II. The Anti-Bully-Campaign



Pamela Tancsik performing *the Proudly not a Bully-Show* in Pinecrest Centre, with the puppet characters 'Blue' and 'Red'.

In the week from 1 June to 5 June 2009 a unique collaboration between funder, initiator and artist took place in the form of the '*Proudly not a Bully campaign*'. The funder, Pinecrest Shopping Centre in Durban/Pinetown, the initiator, Inspector Solomon Mbele from South African Police Service Pinetown and myself as Tekweni Puppetplays got together to carry out a so called anti-bully campaign which involved 10 schools from Pinetown and some areas outside of Durban. Each puppet show was followed by a presentation by Pinetown Police and afterwards a talk by different celebrities such as local soccer stars, a beauty queen and a famous story teller from Durban on each day.



My puppet stage in the shopping Mall 'Pinecrest Centre' in Pinetown, a suburb of Durban with school children watching.

Pinetown is one of the most crime ridden suburbs of Durban and Inspector Mbele has tried for years with a creative educational programme to fight crime and to stop a criminal career where it normally begins at a very young age in a school environment.

The funder, Pinecrest Centre sponsored not only the shows and the presentations but the transport as well. All learners from the different schools were transported by bus from their schools to Pinecrest centre to participate in the anti-bully campaign.



Pinetown, Police Station

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II. Writing a play on bullying

Studies in the past have documented that children often imitate aggressive behaviour from observing TV characters.⁶

Not only can TV characters influence children in a bad way, even more relevant is the fact that it robs children of time, imagination and the ability of concentration. If bad behaviour can be triggered by observing TV characters why shouldn't it work the other way round. Children would imitate good behaviour and develop admiration for positive role models. My task however was, to write an educational but entertaining puppet play of about 20 min. length which should target the bully issue emotionally and rationally. The story had to be suitable for learners aged between 8 and 10. So far I had written several educational plays in the past, mainly concerning health issues such as HIV or cholera awareness, but the matter bullying committed by such youngsters, was pretty new to me. As the deadline for the shows was tight, I had no time to go into proper research about bullying at South African schools. So I contacted first Adi Paxton, another children's performer in Durban to give me some advice on play writing and I asked Inspector Mbele to give me some detailed information about typical bullying behaviour at that age group. To make it real and relevant for isiZulu speaking children, I also asked him if there were special isiZulu-terms which are used by bullies.

⁶ D. Pearl, Television and behaviour. In *Ten years of scientific progress for the eighties*, vol. 1, Summary Report (pp. 36-40). Rockville, Maryland, 1982, US Department of Health and Human Services.

Inspector Mbele told me that most of the bullying took place outside of classrooms, mostly in toilets and on the way to school. He also supplied me with a list of offensive vocabulary used by bullies to abuse their victims verbally. I used this valuable information and constructed my story around it. As I was dealing with fairly young kids I had to keep the story simple which led to the limitation of three characters only.

III. The Anti-Bully-Play – the puppet script

Proudly not a Bully

A puppet play to fight Bully-attitudes

(Before the actual show starts, I play the theme song with my recorder, then teach words and melody so that the children are prepared to join in and sing the song with the MC during interval.).

4 hand puppets, Red , Bully, Blue Boy and the bat

Pamela Front of stage: This is our show song – let's try it together. I need two volunteers to do operate my little shakers here.

I will first play the tune with my little recorder and then sing the first verse and you can follow. I sing the words (look at your hand-out, you find the words of the song there). Remember you can join in any time you hear the tune, *(play while leaving)*

First verse:

I'm proudly not a Bully, I don't torment and terrorize

I only can trust fully,

If I am treated nice.

If I am treated nice.

Recorder tune

Second verse:

I'm proudly not a Bully

I don't like cruelty and crime

I will respect you fully

With love and peace you're fine

With love and peace you're fine

Recorder tune

Third verse

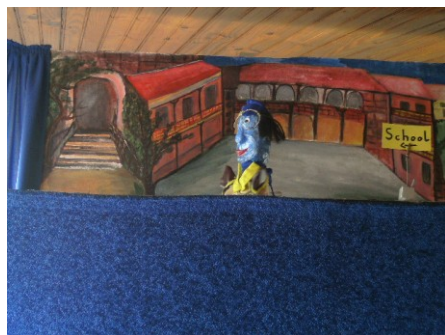
We are proud that we're not Bullies

We don't torment and terrorize

We only can trust fully

If we are treated nice.

If we are treated nice.



Scene 1 **(Blue Boy humming the Bully song, Red stops Blue Boy while he is walking along)*

Red: Hey stop, smarty paints – you think you are so clever, time for you to get strong, how about carrying my bag for me four-eyes

Blue B: No, you carry it yourself *(a bit timid)*

Red: Who are you talking to? I could squash you like a cockroach.
Red pushes him,

BB Leave me alone, let me go.....

Red: Don't think you can anymore uThambile, *(Fight: left, right, middle, right again, B.B. down, Red on top of him)*
You better do what I say. Listen Mummy's Boy or I crack you like an egg.

Blue B: Awe, you hurt me, let me go, I will do it, just let me out....

Red: You should know by now that I'm the strongest one around her. You have not a chance against me uTamatisi *(Blue Boy gets up)*...
and now go and take my bag to my place, hurry up *(kicks him with his legs... Blue Boy off to the left)* Great what do you think guys, isn't that great, Blue Boy is carrying my bag!! Ha, ha, ha....
(Lindi comes from left) Hey Lindi Baby, look who is carrying my bag all the way to my house, he, he...

Lindi: I saw it, Isikhokho, *(full of admiration)* That's really cool *(she is laughing)* *(to the children)*...Did you see that as well guys?

Red: You see Lindi Baby, how easy it is and next time I will break his glasses, then
Blue Boy won't be so smart anymore, he can't even see a book without his glasses.

Lindi: *(sing song)* You are so strong
Red, you are the strongest guy around!!

Red: *(starts sing sang)* I know something:
Blind little blue bat, Silly Boy who's Mummy's fat
.... *(Both laughing...They both sing sang :* **Blind little blue bat Silly Boy who's Mummy's fat** *(repeat).*
End of Scene I



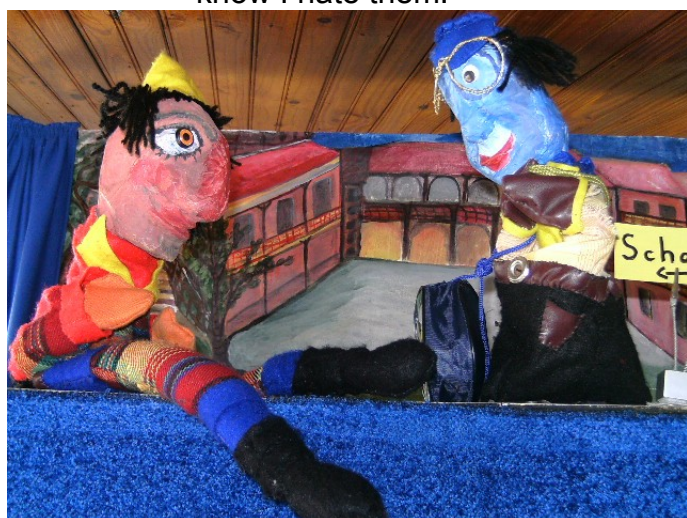
SCENE II

Right side: *Hook-tree blank* (make sure hook works),
Middle: *blank tree stump, Left side:* *Miranda cover, blue flowers*
*(Lindi right hand, later Blue Boy right hand, Red left hand)**(First Lindi appears, hooked in! Red on left hand appears from middle, later Blue Boy right hand)*

Lindi: Blind little blue bat, silly boy who's mummy is fat!!

Red: I can squash ten softies with one arm. You will see Lindi, soon our Mr four-eyes, will be on his knees and crying for his Mummy. I'm the strongest guy all around..*(to children)* I'm .. like John Cena .. I will smash his pumpkin face, watch me .Soon he will be on the ground.

Lindi: Look Red, Blue Boy is coming,
Red: Mr Clever is on his way and my lunch too. *(He sees B.Boy coming)*
Red: What did your fat mama give you for lunch today ?
B. Boy: I really don't know, but I can have a look!
Red: You better do! *(helps him taking lunch box out of the bag, he opens, there are cucumber sandwiches inside)* come on hurry! I cannot wait for ever!!
B. Boy: Yes I'm trying ***(cucumber sandwich is revealed)***
Red: You must be joking four-eyes..... these are cucumber sandwiches again, you know I hate them!



Blue Boy: I told her that I don't like cucumber sandwiches.....
Red: Listen Ungolube (silly boy), I told you, I want polony nothing else! Bring me polony!
Blue B. But I don't eat polony, my Mum wouldn't believe me....
Red: That is your problem pumpkin face; tell your mother from now on you only want polony. Bring me polony or you will eat dirt, got it? *(The Red then throws the lunch box back at him but it falls. Red shouts while Blue Boy crying and running away)*
Red: *(sing song)* Mama's boy can't even catch ! *(Blue Boy runs away, Lindi enters)*
Red: Hey Lindi, I have a great idea, Let's have some fun with Blue Boy ha, ha
Lindi: But don't hit him so hart Red, he is such a softy!
Red: No, no. I just want to have some fun, okay but I do need your help Babe!
Lindi: Okay Isikhokho , what do you want me to do?
Red: When you see him coming, you just lead him to the boys toilets, okay, I will wait for him there. And now let's go. *(They both go off to left side)*
Blind little blue bat, Silly boy who's Mummy 's fat

Changing set

Right side: toilet and Miranda wall

Left side: green-hook tree and brown bush

Middle: Tree stump, set chain-belt

Song *(Sing while changing set)*

I'm proudly not a Bully.....

I don't torment and terrorize

I only can trust fully
If I'm treated nice,
If I'm treated nice.

I'm proudly not a Bully
I don't like cruelty and crime
I will respect you fully
With love and peace you're fine
With love and peace you're fine

We are proud that we'll not bullies
We don't torment and terrorize
We only can trust fully
If we are treated nice.
If we are treated nice.

SCENE III

(Blue Boy right hand, Lindi, later Red on left hand, she sees Blue Boy coming along, pretends to be a bit anxious)

Lindi: I'm glad that you are here Blue Boy, I lent somebody my book and he left it in the toilet. Please can you have a look in the boy's toilet....the book must be next to the basin...Please will you do that for me?

B. Boy: But Lindi you were teasing me, isn't that true guys *(to the children)* you were so horrible and you are always together with that Bully..Red... and now you want me to help you? *(to audience)*

Blue Boy: *(to children)* What do you think, should I help her? Well guys, I tell you what.. I believe.... Just because she has been bad to me, doesn't mean I should be nasty? Only weak people do that! Okay Lindi I will help you. *(They both go to the left side into toilet)*

Lindi: I'm in the ladie's toilet, it must be there, have a look next to the basin

B. Boy: Lindi, I looked everywhere but I cannot see it...

Lindi: Maybe at the other side, next to the toilet maybe on top of the lit.....

B. Boy: No it is not... Maybe it's fallen down somewhere? *(Opens the toilet lid and at that moment Red appears and pushes his head into the toilet!)*

Red: Got you softy!

Blue Boy: Aaaaah, Help, leave me alone, What do you want from me?
(Red rips off his glasses) My glasses, don't break my glasses (Red smashes them, while Blue Boy is trying to get his glasses back, money falls out of his pocket)

Red: So sorry Softy paints, now see how smart you are... looks like you are blind now, Sha..a..a..me ! *(Red ties him onto the tree)*

B. Boy: Aaaaa.... *(a 200 Rand note*



falls out of his pocket)

Red: *(sees the money)* Oh look what fell out of your pocket, 200 Rand,!! Gee!! lucky for me, just what I need, *(takes the money, get hand out of Blue Boy and into Lindi, she is coming from middle)*

B. Boy: Please, that money isn't mine. It belongs to my mother!

Red: To bad Sissy, wrong grammar, it doesn't belong to your mother now it belongs to me, stupid boy! Two hundred rand, just to make sure you don't follow me, Lindi will watch you. *(calls her)* **Lindiiii !!**

B. Boy: I will call the police, you are a thief,

Red: O yes call, sure they will know you are in the toilet here, and even if they find you, they'll never believe you Lindiwe is a witness she will tell them that you have taken the money from your mother. Nobody will believe you!! ...Lindiii!!...Lindi, you watch him now, I have to go .I have things to do with 200 Rand. don't let him go...I'm off to Gateway. *(Red disappears with the money, Lindi comes)*

B. Boy *(crying, tearful)* But my mother needs this money, huh, huh..... it is for her medicine, she is sick, without the money she cant get her medicine, Please **Lindi** let me go.... *(take bat in right hand)*

Lindi: I cannot do anything Blue Boy, I promised *(asks the children)* ..and ... and Yes I do feel sorry for you Blue, but Red is so strong I have to do what he tells me to do...I sit here *(she hooks on, bat swoopss around)* **BAT**



Lindi: Help, Oh what is this, help..... *(she is completely scared, Blue Boy calms her down)* I'm so scared, what is that..... *(Blue Boy calms her down)*

Blue Boy *(Blue Boy calms her down):* Lindi, come on, it is just a bat, it's completely harmless. It can't hurt you

Lindi: *(next to Blue Boy)* Help me , I'm so frightened!! *(Bat hooks on)*

B. Boy: I could help you... but I'm tied onto this tree

Lindi: O please Blue Boy, I'm so frightened, I will let you free just lets get out of her... *(Bat hooks on green tree, she unties him from tree!!)*

B. Boy: Don't worry, the bat will not harm you, it's sleeping up there!

Lindi: *(full of admiration)* Aaah, Blue Boy thank you, you saved me, .

B. Bloy: Listen Lindi, we have to hurry. We must stop Red. I need the money to buy my mother's medicine. Will you come with me to the police?

Lindi: Police? Are you mad, why should I go to the police.....? I'll be in trouble.

B. Boy: I tell them you ended up helping me! It will be okay. I just need the police to help us to get the money back. You must not be afraid of the police, they will always help you, is that right guys? We should trust the police, they will surely help us to get the money back....?

B. Boy: Will you come with me Lindi?

Lindi (*asks children*): Do you think I should go with him to the police? (*children hopefully say yes! They both go and Inspector Mbele (live) appears on the scene and asks the children, they will say yes*)

B. Boy/ Lindi: Let's go!

B. Boy: I know a nice inspector there, Inspector Mbele, children come on let's call him! (*The all shout: Inspector Mbele and he appears*)

Inspector Mbele: What's the problem

B. Boy: The children will tell you what happened, and that Red stole my money, I have to go and look for my glasses (*Off*)
(*After Inspector Mbele's talk they all sing song and children join in*)

Song:

I'm proudly not a Bully.....
I don't torment and terrorize
You only can trust fully
If you are treated nice,
If you are treated nice.

I'm proudly not a Bully
I don't like cruelty and crime
I will respect you fully
With love and peace you're fine
With love and peace you're fine

We're proud that we're not bullies
We don't torment and terrorize
We only can trust fully
If we are treated nice.
If we are treated nice.
(*Inspector appears during the song*)

IV. THE CHARACTERS



Red the bully, he is painted red and is dressed very colourfully and comes across as physically strong and fond of his muscle power. He calls himself John Cena like the famous American wrestler. He enjoys bullying his physically weaker but intellectually brighter class mate 'Blue Boy'.



Blue Boy, who wears spectacles and appears as a blue colour puppet. *Red* abuses him verbally and physically on his way to school and forces him to carry his school bag.

Red is supported by **Lindi**, a young girl of yellow colour, who admires *Red's* power and coolness.



V. THE PRESENTATION BY PINETOWN POLICE



Inspector Mbele and his colleagues demonstrate with hand cuffs, a dummy model of a prisoner in hand cuffs and foot chains, a reconstructed prison cell and a police car what it is like to be imprisoned as a result of a criminal act. 'The main message was that bullying is not cool, and it draws parallels between the behaviour of school age bullies and teenage/adulthood criminal activity no respect for people, no respect for their property, and no accountability for their actions. Although the message is serious, all efforts ...were made to keep it simple, and make it fun so the kids walked away having learnt something. The mock bullies volunteers were taken on the journey that a criminal would experience when apprehended. This included being locked in the back of a police van, and then escorted to a simulated jail cell complete with relevant props i.e. "dog" blanket, tin plate and mug and a bucket. This particular part of the campaign was thoroughly enjoyed by the school pupils, teachers and shoppers alike.'⁷

⁷

Comments about appreciation by teachers and learners:
<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=96696&id=123417279384>

VI. The puppets

The biggest challenge was the characterization of the puppets and their appearance in terms of race and colour. This is one of the reasons why puppet theatre is a wonderful medium to overcome the usual limitations when writing for human actors. A puppet can fly, suddenly appear and disappear, can have any colour, size, looks, movements and unlike a human being it can not be influenced or distracted by audience during a performance, at least not visually. My decision was simple: Why use white, black, coloured or Indian race. I painted my hand puppets in colours which are quite different from human skin colours. The bad character, the bully was painted in red as a symbol of Mars the god of war, aggression and high adrenalin. In the theory of colour and within the colour circle 'red' is the opposite of blue. That is why the bullied character was blue. Psychologically blue is a cold colour which stands for calmness, intellect and reflection.

The girl Lindi who was the ambivalent and more vulnerable character had a yellow appearance. Yellow can symbolize a range of contradictory items. In the middle ages for example yellow was the colour of disgrace and shame. Social outcasts like, prostitutes, heretics or the Jews had to wear it. In Christianity yellow was often used as a symbol for jealousy and envy, sometimes hate. On the other hand yellow symbolizes sunlight, Joy, and brilliance. The Buddhist monk wears yellow and personifies enlightenment, wisdom, generosity and kindness. Later, after the play was written, I did some research into scientific studies on bullying in South Africa and I found the following research study.

The Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health at the University of Cape Town started a research campaign in 2005 and published their statistic results online in 2007.⁸

5074 children from 72 Government schools in Cape Town and Durban from Grade 8 (age 14 and over) and Grade 11 (age 17 and over) participated and completed a self-report questionnaire on involvement in violent and anti-social risk behaviour.

The results showed that 36,3 % of those learners were involved in acts of bullying. 8,2 % admitted that they were bullies themselves, 19,3 % revealed, that were victims of bullying and 8,7 % acted as bullies but were also victims of bullying. This group is called bully-victims and they showed, in comparison with the victim group and even with the Bully group, a bigger disposition to get into fights, carry weapons, drink alcohol and commit vandalism and theft. The younger ones were usually more often victims than perpetrators. Another outcome of the study was that the group of bully-victims had a higher tendency to become smokers and was more tempted to commit suicide. The research campaign came to the conclusion that involvement in bullying is a common problem for young South Africans and bullying is an indicator of violent, anti-social and risk-taking behaviour which can be the beginning of a criminal career. The study also differentiates the bully-victim category to allow closer scrutiny of this group which has been identified as more vulnerable.

⁸ **Holan Liang, Alan J. Flisher and Carl J. Lombard** Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, PO Box 085, Institute of Psychiatry, DeCrespigny Park, London SE5 8AF, UK and Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town, South Africa. (Published by Biostatistics Unit, Medical Research Council, South Africa)

The term Bully was described by Olweus in 1999⁹ as '*a subcategory of aggressive behaviour*'. In practical terms Bullying means being teased, called names, having your money taken, being beaten up being left out and ignored, abused and insulted. When I was approached by Pincrest Management to write an anti-bully play in 2008, none of this statistics and research results were known to me. I relied on my life experience as a children's performer and my previous training in Germany as a social worker. After I have done some research it was quite amazing to see that most of the guidelines, provided by Childline¹⁰ South Africa of how to prevent bullying and how to educate children to prevent it, were reflected in my anti-bully play. The following facts were given by Child line:

1. What is Bullying?

Bullying is being teased, called names, having your money taken, being beaten up. All of which had references in the play, Red abuses Blue Boy verbally: he calls him 'uThambile' (meaning weak boy), 'uTamatisi' (soft tomato), 'Pumpkin face', 'Mr Four-eyes', as he wears glasses and 'Mamma's-boy'.

Red takes Blue Boy's money away, he beats him up, Lindi cruelly ignores his needs when he is tied up on to a tree, she lies to him and lures him into a trap. She is not openly aggressive but her bullying is more perfidious.

2. Bullies are found in most schools and communities.

Even in the most disciplined or positive schools there may be isolated incidents of bullying. Both girls and boys can be bullied and be bullies.

The show was set on or outside of school premises. The show made clear, that boys and girls can bully, but girls may do it in a different way (see Lindi's sneaky behaviour)

3. Reasons why are some children are bullied?

Any child can be bullied, but some are more vulnerable to bullying than others. Many children are bullied because of: their age - younger children are often picked on by older ones;

In the show the physically weaker Blue Boy was picked on by the physically stronger boy Red. Blue Boy is a soft character and obviously more vulnerable than others.

4. Bullying because of skin colour

The fact that learners become victims of bullying because of their race or skin colour, played a major role in the research study.

I would question the method of dividing all the participants into race groups in terms of RDSG (refers to racially defined social group) Does this not determine the outcome before the study was even started in terms of the expectation that the different levels of bullying are necessarily related to a certain race group. The way the data was captured and interpreted was in my eyes questionable?

In the questionnaire executed by the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health at the University of Cape Town race played a major role as all questioned children were divided in four race groups, white – black – Asian (mainly Indians) and coloured. Whites, Blacks, Asians, and Coloureds comprised 14%, 43%, 11%, and 31% of students, respectively. From originally 214 schools in Cape Town and 262 schools in Durban, 38 schools were selected in Cape Town but only 33 in Durban. 'The reason was that 55% of the original

⁹ Olweus, 1999 D. Olweus, The developing world. In: P.K. Smith, Y. Morita, J. Junger-Tas, D. Olweus, R. Catalano and P. Slee, Editors, *The nature of school bullying: A cross national perspective*, Routledge, London, UK (1999), pp. 7–49.

¹⁰ Text from Prevention & Education Manual (Childline South Africa)

contacted schools in Durban withdraw from participation. It would be interesting to find out why not one school in Cape Town withdraw but such a high percentage in Durban. If on average 10 % more learners came from Cape Town than from Durban, it seems obvious that proportionately more coloured and white students (as the majority of them came from Cape Town) did participate in the study as they should have been.

The study showed the following results:

Demographic prevalence data by bullying behaviour group

Demographic variable	<i>n</i>	Control (%)’means Not involved in bullying at all	Bully (%)	Victim (%)	Bully- victim (%)
Cape Town 55 % mainly Coloured and white	2,806	59	8	21	12
Durban 45 % mainly Black and Indian	2,268	67	9	18	6
Grade 8	2,545	59	8	22	10
Grade 11	2,529	69	10	15	6
Male	2,100	57	11	21	11
Female	2,889	68	7	18	7
RDSG White	686	55	9	22	14
RDSG Black	2,139	70	6	19	5
RDSG Asian	563	61	15	14	9
RDSG Colored	1,563	57	10	22	11

Note: *N* = 5,074. RDSG refers to racially defined social group (see text).

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