



THE SPATIAL ACT OF CURATION

HOW THE INTERSECTIONAL SPATIAL RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN PLACE AND ARTWORK UNLOCKS MEANING

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2017558699

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Kultuur is nie beperk tot 'n snobistiese skilderytjie hier of konsertjie daar of kunsuitstallingtjie wat net deur die intellektuele elite bewonder kan word nie. Dit kan veel eerder gedefinieer word as die vorm waarin die mens sy wêreld ontmoet.

Fransi Phillips | @fransipwriter

I, Pieter J Mathews, declare that the Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, or coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation that I herewith submit for the Master's Degree qualification Master of Architecture with specialisation in Design, BC480314, at the University of the Free State is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pieter J Mathews', with a stylized, overlapping structure.

Pieter J Mathews

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the Master
of Architecture with specialisation in Design for the Department of
Architecture in the faculty of Agricultural Sciences at the University of the
Free State

BC480314

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Study leaders

Prof Jonathan Noble, Architecture Faculty: Natural and Agricultural
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I, Pieter J Mathews, declare that the research dissertation that I herewith submit for the qualification Master of Architecture with specialisation in Design at the University of the Free State is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher learning.

I would like to dedicate my master's degree to my parents who are both alumni of UFS, graduating in the 1950s when the tectonic plates shifted in the art world.

I would like to thank my supervisors Roger Fisher and Jonathan Noble for opening my mind, Karlien van Niekerk for language editing, and my local soundboards Johan Thom and Carla Spies. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Eunese Beukes.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate how meaning is unlocked through the intersectional relationship between space and artwork. By the use of specific curatorial techniques, an architect's understanding of architectural principles can assist in the act of curation in order to reveal meaning.

The study is practice-based, and through an autoethnographic approach I will determine how meaning was revealed by retrospectively exploring case studies of my own work. These case studies are my personal previous curatorial experimentations and exhibitions which will be explored with the benefit of hindsight.

For the purpose of this study, art is considered to include sculpture, murals and totems, and space is open ended, questioning the understanding that art belongs in a gallery.

By means of precedent studies, I investigate artists, curators, art historians and critics who have shifted the paradigm of curation or exhibition-making. These include Harald Szeemann, Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Julia Peyton-Jones, Marcel Broodthaers and Gordon Froud.

The case studies will be examined by means of three curatorial approaches:

1. Performative curation: performative curation is an active, hands-on curatorial approach without a preconceived idea of the end result. An example of performative curation discussed in this dissertation is the *Saadjies* travelling collection, comprised of over 100 small sculptures, that was exhibited at five unconventional and diverse locations as well as "photobombed" across the world.
2. Independent commissioning curation: independent commissioning refers to a curation method where the curator commissions an artist to create an artwork with a specific site in mind. To illustrate independent commissioning curation, I discuss *Rabbit* by Guy du Toit as part of the A Re Yeng sculpture project for Tshwane Rapid Transit (Pty) Ltd (TRT).
3. Convener as facilitator for curation: a convener or facilitating curator establishes a platform or vehicle for others to independently interact with various spaces in order to implement their interventions. The Cool Capital initiative will be explored. Cool Capital is the world's first citizen-driven guerrilla biennale centred in the City of Tshwane that boasts more than 1000 participants. Cool Capital as a whole, as well as individual projects executed during this biennale, will be discussed.

The culmination of this study was a practical curation experiment within an unconventional space. By utilising various curatorial approaches, a unique exhibition was curated.

Neither artwork, nor space is as successful in creating meaning as curation of the intersection between the two.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In this study, and specifically in this chapter, the autoethnographic approach will be employed by looking back at how my tacit knowledge of the spatial act of curation developed. I will also look back at seminal encounters, projects and travels that informed my role as curator, in an attempt to define key moments, visits, interviews and circumstances that contributed to my tacit knowledge of curation, my general knowledge about art and sculpture, and my academic and formal training as an architect. I will describe these contributing influences, focusing on those impacting this study directly or indirectly. All these encounters took place in various spatial realms, some accompanied by the additional sensory experience of smell – the smell of turpentine and oil paint in art class, rubber in foundries, and many others that made these spatial encounters even more memorable.

Tacit knowledge, according to Blythe (cited by Vaughan 2017: 60), relates to diverse layers and dimensions of the unspoken, including what the practitioner takes for granted. Leon van Schaik asserts that intuition is not itself a mystery – it is the internalised sum of knowledge (Van Schaik 2008:135). According to Van Schaik it is imperative that those designing spaces should be aware of their own histories in space and the mental space that they had constructed from that history (Van Schaik and Johnson 2011:21).

In the first chapter I will highlight some of these histories which contributed to my personal intuition and tacit and academic knowledge in the understanding of the artwork in space, and space in particular.



Figure 1.1 Spatial exploration on rooftop on 8mm film (Mathews, E., n.d)

1.1 Pre-school

My nursery school report cards gave a very clear indication that creativity, painting and building rated very high in my facilities.

The school teachers, Mrs De Bruyn and Mrs Green, always had to assist me to realize grand schemes and I was never very interested in their standard syllabus. I recall one specific project where I wanted to build a caravan park or a house. This they allowed, and even assisted me practically. Eventually, the caravan park idea became part of the syllabus and made everyone build their own caravans, with the end result being a complete scaled caravan park (a collection), just as I had imagined. Building blocks and clay activities were my favourites, allowing me to achieve flow and be taken away from reality.

From a very young age, our family was closely acquainted with the only two architects in Lichtenburg, Peet Botha and Larry van Rouendal of Botha and Van Rouendal Architects, both trained in the Bauhaus tradition. I became close friends with their children, and through these friendships I was exposed to their newly built modernist homes of the late sixties and early seventies, as well as their contemporary art and unique furniture collections.

On reflection, it is the time spent in the homes of Peet Botha and Larry van Rouendal that created a curiosity in me through the exposure to their respective interiors, art collections and architecture. I am sure this was most likely my first subconscious introduction to the art of curating in architectural space.

1.2 Primary school

The art class was my favourite place to be during my primary school years. In contrast to all the other mundane teaching spaces, the art class was covered with paint strokes and it smelled like paint; as a result, a love of creativity was set in motion. The classroom was a space where creativity was encouraged, and we could make anything that we could dream up – a real maker space. I still have an affinity with these types of maker spaces to this day. When meeting artists and other creatives, I relish the idea of visiting their studios. Mrs Juby Kriel, my art teacher, encouraged me to continue exploring art and assisted me after hours. I received a trophy for the best boy art scholar at the local *landbouskou* [agricultural fair] at the age of 12.



Figure 1.2 Artwork by author 1979 (Author, 2018)

1.3 A modern art gallery for a farming community

Botha and Van Rouendal Architects were commissioned to design a state-of-the-art modern gallery in Lichtenburg as part of a library and municipal complex. This was quite a rarity for a small farming town. The new art gallery played an important role in the development of my knowledge of art and my tacit knowledge of curation. The ground floor housed a library, with the art gallery designed around a generous double volume in the centre. A modernist and generous spiral staircase designed as a focal element connected these two public spaces.



Figure 1.3 Current empty gallery space in Lichtenburg (Meintjes, I., 2018)



Figure 1.4 Spiral staircase leading from the library to the gallery (Meintjes, I., 2018)

This new gallery also served as a catalyst, exposing the residents of Lichtenburg to art and attracting many good artists to exhibit their work. The local arts association started to amass an impressive collection for the town. Sadly, the gallery has since fallen victim to neglect and 230 works of art – including Irma Stern, Johannes Meintjes en Walter Battiss – lie forgotten in the abandoned gallery (Eybers 2016).



Figure 1.5 Artwork by author, 1981 group exhibition (Author, 2018)

In 1981 Bambi Jonker, then curator of the gallery, extended an invitation to me to form part of a group exhibition. At the age of fourteen, a collection of my work adorned a prominent wall in the gallery, strengthening my passion for art. In the absence of the current-day distractions of social media, opening nights were exciting events in our farming town. It was at one of these opening nights that I met Father Frans Claerhout and had the honour of him signing my first art book, something I still cherish to this day. This was the first time that I encountered a real expressionist Belgian Catholic missionary priest or professional artist – so far removed in thinking from what I was used to in town. The happenstance with Father Claerhout led to one of my hobbies of collecting signed books from living artists of note. This love for art books and, later, architectural books led to our firm entering the world of publishing, releasing books by artists and architects through Visual Books, an imprint of Mathews and Associates Architects.

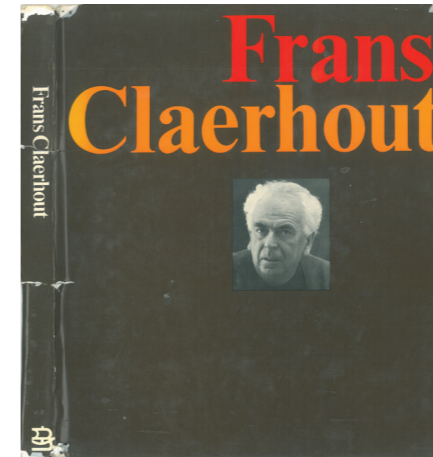


Figure 1.7 Frans Claerhout book cover (Author, 2018)



Figure 1.8 Book signed with a drawing by Frans Claerhout (Author, 2018)

1.4 High school

When I was 16, the high school appointed a new art teacher, Mr Marcus Coetzer, who had been forced to move to Lichtenburg to fulfil his bursary requirements. Mr Coetzer came from the city and introduced us to the *avant-garde* in art, music and architecture. He passionately broadened our understanding and our appreciation of art.

Mr Coetzer taught art as a subject at Hoërskool Lichtenburg until after I matriculated. He later went on to teach at Pro Arte in Pretoria, a specialist art school, and some of his students there included internationally acclaimed Wim Botha, Claudette Schreuders and Lionel Smit.

In my final school year, Mr Coetzer included architecture in our art syllabus. This was when I was first introduced to the work of Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe and Frank Lloyd Wright. I decided to do my final art project on Le Corbusier. With no material to work from available in the modern town library, I turned to the two architects and they lent me a few books on Le Corbusier, through which I fell in love with the Notre Dame du Haut chapel at Ronchamp (1955). The scarcity of study material forced us to appreciate and honour information.



Figure 1.6 Artwork by author, 1983 High school figure sketch (Author, 2018)

Another high school project that stands out for me was the inclusion of pop art. We studied Andy Warhol and had to make pop art sculptures, uplifting everyday mundane objects to become art. The class then had to curate, or rather exhibit, these objects/sculptures in the art classroom to show them as a collection to the rest of the school. Many pupils at the school could not understand the purpose of pop art but they were exposed to it nevertheless. I created a two-meter Staedtler pencil which formed a prime part of the collection.

My high school art education and these two projects were formative in developing tacit knowledge in the arts of curation, architecture and sculpture.

1.5 Architecture school

I attended the University of Pretoria (UP), where I immediately felt at home in the Boukunde building where the school of architecture is housed. I was very fond of the studio activities, the models, the paper and the building but, most significantly, I still treasure the moment I first saw a model of Le Corbusier's Ronchamp in three dimensions.

Our first project in the first year was to plan, source, execute and curate an installation by creating your own space within Boukunde. I found this an excellent project, as we had to explore the building, orientate ourselves in the new environment, meet new people, and create something from existing materials. The project resulted in the creation of various individual spaces within the context of a larger generic studio space – each student intersecting meaningfully with the large studio space, creating a personal area within the unipersonal high volume of the Boukunde top floor.



Figure 1.9 Co-students of architecture (Unknown, 1986);



Figure 1.10 Interpreting the Barcelona Pavilion in painting 1987 (Author, 2018)

My first year of tertiary study was profound: we received exposure to all kinds of fascinating subject matter and we learnt from many lecturers with varying styles of teaching and architectural approaches. Among these was Gus Gerneke, who left me with a credo I still respect to this day: an architect should be a dilettante instead of a specialist. His lectures focused on the world at large, the spirit of different time epochs, and how other fields such as philosophy, politics, automotive design, hairstyles and fashion enhance a wider perspective on the spirit of the times (Zeitgeist). These lectures filled up our reservoir of ideas. It is my firm belief that this type of pedagogical thinking makes for successful practitioners, architects and curators.

Apart from Gus Gerneke, Prof Karel Bakker and Prof Roger Fisher both had a major impact on me, as they were both young and energetic with a passion for architecture. Both were later Head of the Department of Architecture at the University of Pretoria.

1.6 The Grand Tour and a year out

After our third year in 1988, Profs Fisher and Bakker arranged a comprehensive European tour for the class. I took on many private jobs to afford this tour – thankfully planning requirements were more relaxed at the time, and formally stamped architectural plan approvals were not required when building on farms.

We travelled through Greece and Italy extensively. A group of students extended the tour, exploring Paris, Istanbul and Vienna. Our travels focussed on galleries and spaces of architectural and historical significance. Visiting the Centre Georges Pompidou (1977) was a major highlight – a space where art and architecture intersected harmoniously, showing how the art, space, concept and building could work together. Here was a building that could adapt to moving walls to receive exhibitions, unlike other conventional galleries.

Many years later, during my time as President of the Pretoria Institute for Architecture (PIA), I hosted Mr Andrew Tiley from Rogers Stirk Harbour and Partners, who was invited as a speaker by the SA Institute of Steel Construction. I requested a video conference call that would be filmed with him, Mike Davies and Sir Richard Rogers, to which the company and their communications department agreed. Mike Davies – the project and site architect of the Centre Georges Pompidou and recipient of the Légion d'Honneur for building it. Sir Rogers could not attend at the last minute, but I and a few academics interviewed Tiley and Mike Davies on 4 August 2010. The Centre Georges Pompidou was designed by Sir Richard Rogers (with Renzo Piano and Gianfranco Franchini).

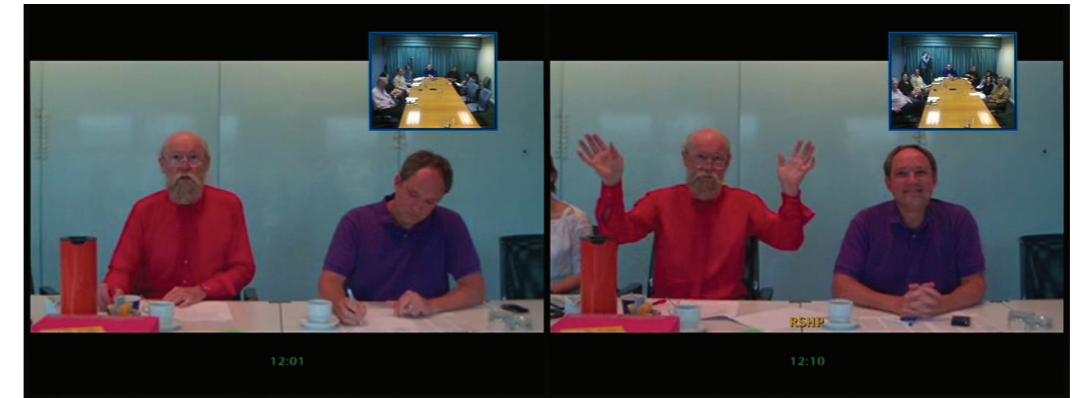


Figure 1.11 Screen grabs of telecom meeting with Mike Davies and Mike Tiley (2010)

During my first visit in 1989 to the Pompidou, the artist whose work was on show was Jean Tinguely. The Swiss artist was one of the first to show moving and kinetic sculpture and how this new approach could change the way conventional art spaces can be activated by movement (kinetics). The show was sculptural, novel and performative, and could be enjoyed by children, adults and art connoisseurs alike through the combination of sounds, movement and humour – a true paradigm shift. Some sculptures were commissioned for the fountains at the Centre Pompidou, with the rotating lips spouting water and wheels splashing every day. Intuitively my perception about the function and possibilities of artworks in public spaces changed, as this show proved what sculpture could achieve in public spaces.

Before leaving for the European tour, I decided that, instead of just travelling Europe, I would rather take an entire year out from full-time studying and gain some overseas work and travel experience. Prof Schalk Le Roux, then Head of Department, allowed me to work in London whilst continuing with Design 4 through the submission of assignments, journals and travel documentation. His instruction was: "If you fail, no other student will be allowed to do architecture via correspondence ever again."



Figure 1.12 First visit to the Centre Pompidou in front of Tinguely Fountain (Unknown, 1989)

At that stage, London had a shortage of architects as Thatcherism was in full swing. My employer Bruce Gilbreth Architects requested me to recruit more of my willing friends to join me in London, of which Fritz Metz was the first. We spent weekdays working and gaining experience, and weekends exploring galleries and museums and doing general sightseeing. As our office was around the corner from the Architectural Association (AA) in Bedford Square we spent many lunch hours at the AA and in their bookshop. We regularly attended public lectures at both the AA and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).



Figure 1.13 Touring London and Europe with Fritz Metz (Unknown, 1989)

Curating an exhibition of our design work for a long-distance absentee examination taught us valuable lessons in improvisation. In 1989, without modern-day technology, we used what was available and couriered slides of our projects, our journals, and a tape recording explaining our projects back to Pretoria. We had to put ourselves in the shoes of the examiners. This was my first step towards the notion of performative curation in absentia. Both of us got distinctions for Design that year.

The South African social landscape was changing in 1990. The positive changes in the political arena made me willing to return to my country, which I would rather contribute to in future. When I returned, the first affirmation was my friends dragging me to an Afrikaans rock concert on campus called Die Voëlvry Toer.

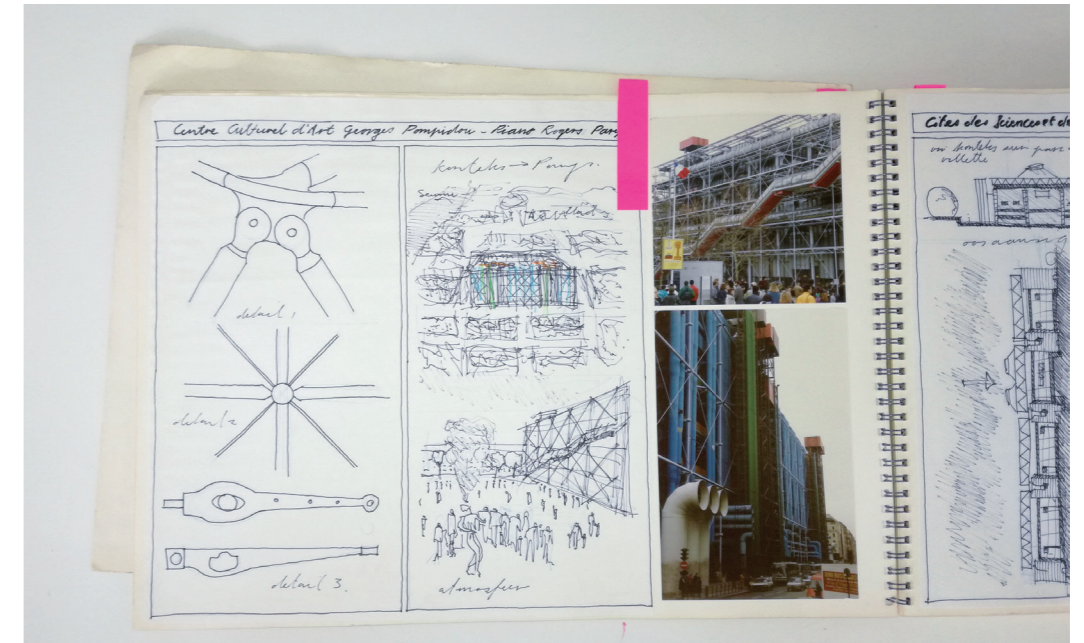


Figure 1.14 Author's 1989 journal entry of Centre Pompidou (Beukes, E., 2018)

1.7 Candidate architect

After completing my studies, I joined Holm Jordaan Holm and was fortunate to have Gerrit Jordaan as my mentor. He is a celebrated urbanist, and activating or curating urban space is one of his specialities. Both Gerrit and his wife Dr Eloise Smit are passionate art collectors and gallerists who broadened my knowledge of art. The Holm Jordaan Holm Pretoria offices were housed in the Gilde-huis. The ground floor foyer of the building was sublet to the Gilde Gallery which belonged to gallerist and curator Frieda van Schalkwyk. With the architectural offices on the first floor, I passed through the gallery daily. This exposed me to modern and contemporary South African art and I had the privilege to meet numerous exhibiting artists. Frieda van Schalkwyk was a phenomenal curator and mentor. I volunteered as an assistant whenever she required. During lunch hours we spent leisurely times discussing art, spaces, galleries and curation in general.

I now firmly believe these encounters contributed to my tacit knowledge of curation. I only have fond memories of the place where I spend my South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP) training to become a professional architect, art collector and, unknowingly at the time, later a curator myself.

1.8 Early architecture career

After completing my candidateship at Holm Jordaan Holm in 1994, I received an offer to become a partner at Nel Storm Nel, which I accepted for financial reasons. The work was unfortunately monotonous and repetitive, in contrast with their early work, designed by Karel Jooste and later Sieg de Beer, who were both employed by the firm many years earlier. This lack of creativity made me very depressed and after only one year I decided to leave. If there is no art in architecture or creativity in a studio, then it is better to pursue another career or try opening your own practice.

In 1995, Jacques Gerber and I established Mathews and Gerber during one of South Africa's worst recessions. This forced our focus to "building on a budget", with the hope to establish a client base and a reputation for hard work and excellent affordable outcomes. These lessons of working with budget constraints and what you have were very valuable for me as architect and curator.

During this period, I was owner-builder of my second home and still had regular contact with Frieda van Schalkwyk of the Guild Gallery. Frieda convinced me to open my house to the public as an art gallery for three days. This exhibition was in aid of Child Welfare of which Judy Sexwale, then wife of Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale, was the patron. Together we curated the show in my house, architect and curator/gallerist working together in unison. The exhibition taught me to reflect on my own design and to see new possibilities in personal spaces, while learning about art and art collections and how they intersect with my own personal space. I did not find it necessary at the time to document this seminal temporary exhibition.

The exhibition was a great success, with the additional benefit of exposing my house to a broader public in the hope of attracting new clients for our new firm – which proved to be the case.

At Mathews and Gerber, I was responsible for curating an art collection for Lucent Technologies in Bryanston (AT&T), which was my first major curation for a multinational corporation, commissioned by Francois Botha of Bovis UK (the son of architect Peet Botha from Lichtenburg). I assisted other private clients in the procurement and commissioning of artworks. Gerber's ex-wife Carina du Randt had studied fine arts at UP and introduced me to many of her artist acquaintances.

As a keen art collector, I befriended many artists and have had the opportunity to visit them in their studios. I find great enjoyment in these social calls, learning how artists go about their work and the physical act of creating. I know that each appointment enriches and broadens my understanding of art and the effort required to produce it.

Studios I frequented include those of the late Hannes Hars, Eduardo Villa, Robert Hodgins and Paul du Toit, and of living artists and sculptors including Norman Catherine, Guy du Toit, Willem Boshoff, the Isa Steynberg and Sybrand Wiechers combined studio, Gordon Froud, Lynette ten Krooden, Esther Mahlangu, Regi Bardavid, Andre Naude and, lastly, one of our clients Angus Taylor, where I spent time actively exploring the making of sculpture. Other studio spaces and museums of the late Christo Coetzee (Tulbach), Alexis Preller (Hartbeespoort) and Anton Van Wouw (Brooklyn, Pretoria) also inspired me.

In the year 2000, the partnership of Mathews and Gerber Architects was disbanded as we (as partners) held very different views of where we should aim our focus for the future.

From 2000 to 2012, art continued to be a part of my life, either directly or through the inclusion of art in my architectural projects wherever possible. This constant preoccupation and involvement with the art world would later culminate in our appointment as the architects of the Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria.

1.9 Mathews and Associates Architects

In 2012 Mathews and Associates was appointed to design the new Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria. After being appointed, the New York-based Mellon Foundation invited a small study group/delegation from the University of Pretoria to study museum typologies and meet curators from some of the best university galleries in and around New York. We had the honour of meeting the curators of the Metropolitan Museum of Art – New York, the Grey Art Gallery at New York University, the Princeton University Art Museum, Yale University Art Gallery – New Haven, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts Museum, the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University – New Jersey, Johns Hopkins University Art Museum – Baltimore, and the Barnes Foundation Art Institute – Philadelphia.

The interviews and tours given by these world-class curators gave me an insight into the art of curation – the effects, the criteria and the logistics involved. I was accompanied by the late Mr Stephan Welz (1843-2015) who, as representative of the Javett Trust, was instrumental in conceiving the Javett Art Centre at UP. We were joined by Professors Antony Melck and Norman Duncan representing the University of Pretoria.



Figure 1.15 Mr Stephan Welz, Professor Norman Duncan, author and Professor Antony Melck on rooftop of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Unknown, 2013)

Even though I have a passion for and an appreciation of art and art curation, I had never realized the scope, effort, criteria and logistical issues involved in the curation process. This tour was instrumental in broadening my understanding and appreciation of curation, with the privilege of being educated through many documented interviews.

Some of these curators extended curation beyond the conventional criteria: Dr Suzanne Delehanty at the Zimmerli Art Museum Rutgers curated a portrait exhibition for the medical school and the psychology department. The exhibition was used to teach future doctors to read faces in lieu of listening to the answers of patients. They brought in the school of psychology to do the teaching on how to read the collection – to read expressions, gestures and emotions (in the process not only broadening the art

market but introducing another criterion or outcome for an exhibition). The Zimmerli Art Museum Rutgers exhibition gave new meaning to the intersection between art and space by broadening the educational value of art – in this instance, the portrait.

(Mr Welz represented the seed donor and Professor Melck represented UP, and both were instrumental in our appointment as architects as they believed a lead concept architect of a museum and gallery should himself be actively involved in the arts. Coincidentally, I started my own art collection with one of Stephan Welz's own father's works, Bauhaus architect turned artist Jean Welz.)

My close friendship with the art community came in handy as I have regularly been asked to open art exhibitions, requiring of me to interview artists and analyse their body of work before an opening. Over the years I have opened various exhibitions at the Pretoria Art Museum, the Trent Gallery, the Pretoria Arts Association and Fried Contemporary.

The last exhibition I opened was for a retrospective exhibition of Titus Matiyane's work at the Pretoria Art Museum on 9 May 2017. One of his public works will form part of the case studies in Chapter 4.

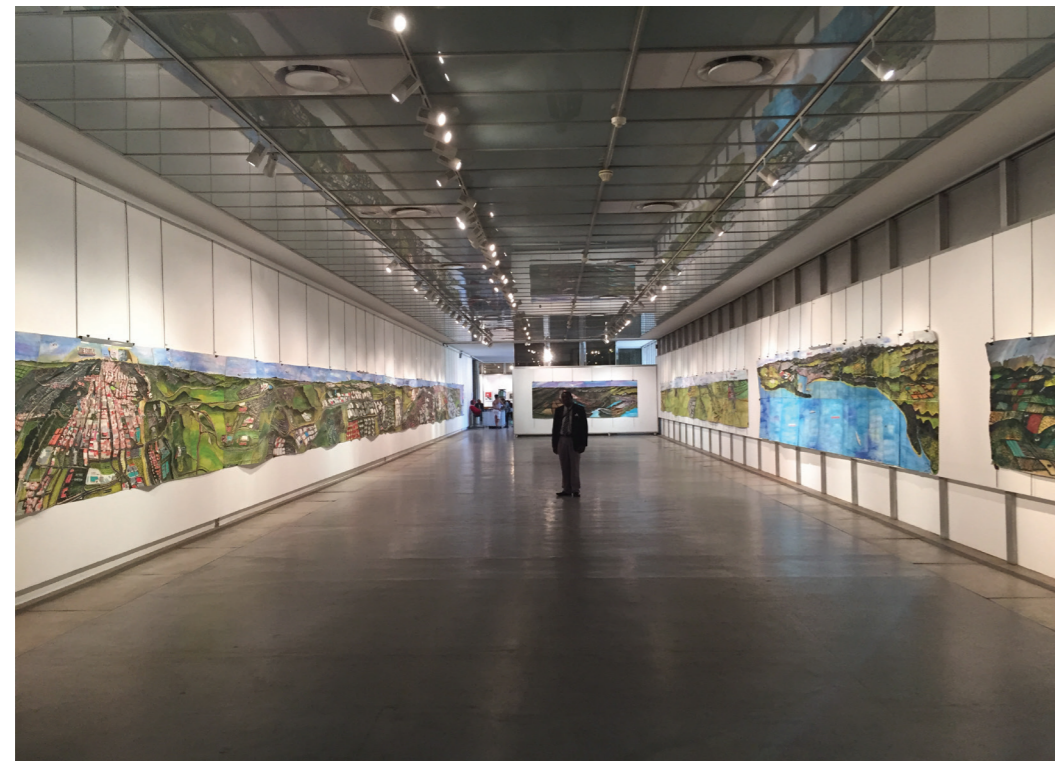


Figure 1.16 Retrospective show of city panoramas before opening night (Author, 2017)

In 2012 our firm was invited by the Global Art Affair (GAA) Foundation, a Dutch non-profit organisation addressing philosophical themes in contemporary art and architecture, to take part in the collaborative eventi collaterali at the Palazzo Bembo for the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale (La Biennale di Architettura). The exhibition was called Traces of Centuries and Future Steps. We decided to activate the courtyard with an installation, as any drawings, posters or two-dimensional works would only disappear between the over-stimulus of hundreds of other drawings and projects. The courtyard, as the space where functions were held, was the first port of call for visitors to the Palazzo. At that time, we were busy with the construction of the Nellmapius bridge and approached our client, South African National Roads Agency SOC Ltd (SANRAL), for sponsorship to exhibit the concept of the bridge in Venice. They agreed to carry

all direct costs involved. The bridge typology is not only apt for the city of bridges, but we also transformed the concept sketch printed on the installation into a light fitting, which would draw immediate attention to the exhibition and space while fulfilling a practical function.

The curator for the 2012 Venice Biennale was Sir David Chipperfield and the theme was "Common Ground". A recurring thread was that this Biennale should act like a Takeaway from Venice to other parts of the world (the British pavilion was called Venice Takeaway: Ideas to change British architecture).

The American pavilion (Spontaneous Interventions) curated by Cathy Lang Ho, David van der Leer and Ned Cramer, became instrumental in convincing me to start a citizen movement in my own town of Pretoria. The pavilion consisted of a series of black granite counterweights fixed with pulleys to posters. On each counterweight, an urban problem was stated, e.g. sterile parks. When one pulled down the poster the community-driven solution was revealed, i.e. urban orchids. I realized that a group of citizens can make a difference without bureaucratic interference and permission. The Cool Capital movement was born at this moment.

During the same trip, I visited the dOCUMENTA 13 at Kassel. dOCUMENTA is a forum for current trends in art and is realised as an exhibition occurring every five years. I spent a few days in Kassel where I became aware of the many building typologies and outdoor spaces receiving art. The actual curatorial knowledge of my Kassel visit contributed to my thinking about art and public space converging meaningfully away from conventional gallery spaces.

The first Cool Capital Biennale was held in 2014, with more than 150 guerrilla installations and over 1000 participants. Urban interventions ranged from yarn bombing to murals, to public sculpture and various school projects. Many of the practise-based case studies are centred on these interventions and will form part of the body of this thesis.

My 2015 visit to the Architecture World Fair in Milan, from which South Africa was absent, furthered my realization that buildings and pavilions can be curated on a large scale. The first time I realized that exhibiting buildings could be a form of curation was when I spent an entire day at the Vitra Design Museum in Germany in 2013. (The architectural pavilion as sculptural object will be dealt with in future studies). These two precedent studies revealed that buildings as objects in place can be curated.



Figure 1.17 REgeneration Art Project in Milan by William Sweetlove (Author, 2015)



Figure 1.18 Author visiting the British Pavilion at the World Fair (Mathews, K., 2015)

When the curator of the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale, Alejandro Aravena, announced the theme for 2016 – “Reporting from the front” – our firm seized the opportunity and tendered for the South African national pavilion with the Cool Capital project – democratizing creativity. The theme called for countries to show what they have already done (practice-based) and to limit talking about what they want to do to make a difference where they live. Therefore, the Cool Capital project, which coincidentally had just been completed and fully documented with real outcomes, was ready to be shipped and an ideal project to present (in the very limited time frame provided). This ensured that we won the bid to represent South Africa.



Figure 1.19 Author visiting Chapelle de Ronchamp (Mathews, K., 2013)



Figure 1.20 Author visiting the Venice Art Biennale (Mathews, K. 2015)



Figure 1.21 Author as curator of the South African Pavilion of the La Biennale di Venezia 2016 (Crafford, C., 2016)

In 2015 I was asked to judge the annual PPC Cement Young Concrete Sculptor Awards, with Prof Ingrid Stevens of Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). The competition is currently known as the PPC Imaginarium: Art and Design Competition. I also adjudicated the Green Mural Art Competition initiated by the Government of Flanders in 2017. On his official visit to South Africa the Flemish Minister-President, Geert Albert Bourgeois, personally awarded the prizes on 21 August 2017. At the occasion I had to rationalize our judging outcomes and process of adjudication to the audience, explaining how the intersection of the message, the place, and facility and execution informed our decision. The act of judging forces one to make connections and find meaning.

My knowledge of art also contributed to Mathews and Associates being appointed to curate a collection of art for the City of Tshwane at their rapid bus stations, which will be described in more detail later.

CHAPTER TWO

STUDY OBJECTIVES

2.1 The spatial act of curation

How the intersectional spatial relationship between place and artwork unlocks meaning.

2.2 Aims and objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to better understand how meaning is unlocked through the intersectional relationship between place and artwork. The advantage of this study lies in providing guidelines to interpret this unique quality of space and artwork. The study will focus on how and where artefacts and artworks can activate place and space by using specific curatorial practices.

From an architectural perspective, this study is about taking cognisance (insight) of the fundamentals of the existing place which is inclusive of the multivalent definitions of place. The definition of space includes not only architecture, but also the landscape, urban built environment, cities (local and international), rural towns, heritage sites and buildings, informal settlements, and existing structures in use and those abandoned. This definition is intentionally left open. I will extrapolate the definitions of space and place in their various forms as the main drivers to "receive" curated artworks in a meaningful way.

The objective with this study is not to investigate architecture and place; neither is it about the collection of art or conventional gallery curating; but it rather examines the meaningful intersection between place and art. This intersection or osmosis will be investigated and will form the core focus of the study.

Different curatorial technical devices had to be found to deal with the open-ended and diverse exhibitions I have organized over the past years. The aim with these exhibitions was to connect unrelated artworks with spaces other than conventional art galleries.

My insight into the fundamentals of the existing architecture was used as a curatorial device to contribute to a meaningful experience of the exhibition as a whole. An example of open-ended interventions and exhibitions is the *Saadjies* project as part of Cool Capital (which will be described in Chapter 4 – Case studies). These non-gallery spaces included the North West University Student Centre, the workshop at Modern Art Project (MAP) in Richmond, Van Wouw House in Pretoria, the Atterbury Theatre in Pretoria, Zuid-Afrikahuis in Amsterdam, the Stellenbosch University Botanical Gardens, and the Arsenale in Venice.

A further aim was to match individual artworks and performances that did not form part of the above open-ended exhibition to spaces where meaningful interaction with the public could take place.

Where space or place dictated the interventions, I shall consider the possibility that commissioning curation and/or performative curation might be beneficial to create meaningful intersections. Artists that understand, or are receptive to, the underlying narrative of a specific site or place would be in a better position to create meaningful artwork for a specific place or point in time.

2.3 Limitations

The exhibitions investigated are mostly our own, where the intersection between space and artwork was successfully used to create new meaning and raise public awareness.

The examples or studies are varied, but most exhibitions stem from the Cool Capital project and its spin-offs.

This is not a debate about the role of a curator or specific curators such as specialist, museum, organisational, virtual or independent curators.

As Cool Capital can be described as a movement, I see my role more as that of convener in lieu of curator. For many artworks submitted to Cool Capital, places had to be found where new possible meanings could be created, and this did require curatorship. This study will thus primarily deal with and focus on my role as a performative curator bringing divergent spaces and objects/artworks together in a meaningful way. The notion of commissioning and independent curator as well as a convener/facilitating curator will also be included in this study.

The curatorial practice and types would thus be limited to:

- i. Performative curation
- ii. Independent commissioning curation
- iii. Convener as facilitator for curation

This study is less about place/space or even the art collections and commissions themselves, but more about where they meaningfully intersect to form a dialogue. The word "intersectional" could be understood as denoting a fluid relationship between artwork and space. In this study, the word "intersectional" does not refer in any way to any issues, specifically not any that involve gender.

Social media platforms were widely used as tools to report on, give coverage to and increase public awareness of these meaningful interventions between art and space. Because of the performative nature of some interventions, social media platforms were ideal to document these.

Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Vimeo will thus be included in this study. These different platforms create the virtual space for exhibitions and will also be explored.

Artwork is understood to include artefact/sculpture/found object/mural/mosaic/functional art/totems/interventions.

2.4 Problem statement

When an exhibition or work of art is placed in specific circumstances or contexts, a layer of meaning can be revealed that would otherwise have remained hidden. The opposite is also true: when an artwork is displayed in a certain way in a specific space, this space can open up and reveal new layers of meaning, either inherent in its context, or even completely surprisingly.

It will be argued that this relationship is intersectional in the sense that artwork can activate space, highlight historical significance, create public awareness of the built environment, stimulate debate, and help to cultivate an appreciative audience for both the arts and architecture in our country. In South Africa we undervalue the potential of spatial and art intersections to give meaning and to assist in place-making.

It is believed that architects understand the underlying fundamentals of space and are therefore in a better position to unlock meaning.

A commissioning approach is seen as one in which the architect commissions a specific artist or group to unlock meaning because of their oeuvre, conceptual strength or artistic approach. Examples of this approach in our work are the *Tshwane Rapid Transit Vertical Element* project for the City of Tshwane and the *Let's Sit* public benches project.

The performative approach is seen as facilitating a performance to activate space temporarily or permanently. The architect or curator must work with what he/she has or what he/she is dealt in terms of space and artwork. Examples of performance-based curation are the *Pink Voortrekker Monument* and the open-ended miniature sculpture project aptly called *Saadjies* (Afrikaans for "seeds" or "pods"). These examples will all be discussed in Chapter four – Case studies.

2.5 Research questions

- Can an architectural understanding of space create meaning by creating an intersection between space and artworks?
- Can the intersectional relationship between art and space inform curatorial decisions?
- Can this relationship interplay to form new meaning?
- How can this relationship effectively be adapted to create new meaning in spaces?
- Can an architectural understanding of space contribute to a meaningful experience of an exhibition?

2.6 Research methods

2.6.1 What will be investigated?

The investigation focuses on how the intersectional spatial relationship between place and artwork unlocks meaning. The study will shed light on how the architect's understanding of the principles of architecture assists in unlocking this spatial intersectional relationship through specific curatorial techniques.

2.6.2 How will it be investigated?

As this is a practice-based study and many of our own projects and initiatives will be investigated, the writing will be autoethnographic.

My method will mostly consist of, but not be limited to, researching, citing and referencing of existing publications, catalogues and online interviews as these relate to our own projects, and precedent studies and other literature that would help to give context to the study.

Interviews conducted:

- Dr Johan Thom – academic, performing artist and gallerist, Pretoria
- Gordon Froud – artist, curator and academic, Johannesburg
- Isa Steynberg – sculptor, Pretoria
- Carla Spies – architect, Pretoria

International curators who will be studied are

- Harald Szeemann – curator, artist and art historian, Switzerland
- Hans Ulrich Obrist – curator, critic and art historian, Switzerland
- Julia Peyton-Jones – curator and gallery director, London
- Marcel Broodthaers – poet, filmmaker and artist, Belgium

National curators who will be studied are

- Gordon Froud – curator, artist and academic, Johannesburg

2.6.3 How will an exhibition/installation be chosen for discussion?

As this is a practice-based study, the focus will be on the intersections between space and artwork with meaning or significance in the outcomes of all the projects in which we were directly involved. Other case studies that will be discussed include the Projects, exhibitions and interventions that I personally curated will be analysed and contextualized against international and local precedent studies. Projects that will be discussed include the *La Biennale di Venezia 2016* official South African Pavilion, *The Sample Workshop* and *Cool Capital* initiative such as the *TRT Vertical elements* sculpture project, the *PPC public benches* project and *Saadjies*.

Exhibitions, installations and artworks will be selected where the intersection between space and artwork resulted in clearly defined meaning and purpose.

My role as architect in understanding space should be clearly demonstrated by the physical outcomes of these intersections, and projects are chosen which fit in with the three types of curation models as tools.

A clear rationale of the intersection will be presented.

2.6.4 What curatorial method will you use to investigate these exhibitions and interventions?

Three main curatorial devices exist that I will use as tools to assess the intersections, exhibitions and interventions:

- i. Performative curation,
- ii. Independent commissioning curation, and
- iii. Convener/facilitating curation.

According to Dr Johan Thom, the litmus test for a performative curator is to give the curator any collection and space and see how they can unlock meaningful conceptual and spatial relations between the object/s and space. In this way a performative relationship is set up between object/s, space and the curator (Thom 2018).

Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976), the late acclaimed Belgian performance curator, will be studied to understand the performative role and to give international context to this study (Cherix and Borja-Villel 2015).

The role of the commissioning curator will also be included as a research tool. Many spaces/places were better understood by specific artists and sculptors, especially in our more site-specific projects.

The convener/facilitating curator provides a platform and connections for interventions to take place between artist, group and place.

2.6.5 What are you hoping to learn and understand from these?

As an architect, I hope to increase my knowledge of space, form and places in need of intervention, and to use the applicable curatorial methods to give meaning by using art to activate space. I hope to increase my knowledge of existing spaces and art, and increase my contacts in the art world to better contribute to a more meaningful built environment in the future.

2.7 The impact of the research

The success and significance of the intersectional matching of space and artwork depends on making creative connections between them to reveal meaning.

Performance-based (coupled with commissioning) curation, which translates into working with what you have or what you are dealt, finding a place outside of the formal gallery environment while making a cognitive connection to assign meaning, has the following advantages.

- Broadening the scope of work for architects: it could be argued that the architect is ideally positioned to see new possibilities and potential regarding space and place, and is, therefore, an ideal candidate to enter the realm of the curator.
- Encouraging interdisciplinary interaction: architects, artists, sculptors and creatives can start to work outside the confines of their narrowly-defined workspaces. The result of this interaction can be beneficial for all parties.
- Serving as catalyst for urban renewal: as many artworks are functional – such as the *Let's Sit* public benches project – they can sometimes become catalysts for urban renewal. A specific example is a bench placed at the Telkom Tower in Pretoria on a portion of sterile land. The result was that the community started to use this object to make place, with gardening and landscape architecture, and yoga lessons now taught at the spot. This is urban acupuncture.
- Creating public awareness: the significance of this approach is that it can create public re-appreciation and awareness of a place where public parks and buildings of historical or architectural significance may be in need of re-use or renovation. This renewed public awareness of urban decay can lead to more qualitative public commissions.
- Inclusive participation: this approach provided many young and promising artists with an opportunity to participate in a welcoming international project, *Saadjies*. By setting a prerequisite that the sculpture had to fit in two hands it was affordable and accessible for lesser-known and less well-off artists to take part in such a project.
- Exposure for participating artists: inclusive participation gave every contributor exposure and helped to build their respective portfolios. The *Saadjies* collection was awarded a Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) Award in 2017, a fact which all the young artists can now include in their respective CV's and portfolios.
- Public debate: this approach stimulated debate amongst the public – Paul Kruger wrapped in tin foil and the Voortrekker Monument lit in pink to show and focus on another side of the artefact; the softer side forced people to re-look at iconic symbols and buildings in the city.
- Serving as pedagogical instrument: the painted chair collection produced by learners exposed these learners to the buildings of Pretoria and the inner city which they painted on the chairs. The welding projects with artists at schools, together with many other interventions, gave learners a new skill set.
- Sponsorships: this approach was so successful that many sponsors started to request participation, which could be ploughed back into the community by means of architecture and art programmes.
- Ongoing virtual exhibitions: The advantage is that most of the interventions and exhibitions can still be viewed in virtual space on social media platforms – documentaries on Vimeo and YouTube, catalogues on ISSUU, and the *#Saadjies* collection on Instagram.

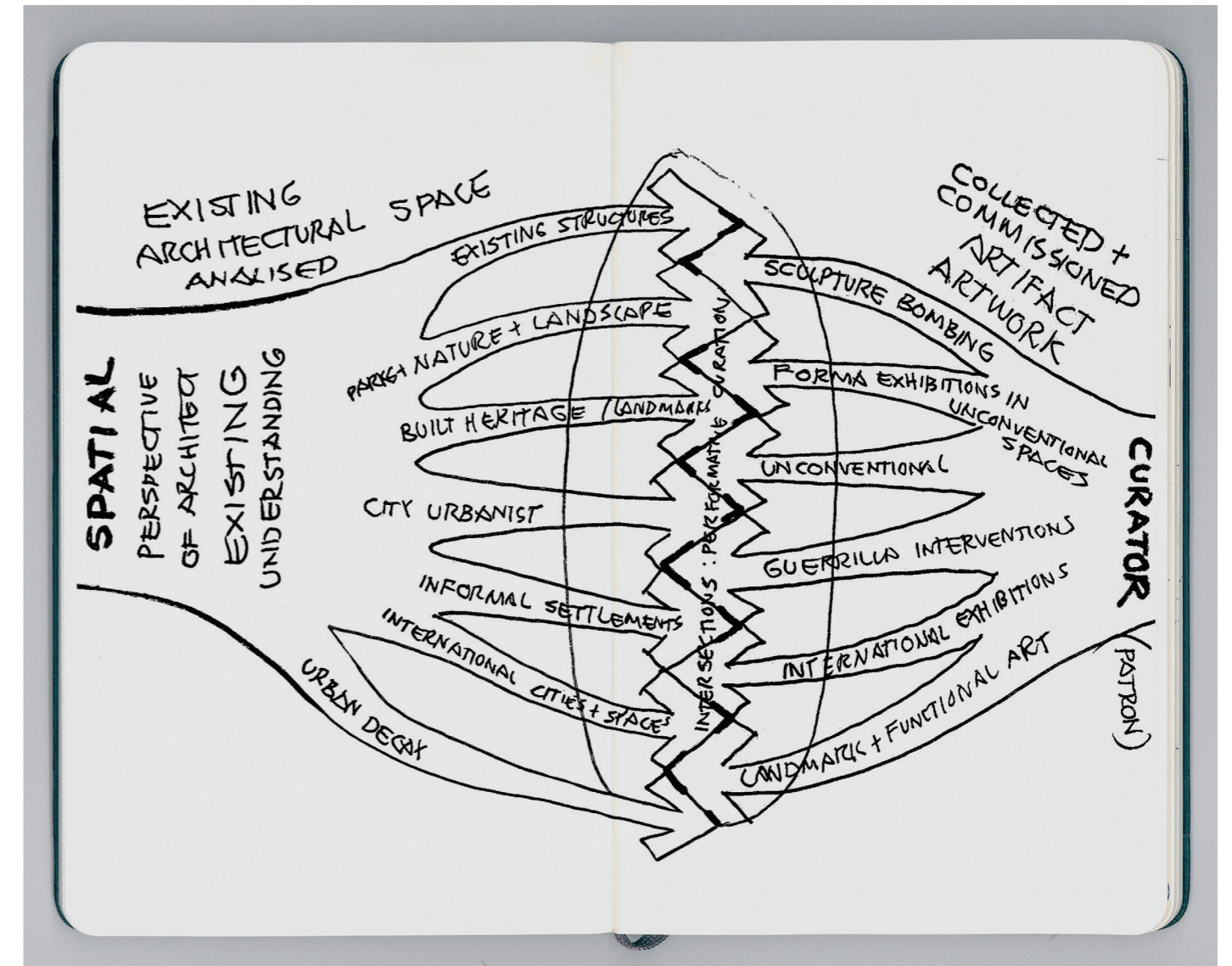


Figure 2.1 The spatial act of curation concept for this study (Author, 2018)

CHAPTER THREE

CURATION

AS A PROFESSION

The concept of a person curating an art exhibition is a relatively new construct: the word "curator" came into use in the mid-14th century denoting a "manager, guardian or overseer" (George 2015:2). The Latin word *curare* forms the root of the word and means "to take care of". The word was mainly used to describe persons in charge of minors or lunatics (*ibid* 2).

As the collection of objects like geological specimens, carvings, decorative objects and natural artefacts became a popular pastime of the rich in the 17th century (*ibid* 4), the concept of a curator became inexorably linked to the development, storage and display of these "cabinets of curiosities" (*ibid* 4).



Figure 3.1 Cabinet of Curiosities (American Museum of Natural History, 1559)

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries these collections, which had by then become quite large, were bequeathed to national museums. The roles of the curator and museum director became interwoven (*ibid* 4). The term curator today is still mainly associated with the custodianship of a museum or collection of objects – art or otherwise (*ibid* 4). The curator's role has since diversified to also include additional responsibilities such as research, logistics, restoration and the design of specialist displays (*ibid* 4).

It is important to note that according to Daniel Birnbaum, director of the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009), "the history of criticism is better known than the history of curation ..." (*ibid* 3), while Catherine Thomas's view is that "the term curator has always been on the edge of an ever-changing, ever-expanding definition; however, the expression may have outlived the conditions that produced it."

The profession of the curator or the curatorial body was first disrupted in the late 1800s by the Société des Artistes Indépendants with their Salon des Indépendants and Salon des Refusés, followed by the Kabinett der Abstrakten in 1927. Another paradigm shift occurred after World War II in the 1950s, when independent and freelance curators began to decide for themselves which roles they wished to take on (*ibid* 6).

3.1 The Salon des Indépendants, the Société des Artistes Indépendants and the Salon Refusés

The first of these disruptions was the Salon des Indépendants in Paris, coupled with the Salon des Refusés, both organized by the Société des Artistes Indépendants.

Artists at the time became increasingly unhappy with the rigid and exclusive policies of the official Paris Salon held by the Académie Royale de Peinture, which had maintained almost total control over the teaching and exhibition of art.

The Société des Artistes Indépendants had been founded to hold unjuried exhibitions and accept any work from any artist that would like to participate (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016).

This represents a turning point at which a collective of artists with innovative ideas took charge of how to make their work known.

The Salon des Refusés (1863) [Salon of the Refused] was held for innovative artists whose work had been rejected by the jury of the official Salon. In 1880 the Salon rejected the works of many Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painters, after which the first Salon des Refusés was held. Three years later they organized a second Salon des Refusés. The artists that took part in the second show included Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh and Seurat. Interestingly the Salon des Indépendants is still today showing new art while supporting the *avant-garde* (*ibid*).

"In French, you even call the curator a commissaire, which is police vocabulary, and so you, as a curator, always have this authoritarian role of drafting a checklist – who is in and who is out" (Obrist 2011b:74).

This disillusion with the exclusionary practices of curatorial teams, described by Obrist, still exists today. In the article "Measures of an exhibition: space, not art is the curator's primary material" Carson Chan explains this dominant practice of "gatekeeping" in contemporary curation:

"Large-scale exhibitions, like biennials, are now predominantly administered by committee and organized by teams to illustrate an agreed-upon thesis ... Products of consensus, the resulting shows offer up work of the latest rotation of artists and, unsurprisingly, betray a sense of interchangeability" (Chan 2011:96).

He goes on to describe contemporary art shows as "uniform, routine and platitudinous" with a very recognizable look (*ibid* 96).

3.2 The Kabinett der Abstrakten of 1927

The second disruption or paradigm shift in the curatorial profession occurred in 1927 as a result of a fresh approach by the curator of the Hanover Museum, Alexander Dorner (1883-1957). He allowed observers and the public to interact with the art, touching, moving and curating the exhibition. Dorner invited Russian artist, designer, photographer, typographer, polemicist and architect El Lissitzky (1890-1941) to create the Kabinett der Abstrakten in 1927 (Obrist 2011:128). Lissitzky hung the artworks in such a way that these could be moved around (and in fact "curated") by each visitor (*ibid* 128).

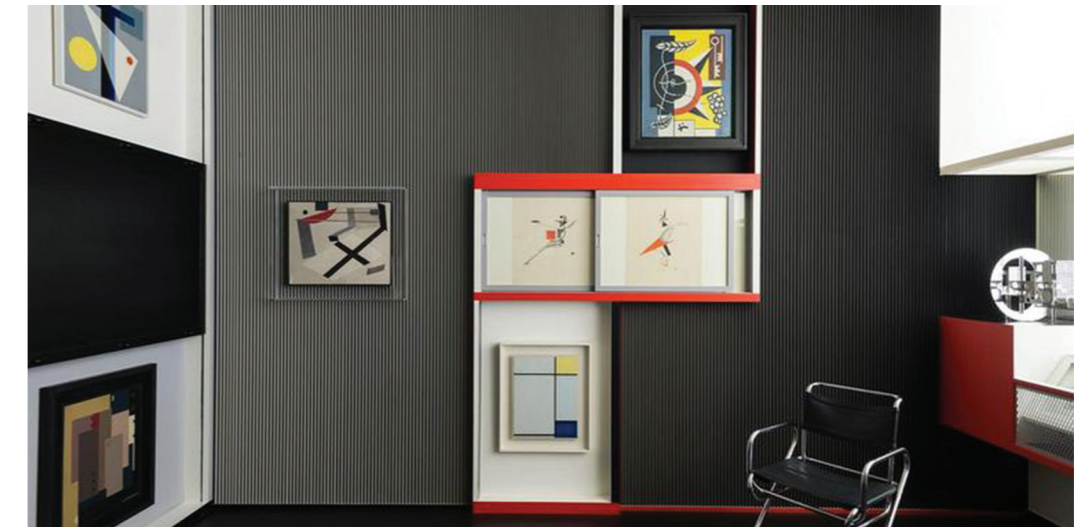


Figure 3.2 Kabinett der Abstrakten (Sprengel Museum, n.d.)

This was the first recorded interdisciplinary exhibition where actors outside of the curator's field were invited to contribute to the act of curation. It is referred to as interdisciplinary curation, practised by many modern curators, most notably Hans Ulrich Obrist.

Closely associated with the ideas around curatorship is the notion of *hierarchy*, where an expert or panel of experts decides what is good enough and what is not. In the words of Rem Koolhaas: "the profession of curating is about thumbs up or down, a system that picks, displays, and judges" (*ibid* 36). Koolhaas is surprised by the certainties he finds in curatorial fields of what is good and what is bad (*ibid* 36).

South African artist, educator and curator, Gordon Froud, has a similar disaffection with this notion of hierarchy in curation. Froud coined the term "democratic curatorship" – a methodology that affords equal opportunity to unknown, emerging and established artists (Monoa in Froud 2018:71). However, Froud also believes that the curator has the power to unsettle the status quo due to his/her authority over who participates, and which artworks are given prominence in the exhibition space.

Steven Rosenbaum cites CNBC's Brian Sullivan in *Forbes* online when in 2014 he proclaimed the word "curator" to be one of the five most overused words of the year. Furthermore, the word had been on the list of overused words since 2011. Rosenbaum makes the case that the word is not really overused, but rather misused (Rosenbaum 2014).

For this reason, in this thesis the act of curation is sometimes referred to as the act of exhibition-making in a multitude of architectural and spatial relations.

3.3 Curation as an act of exhibition-making

Chan defines the exhibition simply as an “interface between new artistic ideas and the public” (Chan 2011:99). This sentiment is echoed by Hans Ulrich Obrist, who sees the exhibition as a time-based and ephemeral constellation (Obrist, Rehberg and Boeri 2003:154). Obrist argues that the classical exhibition (curated in the traditional sense) emphasizes order and stability (*ibid* 150), but that this approach inhibits the potential of an exhibition to “express connective possibilities” (*ibid* 150). Obrist is an advocate for exhibitions that do not pretend to be authoritative on knowledge, but that rather enable knowledge (*ibid* 152).

The curator should prepare the ground, lay the foundations, and make meaningful intersections possible, which emphasizes the importance of a facilitating or curatorial approach.

Here the sentiment of Alexander Dorner (who invited El Lissitzky to create the *Kabinett der Abstrakten*) is echoed. Dorner saw the exhibition as a laboratory, and actively advocated the pooling of transdisciplinary knowledge, an unpopular idea in art institutions to this day (*ibid* 154).

By using the Chan’s definition of an exhibition, its dependence on context, space and even content can be challenged, for as long as meaning could be conveyed between ideas and the public, an exhibition would have been taking place. Developed further, it can be argued that this definition also begins to challenge the notions of hierarchy, as previously discussed.

Obrist advocates for a so-called “self-organization” in exhibitions. In my view the facilitating curator is perfectly placed to open the floodgates of creativity, and the Cool Capital movement is a perfect example of self-organisation where the visitor is not a passive spectator of an already defined object, but is in fact solicited on many intellectual and emotional levels to understand the content on display from their own perspective.

This idea of self-organization is clearly illustrated in Obrist’s exhibition called *Do-It*, where recipes, manuals and instructions on how to create artworks were published and then realized by several museums.

Obrist asserts that exhibitions that are the most memorable almost always contain an aspect of “innovative and experimental display features” (*ibid* 148). The spatial dimension of exhibitions is what makes a compelling case for architects to become more involved in the act of curation.

In fact, Obrist himself collaborated with architects such as Cedric Price, Yona Friedman, Rem Koolhaas and Stefano Boeri to produce evolving and inspiring exhibitions that occupied both spatial and curatorial realms. The collaborative model has the benefit of adding various perspectives and an interdisciplinary richness that provide additional layers of meaning to any exhibition, display or creative intersection.

3.4 A study of interdisciplinary exhibition-makers

As this study is not focused on the theory of curation, but rather on the intersectional space between art and architecture, the curators whose work will be discussed in the following section all have certain commonalities:

- The exhibitions were seminal in creating new paradigm shifts.
- The curators viewed the exhibitions as catalysts and not as final products.
- The exhibitions were transdisciplinary with a focus on space, including architecture specifically.
- The curators for these exhibitions did not have a background in art (Obrist 2011b:38); there have been many exhibition-makers who came from other disciplines. Franz Meyer was a lawyer and Harald Szeemann came from the theatre. Broodthaers was a poet and Obrist himself was trained in economics.
- Curators did not confine themselves to the gallery as exhibition space but discovered new possibilities where meaningful intersections in alternative spaces could be experimented with.

The following curators will be studied:

- Harald Szeemann (1933-2005)
- Hans Ulrich Obrist (1968-)
- Julia Peyton-Jones (1952-)
- Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976)
- Gordon Froud (1963-)

3.4.1 Harald Szeemann

Actor, stage designer and painter Harald Szeemann started making exhibitions in 1957 (George 2015:5). He was the curator of the Kunsthalle in Bern from 1961 to 1969 (*ibid* 5). In July 1968 he famously invited artists Christo and Jean-Claude (Christo Javacheff [1935-] and Jeanne-Claude de Guilebon [1935-2009]) to wrap the Bern Kunsthalle building in fabric. 27 years later in 1995, the same was done with the Reichstag building in Berlin. This performance in 1995 lasted only two weeks, but its impact was huge, with more than 5 million visitors coming to view the installation (Christo n.d.).



Figure 3.3 *Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin, 1971-95* (Volz, W., 1995)



Figure 3.4 *Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin, 1971-95* (Bauer, R., 1995)

Szeemann's 1974 exhibition, called *The Museum of Obsessions*, illustrated that a successful exhibition need not be housed in a conventional gallery space: Szeemann created this exhibition in reaction to the dOCUMENTA exhibition in Kassel, Germany, which he described as "brutal" (Obrist 2011a:92). "[W]ith 225 000 visitors, fragile pieces were easily damaged if you did not pay attention. I reacted to that by organizing a very intimate exhibition in an apartment, called Grandfather, which consisted of my grandfather's personal belongings, and the tools of his profession – he was a hairdresser, an artist. I arranged these things to create an environment that reflected my interpretation of who he was" (*ibid* 92).

Szeemann "invented" this museum where he elevated conventional and mundane objects to the level of an art collection (*ibid* 84). The location of this exhibition, in an ordinary apartment, brought new meaning to what could be described as mundane objects in a mundane space. The power of this exhibition lay in its intimacy and the sympathy evoked in the audience for ordinary people with ordinary occupations in a recognizable "ordinary" space – a powerful intersection with meaning, and a perfect example expressing that it is not about the space, and not about the artwork, which in this case are both pedestrian, but about the meaningful intersection created.

Szeemann was particularly influenced by Dutch typographer and museum curator Willem Sandberg (1897-1984) (*ibid* 84). The open-minded Sandberg let artists curate their own exhibitions and was very interested in new artistic directions like kinetic art, the Californian "light sculptures", and new synthetic materials (*ibid* 84). In the Voortrekker Monument case study (see page 97), I will again focus on light.

This broadening of the individual experience of an exhibition resonated with Szeemann, whose shows in the 1980s were often the first point of contact between the public and new art (*ibid* 96). Szeemann continuously searched for spaces that were not traditional gallery spaces, but rather, spaces that would be "an adventure for artists" (*ibid* 96). These exhibitions were opportunities for emerging artists to be shown in international exhibitions, many for the first time.

Szeemann's interest in the spatial qualities of the exhibition is clearly illustrated in his exhibition *Der Hang zum Gesamtkunstwerk* 1983 [The tendency toward the total artwork].



Figure 3.5 *Harald Szeeman lecturing in front of Werk Nr. 003 by Emma Kunz. Artwork courtesy Emma Kunz Zentrum. (Meier, A. C., n.d)*

The centre of the exhibition contained a small space with a Kandinsky, a Duchamp, a Mondrian and a Malevich. This he called the "primary gestures of our century" (*ibid* 94). The revolution in space and architecture embodied by the Bauhaus manifesto was the point of departure for this exhibition. The *Gesamtkunstwerk* exhibition is a good example of moments in architecture that influence exhibition-making to provide an additional layer of meaning for the visitor.



Figure 3.6 *Museum of Obsessions by Harald Szeemann* (Forrest, B., n.d)

3.4.2 Hans Ulrich Obrist

Swiss-born Hans Ulrich Obrist was exposed to exhibitions created by Szeemann from a young age. He admits to visiting Szeemann's exhibition *Der Hang zum Gesamtkunstwerk* over forty times, and seeing something different every time (Obrist 2011b:39). It was this exhibition that inspired Obrist, trained in economics, political science and sociology, to start making exhibitions (*ibid* 145).



Figure 3.7 Portrait of Hans Ulrich Obrist in front of a personalised hand-written note (Wong, J., 2017)

After becoming disenchanted by the limiting idea of the curator in the second half of the 1990s, Obrist started to invite scientists and architects to his exhibitions (*ibid* 119). These encounters with architects like Enrique Miralles, Peter Cooke and Cedric Price were serious for Obrist as, by his own admission, he was not aware of architecture (*ibid* 70). The conversations started out with pragmatic considerations: "it's interesting to involve architects in the exhibition design because exhibitions that don't have an inventive display feature are doomed to oblivion. So you can have either an artist or an architect invent your display feature" (*ibid* 70).

The importance of more meaningful integration between the design of an exhibition and the discipline of architecture became more deeply ingrained in Obrist's work with the seminal exhibition *Cities on The Move*. Obrist started working with architects, including Rem Koolhaas, Shigeru Ban, Zaha Hadid, Jean Nouvel and Stefano Boeri (*ibid* 71).

The point of departure for this exhibition was to develop the exhibition as a city; to not represent a city, but to "... imagine a city as a performative space ..." (*ibid* 71). Architects and artists who work in Asian metropolises were invited to submit work. Initially, architects submitted only maquettes, but as the exhibition started to travel and evolve, the exhibition as a form of laboratory was established and paved the way for a more meaningful interaction between the architects' work and the exhibition (*ibid* 71).



Figure 3.8 Installation view of *Cities on the Move 5*, Hayward Gallery, London, UK (Asia Art Archive, 1999)

3.4.3 Julia Peyton-Jones

Peyton-Jones was born in Britain in 1952 and studied painting at the Royal College of Art. After some teaching and curating work she became the director of the Serpentine Gallery in 1991, a position she held until July 2018 (Roux 2016).

In 2000 Peyton-Jones asked her friend, architect Zaha Hadid, to design a small and temporary construction as part of the gallery's annual fundraising gala (Elkann 2015).



Figure 3.9 Julia Peyton Jones at the Serpentine Gallery (Funnell, G., 2013)

Since then, temporary architectural pavilions appear on the Serpentine's lawn every year, with a remit to present architecture in the same way as an art exhibit. Architects that had not built in Britain were invited to design pavilions, including luminaries like the Dutch Rem Koolhaas, Japan's Toyo Ito and SANAA, France's Jean Nouvel, and Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer in 2003, then aged 94 (*ibid*).

The Serpentine Pavilion transformed architecture into art and facilitated the loosening of boundaries between public art and architecture. The project proved that these boundaries were not static, but indeed fluid, and that buildings can also be "collected", just like art. Examples of collecting and curating buildings can be found in the Milan World Fair I visited in 2015, together with the more permanent and profane collection of buildings at Vitra in Germany, visited on the same trip.

Bearing in mind that the Serpentine Gallery has a relatively diminutive scale, the programme punches well above its weight.

"We encourage them to be ambitious, and to do things that stretch us as an institution and them as architects ... The permanent building is very different, the temporary structures we commission are quick and light and that speediness sits very well with my DNA, although you need nerves of steel to do it. We work with a tiny team, who are on site seven days a week for a couple of months" (Roux 2016).

Peyton-Jones also employed other novel performative and commissioning curatorial practices that are illustrated in the exhibitions below:

1. Helen Chadwick's *Cacao*, a bubbling chocolate fountain, deliberately plays on many images that teeter on the revolting. The public accused her of portraying chocolate as excrement (Bedell 1994).
2. Jeff Koons's installations in several parks across the USA consisted of representations of his brightly-coloured sculptures, including his giant *Balloon Dog*. Peyton-Jones remarked "You might know Jeff Koons's work well, but combine the park setting and his playfulness, and it becomes something else altogether. This is a perfect example of the intersection being more powerful than space and artwork on their own" (Roux 2016).



Figure 3.10 The Serpentine Pavilion, 2016 by BIG (Stephenson, J., 2016)

3.4.4 Marcel Broodthaers

Marcel Broodthaers, a poet and artist, was an unrecognized curator that actively sought to disrupt the notions of conventional gallery spaces and the monetary value coupled with art. His selection of unconventional content intersected with unconventional spaces and created exhibitions that travelled, entertained and challenged the status quo. Broodthaers believed that: "Every exhibition is one possibility surrounded by many other possibilities which are worth being explored" (Obrist 2011a:128).

In this sense, Broodthaers echoed the sentiments of Obrist who conceived exhibitions not as highly static human-to-object relations, but rather as organic and self-evolving entities (Obrist 2011b:10).

The work of Broodthaers had a profound influence on contemporary artists: his distinctive *décors* set a precedent for what we call installation art today, and his early objects made from mussel shells, eggshells and his own poetry books remain vitally relevant to cultural discourse at large (Cherix and Borja-Villiel 2015).

In 1968, Broodthaers announced that he was no longer an artist and appointed himself director of his own museum, which he called the Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles [Museum of Modern Art, Department of Eagles]. Instead of being dedicated to the display of art objects, it often focused on a museum's supporting activities – such as documentation, publicity, and finance – which Broodthaers represented through announcements, publications, films, slide projections, and objects (Nechvatal 2015).

The Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles was created as a conceptual museum in Broodthaers's Brussels home at 30 rue de la Pépinière. It had neither a permanent collection nor permanent location, and between 1968 and 1971 manifested itself in sections appearing at various locations.

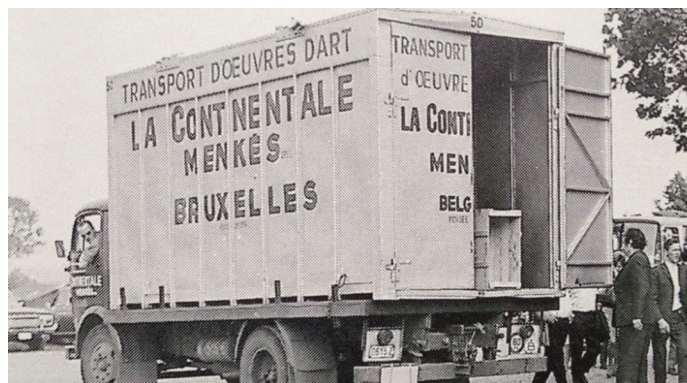


Figure 3.11 The Museum of Modern Art department of Eagles travelling to various locations (Foundation Marcel Broodthaers, n.d)



Figure 3.12 Portrait of Marcel Broodthaers at the Museum of Modern Art department of Eagles (Gilissen, M., 1972)

"These sections, inspired by the likes of Mallarmé, Magritte, and Duchamp, typically consisted of eagle crests and eagle mugs, kitchy eagle paintings, eagle silverware, eagle jerseys, eagle liquor bottles, and eagle-themed books. The result is something between an eagle antique shop and flea market. The bird of prey is of course, since Roman times, a popular symbol of power in Europe, once associated with Nazi symbolism" (ibid).

His questioning of the museum and money may have launched what has become known as "institutional critique," in which interrelationships between artworks, the artist, and the museum are focused upon (*ibid*).

The collection was the spatial anchor and, with this idea, he questioned the idea of the place.

Critics were quick to see the subtle commentary embedded in the project: Joseph Nechvatal's (2015) review, although very negative, explained the main aim of the exhibition:

"Marcel Broodthaers's current show, which takes us back to a time when the artists in the Belgian group 'Surréaliste Revolutionnaire' – with whom Broodthaers associated – knew where to attack power: from above. Up, where the eagles fly ... Broodthaers invites a reflection on and re-evaluation of the role of art as currency in our increasingly connected contemporary society" (ibid).

Broodthaers's Eagles project provided a richly layered commentary on the role of art and the function of the museum in society. Devising new presentations of works made throughout his artistic career, Broodthaers subverted the evolutionary logic of a museum retrospective and demonstrated how objects take on various meanings in different displays (Cherix and Borja-Villiel 2015:19).

In 2015, the entire Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles was reconstructed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, as part of a retrospective of Broodthaers's work.

It is interesting to note that an idea takes time to enter into the established art world, as proven by the fact that MoMA held a retrospective after his death, while in life it takes perseverance and belief in one's own ideas.



Figure 3.13 Museum of Modern Art department of Eagles (Gilissen, M., 1972)

3.4.5 Gordon Froud

Gordon Froud was born in Johannesburg in 1963. In an interview with Tracy Murinik Froud described his childhood as a "poor white in Hillbrow" (Murinik in Froud 2018:112). There was never an intention for Froud to become an artist, and he only studied for a Diploma in Art Education because there were bursaries for the field from the then TED (Transvaal Education Department) and it was the only way he could afford to obtain a tertiary qualification.

Nevertheless, Froud graduated from the University of Johannesburg with a degree in Fine Art in 1987 due to sheer hard work: "I was an appalling student – I worked hard, I've always been a Calvinist in my way of working – but I didn't have a clue of what art was" (Froud 2018:112).

Today Froud is represented in extensive corporate and institutional collections (26); he has curated 10 major and smaller exhibitions and received numerous accolades for his work (*ibid* 191). He cares for the art and I have invited him to open many Cool Capital school exhibitions for which he never said no. He is able to work with what he has and helps who he can.

I regard Froud as one of the most prolific curators, sculptors and academics in South Africa. His integration of various disciplines in his artwork – for example, the use of scientific concepts for his *Virus* body of work – is well respected.

Froud uses various novel ways of curation to strengthen the outcomes of exhibitions. An example of this is his exhibition of erotic miniatures at the Thompson Gallery in Melville in 1997 (bear in mind that this was three years into democracy). An open call was advertised in newspapers, by word of mouth, and through flyers distributed as widely as possible. This resulted in a show of more than 200 works from the polite to the extreme, in materials ranging from butter to bronze (Monoa in Froud 2018:76).

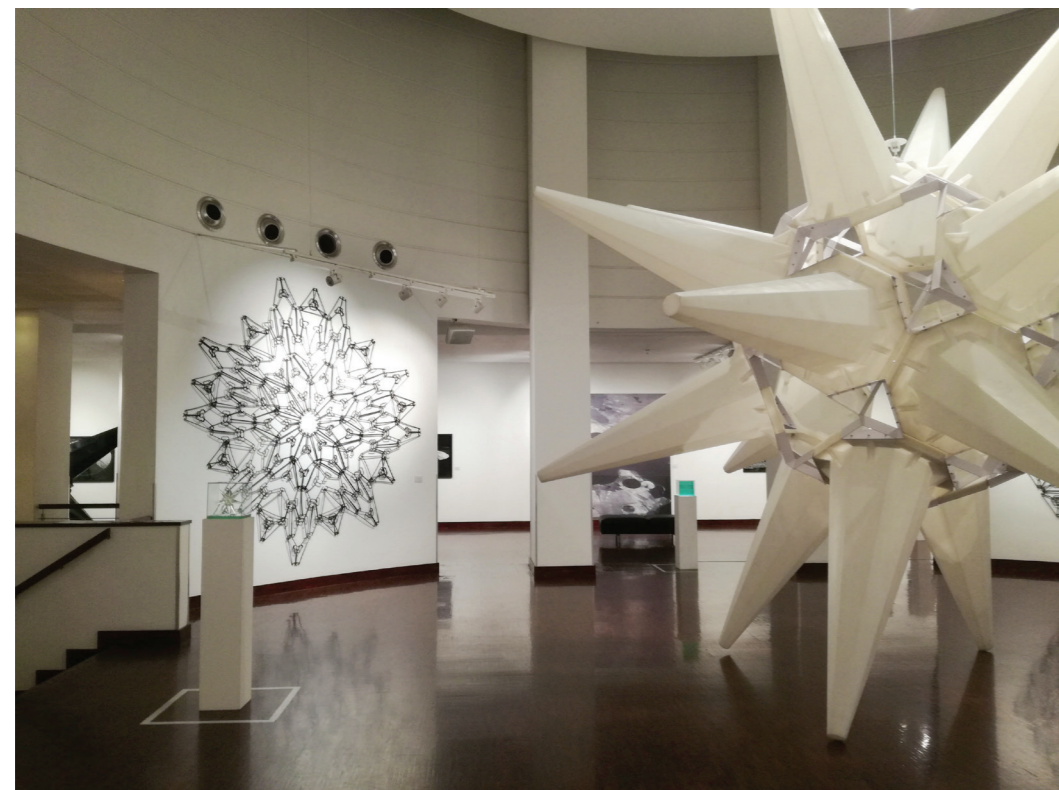


Figure 3.14 'Harmonia, Sacred geometry, the pattern of existence' by Gordon Froud (Beukes, E., 2018)

Froud's exhibitions can be characterized by their good-naturedness as well, often with a slightly cynical or humorous eye. His simple plastic hanger installations make beautiful sculptures, but also make reference to people selling coat hangers on the streets of South Africa, and to people migrating to city centres each day to sell these. The next layer is that of the dispossession of those selling the hangers, and the consumerism inherent in buying them (Froud 2018:114).

For Froud's 2018 exhibition, called *Sacred Geometry – the pattern of existence* and showcased in the Standard Bank Gallery, Froud the curator had to curate the works of Froud the artist.

Froud approached the exhibition from a purely spatial perspective by building a scale model of the interior of the building, which was designed by Meyer Pienaar Architects and later modified by Grosskopff Lombardt Huyberegts in 2004. The model was used to view the space from various angles, heights and geometries to eventually dictate the number of artworks and their size, placement and material. The architecture of the gallery already had a specific connection with his work, as it consists of a spherical space contained in a cube (Froud 2018b).

Space was used as an underlying form of dictation, where the visitor constantly interacted with the artwork in relation to its position in the space.

Froud requested the gallery to construct a drywall above the entrance staircase. This architectural intervention transformed the gallery into a perfect geometry reflecting the perfect geometry of the show (*ibid*).



Figure 3.15 'Harmonia, Sacred geometry, the pattern of existence' by Gordon Froud (Beukes, E., 2018)

3.5 Interaction with art in a politically loaded environment

In the South African context, we are confronted with an interesting challenge with regards to our controversial architectural and artistic heritage. This topic is comprehensively discussed in an article by Dr Hendrik Auret titled "Monuments matter", which appeared in the UFS School of Architecture publication *A Mag 2018*:

"Monuments are strange things. They seem stable, predictable and enduring, yet their meanings migrate and their roles shift. Instances of regime change or liberation may render old assumptions untenable and in South Africa there are monuments once meant to commemorate laudable achievements that have become symbols of the oppressive systems of the past" (Auret 2018:32).

The challenge facing the current generation of South Africans is how to make sense of the monuments bestowed on us, in a way that will dignify the heritage and memory while simultaneously presenting the lived situation of all stakeholders (*ibid*).

In most cases, monuments and public sculptures merge with the background of everyday urban life. The particular person or event presented quickly becomes obscured (Frank in Lossau and Stevens 2015:183), only to be placed in the spotlight with movements like Rhodes Must Fall at the University of Cape Town in 2015, which was eventually successful in having the statue of Cecil John Rhodes removed from the UCT campus. This had a ripple effect on many campuses where founding "fathers" were prominently displayed. Totius at North-West University (NWU) and President Steyn of the University of the Free State (UFS) will feature in this thesis.



Figure 3.16 Students protesting 'Rhodes must fall' (UCT Rhodes Must Fall, 2015)

Generally, in these circumstances, two kinds of engagement with the art or architectural artefact can be distinguished: those that affirm or extend the work's symbolism and those that resent it. What may have started simply as a convenient backdrop can become an integral part of political resistance activities (*ibid* 192).

One such contested monument is the statue of President M.T. Steyn, one of the University of the Free State's founders. Sculpted by Anton van Wouw, it is located in front of the main building of the University. After the success of the Rhodes Must Fall movement, and in an increasingly politically loaded campus environment, the prominent location and history surrounding the statue had the potential to divide the campus along political lines.

In lieu of the barbed wire that was used around other similarly controversial statues like that of Paul Kruger on Pretoria's Church Square, the University of the Free State decided to rather experiment with a temporary intervention by two of their educators, Hendrik Auret and Kobus du Preez.

Auret and Du Preez created an art installation that could serve as a space of debate around the merits of the old statue. Complete with comfortable seating, the primary installation was a reflective triangle, or rather a temporary mirror sculpture, placed in front of the statue. One could see oneself in the mirror, and I believe this defused the explosive situation. Printed on the reflective surfaces were QR codes and questions about the background of the statue as well as questions concerning its future, where one could see oneself and ask oneself these questions. The installation temporarily obscured the public's view of the statue (actually protecting it), but also obscured the statue's view down the main axis of the campus. Auret explains that while the new work undermined the old statue, it also begged reconsideration of its merits. Ultimately the question becomes: "What do we win or lose when we dismantle monuments; even those we despise?" (Auret 2018:32).

In the case of the President Steyn statue, the installation of the mirrored triangle had to be constructed quickly, to communicate to students that the University management was taking their grievances seriously. In due course the installation could counter emotions, connections and perceptions in order to create a space for consultation, conversation and meaningful engagement. This intervention places the viewers in a space that is, according to Michael North, articulated in terms of its political controversy so that viewing is not simply to experience, but also to enter into a debate (Mitchell 1992:10) "Changing the nature of the art meant changing the role of the audience as well" (*ibid* 10).



Figure 3.17 Installation questioning the validity of Pres Steyn statues - UFS Campus (Author, 2018)

3.6 How to make an exhibition

From the projects and curators discussed above and using Obrist as an example, it is possible to refine an approach to exhibition-making that resonates with exhibitions and installations created by myself. Many of these formed part of the 2014 and 2016 Cool Capital initiatives.

- Do not occupy existing space; create free space.
- Build bridges between and become a translator for the public, artists, scientists, institutions and other types of communities.
- Always be curious about emerging artists and remain conscious of geographies and space.
- Do not stand in the way; the curator should not dictate.
- Give up control and recognize failures as a vital feature of learning.
- Approach the exhibition as a vehicle to take art into other fields where it can be relevant.
- Use your tacit knowledge to facilitate, lead, steer and dream.

After following the guidelines above, a different set of approaches can be used to realize the exhibition. The choice of approach is not always a conscious one, and it depends on the circumstances, context and content, as well as the meaning that can be elicited by combining them. These various combinations can become meaningful catalysts for place-making.

In all of these approaches, the concept of "action" is important and provides further clues as to what role the exhibition-maker might play during the process of exhibition-making. The word *act/akt* is described as meaning "a thing is done," from the Latin (*actus*) *agere*, "to set in motion, drive forward," and hence to do, to perform, or to figuratively "incite action; keep in movement, stir up". The verb has a broad range of meanings in Latin, including to "act on stage, play the part of; plead a cause of law; chase or carry off" (Harper 2018).

Following on from these meanings, an exhibition-maker can thus do many things: he/she can, for example, set in motion (as the *Cities on the Move* set in motion a way of thinking about how to exhibit a city), incite (or defuse) action (as was displayed by the intervention by Auret and Du Preez on the UFS campus), or plead a cause (as Gordon Froud does with his democratic curatorship).

3.7 Performative curation

The performative approach to curation is the main approach followed by me. As will be discussed under the *Saadjies* exhibition later on, it was uncertain which objects would be submitted, and the exhibition would be dependent on each object, as well as the collection of objects as a whole.

The performative curatorial approach was explained to me by Dr Johan Thom in an interview on 7 August 2018:

"A performative curator takes any object and any space and unlocks meaningful conceptual and spatial relations between the object/s and space. In this way, a so-called performative relationship is set up between the object, space and the curator. The curator, in this instance, becomes the creator of meaning within the specific limits of the objects and space. The meaning created by this process is always relational and inter-sectional. It exists in a particular space and time" (Thom 2018).

As such, exhibitions that follow this process of meaning-making cannot necessarily be judged as "good" or "bad", but should rather be judged by the new set of relationships that were unlocked by the curator between the collection of objects and space. Were these relationships interesting? New? Previously unthought-of in their possibility?

This form of curation requires critical rigour, sensitivity (both conceptually and spatially in relation to the objects and the space in question), and self-reflexivity on the part of the curator (*ibid*).



Figure 3.18 The surprise element of receiving Saadjies entries (Crafford, C., 2016)

3.8 Independent commissioning

The commissioning curator instructs or briefs an artist to create an artwork for a specific place or context. John Hallmark Neff asserts that, although commissioning today is usually done by panels and deliberations, one should stay mindful that “the process of commissioning public art also begins with dreams” (Mitchell 1992:8).

This form of curation can be seen in my selection of different artworks for the A Re Yeng Stations in Tshwane.

3.9 The facilitating and convening approaches

Instead of commissioning or instructing, a curator can rather play a facilitative role, which creates more freedom for artists and can achieve more creative and surprising outcomes. For most of the Cool Capital submissions, the point of departure was that there will be no curation. The Cool Capital movement, in fact, prided itself on being un-curated.

The facilitating curator is invisible and simply provides the platform or enables opportunities for artists/creatives to enact their own creativity. Although this approach comes with the associated risks, oftentimes surprising and meaningful relations are created in the absence of rules.

3.10 Space as a curatorial tool

In his article “Measures of an exhibition: space, not art, is the curator’s primary material”, Carson Chan argues that it is imperative for curators today to make exhibitions that “provide spatial contexts where artworks, new or familiar are presented in a way that would require visitors’ physical presence for their full apprehension” (Chan 2011:95). This approach would require a better understanding of spatial qualities and complexities – a skill that architects possess. Szeemann continually searched for spaces that would be an adventure for artists to work in (Obrist 2011a:96). In the 1980s, Szeemann demonstrated the tendency of exhibiting in an increasing number of unusual places (*ibid* 96).

The modern exhibition, Chan argues, has evolved from the French Salon model, where paintings were displayed as surfaces that covered entire walls (Chan 2011:94). Today, space should be seen as something that is used, usurped, appropriated and wielded, adding another layer of both possibility and uncertainty as to how to represent it, and from whose viewpoint to do so. This makes architecture different from artworks like performances and processes that are difficult to collect (Chen in George 2015:10).

While many curators today regard the white cube gallery space as reductive, Obrist argues that it is simply its strong ideology that has almost prevented anything else from happening (Obrist 2011b:129). The fact is that the white cube is simply one spatial possibility among many, and all of them are worth exploring.

“I think this whole idea that an exhibition can navigate through different varieties of space is an important one. For me, there have been different possibilities and obviously the idea is to draw such new spaces and to kind of invent them, but of course also to use existing spaces” (Obrist 2011b:129)

When the word “space” is used as a verb, i.e. “to space”, it refers to separate, place, position, arrange, line up, range, order, lay out, deploy, locate and settle. These actions are similar to what a curator is doing when he/she is creating meaning in the placement, location, order and arrangement of objects in an exhibition.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDIES

My practice, Mathews and Associates Architects, is divergent and constantly oscillating between many creative outputs and disciplines. The projects my office undertakes range widely, from building design, graphic design, furniture design and publishing books, to exhibitions and installations. There has always been a constant undercurrent of self-examination, pushing ourselves to constantly re-criticise our work and facilitate individual creativity, while always questioning the established practice of "it has always been done that way" by seeing how far we can push the boundaries in design detailing and guidelines, and always looking for a fresh approach to any project.

Our methods of production, from conceptual designs to large buildings, are unconventional, flexible and fluid. These methods vary greatly and depend on the cost, logistics, teams involved and the client. All of the characteristics of our methods can easily apply to the creation of an exhibition as well.

The case studies below are selections of exhibitions or parts of exhibitions that illustrate a specific point, approach or argument. Where required, reference will be made to curators or curatorial approaches discussed in the previous chapter.

The case studies will be categorised as follows:

1. Tshwane Rapid Transport Services – A Re Yeng, Vertical Sculpture Commissioning
An urban-scale project with the City of Tshwane as canvas.
2. Cool Capital
A citizen-driven guerrilla biennale that democratized creativity.
3. La Biennale di Venezia
Curating on an international stage as the official South African Pavilion at the 2016 La Biennale di Venezia.

4.1 TSHWANE RAPID TRANSPORT SERVICE

A RE YENG: COMMISSIONING OF VERTICAL SCULPTURES (2014)

In 2012 the South African National Roads Agency SOC Ltd (SANRAL) invited 18 architecture firms to take part in a competition to design a station prototype that could be used for the 52 planned Tshwane Rapid Transport (TRT – A Re Yeng) bus stations. Mathews & Associates Architects won the station type intended for four historically sensitive areas in the inner city, and Mashabane Rose Architects was appointed for the remainder of the stations. Both firms agreed that the stations should have a vertical element to create landmarks for wayfinding. It was also agreed that these vertical elements would be the ideal location for public art objects – both Jeremy Rose (the principal of Mashabane Rose) and myself were conscious of the potential impact of public art to activate spaces and provide unique landmarks, leaving the city with a contemporary collection of public art.

The client SANRAL agreed and requested our office to analyse the location of each station, study the narrative of place, and conceptualize a sculptural landmark for each station. These so-called “totem poles” have various functions: they announce the name of the station, act as orientation devices, and tell a story about the location of each station. A body like SANRAL is only equipped to tender on a quantitative basis, so creative and innovative ways had to be found to transform quantitative adjudication into qualitative because of the subjective nature of art.

A narrative for each station had to be developed and an artist identified that would be most suited to each location. These artists were then commissioned to develop and manufacture an artwork for the totem pole that would give meaning to each different station location. By travelling to the station locations by bicycle on Sunday mornings, I could get a better understanding of the genius loci of each. Practical considerations such as pedestrian routes and patterns could be observed and the location could be investigated by bicycle from various viewpoints. This mode of active curation assisted in the successful intersections between context, place, architecture and the final commissioned artworks.

However, the more active mode of curation in this situation was that of the commissioning curator: 54 artists from different backgrounds, with artistic styles that could be executed in a variety of materials and mediums, were identified. They attended a briefing session at the SANRAL regional headquarters where they were informed of the architectural, spatial and contextual cues available for each station location.

As the curator, I assigned and reworked some artworks and concepts together with the artists. Of the 52 artworks that were planned, only 11 have been completed. For this study, two of these will be discussed in terms of spatial and artistic meaning.

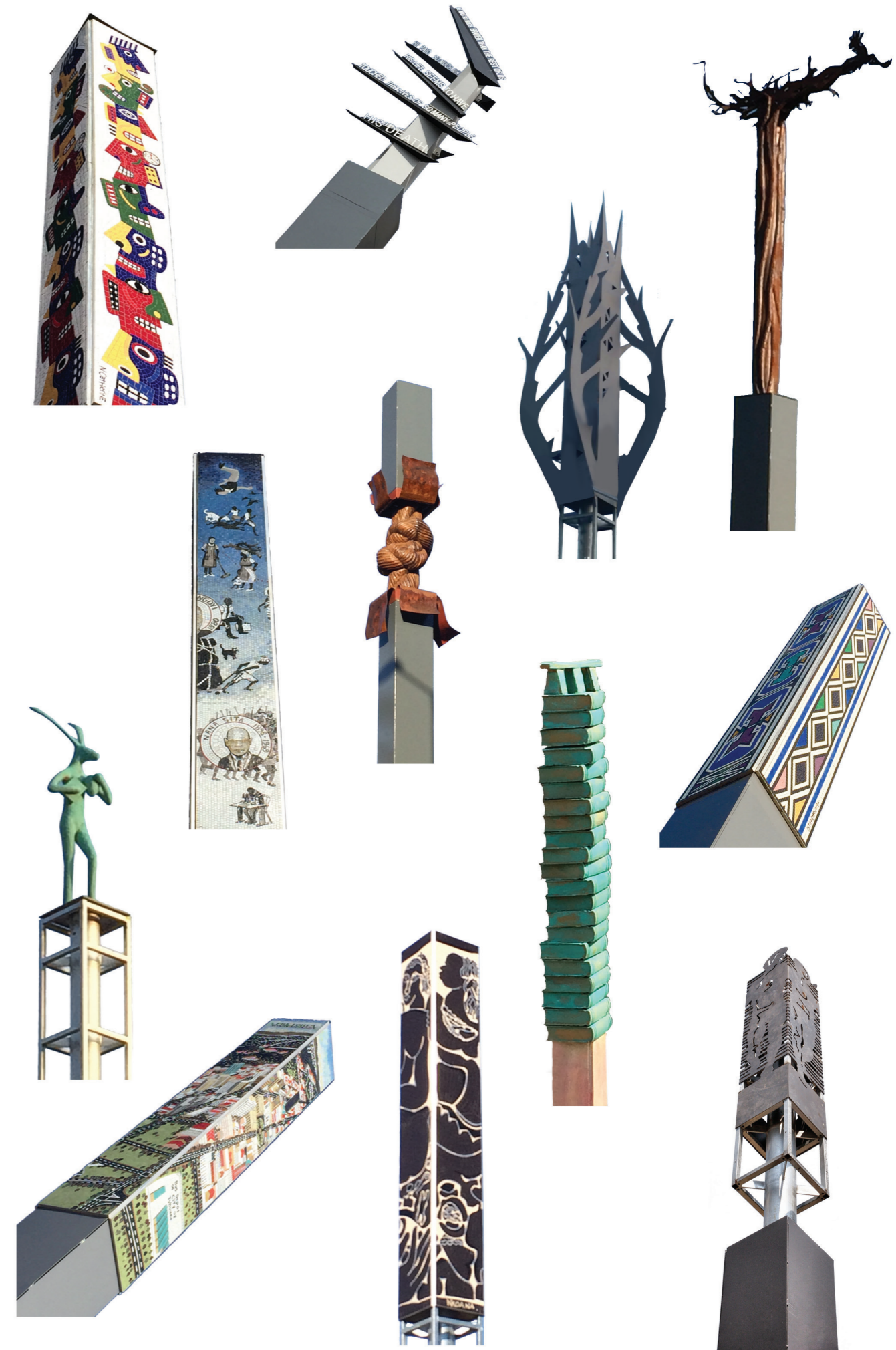


Figure 4.1 Collage of the TRT vertical sculpture collection (Beukes, E., 2018)

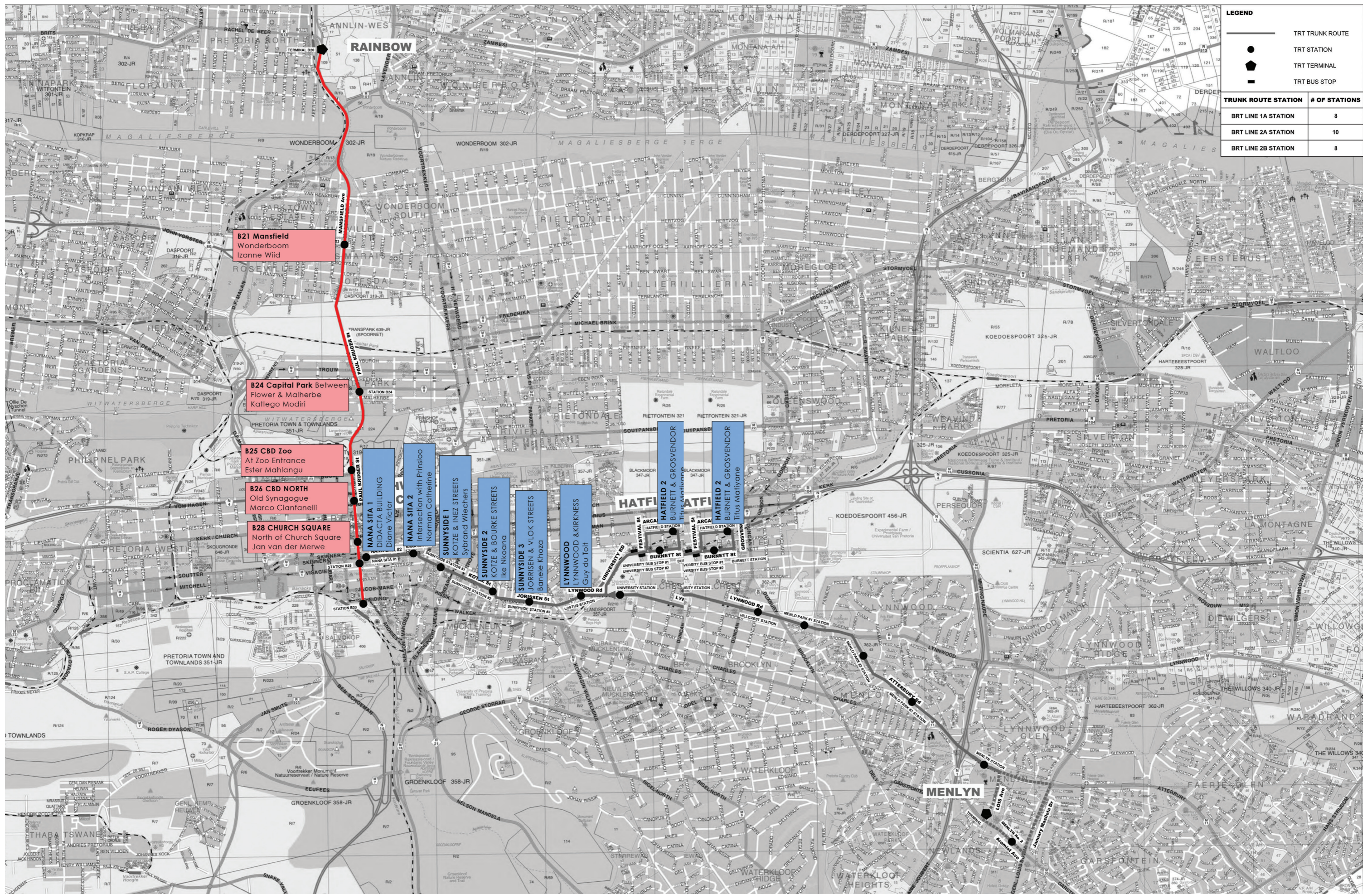


Figure 4.2 Map of Tshwane indicating locations of A Re Yeng Vertical Artwork (MAAA, 2014)

4.1.1 Guy du Toit

Rabbit

Lynnwood Road – intersection of Lynnwood Road and Kirkness Street

The Loftus Versfeld A Re Yeng bus station is located in the Loftus node with many different contextual references:

Situated south of the Loftus Versfeld rugby stadium; north of the Afrikaans Hoër Seunskool [Afrikaans Boys' High School], east of the historic N.G. Kerk Pretoria-Oos [Dutch Reformed Church Pretoria East] by architect Gerard Moerdijk, a Byzantine cross-shaped Dutch Reformed Church. The Afrikaans Hoër Meisieskool [Afrikaans Girls' High School] is also located to the west of the A Re Yeng bus station. With the exception of the stadium, all are heritage buildings. In 2014, a traffic circle in the midst of these buildings was designed and executed by architect 'Ora Joubert in a Walter Battiss-inspired mosaic, which added to the complex and visually stimulating environment of the station. The station location offers superb views westwards down Lynnwood Road and towards the Telkom Tower to the south-west.

The complexities of the location were effortlessly solved by artist Guy du Toit. Du Toit's trademark hares, for which he is widely acclaimed, were inspired by the works of the sculptor Barry Flanagan.

Du Toit adopted the benefit of the totem to use it as a pedestal – reaching to the sky just like the Moerdijk Church, Telkom Tower and Loftus Stadium. He quipped that this artwork was, in fact, higher than Lord Nelson on Trafalgar Square. Its height not only provides a very clear and confident presence for one of his signature hares, but also activates the space by simply summarising the entire architectural context of the location. The hare on the pedestal holds a book in one hand – referencing the schools and church as places of learning and 'the book' – and a rugby ball in the other. The rugby ball primarily references the proximity of the Loftus Rugby Stadium, with Afrikaans Hoër Seunskool's illustrious rugby history as secondary reference. Du Toit's artist's statement summarizes the meaning in this instance: "All you need in life is recreation and education." His sense of humour is evident in the title wordplay *Rabbit* referring to the rapid public transport system.



Figure 4.4 *Rabbit* by Guy du Toit (Author, 2018)



Figure 4.3 *Rabbit* by Guy du Toit at Loftus Versfeld (Author, 2018)

4.1.2 Titus Matiyane

Panorama of Pretoria

Hatfield Gautrain Station, Arcadia Street

Titus Matiyane works and lives in Atteridgeville, a township located west of Pretoria. Titus is well known for extensive and panoramic cityscapes which he produces in his home with mixed media. Matiyane's cityscapes span many metres and are produced by rolling paper across his desk while drawing cities that he has never visited from maps. In March 1998 his panoramas of Pretoria and Johannesburg were exhibited at the Netherlands Architecture Institute in Rotterdam (De Klerk 2007:4). On the 9th of May 2017 I had the privilege of opening a retrospective exhibition of his work at the Pretoria Art Museum.



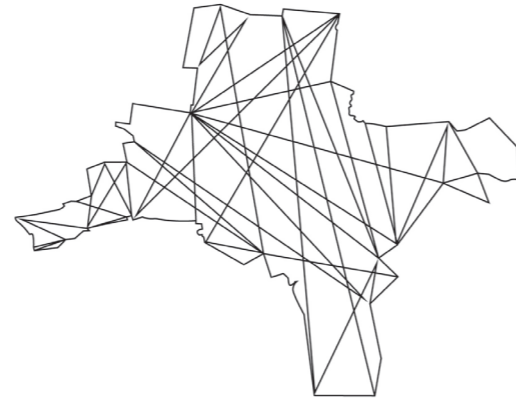
Figure 4.5 *Panorama of Pretoria* by Titus Matiyane. (Author, 2014)



Figure 4.6 *Panorama of Pretoria* located next to Hatfield Gautrain Station (Author, 2018)

The Hatfield Gautrain Station is a prototype by Mashabane Rose Associates. Matiyane's work was chosen for this location so that visitors could get an artistic overview of the entire city. Matiyane's painting was translated into mosaic by Mosaic Arts of Gauteng and covers all four sides of the totem pole. In this specific location, the artwork becomes more than a mere three-dimensional map; it also informs and highlights what the area has to offer. The transitional transport typology is intersected with a semi-abstract artwork of an entire city – a map serving as welcoming device.

Figure 4.7 Cool Capital Logo by Sunshinegun (Sunshinegun, 2014)



4.2 COOL CAPITAL 2014 AND 2016

Many of the case studies refer to a project initiated by myself in 2013 called Cool Capital. I started Cool Capital in reaction to a poster I had seen at La Biennale di Architettura in Venice that year. The poster, an advertisement for the Canadian Pavilion, instructed visitors to the Biennale to “take the discussion back to their own cities”. Sir David Chipperfield was the official curator for the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale and his theme was “Common Ground”. As mentioned earlier, the American pavilion provided me with the how-to for starting such an initiative: citizen driven, and sidelining bureaucracy.

After much consideration and deliberation, we decided on the name, Cool Capital, to celebrate Pretoria and the greater Tshwane as capital city. It would, above all else, be Uncurated Guerilla, and Do-It-Yourself

The fluid nature of Cool Capital made it almost immediately difficult to define: it was an exhibition, but also a movement. It would happen every two years, but constant submissions were always welcome. It was a group of creative people, but with no recognizable roles or responsibilities. It was also a state of mind, an attitude. With the benefit of hindsight, one could call it self-organizing (Spies 2018).

The uncurated nature of Cool Capital resonated with the Salon des Refusés: any person, group or organization could submit any project of any size on the Cool Capital website. It opened the gates and provided a platform for every citizen of the capital city, Pretoria, to become involved.

This approach to curation is similar to the self-organizing curatorial models described by Obrist: “While I have always admired the innovative guerrilla production methods of the 1960s many have become mainstream management paradigms. Alighiero Boetti told me that I’d be a redundant curator for him if I just filled exhibition spaces with shows. Routine is the enemy” (Obrist 2011b:146).



Oupa Mokoena

Liam Purnell

Louis Minaar



Pieter Mathews



Alet Pretorius

Figure 4.8 Collage of Cool Capital projects from 2014 and 2016 (Beukes, E., 2018)

Similarly, the city was regarded as a laboratory. It would mean different things to different people and inspire people in different ways. As such, we had no control over what content Cool Capital would generate. This notion resembles the way Obrist approached his *Cities on the Move* exhibition, which constantly evolved and mutated, depending on the context.

Some Cool Capital projects were exhibitions-within-exhibitions, like a collection of 20 public benches of concrete for the *Let's Sit Cool* Capital project, or the school project, where learners from 20 schools each contributed to their school's Cool Capital project. These school exhibitions were exhibitions in their own right, organized by art teachers, but also falling under the umbrella of Cool Capital.

In 2016, the opportunity arose to exhibit the Cool Capital project at the Venice Architecture Biennale. This presented a unique challenge – of the more than 150 projects submitted and realized by Cool Capital by more than 1000 people, I would have to select (curate) these for a dedicated space, curating the uncurated. This exhibition will be discussed separately.



Figure 4.9 Poster of the Canadian Pavilion (Author 2012)



Figure 4.11 Interactive elements of the American Pavilion at the 2012 Architecture Venice Biennale (Author, 2012)



Figure 4.10 Poster of the British Pavilion (Author, 2012)



Figure 4.12 Interactive elements of the American Pavilion at the 2012 Architecture Venice Biennale (Author, 2012)

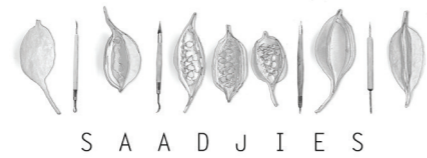


Figure 4.13 Saadjies logo (Taljaard, 2016)

4.2.1.1

SAADJIES

2016

Although the *Saadjies* exhibition also started out as an independent Cool Capital project, this travelling exhibition has specific characteristics that warrant it being explained and discussed separately.

Upon returning from the 2012 Biennale di Venezia, where I did an installation by invitation of the Global Art Affair (GAA) Foundation (sponsored by SANRAL) at the Palazzo Bembo, I discussed the elitist bureaucracy of the biennale and the art world in general with artist Sybrand Wiechers. I told him of an idea to return to Venice and smuggle small sculptures into the exhibition spaces. Small and portable sculptures were needed for this sculpture-bombing activity. Wiechers mentioned that this would be almost like little sculpture seeds that could spread and grow in volume, like ideas that spread like seeds, even on social media. The project was named *Saadjies* (seeds/pods) on the spot.

As with all Cool Capital projects, the invitation for the *Saadjies* exhibition was open and public and advertised widely – much like Gordon Froud’s exhibition of erotic miniatures in 1997. The only restriction placed on the artists was that the saadjie had to be small and able to travel. The small scale of the objects made the barrier to entry relatively low. There would again be no selection; all the submitted sculptures (saadjies) would become part of the collection. Over 100 sculptures were received, and these miniature sculptures filled the entire studio space of the MAAA office. The project is ongoing, and the collection is still growing.

These saadjies would not only be exhibited as a collection, but also individually in sculpture-bombing photography exercises. The reason that the saadjies had to be able to form part of a whole while being independent works of art is aptly described by Barry Flanagan:

“The ideal state is when each object commands an equal attention to the next, due to its very own identity/ separation as an object. When not in this ideal state the observer (accepting the whole convention) uses his faculties to edit out any distractions and confusions to maintain a positive relationship within that convention. As soon as any one object loses its autonomous identity by statement and intention things begin to happen; the whole situation is affected and the nature of ‘exhibition’ altered” (Flanagan in Harrison 2009:33).



Figure 4.14 Saadjies poster (Kruger, J., 2016)

Shortly after the conversation with Wiechers, I was appointed by the South African Department of Arts and Culture as the curator of the official South African Pavilion at the 2016 Venice Biennale, which would thus present an ideal opportunity to sculpture-bomb the Biennale as was originally intended. The saadjies were placed in specific locations: in the South African Pavilion as well as the main Arsenale, in the pavilions in the Giardini and also in other locations around Venice. At each location, a saadjie was photographed by Carla Crafford and the photograph then shared on social media. This served a subversive agenda, raising awareness of the exclusive curatorial practices of formal gallery spaces but especially the Venice Biennale, and to give more artists the opportunity to have their work form part of a seemingly significant exhibition.

Johan Myburg wrote: "what started off as a joke by purposefully inserting maquettes or miniature sculptures into view of a photograph (à la photobombing), resulted in an uncurated, participatory and travelling project, taking art to the outside of the elitist white cube of the gallery to the streets of various centres and the cyber environment of Instagram or Facebook" (Myburg in Mathews 2017:82).

The *Saadjies* collection was exhibited at five national locations comprising different contexts and spaces: Pretoria (Anton van Wouw House and Atterbury Theatre), Potchefstroom (NWU Sanlam Student Centre), Richmond (Modern Art Project), Stellenbosch (University of Stellenbosch Botanical Gardens) and Cape Town/Durbanville D@DH. After Venice, individual saadjies travelled to other international destinations and were photographed by many visitors and shared by the same method. These included Amsterdam, Beijing, Paris and Berlin. At some destinations there were opportunities for small, impromptu exhibitions with photography sessions, i.e. at the exhibition at the Zuid-Afrikahuis, Keizersgracht, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

With a travelling exhibition of this nature, the act of performative curation is notable, as the saadjies and their placement had to create meanings that were not apparent when looking at them in isolation.

The *Saadjies* project shares many traits with the *Museum of Obsessions* by Harald Szeemann and the *Museum of Modern Art*, Department of Eagles by Marcel Broodthaers. As with these projects, *Saadjies* was also conceived to protest against the perceived gatekeeping practices of the curators of formal galleries, and both were held in unconventional spaces.

The *Museum of Eagles* was a travelling exhibition making a statement against the commercialisation of art. With *Saadjies* we had almost the exact same intentions, allowing anyone to participate with no selection or restriction. A commonality between the *Saadjies* exhibition, Broodthaers's *Museum of Eagles*, and Szeemann's *Museum of Obsessions* is that all three were created in a thoughtful and visually stimulating way, adding a layer of meaning through the placement of specific objects in specific and often unusual places.



Figure 4.15 Saadjies poster - Potchefstroom (Swanepoel, C., 2016)



Figure 4.16 Saadjies poster - Venice (Swanepoel, C., 2016)



Figure 4.17 Saadjies poster - World (Swanepoel, C., 2016)

4.2.1.1 Pretoria (House Anton van Wouw)

The Van Wouw house was designed by local architect and protagonist of the regional vernacular, Norman Eaton. It has a thatch roof that is well suited to our climate and the walls were built with local field stone. The house now consists of the original living room and kitchen. The bedroom wall was demolished to combine two rooms into a larger gallery-type space. The double-volume studio and the house are connected with a veranda overlooking the garden.

The curatorial practice for this exhibition was performative in nature, because the gallery was originally a house with many smaller intimate spaces, and we had no prior access to the location. We unpacked the collection and started to sort the saadjies into suitable locations where we thought they would fit.

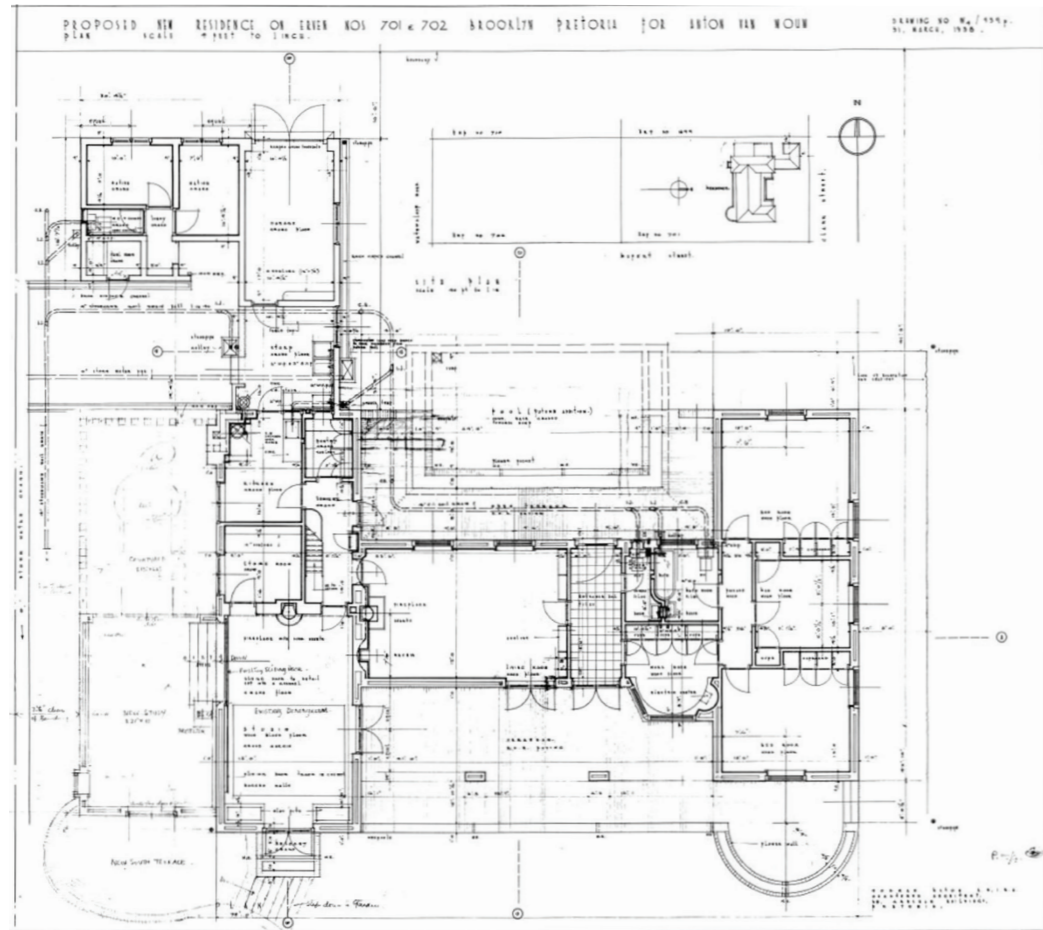


Figure 4.18 Anton van Wouw Huis plan (Unknown, n.d.)

The *Saadjies* collection was divided into three broad groups based on the location in which they were photographed: the former dining and bedroom areas to the east were dedicated to saadjies that were photographed in Pretoria, and the living room and foyer area were dedicated to saadjies that were sculpture-bombed in Venice.

Van Wouw was of Dutch descent, so the studio space was dedicated to the miniatures that were photographed in Amsterdam.

The intersection between the objects and the previous occupant and functions of the spaces was noteworthy, as the house of a historically significant sculptor had been reinvented to now house small sculptures.

Three sculptures in this collection highlight meaningful intersections between the city of Pretoria and the artwork.



Figure 4.19 Amsterdam poster sculpture bombing exhibition in the Anton van Wouw Huis (Crafford, C., 2016)



Figure 4.20 Collection of various sculpture bombing locations (Crafford, C., 2016)

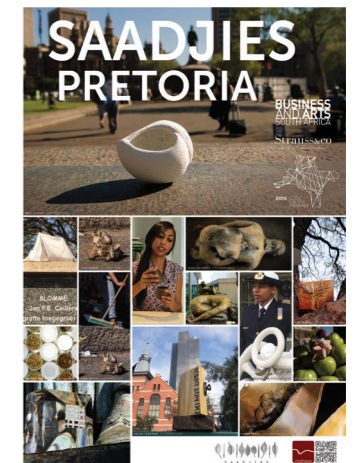


Figure 4.21 Saadjies poster - Pretoria (Swanepoel, C., 2016)



Figure 4.22 Pretoria sculpture bombing section (Crafford, C., 2016)

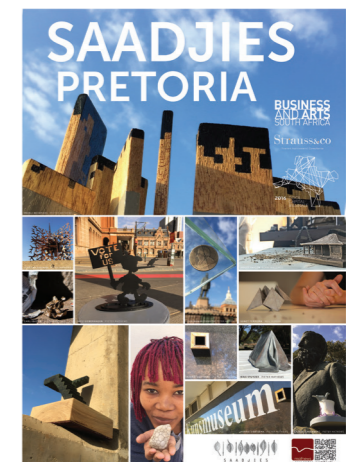


Figure 4.23 Saadjies poster - Pretoria (Swanepoel, C., 2016)

4.2.1.1.1 Jaco Sieberhagen
The elected

Jaco Sieberhagen submitted a sculpture of a laser-cut Pinocchio stating, "Vote for us". I photographed the work on Church Square, Pretoria, with the Ou Raadsaal [Old Council Chamber] in the background, right before the 2016 elections. The posters of political parties can be seen in the background. The sculpture's reference to politicians and politics of the time found meaning in not only the space (Church Square) where historical and current South African politics are playing out, but also in its timing, right before elections, when politicians are perceived to make promises that are not kept once they are in power. As a combination of the space, the sculpture and the timing, the photograph instills new meaning by bringing the three together.



Figure 4.24 *The elected* by Jaco Sieberhagen (Author, 2016)

4.2.1.1.2 Harrie Siertsema
Lost

Harrie Siertsema created a gold-framed black box with nothing inside. The empty space behind the frame hints at valuable artworks that were lost or stolen due to the negligence of South African art galleries, poor-quality security and crime. This work was photographed in front of the Pretoria Art Museum as a double statement: firstly, of the neglected state of the building which is considered as a modernist jewel designed by Burg, Lodge and Burg and W. Gordon McIntosh. Secondly, the empty box sculpture refers to the theft of three major artworks from of the Museum in November 2012. Two of the paintings were recovered, but one by Gerard Sekoto from 1939, called *Street Scene* and worth R 7 million, was never recovered (Stolen Pretoria Art Museum artworks found 2012).

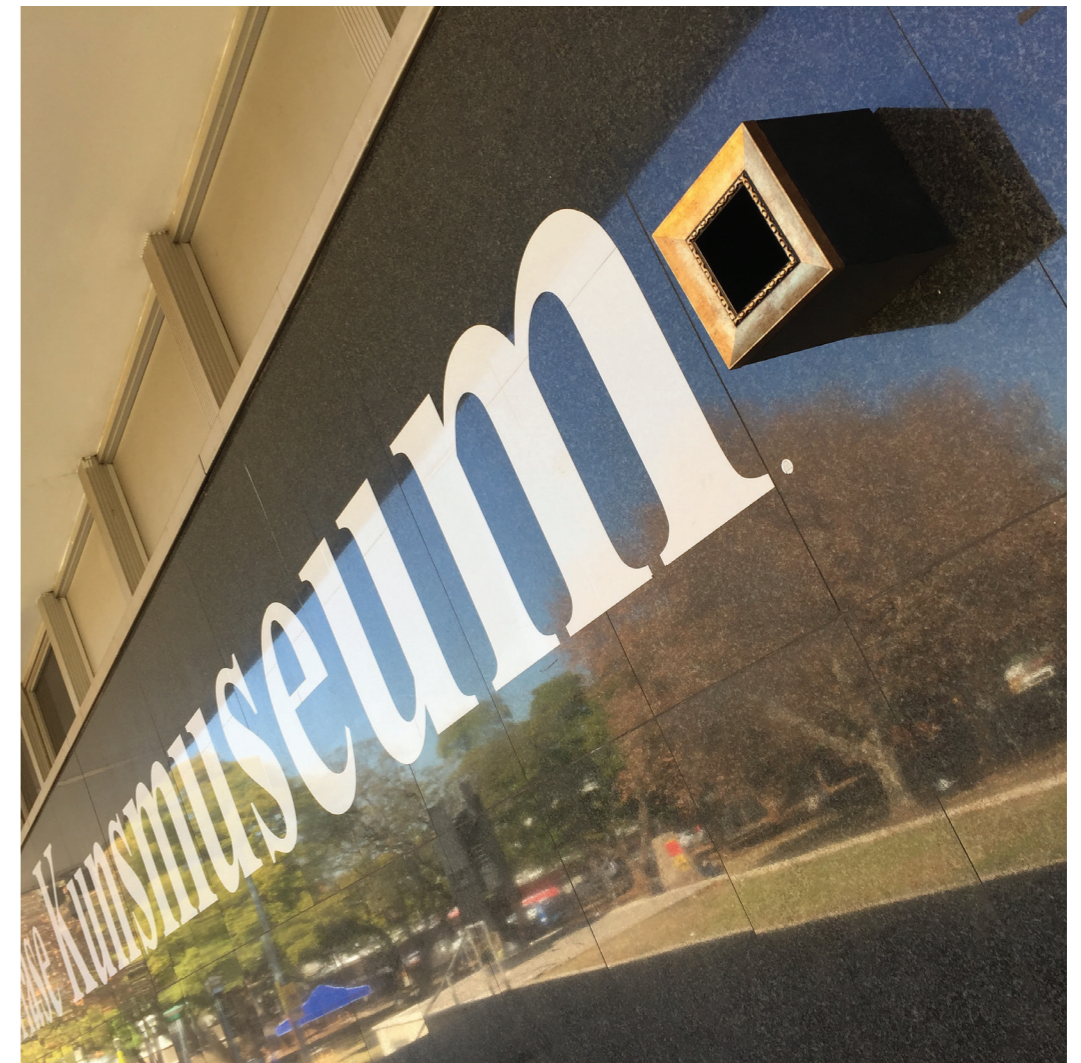


Figure 4.25 *Lost* by Harrie Siertsema (Author, 2016)

4.2.1.1.3 Caitlyn Greenberg
Same shit, different topper

Caitlin Greenberg's saadjie is called *Same shit, different topper*. The sculpture is made from Material One, a new resin-based material, and is a depiction of a top hat as worn by ZAR President Paul Kruger. Similar to the top hat of the statue of Paul Kruger in Church Square, this sculptural top hat is also adorned with bird droppings.

Greenberg's saadjie was photographed at the statue of Paul Kruger's liberal predecessor Thomas Francois Burgers (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Before being ring fenced for its own protection in the year 2015, the Kruger statue had attracted many visitors using it as a backdrop for taking selfies (Van Zyl 2016).

The statue of President Burgers at Burgers Park, now also has a top hat as his successor President Kruger.



Figure 4.26 *Same shit different topper* by Caitlyn Greenberg (Author, 2016)

4.2.1.1.2 Amsterdam (Zuid-Afrikahuis)

A very small informal performative pop-up exhibition was set up at Zuid-Afrikahuis in Amsterdam, with works by Guy du Toit, Jan van der Merwe, Heidi Fourie, Isa Steynberg, Anneke Bosch and Muthivhithi Livhuwani. The works by Guy du Toit and Livhuwani are now on permanent display at Zuid-Afrikahuis and were officially received by Mr. Guido van den Berg, director of the Zuid-Afrikahuis.



Figure 4.27 Impromptu Saadjies exhibition at Zuid Afrika Huis - Artwork by Heidi Fourie (Author, 2017)



Figure 4.28 Amsterdam locals interacting with Saadjies (Crafford, C., 2017)



Figure 4.29 Saadjies poster - Amsterdam (Swanepoel, C., 2016)



Figure 4.30 Guido van den Berg receives a sculpture from Guy du Toit (Author, 2017)

4.2.1.1.2.1 Isa Steynberg
Moersaad

The work *Moersaad* [mother seed] by Isa Steynberg offered our team the perfect opportunity for sculpture-bombing in the Wallen, Amsterdam, famous for its seedy nightlife. Isa was inspired by the seed of the coco de mer palm (Mathews 2018:105).

Mére refers to mother and the palm tree has distinct male and female plants. The female plant bears the coco de mer seed which, according to folklore, is fertilised after a passionate night of embrace. If a person were to see the exchange they would become blind (Jones 2017). The Wallen Amsterdam enforces the idea of the prostitute selling 'coco de mer'.



Figure 4.31 *Moersaad* by Isa Steynberg (Author, 2016);

4.2.1.1.2.2 Jan van der Merwe
Letters

Jan van der Merwe's artwork consists of a stack of envelopes made from rusted metal and tied together with rusted wire representing string – a metaphor for communication between individuals, generations and cultures (Mathews 2018:113). The background of this specific artwork leads me to Zuid-Afrikahuis, an archive of South African culture in a foreign country. Zuid-Afrikahuis was restored in 2015/2016 and re-opened in 2016 with an archive added to the rear of the garden. Van Der Merwe's artwork *Letters* (Van den Berg 2016) was sculpture-bombed in an area next to archive envelopes which contain mainly correspondence between Dutch emigrants to South Africa and their families.



Figure 4.32 *Letters* by Jan van der Merwe (Author, 2016);

4.2.1.1.2.3 Anneke Bosch
Bloed in my wortels [Blood in my roots]

Bosch is South African but studies fabric and textile design in the Netherlands. She created her saadjie sculpture *Bloed in my wortels* [Blood in my roots] from blood-stained cotton stuffed with cosmos seeds. Bosch celebrated her South African and Dutch heritage by using her own blood to stain the cotton. A poem written by her is embroidered on the cloth – the blood-stained cloth makes reference to all races having the same colour of blood. The sculpture was placed at Jan C Smuts Street in the Netherlands to refer to the artist’s South African heritage, and the street intersection refers to the artist as situated between two spaces, cultures and art forms (textiles and fine art).



Figure 4.33 *Bloed in ons wortels* by Anneke Bosch (Bosch, A., 2016)

4.2.1.1.3 Richmond (MAP/Modern Art Project)

The founder and curator of the Modern Art Project in Richmond, Mr Harrie Siertsema, invited the *Saadjies* collection for an exhibition and sculpture-bombing session in Richmond. The authentic character of Richmond, together with the unique quality of the Karoo light and desolate location, made it ideal to sculpture-bomb in this town and its surrounds. The Modern Art Project contemporary gallery is also located in this town, next to the N1 highway connecting Cape Town with the rest of Africa. The exhibition was to be set up in a rectangular shed space next to the main gallery. Here I fulfilled only a facilitative curatorial role and left the method to Siertsema. The exhibition was organized along a rectangular and linear space, where visitors could walk around the saadjies to experience the collection on a tactile level.



Figure 4.34 *Saadjies* exhibition - Richmond (Crafford, C., 2016)



Figure 4.35 *Saadjies* collection exhibited at MAP in Richmond (Author, 2016)



Figure 4.36 *Saadjies* in Richmond (Author, 2016)

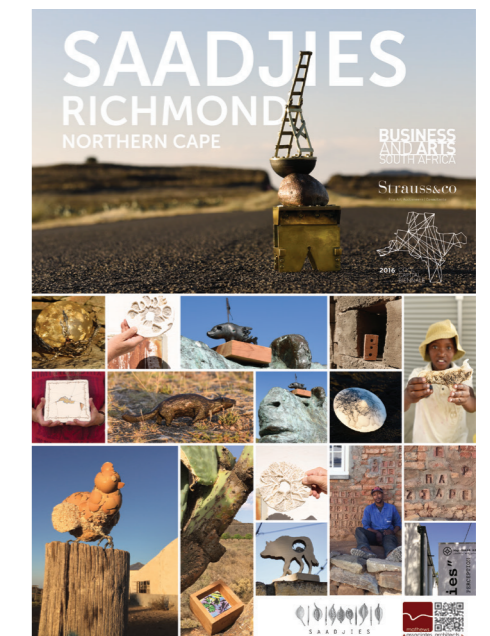


Figure 4.37 *Saadjies* poster - Richmond (Swanepoel, C., 2016)

4.2.1.1.3.1 Ian Redelinghuys
Small pillow for Jacob

Ian Redelinghuys sculpted a work called *Small pillow for Jacob*. This work was photographed in the middle of a Karoo road at Richmond where the vertical ladder contrasts with the horizontal landscape of the Karoo.

The intersection between the landscape and ladder emphasized and exaggerated the horizontality of the landscape juxtaposed against the vertical ladder of Jacob. The shape and meaning behind the sculpture were magnified by positioning it in this specific flat landscape.



Figure 4.38 *Pillow for Jacob* by Ian Redelinghuys (Crafford, C., 2016)

4.2.1.1.3.2 Guy du Toit
Hares in motion

Guy du Toit sculpted some of his signature hares from wax, specifically for the exhibition in Richmond. Due to the harsh sunlight and temperature, the wax softened and could be moulded and bent into different positions. This gave me the opportunity to animate these hare-saadjes for our cameraman to create a stop-motion film in the Richmond landscape. The hares figuratively “came alive” in Richmond, or rather “gave a performance”.



Figure 4.39 *Hares in motion* by Guy du Toit wax maquettes for stop frame animation (Crafford, C., 2016)

4.2.1.1.3.3 Trevor Snyders

Hoeveel letters om 'n huis te bou A-Z
[How many bricks to build a house]

Snyders is a local brick manufacturer in Richmond. With the assistance of one donkey, local clay is utilised to prepare a clay and straw mixture which is then pressed into customized moulds. Snyders creates "alphabet bricks" which are impressed with letters of the alphabet.

Snyders manages to elevate a simple and mundane object to an affordable art object that can be bought by visitors to his yard. As an architectural object, the brick represents the most basic of building components.

As such it is transformed to become an individual artwork that intersects with its direct environment in the drying shed and firing kilns. During the drying process the stacked collection of these raw bricks forms amazing architectural structures.



Figure 4.40 Trevor Snyders creating hand-made bricks (Crafford, C., 2016)



Figure 4.41 Bricks by Trevor Snyders (Crafford, C., 2016)

4.2.1.1.4 Stellenbosch University (Botanical Gardens)

The then curator of the Stellenbosch Botanical Gardens, Martin Smit, invited the *Saadjies* collection for an exhibition and photobomb session in 2017. The idea of small sculptural saadjies ("seeds") resonated with the idea of the product of real seeds and time, an essential part of any botanical garden.

Four areas within the gardens were allocated to the *Saadjies* exhibition: the aquatic lotus and lily ponds, the Bonsai/Penjing area and the cactus glasshouse, as well as the Zen garden at the entrance (not the same as the Bonsai/Penjing area).

Due to limited time to set up the exhibition, as well as not having access to the space beforehand, the curation was done in an impromptu fashion. The performative collection was again divided into four groupings according to themes:

- Objects that can float on lilies and get wet
- Objects associated with or displayed in glasshouses
- Artefacts made according to Japanese tradition and philosophy
- Objects that could be associated with cacti

Two saadjies from this exhibition will be discussed in more detail to reveal another layer of meaning when the saadjie is placed in its specific location:



Figure 4.42 Zen garden in the Stellenbosch Botanical Gardens (Author, 2017)



Figure 4.43 Visitors to the Saadjies exhibition in Stellenbosch (Author, 2017)



Figure 4.44 Glass house in the Stellenbosch Botanical Gardens (Author, 2017)



Figure 4.45 Bonsai garden in Stellenbosch Botanical Gardens (Author, 2017)

4.2.1.1.4.1 Andrew Munnik
Another desert to cross

On a salvaged tile, Munnik painted a boat full of refugees floating in an unseaworthy dinghy on the Mediterranean Sea. The painting is done from above, looking down onto the refugees.

With the refugee crisis at the time dominating the debate internationally, this saadjie touched on topical issues. The saadjie was placed in the lily ponds on an unstable lily leaf near the edge of the pond. The edge signifies that they are so close yet so far and only luck would dictate their fate. At the edge it is also easier for the viewer to see the intricate detail in the painting. The ponds were used to reveal another layer of meaning of water, boundaries and aspirations. The Mediterranean scene painted on a cracked tile also makes reference to refugees crossing the Mediterranean to reach what they perceive to be greener pastures. Furthermore, the Cape Dutch tile that the saadjie is painted on also refers back to Dutch settlers who came to South Africa in 1652. The "pristine" European object was imposed on an African landscape, but has cracked, with what is being revealed below.

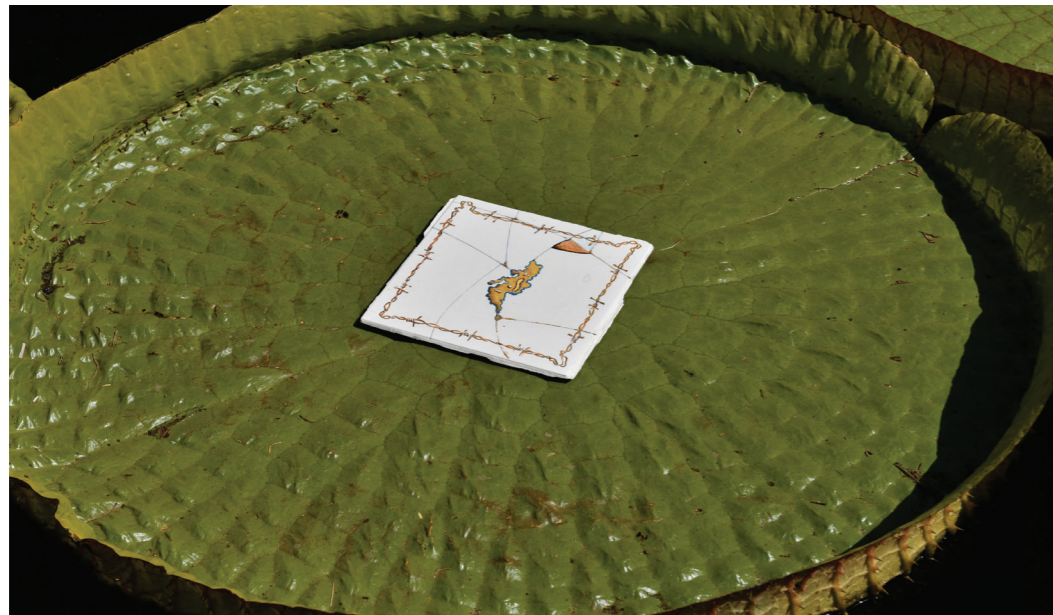


Figure 4.46 *Another desert to cross* by Andrew Munnik (Author, 2017)

4.2.1.1.4.2 Louis Kok
Suicide kok ring

This cast-bronze sculpture is a replica of a penis that represents, according to the artist, the worst seed of all sperm. A sexual enhancer, a cock-ring, is attached to the penis, but this specific ring represents a small explosive, referencing suicide bombers that attach explosives to their bodies. A final meaning of this saadjie lies in the title, a word-play on "cock" and the artist's surname, Kok.

The artist's rationale states:

"The phallus has been a vehicle for the sowing of seeds for millennia. There was the sowing of life, love and growth, then came the sowing of carnage and destruction. It seems life grows from a seed of love and ends in total pandemonium" (Mathews 2018:57).

This saadjie was placed in the Stellenbosch cactus hothouse between other "dangerous objects" in order to strengthen the artist's rationale. This very private object was juxtaposed onto a very public and literally transparent building – a greenhouse. Furthermore, there was a language reference in the fact that cacti have thorns that "prick". Translated into Afrikaans prick becomes "steek" – an informal term associated with intercourse.

Age restriction notices were placed at the entrances to the greenhouse for the duration of the exhibition, but ironically the work could be seen through the glass walls of the greenhouse.



Figure 4.47 *Suicide kok ring* - by Louis Kok (Author, 2017)

4.2.1.1.5 Potchefstroom – NWU Student Centre (Artklop – Aardklop)

The *Saadjies* exhibition was installed at the North-West University Gallery/Student Centre. This building was designed in 1977 by Bannie Britz and Michael Scholes and received an Award of Merit in 1981, although it was completed much earlier. The building is in the Brutalist style with honest use of materials such as concrete and brick, and displays the influence of Louis Kahn.

The approach to the building was an important factor in how the exhibition was organized. Large open spaces adjacent to the auditorium on the first floor had to be demarcated for this *Saadjies* exhibition.

The 1970s Brutalist building required a brutalist approach to the orientation devices of the exhibition, so scaffolding and crates were requested for this purpose. "Islands" were built around themes based on the locations/places the saadjies had visited. The islands were demarcated by posters of the photobombed saadjies demonstrating the power of sculpture-bombing.

The Brutalist space of the building was countered with the informal collection of miniatures grouped into various islands among which the visitors could meander. I used the same narratives of the sculpture-bombing places displayed in the posters to create a path to break up the uniform space. The experience was more informal, and we raised the miniatures to make the interaction between the viewer and the artwork more intimate.

The catalogue for this collection was a poster which was used to create a counter for the gallery assistants.

All school visitors and learners received a postcard explaining the concept of *Saadjies* and were asked to draw their own saadjie.

The *Saadjies* exhibition was awarded the Artvark Prize, alongside NWU Gallery, as most innovative project and for its accessibility to children and the general public.



Figure 4.50 NWU students and volunteers that assisted with performative curation (Unknown, 2016)



Figure 4.51 Saadjies exhibition completed before opening (Author, 2016)



Figure 4.48 Saadjies exhibition installed at the Aardklop Kunstefees - #Artklop (Author, 2016)



Figure 4.49 Saadjies exhibition signage at the Aardklop Kunstefees - #Artklop (Author, 2016)

4.2.1.1.5.1 Angus Taylor
Fractal head

This bronze sculpture consists of the head of an African male with the artist placing fractals of the same head each on top of the other, until the last fractal or head becomes so small that it is nearly impossible to recognize.

Taylor explains the thinking behind his artwork as follows:

"In Africa a large part of the geometry utilized in architecture and design is based on fractals – a self-similar geometry that varies in scale. This seemed an apt metaphor for conveying the expansion of a singular concept of subsistence as a type of meme. But also, in contrast to this when read in the opposite direction, the fractals become a metaphor for the diminishing of understanding, things we once held dearly and understood which we have forgotten" (Mathews 2018:108).

While studying Fine Arts at the University of Pretoria, Taylor was mentored by Professor Jo Roos (H.O.D of Fine Arts UP). In 1977 Roos was commissioned by the city council of Potchefstroom to create a life-sized bronze figure of the Afrikaans poet, theologian and co-founder of the North-West University (formerly Potchefstroomse Universiteitskollege/PUK), Jacob Daniel du Toit, colloquially known as Totius.

The life-sized statue was placed in the Totius garden near the Wasgoedspruit.

Roos also had to create the spatial context for this statue and designed three tapering rectangular columns directing the viewer to a reflecting pond. The figure of Totius was positioned to look towards the East.

In 2009 the sculpture was donated to the North-West University and placed close to the Main Building on the Potchefstroom Campus. This was negotiated between the Thlokwe City Council and the NWU as an NWU initiative.

In 2015, after the removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes from the University of Cape Town campus, the family and custodians of the Totius statue requested that it be removed from its location (Raborife 2015).

The spatial context that surrounded the sculpture of Totius, however, remained unchanged and the three tapering columns are immediately visible upon entering Potchefstroom from the West. These columns now rise to the sky and are accompanied by an empty pond filled with rubbish. Devoid of its original meaning, these spatial markers are derelict, but serve as spatial reminders of the location of the original Totius statue.

Taylor's *Fractal head* sculpture momentarily fills the void left by the Totius sculpture and is photographed to create awareness of the context and its history, but also to focus public attention on the derelict space.



Figure 4.52 Potchefstroom, Totius Monument (Pretorius, Andre., 1984)



Figure 4.53 Remains of original location - still used as an orientation device (Author, 2018)



Figure 4.54 Urban decay (Author, 2018)



Figure 4.55 Fractal head by Angus Taylor (Author, 2016)



Figure 4.56 Author photographing Fractal head in original location of Totius statue [please note scale of artwork] (Human, N., 2016)

4.2.1.1.5.2 Esther Mahlangu

Pot

Esther Mahlangu is known for painting traditional Ndebele patterns on many functional objects, and became famous for painting a BMW 3 series motorcar in colourful Ndebele patterns. She was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Johannesburg in 2017. The saadjie by Mahlangu is aptly named *Pot* and is simply a hand-painted ceramic pot.

In 2015 student protests at the University of Cape Town were successful in convincing the University management to remove the statue of colonial British politician Cecil John Rhodes. The success of the #rhodesmustfall campaign caused other Universities to also consider the position, placement and representation of figures connected to either colonial or apartheid dispensations.

In spite of this great controversy, these statues are valuable works of art by masters of sculpture, and many Universities started to remove sculptures in order to protect the artworks and to avoid a situation similar to what happened to the Rhodes statue.

The North-West University made the decision in 2015 to remove the statue of Totius (Raborife 2015). In its place, University Management installed unsightly "pots" in an effort to reactivate the space. This effort has not been successful. The saadjie by Mahlangu is placed together with these pots in an act of protest against the poor taste of the existing pots.

With my last visit to this location in November 2018, the pots had been removed.



Figure 4.58 Second location - North West University - Pukke campus (Krugell, W., 2012)



Figure 4.57 Pot by Ester Mahlangu, North-West University Main Building (Author, 2016)



Figure 4.59 Author with artist Ester Mahlangu (Mathews, A., 2014)

4.2.1.2
LET'S SIT
 2014 AND 2016

The *Let's Sit* initiative was conceived as part of the broader Cool Capital project where citizens of Pretoria were encouraged to re-look at their immediate environment and find cost-effective and quick but meaningful ways to improve it. The *Let's Sit* project partnered with Pretoria Portland Cement (PPC) to create a number of bespoke public benches made of concrete that could be placed around Pretoria to highlight important structures, enhance buildings, parks and public spaces, or focus the public's attention on heritage buildings in need of restoration.

The invitation was open and any person, organization or group could submit designs. The Tshwane University of Technology's Department of Architecture decided to incorporate the project into their fourth-year syllabus, and the combination of students, artists and sculptors who participated gave rise to submissions of a very high standard. The manufacturing component of the project was more technical in nature, and resulted in the grouping together of skilled and inexperienced designers to manufacture and install the benches.

The 20 benches were installed in various site-specific locations in the city, so it is challenging to view them all at once. The benches form a strong connection with their locations and are all designed to say something about their immediate vicinity. As such, they stand on their own as artworks, but also form a bigger concrete bench collection when considered as a whole.

The project won the Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) Innovation Award in 2014 for the successful collaboration with PPC to bring the project to fruition.

In an interview Elani Willemse of Schmeckt Creations stated: "Ultimately, the benches serve as a reflection of Pretoria's diverse creative heritage, while at the same time creating a sense of community and belonging to all who make use of them" (Willemse in Mathews and Taljaard 2015:31).



Figure 4.60 Collage of the *Let's sit* collection of 2014 and 2016 (Beukes, E., 2018)

4.2.1.2.1 Sybrand Wiechers
Snor bench
Café Riche, Church Square

Wiechers submitted a design for a concrete bench that would make use of a water-jet cutting technique. His proposal referenced a Zeitgeist before 1994 when most civil servants were based in the Pretoria CBD and most usually sported a stereotypical moustache.

This earned Pretoria the nickname of “SnorStad” [Moustache City]. Wiechers combined the symbol of the moustache with the civil servants’ love of ball-and-claw furniture, which was considered as a status symbol in households of the time. Wiechers’s bench has a moustache-shaped seat, positioned on top of six ball-and-claw legs, giving the bench the appearance of being able to “scuttle” away.

The bench was placed at Café Riche that during the week is frequented by civil servants, lawyers and tourists. This bench became a curiosity associated with the place. Café Riche is situated on Church Square in the Pretoria CBD, surrounded by many civic buildings – where moustached men used to be in charge. The *Snor* bench contributes to the debate about the history of the surrounding context, which includes the location of the infamous Rivonia Trial, among other important events that took place before 1994.



Figure 4.61 Snor bench by Sybrand Wiechers (Author, 2014)

4.2.1.2.2 Pieter Mathews
Cool Capital Logo bench
Pretoria Gautrain Station

The *Cool Capital Logo* bench is a three-dimensional extrusion of the Cool Capital logo. The logo was designed by Sunshinegun, an advertising firm of Johannesburg, and is a simplified extraction of the city boundaries of Tshwane. The logo and bench have intersecting lines representative of the connections formed between different places, people and social nodes in Pretoria.

The *Cool Capital Logo* bench is situated at the Pretoria Gautrain Station where the symbolic map welcomes commuters and travellers – a map to sit on while you are using Google Maps as a first-time visitor to navigate your way around the city.



Figure 4.62 Logo bench by Pieter Mathews (Author, 2014)

4.2.1.2.3 Isa Steynberg
Hand bench
Muckleneuk Community Garden

Sculptor Isa Steynberg proposed a concrete bench based on a very early work of her father, the acclaimed artist Coert Steynberg. His sculptures can be found in many public spaces in South Africa, including in front of the old Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) building designed by Meiring and Naudé Architects.

"The Hand bench is an ode to all the hands that have built this city. Every brick of every building was laid by hand, every plan was drawn by hand and every building constructed with hands. The hand can act as a bowl – in fact it is also an ode to my father who sculpted a bowl in the form of a hand as functional art. It was reproduced so much that it almost became kitch. This bench pays homage to my father's and every other person's hands" (Steynberg 2018).

The bench was modelled with the assistance of a self-constructed steel armature, and no modern techniques were used in its manufacture, thereby honouring the "making of" with one's hands.

Steynberg's bench was placed on a sterile but highly visible piece of unused land under the Telkom Tower in the Pretoria suburb of Lukasrand, close to where she used to reside as wife of a former vice-chancellor and rector of UNISA. The design and planned placement of the bench motivated residents in the area to cooperate and to establish a park around the bench: pathways were laid out, trees were planted, and additional seating installed. The initiative prompted Telkom to contribute to the maintenance of the new park by donating money for irrigation. Since the installation of the bench, the park has attracted many public activities, including exercise groups and monthly outdoor film screenings.

The unveiling of the bench was attended by the Tshwane Mayor, Mr Solly Msimanga, who endorsed the project and prompted other communities to follow suit.

The photographic opportunities provided by the bench in its location under the Telkom Tower give this sculpture and sculptor much-deserved credit and exposure.

The project demonstrates the powerful knock-on effect of using art as catalyst or urban acupuncture to create meaningful intersections, not only with the space, but with the local community as well.



Figure 4.63 Sculptor Isa Steynberg with the mayor of Tshwane, Solly Msimanga (Human, N., 2017)



Figure 4.64 Hand bench as baby cot (Steynberg, I., 2018)



Figure 4.65 Context of the hand bench with the iconic Telkom tower in the background (Author, 2018)

4.2.1.2.4 Pieter Greyvensteyn
Lion bench
The Union Buildings

Greyvensteyn lectures fourth-year students at the Tshwane University of Technology. The *Let's Sit* bench project forms part of his teaching syllabus, and in the spirit of leading by example, Greyvensteyn was challenged by me to also design a bench. The location decided upon was the walkway in front of another prominent location in Pretoria, the Union Buildings.

Greyvensteyn used an iconic symbol representing all South Africans and recognised by most South Africans, Lion Matches. He made a graphic representation of the lions on the packaging and used two lions back to back with the centre forming the bench. When looking at the bench towards the Union Buildings, the two lion heads reflect the two Towers of Unity of the Union Buildings.

The concept of lions has a rich narrative history in Pretoria and is used in many symbolic ways throughout the city. In 1886 mining magnate Barney Barnato gifted then President Paul Kruger two sculptural lions as a birthday present (South African History Online 2011a). These lions can still be found flanking the Kruger House in Pretoria.

The nearby Lions Bridge also has reference. Designed by Sytze Wierda and built by Kirkness, it was opened in 1894. It is not clear where the name came from, but two theories exist, one being that it refers to the coat of arms of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR), and the other that it relates to the number of lions that were hunted in the area (South African History Online 2011b).



Figure 4.67 Box of matches (Greyvensteyn, P., 2016)



Figure 4.68 Cardboard maquette of Lion bench (Greyvensteyn, P., 2016)



Figure 4.66 Concrete Lion bench by Pieter Greyvensteyn (Pretorius, A., 2014)



Figure 4.69 Lion Bridge Pretoria (Dutch Footsteps, n.d)

4.2.1.3
A THEATRE OF CHAIRS
 2014 AND 2016

By Hoërskool Garsfontein [High School Garsfontein]
 Art and Design learners
 Analene van Tonder (Design teacher) and Olga van der Merwe (Art teacher)
 Dr Jan van der Merwe (Collaborating artist)

Curator Hans Ulrich Obrist has a collection of handwritten notes, all made by different curators and artists that he has interviewed. These notes have become an important collection in itself, and again, certain characteristics of this "collection" can be identified: a standard and ordinary piece of notepad paper is elevated into a collectable. The sameness of the paper is transformed by the handwritten notes of the person Obrist interviewed.

In 2013 Gordon Froud used standard circular vinyl records as canvas and invited artists to respond to the music of Tom Waits (Froud 2018:77).

In the same way, for the H/S Garsfontein chair project a mundane and cheap item was used, a raw pine chair that each learner had to transform into a subject they drew from a hat, which they had to personalise with a mundane personal item such as lip balm.

The chair also has deeper significance in architecture, as Rolf Fehlbaum, director of the Vitra furniture company and owner of the largest known collection of chairs describes: "... what distinguishes a chair from other furniture [is that] a chair is an object with a strong sociological component, consider a chairman or throne. A chair can impart authority – or not. Historically viewed it expresses belonging to a particular class or society. And finally, a chair is also a small sculpture as it is positioned in a space. A chair is a very traditional object. It always remains the same but is always different. Because of this, it is easy to put two chairs next to each other and compare them – in their merit as objects but also as witnesses of a particular time period" (Fehlbaum in Kries and Stapmanns 2016:79).

The topics the learners were given all related to significant histories, narratives, spaces or objects around Pretoria. The learners had to research the topic, sometimes visiting spaces they had never seen before, and write an essay on its meaning. They were then instructed to portray their understanding of the meaning on the pine chair. Learners were also encouraged to add something of themselves to the chair in *trompe l'oeil* fashion. Each chair became an individual drama, telling a tale of space and history in a new piece of art.



Figure 4.70 Collage of Theatre full of chairs (Beukes, E., 2018)

4.2.1.3.1 Ellen Steyn
Voortrekker Monument senotaaf

Several architectural spaces intersected with this collection of chairs at different stages of the project: the first space was the art classroom where the chairs were created. Here, the studio environment enriched each object. The art classroom was the “maker space” where learners were exposed to the act of making a three-dimensional object, thereby activating space (the art class) in a dynamic way in lieu of only working on flat surfaces, as is the norm.

The second space was what the learner was expected to paint on his/her chair. This space was translated onto the chair, as it was required that the learner visit, research and bring this space into their art studio environment.

A collection of thirty-six chairs was created and then exhibited in the school hall – the third space with which these chairs formed a spatial relationship. Here the school and public could interact with the chairs and their content. While exhibited in the school hall, the exhibition was filmed for a documentary *DorpStad* and a BBC travel show – both placing the chairs in virtual space.

In 2016, when I curated the South African Pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia, 16 of these chairs were selected to become part of the installation. The 16 chairs travelled to Venice and were exhibited in the Biennale’s fourth space, the Sale d’Armi in the Venice Arsenale, for six months. Visitors to the pavilion used these seats as physical theatre chairs to view the documentary film screened in the space. While sitting on a depicted “space” on the chair, visitors were also watching a film about space. The meaning of this intersection of place and collection was not only functional but, also, the narrative of the city was told and appreciated.

Finally, the chairs were sent to the South African Consulate-General in Milan. Here, they were placed in the waiting room welcoming all visitors to the consulate. This institutional space again reflects a truly South African story to foreign visitors. The chairs in the collection of Hoërskool Garsfontein started off as the simplest and humblest of chairs but have travelled the world and now – transformed into thrones – they welcome guests from all over the world.

The central focus of the chair in the Voortrekker Monument is on the cenotaph where every year, on 16 December at 12 noon, a ray of sunlight hits the words “Ons vir jou Suid Afrika” [We for thee, South Africa]. The seat of the chair is represented as the interior and the heart of the building, and one can almost imagine the rest of the Monument hovering above it. Some clues are given on the back of the chair regarding the exterior of the building.



Figure 4.71 Voortrekker Monument senotaaf chair by Ellen Steyn (Unknown, 2014)



Figure 4.72 Voortrekker Monument senotaaf detail on seat of chair (Unknown, 2014)



Figure 4.73 Back detail of the Voortrekker Monument senotaaf chair (Unknown, 2014)

4.2.2
INSTALLATIONS
AND URBAN ACTIVATION

Amazing stuff to come

Amazing stuff to come

Amazing stuff to come

Figure 4.74 Collage of installations and urban activation projects (Beukes, E., 2018)

4.2.2.1 The PIA, Luminance Lighting and Pieter Mathews

The Pink Voortrekker Monument

The Voortrekker Monument was designed as an iconic landmark of Pretoria and constructed in the Art Deco style of the thirties. It commemorates the Great Trek of Dutch pioneers in 1838 and has remained a greatly contested symbol of Afrikaner Nationalism. The building is located on a hill and is highly visible as one enters the city and also from many points within the city.

Despite its contested existence, the Monument has continuously managed to attract thousands of local and international visitors on a weekly basis. In order to maintain the Monument and to attract even more visitors, the grounds are used for weekly Parkrun events and monthly Park Acoustics music concerts.

The *Pink Voortrekker Monument* project formed part of the 2014 Cool Capital Guerrilla Biennale and was realised as a temporary art installation. I set out to create a meaningful intersection between the edifice itself and an artwork. With a space of this significance, the architectural space stood in the foreground and the artwork had to intersect it in such a way as to force the public to look with new eyes at the Monument.

Here, the wrapping of the Reichstag by Christo and Jean-Claude is an apt precedent: both Berlin and Pretoria carry heavy political associations and both the Voortrekker Monument and the Reichstag are regarded as political manifestations of negative regimes. Finally, the Voortrekker Monument and the Reichstag are public and highly visible buildings.

Without the resources to wrap the Voortrekker Monument, I decided to take a performative curatorial approach by projecting the artwork onto the building, in essence making the architecture a historic canvas. Due to funding constraints the 'artwork' was simplified to a light projection. The Voortrekker Monument was lit in pink, creating a striking sight for all to see. The colour was chosen to represent the colours of the Cool Capital Biennale and the vibrancy of Pretoria's diverse communities. The Pretoria Institute for Architecture funded the lights and helped realise the initiative.

In this case the projected light was the art installation and by creating an intersection with the artwork and an architectural monument of significance, the meaning of the building was highlighted and the city celebrated.

An image of the installation represented South Africa by forming part of the official catalogue of the Venice Architecture Biennale. It had such an impact that it was featured on the front page of the 5 September 2014 edition of the *Beeld* newspaper.

The meaning many people read into this intervention – a pink and gay form in the skyline – was that it represented the intersection of a turning point between a more brutal past and a softer current stance in changing times, looking at the merit of the architecture detached and cleansed of past perceptions, very much like the Reichstag. The installation was very simple, yet by creating an intersection that engaged with architecture, the past, the present, art, light and symbols, a very striking and memorable meaning was created, and curated.



Figure 4.75 Pink Voortrekker Monument (van Helsdingen, D., 2014)

4.2.2.2 Banele Khoza and Ke Neil We *Stone Spiral Mandala*

Land art is the creation of non-destructive, non-invasive, impermanent artworks, temporary installations, performances, and interventions within a natural context. South African artist Strijdom van der Merwe has been instrumental in establishing this art form. Together with land art collective Site_Specific, a foundation has been laid for the discipline of land art in our built and unbuilt environments.

After a land art workshop organized between Cool Capital and Site_Specific, artists Banele Khoza and Ke Neil We created an installation on a burnt piece of veld on the periphery of the township of Mamelodi. The surrounding residents and their children were mobilized by the artists, and a traditional cleansing ritual was performed on the site. Afterwards, the artists created a large spiral with big stones found on the site. Although residents did not understand the stone mandala at first, its presence eventually created a new safe space where children of the area could play and explore.

The significance of this installation lies in its powerful simplicity. It is made with found material in a very stark environment. The installation created space where previously there had only been an empty veld filled with rubbish.

The *Stone Spiral Mandala* formed part of the Cool Capital initiative. My role in this project was merely as facilitator, establishing a platform for the project to be realised.



Figure 4.76 *Stone Spiral Mandala* by Banele Khoza and Ke Neil We (Ke Neil We, 2014)

The significance in the project lies in the fact that the artists had no funding, used found materials, and worked within their community. They were able to create a striking installation that empowered their community by highlighting the potential that the hostile environment of informal settlements represents.

“The *Stone Spiral Mandala* installation took place in Mamelodi on the ridge of the Magalies Mountain. The site was previously used as an informal garbage heap, and the surrounding veld had been badly burnt. The installation was both land art intervention and cleansing ritual. The artists confronted the derelict nature of the context by engaging with community members and enacting a cleansing ritual performed by Selogadi Mampane in the presence of the surrounding community. With very limited means, this installation employed design as a tool for creating conversations about the environment, city and community” (Vandenberghe in Mathews and Taljaard 2015:164).

Since the completion of this project in 2014, Khoza, a relatively unknown artist, has caught the attention of the South African art industry. He recently opened a studio in Maboneng, Johannesburg, and was also part of a group exhibition at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA) in Cape Town in 2018.

The stone mandala installation was selected to form part of the content presented at the Biennale di Architettura in Venice in 2016, and was also selected for the official Biennale Catalogue.



Figure 4.77 Portrait of Banele Khoza (Bernard Brand Photography, 2016)



Figure 4.78 Portrait of Ke Neil We (Author, 2016)

4.2.2.3 Diane Victor *Victor meets Preller*

The TPA (Transvaal Provincial Administration building), designed by Meiring and Naude, was a tour de force in an era when South African architects were inspired by the new-found modernism of Brazil. The best artists of the time were commissioned to create murals and artworks, which included works by Alexis Preller, Walter Battiss and Ernst de Jongh. Today the building stands empty, and the neglect is clearly visible in the form of rubbish heaps, staircases filled with garbage, and dove and rat carcasses covered in dust.

I had been aware of this building and the valuable art contained in it for some time. It was an ideal venue for an art installation, but the building's history and the political controversy surrounding it, as well as its close proximity to Church Square and the statue of Paul Kruger, required that the artwork that would be inserted into the space would have to be carefully chosen.

During an art exhibition at Fried Contemporary Gallery, I bumped into long-time friend and artist Diane Victor, and we started talking about one of the artworks situated on the 13th floor of the TPA building: the 13m long painting titled *Discovery* by South African master Alexis Preller. The painting was commissioned specifically for the space in 1962 by the then Transvaal Provincial Administration. The painting took Preller four years to complete and is regarded as a national treasure.



Figure 4.79 Author in conversation with artist (Crafford, C., 2014)

Victor, who works with unconventional mediums such as smoke and wax, was immediately interested in the dust on the parquet floor as a possible medium and canvas for a temporary dust artwork. Victor decided that she would "paint" a 13m long artwork in the dust in front of Preller's *Discovery*.



Figure 4.80 Diane Victor in action (Crafford, C., 2014)

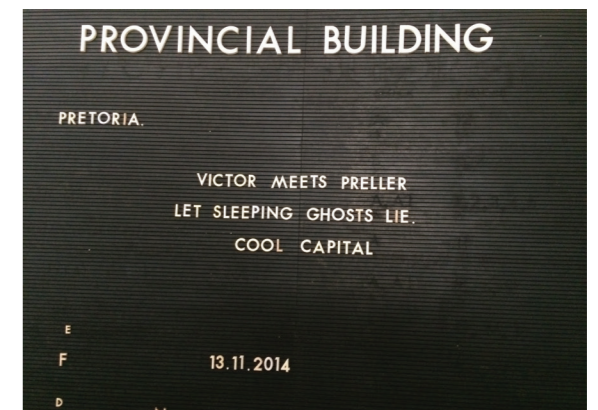


Figure 4.81 Signage installation by author (Author, 2014)

Victor is an artist whose works are piercingly political and often speak uncomfortable truths. She used brushes, sponges and self-made tools to meticulously "carve" out a depiction of Paul Kruger lying "in state". Save for his shoes and a top hat he holds in his hands, he is naked.

Access to the building and the artworks is very limited, and Victor's artwork was created in one day. I arranged access for Victor, two filmmakers Neil Human Christo Niemandt, a photographer Carla Crafford and the sponsor. The public would only have access to the artwork online via films and photographs.

The title of the work, *Let sleeping ghosts lie*, refers to the building, the original painting by Preller, and the statue of Paul Kruger. All of these artefacts are excellent examples of their time, but it was perhaps time to appreciate these for what they were (Mathews and Taljaard 2015:48).

The dust drawing also comments on the ethereal nature of buildings, people and art, as is communicated by the material – dust.

Victor's dust depiction of Kruger is juxtaposed with the bright and colourful composition evident in Preller's *Discovery*. Drawing in the dust makes reference to the Latin *spatium* which, according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2018), not only refers to space but also to a measure of time. In the case of this artwork, it would also again become covered in dust and disappear over time.

For this project a new way to connect the audience with the exhibition had to be found, as they would not be allowed into the building where it was created. For this reason, a short documentary film was made and shared online. This way of creating new forms of exhibition relates to the constantly evolving and radically new approaches advocated by Catherine Thomas (Thomas 2002:10). In her book, *The edge of everything*, she describes the changing relationships between art, artist, curator and the viewing of the art and how discoveries are made outside or at the peripheries of the context.

When discussing the project with other people, it became clear that each person could add their own interpretation to the project and see their own meaning in the different aspects of the work. These varied from the symbolism of the top hat and shoes, to the dust Paul Kruger is still wearing, up to its position on the floor. In this way, the project opened up the possibility of many different meanings for different people.



Figure 4.82 The completed work (Crafford, C., 2014)

4.2.2.4 Rina Stutzer
Vasgevangde vervlietentheid II [Pinned Transitory II]

Artist and sculptor Rina Stutzer has extensively researched and investigated the nature of nomadic structures. The tent, as a makeshift temporary structure, features prominently in Stutzer's work.

Made from a steel armature, with tensile tent fabric covering the structure, and rope, tent pens and chord, this sculpture measures 4,5m x 2,25m. At first, the sculpture appears simply to be a sculptural "tent", but further inspection reveals that the tent is in fact an abstracted bird, diving head first into the ground. Stutzer uses the bird as a metaphor for the African traveller or nomad, and this temporary bird references nomadic travel. The massive bird is pinned in the moment before it crashes into the ground and perishes, thereby making permanent a temporary moment.

The size and architectural qualities of the sculpture can be compared to the Serpentine temporary architectural pavilions erected on the Serpentine Gallery grounds every summer. This made the sculpture an ideal piece to be exhibited somewhere where it would be visible to the public as a 2014 Cool Capital art installation.

The sculpture was erected on the front lawns of the Afrikaans Hoër Meisieskool [Afrikaans Girls' High School] in Pretoria – a space where it would be visible to learners, parents and passers-by without the threat of vandalism or theft.

The placement of a tent-like structure at a historic Afrikaans school immediately creates an association with the concentration camps of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) during which many Afrikaans women and children were held captive. Furthermore, the material, structure and tectonic qualities can be associated with the Sibley Bell tent, used by the British during the Anglo-Boer War.

The temporary object, the tent, is placed among the historical permanent buildings of the school.

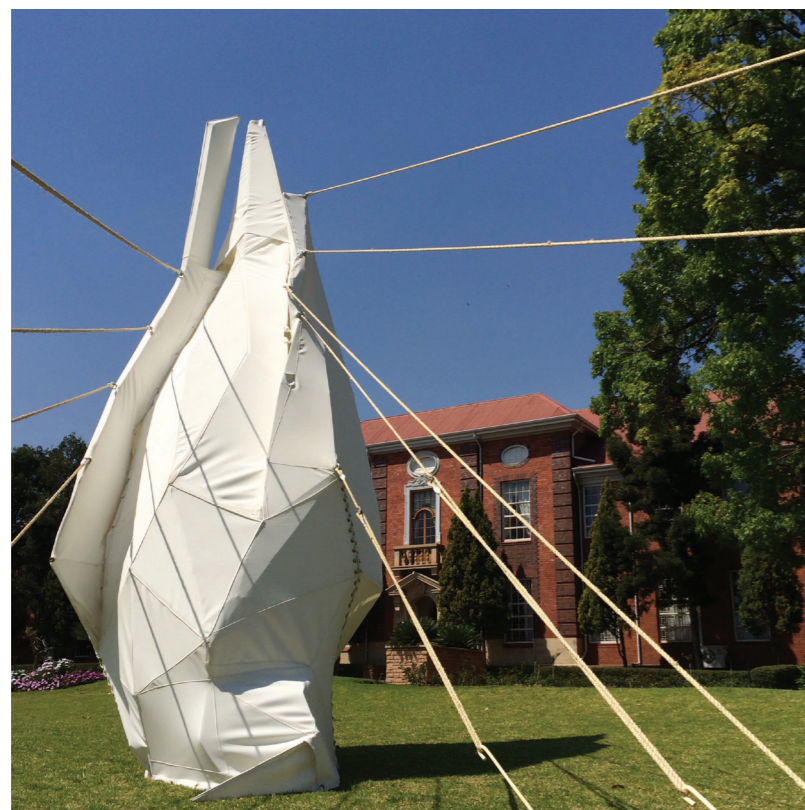


Figure 4.83 *Vasgevangde vervlietentheid II, Pinned Transitory II* by Rina Stutzer (Author, 2014)

4.2.2.5 Diane Victor and Pretoria High School for Girls
Blindfolded heroes

This project formed part of the Cool Capital School Project, and the Pretoria High School for Girls elected to work with Diane Victor.

During the time of the 2016 Cool Capital the South African elections were in full swing, with political scandals published in the news every day. Furthermore, more information was emerging about members of the African National Congress, the party holding national power, having illegal and untoward relationships with businesses and acting in ways contrary to the constitution. Many ANC supporters and members had by this time become disillusioned by the party, and were frustrated with the then leadership.

It was repeatedly suggested in the press that the current party leadership had betrayed the values that their forefathers had fought for during the struggle against apartheid, and that the current politicians were, in fact, acting in the exact same corrupt way that the National Party had acted.

The National Heritage Monument and Heroes' Acre in the Fountains Recreation Resort was suggested as a possible place to stage an artistic and political "protest". The Monument is the home of 100 life-sized bronze statues of struggle heroes, all walking in the same direction – a march towards freedom.

The art class decided to create a series of blindfolds printed with the school's motto *Spes Labori* [We Work in Hope]. The words were translated into the 11 official languages of South Africa. The 100 statues at the monument were then blindfolded, so that they would not be able to witness the actions of the leaders of the party at the time who were undermining the cause these heroes had devoted their lives to.

The students paid special attention to blindfolding the statues in their respective home languages, i.e. Nelson Mandela in Xhosa, Sol Plaatje in Afrikaans, and reverend Trevor Huddleston in English. By doing so, recognition and a personal connection became apparent. The significance of the project is multi-layered, due to the social and political commentary established by the students but also the continued publication and public debate that followed.



Figure 4.84 Diane Victor inspects the intervention (Pretorius, A., 2016)



Figure 4.85 *Blindfold Heroes* (Pretorius, A., 2016)

4.2.2.6 Dr Johan Thom *Two fucking typewriters*

On 14 February 2013 the prominent South African paralympic athlete Oscar Pistorius shot and killed his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp. The event gripped the local and international media for months, and international media houses likened the drama and its viewership to that of the trial of OJ Simpson in the United States (Freemnad 2014).

The trial was held in the Pretoria High Court in Schoeman Street. The media camps, vans, food trucks and journalists from all over the world had the unintended consequence of activating a section of street in downtown Pretoria for the duration of the trial. Along this road, and suddenly passed by lawyers and thousands of curious members of the public, was the office building of the Pretoria News newspaper. The foyer of the building created a great opportunity for a Cool Capital art installation.

The foyer has great spatial qualities for a large installation. The building is a typical International Style building, covered in black glazing except for the box-like or square double-volume foyer which is glazed with clear glass. It provides a perfect glass exhibition cabinet right in the centre of town. The space required a large-scale intervention to activate it and catch the attention of the people passing by. A small, timid artwork would not have been sufficient. I reasoned that the piece had to be large, imposing and able to ignite a debate, forcing the viewer to look twice.

As Cool Capital convenor, I approached Dr Johan Thom, an artist and current head of Fine Arts in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria. He agreed to create an installation on the condition of being allowed artistic freedom.

This work consists of two typewriters on two old tables, both on a parquet floor. Thom used the existing environment as inspiration for his installation, the parquet and the typewriters alluding to the old days of the proper newsroom. Growing from the typewriters are two clouds made from building foam, referencing modern 'cloud' technology such as offsite digital storage – that is making the typewriter obsolete. These clouds take the form of male and female genitalia moments away from intercourse.

In the context of the court case, the installation became significant: Pistorius killed his girlfriend on Valentine's Eve, a night associated with love and lovemaking (just as the typewriters are about to). The two typewriters and their significance concerning the history of the press and placed in the foyer of a news publication also led to another layer of meaning for the journalists that passed the installation daily. Finally, the installation also focused new attention on the interior foyer space, a space that had gone unnoticed in recent years.



Figure 4.86 *Two F*cking Typewriters* by Johan Thom in the foyer of Pretoria News (Enaba Productions, 2014)

4.2.2.7 William Sweetlove
Sweetlove in Groenkloof
 Jan Celliers Park, Groenkloof, Pretoria

While walking through the city of Milan on my tour to the 2015 World Fair I stumbled across a magnificent artwork that activated a public space in a very spectacular way. Its placement in the urban space felt just right, and I took many photographs of this massive electric blue snail sailing across a public space in Milan.

It was only back in South Africa that I learned more about the Flemish sculptor William Sweetlove, of which I became an admirer. The local Flemish representation of the Government of Flanders, headed by Dr Geraldine Reymanants, put me into contact with one of Sweetlove's agents, Dirk Dunez. From Dirk I requested borrowing some of Sweetlove's smaller sculptures, the Dogs collection, for a pop-up show during the 2016 Cool Capital period. Astonishingly, all parties agreed, and with the aid of the Flemish delegation I could prepare a show of dogs for the dog lovers walking their dogs at this park, a popular hang-out for the dog-loving community.

The show was performative, as I had to curate the show, place the artworks strategically in one afternoon, and remove the artworks that very same evening – a pop-up show of one of the world's most celebrated artists. What was so refreshing was that nobody realized how privileged they were to attend this Sweetlove show I curated. Only later did word spread that Sweetlove had had an exhibition in Pretoria, which connoisseurs missed, but dogs enjoyed. When the artist saw the photographs of the pop-up exhibition, he requested some for his portfolio. As a collector of art books, I cherish my signed copy of William Sweetlove's catalogue – Mayday, mayday ... I Said, no, no, no.



Figure 4.87 *Sweetlove in Groenkloof* by William Sweetlove (Hnatowicz, L., 2016)



Figure 4.88 *Sweetlove in Groenkloof* by William Sweetlove (2016)

4.3 LA BIENNALE DI ARCHITETTURA DI VENEZIA 2016

Every two years, the small island of Venice is flooded with thousands of architects, urban designers and planners interested in and passionate about architecture and public space. The bi-annual Mostra di Architettura di Venezia is arguably one of the world's most prestigious and sought-after architectural events, with international exhibitions ranging from small pragmatic ideas to daring architectural installations.

For every exhibition the Biennale Foundation nominates a new architect to act as chief creative director of the entire event. The creative director establishes a theme and curates the main exhibition in both the Venice Arsenale and the Giardini. Previous creative directors include Dutch Architect Rem Koolhaas and British architect David Chipperfield. In addition to the exhibition by the creative director, countries are also invited to participate with local content exhibited in the form of national pavilions. In 2016, more than 65 countries from all over the world were represented nationally at the biennale, rightfully earning it the title as "The Olympics of Architecture".

Chilean architect Alejandro Aravena was appointed as creative director of the 2016 biennale and announced the year's theme as "Reporting from the front." Aravena challenged national participants to present and exhibit real-world situations where architects could make a tangible difference and contribute to architectural and urban challenges of the present day.

The South African Pavilion was located in the Arsenale, a historic building on the Venice Dockyard that had been used to repair and build ships since the 13th century. The Arsenale is only accessible to the public during the biennale.

Since 1993, some of South Africa's finest artists and architects have been represented in Venice, including William Kentridge, Karel Nel and Norman Catherine. Participation in the Venice Biennale is funded and supported by the Department of Arts and Culture, with the consul in Milan acting as the commissioner.

The venue assigned to the South African Pavilion in Venice is a 240m² longitudinal space located on the first floor of the Sale d'Armi.

South Africa shares the first floor of the Sale d'Armi with Singapore, Turkey and Peru. The design of the pavilion has to take into account the restrictions of working in a heritage building. All curators are expected to submit detailed drawings of the pavilion design to the Venetian Heritage Council, in order to ensure that the building fabric is dealt with sensitively and that the floor will be able to support the weight of the exhibition pieces.



Figure 4.89 Collage of the South African Pavilion at the La Biennale di Architettura 2016 (Beukes, E., 2018)

Natural light can be manipulated either by blocking out the sun completely, or alternatively by encouraging views to the dockyard and situate the pavilion within the context of Venice.

With only 8 weeks to conceptualise, curate and manufacture the entire pavilion, the selection of material was based on practicality and affordability as much as it was based on concept. There was no time to source or manufacture any additional items for the display, and the exhibition had to be constructed from what was still available from the 2014 Cool Capital initiative. This was also the first time all the Cool Capital projects had to be conceived and presented as a unified collection.

At that stage, the 2014 Cool Capital project had more than 1000 participants, and it was crucial to select works from what had, up to that point, been a totally uncurated collection of extremely diverse projects. We would not have the opportunity to see the space prior to selecting works, and we had to rely on plans and a generated 3D Building Information Model (BIM) to understand the spatial quality of the available space.

As the curator of the South African Pavilion at the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale I selected the *Stone Spiral Mandala* as a feature project. Images of the project were placed directly opposite those of the *Pink Voortrekker Monument*. The deliberate placement juxtaposed the two projects that are both born from the same city. Images of the installation represented South Africa by forming part of the official catalogue of the Biennale. The stone spiral was chosen by *Wallpaper* online as their feature image for reporting on the South African Pavilion.



Figure 4.90 Visitor interacting (Human, N., 2016)

Central to the exhibition was a map drawn by Pretoria artist Eric Duplan. It shows the extent of Pretoria and is also the outline of the logo of Cool Capital. The cardboard version of the *Cool Capital Logo* bench (Gautrain Station, Pretoria) was placed in front of the actual logo by Duplan. Bridge-like structures and lines link different areas of the map, just like Cool Capital aimed to link and unify different parts of the city and its people through creative interventions. The concept of these connections was continued in the selection of items to display:

The armature of Rina Stutzer's sculpture *Vasgevangde vervlietendheid II* (discussed previously), revealing a multitude of steel connections, was placed in a far corner close to the windows as sources of light. Its many intricate connections revealed the intention of Cool Capital to build connections between artists, the public, architects, sponsors, artefacts and place. We decided to do away with the tent fabric to reveal the armature and make it transparent. These connections are also reflected in the in situ installation of pink tape, posters and newspaper clippings that documented Cool Capital.

Modular cardboard blocks were placed on site to encourage movement and rest throughout the pavilion space. These seats, made in Italy, were spaced and curated on site in a performative way. Many combinations were tried out, but the main idea was to create a natural flow towards the landmark work of Rina Stutzer, leading visitors to the chair collection placed at the back of the pavilion, where they could comfortably sit and watch the Cool Capital documentary *DorpStad*.

On getting closer to the chair collection, each chair intrigued visitors while also affording them the opportunity to rest. Other types of sculptural seating were used as focal points. Representing the *Let's Sit* project were the *Cool Capital Logo* bench (Gautrain station, Pretoria) and the *Koeksister* bench (Voortrekker Monument). These were also made in Italy from cardboard, as transporting the actual concrete benches was practically and financially not feasible.

I deliberately chose the photo of Diane Victor's TPA installation *Let sleeping ghosts lie* as welcoming wallpaper to urge the world to look at our city through new lenses.



Figure 4.91 Author curating at the La Biennale di Venezia (Human, N., 2016)



Figure 4.92 Visitors to the La Biennale di Venezia 2016 (Human, N., 2016)

SOUTH AFRICA

**COOL CAPITAL: THE CAPITAL OF GUERRILLA
DESIGN CITIZENSHIP**

Commissioner
Consul-General Saul Kgomoetso Molobi

Curator
Pieter J. Mathews

Organization
Mathews & Associates Architects; Carla Taljaard

Collaborators
University of Pretoria; Pretoria Institute
for Architecture

With the support of
South African Department of Arts & Culture;
Atterbury Property; PPC Cement; Business
and Arts South Africa (BASA)

Participants
Over 1000 citizens of Pretoria participated
in creating 150 installations across the city

While exhibiting at the 2012 13th International Architecture Exhibition, architect Pieter J. Mathews was inspired by a poster encouraging visitors to "take the discussion beyond Venice." Back in Pretoria, South Africa, with the assistance of a small group of architects and artists, the first uncurated, DIY, guerilla biennale called *Cool Capital* was launched.

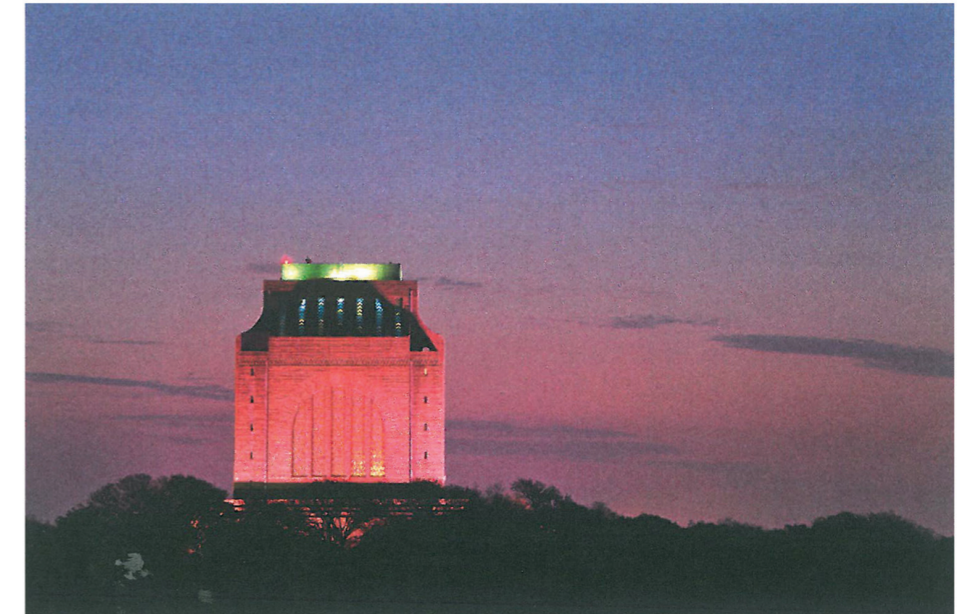
The aim of *Cool Capital* was clear: dismantle the bureaucratic relationship between citizens and public space and encourage a new ownership for the city.

Designers were encouraged to rediscover marginalized parts of the city's historic center, to collaborate with residents by creating pop-up installations, and to become active agents in the rethinking of their city as place, destination, and capital city. *Cool Capital's* uncurated approach meant that the usual bureaucratic processes were short-circuited. It democratized creativity and promoted activism by putting the city into the hands of its creative community.

The city came alive as spontaneous street art and design interventions celebrated the city, inspiring urban renewal, achieving social coherence, and, above all, putting a smile on the mind. *Cool Capital* proved that real change lies in the hands of engaged citizens.

Low on budget but high on innovation, over 150 interventions took place, all of them questioning, challenging, or leveling the status quo. This year, *Cool Capital* continues with the theme "small is big." *Cool Capital* has cemented Pretoria as a notable African center of creativity.

Pieter J. Mathews, Carla Taljaard



Above: Open Window Institute & Pretoria Institute for Architecture, *Pink Voortrekker Monument*, 2014. Lighting Installation. Photo Dewald van Helsdingen. © Visual Books
Below: Ke Neil We, Banele Khoza, and children from Mamelodi East, *Stone Spiral Mandala*, Sunday August 24, 2014. Land Art Intervention. Photo Ke Neil We. © Visual Books

4.4 THE SAMPLE WORKSHOP

Mathews and Associates Architects designed the Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria. It has been designed as a state-of-the-art gallery and museum that will house the University of Pretoria's prestigious Mapungubwe collection. The complex is located on the north and south sides of Lynnwood Road, with a new bridge gallery connecting the two galleries and campuses. The building consists of nine white-box galleries, art restoration facilities, a restaurant, coffee kiosk and administrative and storage spaces.

The Sample Workshop is an exhibition which I curated within the basement of the Javett Art Centre at UP. The exhibition was held whilst the project was still under construction. The construction environment allowed for creative artist explorations and outcomes whilst requiring all involved to comply with statutory health and safety requirements.

To avoid the bureaucracy often associated with galleries, this exhibition was not called an exhibition, but rather a "sample workshop", as an architect is allowed to ask for samples on any project. I have built up a close network of artists over the years and each artist was called upon to each provide a "sample" on the drywalls as well as the permanent perimeter walls in the basement. These "samples" became artworks, installations which commented on the space, the industry and the broader context of the University, to which many of the artists are or were affiliated as either alumni or lecturers.

The processes of exhibition-making and spatial curation were documented by me, Neil Human and Katlego Mance, and photographed by Alet Pretorius, Carla Crafford and Eunese Beukes.



Figure 4.95 Collage of The Sample Workshop (Beukes, E., 2018)

This basement space receives unique lighting conditions in specific places, as it is a wet basement which is naturally ventilated. The brick walls below the large ventilation holes are bagged and painted white to reflect abundant light into the space, with the benefit of natural light and air penetrating deeply into the space, making it more human.

During the exhibition all the site offices were located in the basement. These were built with drywall in a fairly haphazard and unplanned way because they were intended for temporary use.

Ironically, the basement is the least important area of the formal gallery space that is constructed above. An important consideration during the curation of this exhibition was making art accessible to the construction workers. *The Sample Workshop* exposed these workers to some of South Africa's most prolific artists and their art.

Each artist interpreted the real and imaginary ideas of "basement", "underground" and "construction" in their own way. In a sense, each artist derived something different from the building site to generate a concept for their samples.

The artists were given a tour of the basement before the exhibition, in order for them to discover the possibilities of the basement and to discuss ideas. In this case, the space dictated the content of the final artworks.

A plan was drawn up and artists were allocated the specific spaces they had requested. The layout and placement of artists changed several times before the exhibition, and were constantly revised as the intentions of the artists became more manifest.

The participating artists are listed below (in alphabetical order). Artists whose work is discussed in more detail are marked with an asterisk:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Carla Crafford | 9. Allen Laing* | 16. Lynette ten Krooden |
| 2. Eric Duplan | 10. Keneilwe Makoena | 17. Helena Uambembe* |
| 3. Guy du Toit | 11. Cow Mash (Kgaogelo Mashilo) | 18. Jan van der Merwe* |
| 4. Sunet Ferreira | 12. Malose Pete* | 19. Pieter Mathews* |
| 5. Gordon Froud | 13. Annette Pretorius | 20. Diane Victor |
| 6. Heidi Fourie* | 14. Alet Pretorius* | 21. Sybrand Wiechers |
| 7. Dylan Graham | 15. Nazirite Tam | 22. Izanne Wiid |
| 8. Carl Jeppe* | | 23. Lukhanyo Dyasi* |

The *The Sample Workshop* exhibition utilised

- i. performative curation
- ii. independent commissioning curation
- iii. convener/facilitating curation.



Figure 4.96 Javett Art Centre at UP (Human, N., 2019)



Figure 4.97 Interior space of the Javett Art Centre at UP (Author, 2019)



Figure 4.98 The basement of the Javett Art Centre at UP (Beukes, E., 2018)



Figure 4.99 Javett Art Centre at UP basement (Author, 2019)

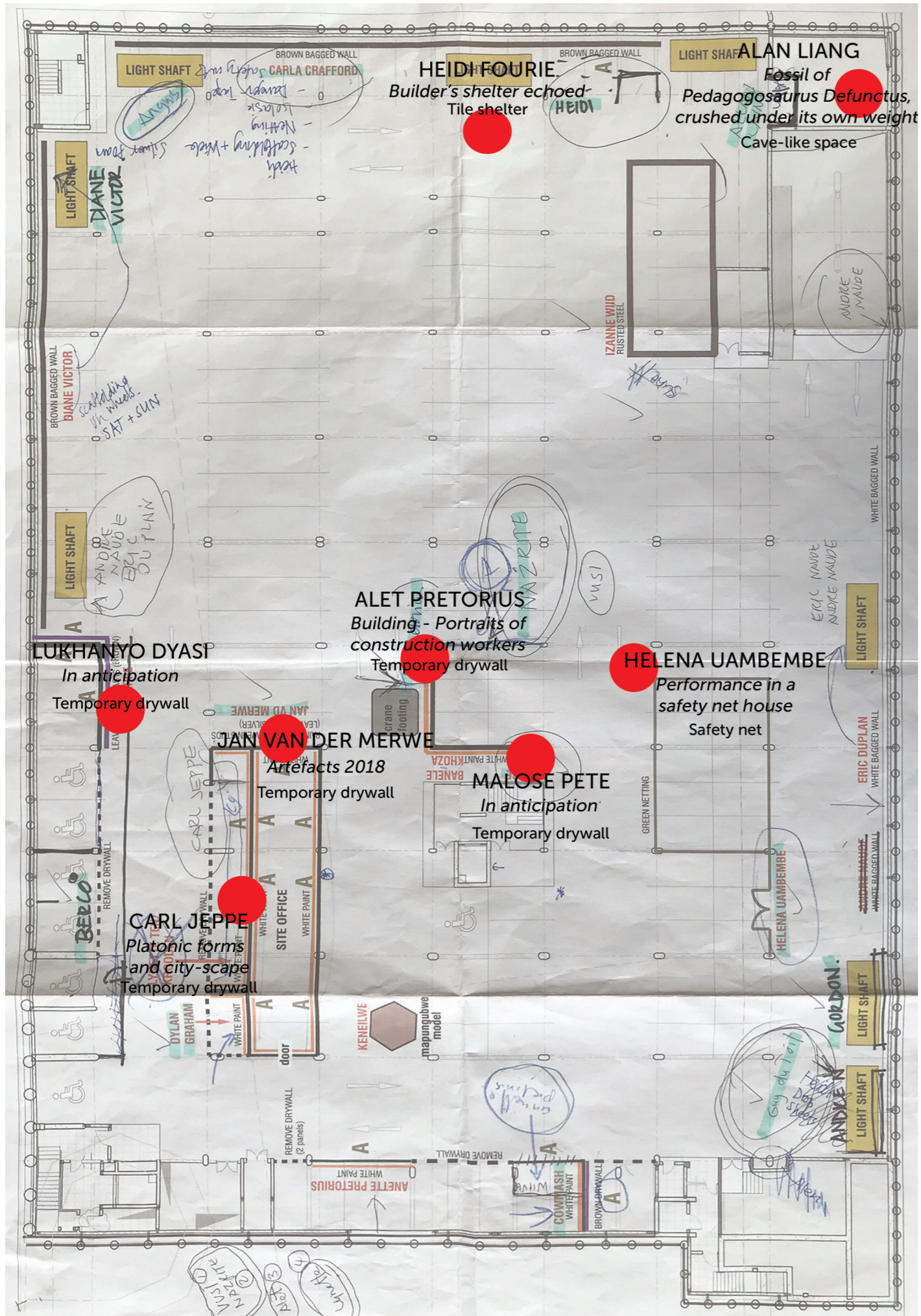


Figure 4.100 Spatial planning for The Sample Workshop (Author, 2018)

4.4.1 Lukhanyo Dyasi
Excavator in hand

"The hand is representative of the excavator disrupting the natural ground from this specific site. As a construction crane guide working on the Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria I have contributed personally to the excavation of the site. I had a hand in its creation."



Figure 4.101 Portrait of Lukhanyo Dyasi (Author, 2018)



Figure 4.102 Artwork by Lukhanyo Dyasi (Crafford, C., 2018)

4.4.2 Heidi Fourie
Builder's shelter echoed

Inspired by an existing mesh "shelter" on site which was used to trap dust when cutting granite tiles, Fourie replicated this shelter with a combination of fabric and plastic. The dimensions and spatial quality of the replicated shelter echoed the existing shelter, except for the quality of the light that permeated the plastic. Fourie then placed different coloured pigments derived from powder food colourant on the roof of the shelter. The pigments were wetted and changed by an afternoon thundershower and the resultant colours were further enhanced by the artist. The light penetrating from the open light shaft made for vivid photographs, as the different colours flowed into each other when the rain water activated the installation.



Figure 4.103 Artist splashing water on artwork to activate the colourant and therefor the space (Beukes, E. 2018)



Figure 4.104 Installation echoing builder's structure (Author, 2018)

4.4.3 Carl Jeppe
Platonic forms and city-scape

Various landmarks in Pretoria were depicted in charcoal by Carl "Cuz" Jeppe in humorous fashion. Above the city, three-dimensional shapes hover in space, throwing ominous shadows on the foreground of the cityscape. The easily recognisable buildings and skyline depicted by Jeppe as well as the large scale of the work, elicited great interest from the builders, who took pictures and selfies using the work as a backdrop.



Figure 4.105 Carl Jeppe creating Platonic forms floating above the city-scape (Beukes, E. 2018)



Figure 4.106 Carl Jeppe creating artwork for The Sample Workshop (Author, 2018)

4.4.4 Helena Uambembe
Performance in a safety net house

Helena Uambembe used objects found on site to construct a house from the recognisable orange safety mesh used to demarcate safe areas for passers-by. The symbolic 'house' was "furnished" with a single chair which was again "upholstered" in the orange net. Finally, Uambembe performed a dance inside the house which was captured on film by Neil Human.



Figure 4.107 Artist creating installation (Beukes, E. 2018)



Figure 4.108 Safety net house installation (Pretorius, A. 2018)



Figure 4.109 Portrait of Helena Uambembe (Pretorius, A., 2018)

4.4.5 Allen Liang
Fossil of Pedagogosaurus Defunctus, crushed under its own weight

Liang treated a small entrance to a service space under the basement ramp as a cave and used timber found on site to construct an archaeological site. Amongst the found timber, he created a small skeleton of an imaginary creature, also made from timber. The title plays on the idea that current pedagogy (Pedagogosaurus) is dysfunctional, presented as a skeleton with the prediction that these institutions may be crushed by their own weight.



Figure 4.110 Allen Liang creating his artwork (Author, 2018)



Figure 4.111 Detail of Fossil of Pedagogosaurus Defunctus, crushed under its own weight (Author, 2018)

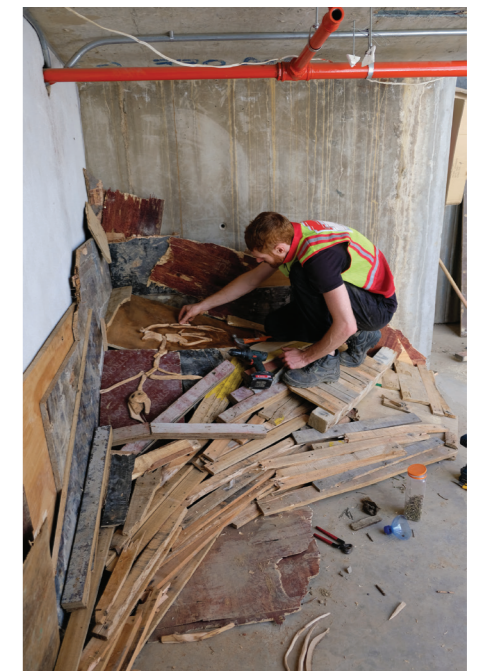


Figure 4.112 Allen Liang constructing his sculpture (Author, 2018)

4.4.6 Malose Pete
In anticipation

Pete took the clouds above the basement as a starting point for a charcoal drawing made on a painted drywall. The final artwork is a woman gazing at the dream clouds. The intricacies of the woman's face are rendered in exquisite detail. The prominent space of this work, coupled with the stark contrast between the charcoal and the white drywall, created great interest among all passers-by. It can be argued from the reaction of the workers that by seeing Pete drawing the portrait, the function of what the builders were constructing became apparent to them, possibly, for the first time.



Figure 4.113 Looking on to the process of creation (Beukes, E. 2018)

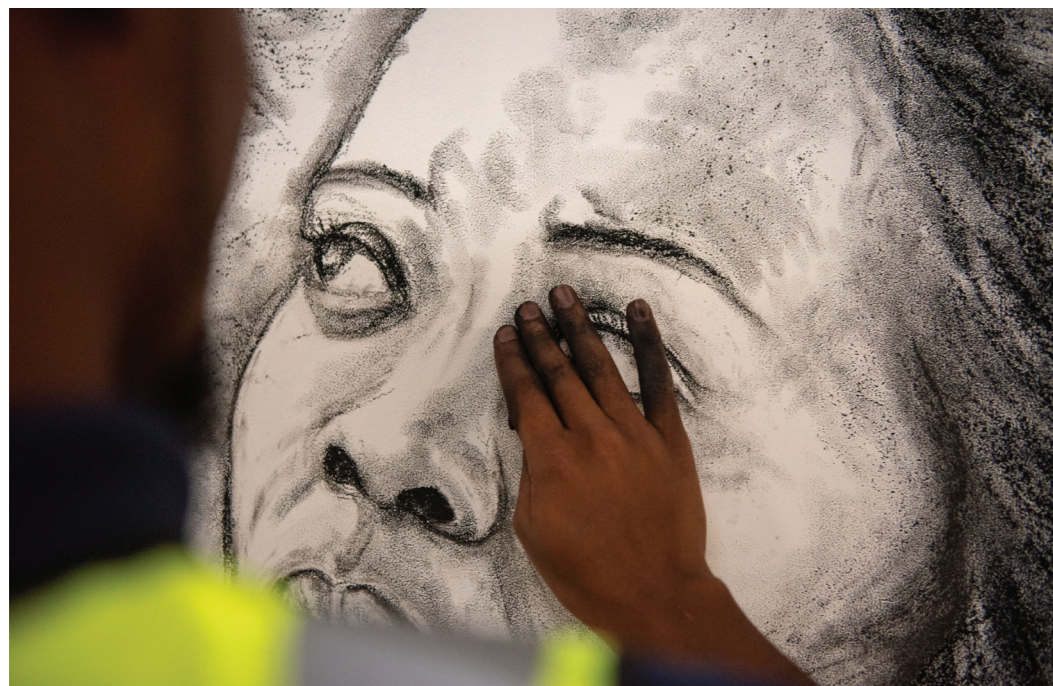


Figure 4.114 Detail of charcoal artwork (Pretorius, A. 2018)

4.4.7 Jan van der Merwe
Artefacts 2018

Van der Merwe depicted the work of a possible future archaeologist if he/she were to visit the building site and collect items of interest. On a piece of drywall divided into 10 panels by aluminium studs, objects that belong together were pinned in an almost scientific fashion.



Figure 4.115 Completed artwork (Author, 2018)



Figure 4.116 Artist creating artwork (Beukes, E. 2018)



Figure 4.117 Detail of Artefacts 2018 composition by Jan van der Merwe (Author, 2018)

4.4.8 Alet Pretorius
Building - Portraits of construction workers

Pretorius is the official photographer of the building process, and has photographed numerous workers on site during the course of the building project. For her installation, she printed a collection of the best portraits. Workers on the site were allowed to identify the people in the pictures and could take home a portrait of themselves.



Figure 4.118 Artist in discussion with construction worker (Beukes, E. 2018)

4.4.9 Pieter Mathews
After...

The architect as artist, curator and photographer.



Figure 4.119 After Geers by Pieter Mathews (Author, 2018)



Figure 4.120 After Fishili & Weiss by Pieter Mathews (Author, 2018)

4.5 THE EXAMINATION EXHIBITION

In this chapter the final examination presentation for this Master of Architecture with specialisation in Design is documented.

The curation of the exhibition started by considering the following:

- the space;
- my presentation style;
- the aim of the exhibition;
- the collection of materials; and
- available objects that could be used to display the exhibition material.

The space

The exhibition space consists of a multifunctional hall within the Department of Architecture building at the University of the Free State. The space is an open hall with stacking doors that divide the communal foyer from the exhibition space.

Performative curation was chosen as the most appropriate form of curation. Using the space as a student and curator compelled me to consider the potential and possibilities of the space for the first time.

My presentation style

The examination exhibition required me to actively participate by presenting and explaining the study. The exhibition had to accommodate my variable presentation style, which references sculptures, posters and digital media. This visual dialogue was of utmost importance.



Figure 4.121 Introduction to examination exhibition (Author, 2019)

4.5.3 The aim of the exhibition

The aim of the exhibition was to clearly communicate the study and the case studies discussed within, as well as what I have learnt throughout the process. The focus of the exhibition was to provide legibility and recognition of the project.

4.5.4 The collection of materials

The collection was made up of the following components:

- an A2 invitation to the exhibition;
- A2 posters illustrating all the collections and interventions discussed in the study;
- 5 *Saadjies*;
- A2 posters describing *The Sample Workshop* collection; and
- a film documenting *The Sample Workshop*.

4.5.5 Available objects

I selected the following objects as display devices to showcase the collection of materials:

- a projection screen;
- square welded frames;
- black pedestals; and
- mobile pin boards.

4.5.1.2 Curation of the examination

In order to create an exhibition that clearly and concisely conveyed the contents and intentions of the master's dissertation, I had to work within the boundaries and limitations set by the space.

The collection of materials and my presentation style dictated many curatorial decisions. The fact that I would reference printed posters and a digital video concurrently, with the projection screen fixed to a wall, served as an anchor point on which to base the rest of the exhibition. The seating provided was rearranged so that the audience could easily follow the narrative of my presentation.

Welded steel frames were used to display posters of the collections and interventions discussed in the study. Mobile pin boards displayed posters of *The Sample Workshop*. The black pedestals were used to display some *Saadjie* sculptures, while other *Saadjies* were suspended from the welded steel frames. The welded frames and pedestals allowed the audience to view the objects (posters and sculptures) from all sides, which stood in contrast to the linearity of the pin boards. The variety of display devices and curatorial techniques facilitated a unique and interesting exhibition.

These display devices, along with the collection, were positioned within the space to dictate the linear thoroughfare from the staircase to the projection screen. This progression allowed the visitors to familiarise themselves with the whole collection before the digital presentation began.

By considering the space, the collection, the materials and the aim of the exhibition, I was able to dictate the narrative of the exhibition.



Figure 4.122 Arrangement of seating, projection screen and mobile pin boards (Author, 2019)



Figure 4.123 The examination exhibition - posters and sculpture displayed in welded frames (Author, 2019)

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The study set out to investigate the relationship between space and artwork and how the intersection between them has the potential to unlock meaning. Through practice-based case studies it was illustrated that the success of a meaningful exhibition is dependent on the understanding of the space and the artist, and the potential offered by both.

This study originated in an intuitive understanding of curation, but by delving into case studies, some aspects of the process could be formalised, allowing for a clearer personal approach to creating meaningful exhibitions.

As I am an architect by training, the space is always the first point of departure when curating an exhibition. The spatial qualities, restrictions and opportunities, and the history and context are the parameters within which the curator can work. The role of the curator is to identify and utilise the spatial clues that will unlock meaning when paired with art to successfully narrate the exhibition.

In this study it is argued that space is one of the most significant factors in curation and that architects are, in fact, exceptionally well equipped to be curators.

Throughout this process I have made two additional discoveries. The first is the intermediate curation process I refer to as the 'cloud of dots'. The second is the level of control wielded by the curator with reference to each of the three modes of curation – performative curation, independent commissioning curation, and facilitating and convening curation. Both of these discoveries will be discussed below.

5.1. Curation as a 'cloud of dots'

The role of the curator is not often clear to the public, leaving the impression that the curator is uninvolved after commissioning an artwork for a space. I have found that this is in fact where the curator is sometimes most active, but this process cannot easily be defined.

I call this intermediate section between the initial commissioning and the final documentation a 'cloud of dots'. Each dot represents a variable that I have encountered after commissioning but before the final product has been documented. These variables include logistics, budget, politics, client, available resources, marketing, the artist's ability and preferences, funding, and spatial constraints.

The success of the exhibition is reliant on the strategic connection of these variable dots. The role of the curator is to assess these factors, comprehend the possibilities and constraints imparted by each, and to evaluate the consequences. As every project, client and artist is different, no one solution can be proposed. It is through investigating these factors, evaluating their impact and responding appropriately that meaning is unlocked and crystallised. These variables cannot be measured or quantified but have the potential for future research.

By recognizing the influence and importance of the above factors it is clear that the curator must be able to navigate various areas of knowledge. Often professionals will specialise and focus their area of study and expertise. Although this is beneficial in the commercial market, I have found that a broader base of knowledge, influences and perspectives is what enables curators to navigate those factors that cannot be qualified. Agnes Denes, an American conceptual artist, stated: "... we have entered an age of alienation brought on by specialization, a by-product of the information age. This is an age of complexity, when knowledge and ideas are coming in faster than can be assimilated, while disciplines become progressively alienated from each other through specialization" (Denes, 1990).

The curator must adopt a fluid or oscillating approach to this intermediate section of curation, connecting the 'dots' strategically to create an appropriate cloud for each exhibition. The case studies discussed in this dissertation shed light on the unique logic that arises in each circumstance.

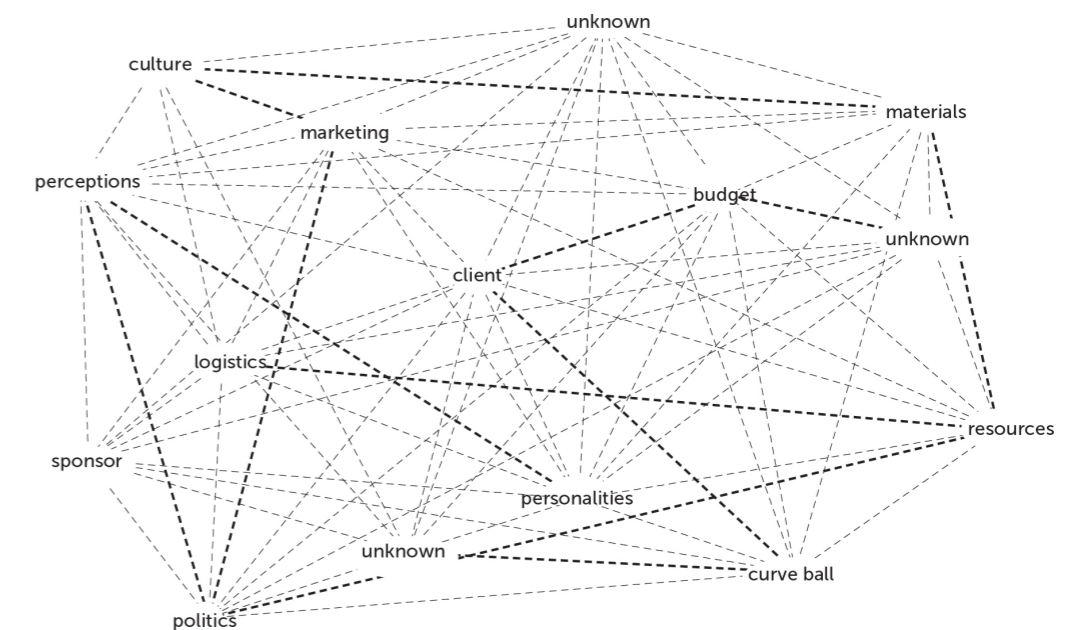


Figure 5.1 Cloud of dots diagram (Author, 2019)

5.2. The level of control held by the curator

The curator has a level of control over the space, artist and/or artwork which has a direct influence on the outcomes of the exhibition. It is the responsibility of the curator to wield this control as is appropriate to the exhibition circumstances.

Through this study I have found that the level of control wielded or ceded by the curator is often dependent on the mode of curation. Each will be discussed separately. Curation is, however, not a linear process. The curating methods can merge or oscillate between themselves to form a combination of curation modes, as deemed appropriate by the curator.

5.3. Independent commissioning curation

The independent commissioning curator commissions a specific artist to create an artwork for a specific space. This seems to be standard practice. The curator has the control to pair an artist/artwork with a specific context or space.

Two projects discussed in Chapter 4: Case studies are clear examples of independent commissioning curation. These are the *TRT Vertical Elements* (page 47) and the *Let's sit concrete benches* (page 83). These projects were conceptualised as collections, but upon reflection I have found that projects of this scale in an urban environment should rather be classified as a series as opposed to a collection. The distinction between a series and a collection is clear considering that each object (sculpture or bench) cannot be viewed with the rest of the objects in the collection. Even though these projects are all in the public realm, very few people will ever see more than a handful within the time frame of one day.

By distinguishing between the object and the collection, each object must be regarded separately, and the immediate spatial context, history and constraints become more important and influential. Independent commissioning curation thus places an extremely high level of control in the hands of the curator, much like a playwright casting an actor as the person best suited for the role.

The curator must understand the spatial context, possibilities and restraints, as well as the strengths and conceptual abilities of the artist. This can only be done after thorough research of both the space and the possible artists. The role of the curator is to pair the space with the artist who understands the space, who can discover hidden meanings, and who can best achieve the most meaningful outcome.

To achieve meaningful intersections between space and art, the curator needs to determine when to cede some control, or how to, and when, to apply control by continually assessing the artist and gauge if the spatial possibilities are clearly understood and taken advantage of. The curator must also consider the 'cloud of dots' – the intangible and changing factors that can influence the curation process significantly.

The curator regains full control after the completion of the project, allowing for proper documentation. I have found that the documentation of all the case studies discussed in this dissertation was of paramount importance. Through proper documentation it is possible to communicate the intersection between space and art in a meaningful way to the broader public and a larger audience. The documentation can then be used as a design catalogue and for marketing material, which in turn gains exposure for the artists, curator, client and sponsors involved. With the *Let's sit public benches* the documentation was of paramount importance and ultimately led to the project receiving a Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) Innovation Award in 2014, which ensured its continuation the following year.

5.4. Facilitating and convening curation

Facilitating and convening curation entails the creation of a platform for exhibition possibilities. In this mode of curation, the curator merely establishes an opportunity for artists to create with freedom. Often the curator relinquishes control to the artist, and has very little control of the space chosen, the artwork, and the relationship between the two.

I find an apt comparison for facilitating and convening curation is that of the production of a nursery school concert; you abandon all control, lower your expectations and have little control over the end result.

A theatre of chairs and *The Sample Workshop* are clear examples of facilitating and convening curation. As discussed on page 91, *A theatre of chairs* was a Cool Capital project where I created an opportunity for schools to work with renowned local artists. The artists paired up with schools as they saw fit, and designed a project according to the needs of the school within a space that they had identified. I had no influence, and thus no control over the result.

A theatre of chairs was only one of many school projects completed. I found this the most successful project, as the artist, Jan van der Merwe, embraced the role and responsibilities of the curator, realised the potential of his chosen space, and helped to guide the students to create an appropriate exhibition. During this process the artist had to identify and investigate the factors that made up the cloud of dots for this exhibition, and was successful in navigating these.

Facilitating and convening curation requires low levels of control and expectation from the curator. The process of documentation during and after the completion of the project is where the curator regains control and has the ability to emphasise and perhaps even add to the connection between space and art through its documentation.

A selection of chairs from *A theatre of chairs* formed part of the official South African pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia 2016, as discussed on page 109. For this exhibition, the artworks were removed from their original space and placed within a new context, where I as curator regained all the opportunities and responsibilities of curation.

5.5. Performative curation

Performative curation is an active participatory form of exhibition-making where the curator has artworks and a space and must create an exhibition with both. The curator investigates the space, its possibilities and restrictions, as well as the artworks and the context of each object. This is an improvisational process in which the curator must think on his/her feet. Apart from the space and the artworks, the curator must consider the 'cloud of dots' as it pertains to a specific exhibition. In general, performative curation requires the curator to retain a high level of control.

Three case studies discussed previously follow this hands-on approach of performative curation: *Saadjies* (page 57), *Sweetlove in Groenkloof* (page 107), and the examination exhibition (page 131).

Saadjies was an open-ended invitation to any creative or lay person to submit an artwork to form part of a larger collection that would eventually be exhibited at several formal and informal exhibitions. More than 100 artworks were received and because of the strict parameters I had set as curator, the exhibition could travel the country, and the world, as promised. With a project on this scale that was meant to travel, it was important for the curator to enforce strong rules and definite control. By being restrictive in the request for artworks, the curator had considered the 'cloud of dots' and some of the factors specific to this project, i.e. logistics, size, weight, etc.

As *Saadjies* travelled South Africa and had five formal exhibitions, I, as the curator, had to create an exhibition with the artworks that I had travelled with, within each space offered by a host. *Saadjies* is thus a clear example of how one collection can, and should, be curated in different ways depending on the space and resources available. Through thorough documentation, insight is gained into how the same objects within different spatial contexts unlock different meanings.

Each *Saadjies* exhibition concluded with a sculpture- and photo-bombing exercise. With the public visitors removing the artworks and placing these in different spaces for the purpose of taking pictures, the space was no longer only physical, but also virtual/digital. Throughout the process of exhibition-making the curator had full control, which was then ceded to the public as they themselves took on the role of curators. This project demonstrates the dualism of how performative curation can oscillate from total control to no control and back again, should the curator so wish. and should, be curated differently depending on the space and resources available. Through the thorough documentation it is insightful to compare the same objects within different spatial contexts.

Each *Saadjies* exhibition concluded with a sculpture- and photo bombing exercise. With the public visitors removing the artwork and placing it in different spaces for the purpose of taking pictures, the space was no longer only physical, but also virtual/digital. Throughout the process of exhibition-making the curator had full control which was then ceded to the public as they themselves took on the role of curator. This project demonstrates the dualism of how performative curation can oscillate from total control to no control and back again, should the curator so wish.

Upon analysis of the case studies I discovered the value of the intangible and immeasurable 'cloud of dots' that is essential to curating a meaningful exhibition. These factors are different in every individual exhibition and must be evaluated independently for each.

The control of the curator may be wielded or ceded to allow a unique and appropriate exhibition. The curator has the final control of the exhibition. It is his/her responsibility to create a meaningful exhibition by determining when to take or cede responsibility to produce the desired outcome. By varying the degree of control over the project, different results can be achieved.

The process of documentation is of paramount importance and is within the full control and scope of the curator. Proper and curated documentation can direct the narrative of the exhibition long into the future, and prolong the life of an exhibition long after it has been dismantled.

The processes and outcomes of curation are the result of the complex, intersecting relationship between space, the 'cloud of dots', and the control of the curator – as based on the three modes of curation.

"... [A]rt and the curator's relationship to art is as ever-changing as life itself and therefore requires constantly evolving manners of thinking and working" (Thomas, 2002:x).

	SPACE	CLOUD OF DOTS	EXPECTATION	CONTROL	
TRT VERTICAL ELEMENTS	Urban, city, public	Government, bureaucracy	Low expectation	Low control	
SAADJIES	Travelling, various	Logistic, travel, size, packaging, amount of artworks, various spaces	Low expectation	Low control of sculpture High control of exhibition	
LET'S SIT PUBLIC BENCHES	Urban, city, publicgovernment, bureaucracy	Government, bureaucracy	Low expectation	High control of selection Low control of outcome	
THEATER OF CHAIRS	School hall	School, teachers	Low expectation	Low control of selection Low control of outcome	
INSTALLATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS	PIENK VOORTREKKER MONUMENT	Public, heritage	Technology, history, heritage, national heritage site	Low expectation	Low control
	STONE MANDALA VICTOR MEETS PRELLER BLIND FOLD HEROS	Various	Heritage, various	Low expectation	Low control
	LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2016 SOUTH AFRICAN PAVILION	Logistic, travel, restrictions	Logistic, travel, international, language	High expectation	High control
THE SAMPLE WORKSHOP	Basement, gallery, variety, light shaft	Personalities, health + safety	High expectation	High control	
THE EXAMINATION EXHIBITION	Linear, conventional gallery	Legibility, audience, presentation, academic	High expectation	High control	

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF TERMS

avant-garde	p. 21
New, experimental, unorthodox ideas and methods.	
Bauhaus manifesto	p. 30
A public declaration of the policy and aims of the Bauhaus. The Bauhaus was a German art school which was operational from 1919-1933.	
BBC	p. 93
An acronym for the British Broadcasting Corporation, a public service broadcaster.	
CNBC	p. 26
An acronym for Consumer News and Business Channel, an American paid television channel.	
Die Voëvry Toer	p. 8
'Die voëlvry toer' refers to a South African movement in anti-apartheid Afrikaans music.	
Facebook	p. 17
An online social media and social networking service.	
genius loci	p. 47
The prevailing character or atmosphere of a place.	
in situ	p. 111
A Latin phrase that literally translates to 'on site' or 'in position'.	
Instagram	p. 17
An online photo- and video-sharing social networking service.	

ISSUU	p.21
A digital publishing platform.	
litmus test	p.20
A decisively indicative test.	
MoMA	p.36
An acronym for The Museum of Modern Art, located in Manhattan, New York City.	
PIA	p.97
An acronym for the Pretoria Institute for Architecture.	
photo-bombing	p.VII
The process of intentionally inserting an object within a space for the purpose of photographing it.	
QR code	p.40
A machine-readable code consisting of an array of black and white squares, typically used for storing URLs or other information	
sculpture-bombing	p. 57
The process of intentionally placing sculptures within a space for the purpose of highlighting the qualities of the space and the artworks.	
status quo	p. 26
A Latin phrase meaning the existing state of affairs.	
Thatcherism	p. 7
A branch of Conservative ideology that originated from the ideals and teachings of Margaret Thatcher, British Prime Minister from 1979 until 1990.	
totem	p. XI
Derives from the totem pole and refers to a large vertical structure or artwork.	
trompe l'oeil	p. 91
An art technique in which realistic imagery is used to create the optical illusion that the depicted objects exist in three dimensions.	
tour de force	p. 101
A performance or achievement that has been accomplished or managed with great skill.	
Vimeo	p. 17
An online video-sharing service focussing on professional and creative content.	
wet basement	p. 118
A form of underground construction with large openings for ventilation and natural light.	
YouTube	p. 17
An online video-sharing platform.	

