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PERFORMING MASCULINITIES IN THE ICONOGRAPHIES OF SELECTED WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN MALE ARTISTS

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree
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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is, apart from the recognised assistance and unless otherwise indicated, my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment for the Degree Magister Technologiae (Fine Art), in the Department of Visual Art, Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, University of Johannesburg. It has not been previously submitted by me to any other institution or university for examination or to obtain any other diploma or degree.

11 March 2013



ABSTRACT

In this research I explore performances of white South African masculinities in select works by the South African artists, Anton Kannemeyer and William Kentridge, as well as in my body of practical work.

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the nature of performances of white masculinities depicted in the selected visual texts. The term 'performances', in the context of this study, refers to Judith Butler's (1990, 2004) concept of gender as performed identities, as free-floating, unconnected to an 'essence'. Within the context of gender performativity, I apply constructivist identity formation theory to examine masculine identities depicted in the visual texts. This research shows how the performances of white masculinity represented in the artists' selected works function to comment on how white South African men are reconceptualising their masculine performativities in order to adapt to the ideals of post-apartheid South Africa. The study explores a perceived existential crisis in emergent South African white masculinities, analysing how a changing post-apartheid socio-political environment cause white South African men to create new conceptions of identity which break down previously imposed preconceived identities.

In this dissertation I explore Kannemeyer's, Kentridge's and my own visual texts relating them to a discourse of social commentary. A key deduction I make from my research is that the selected visual texts operate through Laurel Richardson's factors of lived reality and reflexivity in that the artists' appropriate elements from within their experiences and observations of South Africa to inform their visual narratives. Another key deduction is that the visual texts analysed are structured through heteroglot voices, voices the artist uses to differentiate between the artist as author (his author-voice); the artist as his recognisable alter-ego (his object-voice); and the voice that provides content, context and meaning, to the text (his subject-voice).

There are a number of white, male artists who grew up in apartheid South Africa and who critique performances of white masculinity. I choose Kannemeyer and Kentridge as, apart from their both growing up in apartheid South Africa and using their lived realities and observations of socio-political change to inform their art making, as do I, they also tend to focus on two-dimensional art.

The broad research paradigm in this study is qualitative. The research incorporates textual analysis and visual analysis. I use textual analysis to explore and interpret critical positions regarding constructivist identity theory, South African whiteness studies, gender performativity theory and masculinity theory. These critical discourses are relevant to my research as they examine ways in which identities are constructed, circulated and challenged. I use the conclusions I draw from exploring these critical positions to evaluate the representations of performances of white masculinity represented in the visual texts and to inform my body of work. Textual analysis extends to a close visual analysis of the iconography in the selected work of Kentridge, Kannemeyer and my body of work, *Performing 'man'*.

My research design uses discourse analysis to identify ways in which theorists engage with concepts of identity formation. This study confirms the importance of visual art as a function for societal expression, in the tradition of social commentary by artists, for example Francisco Goya and William Hogarth, through visualising performances of white masculinity in South African identity constructs.



Key Words: constructivist identity theory, gender performativity, South African whiteness studies, masculinity, autoethnography, heteroglossia.

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Derek Zietsman



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1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This study is motivated by an article by Okwui Enwezor (1997) on the representation of the black body by white South African artists. Enwezor accused white South African artists of continuing the apartheid/colonial practice of representing black bodies as abject and denying them a rightful voice.¹ However valid Enwezor's accusation may have been in 1997, it is unlikely that this is still accurate (Farber 2010). Enwezor's article seems to determine white South African artists as essentialist identity constructs who are racially prejudiced in their art making. His article invokes the complexities inherent in identity construction and for me, as a white South African male artist, the complexities in white South African masculine performativities.²

1.1 Aims and objectives of the research

My research design for this study uses discourse analysis through which I examine select critical literature in order to identify ways in which theorists engage with concepts of identity formation. This in turn informs my research question for this study, which is to investigate the nature of performances of white South African masculinity depicted in selected visual narratives of William Kentridge and Anton Kannemeyer, as well as in my practical component to this study. The primary aim of this study is to examine how and why representations of performances of white masculinity are manifest in the iconographies of selected works by Kentridge and Kannemeyer and in the images used in my art works. Liese van der Watt (2003:16) suggested that South African whiteness is "in crisis", delegitimised by virtue of its complicity with apartheid (De Kock 2006:1), and I argue in this study that a perceived renegotiation in hegemonic status between white and black masculinities to be a continuing cause in a purported existential crisis suffered by post-apartheid white South African men. An exploration of this nature into the visualisation of

¹ Particularly targeted were white women artists, namely Lien Botha, Candice Breitz, Pippa Skotnes, Penny Siopis, and Minnette Vári. Enwezor's article evoked strong responses from the artistic community, as evidenced in the book *Grey areas: Representation, identity and politics in contemporary South African art* (Breitz & Atkinson 1999).

² The terms 'masculine performativities', in the context of this study, refers to Judith Butler's (1990, 2004) concept of gender as performance. My approach in this study is one of masculinity as a performance of male identity, a performativity which shifts and changes in different contexts and at different times.

performances of white masculinity in the iconographies of Kannemeyer, Kentridge and in my work can add to our understanding of one aspect of this crisis; how white men are negotiating their emergent masculinities in post-apartheid South Africa. From my readings and observations of socio-political change in South Africa over the past 22 years, I am of the opinion that all gender identity performativities, of black, white, male and female, are in crisis and grappling with how to adapt to changing role expectations. These expectations include how to perform being 'white', 'black', 'man' or 'woman' in post-apartheid South Africa. However, in this study I only focus on white male performativities as represented in the selected visual narratives.

A secondary aim of this study is to investigate a suggested crisis in post-apartheid performativity of white masculinities. I explore how, as white male artists, Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I reflect on our respective lived realities and observations of socio-political change in South Africa to depict performances of masculinity which comment on performativities of white masculinities in wider South Africa. My objectives in this study are to provide an overview of constructivist identity theory, gender performativity, global whiteness studies and South African whiteness studies, which I use to explore how Kannemeyer and Kentridge depict performances of white South African masculinity. I analyse and consolidate the information from my research and analysis within my body of work, *Performing 'man'*, which is explicated in Chapter Five of this dissertation. In conjunction with the methodology of critical discourse, I use autoethnography³ in my analysis of Kannemeyer's, Kentridge's as well as of my own visual narratives. The autoethnographic process is detailed later in this chapter.

There are a number of white, male artists who grew up in apartheid South Africa and who critique performances of white masculinity, for example, Steven Cohen,⁴ Peet Pienaar⁵ and Brett Murray.⁶ I am, however, primarily focused on exploring

³Autoethnography is described as research, writing, and storytelling in order to connect autobiographical and personal components of the author of an autoethnographic text to wider cultural, social, and political environments (Ellis 2004:xix).

⁴ Steven Cohen is an artist who comments on gender identity, particularly outsider identity, through provocative live performances. He mostly uses his own body to create 'living art' that references sculpture, contemporary dance, drag and performance art.

⁵ Peet Pienaar is a performance artist, probably best known for having himself videotaped whilst undergoing a circumcision, then displaying the foreskin in a Perspex case. Pienaar exhibited the work, *I want to tell you something* (2000) at Bell Roberts Contemporary Art in Cape Town.

representations of white male identities in works of other white South African male artists with backgrounds similar to mine. I was born into a white Afrikaner home not long after the National Party came to power and, as explicated in Chapter Five, grew up in Johannesburg in a white Afrikaner patriarchal environment. I therefore choose Kannemeyer and Kentridge as they both grew up in apartheid Johannesburg, they both use their personal lived realities to inform their art making and they also tend to focus on two-dimensional art, as do I. Kentridge and I grew up during a similar period, and Kannemeyer, who is younger, grew up in a conservative patriarchal white Afrikaner environment, as did I. In this study, I investigate the ways in which lived reality affects both the construction of our identities as white South African males, as well as the ways in which our lived realities and observations of socio-political change in South Africa influence our art making.

From my lived reality and observations, as well as readings of identity politics, I am aware that race and racial identity are still contested issues in post-apartheid South Africa. My evaluation of the current South African literature⁷ on white masculinity in art indicates that the literature does not clearly identify how Kentridge and Kannemeyer use their heteroglot voices to comment on white South African male performativities through their art. This study addresses this gap in the literature as well as being relevant to emerging debates on whiteness in South Africa. I anticipate the study to confirm the importance of visual art as a function for societal expression, in the tradition of social commentary by artists such as Goya⁸ and

⁶ Brett Murray is known for his steel and mixed sculptures that critique and satirise abuse of political power.

⁷ This literature include Ballard (2004a, 2004b), Barnard (2004), Benezra (2001), Breidbach (2006), Cameron (2001), Christov-Bakargiev (1998, 1999), Coombes & Siopsis (1997), de Kock (2006), de Vries (2007), Distiller & Steyn (2004), du Pisani (2001), du Preez (2005), Epstein (1998), Farber (2010), Gule (2010), Hennlich (2011), Jamal (2005), Kannemeyer (1997, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2011), Kentridge (1999, 2009, 2011), Krauss (2000), Marais (2007), Mason (2006, 2010), Mbembe (2007), McCrickard (2012), Milan (2012), Morrell (1998, 2001), Morris (2006), Ndebele (1998), Norval (1996), Nuttall & Coetzee (1998), Nuttall & Michael (2000), Nuttall (2006), Reid & Walker (2005), Rheeder (2000), Rosenthal (2009), Salusbury & Foster (2004), Steyn (2001, 2004), Taylor (2009), Tone (1999), van der Watt (1997, 2003), van Eeden & du Preez (2005), van Staden (2006), Vestergaard (2001) and Walker (2005).

⁸ The Spanish artist, Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, dedicated much of his artistic output to a pictorial description of the society in which he lived. His work critiqued the habits and behaviour of society, particularly the nobility, the clergy, mistreatment of women, loveless marriages, prostitution and begging (see Ceron 2008). The South African artist Diane Victor references Goya's *Disasters of war* series of prints, which he made from 1810-1820 and wherein he graphically explores the dehumanizing effects of war, to draw attention through her ongoing series, *Disasters of peace*, to post-apartheid everyday violence in South Africa.

Hogarth.⁹ In my observations on socio-political change in South Africa over more than two decades, I perceive that the experiencing of post-apartheid change often causes white males to renegotiate new conceptions of identity performativity. They renegotiate away from previously imposed preconceived identities, such as a historical expectation that all white male Afrikaners adhere to white Calvinist patriarchal values. This renegotiation in identity performativity often causes, as van der Watt (2003:1) suggests and I argue in this study, an existential crisis in white identity constructs.

Thus I focus on exploring how white masculine subjectivities are renegotiating their emergent performativities in post-apartheid South Africa. My key approach to investigating these performativities is through Stuart Hall's (1994:21) theorisation of identity as "a form of representation which is able to constitute us as new kinds of subjects, and thereby enable us to discover places from which to speak". I approach the construction of masculinities as performances through the concept of gender as "a kind of activity, an incessant activity performed ... a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint" (Butler 2004:1); that identities are always matters of "becoming" as well as of "being" (Hall 1994:23).

1.2 Outline of chapters

1.2.1 Chapter Two: Contextualising frames of identity, whiteness, gender and masculine performativities

Chapter Two is an overview of the theoretical positions that contextualise this study of white South African masculine performativities depicted in the selected iconographies of Kannemeyer, Kentridge and in my art work. I apply textual analysis to explore and interpret critical written texts regarding constructivist identity theory; gender performativity theory; whiteness studies, particularly South African whiteness

⁹ The English artist William Hogarth critiqued English society in engraved narratives of social issues such as prostitution, greed, marital ethics, alcoholism, idleness and cruelty to animals (see Birdman 1985). In 1986 William Kentridge produced a suite of etchings, titled *Industry and Idleness*, based on William Hogarth's series of the same name. Hogarth's series comments on moral, political and social abuses by contrasting the successful life of an industrious apprentice with that of an idle one. Kentridge's etchings critique the effects of racial inequality through narrating the life of an industrious black man, who works hard but is doomed by his skin colour, with that of a white man who ends up wealthy and successful despite idleness.

studies and an Afrikaans/English binary; masculinity theory with specific emphasis on South African white masculinities; and autoethnography.

1.2.1.1 Constructivist identity theory

Constructivist identity theorists such as Hall (1994:21) argue that identities are "not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture ... [b]ut, like everything which is historical ... undergo constant transformation". In this study, I consult Hall's essay *Cultural identity and diaspora* (1994) as well as his *Questions of cultural identity* (1996) and *Representation: cultural representation and signifying practices* (1997). These texts, although written in the 1990s, are still primary sources on constructivist identity theory. Hall's (1994:21) conception of postmodern identity, which he considers a production which is "never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" is a factor in my analysis of post-apartheid white masculine performativities.

1.2.1.2 Gender performativity theory

I consider masculine identity as a performance. The concept of gender as a performance; seeing identity as free-floating, unconnected to an 'essence', is key to this study. The primary initiator of the concept of gender performativity, feminist philosopher Butler (1990, 2004), argues that rather than being a fixed attribute, gender should be seen as a fluid variable which shifts and changes in different contexts and at different times. I adopt her concept of gender performativity (1990, 2004) which argues for performances of gender as being "outside oneself, beyond oneself in a sociality that has no single author" (Butler 2004:1). Relevant to my study of masculine performativity is *The masculine masquerade: Masculinity and representation* (Perchuck & Posner 1995), particularly the article by Harry Brod (1995:14) who describes gender as a role, not a biological condition. An important secondary text is Debbie Epstein's (1998) article on South African masculinities, especially her argument that "the ways men do men, or 'do man' is not fixed" (Epstein 1998:52).

1.2.1.3 Whiteness studies

Any study on performativity of white masculinity is, in part, a study on whiteness. Melissa Steyn's *Whiteness just isn't what it used to be* (2001) is the first detailed exploration of South African whiteness, followed by *Under construction: 'race' and identity in South Africa today* (2004), which Steyn co-edited with Natasha Distiller. These texts argue that race and South African whiteness, which were historically treated as biological or historical given facts, are contestable concepts that need to be interrogated and explored. These primary texts, published in 2001 and 2004 respectively, inform my analysis of South African whiteness and although there are more recent articles on South African whiteness, the later articles are not as comprehensive.¹⁰ However, of value is Leon de Kock's article, *Blanc de blanc* (2006), in which he cautions researchers against too easily following assumed discursive regularities around whiteness, thereby introducing an element of overdetermination (De Kock 2006:1). De Kock's cautions are in keeping with my approach of trying to understand white masculinities in fluid and performative terms, as opposed to essentialist ones.

The study of whiteness, in the global sense, was initiated in the 1990s (hooks 1990; Morrison 1992; Roediger 1991; Dyer 1997). To contextualise the study of South African whiteness, Chapter Two provides an overview of global whiteness studies. South African whiteness studies, however, display some significant differences to global whiteness studies, for example, in the United States theorists argue that white ethnicity "has been rendered invisible" (Van der Watt 2003:1). In South Africa, whiteness was never invisible (Van der Watt 2003:15) and in contrast to international whiteness, South African whiteness is a "fractured ... self-conscious, ambivalent and vulnerable construction" (Van der Watt 2003:1). I argue that this vulnerability in South African whiteness is still present in 2012, when this dissertation is written. Chapter Two explores how South Africa's unique demographic and economic situations make South African whiteness different.

¹⁰ There are a number of other texts on South African whiteness (see Ballard 2004a, 2004b; du Preez 2005; Jamal 2005; Marais 2007; Nuttal 2006; Salusbury & Foster 2004; Walker 2005 and Yancy 2005) that explore aspects of South African whiteness, which I apply in this study. However, I consider Steyn's and Distiller's texts the most comprehensive for an overall sense of what South African whiteness is and how white South Africans are responding to post-apartheid South Africa.

1.2.1.4 Masculinity

Nicholas Mirzoeff's two edited volumes (1998, 1999) are influential to my study in that they identify how visual culture affects and influences performances of masculinity. Hall (quoted in Storey 1996:2) states that visual culture is "an arena of consent and resistance ... where hegemony arises, and where it is secured" and therefore plays an important part in a renegotiation of masculine performativities in post-apartheid South Africa. Jeanne van Eeden and Amanda du Preez's 2005 edited volume provides an overview of issues in South African visual culture that influence post-apartheid South African's culture and society.

The literature in the field of masculinity theory emphasises that performances of masculinities, like all performances of gender, are shaped by historical circumstances and social discourses. They are never fixed, always complex and dependent on "exigencies of personal and institutional power" (Berger, Wallis & Watson 1995:3); masculine identities are the unfolding of a series of performed operations (see Epstein 1998, Butler 2004). In apartheid South Africa, it was normal for white men to assume themselves superior to black men (Epstein 1998:50). In post-apartheid South Africa, the social discourses no longer accept such racially motivated assumptions and new versions of white masculinities are emerging.

Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-Anne Michael (2000:16) identify the emergence of what they call a new form of imagining in South Africa, where creolised constructions of identity challenge the fixity of old apartheid identities. Mads Vestergaard (2001:34) identifies white Afrikaners as ascribing new signification to 'us' and 'them' in an attempt to rehabilitate and repackage white Afrikanerness, so as to adapt to a changing post-apartheid socio-political environment. Of interest to my analysis of Kannemeyer's iconography is Vestergaard's (2001:34) description of different expressions of being white and Afrikaans found among white Afrikaner artists (such as Kannemeyer) who, although they display a high degree of self-consciousness of their white Afrikaner identities, are sceptical of historically established white Afrikaner values.

1.2.1.5 Autoethnography and heteroglossia

In Chapters Three, Four and Five, I use autoethnography¹¹ as a lens, framed by the broader concepts of constructivist identity theory, South African whiteness studies, gender performativity theory and masculinity theory, to investigate how white masculine subjectivities are reconceptualising their gender performativities in post-apartheid South Africa. Autoethnography allows me to identify and explore Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's heteroglot¹² voices in their visual narratives I selected for analysis; that of their authorial voice, as authors of the narratives, their object-voices, which are primarily performed through recognisable self-portraits and alter-ego characterisations; and their subject-voices that provide content and context to the narratives. In analysing Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's visual narratives I apply autoethnography to explore how storytelling combines with the artists' observations of South Africa and autobiographical components within the artist's lived realities. The combination of the factors I outlined here produce a narrative which contextualises, comments on and interprets the wider cultural, social, and political environments (Ellis 2004:xix). I analyse how Kannemeyer and Kentridge use a form of personalised ethnography that incorporates their own physical features and aspects from their lived reality and observations of socio-political change in South Africa in order to comment on performances of white masculinity.

I argue that the selected works of Kannemeyer, Kentridge, and my art works, are what Laura Ellingson and Carolyn Ellis (2008:445) term "evocative autoethnographic visual texts". Evocative autoethnographic texts emphasise narrative presentations that evoke conversation, even emotional responses. Applying evocative autoethnography, I explore how the masculine performativities depicted in the selected works function to parody and comment on white South African masculinities in a manner that may allow viewers to relate to and identify with, the

¹¹Most of the literature on autoethnography is concerned with qualitative research methodology in a sociological or anthropological setting and, in that context, not immediately applicable to my study. Autoethnography is a broad category and varies in its application (see Ellingson & Ellis 2008). For example, autoethnographic texts vary in their emphasis on the research process (*graphy*), or culture (*ethnos*), and self (*auto*) (Reed-Danahay 1997:2). Researchers also differentiate between analytic autoethnography and evocative autoethnography (Ellingson & Ellis 2008:445). In this study, I use autoethnography in a context of reflexion by the artist in order to create evocative texts that comment on the wider environment through heteroglot voices.

¹² In simple terms heteroglossia is the presence of two or more voices expressed in a text, in Bakhtinian terms (1981, 1990), a 'multivoicedness'.

performances as well as with the content and context of the narratives. I could not find a text on autoethnography that specifically describes the autoethnographic lens as a visual process, however, Heewon Chang (2008) provides a broad understanding of autoethnographic concepts, which I adapt for my study. I also adopt insights from Ellis' (1995) highly autobiographical but also self-defined autoethnographic text. Laurel Richardson (2000:15-16), describes five factors to evaluate a successful autoethnographic text. I specifically apply Richardson's (2005:16) "factors of reflexivity and expression of lived reality", as appropriate and useful analytical strategies. Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I use aspects of our lived realities as well as from our observations of socio-political change in order to visually comment on white masculine performativities in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa.

My use of the term narrative is deliberate and used in the sense stated by Arthur Bohner (2001:137) who argues that narrative is how people remember, how they construct texts from their experiences and observations, how they legitimise their experiences to themselves and to others. Within this context, I analyse the episodic nature of Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's selected narratives, how narration creates meaning, rather than the individual imagery in the works.

1.2.2 Chapter Three: Performing white Afrikaner masculinities in Kannemeyer's *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*

The objective of Chapter Three is to identify Kannemeyer's heteroglot voices of author, object and subject in the selected narratives, as operationalised through the performances of masculinity depicted in his visual texts, and to explore how these performances reveal and comment on what I argue is still a crisis in white Afrikaner South African masculinity. I analyse Kannemeyer's critique of white Afrikaner masculine performativities as represented in two of his narratives, *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, using the autoethnographic lens described earlier. The two narratives are explicit in their critique of white Afrikaner masculinities. I specifically analyse how Kannemeyer parodies Afrikaner Calvinist patriarchy and conservative values, how he reinterprets memories from his lived reality to represent defiance against the authority figures of his boyhood; namely the patriarchal white Afrikaners who attempted to indoctrinate him (Van der Watt 1997:120). There are

not many authoritative texts on Kannemeyer available to inform my analysis. A text used in this study is *The big bad Bitterkomix handbook* (2006), particularly Rita Barnard's (2004) article in which she unpacks Kannemeyer's approach to creating work that deliberately provokes strong reaction. Roberto Milan's (2012) dissertation provides an interesting discussion on the use of autobiography in narrative art. My interview with Kannemeyer (2011) is a valuable source in establishing where Kannemeyer, the person, fits into his narratives, revealing to what extent the narratives are autobiographical, and orders his heteroglot voices.

In Chapter Three I identify how, through the autoethnographic lens, Kannemeyer interprets memories from his lived reality to structure performances of white Afrikaner masculinity. I do this in order to show how Kannemeyer not only satirises white Afrikaner patriarchy and moral values, but how he inserts himself as object-voice and subject-voice into his narratives, thus increasing the viewer's ability to identify with the narratives. The dichotomy between Kannemeyer and his alter-ego Joe Dog, the form of self-portraiture he uses after *Boetie*, forms part of Kannemeyer's strategy to create critical performances of white masculinity within contexts that resonate with his viewers (Kannemeyer 2011).

1.2.3 Chapter Four: Transforming roles: an exploration of white masculinity in Kentridge's *Mine*, *History of the main complaint* and *Other faces*

The objective of Chapter Four is to identify Kentridge's heteroglot voices of author, object and subject, as operationalised through the performances of his alter-ego, Soho Eckstein, depicted in three narratives from his *Drawings for projection* (1989 – 2011) cycle of hand-drawn films; *Mine* (1991), *History of the main complaint* (1996) and *Other faces* (2011). I analyse how Soho's performances comment on a gradual renegotiation of white South African masculine performativities as well as how they reflect on a perceived crisis in post-apartheid white masculine performativity. There are a number of relevant texts available on Kentridge's visual contexts and iconographies which assist this analysis. Of primary importance are Cameron, Christov-Bakargiev and Coetzee (1999); Cameron (2001); Breidbach (2006); Kentridge (2009); and McCrickard (2012). An e-mail interview with Kentridge (2011/06/08) informs my exploration of Kentridge's lived reality.

In Chapter Four, I discuss how Kentridge's approach differs from Kannemeyer's in that Kannemeyer's subject-voice in the narratives is influenced by his lived reality, whereas Kentridge's subject-voice appears to be less autobiographical and instead reflects more on Kentridge's observations of South Africa's socio-political metamorphosis. Kentridge's subtle political approach in his films is a large component of his subject-voice which, together with his recognisable alter-ego, Soho Eckstein, as his object-voice, may enable his viewers to recognise Kentridge's presence in the films and identify with the context of the narrative. As with Kannemeyer, this heteroglot interplay between author-voice and object-voice, when the viewer recognises both the author and the object-voice in the narratives, is what creates critical performativities of masculinity. In Chapter Four I unpack the character of Soho, who I read as an accurate and relevant metonym for the selective moral blind spots of many white males during the apartheid-era.

1.2.4 Chapter Five: Renegotiating masculinity: an explication of *Performing 'man'*

Chapter Five is a discussion of how I identify my three voices of author, object and subject in my practical work, *Performing 'man'*, as represented through performances of white masculinity. I discuss how these particular performances comment on a broader existential crisis in white South African masculine performativities. Using the autoethnographic lens, I interpret memories from my lived reality in conjunction with my observations of change in South Africa and point to conclusions I reach from my exploration of the critical literature. My practical work does not overtly address issues of political or moral value but focuses rather on societal aspects that define and shape white South African masculine performativities, such as the impact oppressive white Afrikaner patriarchy had in the construct of white fear of black people. In ways that are similar to Kannemeyer and Kentridge, I create self-portraits in order to insert myself as object-voice and subject-voice into the works, creating content within the works that many South Africans may identify. I appropriate images of myself through which I reinterpret performativities of white masculinities which comment on, *inter alia*, apartheid-era Afrikaner patriarchy as well as post-apartheid performances of uncertainty and identity reconceptualisation. I adopt an exploratory approach to investigate

ambiguous performances of white South African masculinities represented by, amongst others, the privileged schoolboy, the businessman and the father figure.

1.3 Conclusion

This introduction outlines the aims of this study, to examine how Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I represent performances of white masculinities in our art and how these depictions of masculine performativities reveal and comment on a critically theorised crisis in white South African masculinity. A further focus is on how white men are negotiating their masculinities in post-apartheid South Africa. I also argue that white masculine identity performativities in South Africa are in crisis and attempt to explicate how white men are uncertain as to how to negotiate changing role expectations in post-apartheid South Africa. The value of this study lies in its demonstration of how a crisis in white South African masculinities is implied through the depiction of white masculine performativities in the selected visual narratives of Kannemeyer and Kentridge. The wider implication of this study is that South Africa's emergent masculine identities, both black and white, are renegotiating and reconceptualising their performativities in ways congruent with an emergent post-apartheid South Africa. What forms the new performativities will take are, at this stage, still uncertain. Epstein (1998: 57) stated in 1998 that "there will be a relationship between the structures and institutions created in the new South Africa and formations of new South African masculinities". In this study I argue that South Africa's socio-political restructuring and a contingent renegotiation in white masculine performativities are not complete. At the time of writing, South Africa's socio-political environment is still a topic of heated debate, and an existential crisis in post-apartheid masculine performativity has, in my opinion, not decreased.

2 CHAPTER TWO: CONTEXTUALISING FRAMES OF IDENTITY, WHITENESS, GENDER AND MASCULINE PERFORMATIVITIES

2.1 Aims and objectives

The objective of this study is to explore Kannemeyer's satirising of Afrikaner patriarchy through his alter-ego characters of Max Plant and Joe Dog; Kentrige's critique of white masculinity through his alter-ego object-voice, Soho Eckstein; and my own representations of white South African masculine performativities in my body of work, *Performing 'man'*. To achieve this, I explore white Afrikaner and white English-speaking South African masculine performativities in post-apartheid South Africa, focusing on how the performativities might reconceptualise whiteness and masculinity in post-apartheid South Africa.

Exploring representations of performances of white South African masculinities requires investigations of constructivist identity theory, how white masculinities are negotiated in post-apartheid South Africa as well as South African whiteness studies and gender performativity theory. I apply Hall's (1994:21) concept of identity as a form of representation that reconceptualises identity in order to discover new forms of representation, and Butler's (2004:1) approach that sees the construction of masculine identities as performances which are always improvising "within a scene of constraint" (Butler 2004:1).

In analysing particular works of Kannemeyer, Kentrige and my own, I apply autoethnography as a lens through which to observe and comment on how we structure depictions of white male performativities, filtered through our personal lived realities¹³ as Afrikaans or English-speaking males growing up during the apartheid-era. An autoethnographic lens allows me to identify the heteroglot voices of the artist present in the selected works: the authorial voice (the artist-as-author); the object-voice (the-artist-as-object), realised through alter-ego characterisations; and the subject-voice (the-artist-as-subject), realised through the construction of content and the context of the narratives. Through approaching the visual narratives I selected for this study as autoethnographic texts, the concepts of constructivist identity

¹³ I access details of Kannemeyer's and Kentrige's personal lived realities through interviews and from the literature.

theory, South African whiteness studies, gender performativity theory and masculinity theory serve as frames through which I identify the artist's three voices in the works. The diagram below illustrates how the autoethnographic lens is applied.

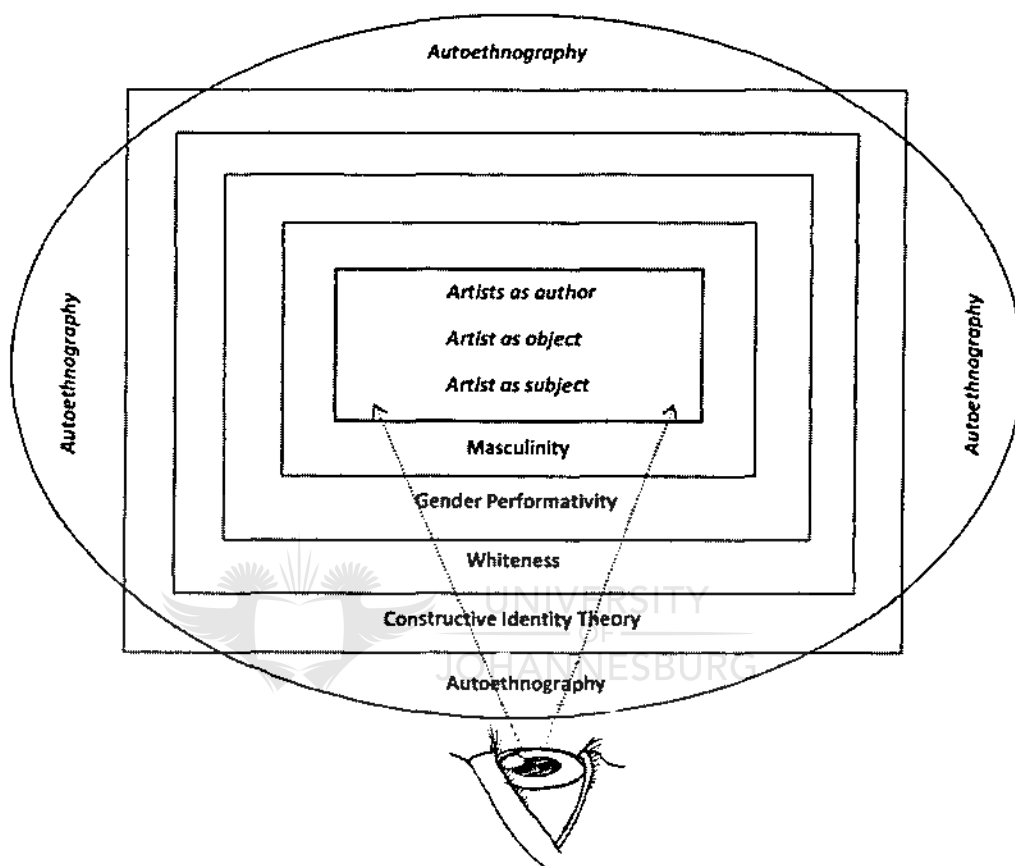


Diagram 1: Application of the autoethnographic lens in the text.

A particular focus of this study is the dichotomy that arises between the artist's performances as author, the author-voice, and as character, the object-voice, in the visual narratives. Remarks made by Kannemeyer and Kentridge regarding the separateness between artist-voice and object-voice in the narratives, is discussed in Chapters Three and Four. Yet, this difficulty in differentiating, negotiating a path between the author-voice and the object-voice reveals a complexity that helps me identify Kannemeyer and Kentridge's narratives as autoethnographic texts.

The concept of white South African masculinity as a performance; seeing identity as free-floating, unconnected to an 'essence', is a key argument underpinning this study. As important is the concept that identities, which include whiteness and masculinity, always reconceptualise as social exigencies change. The basis of this argument is situated in constructivist identity theory and the concept of gender performativity. Rather than being fixed attributes, identity and gender should be seen as fluid variables which shift and change in different contexts and at different times (see Butler 1994).

The overarching discourses that influence my context are South Africa's apartheid past and the historic construct of an English/Afrikaans binary. Apartheid was, I propose, the major influence in the construction of South African masculine identity for white men who grew up under its influence. I do not discuss apartheid as a discourse nor the historic construct of English/Afrikaans binary opposition in this study, but rather comment on how apartheid influenced the constructs of white men and how the historic English/Afrikaans binary defined Afrikaans and English-speaking whites as specific groups. In this study I aim to provide, through close readings of the selected visual narratives of Kannemeyer and Kentridge, an understanding of how the end of apartheid causes a dislocation of both Afrikaans and English-speaking white masculine identities in post-apartheid South Africa.

2.2 Constructivist identity theory

Constructivist identity theory proposes that identities are non-essentialist constructs, never uniform or stable, always reconceptualising as a process of identification. Identities are always becoming different performativities. Because identities are "not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture ... [b]ut ... undergo constant transformation" (Hall 1994:21), I approach post-apartheid white South African masculine identity as a performance which is never complete, always in a process of reconstructing and reconceptualising to adapt to the changing social exigencies.

Within this context, where identities are constructed within representation, I accept that my Afrikaner white South African male identity was, and still is, constructed through specific historical circumstances that include discourses enunciated through socio-political strategies. As a child growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, the

overarching discourse was apartheid. In post-apartheid South Africa, I now perceive the overarching discourse as the dismantling of the remnants of apartheid's constructions. Identities emerge within specific power structures, which include elements of difference and exclusion (see Hall & du Gay 1996). My identity as a white Afrikaner man is influenced through my lived reality of white racist male hegemony under apartheid and is now influenced by my witnessing a redefining in masculine hegemonies in post-apartheid South Africa.

As noted in Chapter One, some scholars of South African whiteness (Steyn 2001; Nuttall 2001; Vestergaard 2001; van der Watt 2003; Ballard 2004a & b) regard white masculinities in post-apartheid South Africa as in a state of change, even in crisis. Of specific interest to me therefore, is Hall and du Gay's (1996:19) contention that the concept of identity becomes paramount whenever you are unsure of where you belong. In post-apartheid South Africa, many whites are unsure where to place themselves and "how to make sure that people around would accept this placement as right and proper, so that both sides would know how to go on in each other's presence" (Hall & du Gay 1996:19).

I apply constructivist identity theory as a tool to help make sense of the existential crisis in South African white masculinities and the strategies they adopt in order to adapt to post-apartheid South Africa. In the following chapters, my autoethnographic lens is used to focus upon the frame of constructivist identity theory which, together with the frames of gender performativity theory, South African whiteness studies, and masculinity theory, helps me explore performances of masculinity in the selected works of Kannemeyer, Kentridge and my own.

2.3 Gender performativity theory

Gender performativity is the concept of gender as a performance; a concept proposed by Butler (1990, 2004) who argues that, rather than being a fixed attribute, gender identity should be viewed as a performance which changes as the performance contexts change and at different times. Brod (1995:14) describes gender as a role, not a biological condition, and Epstein (1998:49) argues that "the ways men do men, or 'do man' is not fixed". In this study, I view the art making process and iconographies of Kannemeyer, Kentridge and my own as performances of gender, as masculine constructs that are always reconstructing (Butler 2004:1).

These performances are complex. For the purposes of this study, I concentrate on how the different masculine performativities represented in the selected works change as the artist's author-voice assumes different contexts for the subject-voice and how the artist's alter-ego object-voice performs in the different narratives. I explore, for example, in Chapter Three how Kannemeyer represents performances of patriarchal oppression and anger and in Chapter Four, how Kentridge represents performances of greed, trauma and nostalgia.

Butler (1990) characterises gender as the effect of reiterated acting within the larger social world. She says "[t]here is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender ... identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (Butler 1990:5). White South African masculinities are performances; our identities are 'what we do' and not some universal concept of 'who-we-are'. Our masculinities, unfoldings of a series of performed operations (Epstein 1998; Butler 1990, 2004), therefore change as we reconceptualise our apartheid identities into post-apartheid ones.¹⁴

In this study, I argue that performances of white masculinities are shaped by our shared lived realities of apartheid and are now reshaped by contemporary post-apartheid circumstances and socio-political discourses. We do not possess some authentic inner essence of man, nor white, nor Afrikaner nor English. White South African masculinities are, like all identities, dependent on "exigencies of personal and institutional power" (Berger, Wallis et al. 1995:3). In the selected works I specifically focus on the commonality in the performances, which are ones of white masculinity shaped by South Africa's apartheid history, as well as the differences. Kannemeyer and I are both Afrikaners but with different lived realities, and Kentridge is an English-speaking man of Jewish origin with historic anti-apartheid lived reality since his childhood.

2.4 Whiteness studies

Whiteness studies is a relatively new field. The concept and study of race was, until comparatively recently, mostly focused on the so-called non-white other. Whiteness

¹⁴ Although outside the scope of this study, I acknowledge the limits of Butler's theory as critiqued by social theorists such as, *inter alia*, Geoff Boucher (2006). I also do not discuss in this study how Butler approaches reconfiguration of gender performativity (see Butler 1993).

studies unmask how whiteness was, and often still is, essentialised as the norm, “an unchanging and unproblematic location, a position from which all other identities come to be marked by their difference” (Nuttall 2006:137). This position is challenged when whiteness is “understood as a process that can be contested as well as deconstructed” (Ware & Black 2002:25).

The study of whiteness is positioned within a set of historic discourses of white supremacy that intersect with post-colonial expectations that deconstruct the notion of white supremacy. The myth of race as an essence is placed under the spotlight by Jacobson (2000:1) who writes: “We tend to think of race as being indisputably real. It frames our notions of kinship and descent and influences our movements in the social world; we see it plainly on one another’s faces”.

The study of whiteness, in the global sense, was initiated in the 1990s (hooks 1990; Morrison 1992; Roediger 1994; Dyer 1997; Ware & Back 2002). Whiteness studies place whiteness under investigation, calling for analysis and redefinition; decentring white privilege and white power. The British academic Richard Dyer (1997) calls for whiteness to be seen through the eyes of the self. An objective of whiteness studies is to make whiteness visible, to unmask whiteness as a discourse that arbitrarily categorises people within racially ordered hierarchies (Giroux 1997:4). Whiteness studies suggest that, in a society dominated by ideologies of white supremacy, whites see themselves as normal, without a racialised identity, as invisible. In contrast, whiteness was never invisible to black people. hooks (1990:24) writes that “black folks have, from slavery on, shared ... knowledge of whiteness ... to help black folks cope and survive in a white supremacist society”.

Whiteness studies is more than a call for whiteness to be unmasked and made visible. By approaching whiteness from different angles, Thompson (2001:[sp]) divides whiteness studies into four major groups: material theories of whiteness which focus on systemic racism; discursive theories of whiteness which analyse the ways whiteness is framed as both ‘preferred’ and ‘normal’; institutional theories of whiteness which identify and analyse systems of privilege that have material consequences, for example, racial discrimination in business organisations; and personal, or identity, theories of whiteness which address how white privileging mechanisms find a home in relationships and peoples’ sense of self.

Charles Mills (2007:218) states that, before the 1980s, discussions of race were limited to applied ethics issues, whereas today whiteness studies is far more expansive, encompassing amongst other issues, race and the history of philosophy; the phenomenology and existential import of race; the metaphysics of race; race and political theory; and race and epistemology. Whiteness studies has become a tool for analysing and interpreting the workings of white power and white privilege (Dolby 2001:5). Whiteness forms part of a contextual site of identity, and therefore is subject to continuous construction and re-construction through changing socio-political circumstances.¹⁵ Like other elements that influence how we construct identity, the concepts of whiteness are complex, constructed around sets of discourses that are reliant on “social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle” (Donald & Rattansi 1992:1).

In essence, whiteness studies is a process that traces the economic and political histories behind the construction of white privilege: a process that analyses cultural practices which create and perpetuate white power, in order to challenge and deconstruct these practices. The challenge to white privilege is unlikely to diminish, Steyn (2001:164) comments that “[g]lobally, whites are a numerical minority ... and the ideology of white superiority ... is being challenged ... whiteness is less and less likely to retain its privileged position”.

2.4.1 South African whiteness studies

South African whiteness studies is of particular importance to my exploration of white South African masculinity performativities. Steyn (2001:xxii) says: “The particularities of South Africa’s historical process, which include the nation’s demographic profile, the extremely radicalized nature of the society, and the recent disruption of old power structures ... make a study of Whiteness [in South Africa] very revealing”. In the context of this study, van der Watt’s (2003:33) statement that an “analysis of whiteness per se, especially by a younger generation of white artists, has emerged as an important area of inquiry” is particularly appropriate (see van der Watt 2003:34-39).

¹⁵For example, in the United States, Jewish and Irish people only relatively recently became accepted as ‘white’ (see Ignatiev 1995).

As noted in Chapter One, *Whiteness just isn't what it used to be* (Steyn 2001) and *Under construction: 'Race' and identity in South Africa today* (Distiller & Steyn 2004) are the primary texts I consulted on South African whiteness. The texts argue that, in South Africa, whiteness is irrevocably linked to apartheid (Steyn 2001; Nuttall 2001; Vestergaard 2001; van der Watt 2003; Ballard 2004a&b). South African whiteness studies critique apartheid-era white supremacy and explore the emergence of post-apartheid reconceptualisations in white identities. South African whiteness studies forms part of, and is informed by, international studies of whiteness. Whiteness in South Africa is, however, unique; South Africa has its own history and distinct cultural, demographic and economic domains. South Africa's unique history makes it important to consider how emerging debates regarding whiteness in countries such as the UK and the USA are translated into a South African context. Although whiteness in South Africa is also equated with privilege, whites in South Africa are a minority. The "majority [of international literature on whiteness] focuses ... on contexts in which 'whiteness' is a majority position, and consequently easily justifiable as normative and dominant" (Salisbury & Foster 2004:93). South African whiteness studies differ to global whiteness studies insofar as global theorists argue a white ethnicity that "has been rendered invisible" (van der Watt 2003:1). In South Africa, whiteness was, and still is, never invisible, and this always visible whiteness has now, in post-apartheid South Africa, been unmasked as a "self-conscious, ambivalent and vulnerable construction" (van der Watt 2003:15).¹⁶

The demographic and economic situations in South Africa are unique. In Africa, South Africa is a dominant economy, and this economic power is still primarily in the control of whites, while black South Africans, in 2007, controlled less than 5% of South Africa's economic power (Mbembe 2007:1). In 2006, white households' share of consumption expenditure was 42,9% even though whites comprise only 9,2% of the population (Statistics SA 2009). Elsewhere in Africa, where there were instances of discrimination by a minority white population against the black majority, as in

¹⁶ Die Antwoord, a controversial South African band, appropriates and satirises, through their music and live stage acts, performances which "simultaneously construct, resist, maintain and challenge dominant discourses of white identity in South Africa" (Scott 2012). As discussed in Chapter Three, Kannemeyer's use satire to challenge and critique performances of white Afrikaner patriarchy which evoke contradictory responses in his viewers, thereby exposing an uncertainty on how to perform 'man' in contemporary South Africa.

Kenya, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), South West Africa (now Namibia), Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Mozambique and Angola, the number of whites remaining in these countries after independence form a small component (on average less than 2%) of their total population (CIA 2010). The relatively high number of whites in South Africa is an important component of how whiteness is constructed here. Steyn (2001:xxiv) observes that "the presence of a critical mass of settled Europeans in South Africa served to hold the wealth at 'home'. The white elite group was able to maintain power politically, economically, militarily, and culturally". With whites maintaining a relatively high settled mass of the total population, it can be surmised that "white South Africans, with their powerful economic interests, will remain a permanent presence in the country. In all likelihood they will continue to influence the course of South African history" (Steyn 2001:xxiv).

After the 1994 democratic elections, changes in the post-apartheid socio-economic environment cause most whites to renegotiate their identities as they try and adapt to new expectations (Steyn 2001:xxii). Van der Watt (2003:19) argues most whites find these new expectations alien and disorientating, that in post-apartheid South Africa the "norm of whiteness was suddenly fractured".¹⁷ In particular, South African white men find the change uncomfortable. They feel emasculated and believe they have lost status and power (Morrell 2001:33) and a failure to fulfil a particular masculine ideal may result in a crisis of identity (Viljoen 2008:314). White masculinity in post-apartheid South Africa is in crisis.

Steyn (2001) interprets the various ways white South Africans try to deal with this fundamental challenge to their sense of self. In her research she identifies five narratives. The first two narratives deny any change to white identities; whites still identify with racist assumptions of white privilege and do not accept any diminution to the historic dichotomous relationship of 'superior' whiteness and 'inferior' blackness. The remaining three narratives accept that white identity must change. The last narrative is of particular interest as it promotes the construct of new hybrid identities beyond whiteness (Steyn 2001:169). Whites in this narrative see their

¹⁷ Van der Watt notes the fracture that happens in works such as Paul Stopforth's triptych *The Interrogators* (1979) and Jane Alexander's *The Butcher Boys* (1985) which help to close the theoretical and practical focus on this fracture. More recent works such as Kannemeyer's *The Liberals* (2010) similarly expose an uncertainty in the performativity of post-apartheid whiteness.

whiteness as problematic and negotiate new hybrid identities within Africanist discourses which oppose any racist ideology that claim whites are superior to blacks. Although van der Watt (2003:20) regards Steyn's narratives as appearing anecdotal,¹⁸ it provides empirical proof that South African whiteness is more complex and nuanced than what historical stereotypes would suggest, and exposes the mechanisms of the crisis in South African whiteness.

Roger Ballard's (2004a) exploration of South African whiteness analyses how white South Africans try to maintain a sense of belonging in post-apartheid South Africa. Apartheid provided what many whites regarded as "islands of safety in a sea of threat" (Ballard 2004a:51). In post-apartheid South Africa, many whites feel their sense of safety threatened and adopt strategies they hope will help them retain a sense of psychological comfort (Ballard 2004a:51). Ballard's analysis identifies four broad strategies. His first strategy, assimilation, is similar to Steyn's (2001:67) first narrative, and displays a paternalistic attitude whereby whites attempt to assimilate and educate the other into their way of life, thereby negating their otherness and maintaining the white values status of their cities. The next two strategies deal with emigration, where whites who feel that assimilation is not feasible, emigrate to overseas Western environments, or semigration where, for personal or financial reasons, whites who cannot emigrate construct 'own' environments, such as privatised gated communities. Semigration is also the term Ballard uses for whites who relocate to Cape Town in the belief that Cape Town provides a location where whiteness is still the ideological majority. Ballard's final strategy, of integration, is similar to Steyn's (2001:123) fifth narrative, where whites do not expect the other to conform to white norms and welcome social mixing and social change.

Questioning of whiteness, post-apartheid, raises fears by some whites, which are similar to those during apartheid; the fear of mixing, losing power, privilege, identity, a sense of self. According to Ballard (2004a:58), these result in a degree of alienation and displacement, prompting whites to avoid areas where they feel they lack control, they attempt to find spaces within which white control can be

¹⁸Van der Watt (2003:20) regards Steyn's study as "frustrating because it does not adequately situate these narratives in the context of broader cultural and social events such as the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*".

maintained. Steyn (2001:25) states that "white South Africans have always been reminded of its tenuousness. The fear of being overrun, the fear of domination, the fear of cultural genocide ... these anxieties were always present".

Apartheid racism, as Ballard (2004a:52) points out, was useful to whites as it enhanced and confirmed their white identity and provided automatic privilege, economic status and political power. The physical separation of races enabled white South Africans to create comfort zones which allowed whites to reify their own whiteness through creating environments that facilitated an European sense of themselves, and removed "those people [whose] values, behaviours, languages which were seen to contradict this identity" (Ballard 2004a:51, 54).

Vulnerability in South African white identities became unmasked after 1990, when Nelson Mandela was freed from prison, and particularly after the first democratic elections in 1994, when whites were confronted with the fact that "in the new context, belonging could not be assumed" (Nuttall 2006:118). Nuttall (2006:135) observes that after 1994 "whiteness' no longer carries the same meanings that it did under colonisation or apartheid".

Nuttall (2001), in a more narrowly focused study than Steyn and Ballard in regard to reconceptualisations of white identity, subtly emphasises the fluidity and possibility of creolised, hybrid, South African white identities through her analysis of individual texts by South African whites who were involved in the struggle against apartheid; whites who are inside whiteness but also outside whiteness. Nuttall (2001:124) identifies "a distancing of the self from the self in the texts of Ruth First and First's daughter, Gillian Slovo". Her analysis suggests a particular complexity of white performativities; some identities shaped for public environments and others shaped for personal environments. Nuttall (2001:124) does not see a distancing in the texts of Joe Slovo, husband of First and father of Gillian, suggesting a gendered approach to whiteness and self-identity. The premise of gendered difference in how white South African identities construct themselves is interesting in the context of Butler's (1990:204) contention that masculinities are involved in the performativity of their particular identities; that the acts by which masculinities are performed are not a matter of choice. Nuttall's observation suggests that gendered role expectations differ.

2.4.2 Afrikaans/English binary

An Afrikaans/English binary is a historical complexity in South African whiteness which, apart from the black/white binary, influences and informs how South African white men construct their masculine performativities. Van der Watt (2003:23) describes South African whiteness as "seldom predictable according to ethnic or linguistic affiliations". There are, for example, different ways of being a white Afrikaner and, contrary to what many people may expect, not all white Afrikaners obsess about cultural survival, only a small section of white Afrikaners emphasise their numerical minority status (Vestergaard 2001:39).

According to Steyn (2004:153), South African whiteness, in part, is also defined in terms of the historic struggle between Afrikaans and English-speaking whites. Salusbury and Foster (2004:93) explore South African whiteness in terms of these two distinct, though inextricably entangled, groups. Steyn (2004:153) argues that many white English-speaking South Africans align themselves with Western international capitalist whiteness, but that white Afrikaners are outside this ideological centre. Nuttall (2006:117-118) attributes this identification by English-speaking South African whites with Europe to the history of white English settlers; the settler is identified as "coming from elsewhere ... [rather than] ... being of the place". As a consequence, South Africa becomes the foreign country, and white English-speaking South Africans, according to Nuttall (2006:117-118), therefore struggle to find a place within South Africa. Salusbury and Foster (2004:104) regard this affinity by English-speaking South African whites to emanate from the power in global capitalism, driven by European and American elites, which helped construct a global English-speaking white hegemonic culture. Nuttall (2006:118) suggests that this questioning of belonging by English-speaking South African whites has become more evident in post-apartheid South Africa, where the place and function of whiteness is questioned.

An accepted stereotype of white Afrikaner identity is one of a god-fearing Calvinist who submits to patriarchal authority, is traditionalist, nationalist, conservative and, above all, white (Vestergaard 2001:21). Of special significance to me, as a white Afrikaner who grew up during the apartheid-era, is Nuttall's (2001) evaluation of the text of the Afrikaans poet and writer, Antjie Krog. Nuttall (2001:127) states that Krog,

in her reporting on the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (TRC) hearings, recognises a dichotomous position in her as a white Afrikaner who loathes apartheid whilst identifying with the Afrikaner perpetrators of violence. Nuttall (2001:127) writes how “Krog sees clearly the ‘evil’ of the men of her race; she also expresses a certain familiarity”. This example of crisis in a white Afrikaner who, through recognising an indirect complicity to the atrocities of apartheid whilst simultaneously recognising a need to accept the past and reconceptualise a new hybrid post-apartheid identity, demonstrates one aspect of the existential crisis of South African whiteness. White Afrikaners are, more than English-speaking white South Africans, contending with an existential crisis (de Klerk 2000; van Zyl Slabbert 2000).

The particular complexities inherent in Afrikaner whiteness are explored by Vestergaard (2001) who analyses how white Afrikaners, as a group, are adapting to post-apartheid South Africa. Vestergaard (2001:19) divides white Afrikaner opinions into heterodoxy and orthodoxy, where heterodox Afrikaners welcome the challenges posed for whites living in post-apartheid South Africa, while orthodox Afrikaners resist change and cling to established historic values. Heterodox white Afrikaners are not as preoccupied by their performativity as orthodox white Afrikaners. Vestergaard (2001:29) found that opinion polls indicate most white Afrikaners are concerned with education, the economy, creation of jobs, and reduction of crime, and not their status as white Afrikaners.¹⁹ Heterodox Afrikaners prefer not to identify themselves as Afrikaners, but rather by their professional position or simply as South African (Vestergaard 2001:30).

South African whiteness studies has unique complexities that emanate from our history of apartheid, its subsequent collapse, and perceived differing identity constructs between white Afrikaans and white English-speaking South Africans. The fundamental changes in South Africa’s socio-political environment over the past two decades initiates a complete restructuring of how race is inscribed in post-apartheid South Africa and how whites renegotiate their place here. Achille Mbembe (2007:1) says: “The meaning of race and the nature of racial identity are now far more complex and ambiguous than they have ever been. Who is ‘black’, ‘Afrikaner’, ‘white’, ‘coloured’, ‘Asian’ or ‘African’ is no longer pre-fixed”, implying that for society to ‘see’ these categories, these identities require them to be performed. In the works

¹⁹ Vestergaard does not cite the details of the opinion polls to which she refers to.

selected for this study, Kannemeyer depicts the necessity for performativity particularly well, where for example in his narrative *Jeugweerbaarheid*, which is discussed in Chapter Three, the performance of Dr. Prof. Boela Malan is unmistakably that of a stereotypical Afrikaner patriarch. Similarly, Kentridge's representation of Soho Eckstein in *Mine*, discussed in Chapter Four, evokes the performance of an avaricious, pin-striped capitalist.

2.5 Masculinity

Masculinity, including hegemonic white masculinity, was, until recently, little researched. Most studies on gender favour feminist studies. Men, when they were studied, tended to be stereotyped, as the abuser, the oppressor, the patriarch, and were "neither the object nor the subject of study" (Reid & Walker 2005:6).

Raewyn Connell²⁰ (1995) developed the concept of hegemonic masculinity, which has considerable influence on the study of gender, masculinities, and social hierarchy (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:829). Connell (2005:830) proposes that masculinities be viewed in terms of four main structures, namely: dominant, complicit, submissive and oppositional. A 1980s study on social inequality in Australian high schools (Kessler et al. 1982) provides empirical evidence that masculinity is not a singular concept but consists of multiple hierarchical structures (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:830). Hegemony means gaining ascendancy through cultural practices, institutional practices, and persuasive discourse (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:832). Hegemonic masculinity requires that other men, and women, subordinate themselves to the hegemonic man. However, men and women who are subordinated are "likely to find ways, big and small, of resisting it" (Epstein 1998:54). Maintaining hegemony therefore, requires considerable effort (Epstein 1998:53). Although only a minority of men can enact hegemony (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:832), hegemonic masculinities are normative and regarded as the 'ideal'. Berger (1995:2) states that "[w]ithin the ideological structure of patriarchal culture, heterosexual masculinity has traditionally been structured as the normative gender".

²⁰Raewyn Connell is an Australian transgender woman who changed her name from Robert William Connell. Her writings have appeared under several different name forms including Bob Connell, Robert Connell, Robert W. Connell, Robert William Connell, R.W. Connell, R. Connell and Raewyn Connell.

2.5.1 South African white masculinities

Epstein (1998:49) regards South African white masculinities as “forged in the heat of apartheid and the struggle against the apartheid state”. With the collapse of apartheid, white South African masculinities are required to re-examine their masculine performativity. White South African men are reconceptualising their white masculine performativities in an environment where the historic racial and hegemonic identification of white men is collapsing (Morrell 2001:33). As with South African whiteness studies, any discussion of white South African masculinities must consider the distorting effect that apartheid had on masculine performativities. Apartheid transformed masculinities and created layers of different forms of masculinities, and race and class informed the configuration of separate hierarchies (Morrell 1998:605). Domination and subordination were racially structured, resulting in such strange and demeaning apartheid practices as, for example, whites referring to grown black men as ‘boys’ (Morrell 1998:605).

Stella Viljoen (2008:312) remarks that the hegemonic status of certain types of masculinity is sustained through the creation of a masculine ideal, the masculine ideal is perceived as dominant and other forms of masculine performativity is measured against this ideal. Viljoen (2008:313-315) explored men’s glossy magazines which promote the concept of a masculine ideal, and found that masculine performativity is “as powerful in a represented format as it is in ‘real life’ ...”. This masculine ideal, like all gender hierarchies, is based on historical norms and therefore changes as historical norms change (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:833). In post-apartheid South Africa, the historic white patriarchal system, particularly orthodox white Afrikaner patriarchy, is no longer accepted as the norm. The historic hegemonic white masculine ideal, a performance required to constantly respond to challenges, is changing in post-apartheid South Africa to accommodate new rival representations of masculinity.

Apartheid allowed racial discrimination to construct hegemonic masculinity overwhelmingly for white middle class men. It was, to paraphrase Morrell (1998:608), exclusive, anxiety-provoking, internally and hierarchically differentiated, brutal and often violent. In post-apartheid South Africa state-imposed practices and protocols, such as the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, which

requires companies to enhance participation of black management and black ownership, challenge the historic hegemonic economic status and assist in a restructuring of a black middle class of, mostly, men. Morrell (2001:20) regards the state as the paramount agent of change within white masculinity identity and a catalyst for transformation in the construction of white masculinities. Morrell (2001:21) suggests that all South African masculine performativities are unsettled and unsure of their place.²¹

The crisis in whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa and the concomitant anxiety felt by many white men may be ascribed to the speed of change which has caught many white South Africans off balance. The swiftness of this change and the challenge to white masculine hegemony is demonstrated in some South African television advertisements. Soon after 1994, judging by certain television advertisements flighted by various media houses, the target market of consumer industries enhanced their focus on black audiences (van der Watt 2003:24-28). South Africa is witnessing the emergence of a strong black middle-class consisting of professionals, skilled workers and entrepreneurs who are the most upwardly mobile group (Strelitz 2003:230). Many South African advertisements are representative of this changing cultural composition. This should not imply that consumer companies and media houses are negating white consumers, but rather highlights their awareness of rapidly increasing black purchasing power.²²

²¹As discussed in Chapter One, this study explores white masculinities in the context of my proposal that all masculinity performativities in South Africa, black and white, are in crisis. It is worthwhile therefore to note the recent (May 2012) public debate around the 'right to dignity' vs. 'freedom of artistic expression' that arose through a painting of South Africa's president, Jacob Zuma, by the white South African male artist Brett Murray. Murray opened his exhibition, entitled *Hail to the Thief II*, at the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg in May 2012. The exhibition includes a painting of President Zuma titled *The Spear* (2011), based on a poster of the Russian dictator Vladimir Lenin, representing the president with his pants unzipped and his penis hanging out. A week after the opening, South Africa's ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), demanded that the painting be removed. The gallery refused, causing front page exposure and a public outcry, particularly from black men who saw the painting as an affront to black masculinity and black values around dignity and decency. I do not discuss the merits or demerits of the various arguments, nor do I discuss the reconceptualisation of black masculine performativities in this study. I suggest, however, that, for me, the strong views expressed by particularly black males may indicate an ambiguity in black masculinities in how to structure their masculinity performances in post-apartheid South Africa. Murray's painting may prove to be an interesting case study for a future study which explores a suggested crisis in black South African masculinities.

²²A University of Cape Town research survey in 2008 found that South Africa's black middle class in 2008 had an estimated annual spending power of R250-billion and numbered three million people, representing a 15% annual growth rate in the number of people over the 2007 figure. Of significance is that despite predictions in 2008 that this sector was facing a financial melt-down due to debt pressure, black middle-class spending power increased by 34%, from R180 billion in 2007 to R250 billion in

An exploration of the tactics used by some media houses to attract this new base of customers is revealing. The use of humour in some advertisements is seemingly at the expense of white masculinities.²³ Most advertisements representing black South African men depicts them as comfortable in their environments, such as multi-racial business meetings, sporting events and multi-racial socialising, displaying a shift in hegemonic status. Another common theme in post-apartheid South African advertisements is one of unproblematic and idealised racial equality and harmony. Van der Watt (2003:122) describes and comments on the well-known (in South Africa) Castrol advertisements featuring two white men and a black man who work at a petrol station somewhere in rural South Africa. The image created is one of a harmonious team who, in companionship, observe the world going by.

It is debatable if advertisements can function as a barometer of change; however, the role of visual culture as a change agent is accepted. Grushka (2007:3) writes that "visual activities of popular culture shape representations and inform identities" and "[h]ow we see, what we see, and how the world is represented shapes who we are". Hall (in van Eeden & du Preez 2005:3) also suggests that "the world is constituted by representations that operate from positions of power" and Viljoen (2008:314) argues that people are subject to the homogenising effects of the media. If we accept these statements, then post-apartheid advertisements may mark where white masculinities fit in the broader cultural and social post-apartheid contexts.

The role of television advertisements in articulating masculine performativities is mostly ambiguous. It is probable that the representations of white South African masculine performances in advertisements differ from 'real' white masculine performativities. The advertisements do, however, indicate that white masculinities in South Africa are in flux and experiencing a shift in power relations. Steyn (2001:xxii) says: "People who staked much of their identity on their privileged whiteness are now subordinated politically in a country that is redefining itself as

2008. This growth in black middle class spending, despite the economic downturn, suggests that this segment is becoming wealthier. In 2007, black South Africans collective spending power grew by 11.7% and, in comparison, white South Africans' collective spending power increased by 2.2% (Black diamonds [sa].)

²³ For instance, a recent cellular phone company advertisement shows a black businessman parodying dancing practices of white men. The advertisement portrays a business meeting consisting of mostly black men, dressed in business suits. A participant asks the black male manager what he did the previous night, he shouts "dancing like a white guy" and gyrates like John Travolta in *Saturday Night Fever*. The participants laugh, including the few white men attending the meeting.

African". Television advertisements may not measure the extent of change, but do indicate that change is happening. The study of white masculinities in South Africa, as with South African whiteness, is far more complex, and is "fertile ground for the analysis of the many masculine ideals" (Viljoen 2008:321).

Contemporary South African television advertisements raise questions of social demotion of white masculinity. If we accept that apartheid played a major part in shaping historic masculine performativities, then a post-apartheid renegotiation in masculine performativities has an unsettling effect (Reid & Walker 2005:8). As masculinity "is constructed in the context of class, race and other factors" (Morrell 2001:8), a rapidly increasing black middle class place white men in post-apartheid South Africa in a double-bind, both their identities as whites and their performativities as white men are undermined. How white men are repositioning their performativities is discussed in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

2.6 Autoethnography and heteroglossia

As noted earlier, I apply autoethnography as a lens through which to observe and comment on South African white male performativities represented in particular works of Kannemeyer, Kentridge and my own. Through an autoethnographic lens I identify the heteroglot voices of the artist present in the selected works; a) the artist as the author; b) the artist as object; and c) the artist as subject in the works. Autoethnography is a type of ethnography and has a similar objective, to achieve cultural interpretation. However, autoethnography differs from traditional ethnography in that autoethnography incorporates self-observation and reflexive investigation (Maréchal 2010:43). As noted, Richardson (2000:15–16) describes five factors to evaluate autoethnographic texts²⁴ and here, I employ Richardson's factors of reflexivity and expression of lived reality to explore white masculine performances in the selected works. Observation and reflexivity within autoethnography contribute significantly to my autoethnographic lens through which I am able to focus on specific aspects in the personas of Kentridge, Kannemeyer and myself as represented through the performativities of the characters in our works. Pertinent to

²⁴Richardson's (2000:15–16) five factors are: a) substantive contribution - does the work contribute to understanding social life?; b) aesthetic merit - does the work succeed aesthetically?; c) reflexivity - how did the author come to write this text?; d) impactfulness - does the work affect the audience emotionally or intellectually?; and e) expresses a reality - does the work embody a sense of lived reality?

this study is the use of narrative, a methodology often used in constructing an autoethnographic text in the works of Kannemeyer and Kentridge. In Chapters Three and Four I emphasise Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's use of narrative which I identify as an autoethnographic vehicle to create meaning.

Using an autoethnographic approach to de-construct a visual narrative infers for some sociologists a concept of purpose, that an autoethnographic text must be useful in some way in helping create a better society.²⁵ Norman Denzin (2000:256) asks if an autoethnographic work has potential to cause change, and sociologist Peter Clough (2002:290) argues that a good autoethnographic text should motivate cultural criticism, that it should be aligned with reflection. The concept that the selected visual narratives of Kannemeyer and Kentridge may serve as vehicles to bring about change is complex and difficult, and not a claim that either Kannemeyer or Kentridge make. Kentridge, as discussed in Chapter Four, specifically denies having any personal objective to achieve political change through his *Drawings for projection* series. However, in Chapters Three and Four, I explore and discuss how scholars, who have studied their works, perceive how the performativities of Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's characters may influence socio-political change in South Africa.

Autoethnography is a broad category,²⁶ and varies in its approach in how to construct a text (see Ellingson & Ellis 2008). My approach to autoethnography is evocative, in that I explore how the masculine performativities of the characters represented in the selected works function to parody and criticise white South African masculinities. I examine how Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I respectively construct performances which comment on white masculine performativities in South Africa during and after apartheid. As noted earlier, I analyse the artist's three voices of author, object and subject, filtered through contexts of constructivist identity theory, South African whiteness studies, gender performativity theory and masculinity theory. This approach can be aligned to Cunningham and Jones (2005)

²⁵Ellis (2004:126) suggests that an autoethnographic text should be judged on the usefulness of its story, rather than only on its accuracy.

²⁶The sociologist Deborah Reed-Danahay (1997:2) explains how autoethnographic texts vary in their emphasis on the research process (*graphy*), culture (*ethnos*), and self (*auto*). Researchers differentiate between analytic autoethnography and evocative autoethnography. Analytic autoethnographic texts emphasise theoretical explanations and evocative autoethnographic texts emphasise narrative presentations that evoke conversation, even emotional responses (Ellingson & Ellis 2008:445).

who discuss autoethnography, in art, as an approach whereby artists apply reflexivity in attempts to understand their own behaviours and own individual contexts within the wider socio-political environment, resulting in reflexive art works that comment on their understanding. I expand on the approach of Cunningham and Jones to focus on how Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I comment reflexively on our respective understanding of white masculine performativities in South Africa. By satirising historic performances of white South African masculinities, Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's visual narratives undermine and fracture conventional understandings of white South African masculine performativity. Their visual narratives represent more than what the surface imagery may suggest. Through reflexivity Kannemeyer and Kentridge create complex commentaries on white masculine performativity which subverts any assumption that the works are a transparent window on the world.

Autoethnography as a research process is not universally accepted and carries a degree of academic suspicion.²⁷ Using an autoethnographic approach, however, allows me to explore the selected artworks through the artists' heteroglot voices of author, object and subject and provides insight into how issues of identity construction, gender performativity, whiteness, race, hegemony, and socio-political change are represented in the selected works.

Approaching the selected visual narratives as apparently autobiographical texts does not automatically qualify them as autoethnographic. This implies that before I can label the selected works of Kannemeyer and Kentridge as autoethnographic, I must not only consider how the artists depict performances of masculinity in the selected works, but also rely on claims to autoethnographic content made by the artists (Ellingson & Ellis 2008:449). Such claims are, however, not always resolved by simply asking the artists what their works might mean; the autoethnographic process is a relatively recent postmodernist construct (Reed-Danahay 1997) and seldom consciously practised in a visual context. The artists may not be overtly

²⁷The use of the self as the primary source in a qualitative research project in producing an autoethnographic text is questioned (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). Some autoethnographic texts have been criticised as self-indulgent (Coffey 1999). A dichotomy exists between representation and legitimacy: how legitimately the artist can represent the social world, is questioned (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). Another criticism of an autoethnographic approach is that it is exploratory, personal and full of bias (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:4). As a research approach, many quantitative researchers regard autoethnography as unreliable and not objective (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:5).

aware of any autoethnographic elements in their work: the presence of autoethnographic content in the selected works is inferred from what the artists say in their own writings or in interviews. Autoethnography can be associated with autobiography in that autobiography also foregrounds lived reality to evoke meaning (Maréchal 2010:43).

This strategy helps me explore gender performativity of white masculinities in Kannemeyer's *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*; in Kentridge's *Mine*, *History of the main complaint* and *Other faces* and in my body of work, *Performing 'man'*. Through autoethnography I focus on the artists' three voices in the selected works, and specifically on how the artists reveal them. Examples of how Kentridge and Kannemeyer reveal their author and object voices are provided through the physical similarities between Kentridge and Soho in *Other Faces* and the factual correctness of Kannemeyer's lived reality of arrogant patriarchy in *Jeugweerbaarheid*. The autoethnographic lens also allows me to recognise the subject-voice in the narratives, for example, Kentridge's parody of racist capitalism through Soho's performance in *Mine*.

I regard the visual narratives I selected for analysis in Chapters Three and Four as proxy for how Kannemeyer and Kentridge observe and reflect on the changing socio-political context in South Africa over the past two decades. I explore how Kannemeyer and Kentridge comment on particular performances of white masculinity within their wider social, political and personal lived realities through their construction of performativities of white masculinity in the selected works. I consider autoethnography to be an appropriate tool to analyse Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's visual texts and my body of work, as autoethnography negates oppositions between the artists' objectivity and subjectivity and between the art process and art product (Ellingson & Ellis 2008:450-459). An example of how the autoethnographic lens achieves this is outlined in Chapter Four: how Kentridge gradually increases Soho's features over the *Drawings for projection* series to become a recognisable self-portrait and how Soho's performativity morphs from that of a confident South African white capitalist in *Mine* to melancholic uncertainty in *Other faces*.

In Chapters Three, Four and Five I explore how Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I respectively deploy our heteroglot voices through the depicted performances of masculinity. I analyse how Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I perform as authors of our respective visual narratives as well as performing different kinds of white masculinity through our object-voice characters.



3 CHAPTER THREE: PERFORMING WHITE AFRIKANER MASCULINITIES IN KANNEMEYER'S *JEUGWEERBAARHEID* AND *BOETIE*

3.1 Aims and objectives

Chapter Three explores, through an autoethnographic lens, gender performativity of white masculinities depicted in two of Kannemeyer's visual narratives. The works I choose to analyse, *Jeugweerbaarheid* (1994), translated as 'youth preparedness', and *Boetie* (1995), translated as 'Sonny', are drawn visual narratives first published in issues four and five respectively of the *Bitterkomix* series of satirical comic strips. I choose these two narratives as both are sourced from emotive experiences within Kannemeyer's lived reality and both depict what I regard as particularly successful representations of white Afrikaner patriarchal abuse. Kannemeyer explores and questions in these two narratives, as he does in the rest of his *Bitterkomix* strips, what it means to perform being a white Afrikaner man in South Africa.

Kannemeyer and Conrad Botes co-founded *Bitterkomix* in 1992 while studying at the University of Stellenbosch. As described in Chapter Two, I apply Richardson's (2000:15–16) factors of reflexivity as well as her expression of lived reality to operationalise an autoethnographic lens which focuses on white masculine performativity within *Boetie* and *Jeugweerbaarheid*. Through the performances of white Afrikaner masculinity represented in the narratives, I am able to identify Kannemeyer's heteroglot voices of author; object, which, in the selected narratives, is performed through Kannemeyer's alter-ego characters, Max Plant, Joe Dog and Sonny; and subject, through which he creates the content of the narratives. These three voices of Kannemeyer are not independent, but function together to construct the depicted masculine performativities, and reveal how Kannemeyer reflexively reinterprets aspects from his lived reality in order to comment on Afrikaner patriarchy. The autoethnography in the narratives is derived from the combination of how Kannemeyer reinterprets his lived reality and how he uses these reinterpretations to structure performances of masculinity which reveal Kannemeyer's heteroglot voices of author, object and subject in the work.

I approach *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* therefore, as autoethnographic narratives which are informed by Kannemeyer's lived reality as a white, Afrikaner male who

grew up under apartheid and was forced to subscribe to Calvinist patriarchal white Afrikaner values. In order to identify *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* as autoethnographic I analyse the relationship between the performances of the characters depicted in the narratives and Kannemeyer's lived reality, which I establish through the literature as well as comments made by Kannemeyer in regard to autobiographical content in the works. I argue that Kannemeyer's use of specific aspects from his lived reality of white Afrikanerness as a strategic communicative device in the narratives, and can therefore be regarded as intentional.

Positioning *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* as autoethnographic allows me to investigate the nature of Kannemeyer's performativity as an insider in the works, how the performativity of the white male Afrikaner characters depicted in *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* function to infer the presence of Kannemeyer in the narratives. In a context of *Bitterkomix* as a "psychosexual, socio-historical critique of Afrikaner culture and South African society" (Mason 2006:7), I approach *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* as proxy for the complexities inherent in defining and framing white Afrikaner South African masculine performativities. I explore how Kannemeyer's visual narratives autoethnographically identify with what he considers to be a wider collective white Afrikaner lived reality, questioning what it means to be a white Afrikaans man in post-apartheid South Africa. As noted in Chapter Two, my approach to autoethnography is evocative, meaning I focus on how Kannemeyer uses reflexivity as a subjective process to operationalise performances of white Afrikaner masculinity that not only comment on his own lived reality of white Afrikaner masculinity under apartheid, but also critiques historic white Afrikaner values and satirise performativities within historic Afrikaner patriarchy. I analyse how Kannemeyer, through *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, comments on the wider performativities of white Afrikaner patriarchal masculinities in South Africa, how, in a context of reconceptualisation of white masculinity performativities in post-apartheid South Africa, Kannemeyer represents the influence of oppressive Afrikaner patriarchy on a contemporary existential crisis in white Afrikaner men.

The overarching discourses that influence the context of my exploration are South Africa's apartheid past and the historic construct of white Afrikaner patriarchy. However, as stated in Chapter Two, performances of Afrikaner identity, like all identity constructs, are neither fixed nor unambiguous, but always historically and

culturally contingent. I realise that this contingency is easily forgotten and people tend to naturalise different social groups according to characteristics believed objective and stable, even essential. From my own experience, I perceive that many South Africans, including white Afrikaners, still regard most white Afrikaners as orthodox. My primary objective in this chapter, however, is not to investigate people's perception of white Afrikaner patriarchy, but to explore Kannemeyer's satirical representation of white Afrikaner patriarchal performativity in *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, as informed through Kannemeyer's lived reality of whiteness, masculinity, patriarchy and Afrikanerness. The objective of this chapter then is to analyse the intertextuality between Kannemeyer's lived reality and how the represented performances reveal Kannemeyer's heteroglot voices in *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*. Kannemeyer (2010a), referring to the influence of lived reality on his narratives, says: "I think it's initially important to work from close personal experience; those issues and references are more authentic than trying to create some sort of general 'international' message". The autobiographic elements within *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* form part of the autoethnographic analysis, how Kannemeyer's object-voice in the narratives is revealed through the performances of his alter-egos and his subject-voice is inferred from the content of the narrative.

Throughout the *Bitterkomix* series Kannemeyer uses alter-egos to narrate and perform in his narratives. This use of alter-ego characters is an important factor in establishing *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* as autoethnographic texts. Joe Dog, Kannemeyer's main alter-ego and the narrator in *Boetie*, is a visual articulation of Kannemeyer's physical features throughout *Bitterkomix*. In *Jeugweerbaarheid*, which Kannemeyer published before *Boetie*, his alter ego object-voice is a character named Max Plant, who is "based on a real character, a student who had an interesting face ..." (Kannemeyer 2011). After *Boetie*, Kannemeyer decided to primarily use Joe Dog as his alter-ego (Kannemeyer 2011).

An analysis of Kannemeyer's process of narrating performativities of white Afrikaner identity through an alter-ego reveals discrepancies between his alter-ego identities and Kannemeyer's perceived public persona. These discrepancies define *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* as autoethnography rather than autobiography. As Kannemeyer remarks: "... people have quoted me before as Anton Kannemeyer

when it was something said by Joe Dog, and I feel that I didn't say it, it was a character, Joe Dog, who said it, and there is a difference". This remark by Kannemeyer is interesting as he suggests a self-conscious distancing between his voices of 'artist-as-author' and 'artist-as-object' in order to nuance his reinterpreted lived reality that serves as content of the narratives. Kannemeyer is using his alter-ego object-voice to perform narratives that he may otherwise find too difficult or potentially offensive to perform as Kannemeyer. Joe Dog can say and do things that Kannemeyer cannot, or will not.

I perceive Kannemeyer's lived reality to be a major influence on his artistic processes, his style of drawing, his choice of imagery and subject and how he portrays performances of white Afrikaner masculinity within his visual narratives. Kannemeyer's approach allows him to structure the performativities in his narratives in such a way that his readers, those who identify with the narratives, are able to recognise the context and can relate the context to their own lived reality. When I, as an Afrikaner white male, reflect on Kannemeyer's work, I am aware of identifying with where I come from, who I was and who I am and how I am constructing and reconstructing my identity as a white man in relation to the society and culture I grew up in and the society and culture in which I now reside. In Chapter Five I analyse my personal lived reality which incorporates being both inside and outside a specific cultural set at the same time.

3.2 Kannemeyer's lived reality

Kannemeyer, in *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, does not display his lived reality simply as events, but as specific circumstances to which a viewer can relate to and believe have happened. It is important to Kannemeyer that readers should be able to identify with his narratives. Kannemeyer (2011) says, for him "autobiography ... must be able to relate to everyone. If everyone²⁸ cannot identify with the story and with that character situation then it becomes self-indulgent ...".

In the context of South Africa in the 1980s, when *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* are situated, Kannemeyer appropriates performances of traditional white Afrikaner

²⁸ Kannemeyer's use of the term 'everyone' is, I suggest, used loosely. *Bitterkomix*'s target audience of young white heterodox Afrikaners is not 'everyone'. Many readers of *Bitterkomix* find it sacrilegious and pornographic.

stereotypes from his lived reality in order to comment, critique and satirise the values and performativities within white Afrikaner patriarchy. Throughout the *Bitterkomix* series, Kannemeyer uses elements from his lived reality in order to allow viewers, who recognise and empathise with the context, to identify with his narratives, even if they may not agree with his depictions of the particular performances of sex and violence. Mason (2010:189) states that “themes of outrage and resistance to the dominant cultural ideology of obedience and sexual repression became powerfully evident as Kannemeyer evolved a versatile, incisive style of social criticism, strongly informed by autobiographical themes”.

Jeugweerbaarheid and *Boetie* can, within this context, be defined as interpretative narratives, where Kannemeyer appropriates memories from his lived reality to operationalise performances of white Afrikaner patriarchal masculinity to comment on his lived reality and the ideological cultural environment within which it occurred. The use of autobiography seems important to Kannemeyer, he says: “To me, autobiography stands in service to the final art work; it needs to convey the message clearly. So if the autobiography then has to become fiction, that is OK, in the end the message I am trying to put across is the most important” (Kannemeyer 2011). Therefore, although sourced from lived reality, the depicted performances should not be interpreted as indicative of historical fact, but rather as a referential text. Martin Löschnigg (2006:2) argues that where “[a] conception of the autobiographical act [is] as a creative rather than a mimetic process ... autobiography then oscillates between the factual and the fictional”, and Ellis (2004:126) suggests that an autoethnographic text should be judged on the usefulness of its story, rather than only on its accuracy. In my autoethnographic analysis of Kannemeyer's narratives the autobiographic element is but a part of the narrative.

3.3 Kannemeyer's white Afrikaner heritage

Kannemeyer was born into an Afrikaans family in 1967. His father, John Kannemeyer, was a well-known academic authority on Afrikaans literature and a respected figure in the white Afrikaner community. Kannemeyer grew up in Linden, a middle-class suburb of Johannesburg. Kannemeyer's visual narratives in *Bitterkomix*, such as depicted in *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, suggest that he did

not enjoy a childhood filled with many happy memories and that he had a difficult relationship with his father. In response to a question in regard to the performance of the father figure in *Boetie*, Kannemeyer replied: "For me it's not about putting my father on the spot, but dealing with issues we had. And we resolved it. I mean, he said he didn't want to know me anymore and that resolved it. ... I think the idea of the family is a bit overrated" (de Vries 2007:2).

Kannemeyer attended the Afrikaans high school, Linden Hoërskool, during the early and middle 1980s (Kannemeyer 1997:50). The 1980s was a time of great uncertainty for young white men in South Africa.²⁹ A focus in my analysis of *Jeugweerbaarheid* is to explore how, under the pretext of the need to 'protect' white South Africa against the 'total onslaught'³⁰ of communism and the 'swart gevaar' (black danger), the ruling National Party government of the time, paranoid in maintaining white privilege, used political power to enforce various measures in attempts to 'prepare' the white youth of South Africa for the expected 'onslaught'. One of the measures, the repressive Christian National Education system, is a focus for Kannemeyer's outrage in *Jeugweerbaarheid*.

In Chapter Two I discussed how apartheid centred white Afrikaners as a 'group', how it is still difficult, in post-apartheid South Africa, to separate traditional white Afrikaner values from apartheid. An accepted white Afrikaner stereotype for many South Africans, including white Afrikaners, is still one of a god-fearing Calvinist who submits to patriarchal authority, is traditionalist, nationalist, conservative and, above all, white (Vestergaard 2001:21). Considering his subject matter, satirical approach, and use of sex and violence throughout the *Bitterkomix* series, Kannemeyer's visual

²⁹ From 1952 until the ending of apartheid in 1994, South Africa enforced a system of military conscription for white males, initially on a ballot basis but after 1967 conscription was compulsory for all medically fit white South African males. From the mid-1970s military service included fighting in Angola and South West Africa (now Namibia), as well as often within the black townships of South Africa. Conscription impacted all aspects of social life, many young white men tried to avoid conscription by exiling themselves overseas or, like Kannemeyer, prolonging their studies indefinitely. Many others simply dodged the call-up by evading the military police. The penalties were severe; prison terms of up to six years were handed to some youths for refusing to comply (End conscription campaign [sa]).

³⁰ In 1977 the National Party government published a White Paper spelling out their belief that white South Africans faced a 'total onslaught' against white privilege from some of its neighbouring countries and from freedom organisations within South Africa. The 'total onslaught' theme was 80% socio-economic, the primary objective therefore being to achieve the co-operation of the white population in preparing for the expected onslaught. Christian National Education was the main vehicle aimed at preparing the white youth for 'total onslaught'. Christian National Education was introduced to the South African education system soon after the National Party came to power in 1948. (Total onslaught [sa]).

narratives suggest that Kannemeyer does not accept traditional Afrikaner values. In *Bitterkomix* he satirises traditional Afrikaner values so forcefully that, although the narratives are not overtly anti-apartheid, they could be aligned with an anti-establishment and by implication, anti-apartheid stance. Kannemeyer does not regard himself as a political artist, he says: "I am a satirist. I regard my work as a very pedestrian take on politics. I actually find politics a bit boring. ... I get caught up in politics now and then and I want to run away from it screaming" (Kannemeyer 2011).

However, many of Kannemeyer's narratives in *Bitterkomix* can, I suggest, be interpreted as political, for example, the visual narrative *Black* (2000), which appeared in *Bitterkomix 10* in Afrikaans as *Swart*. In *Black*, Kannemeyer's alter-ego object-voice, Joe Dog, visits his friend, Tienie, where they talk about "the new South Africa" (*The Best of Bitterkomix volume 2*, 2002:13). Tienie tells Joe Dog about his new black neighbours and their child who is a playmate of Tienie's child. Kannemeyer illustrates the neighbour's son as a black *Tintin* using Hergé's clear line way of drawing. *Tintin* is a well-known, if now controversial, cartoon character created in 1929 by the Belgian artist Georges Remi, better known through his cartoon series of books, as Hergé.³¹ Through appropriating Hergé's characters and drawing style, Kannemeyer risks engaging with post-colonial discourse and the controversy surrounding the racism perceived in Hergé's cartoon series. However, considering Kannemeyer's practice of deliberately employing controversial material to provoke a reaction, this is probably intentional.

Tienie's son gives the neighbour's son a *Tintin* book to read. The boy returns the book to Tienie stating that his Dad does not want him to read the book, as it is a racist book. Joe Dog leaves, and at his studio he consults the 1979 edition of the *Verklarende handwoordeboek van die Afrikaanse taal* (Expository dictionary of the Afrikaans language), wherein he looks up the origin of a number of racially charged,

³¹ Hergé published a total of 24 *Tintin* narratives. The second *Tintin* adventure (which is the fourth book in the series), *Tintin in the Congo* (1931), is the most controversial. In the book the Congolese are depicted as semi-naked imbeciles, lazy, and almost unable to think for themselves, patronised by pith helmeted and safari suit-clad Belgians. Hergé never visited the Congo and drew his knowledge from the writings of missionaries. Interestingly, *Tintin in the Congo* was first controversial not for racism but for *Tintin's* contempt for wildlife. Hergé later became embarrassed by his portrayals in *Tintin in the Congo* and in the 1946 edition cut many of the references to Belgium and colonial rule. Whether Hergé himself was a racist, or simply reflected the attitude of Belgians in the 1930s, is unknown (Ritman 2011).

colloquial Afrikaans words (Figure 1). In the last panel of the narrative Kannemeyer satirises, through Joe Dog, the irony in the fear held by many orthodox white Afrikaners that Afrikaans as a language is under threat of losing its 'purity', becoming creolised. Joe Dog is outraged that a language which accepts into its lexicon such reprehensible terminologies as represented in *Black*, have champions calling for its preservation as a 'pure' language. In *Black* Kannemeyer represents his "outrage in the way in which apartheid's discourse of racism was expressed ..." (Barnard 2004:744).



Figure 1: Anton Kannemeyer. *Black* (2002). Pen and ink on paper. (The best of Bitterkomix volume 2, 2002:13). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Although Kannemeyer's primary focus in *Bitterkomix* is the hated patriarchal authority figures from his childhood, it is difficult to avoid the association between white Afrikaners and apartheid. Describing apartheid's hegemonic influence on the construct of Afrikanerness, Aletta Norval (1996:300) says: "One either stayed within the horizon delineated by apartheid discourse, or one fell outside of it; one either engaged in 'loyal resistance', or one became a traitor to the Afrikaner cause". In this context Kannemeyer could be described as a traitor. This dichotomous nature in white Afrikanerness, an orthodox/heterodox binary, is an important factor in my analysis of white Afrikaner patriarchal masculine performativities in *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*.

I am careful not to define Kannemeyer as a stereotype or metaphor for 'rebellious' heterodox white masculine Afrikanerness. Accepting that there is no homogeneity in the diverse aspects which define whiteness, masculinity, or Afrikanerness, I approach Kannemeyer's work within a discourse of performativity of white South African masculinities during and after apartheid, and not as a study of heterodoxy or orthodoxy within white Afrikaner performativities.

3.4 *Bitterkomix*

Kannemeyer (along with Conrad Botes, the co-founder of *Bitterkomix*) used the *Bitterkomix* series of cartoon publications to vent his anger and outrage at the hated patriarchal authority figures of his youth. Most of Kannemeyer's visual narratives in *Bitterkomix*, such as *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, contain autoethnographic elements as evidenced through the guise of Kannemeyer's most often used object-voice, Joe Dog, who, throughout *Bitterkomix*, narrates and performs reinterpreted events from Kannemeyer's lived reality. Almost all of Kannemeyer's visual narratives in *Bitterkomix* reveal an undercurrent of outrage. Kannemeyer's antagonism towards traditional white Afrikaner cultural ideology, delivered via performances of arrogant abuse of authority by his father, teachers, and *dominees*,³² is evident throughout *Bitterkomix*. This element of outrage against Afrikaner ideology contributes greatly to the identifiable personal language that Kannemeyer brings to his art practice. Kannemeyer (2010a) says: "We both [Kannemeyer and Botes] had an Afrikaans background, and both pretty much rejected most of the Afrikaner ideology. We were

³² A *dominee* is an Afrikaans term for a minister in any of the Afrikaner churches in South Africa.

bitter and hell-bent on hitting back, fighting against the army, the schools, our parents and religion”.

Bitterkomix developed into a publication that, for its orthodox young white Afrikaner readers, unmasked and challenged white Afrikaner patriarchal hegemony. Michael Morris (2006:47) refers to *Bitterkomix* as revealing “the neuroses and hypocrisies of patriarchal and conservative white ... and particularly Afrikaner society”. Morris (2006:47) quotes the co-founder of *Bitterkomix*, Botes, who said that “[t]he thing about the Afrikaner is that we’re always hiding things. And above the surface there is that pretence of righteousness”. *Bitterkomix* subscribes to an overt anti-patriarchy agenda, through which Kannemeyer and Botes aim to create commentary which questions how to perform white Afrikaner masculinity in post-apartheid South Africa. By sourcing his narratives from his lived reality, Kannemeyer legitimises *Bitterkomix* for its readers. However, *Bitterkomix* is, I argue, autoethnography and not autobiography. Autobiography implies a truthful, factual and formal narrative whereas Ellis’ (2004:126) suggestion that autoethnography should be judged on the usefulness of its story, rather than only on its accuracy, a criterion that, I propose, applies to Kannemeyer’s *Bitterkomix* narratives. Kannemeyer (2011) says that: “... in *Bitterkomix* the autobiography was in many places the point of departure, but it is not necessarily ... autobiographic”.

Kannemeyer’s and Botes’s rejection of white Afrikaner ideology through *Bitterkomix* becomes apparent, *inter alia*, in works such as the cover of *Bitterkomix 5* (1995) (Figure 2), which features a young white woman, dressed in underwear, stockings and wearing a ‘kappie’ (bonnet) on her head. The kappie was traditionally worn by Voortrekker women and is a symbol for white Calvinist Afrikaner moral values and Afrikaner history. The irony in the image is further contextualised through the by-line “Ek sal vergewe, maar nie vergeet nie” (I will forgive but not forget), a direct reference to the inscription on the Vrouemonument³³ (Women’s monument) in Bloemfontein, and the contrasting captions on the bottom of the cover “seks” (sex), “dwelms” (drugs), “geweld” (violence), and “plesier” (pleasure). Conservative white Afrikaners will find the association of Afrikaner ‘purity’ and suffering, as symbolised

³³ The Vrouemonument was erected in memory of the women and children who died in concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902.

by the kappie and the by-line, with scantily clad women, sex, drugs and violence extremely insulting.



Figure 2: Anton Kannemeyer. *Bitterkomix* 5 (1995). Pen, ink and watercolour on paper. (*Bitterkomix* 5 cover page). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

As noted in Chapter Two, by using an autoethnographic lens to focus on *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, I am able to identify Kannemeyer's heteroglot voices of author, object and subject in the works, and how Kannemeyer applies reflexivity to position the narratives as vehicles to create meaning through satirical representation of white Afrikaner patriarchal performativities. Through his satiric performances, Kannemeyer undermines and fractures conventional understandings of white Afrikaner masculine performativities.

3.5 Analysis of *Jeugweerbaarheid*

Kannemeyer's *Jeugweerbaarheid*, which first appeared in *Bitterkomix 4* (1994), is a story of white Afrikaner patriarchal repression. A *dominee* of the *Aasvoëlkop* congregation in the Dutch Reformed Church, in Linden, Johannesburg (Figure 5), Dr. Prof. Boela Malan, lectures schoolchildren from the Linden High School, the same school that Kannemeyer attended in the 1980s, on the sins and shame of sex and masturbation. Kannemeyer writes that Dr. Prof. Boela Malan "quotes profusely from the bible to prove his argument" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:10). The use of biblical text to motivate apartheid ideology as divinely sanctioned was common practice prior to 1994. Even before apartheid patriarchal authority was entrenched in Afrikaner social life, patriarchy was justified in terms of biblical texts. Biblical endorsement of the principal of patriarchal authority allowed Afrikaans churches and schools to normalise white, racist patriarchy with the majority of Afrikaner men and women accepting it as natural.³⁴ Through the then ruling National Party government, which embraced patriarchy as its driving force, white Afrikaner patriarchy wielded power in all facets of society.

Jeugweerbaarheid, apart from being a narrative of repulsive white Afrikaner repression, reveals the negative impact that such performativities had on the schoolchildren. In the mid-1980s the apartheid government's Christian National Education system served to enforce and normalise the racial division of society. During the 1970s and 1980s the National Party government perceived the threat to its racist hegemony to be increasing and implemented measures, such as its Christian National Education programme, to maintain white privilege. The goal was to normalise a military culture in the white youth, thereby preventing the development of non-conformist or rebellious behaviour. In white government schools, which operated on the Christian National Education model, the retention of apartheid, and particularly the retention of authority in white Afrikaner patriarchy, was a specific goal. These racist values were indoctrinated in schoolchildren via programmes such as military school cadet practices; veld-schools and the practice of rigid school rules (see Kannemeyer 1997). Through their 'Youth Preparedness' (*Jeugweerbaarheid*) programme the National Party government enforced white

³⁴ The use of the term natural is made in the context of divinely ordained, as opposed to a concept which is constructed or man-made.

schoolboys to learn military drill exercises and all white schoolchildren were indoctrinated with a belief in dominance and subordination of the other, a paranoid belief motivated by fear. In this environment of fear and suspicion, authoritarianism and militarism became even more intertwined with the ideal of white Afrikaner masculinity. Epstein (1998:49) states that South African white masculinities “were forged in the heat of apartheid”.

In the 1980s white Afrikaner authority in South Africa vested in the National Party government, which was dominated by the *Broederbond*.³⁵ The Christian National ideology of the *Broederbond* was propagated and enforced through white Afrikaner churches, white Afrikaner schools and in white Afrikaner family homes. As Kannemeyer suggests in *Jeugweerbaarheid*, the impact of such enforced ideology on how young white masculine identities are constructed, can be debilitating. A post-apartheid crisis of identity experienced by many white Afrikaner males can be attributed to the influence that performances of Afrikaner ‘leadership’, such as those of Dr. Prof. Boela Malan, had over young white Afrikaners. It is interesting that *Jeugweerbaarheid* was first published in September 1994, by which time the ANC was unbanned, Nelson Mandela had been released and the first democratic elections were held. The publishing of *Jeugweerbaarheid* as a narrative which explores both the lived reality of Kannemeyer and the enforcement of an apartheid value system, suggests that Kannemeyer’s intention in *Jeugweerbaarheid* is reflexive, to provide a sense of catharsis.

The negative impact of repressive patriarchal authority is graphically narrated on the first page (Figure 3) of *Jeugweerbaarheid*. Kannemeyer’s object-voice, Max Plant, states that “youth preparedness was one of those unique experiences that marked me for life and fucked the minds of my friends” (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1*

³⁵ The *Afrikaner Broederbond* was created in 1918 to maintain Afrikaner culture, develop an Afrikaner economy, and to gain control of the South African government. During the 1930s the *Afrikaner Broederbond* became increasingly political, and evolved into a highly influential ‘secret’ society. Most of the chairmen of the *Afrikaner Broederbond* came from traditional white Afrikaner academia, in public life they served as *dominees* in Afrikaner churches or professors in Afrikaans universities. This link to Afrikaner academia helped entrench the *Afrikaner Broederbond*’s ideology through Afrikaner churches and especially through Afrikaans educational systems and institutions. It was within this society that the concept of total segregation for South Africa was developed. Every prime minister and state president in South Africa from 1948 to the end of apartheid in 1994 was a member of the *Afrikaner Broederbond*. Once the National Party came to power in 1948, all key governmental posts were allocated to *Afrikaner Broederbond* members. In 1993 the *Afrikaner Broederbond* decided to end the secrecy and under its new name, *Afrikanerbond*, opened membership to women and other races (Afrikaner Broederbond [sa]).

2001:9). Max Plant, who is also the main character in “*Max kom terug*” (Max comes back) in *Bitterkomix 6*, is based on a real character (Kannemeyer 2011). Before *Boetie*, Kannemeyer often used Max Plant as his alter-ego, but after *Boetie* he almost exclusively used Joe Dog instead (Kannemeyer 2011).

Kannemeyer introduces *Jeugweerbaarheid* as “A Max Plant adventure” (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:9). The use of Max Plant, a Kannemeyer object-voice alter-ego, suggests that *Jeugweerbaarheid* is sourced from Kannemeyer’s lived reality, and Kannemeyer (2011) confirms that “[e]verything in *Jeugweerbaarheid* is real”. Apart from Kannemeyer confirming its actuality, *Jeugweerbaarheid*’s autobiographical elements are revealed from its context. The school in Linden, where Kannemeyer grew up, the school crest displayed on the lectern, the church, *Aasvoëlkop Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk* (Dutch Reformed Church) in Northcliff, Johannesburg, all exist, while the main protagonist, Dr. Prof. Boela Malan, is also based on a real person.



Figure 3: Anton Kannemeyer. *Jeugweerbaarheid* (2001). Pen and ink on paper (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1*, 2001:9). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Kannemeyer appropriates a typical traditional Afrikaner ‘hero’ stereotype (Figure 4) to represent the performance of the physical tuition teacher in the narrative. The teacher displays many of the props used in performing the role of an ‘ideal’ Afrikaner masculinity; he is a burly, white, rugby playing character wearing what appears to be a Western Province rugby team³⁶ shirt. He sports a *snor* (moustache) - still a

³⁶ Western Province is a popular South African rugby union team.

favourite facial feature in the performative make-up of many white orthodox Afrikaner males as an indicator of 'manliness'. The teacher has a staring, maniacal look in his eyes, and promotes military service, "the best time of my life I never want to live again" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:10). Military conscription in the 1970s and 1980s meant young men were sent to Angola to participate in the 'Bush War'.³⁷ Kannemeyer was vehemently opposed to military conscription (Kannemeyer 1997), and his portrayal of the teacher as a rugby-mad,³⁸ snor sprouting, maniacal ex-soldier who obviously loved defending 'our country', is an invitation to the reader to recognise the irony in the narrative.



³⁷ The Namibian/Angola conflict, colloquially also referred to as the Bush War in South Africa, took place from 1966 to 1989 in Namibia (then South West Africa) and Angola. The conflict was between the South African Defense Force (SADF) and its allies against the Angolan government, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) and their ally, Cuba. Many South Africans, primarily white young men, were conscripted to fight in the conflict.

³⁸ In South Africa rugby has cult status for many white Afrikaner men. Rugby is thus far the only internationally successful National Sport and, as a traditionally white Afrikaner activity, provides a sense of pride and of belonging to white Afrikaner masculine identity. Playing rugby is considered a performance of manliness and, for white Afrikaners, indicative of a combative and winning mentality in white Afrikaner men, that only 'real men' play rugby. In the apartheid era, South African rugby was institutionalised into a white Afrikaner racially dominated activity and the overwhelming majority of the Springbok rugby squad is still white, however, since 1994 more black and coloured men have succeeded in becoming members of the National Springbok team (Rugby springboks [sa]).



Figure 4: Anton Kannemeyer. *Jeugweerbaarheid* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (The best of Bitterkomix volume 1, 2001:10). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

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Through his satire of a stereotypical white Afrikaner 'hero's' masculine performativity, Kannemeyer questions traditional ideological conceptions of masculinity, whiteness and Afrikanerness. By subversively reinterpreting his lived reality of repressive white Afrikaner hegemonic patriarchy in *Jeugweerbaarheid*, Kannemeyer mines into his readers' collective understanding of Afrikaner nationalist ideology of the time. As noted, reader identification with his narratives is important for Kannemeyer, otherwise he regards his narratives as "self-indulgent, it all then becomes poor me, and it shouldn't be that" (Kannemeyer 2011). Kannemeyer is able to reinterpret his lived reality of high school repression in a way which rearticulates his lived reality in the minds of readers who have had similar experiences.

In *Jeugweerbaarheid*, Kannemeyer depicts how, in order to reach its goal of preparing the white youth of South Africa for the 'total onslaught', the 'boys' are

forced to practice military drilling exercises, while the 'girls' watch graphic images of male genitalia infected with venereal disease. Seeing sex as sinful and dirty, particularly if practiced by schoolgirls and schoolboys, is a cornerstone of traditional orthodox Afrikaner morality. Kannemeyer places the words 'boys' and 'girls' in quotation marks in the narrative, thereby drawing attention to the words and satirising what was a common patronising and controlling practice. Prior to 1994, many white people often used the demeaning terms 'boys' and 'girls' when referring to grown black men and black women, some white South Africans still continue this practice. Readers cognisant of the context will recognise the demeaning and controlling aspect in the use of the terms 'boys' and 'girls'.

Another common controlling practice in Afrikaner schools during the apartheid-era was the use of violence, particularly by male teachers on schoolboys. From my lived reality of Afrikaner schooling, I can testify that violence was common practice in most white Afrikaner schools. Male teachers, who represented and enforced the ideals of Christian National Education, regularly used corporal punishment, ridicule and bullying to ensure compliance. The use of violence was often justified in terms of Proverbs 13:24 in the Bible, which reads: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes". In the white Afrikaner community, the use of violence to 'discipline' children, both at school and in the home, was not only condoned but expected.

Kannemeyer's framing of Dr. Prof. Boela Malan's performance in *Jeugweerbaarheid* as satirical is emphasised through his description of him as important, he holds a doctorate, a professorship, and is a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. In traditional Afrikaner culture such a persona would carry enormous respect and be feared. Kannemeyer, however, equates the Dr. Prof. to a vulture by depicting an image of a vulture opposite the drawing of Dr. Prof. Boela Malan. *Aasvoëlkap* refers to a vulture crest.



Figure 5: Anton Kannemeyer. *Jeugweerbaarheid* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (The best of *Bitterkomix* volume 1, 2001:10). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Max Plant's story "actually begins with a visit by the famous Dr. Prof. Boela Malan" (*The best of Bitterkomix* volume 1 2001:10). Kannemeyer's depiction of Dr. Prof. Boela Malan's raised finger (Figure 6) while he admonishes the 'boys' and 'girls' on their fictional sexual practices, will remind many readers of PW Botha's³⁹ infamous raised finger. PW Botha's wagging finger, which was often seen on television, was synonymous for the autocratic exercise of power. The raised finger gesture is not only a performance of autocratic patriarchy, but can be regarded as a performance that invokes divine authority (Figure 7). In *Jeugweerbaarheid* Kannemeyer's

³⁹ PW Botha, commonly known as *Die Groot Krokodil* (Afrikaans for 'The Big Crocodile'), was South Africa's Prime Minister from 1978 to 1984 and the first executive State President. Botha was a staunch advocate of racial segregation and the apartheid system. Botha was the Minister responsible for and presided over forced removal activities under the Group Areas Act and was minister of Defense from 1966 and presided over the SADF's Bush War before becoming Prime Minister in 1978 (Pieter Willem Botha [sa]).

representation of Dr. Prof. Boela Malan's performance; stern demeanour; raised finger to admonish and emphasise the 'fact' that 'boys' and 'girls' all masturbate; pointing his finger at the 'boy' who laughs; are synonymous with traditional performances of hegemonic white Afrikaner patriarchy. The detail in the imagery (Figure 6), the way Dr. Prof. Boela Malan dominates the lectern and the stage, the array of mostly male teachers behind him, the 'boys' and 'girls' who are forced to look up and listen to Dr. Prof. Boela Malan accuse them of behaviours which, as Kannemeyer points out, is fictional, not only provides a sense of tension to the narrative, but reveals Kannemeyer's outrage at this memory of repressive autocratic patriarchy.



Figure 6: Anton Kannemeyer. *Jeugweerbaarheid* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (The best of Bitterkomix volume 1, 2001:11). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.



Figure 7: Anton Kannemeyer. *Why Bitterkomix* (2006). Pen and ink on paper. (The big bad Bitterkomix handbook 2006:137). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Kannemeyer ends his *Jeugweerbaarheid* narrative with Max Plant (Figure 8) walking away in disgust. This final panel is filled with tension; the wall behind Max lends a locked-in feel to the image, alluding to the prison-like atmosphere in many white Afrikaner high schools during the apartheid-era. Max is contained by both the wall and the end of the panel, adding to the sense of tension in the narrative. Kannemeyer subverts the underlying ideological themes of *Jeugweerbaarheid* through ending the narrative by a quote from Jello Biafra, lead singer of the American punk rock band, *Dead Kennedys*: "I'd rather stay a child and keep my self-respect if being an adult means turning out like that guy". From my lived reality of repressive patriarchal authority in an Afrikaans high school, I fully agree with Barnard's (2004:722) summation that: "The repulsive behaviour of the bullying, hypocritical minister, Prof. Dr. Boela Malan of the *Aasvoëlkop* Congregation ... makes it hard to argue with [Kannemeyer's] ... conclusion".

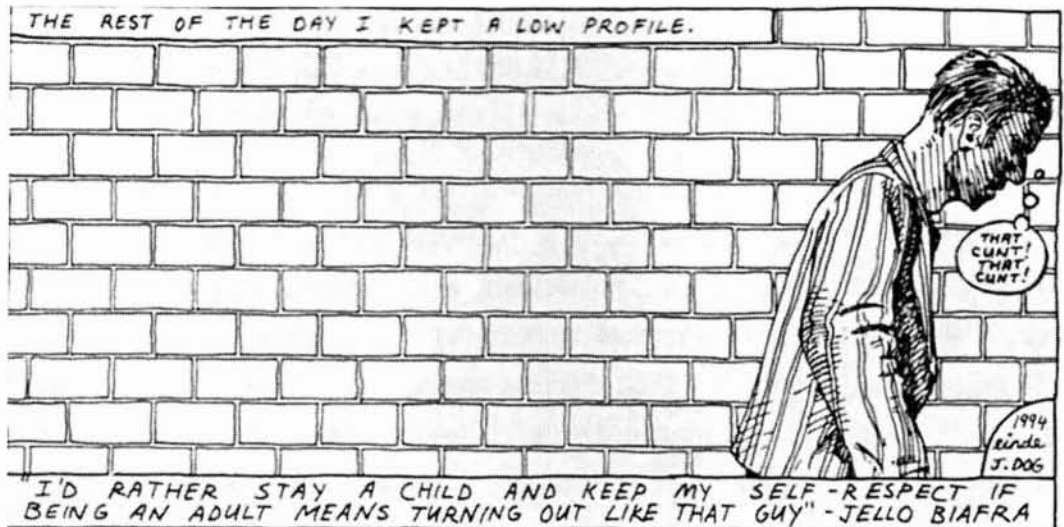


Figure 8: Anton Kannemeyer. *Jeugweerbaarheid* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (The best of *Bitterkomix* volume 1, 2001:12). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

3.6 Analysis of *Boetie*

Boetie was first published in *Bitterkomix* 5 and later translated to English as *Sonny* (2001) in *The best of Bitterkomix volume 1*. For my analysis of *Boetie* I refer to the English version, *Sonny*, as my source text. In *Sonny*, Kannemeyer again pays tribute to *Tintin*, the comic hero of his childhood by portraying the boy *Sonny* as a *Tintin*-like figure in shorts. Kannemeyer (2010a) says:

"I grew up with *Tintin* and he was often my only means of escape, especially during my pre-pubescent years - definitely the most difficult years of my life to date. In order to return to that stage of my life in comics, it just seemed natural to appropriate the *Tintin* style".

Mason (2010:144) describes Kannemeyer's appropriation of Hergé's style as a "dispassionate parody of white fear".

Sonny is a story of child abuse. In short, *Sonny* is sexually stimulated by his father while asleep and develops an erection. Although he is horrified by what happened to him, *Sonny* is scared to question his father's authority and runs away to hide. Through the narrative of *Sonny* Kannemeyer exposes a fragility in mythical white Afrikaner values of family cohesion. Family solidarity is an integral part of traditional white Afrikaner family morals, a vital component of Afrikaner Christian nationalist ideology. Most orthodox white Afrikaners condone blind obedience to the father, and

expect the father to use violence, where necessary, to enforce compliance. Du Pisani (2001:163) states that “puritan Afrikaners viewed the male-headed family as the cornerstone of a healthy society”.

Kannemeyer opens the *Sonny* narrative with his alter-ego object-voice, Joe Dog, looking haggard and drinking vodka (Figure 9). Joe Dog is unable to “draw an island full of palm trees” and instead draws “depressing stories ...” (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:4). In contrast to the drawings in the rest of the narrative, which are carefully detailed, the Joe Dog representation is noticeably more roughly drawn. The change in drawing style suggests that Kannemeyer intends his viewers to differentiate between Joe Dog’s loosely drawn introduction to the narrative and the carefully drawn ‘actual’ story. The clear drawing style in the main narrative introduces seriousness to the narrative. The serious intent is amplified through Kannemeyer’s quote of the author Thomas Bernhardt: “It is impossible to dismiss the suspicion that our parents had us for one sole reason, so that we could represent their guilt” (Bernhardt quoted in *The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:4).

Sonny is a tense narrative, suggesting that Kannemeyer is sharing an incident from his lived reality. In this context, Kannemeyer (2011) says: “I used this character, Joe Dog, to deal with subject matter that was difficult for me, as Anton Kannemeyer, to address. I remember I made one comic [*Boetie/Sonny*] that was so personal that I couldn’t even talk to friends about it ... as Joe Dog I could draw this comic”. I read *Sonny* as a cathartic narrative. Kannemeyer (2011) states his intention with *Sonny* is to take readers, who may have had similar experiences, back to a childhood where repression turned the family home into a prison.



Figure 9: Anton Kannemeyer. *Sonny* (2001), Pen and ink on paper. (The best of Bitterkomix volume 1, 2001:4). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Kannemeyer provides clues to Sonny's environment, Sonny deliberately kicks a rugby ball through a window; he is "bad on purpose" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:4). *Sonny* is not only a narrative of abuse, but also a representation of patriarchal repressive performativity. Sonny cannot disobey the authority of his father and he therefore displays his frustration by kicking a ball through a window.¹¹ Kannemeyer dispels any speculation of domestic harmony by depicting Daddy hitting Mommy (Figure 10). The sound of Daddy's fist, "twak", effectively describes the sound of violence; however, in Afrikaans "twak" can mean 'nonsense'. This representation can be read simply as violence, but in the context of Kannemeyer's Afrikaans heritage, may also suggest that Mommy disagreed with Daddy, was talking 'nonsense' and is accordingly 'disciplined'. The sense of violence is emphasised through the image of a woman screaming on the television, as if she is

reacting to the violence in the room. The representation of a pre-cast wall with an aeroplane overhead suggests that this is how Mommy escapes the domestic prison. The dark wall enhances a sense of being closed in; the sense that this family home is a prison. Throughout *Sonny*, Kannemeyer uses child language, 'Mommy', 'Daddy', 'Sonny', 'little peter', thereby contextualising the innocence in the narrative – *Sonny* is the narrative of a child.



Figure 10: Anton Kannemeyer. *Sonny* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (The best of Bitterkomix volume 1, 2001:5). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

The subject focus of *Sonny*, abuse of patriarchal authority and repression begins on "a Saturday afternoon, September 1976" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:5) (Figure 11). The date, a Saturday in September 1976, refers to a time when Kannemeyer was aged eight, as well as the year of the Soweto student uprisings.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Under apartheid, black children were educated in terms of the Bantu Education Act, the aim of which was to provide learning that provided skills sufficient only to work in manual labour under the supervision of whites. When the white National Party government decreed in 1976 that Afrikaans was

By using his alter-ego, Joe Dog, and dating the narrative, Kannemeyer suggests an association between the "sad history" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:4) of *Sonny* and his lived reality. The actuality of the incident, as noted earlier, within Kannemeyer's lived reality seems definite. Kannemeyer, through *Sonny*, rearticulates an incident from his lived reality in order to critique abusive white Afrikaner patriarchal performativity and exposes a fragility in traditional white Afrikaner values.

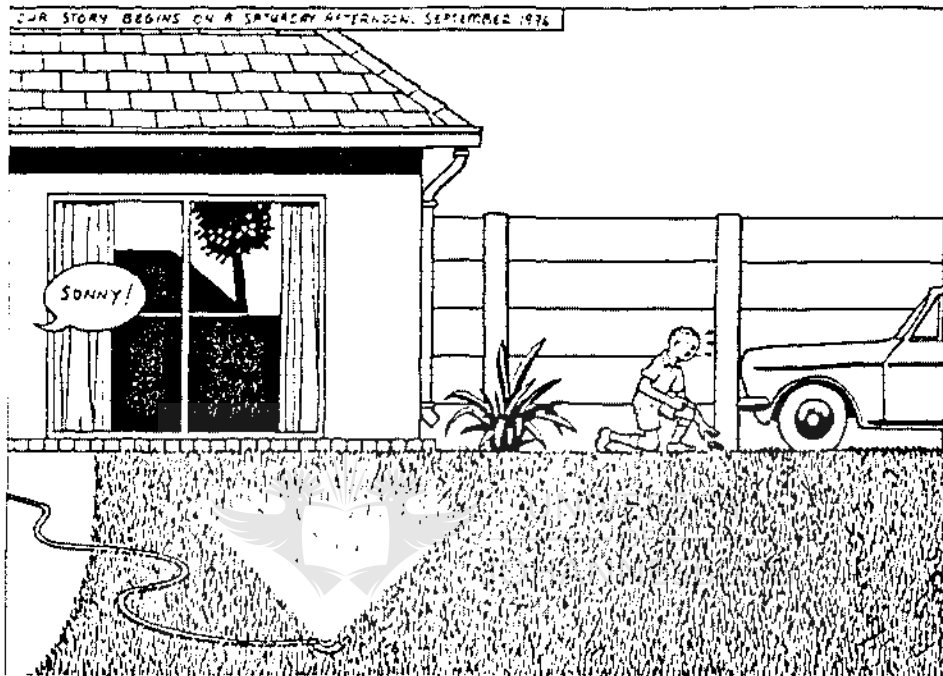


Figure 11: Anton Kannemeyer. *Sonny* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1*, 2001:5). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Kannemeyer maintains the tension in the narrative; the sweat drops off Sonny's face when he hears Daddy call; the obsessively detailed drawing of the grass and tiles; the normality of the garden hose and spray; are all factors that lend an aura of tension (Figure 11). Kannemeyer refers to Hergé's pictorial runes through the swirly movement lines around Sonny's leg and head, suggesting that Sonny is anxious. Sonny's reluctance to take a nap with Daddy in the middle of a spring day, Daddy's stern expression and his demand for immediate obedience: "I'm not going to ask

to become a language of instruction, students protested. Black high school students in Soweto began protesting on 16 June 1976 and the police responded with teargas and live bullets, students were killed.

you again!" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:5), with the implication of violence should Sonny not comply, are all clues that Kannemeyer suggests a performance of repressive patriarchal authority, and an expectation that such patriarchal authority is about to be abused.



Figure 12: Anton Kannemeyer. *Sonny* (2001), Pen and ink on paper. (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1*, 2001:6). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Sonny goes to Daddy's bedroom where he scratches Daddy's back. The text makes it clear that this is not the first time Sonny has been lured into Daddy's bedroom: "Sonny is familiar with the procedure: first scratch Daddy's back and then nap" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:7). After scratching Daddy's back Sonny falls asleep. When he wakes up (Figure 13) "something isn't feeling right" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:7). As noted earlier, Kannemeyer emphasises the innocence of Sonny through child language: "Daddy is stroking little peter up and

down ... and Sonny's little peter stands up stiff!" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:7).

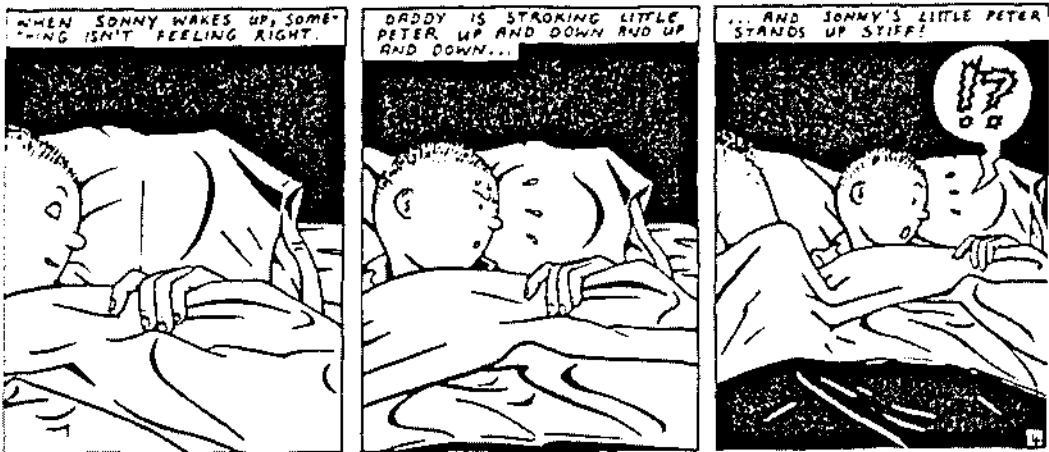


Figure 13: Anton Kannemeyer. *Sonny* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1*, 2001:7). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

Sonny jumps out of the bed (Figure 14), a thought bubble shouts "NO!" above his head, Sonny is scared to verbalise what he is feeling, a fear of contradicting Daddy's authority. "Daddy says nothing" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:7), he stares straight ahead, a plaintive expression on his face. A bulge in the blankets suggests he has an erection.

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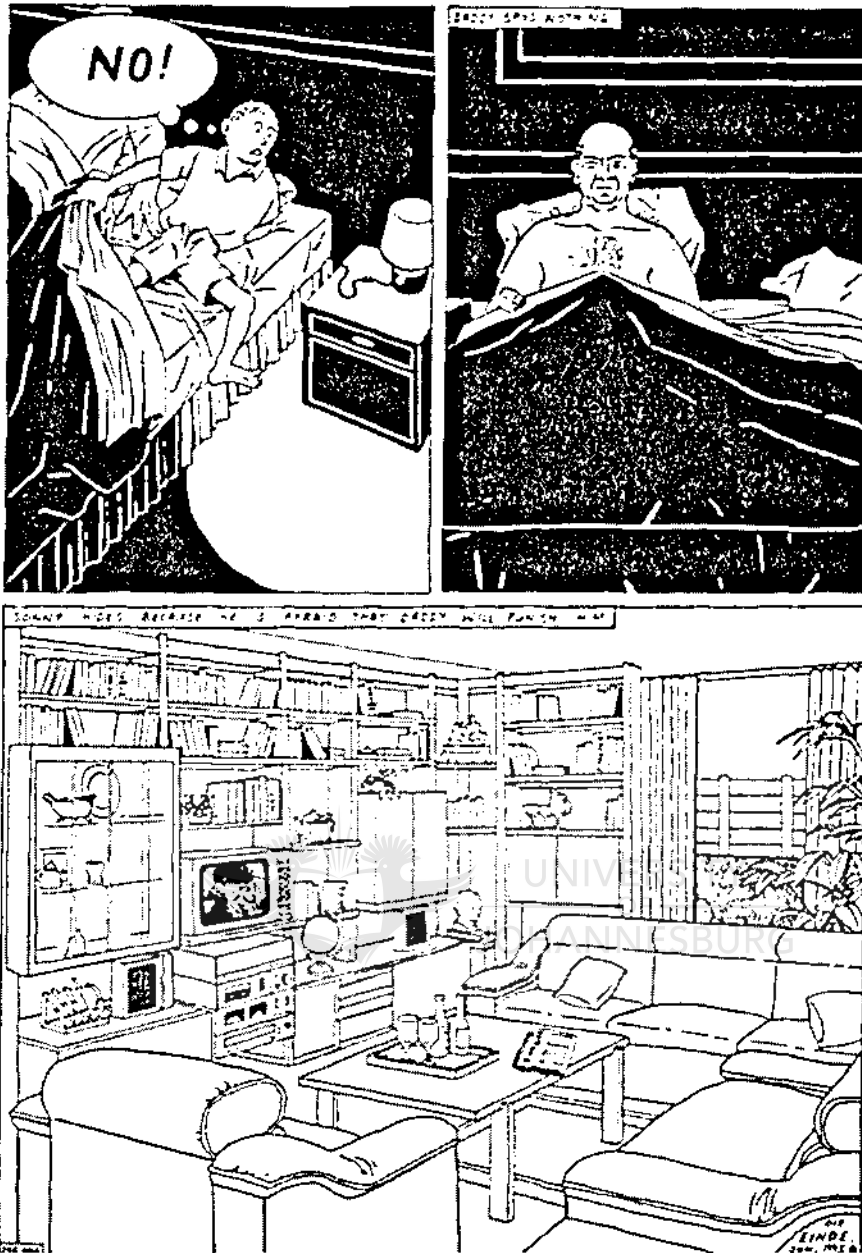


Figure 14: Anton Kannemeyer. *Sonny* (2001). Pen and ink on paper. (The best of Bitterkomix volume 1, 2001:8). © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

The final panel (Figure 14) is obsessively detailed, corresponding to the image of obsessive neatness in the room: everything is in its right place. The orderliness of the room, the public space that visitors will see, is in stark contrast with the emotional turmoil that has just occurred in Daddy's bedroom. Kannemeyer emphasises that this is a typical middle-class conservative white Afrikaner living

room by drawing the Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Burger*, on the coffee table and a *Bybel* (Bible) in the bookshelf. Sonny hides behind the curtain, almost unnoticed amongst the obsessive detail of the room: "Sonny hides because he is afraid that Daddy will punish him" (*The best of Bitterkomix volume 1* 2001:7). Through this final panel Kannemeyer effectively represent how the performance of patriarchal domination denies Sonny the ability to question his father's behaviour, and instead forces Sonny to question his own reaction, as if he has done something wrong and should be punished.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I framed an analysis of Kannemeyer's *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* visual narratives, published in the *Bitterkomix* series, through an autoethnographic lens. The autoethnographic lens helped me to reveal, through the performances of the characters represented in the narratives, Kannemeyer's heteroglot voices of author, object and subject. I identified autobiographical components in both *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Sonny/Boetie* and revealed how through reflexive reinterpretation of his memories from his lived reality Kannemeyer critiques and satirises performativities of traditional Afrikaner patriarchal stereotypes. I identified how Kannemeyer explores and rearticulates his lived reality to suggest a sense of catharsis within *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Sonny/Boetie*, which provides a tension to the narratives. The narrative *Sonny/Boetie*, in particular, presents as a cathartic text, a confessional narrative of a sensitive topic, traditionally considered private and taboo, in order to shatter a myth within traditional white Afrikaner ideology. I conclude that through his reflexive reinterpretation of lived reality, Kannemeyer is able to structure performances of white Afrikaner patriarchal repression that provide his target audience of disillusioned young, white heterodox Afrikaners with a sense of identification with his narratives. However, although I argue that *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* are cathartic texts, I do not perceive the narratives as melancholic or self-pitying, but rather as narratives of outrage against repressive traditional white Afrikaner patriarchal performativity. In these narratives "Kannemeyer is speaking to Afrikaners of his generation, and his rebuke [of patriarchy] is severe" Barnard (2004:74).

By introducing a cathartic component into *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* Kannemeyer succeeds in suggesting a form of intimacy between some readers and the narrative. Barnard (2004:747) similarly argues that "*Bitterkomix* is ultimately a characteristic artistic product of post-apartheid South Africa, where the need for alternative modes of remembering has been acute, and where ... confession, autobiography, memoir, and historiography have proliferated". As noted, the cathartic component does not position Kannemeyer as vulnerable but instead, through his alter-ego object-voices of Max Plant and Joe Dog, positions his subject and object-voices in the narratives in a way that identifies the texts as autoethnographies that focus the reader to identify with the narrative, to merge Kannemeyer's lived reality and white Afrikaner values with their own. For example, in *Jeugweerbaarheid*, Kannemeyer reinterprets a personal lived reality of high school in a way that allows readers, who may have had similar experiences, to identify with the narrative. *Jeugweerbaarheid* thereby operates as a cathartic narrative whilst simultaneously questions and satirises performativities of repressive white Afrikaner traditional ideology.

The success of *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie* does not come from historical accuracy, but from the ability of many readers to identify with Kannemeyer's parody and satirical reinterpretation of repressive white Afrikaner patriarchal performativity. Kannemeyer's unmasking of repressive performances of nationalist white Afrikaner cultural ideologies, to reveal what it meant to 'belong' as an orthodox, white, South African, Afrikaner man in apartheid South Africa is, I propose, successfully achieved through these *Bitterkomix* narratives. By reinterpreting his lived reality as subversive discourse, Kannemeyer is able to undermine traditional white Afrikaner patriarchal authority and his narratives function as vehicles for social commentary.

3.8 Endnote: Kannemeyer after *Bitterkomix*

Since the publishing of *Jeugweerbaarheid* and *Boetie*, the South African cultural and socio-political environment has changed, as has Kannemeyer's artistic focus. Kannemeyer widened his satiric focus from performativities of repressive Afrikaner patriarchy to include the larger post-apartheid socio-political environment. An example of this widened focus is Kannemeyer's *Pappa in Afrika* (2010) wherein he, through his usual style of satire and parody, comments critically, *inter alia*, on the

fears of mostly English-speaking, politically-correct white South Africans (Figure 15). In *Pappa in Afrika*, Kannemeyer also satirises performativities of financial greed and hollow rhetoric he perceives in Africa's post-colonial political hierarchies. Kannemeyer appropriates Hergé's *golliwog*⁴¹ caricatures from *Tintin in the Congo* (1931) to subvert post-apartheid South African ideals of racial equality and racial harmony. In *Pappa in Afrika*, Kannemeyer represents post-apartheid South Africa as a social order filled with absurd performances of moral ambiguity, questionable financial opportunism and continuing white racial fears. *Pappa in Afrika* depicts performances of offensive colonialism and white fear "with irreverent humour and reminders of very real catastrophes plaguing Africa" (Marais 2007:2).



Figure 15: Anton Kannemeyer. *The Liberals* (2010). Acrylic on canvas 130 x 200cm. © Anton Kannemeyer, courtesy Anton Kannemeyer.

In this study I do not explore the question of racial ambivalence some commentators perceive in Kannemeyer's recent work (Gule 2010). It is, however, worthwhile to note that, as Brett Murray experienced with his satirical painting of President Zuma in his *Hail to the thief II* exhibition (2012), Kannemeyer, by appropriating apartheid and colonialist racist imagery into his works in order to critique and unmask performances of moral ambiguity and white fear, risks appearing to endorse racial

⁴¹ The term *golliwog* was popularised in children's stories by the author Enid Blyton. By the 1960s both the term *golliwog* and the dolls were regarded as racially insensitive (Dunk 2009).

bigotry and racial marginalisation. Barnard (2004:721) remarks that “[a] purely negative and reactive critique ... is readily recuperated and runs the risk of reinscribing - and even exaggerating - the power of its antagonist”. Although Barnard’s comment may be valid, I argue that works such as *The Liberals* (2010), created 16 years after white rule was replaced by a mostly black government, is an effective way to unmask and satirise an uncertainty still present in many South African whites of how to perform being white in a post-apartheid South Africa.



4 TRANSFORMING ROLES: AN EXPLORATION OF WHITE MASCULINITY IN KENTRIDGE'S *MINE*, *HISTORY OF THE MAIN COMPLAINT* AND *OTHER FACES*

4.1 Aims and objectives

In this chapter I continue to explore gender performativity of white South African masculinities using an autoethnographic lens. I analyse three films from Kentridge's *Drawings for projection (1989 – 2011)*⁴² series of hand-drawn animated films, *Mine* (1991); *History of the main complaint* (1996); and *Other faces* (2011). I choose the three films as they trace South Africa's journey of socio-political transformation from apartheid to post-apartheid. Discussions on political change started in 1991, when *Mine* was made. When *History of the main complaint* was made in 1996 the TRC hearings exposed apartheid brutalities and in 2011, 17 years after the demise of apartheid, *Other faces* comments on what it means to be a white man in post-apartheid South Africa. These three films trace not only a developing existentialist crisis in white South African masculinities, but also an ongoing renegotiation and restructuring in white male performativity. Through these three films I am able to explore how Kentridge interprets his observations of change in South Africa, framed by his lived reality and moral world-view. The performances he structures for Soho in these films provides a succinct overview of how Kentridge comments, through the *Drawings for projection* cycle of films, on a changing performativity in white South African masculinities.

In this chapter I again favour Richardson's (2000:15–16) factors of reflexivity and lived reality. However, Kentridge's narratives are not as closely sourced from lived reality as Kannemeyer's are, insofar as this is a direct factor in how he operationalises performances of white masculinity in *Mine*, *History of the main complaint* and *Other faces*. The performances of white masculinity represented in the films, as with Kannemeyer's satirical strips, serve to identify Kentridge's heteroglot voices performed in the films, his voice as author; his object-voice, performed in the selected films through Kentridge's alter-ego Soho Eckstein; and

⁴² The series of animated films include *Johannesburg, 2nd greatest city after Paris* (1989), *Monument* (1990), *Mine* (1991), *Sobriety, obesity, and growing old* (1991), *Felix in exile* (1994), *History of the main complaint* (1996), *Weighing ... and wanting* (1998), *Stereoscope* (1999), *Tide table* (2003), and *Other faces* (2011).

Kentridge's subject-voice, the content and context of the films which Kentridge sources from observations of socio-political change in South Africa over 22 years.

Over the *Drawings for projection* cycle of films Kentridge uses two object-voice alter-ego characters, Soho Eckstein and Felix Teitlebaum. Both Soho and Felix are physical articulations of Kentridge's physical features. The performativities of Felix, who serves as Soho's counterpoint in *Drawings for projection* and who appears in *Johannesburg, the 2nd greatest city after Paris* (1989), *Sobriety, obesity and growing old* (1991) and *Felix in exile* (1994), but not in the films I select, does not receive the same degree of analysis as Soho's performativities. In the selected films Kentridge's object-voice is performed through Soho and Kentridge's subject-voice is operationalised through the content, the 'plot', of the films. Kentridge's three voices function together to reveal how he interprets his observations on South Africa's socio-political change to operationalise and satirically depict performances of white masculinity in the selected films.

Kentridge's exposure to an anti-apartheid environment from a young age is an obvious and strong influence on how he structures the performances of white masculinities in the *Drawings for projection* films. His primary subject-voice is one of trauma, particularly in the early films from the series. In *Mine* he constructs performances of emotional trauma through Soho's role as an exploitative Randlord⁴³ capitalist who deprives and degrades his black workers. In *History of the main complaint* Kentridge depicts performances of overt physical trauma by showing imagery of brutalised bodies, fighting and killing. Kentridge interprets and exposes his own traumatic memories from observing apartheid's brutality (Cameron et al. 1999). As discussed later in this chapter, the sense of trauma in *Other faces* is one of confrontation and loss rather than brutality. Jane Taylor (2009:75) argues that "trauma arises at the point of interface between incident and the recollection of the incident". Trauma, time and remembering, is therefore interconnected. I argue that *Drawings for projection* can therefore be approached as a journey of remembering, not only remembering the brutalities of apartheid, as in the earlier films in the series, but also a nostalgic remembering, as in *Tide table* and *Other faces* where Kentridge resurrects memories of his childhood.

⁴³During Johannesburg's early boom days after the discovery of gold in 1886, a number of mostly Jewish white men became fabulously wealthy from the gold mines. They were known as Randlords. These men were known for their extravagant lifestyles and ruthlessness in business.

Kentridge made *Drawings for projection* over a period when South Africa experienced significant cultural and socio-political change. The first film in the cycle, *Johannesburg, 2nd greatest city after Paris* (1989), was made when the white, predominantly Afrikaans, patriarchal National Party still enforced apartheid. Kentridge made the latest film, *Other faces* (2011), 17 years after the African National Congress came to power.⁴⁴ *Drawings for projection* are, in essence, structured around Kentridge's observations of socio-political change in South Africa over 22 years. These observations are influenced by his lived reality as a white English-speaking South African male of Lithuanian Jewish descent, who grew up under apartheid in an anti-apartheid household, but who nonetheless recognises his white privilege by virtue of his skin colour. Kentridge reflects seriously on his responsibility as a white South African artist. McCrickard (2012:12) says Kentridge possesses an "exacting opinion of the artist's social responsibility [which] means that he could only consider making art after first evolving a point of view about the South Africa around him". This implies that Kentridge considers and appropriates from his lived reality and socio-political observations to create meaning in his art making. My analysis of the three selected films are situated within this context of Kentridge's observations of change in South Africa, which he uses to structure performances of white masculinity contextualised through his lived reality as an anti-apartheid English-speaking white South African Jewish male. The aim of this analysis is to identify how Kentridge's structuring of white masculine performativities serve as comments on what it means to be a white man in South Africa.

Kentridge's approach to operationalising the performativity of his heteroglot voices in the films is subtle. He (Kentridge quoted in Christov-Bakargiev 1998:76) regards "subjects that have an origin outside of a particular object ... [to] become more illuminating in their oblique light than the full searchlight of the project that stares straight at the object". Through these films, Kentridge's heteroglot voices perform as author; as different kinds of object-voices which he represents through self-portrait alter-egos; and as subject-voice which provide meaning and context. The resultant juxtaposition of different performativities, the hybridity in the three voices, cause

⁴⁴The African National Congress (ANC), South Africa's governing party since April 1994, was founded in 1912. The ANC's armed resistance struggle activities, together with increasing internal dissent, international sanctions and political pressure, caused the previous white ruling party, the National Party, to enter into negotiations for power sharing in the late 1980s. This led to elections in 1994 when the ANC was elected to power (African National Congress [sa]).

conflict – a conflict between Kentridge's public persona, Soho's exploitative but ambiguously evolving performativity over the cycle of films and Felix's limited counterpointing performativity to Soho. Kentridge applies his personal double consciousness, a consciousness of his lived reality as a white South African male and a consciousness gained from observing South Africa's socio-political landscape over 22 years, to structure a juxtaposition in performativity. Kentridge is seemingly aware of this double consciousness, he says: "an artist looks at himself ... the character is who you are ... always a kind of self-portraiture" (Kentridge quoted in Breidbach 2006:68). For my purposes the autoethnographic lens contextualises how Kentridge, through frames of whiteness, gender performativity and masculinity, uses his observations of South Africa's socio-political complexities to structure performances of white masculinity, particularly by Soho, that comment on white masculine performativities in wider South Africa.

By positioning *Mine*, *History of the main complaint* and *Other faces* as autoethnographic, I am able to investigate how Kentridge performs as an insider in the films, how his autobiographical presence as author, object and subject in the films can be inferred from the depicted performances of the white male characters in the films. I regard Kentridge's representation of white masculine performativity, particularly in *Other faces*, as deliberate proxy for how he observes a contemporary existential crisis in white South African men. Kentridge's subtle portrayals of the psychological effects of socio-political change on the performativity of white masculinities, his themes of racist oppression and social conflict, nostalgia, loss and reconciliation, effectively reveals a renegotiating status in white masculine performativity over 22 years.

4.2 Kentridge's lived reality

Kentridge was born in Johannesburg in 1955, and is of Lithuanian Jewish descent. He was exposed to the horrors of apartheid through his parents at a young age. His father, the lawyer Sir Sydney Kentridge, was involved in many of the key political cases in South Africa during apartheid, such as the Steve Biko inquest⁴⁵ in 1977, the

⁴⁵Steve Biko was one of the founders of the black consciousness movement in South Africa. He died from brain damage in 1977 after being arrested. The circumstances of Biko's death caused a worldwide outcry and he became a symbol of black resistance in South Africa (Stephen Bantu Biko [sa]).

Treason Trials⁴⁶ and Nelson Mandela's trial. His mother, Felicia Kentridge, also an attorney, instituted a resources centre in Johannesburg which provides legal assistance for financially impoverished, mostly black, people. Although Kentridge enjoyed a privileged upbringing, he became aware at age six that he was living in a country where racial discrimination was the norm and brutally enforced on a daily basis. He says: "When I first came across a set of photographs of the Sharpeville Massacre,⁴⁷... [i]t was a complete revelation: the world was constructed in a way that I had no idea before" (Kentridge quoted in hooks 1998:2). Kentridge became aware that in South Africa, at the time; there existed a dichotomous environment where black people suffered violence and degradation whilst white people lived in comfort (Christov-Bakargiev 1999:9). Kentridge's critical view of apartheid, shaped by his parents' anti-apartheid activities and moral world-views, is expressed in his earlier art, such as in the *Industry and idleness* (1986 – 1987) series of etchings, where he stated that the series

was about the fact that however industrious you are, [as a black person] if the politics are against you, you would die on the pavement; and however lazy you were, [as a white person] if you were born into the right circumstances, you could still flourish and make a fortune (Breidbach 2006:14).

It is obvious that Kentridge's lived reality influences his art making when he says: "I draw the way I think" (Breidbach 2006:5).

Although the above comments may suggest that Kentridge is a political artist, this is a conclusion that I am careful not to subscribe to. Even though Kentridge moved to practicing as an artist only after he evolved a view about being a white man in South Africa (Rosenthal 2009:36), he does not create political art in the explicit sense. Kentridge regards his art making as "politically concerned but distanced" (Christov-Bakargiev 1999:9). He does not negate the importance of political art, but believes, in the context of his own art, that "[i]f there were to be a very clear, ethical or moral summing-up in my work, it would have a false authority" (Christov-Bakargiev 1999:35). Kentridge made his visual narratives in order to make sense of the world

⁴⁶The Treason Trial in 1956 was a trial where 156 people, including Nelson Mandela, were charged with treason. All were acquitted but some, including Mandela, were re-arrested and convicted in 1964. Mandela spent 28 years in jail (Brody-Evans [sa]).

⁴⁷In 1960 the South African police at Sharpeville, a township south of Johannesburg, shot into a crowd of about 5,000 unarmed anti-passbook protesters, killing at least 69. The Sharpeville massacre drew international condemnation (Brody-Evans [sa]).

(Breidbach 2006:71) Kentridge says he is "working from the perspective of redemption rather than working *for* redemption" (Christov-Bakargiev 1998:75) [emphasis in original]. Kentridge abhors the idea that his work should occupy a judgemental moral high ground, he rather regards his work as "about a process of drawing that tries to find a way through the space between what we know and what we see" (Kentridge quoted in Christov-Bakargiev 1998:33). Kentridge refers to apartheid as the 'rock', but chooses to address the rock, the trauma of apartheid, obliquely (Krauss 2000:4). Through Soho's performances of brutality and indifference depicted in the earlier films, Kentridge circumvents the rock of apartheid, making "art that, although trenchantly political ... remains stolidly non-prescriptive" (McCrickard 2012:8). Kentridge only became able to make art that existed outside the rock after 1994 (McCrickard 2012:61).

When questioned on his status as a white South African man of Lithuanian Jewish descent, Kentridge replied that he does not feel himself as Lithuanian, nor does he feel himself tied to Africa (Cameron 2001:72). Kentridge seems to negate any form of 'Africanness' to himself when he says: "Anyone who says they feel quintessentially African is speaking a kind of myth" (Kentridge quoted in Cameron 2001:72). This remark suggests that Nuttall's (2006:118) observation of English-speaking white South Africans identifying with Europe, a feeling of "coming from elsewhere ... [rather than] ... being of the place", applies to Kentridge. Kentridge states he has a sense of feeling set apart in "a white community that, at the southern tip of the African continent, still endures an ache of dislocation" (McCrickard 2012:7).

Kentridge's Jewish status is reflected in *Drawings for projection*, where his alter-ego object-voices, Soho Eckstein and Felix Teitlebaum, have Jewish names. Kentridge's autobiographical presence in the series is further revealed by the suggestion that, as with Kentridge, Soho and Felix are apparently "of sufficient means to enable them to disregard the daily struggle for survival experienced by the vast majority" (Cameron et al. 1999:45). By using self-portraiture as alter-egos to frame his explorations and critique of white South African masculine performativities, Kentridge renders himself both visible and invisible by introducing an ambiguity into the films through structuring evolving complexities into Soho's metamorphosing performativity over the *Drawings for projection* cycle of films. This prompted, in regard to Soho's morally indifferent performativity in the films, accusations of anti-Semitism (McCrickard

2012:77). However, in a context of Soho and Felix as alter-egos of Kentridge, Soho and Felix are required to be Jewish in order for Kentridge to satirise, through Soho's performances of a racist pin-striped⁴⁸ property tycoon, both Randlord-style capitalist avarice and English-speaking South Africans' sense of Europeaness.

4.3 *Drawings for projection*

The *Drawings for projection* cycle of films can be summarised as explorations into the lives of three fictitious characters; Soho Eckstein who, over the series, develops into a physical alter-ego of Kentridge (the object-voice); Soho's wife, Mrs Eckstein, whom Soho seems to love in an offhand, disconnected way; and Kentridge's other physical alter-ego, Felix Teitlebaum (an alternate object-voice), who seduces Soho's wife and is a dreamy, naïve lover who is always naked. Through *Drawings for projection* Kentridge examines the effects of apartheid on the performativity of masculinities, particularly white masculinities, in South Africa. As the cycle of films progresses Kentridge depicts performances of white moral ambiguity which he operationalises through themes of trauma, culpability, complicity and guilt, all situated in Johannesburg against a backdrop of change and eventual socio-political transformation. In the later *Drawings for projection* films⁴⁹ Kentridge introduces a distinct quality of nostalgia, emphasised through depictions of out-dated and obsolete objects and 1950s style buildings. The soundtracks in the films, most by Phillip Miller, add to the sense of nostalgia, even melancholy.

Kentridge makes the films through a series of charcoal drawings which he photographs, alters and re-photographs. By combining the photographs a filmic narrative is created. *Drawings for projection* are ambiguous works, the performativity of Kentridge's primary alter-ego in the series, Soho, is not easily accessed. In the earlier *Drawings for projection* films,⁵⁰ Soho pursues his own interests, seemingly unaware of the eugenicist socio-political environment around him. Soho's performativity develops from the stereotypical rapacious and gluttonous pin-striped

⁴⁸The black pinstripe suit has become synonymous with rapacious capitalism, and particularly after 2008 when the international sub-prime mortgages scandal was created by pinstripe-suited white bankers.

⁴⁹ Particularly *Felix in exile* (1994), *Weighing ... and wanting* (1998), *Stereoscope* (1999), *Tide table* (2003), and *Other faces* (2011).

⁵⁰ *Johannesburg, 2nd greatest city after Paris* (1989), *Monument* (1990), and *Mine* (1991).

white Randlord capitalist in *Johannesburg, 2nd greatest city after Paris*, to reflective powerlessness in *Other faces*.

The development in Soho's performativity, who appears in all the *Drawings for projection* films, provides an episodic structure to the series. This episodic structure suggests that Kentridge consciously developed a process to explore and comment on reconceptualising white South African masculine performativity in a changing South Africa. Soho's performances of greed and moral indifference in *Mine* and *History of the main complaint* are accurate and relevant metonyms for the selective moral blind spots in many South African white men during the apartheid-era, whereas Soho's pensive performance in *Other faces* suggests an existentialist crisis in post-apartheid white masculine performativities.

Kentridge's two alter-egos in *Drawings for projection*, Soho Eckstein and Felix Teitlebaum, are both self-portraits and "we are invited to experience Soho as an extension of the artist himself onto the morally complex playing field of South African public life" (Cameron et al. 1999:57). By depicting Soho and Felix as identifiable self-portraits, Kentridge infuses his alter-ego object-voice characters with personal meaning. In the context of apartheid, which means separateness in Afrikaans, the characterisation of Soho and Felix in *Drawings for projection* as moral opposites suggests that Kentridge is exploring his own dichotomous position as a white man in South Africa. If Soho and Felix serve, as I argue, as metaphors for performances of white masculinities in South Africa, then Soho and Felix perform separateness, Felix a pensive observer and Soho an indifferent, greedy, Randlord exploiter of his black workers. Similar to Kannemeyer's double consciousness discussed in Chapter Three, Kentridge's split consciousness between himself, Soho and Felix suggests that Kentridge is exploring an insider/outsider or observer/participant type of consciousness found, I propose, in many South African white males.

In summary, autoethnographic reflexivity - how Kentridge uses his observations of change in South Africa to structure performances of white masculinity in his films - forms the primary analysis tool for exploring the films I have selected. Though this reflexivity may not always be deliberate, Kentridge remarks that "there may be a vague sense of what you're going to draw but ... drawing is a testing of ideas, a slow-motion version of thought" (Kentridge in Cameron et al. 1999:8), I argue that

reflexivity is present in all the films. Kentridge's reflexive engagement with the changing South African socio-political landscape, his themes of violence, reparation, restoration, healing, nostalgia and loss, correspond with similar themes in the broader South African socio-political landscape over the period 1989 to 2011.

4.4 *Mine*

In *Mine* (1991), the third film in the *Drawings for projection* series, Kentridge continues his representation of brutish performativity by Soho, "the perpetrator of horror ... a deeply despicable person" (Rosenthal 2009:41) that began in *Johannesburg, 2nd greatest city after Paris*. The earlier films in the series depict Soho metaphorically performing the negative found in some English-speaking white masculinities during apartheid: avaricious, self-indulgent, greedy capitalists who exploit their black workers in order to grow personal wealth and power. *Mine* is a narrative of Soho's indifferent exploitation of his black miners working in cramped and demeaning conditions in a mine owned by him.

In 1991, when *Mine* was made, South Africa was still at an early stage of political change. Nelson Mandela was released from prison the year before and the then president FW de Klerk⁵¹ announced major political reforms. Historic apartheid laws⁵² were repealed and talks began between the government, the ANC and other parties on power sharing arrangements during a transitional government. For the black majority, 1991 was a time of hope, for many whites it was a time of uncertainty, even fear. However, in *Mine* Soho seems unaware of these changes or is indifferent to them, he is still exploiting and brutalising his labourers.

Mine begins with an image of koe-koe pans⁵³ in a mine tunnel, a bronze *Ife*⁵⁴ head in the foreground. The *Ife* head invokes a reference to Africa's colonial past when white colonialist Europeans appropriated and exploited Africa's resources, including

⁵¹FW de Klerk was the last white President of South Africa. After he was elected de Klerk lifted the ban on black resistance movements and released Nelson Mandela. De Klerk and Mandela were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts at reform in South Africa.

⁵²The race laws included, *inter alia*, prohibition of marriage between non-whites and whites and 'white-only' jobs. All South Africans were racially classified into white, black, Asian or coloured (of mixed descent). All black people were required to carry 'pass books' (Apartheid.hist [sa]).

⁵³A koe-koe pan is a wheel-barrow type container, on rails, historically used in mines to transport ore.

⁵⁴The *Ife* head sculptures were created in the Kingdom of *Ife* (today south-western Nigeria) by the Yoruba people during the 12th to 15th centuries A.D. Each *Ife* head probably represents an *Ooni* (king). The *Ife* heads were used for ceremonial purposes on the death of a ruler and were symbols to commemorate the dead ruler and show continuity (Kingdom of Ife [sa]).

symbolic artefacts such as the *Ife* head, in order to enrich themselves. This invocation of Africa's colonialist past together with Kentridge's use of depicting obsolescent objects and outdated technologies, such as old-style Bakelite telephones, typewriters and ticker tape machines in his films, introduces a sense of history, of time passing. In the context of imminent change to the socio-political landscape in 1991, this imagery suggests that Soho is stuck in a colonialist, bureaucratic past. The outdated imagery suggests bureaucratized moral values, reinforcing Soho's performance as an indifferent, racist, greedy white man. The old-fashioned machinery, however, also introduces remembering, a sense of nostalgia for the 1950s and 1960s when Kentridge was a child. Kentridge introduces old-fashioned obsolete technological objects throughout *Drawings for projection*, referring to a time when his moral world-view and abhorrence of apartheid was formed, and also a time of happy memories around growing up in a stable family. The obsolete machinery infuses autobiographic traces of Kentridge's lived reality into the films.



Figure 16: William Kentridge. *Mine* (film still) (1991). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

Throughout *Mine*, Kentridge applies a strategy of rapidly flitting between Soho, who is luxuriating in bed or at his cluttered desk, and his black labourers living and working in cramped conditions. The rapid changing reinforces a dichotomy between Soho's performance of gluttony and avarice and the contrast with his black miners' sparse environment and labour underground. The contrast between Soho and the black workers' performativity reveals how Soho's performance depends on and is made possible through the performances of his black labourers. Without the black miners' performances, Soho's performance becomes one of him lying in bed. This dichotomy in performativities invokes apartheid's enforced separateness and exposes how the wealth of white South Africans was dependant on cheap black labour. Kentridge is aware that a successful performance relies on separate performances by others. Kentridge reinforces a separateness in masculine performativity throughout *Drawings for projection* and an interdependency between Soho's performativity and the separate performativities by the black masculinities in the films. Kentridge seems to refer to separateness when he said he "assumed that splitting was just the way one exists in the world" (hooks 1998:2).



Figure 17: William Kentridge. *Mine* (film still) (1991). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

The film flits to Soho in bed, wearing his pin-stripe suit, and black men sleeping, softly breathing, in cramped bunks, stacked like sardines. Kentridge emphasises breathing in both *Mine* and *History of the main complaint*. In *Mine* the black labourers' breathing is gentle and unnoticed, suggesting vulnerability. In *Mine*, Kentridge contrasts the labourers' gentle breathing with back-breaking labour, emphasising exploitation that the black labourers 'belong' to Soho to use as he wishes. Soho rings a bell; summoning his black labourers to work whilst he lies in bed, then pushes down on the plunger of a *cafetière*. The plunger turns into a lift shaft that tunnels into a dormitory filled with cramped bunks; men showering⁵⁵ in rows, bodiless heads, between images of miners drilling in a rock face. The imagery of the black miners drilling into a rock face is reminiscent of Kentridge's description of apartheid as the 'rock' (Krauss 2000:4). The black miners drilling into a rock face infers the changes happening in South Africa during 1991, when the 'rock' of apartheid was inexorably being broken down, and thus the foundation upon which Soho exists also is broken down. The bed morphs into a desk which becomes littered with obsolete office machinery, including a ticker-tape machine that spews out miniature black miners that solidify into a mine-dump.⁵⁶ The exiting hordes of miniature black miners imply a presumed inferiority of the black labourers to the gigantic Soho, like ants scurrying to his bidding.

⁵⁵ In the context of Kentridge's Jewish heritage, this imagery suggests World War II gas showers in Nazi death camps.

⁵⁶ Mine dumps were a part of Johannesburg's landscape for over 100 years. They are currently being removed and reprocessed for residual gold ore. In the process, the Johannesburg landscape is changing.



Figure 18: William Kentridge. *Mine* (film still) (1991). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

The *cafetière* plunger morphs into drills shattering the rock face, side tunnels appear which configure into a diagram of a transatlantic slave ship.⁵⁷ The association of the miners as slaves of Soho is unmistakable. Pieces of the drilled rock face spew out of the ticker-tape and reconfigure into an *Ife* head. A *koe-koe* pan moves onto Soho's desk and pours two ingots out of which two black men appear, their lower bodies encased in blocks. This image suggests two aspects to Soho's exploitation of his black labourers, firstly that the ingots incorporate their labour and often their lives, and secondly their inability to escape; the miners need Soho's wages to feed their families. The lift returns and spews out a tiny rhinoceros.⁵⁸ Soho clears his desk with a sweep of his arm so that he can play with the rhinoceros. The film ends with the desk becoming a big, luxurious bed again where Soho plays with the rhinoceros.

⁵⁷The diagram is that of the type of slave ships used during the eighteenth century to transport black peoples from Africa to the North and South Americas as slaves. The conditions on the slave ships were horrific and many people died, primarily from malnutrition and disease (Boddy-Evans [sa]).

⁵⁸ The rhinoceros is possibly a reference to a small golden rhinoceros found in a royal grave at Mapungubwe, in South Africa's Limpopo province. The Mapungubwe people traded gold and ivory with China, India and Egypt, and is testimony to the existence of an African civilisation before colonisation (Mapungubwe [sa]).



Figure 19: William Kentridge. *Mine* (film still) (1991). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

The miniature rhinoceros, like the miniature miners, reinforces Soho's dominant performativity in this narrative. Soho's action of sweeping away the office machinery, the *Ife* head, the black men trapped in blocks, is indifferent; he wants to 'play' with the miniature rhinoceros. Kentridge regularly uses a rhinoceros image in his art, he says: "It's like a group of actors that are pressed into service ... to come and perform every night ..." (McCrickard 2012:105). By appropriating a rhinoceros image into *Mine* Kentridge again refers to colonialist rapacity of Africa, to a European view of Africa as a wild beast that must be tamed (McCrickard 2012:106).

Soho's performance of an avaricious white pin-striped capitalist who exploits and ignores the humanity of his black labourers, is morally indifferent, racist and abusive, suggesting a commonality with performances of indifferent capital avarice found in many hegemonic and racist white male elitists during apartheid South Africa. My reading of *Mine* is of Kentridge, enraged by exploitation of black people (Cameron et al. 1999:60), and through Soho's indifferent, megalomaniac mining magnate performativity, is raging against similar performances of moral indifference by apartheid-era white capitalist masculinities. Thus, through Soho's alter-ego

performativity, Kentridge reveals his abhorrence of an apartheid practice as well as an awareness and critique of his personal apartheid. Kentridge satirises his own privileged white male status and the impossibility of neither escaping nor denying his white-skin complicity. Through Soho's performance in *Mine* Kentridge is addressing complexities in his own whiteness.

4.5 *History of the main complaint*

The sixth film in the *Drawings for projection* series, *History of the main complaint* (1996), opens on an empty Johannesburg city street; a piece of paper flutters into the distance, the image evokes a tense atmosphere, as if in the aftermath of some horrific event. In a hospital bed Soho lies comatose behind a curtain, dressed in his stereotypical pin-striped suit. Soho is "a person who's in a coma because of the weight of what he's seen" (Kentridge quoted in Christov-Bakargiev 1998:179). Soho breathes with the help of a respirator, suggesting vulnerability. He is surrounded by obsolete hospital machinery; an old-fashioned video-sonar shows the inside of his body. Doctors, who are all Soho clones, examine Soho's torso with stethoscopes that morph into x-ray plates, the stethoscopes penetrate into his body, "mapping rather than healing ... a metaphoric embodiment of conscience, general anamnesis, historical memory and collective responsibility" (McCrickard 2012:78).



Figure 20: William Kentridge. *History of the main complaint* (film still) (1996). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

History of the main complaint coincided with the establishment of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 1995, which was formed to gather testimony from both perpetrators and victims of apartheid violence. The purpose of the TRC was to hear testimony of racial atrocities, and where possible to cause reparation for the victims and provide amnesty for apparently remorseful perpetrators. During the TRC hearings the 'body' of apartheid, the cumulative performativities of white South African masculinities, also lay inert, comatose, while the Commission's members probed into acts of racial violence. Soho's comatose inertness invites comparison with the TRC hearings where perpetrators of racial violence sat inert, quietly confessing to torture and murder in normal, everyday voices. The TRC's emphasis on self-examination to reveal trauma, is the underlying theme of *History of the main complaint*; Soho performs self-examination to reveal memories of racial violence. Through *History of the main complaint*, Kentridge suggests that white South African men should examine their own culpabilities and responsibilities during apartheid. Kentridge says that in *History of the main*

complaint he was looking at the body as "a metaphor for our relationship to memory and the unconscious ..." (Christov-Bakargiev 1999:23).

A Bakelite telephone montages onto x-rays, stethoscopes burrow into Soho's spinal column reminding one of the plunger of the *cafetière* in *Mine*. Inside Soho's abdomen a paper-punch transforms into a ringing Bakelite telephone. Electricity cables, attached to a joint of meat and then to toes and male testicles, suggest physical torture.⁵⁹ On the sonar Soho is shown driving along an empty road, his eyes reflect in the rear-view mirror, symbolising Soho looking back to his past; "eyes in the rear-view mirror evoking memory ..." (McCrickard 2012:17). The road is flanked by long, thin structures; reminiscent of Meindert Hobbema's painting *The Avenue at Middelharnis* (1689) where an avenue of trees recedes towards the middle of the image, but here, evoking an uncertain future for Soho and, by extension, the future of South Africa; at least for the white male and what role he will perform in post-apartheid South Africa.



Figure 21: William Kentridge. *History of the main complaint* (film still) (1996). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

⁵⁹ During apartheid the South African security police used torture to obtain 'confessions' from political detainees. One of the torture methods was to surge electricity through the genitals of the detainees.

The film flits between Soho in his hospital bed and him driving along the road, witnessing acts of physical violence, suggesting memories of trauma and images of men beating another man. Soho, however, stares impassively ahead, unmoved, reflecting his usual state of indifference, metaphorically exposing an indifference towards violence on black people common in many white men during apartheid. When Soho's vehicle hits a black man, who smashes against the windscreen, he wakes from his coma, his eyes open; he has discovered "the weight keeping him 'unconscious'" (Kentrige quoted in Christov-Bakargiev 1999:112). As in *Mine*, Kentrige again emphasises a separateness of roles, revealing Soho's dichotomous performative dependency on separate performances by others, revealing how Soho's restoration to a greedy white Randlord status is dependent on the brutalised 'performance' of the victim hitting his car. Soho's restoration seems so complete that it suggests that Soho is not troubled by his violent memory; has no remorse. The correlation with the TRC hearings, where many perpetrators did not display overt remorse for their acts, is unmistakable, as well as its metaphoric reference to white men, such as PW Botha, who refused to apologise for apartheid and its impact on society.

The white hospital curtain opens and Soho is at his desk, complete with obsolete office machinery, ticker-tape and Bakelite telephone. Through *History of the main complaint* Kentrige questions whether Soho, and white South African men, made any moral progress since the demise of apartheid. The restoration of Soho to his stereotypical performativity of morally indifferent avaricious white masculinity, the same performativity he showed in *Mine*, his refusal to alter his abusive performance, suggests that Soho has, indeed, not made any moral progress.



Figure 22: William Kentridge. *History of the main complaint* (film still) (1996). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

Kentridge (quoted in Christov-Bakargiev 1999:33) states “[t]he film asks how you map the effect of guilt ...”, suggesting Kentridge is asking if the objective of the TRC, to achieve reconciliation, was achieved. His characterisation of Soho's performativity in *History of the main complaint* suggests that he, Kentridge, is sceptical of how successful the TRC was in attaining reconciliation of the 'body' of apartheid into the collective acceptance of South Africans. Through *History of the main complaint* Kentridge suggests that Soho, who I approach as a metonym for the performativities of many South African white masculinities, is not reconciled. Soho was kept unconscious by his denial of brutality and violence, and now that he has simply acknowledged the existence of trauma, his conscience is lightened and he can wake up and be absolved and again smoke a cigar, answer the Bakelite telephone. By merely acknowledging his culpability, Soho is restored to strength and power. *History of the main complaint* suggests that although confessors may admit to horrific acts of violence, in general they continue with their racist conviction that they have done 'nothing wrong'. Apart from the media coverage of prominent white men, such as PW Botha, who refused to apologise for apartheid, I am aware, through my

lived reality, of white South African men who deny any culpability in the structuring or maintenance of apartheid and wish to continue 'as before'.

4.6 *Other faces*

Other faces (2011) is the latest film in Kentridge's *Drawings for projection* series and introduces, by comparison to *Mine* and *History of the main complaint*, a much subdued performativity by Soho. Soho's pensive and reflective performance in *Other faces* is framed within a sense of nostalgia that threads through the film, a nostalgia similar to *Tide table* (2003) where Kentridge also introduced a feeling of melancholic loss. The sense of loss is heightened by a portrayal of the gradual disappearance of the Top Star drive-in⁶⁰ in the south of Johannesburg and recurring imagery of a cemetery. Soho's tentative performance in *Other faces*, far removed from the overt megalomaniac and exploitative Randlord in *Johannesburg, 2nd greatest city after Paris, Monument*, and *Mine*, appears closer in behaviour and demeanour to Felix Teitlebaum (could this be Felix dressed in a pinstripe suit?). Soho's vulnerability in *Other faces* presents as more genuine than the false vulnerability witnessed in *History of the main complaint*. In contrast to Soho's subdued performance, and for the first time in the *Drawings for projection* series, black masculine performativities are assertive, even aggressive – a dramatic shift from the submissive and acquiescent performativities depicted in the earlier films from the series. McCrickard (2012:77) observes that in *Tide table* Soho "grows in our sympathies through the awakening of his conscience". Soho's sympathetic performativity continues in *Other faces*. Through *Other faces* Kentridge acknowledges a post-apartheid renegotiation and reconceptualising of historic black and white masculine performativities in South Africa; and comments on the complexities inherent in such gender performativity reconceptualisations. More than any of the other films in *Drawings for projection*, *Other faces* acts out a crisis in Soho's identity and therefore in post-apartheid white masculine identities. McCrickard (2012:61) states that like "many South Africans, he [Kentridge] experienced disappointment in the post-apartheid state ... a dulling of the sensibilities in response to his country's new freedom".

⁶⁰The Top Star was a popular drive-in open-air movie venue situated on an old mine dump in the south of Johannesburg. It closed down in 2006 as the mine dump is reprocessed for residual gold.

The socio-political context of *Other faces* is 17 years after the ANC came to power in South Africa and Kentridge recognises and explores an uncertainty still present in many South African white men of how to position their masculine performativity in a changed world. Soho's performance in *Other faces*, a performativity dramatically different from *Mine* when Soho could be indifferent towards, and openly exploit, his black workers, recognises this existential uncertainty. By 2011, abusive white hegemonic masculine performativity has become socially and constitutionally unacceptable, and Kentridge reflects this in Soho's performance in *Other faces*.

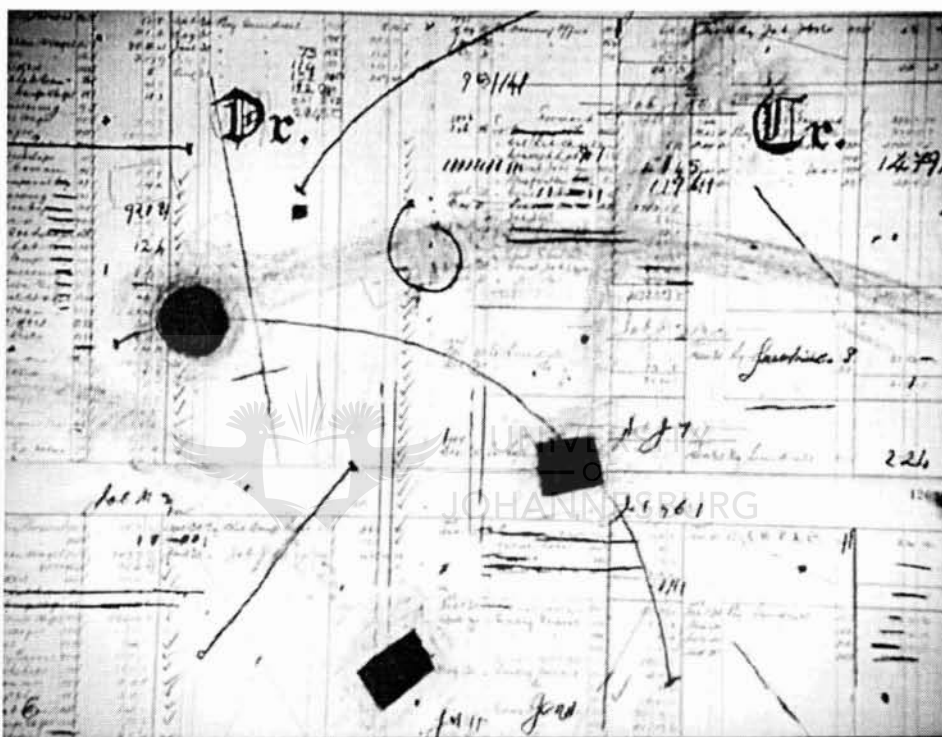


Figure 23: William Kentridge. *Other faces* (film still) (2011). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

Other faces is an ambiguous, complex narrative that allows the viewer to presume different interpretations. In the opening scene of the film, black squares and circles slam onto a historic, handwritten ledger: Dr (Debit) and Cr (Credit) prominently displayed. The meaning of this opening is uncertain. I surmise that Kentridge is referring to the *Black Square* (1915) painting of the Russian artist, Kasimir Malevich, who stated that his *Black Square* signifies that "everything we loved and by which we have lived becomes lost to sight" (Kasimir Malevich [sa]). If we accept this assumption, then Kentridge is referring to the presumption by some South African

white men that 'everything is lost' in post-apartheid South Africa. By opening the film with a historic ledger Kentrige suggests an audit of post-apartheid white indebtedness for years of racial inequality, as well as an audit of loss in white power. The audit theme suggests a 'looking back' which, similar to *Tide table*, imparts a sense of nostalgia. Kentrige looks back through his observations of post-apartheid South Africa and memories from his lived reality in order to frame a sense of loss in white power. The theme of looking back in *Other faces* is also present in *Stereoscope* where Kentrige said: "There is an element of trying to go back to an earlier stage of trying to recapture the sensitization ... trying to capture a different way of seeing" (Tone 1999:3).

As with all the films in *Drawings for projection*, the city of Johannesburg features prominently in *Other faces*, forming the backdrop against which Kentrige frames the performativities of his characters in all the films. Kentrige says he is "unable to escape Johannesburg ... all my work is rooted in this rather desperate provincial city" (Kentrige quoted in Taylor 2009:48). Johannesburg obviously comprises a large part of Kentrige's lived reality and in *Other faces* he features Johannesburg prominently to contextualise Soho's performance. In *Other faces* Kentrige extends a metaphorical exploration of Johannesburg's sense of place, questioning how people perceive themselves and other people in post-apartheid inner-city Johannesburg and in post-apartheid South Africa. *Other faces* graphically depicts how space and power are intertwined: how Johannesburg redefines itself as a post-apartheid city, performing its inner-city space by becoming African and moving away from its European apartheid-era façade. *Other faces* operationalises, in graphic counterpoint, Soho's metamorphosing performance of white masculinity framed against a redefining and performative Africanising Johannesburg.

Thus, in *Other faces*, Kentrige represents inner-city Johannesburg as a character performing a role. Johannesburg's Africanising affiliation is emphasised with new signage: "Prophet Tshuma", "Surgery Dokotela", "Horn of Africa", minibus taxis hooting, women in colourful dresses carrying bags on their heads; inner-city Johannesburg's post-apartheid performativity in 2011. A prominent visual articulation of Johannesburg's inner-city, post-apartheid, redefining-in-performativity is a depiction of the gradual disappearance of Top Star drive-in. Top Star drive-in was a defining component of Johannesburg's identity as an apartheid city. Provided

you were white, the Top Star drive-in was a place to relax and watch movies. For black people it was a place where they were not allowed, a symbol of enforced racial segregation. Although a symbol of oppression, Kentridge's depiction in *Other faces* of the disappearance of Top Star drive-in is nostalgic and evokes a sense of loss. Similar, I propose, to the sense of loss Kentridge constructed in *Tide Table* - in an interview on *Tide table* Kentridge says the film is "connected with moments of childhood that one tries to reclaim ..." (Christov-Bakargiev 1999:9). In *Other faces* Kentridge appropriates the Top Star drive-in as a cultural construct that has different meanings for white and black South Africans, rather than as a reference to the actual space as such. The mine dump on which the Top Star drive-in is situated gradually disappears, a cogent metaphor for the changing power dynamics around the performativities of white and black masculinities in post-apartheid South Africa.



Figure 24: William Kentridge. *Other faces* (film still) (2011). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

Kentridge draws a map on the historic ledger, showing Jeppe, Pritchard and Error Streets; a busy African city scene in Jeppe Street; a black lady in front of a sheet

pinned to a wall; posing for a neatly dressed black photographer's camera.⁶¹ Johannesburg's redefining inner city, once the CBD of Johannesburg where Randlords like Soho dominated, has become someone else's territory. Inner-city Johannesburg is no longer a 'Western' city. Previous white governments presumed Johannesburg to be an international Western city.⁶² However, whilst white Johannesburg built western-style edifices that celebrated white masculinity's hegemonic status, black people, during apartheid, lived in segregated townships. Many of the western-style edifices are now run-down, neglected and vandalised.



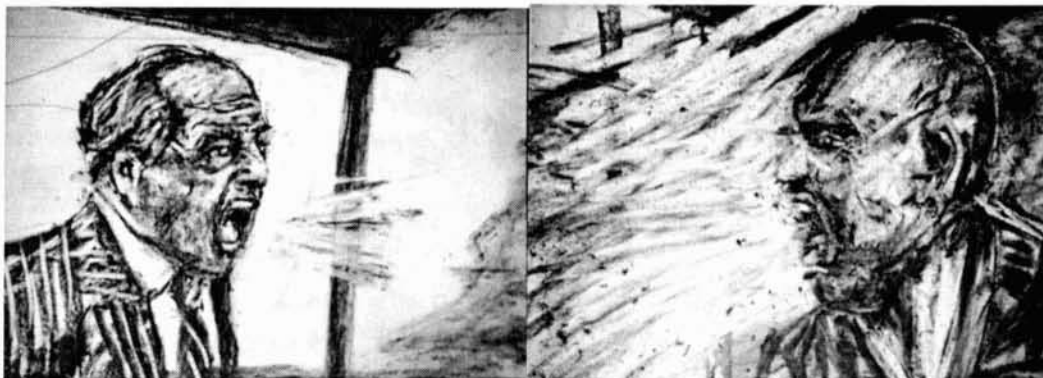
Figure 25: William Kentridge. *Other faces* (film still) (2011). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

On the ledger map two cars, depicted as black blocks, drive towards each other and collide near Error and Jeppe Streets. The drivers stand outside their cars, Soho shouts at a pin-stripe suited black man, his post-apartheid black counterpart, who shouts back. This is the first time in the series that Kentridge portrays a black man displaying anger directly at Soho. In all the previous instances in *Drawings for*

⁶¹ Black photographers congregate at the Home Affairs and Johannesburg Licensing Department offices, providing a service for people needing identification photographs. They place a sheet up against a wall as a make-shift studio.

⁶² For example, in Johannesburg there are many Art Deco style buildings. The buildings, such as His Majesty's cinema, were built to exemplify a Western city.

projection where black people display disaffection, it is in the form of amorphous crowds marching on Soho's edifices of power; his factories and warehouses. *Other faces* presents a major shift from how the previous films represented performativities of white and black masculinities; a black man confidently displaying anger, and Soho reduced to shouting back, the extent of his renegotiated post-apartheid authority.



Figures 26, 27: William Kentridge. *Other faces* (film stills) (2011). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

Other faces suggests that Soho is no longer welcome in inner-city Johannesburg, his previous domain of authority, the anger in the statement on a cream-coloured card "YOU FUCKEN WHITE MAN", is unmistakable. The statement may be a simple reflex of road rage from the accident, however, considered within the context of the narrative of *Other faces*, the statement represents black anger against Soho, metaphoric anger against white South Africans for years of oppression living under apartheid. The statement: "I AM NOTHING & SHOULD BE EVERYTHING" is also uncertain and, in the context of *Other faces*, an ambiguous statement. For Soho, and white South African men, it suggests a wish to be restored to historic performativities of power and authority, a yearning for 'things to be as they were'. However, for black masculinities the statement could imply frustration in that, notwithstanding gaining democratic rights, most black South Africans are still economically disadvantaged when compared to most whites.



Figures 28, 29: William Kentridge. *Other faces* (film stills) (2011). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

Kentridge emphasises the sense of nostalgia threading through *Other faces* by introducing a home movie made on a hand-held movie camera. For white South Africans who recognise the context, who remember old-fashioned shaky hand-held home movies, this particular imagery introduces nostalgic memories of a seemingly less anxious past. For black South Africans, however, the imagery will invoke painful memories of acquiescent servility. *Other faces*, as with Kentridge's other films in *Drawings for projection*, makes the audience aware of the dichotomous complexities in South Africa's history of apartheid. The sense of white nostalgia and white loss is reiterated through a depiction of an old white man, who resembles an aged Soho, reading to an old woman half-lying in a sofa chair, a blanket over her lower body.



Figures 30, 31: William Kentridge. *Other faces* (film stills) (2011). Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

The image near the end of *Other faces* of Soho holding a cat-child; Soho in a 'caring' situation, is a performance very far removed from the egotistical indifferent Randlord in *Mine* and *History of the main complaint*. Accepting the metaphoric symbolism of Soho's performance, this image suggests Soho cradling the young post-apartheid South Africa. Soho seems perplexed, unsure of how to react to a being that requires nurturing but has sharp claws that are able to scratch. The cat-child might represent the fledgling status of post-apartheid South Africa, a status that is still exploring various future directions, but one that requires nurturing. Kentridge suggests that South Africa's white masculinities have joint parental responsibility in influencing how this cat-child matures.



Figure 32: William Kentridge. *Other faces* (film still) (2011) Hand-drawn animated film, charcoal and pastel on paper. © William Kentridge, courtesy William Kentridge.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I framed my analysis of three films from Kentridge's *Drawings for projection* cycle of filmic narratives, *Mine*, *History of the main complaint* and *Other faces*, through an autoethnographic lens. The autoethnographic lens revealed, through Soho's performances, Kentridge's heteroglot voices of author, object and subject. I revealed how Kentridge reflexively interpreted his observations on South

Africa's socio-political change over 22 years in order to satirise historic performativities of white masculine moral indifference and to reveal a gradual reconceptualisation in white masculine performativities. I identified how Kentridge uses remembering of both trauma and nostalgia to suggest a journey of change and to evoke a sense of loss, particularly in the later films in the series. I also identified how Kentridge's reflexive interpretation of his observations of change function to split his heteroglot voices in the narratives, a heteroglossia which juxtaposes different performativities of masculinity, thereby providing an ambiguity to the series that emphasises a developing existential crisis in white South African masculine performativities. The success of the *Drawings for projection* cycle of hand-drawn films arises from the ability of many viewers to identify with Kentridge's episodic interpretation of change over 22 years, his questioning of what it means to 'do man' in South Africa.

In Chapter Five I explore gender performativity of white South African masculinities through my body of work, *Performing 'man'*.



5 RENEGOTIATING MASCULINITY: AN EXPLICATION OF PERFORMING 'MAN'

5.1 Context for the work

This chapter is an explication of my body of work, *Performing 'man'*, in which I visually explore a perceived crisis in post-apartheid white masculine performativities in South Africa. In order to do this, I deploy my heteroglot voices of author, object and subject as an analytical framework. *Performing 'man'* consists of five separate series of prints on paper in which my broad satirical intent explores how white men perform 'man'. This is primarily achieved through purposefully ambiguous place/space relationships, unlikely groupings, and passages of time. These tropes of ambiguity evoke, amongst others, nostalgia, avoidance acceptance and denial. The prints foreground constructions of creolised and hybrid identities. Here hybridity is used in the context of Hall's (1996:58) concept of identity reconceptualisation that does not attempt to seek cultural supremacy, but rather provides an interstitial performativity that accesses the minority position my object-voice, Sies Man, occupies in post-apartheid South Africa. In this body of prints, through the character Sies Man, my hybrid identity is constructed through performativities that are neither assimilation nor collaboration, but interstitial.

I explore the nature of white masculine performativities in South Africa during the apartheid-era as well as how a perceived post-apartheid existential crisis reconceptualises these masculine performativities. I explore how white men perform 'man' primarily through ambiguity and satire, and through lenses of hybridity, nostalgia, avoidance and denial. The prints are constructed by means of traditional printmaking processes including hard-ground etching, soft-ground etching, aquatint, drypoint, ink monotype and watercolour monotype.

I choose traditional printmaking, as it is an art making practice which I find appropriate for the creation of images that can function as societal commentary. Although traditional printmaking may be regarded as archaic by some contemporary printmakers who use photography, video, photomechanical, and digital printing mechanisms, it is, for me, the most appropriate way in which to continue a historic social commentary practiced by artists such as Goya and Hogarth and, more

contemporaneously, by Kannemeyer and Kentridge. These artists critique social and moral issues relevant to their time.

The drawing style in all the prints can be described as primarily naturalistic, facilitating the legibility required of the conventions of social commentary, within the broad ambit of social realism. However, in order to exploit a purposeful ambiguity, the prints incorporate some expressionist elements, found particularly in the drypoint and monotype prints. My intention is for the viewer to recognise the imagery represented and the social commentary intended in a print as constructs of not only white male performativity, but also of constructed, indexical and self-reflexive marks on paper.

I argue that by exploiting ambiguous and satirical visual commentary, my body of prints align with contemporary art making in South Africa which too, has exploited the states of flux and open-endedness associated with postmodernism over the past three decades. Contemporary South African artists, including Kannemeyer and Kentridge, seem more concerned with moral, socio-political issues than defending some grand narrative about the function and meaning of art.

Richardson's (2000:15–16) autoethnographic factors of reflexivity and lived reality, discussed in previous chapters, operationalise my conceptual framework. The five series of prints are themed from my lived reality and observations of socio-political change in South Africa over two decades. Although I come from an Afrikaans background, I now primarily speak English in my personal and business environments. *Performing 'man'*, does not focus on white Afrikaner or white English-speaking South African masculine performativities, but rather on how any white masculine identity, performed under apartheid, might be reconceptualising in post-apartheid South Africa. The conceptual themes I use are also influenced by my research of the critical literature on post-apartheid South African whiteness studies and gender performativity theory.

This chapter then, describes how my conceptual framework, use of traditional printmaking practices, style of drawing and subject matter, work together to voice a commentary on performances of post-apartheid white masculinities. The chapter starts with an overview of my lived reality, and then moves to an overview of *Performing 'man'*, which includes the themes underpinning the five series and a

detailed exposition on how I perform my heteroglot voices of author, object and subject within the body of prints.

5.2 Lived reality

My lived reality can be summarised as the narrative of a South African white Afrikaner man, who was born on a farm, grew up in Johannesburg during the apartheid-era in a white Afrikaner environment and became disillusioned with white Afrikaner values. As noted in Chapter Two, identities emerge within specific power structures, which include elements of difference and exclusion (see Hall & du Gay 1996). My masculine performativity under apartheid, insofar as my moral and socio-political values were concerned, questioned the notion of who I was and where I belonged. I questioned whether I could be part of a people and culture who enforced racism on the back of white Calvinist patriarchal values. My post-apartheid performativity as a white man is being reshaped by the dismantling of the remnants of apartheid, but also by a sense of disillusionment in post-apartheid South Africa caused by witnessing corruption, overt displays of greed, questionable political morality and ongoing broken social promises. I am uncertain of how my masculine performativity may reconceptualise, and I sense that my masculine performativity may also be in crisis.

My home life as a child was not as strong an influence on my identity construction as it was for Kannemeyer and Kentridge. Domestic patriarchal influence was limited as my father was already aged 54 when I was born, suffered from diabetes and died when I was 14 years old. I did not know him well. Both my parents subscribed to white Afrikaner Calvinist patriarchal values, but within my domestic environment I was relatively free to explore different ideologies, a freedom that benefited my intellectual curiosities when I became a teenager. My school environment, however, strictly enforced white Afrikaner patriarchal values which, at the time, I accepted as normal. As a young boy I was a god-fearing Calvinist who submitted to patriarchal authority, particularly external patriarchal authority. I accepted and subscribed to white Afrikaner values and ideology until age 14, when I started questioning a blind acceptance of white Afrikanerness and patriarchal authority.

I became aware of my social identity as a white Afrikaner during the middle to late 1960s, whilst attending an all-boy, all white, Afrikaans medium high school. This

initial awareness was awakened through reading a new form of dissident Afrikaans literature that dared question Afrikaner ideology and the hegemonic status of patriarchal Afrikanerness. This literature changed my socio-political and moral world-view in subtle yet profound ways. The new form of Afrikaans literature came from the *Sestigers*,⁶³ a group of writers whose conceptualisation of white Afrikaner masculine performativity differed radically from the conservative Calvinist white Afrikaner patriarchy accepted as the norm by most white Afrikaners at the time. With hindsight, I now realise that many young white Afrikaner youths in the 1960s, at least those who read the *Sestigers'* works and aligned with their values and ideas, suffered from a cultural schism. This schism arose from being part of a culture that demanded complete adherence to Calvinist, racist white patriarchal values, whilst simultaneously doubting and questioning those very values. When I attempted to ask questions and debate my doubts with teachers, the reactions varied from ridicule to accusations of intellectual treason. The *Sestigers'* novels, poems and plays,⁶⁴ which focused on apartheid, patriarchal oppression and sexual puritanism, caused me to question the then accepted norms of white Afrikaner performativities that defined 'decency' and 'loyalty'. Decency, in white Afrikaner terms, equated to puritan sexual oppression and loyalty referred to a white Calvinist Afrikaner patriarchal ideology which excluded anyone not white and Afrikaans (see Vestergaard 2001:21). I aligned with the *Sestigers'* aims which I perceived as a desire to ferment dissension among young white Afrikaners and to redeem white Afrikaners from oppressive Calvinist patriarchy, to effectively cause a political revolution – at least on an intellectual level. I wanted to be part of this dissension and came to reject all forms of the then established Afrikaans literary oeuvre, only accepting Afrikaans writing if presented in *Sestigers* postmodern terms.

Through the writings of the *Sestigers* I became aware of the racist and exclusionary implications within white Afrikaner ideology and from there migrated towards the ideas of writers such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Franz Kafka, and Eugène

⁶³ During the early 1960s the *Sestigers*, young white Afrikaans writers, introduced what can now be considered postmodern literary concepts into Afrikaans writing. They embraced racial tolerance and sexual freedom and explored these themes in their writings. The writers included, *inter alia*, André Brink, Breyten Breytenbach, Ingrid Jonker and Etienne le Roux.

⁶⁴ Particular works that added to my questioning the values of Afrikanerness' included Brink's *Die Ambassadeur* (1963) and *Orgie* (1965); Breytenbach's *Die ysterkoei moet sweet* (1964); and le Roux's *Sewe dae by die Silbersteins* (1962), *Die magu* (1959) and *Die derde oog* (1966).

Ionesco.⁶⁵ I was aware that to be associated with ideas that the then ruling hegemony regarded as communist, ideas that explored concepts outside white Afrikaner orthodoxy, would place me in opposition with most white Afrikaners of the time as well as the then white Afrikaner government. In the 1960s it was still politically and ideologically unacceptable to speak of 'all' South Africans; black, coloured, Asian and white, as equals. I adopted a safe and ambivalent insider/outsider approach in effecting my new world-view and only debated my opinions when in the company of like-minded individuals – which was not often. Although I aligned intellectually with the anti-apartheid movement and despised what I perceived as 1960s white Afrikaners' political and cultural backwardness, I did not action my world-view in any meaningful way. The extent of my 'revolt' was to exercise my personal freedom from patriarchal authority and hierarchical statuses by refusing to wear a school uniform, embracing socio-political change where I could do so safely and developing a desire for reflection, independence and a cynical distrust of authority.

5.3 Overview of *Performing 'man'*

5.3.1 Conceptual themes

The key conceptual objective of *Performing 'man'* is to comment on white South African masculine constructs under apartheid and a perceived post-apartheid existential crisis in the performativities of these masculine constructs. I achieve this objective by visually exploring how white masculine performativities reconceptualise in order to respond and adapt to this identity crisis. Any form of identity reconceptualisation implies uncertainty and no gender identity, particularly one experiencing an existential identity crisis, can realistically anticipate what form their gender performativity may take in the future. I deliberately thread ambiguity and uncertainty through the performances of identity reconceptualisation represented in the body of prints. These performativities are situated against hybridised contexts such as, *inter alia*, combining elements of 1950s rural nostalgia with post-apartheid social mixing. I aim to provide, through themes of ambiguity and hybridity, critical

⁶⁵ As I saw it, all these writers reflected on the absurdity of existence; the concept that humanity is the product of random combinations and circumstances. Calvinist patriarchy would describe such concepts not only as blasphemous, but as leading to despair. I instead found the concept of absurdity exhilarating, providing me with a sense of freedom from oppressive white Afrikaner values and beliefs.

performances of white masculinities that satirise and comment on how the end of apartheid causes a dislocation of white masculine identities in post-apartheid South Africa.

5.3.2 The heteroglot voices in the prints

I approach the making of *Performing 'man'* through Richardson's (2000:15–16) autoethnographic factors of reflexivity and lived reality to depict and comment on white male performativities, filtered through my personal experiences and observations of socio-political change in South Africa over two decades. Through these factors of reflexivity and expression of lived reality I operationalise how constructions of white masculine gender performativities would comment on and satirise the underlying elements that define white masculine performativity in South Africa. Since the prints are intended to function as vehicles for social commentary, all the characters in an image need to have a voice. Reflexivity allows me to identify how to construct my heteroglot voices of author-voice, object-voice and subject-voice in the prints.

As the author I am able to control my heteroglot voices through an alter-ego self-portrait object-voice I named Sies Man, whose recognisability as the author actions and enables the subject-voice which provides content to the prints.

5.3.2.1 Author-voice

Operationalised through the concept of heteroglossia, my author-voice orientates the imagery in the prints which, together with the subject-voice, function to suggest certain interpretations of the prints' content. In essence, the author-voice decides what experiences and observations to appropriate from my lived reality and how to structure these into commentary in the prints. As author I select between experiences and observations within my lived reality that best serve my objectives and then identify an appropriate artistic methodology to construct a printed commentary and negotiate content. The orientation implied through the imagery is loaded with intended contexts which vary according to the kind of object-voice and subject-voice performed in the print. I find that any intended context does not lie within the print but extends to the viewer. The best my author-voice can do is

anticipate in Bakhtinian terms (1981, 1990) the viewer's reactions and try and lead or suggest dialogue between the viewer and the print in a certain direction.

5.3.2.2 Object-voice

My object-voice is structured through my alter-ego, Sies Man. In the body of prints Sies Man's physical resemblance to the author varies between obvious recognisability and those of a young Sies Man and an aged Sies Man who may not be immediately recognisable as self-portraits. The variances in Sies Man's physical features refer to the theme of ambiguity which threads through the series of prints as well as to the theme of reconceptualisation in masculine performativity explored in this study. My alter-ego's name, Sies Man is a play on my surname, Zietsman. The satirical intent resides in the use of a term, 'sies, man', which in Afrikaans derogatorily describes a nasty personal behaviour, such as someone picking their nose in public. Although a constructed name, there is some reference to my lived reality when my peers at high school expressed disgust at my socio-political and religious views, taste in music, art and dress style. The other characters depicted in the prints are based on stereotypes mostly appropriated from people I read about in the media. In the various prints, each character has its own context which forms part of my subject-voice.

5.3.2.3 Subject-voice

The subject-voice is the agent and facilitator of meaning and context in a print. How the viewer experiences the subject-voice in visual art can differ. The art work may be graphically descriptive only, as I use in my prints, or a combination of graphic and music, as Kentridge uses in his films and staged performances, or graphic and verbal, such as in Kannemeyer's use of imagery and words in his satirical *Bitterkomix* strips. Individual prints may resemble other prints in a series insofar as the type of printmaking technique or process used, drawing style and use of similar spaces as background, thereby suggesting a narrative. However, each print contains a context within which I intend the viewer to create his or her own narrative. My intent when constructing a print is to create a dialogue between the viewer and the print. A viewer who knows me should, in most of the prints, recognise my alter-ego object-voice; recognise the social context and the other masculine

performativities depicted in the print; then create their own story or narrative that, for them, makes sense of the imagery represented in the print. My intention is to invite a negotiation of ambiguous spaces and constructs in order to attempt some understanding of hybridity associated with identities in flux and the representation of performativities of ambiguity, crisis and reconceptualisation.

5.4 Discussion of themed series of works

5.4.1 Theme one – Becoming white man in 1950s South Africa

This series of six soft-ground etchings depicts performances of white patriarchal oppression in a white Afrikaner farmhouse from the 1950s, a home similar in style to when I was a boy. As my own domestic youth was mostly uneventful, I source my subject-voice from witnessing and experiencing performances of Calvinist patriarchal authority in the homes of other family members and friends.

Patriarchal authority in the white Afrikaner household was a dominant characteristic of 1950s and 1960s Afrikanerness and the cornerstone of a community where Calvinist patriarchal authority was not to be questioned. All women and all black people of both sexes were regarded as inferior to white men. Young white Afrikaner boys' lived realities were reduced to a world that consisted only of white Afrikaner Calvinist patriarchy. This patriarchy included me, as a child, being called *kleinbaas*⁶⁶ by all the black people on the farm. In the 1950s, the apartheid state constructed black people to be obedient, non-questioning and child-like. Rural black people were not allowed to complain, were forced to accept white patriarchal authority or face expulsion from the farm with consequent hardship for their families. This reductionist view of reality, which negated the wider South African socio-political reality, was enforced daily through performances of patriarchal arrogance and oppression. In this series of prints I visually explore such patriarchal practices and satirise white Afrikaner patriarchal values, exposing the oppressive environment patriarchal authority created for young children and black people.

The oppressive and demeaning environment such racist practices would have caused for black people is explored in Figure 33, *Performing 1950s - Is it an act?*

⁶⁶In apartheid-era South Africa it was common for black people to call young white boys *kleinbaas*, literally 'little master'. Adult white men were called *grootbaas* – 'big master'.

(2010). The print depicts an apparently innocent setting of an old white man sitting in a bedroom with a young white boy and a black girl. The young boy and the old man are both my alter-ego object-voice, Sies Man. The young boy is a physical representation of Sies Man at age three and the man, an aged version. The meanings behind the three characters are ambivalent. The three figures are grouped together, away from the neatly made bed, and stare forward as if the viewer has opened a door and caught them doing something forbidden. The three characters look directly at the viewer, suggesting the author-voice is deliberately confronting the viewer and demanding the viewer's participation as a witness. The role of the aged Sies Man is unclear; he could be the father of young Sies Man, even of the black girl from a then illegal transracial sexual encounter, a relative, family friend, even a *dominee* on a house visit. The presence of a young black girl in a bedroom with a white man would, however, have been automatically regarded as suspicious in all contexts during the 1950s. I intend for the viewer to question the relevance of the young black girl, perhaps surmise her presence as that of a farmworker's daughter and young Sies Man's playmate. The black girl, however, appears dismayed, suggesting sexual impropriety. The young Sies Man is frowning, a button missing on his farm-style dungarees, seemingly unsure of how to behave, a performance reminiscent of Kannemeyer's *Boetie* (1995) where *Boetie* hides, unsure of how to behave after his father sexually molested him. The viewer may instead surmise that young Sies Man may simply have done something for which his father has scolded him, torn his dungarees whilst playing, and the black girl is upset because *kleinbaas* was reprimanded and she feels protective of him. The aged Sies Man stares forward, hands clenched on his lap.

The subject-voice, the context in this print, is deliberately ambiguous, particularly in the context of 1950s apartheid South Africa. The hybridity in an aged Sies Man in the same space as a young Sies Man, the typical conservative 1950s Eurocentric style bedroom counterpointed by a dry, austere African landscape outside the window, suggests an atmosphere of tension. Everything in the room is neat and undisturbed, the bed is made, the cushion on the chair is neatly fluffed and placed, no visible clutter – a suggestion of Calvinist austerity. The view through the window of an empty scrub landscape and a single wind pump provides an inside/outside feel

to the print, as if the outside is too austere, or too dangerous, to go out to. The impression of Calvinist austerity is enhanced by the basic bed, chair configuration.



Figure 33: Derek Zietsman. *Performing 1950s - Is it an act?* (2010). Soft ground etching printed on Hahnemühle paper, 50 x 33cm. Collection of the artist.

5.4.2 Theme two - Performing white man in apartheid South Africa

In this series of six watercolour monotypes I use aspects from my observations of white masculine socio-political performativities during apartheid to construct prints that satirise and comment on such performativities. I visually explore how Sies Man performs apartheid-era 'white man', performances that in post-apartheid South Africa are politically and morally unacceptable. Butler's (1990:25) contention that "identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results", forms the basis of my conceptual framework in this series of prints. In the context that masculinity is defined through performance, the concept that our masculine identities are what we do rather than who we are, I focus in this series of prints on performativity; on how identity is the effect rather than the cause of performativity. The prints depict certain cultural configurations of apartheid masculine performativity, which were then often seen as natural.

Collecting Specimens (2011) (figure 34) refers to a time when it was common, a 'norm', for many white South Africans to objectify black people, when white people

regarded black people as only fit for servitude. The subject-voice in this print is exploitation. I also satirise, through Sies Man's performance as a white artist, Enwezor's (1997) accusation that South African white artists represent black bodies as abject, denying them a voice.

My object-voice in this print is a relaxed, middle-aged, Sies Man who is drawing on paper set on an easel while a naked black man poses rigidly, another apparently naked black body lays a few metres behind Sies Man. The posing black man and the naked body both seem to suggest rows of bodies and models extending outside the print, implying an expectation of unlimited, disposable, cheap black models, or specimens. Sies Man is dressed in comfortable casual clothes, seemingly unconcerned at the black model's tense nakedness; the rigidity in the pose suggesting he is not allowed to move, a normal expectation during a life drawing exercise, but also infers Sies Man's hegemonic *grootbaas* authority. The black model appears tense, facelessly turned away from the viewer, his sinewy muscled body stands subservient, head down, slave-like; he does not appear comfortable.

The imagery in *Collecting Specimens* does not represent as ambiguous or hybrid. My intention with this series is to invite the viewer to negotiate these prints within the context of the total exhibition. I do not construct this particular series of prints as specifically ambiguous or hybrid, but rather focus on how these prints 'confront' the rest of the exhibition and thereby assist in my aim of ambiguity and hybridity within the overall *Performing 'man'* series of prints.

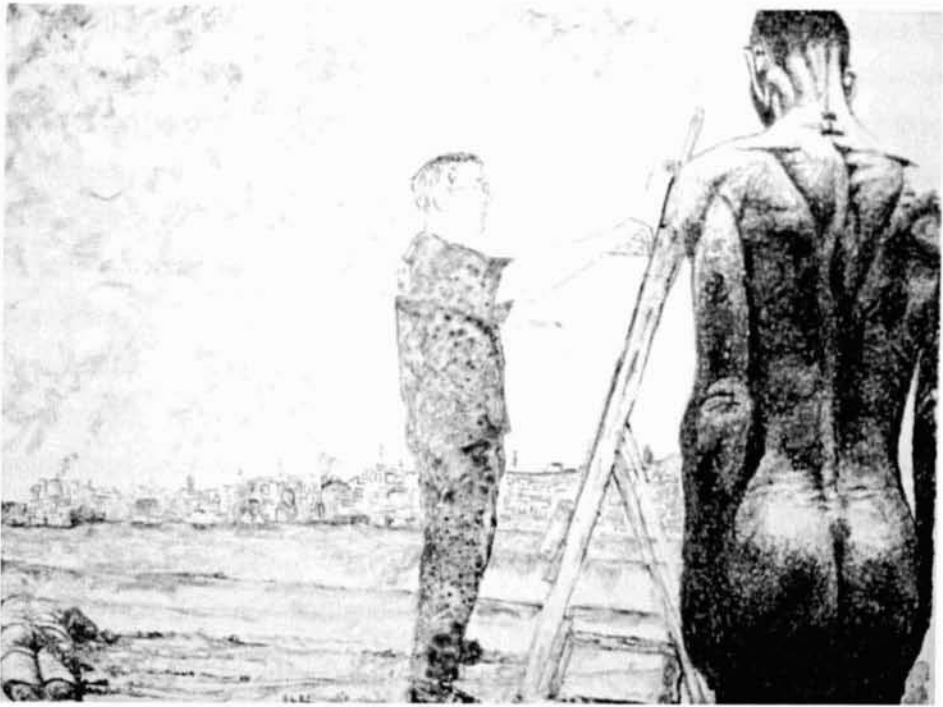


Figure 34: Derek Zietsman. *Collecting specimens* (2011). Watercolour monotype printed on Hahnemühle paper, 51 x 38cm. Collection of the artist.

5.4.3 Theme three – Performing white man in post-apartheid South Africa

This series of hard-ground etchings, drawn in naturalist style, explores and represents masculine performativities influenced primarily by Steyn's (2001) and Ballard's (2004) research on post-apartheid South African whites in a state of change, even in crisis. Within this context of crisis, the prints in this series also refer to Hall's (1996:19) contention that identity becomes paramount whenever you are unsure of where you belong. I satirically comment on how some post-apartheid white masculine performativities, shaped by the realities of apartheid, are adapting to contemporary post-apartheid circumstances and socio-political discourses.

The performances of post-apartheid white masculinity depicted in this series are situated against the background of the same typical South African rural town. I was born on a farm and have always been attracted to small rural towns; in this sense I reflect on my own nostalgia for rural simplicity. However, by depicting a small rural town with an ever-present Dutch Reformed Church steeple and untarred main street, I also reference white Afrikaner Calvinist patriarchy and my own white Afrikaner heritage.

The primary character in the etchings of this series is my alter-ego, Sies Man, (also my object-voice), a self-portrait, who performs various post-apartheid white masculine reconceptualisations. As found in Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's visual narratives, the use of an alter-ego helps establish the series of prints as potential autoethnographical texts. In the context of white masculine performativities in an existential crisis, this series appropriates the image of a phallus as symbolic reference to masculine hegemonic renegotiation in post-apartheid South Africa. Considering my own lived reality, the motif of the phallus symbolises an intrinsic relationship between mythic white Afrikaner Calvinist ideals and oppressive patriarchal authority. I use the phallus to satirise how, under apartheid, any reference to the phallus was strictly forbidden, seen as vulgar and obscene. I find it ironic that in a society where white phallogentric patriarchal authority was the norm, any discussion or representation of human sexuality was met with puritan horror.

I became aware of the influence of phallogentric authority on identity construction about ten years ago when I read an introductory text on the ideas of Jacques Lacan. My interest in exploring the structure of white Afrikaner patriarchal society in South Africa developed when researching for this dissertation and I became aware that white Afrikaner Calvinist patriarchal authority, particularly as enforced in the apartheid-era classroom, played a major role in my masculinity identity construct. Satirising the visual aspects of phallogentric authority became a focus in *Performing 'man'*. I first made the phallus print, (Figure 36) *Performance number 1 – you shall have no other god* (2010), and the rest of the series followed. Although my interest in phallogentric authority predates the May 2012 public debate around Brett Murray's painting of President Jacob Zuma (*The Spear*, 2011), the debate is relevant to my study as it seems to expose a fragility in all masculine performativities in post-apartheid South Africa. Murray's painting, at the time of writing, is still causing debate. In July 2012 the South African political cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro, known as Zapiro, published a cartoon (Figure 35) that continued the controversy. Zapiro's cartoon portrays Zuma as a giant walking penis frowning at his reflection in a mirror hung on the wall of the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg. Murray's painting brings the link between masculine performativity and the phallus into the collective consciousness.

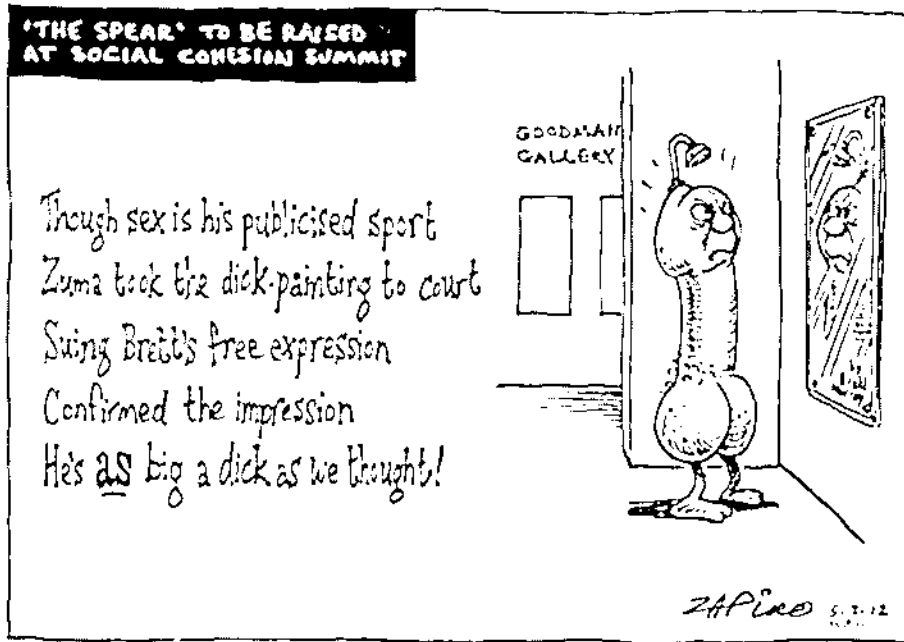


Figure 35: Jonathan Shapiro (2012) *'The spear' to be raised at social cohesion summit*. Pen and ink on paper. (Mail and Guardian July 2012). © 2012 Zapiro (All rights reserved). Used with permission from www.zapiro.com.

Visual representation of the penis is still socially sensitive, particularly where it approximates its erect state. In South Africa the penis is still regarded sacrosanct, and publicly displaying the penis, particularly the black penis, is seen as politically incorrect, distasteful, and insulting to black culture (Bauer 2012). However, considering the impact of Murray's *The Spear* painting and Zapiro's cartoons on the collective consciousness, the recent past has witnessed a dramatic re-emergence of the penis from its historic closet for representation.

I use the phallus image as a signifier for masculinity and, in this study, a satirical symbol for masculine performativity. In the context of this study I use the phallus motif to represent white anxieties of how to perform their post-apartheid white masculinity. The symbol of the phallus in my prints also infers a historic fear that the white penis cannot live up to the size and potency imputed for the black penis. The materiality of the phallus depicted in this series therefore symbolises not only a crisis around white South African masculinities' fear of hegemonic reversal, but also a satirical stab at white men's historic insecurity around phallic performativity.

Performance number 1 – you shall have no other god (2010) (Figure 36), has as its focal point a large black phallus on a float being drawn down the untarred main street of a typical South African rural town featured in all the prints in this series. My object-voice, Sies Man, dances next to the black phallus, as if welcoming its materiality and symbolism. White men follow further down the dusty street, pulling a white phallus on a float. The subject-voice in this print visually infers a perceived rise of new black male hegemonic power in post-apartheid South Africa. As noted, I regard a renegotiation in hegemonic status between white and black masculinities to be a primary cause in a purported crisis suffered by post-apartheid white South African male performativities. The print suggests a celebration, dancing in the streets, to honour the rise of a new hegemonic power, suggesting acceptance by white masculine performativities. Although the celebration implies acceptance of a new order, the celebration includes only a few white participants and no onlookers, and happens in an obscure small rural town. The paucity in participation suggests a wider denial rather than acceptance. This welcoming event may not be popular with many white South Africans.



Figure 36: Derek Zietsman. *Performance number 1 – you shall have no other god* (2010). Hard-ground etching printed on Hahnemühle paper, 50 x 33cm. Collection of the artist.

In *Performance number 2 – packed for Perth* (2010) (Figure 37) my subject-voice is one of avoidance and denial. This print satirises, through absurd hybridity, South African whites who emigrate from post-apartheid South Africa, a strategy Ballard (2004) identifies as a way some white South Africans deal with an existential crisis; they flee. Sies Man, wearing an astronaut suit and holding his pet goldfish, is preparing to leave on a penis-rocket set up on the dusty rural town's street. My object-voice and subject-voice performances in this print are intentionally satirical and absurd. The imagery suggests fantastical boyhood dreams of becoming an astronaut, a dream only one South African, Mark Shuttleworth,⁶⁷ has achieved. Sies Man is leaving post-apartheid South Africa and is taking his white phallus with him.

Sies Man's absurd departure method contrasts with the depiction of two overweight white men struggling to manoeuvre a load of luggage down the dusty street, suggesting white South Africans who may wish to emigrate but are restricted, struggling to move but not making much progress.



Figure 37: Derek Zietsman. *Performance number 2 – packed for Perth* (2010). Hard-ground etching printed on Hahnemühle paper, 50 x 33cm. Collection of the artist.

⁶⁷ Mark Shuttleworth gained worldwide recognition in 2002 as a self-funded space tourist and the first South African in space. He flew in a Russian spacecraft.

Performance number 3 – black like me (2010) (Figure 38) again explores an uncertainty present in many post-apartheid South African white men; how to position their masculine performativity in a changed world. This print refers to Steyn's (2001:169) fifth narrative, which promotes the construct of hybrid white identities, suggesting that post-apartheid South African whites should negotiate new hybrid, creolised, gender performativities within Africanist discourses. In the print *Sies Man*, apparently unconscious, lies on an operating table, he is undergoing a transracial penis transplant. Hamilton Naki,⁶⁸ who assisted Dr Christiaan Barnard in preparation for the world's first heart transplant, leads the operation. The dominant performance is by Naki, dressed in hospital scrubs and smiling comfortably at the viewer. *Sies Man* lies helpless and vulnerable. The operation happens outdoors in the dusty main street of my archetypal rural town, a white phallus on top of the Dutch Reformed Church steeple. A black phallus lies ready for transplantation in a steel bowl. My subject-voice in this print is satirically focused on *Sies Man* attempting to reconceptualise his white masculine performativity through hybridity. *Sies Man* is attempting, through a type of ritualistic surgical rite, to enter into an interstitial white/black manhood by appropriating a black phallus onto his white body and discarding his white penis. *Sies Man* is being dismembered in order to become a different member.

The white phallus blasphemously rising on top of the Dutch Reformed Church steeple refers to historic Calvinist white Afrikaner patriarchal values whilst simultaneously satirising those very values, held sacrosanct within white Afrikaner patriarchy. The white phallus infers that not all white South African males wish to attain hybridity.

A dog walks away from the operating table, perhaps disgusted that no scraps are forthcoming. As a child I had a dog that looked very similar to the one depicted in this print. I use the same dog in a number of prints. While for me dogs symbolise loyalty and guardianship, I am, however, aware that in apartheid South Africa many

⁶⁸Hamilton Naki was a black gardener who later worked in the animal laboratory at the University of Cape Town. He assisted Christiaan Barnard in the research that preceded the first heart transplant. Naki had little education, yet developed excellent technical skills and Barnard apparently valued Naki's help in training surgeons. According to interviews with Naki and Barnard, Naki was present in theatre during heart and liver transplantations, which was illegal at that time. In post-apartheid South Africa, newspapers began to report that Naki was as responsible for the success of the first heart transplant operation as Barnard. In 2003, Naki received an honorary Master of Medicine degree from the University of Cape Town (Hamilton-naki [sa]).

black people equated dogs with aggression and disdain; police often set dogs on people peacefully demonstrating for a better life. I deliberately use the complexities within South African dog symbolism to add to the theme of ambiguity in the prints. The dog has no specific relationship with any character in the print, seemingly performing as a *flâneur* who strolls for pleasure, free to probe its surroundings. However, I argue that one of the complexities inherent in post-apartheid white masculine performativity reconceptualisation derives from a need of the individual white South African male to preserve his autonomy and individuality of existence in the face of new social forces. Within this latter context of a *flâneur*, the dog's performance is hidden; although the dog participates in the print, its relevance to the performativity of the other characters in the print is ambiguous, not apparent.



Figure 38: Derek Zietsman. *Performance number 3 – black like me* (2010). Hard-ground etching printed on Hahnemühle paper, 50 x 33cm. Collection of the artist.

Performance number 5 – it's not what you know (2012) (Figure 39) depicts Sies Man performing social mixing and refers to Ballard's (2004) strategy of integration as well as satirising a theme found in many post-apartheid South African advertisements, that of unproblematic and idealised racial equality and harmony. The print is again situated in my archetypal small rural town, Sies Man holds a glass of red wine and poses for a photograph with South Africa's current president, Jacob Zuma, and America's first black president, Barack Obama. On the horizon, behind Obama's left

shoulder, stands a sculpture of a white phallus and walking away from the trio, an elderly white man without a shirt. The archetypal rural town, with its dusty untarred main street and Dutch Reformed Church steeple, suggests nostalgia for a time when there was an illusion of simplicity, when life is remembered as seemingly less complex and white men believed they were confident in their patriarchal authority.

As with the other prints in this series, *Performance number 5 – it's not what you know* depicts ambiguity and absurd hybridity. The subject-voice is one of acceptance and avoidance, being 'in' and being 'out', operationalised through the attire and demeanour of the characters performing in the print. The grouping of Sies Man, Zuma and Obama appear pleased and relaxed, as if posing for a 'brag' photograph. Zuma and Obama wear buttoned suits, lounge shirts with ties and politician smiles, which indicate that they are working. Sies Man has a cynical smile and is casually dressed with an open collar and unbuttoned leather jacket, he is performing social mixing. Sies Man is 'in', he is being photographed with the seats of political hegemony.

In contrast, the old man walking away, head down, appears dejected, lost and vulnerable. He is shirtless, suggesting he has 'lost the shirt off his back', his power has been removed. The old man is walking towards the white phallus in the background and in the context of this study, the old man's performance implies he sees no alternative but to go back to a white phallus, back to the illusion of white power and white privilege.



Figure 39: Derek Zietsman. *Performance number 5 – it's not what you know* (2010). Hard-ground etching printed on Hahnemühle paper, 50 x 33cm. Collection of the artist.

5.4.4 Theme four – Get out of town!

This series of six drypoint etchings on Perspex explores white post-apartheid uncertainty and fear against the backdrop of the Nelson Mandela Bridge⁶⁹ in downtown Johannesburg. Suburban post-apartheid Johannesburg consists of many estates that have exclusive security-gated communities, all in the name of escaping from crime. I know people who live in these gated communities and can confidently state that most of these residents would react with horror should I suggest a visit to downtown Johannesburg.

Downtown Johannesburg was, during the apartheid-era, the primary business and financial centre of South Africa. Most businesses relocated to other areas during the 1990s, moving to areas such as Sandton. As crime increased in downtown Johannesburg it became a no-go area for most whites. The empty buildings left behind, some occupied by squatters, fell into ruin. Many white and black South Africans, as well as foreign visitors, perceive downtown Johannesburg as a gangsters' paradise – a place to fear and stay away from. Many young white people

⁶⁹ The Nelson Mandela Bridge, the largest cable-stayed bridge in southern Africa, was completed in 2003.

living in Johannesburg's suburbs have never seen their city; their parents tell them it is too dangerous.

However, downtown Johannesburg has revived over the past decade. Old office buildings are being transformed into apartments and lofts, dilapidated facades are being restored and sculptures are now displayed on the sidewalks. As discussed in Chapter Four, downtown Johannesburg has developed an African identity and performs a vibrant African city. Most white South Africans, however, are unaware, or cynical, of these developments and still refuse to venture into downtown Johannesburg. Through the imagery depicted in this series I satirise this fear and, by extension, any area in post-apartheid South Africa predominated by black people. White people feel they should stay away from such areas, get out of town.

The apparent subject-voice in *Mandela Bridge number 1 - pasop die hond!* (2011) (Figure 40), translated as 'beware of the dog', is one of avoidance. The print depicts the Nelson Mandela Bridge and a young Sies Man who, held in the arms of a woman, stares out at the viewer. The woman is looking across the bridge towards a group of black men carrying knobkerries and sticks marching towards her, the dog walks towards the group of men. It is the same dog as in *Performance number 3 – black like me* (2010). The subject-voice in this image is again ambiguous; the imagery suggests confrontation and challenge but, through the symbolism of the Nelson Mandela Bridge, also suggests reaching out. I expect an initial viewer interpretation to be that the print evokes a tense atmosphere, as if some horrific event is about to happen, that whites are not welcome in downtown Johannesburg.⁷⁰

The young Sies Man in the arms of a white woman, who could be read as his mother, turns away from the group of men marching towards him, suggesting denial, but may simply infer curiosity of a young child. The performance of the dog, as in *Performance number 3 – black like me* (2010), is again ambiguous. It is not clear if the dog is threatening or welcoming the group of men, or if the dog belongs to the

⁷⁰ It is worth mentioning a video released in October 2012 by the controversial South African music group, *Die Antwoord*. The video satirises foreigners' concept of South Africa as a place full of wild animals, positioning the pop star, Lady Gaga as one of these foreigners. In the video Gaga is shown touring downtown Johannesburg with a local black taxi driver. The taxi driver points out lions, hyenas and a black panther in the street. The absurd narrative of the video ends with the taxi being hijacked and Gaga being eaten by a lion.

woman and child and is protecting them. In the context of the dog's other appearances in this body of prints, I intend it to be perceived as a *flâneur*.

The lone woman and young Sies Man appear vulnerable against the advancing group of apparently aggressive men. However, in the context of labour strikes in 2012, or even xenophobia (discussed in Chapter Four) where black men carry similar weaponry, the group of men may have nothing to do with black anger against the white woman and child, who like the dog, may simply be observers; the woman and child do not appear to be afraid of an event about to happen on the bridge.

The subject-voice in this print is one of uncertainty. An uncertainty suggested by the performance of apparent vulnerability of the lone woman and the young Sies Man, as if she is uncertain how to react to a possibly dangerous situation for her and the child; an uncertainty as to who the group of men are and what they are doing; an uncertainty as to the performance of the archetypal dog; an uncertainty as to how to interpret the imagery. Through the theme of uncertainty my subject-voice asks the viewer to speculate on the future performativity of the young Sies Man, what kind of future performativity may exist for him in post-apartheid South Africa, one of threat or of opportunity.



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Figure 40: Derek Zietsman. *Mandela Bridge number 1 - pasop die hond!* (2011). Drypoint on Perspex printed on Hahnemühle paper, 51 x 38cm. Collection of the artist.

5.4.5 Theme five - Appearances are deceptive

This series of three ink monotypes satirises a common social practice where people tend to define other people by their outward appearance. I explore how, though depicting Sies Man performing various stereotypes, there is a tendency to define people based on their dress, hairstyle, skin colour, language, or a myriad of other factors. The prints infer apartheid South Africa's history of racial stereotyping according to a person's skin colour, leading to discrimination and persecution. Although the theme suggests a dialogue on how white people defined black people as inferior simply by skin colour, in the context of this study, these ink monotypes explore the effect certain apparent stereotypical masculine performances may have on people. Sies Man performs contemporary masculinities often regarded as 'other'.

In *Hoodie* (2012) (Figure 41) Sies Man wears a sweatshirt with a hood, which is a type of garment often chosen by young people, usually black, to avoid being recognised. Wearing a hoodie suggest anti-establishment and anti-social behaviour, a desire to appear menacing, tough, dangerous and angry. Many white people, and

I suspect many black parents, would stereotype a person wearing a hoodie as young, black, masculine, one who listens to rap music, with large biceps and a thug attitude.⁷¹ I wore leather jackets in my motorcycling days and can attest to the automatic assumption by many people that I was morally suspect and physically dangerous.

However, in *Hoodie*, Sies Man is neither young nor black. This contradiction suggests Sies Man is trying to 'fit in', to appear 'cool' and 'black', to become part of a South African hip-hop sub-culture (see Kibona 2007) populated by young, mostly black, masculinities; a sub-culture that defines a contemporary masculine ideal which is performed as if they possess hegemonic status. Sies Man is not cool. Instead of the obligatory dark glasses he is wearing transparent spectacles suggesting poor vision, has a grey beard and appears old, not young and 'hip'.

My subject-voice in this print is white masculine desperation. In his attempts to belong in a new post-apartheid South Africa, Sies Man has, instead, structured a performativity that invites ridicule and pity, not admiration. The implication that liberal South African whites who try too hard to be politically correct and instead become absurd, is unmistakable.



⁷¹ Hip-hop and rap has become an international sub-culture. It is commonplace to see young people dressed in its distinctive subcultural clothing, such as hoodies. Contemporary hip-hop has developed into a negative-stereotype that promotes distrust of law enforcement, glorifies inappropriate behaviour, promotes brutality, criminality, vulgar sexuality and misogyny, all feeding into negative images of particularly black youth (Nelson 2005:37).



Figure 41: Derek Zietsman. *Hoodie* (2012). Ink monotype printed on Fabriano paper, 70 x 105cm. Collection of the artist.

5.5 Conclusion

Performing 'man' can be summarised as a thematic series of prints which, through ambiguity and satire, visually explore how white South African men try to adapt to a post-apartheid existential crisis. The conceptual framework of my body of prints is sourced from my lived reality and observations of socio-political change in South Africa over two decades; influenced by my identity as a white Afrikaner man who grew up under apartheid in a patriarchal environment and filtered through subject-voices of nostalgia, avoidance and denial. In these prints I consider how to create ambiguous, hybrid, performances of white masculinity that asks what it means to be a white man in post-apartheid South Africa.

By depicting identifiable self-portraits as my object-voices, I infuse my alter-ego characters with personal meaning. Similar to Kannemeyer's heteroglot split between himself, Joe Dog and Max Plant, and Kentridge's heteroglot split between himself, Soho Eckstein and Felix Teitlebaum, the split between myself and Sies Man allows me to construct performativities of a hybrid, creolised, insider/outsider or observer/participant that comment on the ambivalent identities inherent in many post-apartheid South African white males.



6 ENDNOTE

In this study I have drawn on Butler's (1990, 2004) concept of gender as a performance; performativities unconnected to an 'essence', I have done this in order to investigate the nature of white South African masculine performances represented in selected visual narratives of Kentridge, Kannemeyer and in my *Performing 'man'* body of prints. The primary aim of this investigation is to examine how and why these representations of white masculine performativities comment on a perceived existential crisis (van der Watt 2003:16) in South African white men.

Richardson's (2000:15-16) factors of reflexivity and expression of lived reality formed a key component in my analysis of how Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I use aspects from our lived realities and our observations on socio-political change in South Africa to structure visual commentaries that satirise white masculine performativities in both apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa

I applied autoethnography as a lens, through which frames of constructivist identity theory, South African whiteness studies, gender performativity theory and masculinity facilitated an investigation of how Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's representations of white male identity performativities operate. Through the autoethnographic lens I identified Kannemeyer's and Kentridge's heteroglot voices of author, object and subject in the selected visual narratives.

Adapting a Bakhtinian (1981,:291) heteroglossia made it possible for me to identify not only the co-occurrence of different voices in Kannemeyer, Kentridge and my visual texts, but also how the voices operationalise different ideological white masculine performativities in these particular visual narratives.

I have argued in the body of my research, through the concepts of gender performativity, autoethnography and heteroglossia, that Kannemeyer, Kentridge and I use our three voices to represent juxtapositional, conflictive, white masculine performativities that comment on a crisis in South African white male identities and a subsequent reconceptualisation in such white male identity performativities in post-apartheid South Africa.

It is my intention to examine, in a future investigation, my supposition of an existential crisis in South African black men, as suggested through representations

of black South African masculine performativities in the iconography of both black and white South African artists.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview with Anton Kannemeyer 2011

Note: this was an unstructured interview. The transcript includes the aspects relevant to my study.

1. Presence in work

I see myself present in my work, even when I am not present. I was very present in my work during the *Bitterkomix* period. After 2006, when I resigned from Stellenbosch University, I feel there was a shift. The real me disappeared a bit - which was good, I felt like I was working towards a corner.

2. Autobiographical elements

If you work autobiographically your options become limited after a while, you use yourself in all the contexts that you wanted to and eventually it is 'where to from here'? After I resigned I went on a residency (in America) where I asked myself 'what do I do next?' I reached a point where I was tired of myself.

I kept a journal since I was very small. Since I was 12 years old I have written down every movie I have seen, I record books I have read, and so on. All of this becomes part of me and of my art.

3. How do you source material?

I have almost always made 'paste-up' books where I paste articles from magazines, newspaper clippings - anything I found interesting. When students look at work they often look at photography books or design books - you need to look at those things to see how people work, but you don't keep those things, you don't cut them out and paste them into a journal. I started collecting a lot of stuff that had to do with South Africa and South African history. Not necessarily 'historical events' like the inauguration of Nelson Mandela, that is boring, but the 'awkward' things that you find.

4. In *Bitterkomix* you were 'inside' the work, in your later works you seem 'outside', an observer?

When I worked on *Alphabets of Democracy*, this (show image of *W is for white*) is an example of the shift after 2006, you can say it is part of a document that captures

part of history, but I say the history it captures is a very personal history. It doesn't capture all the elements of the past 15 years; it is from my scrapbooks of images that I thought were interesting and not necessarily seminal instances of the progression we made since 1994.

For example, when I saw the image for *C is for crying farmer*, I thought OK this is an image that will be seen by everyone all over the world. So I put it in my scrapbook and don't look at it again for two to three years. When I look at it again I think, this is an interesting photograph, and when I make an artwork it is as nobody had seen it before, it somehow disappeared. When I resolve these images (in my art) I don't give an opinion, I take what I see and say this is for the crying farmer.

When you look at [my later works] you may say that I, as the author is missing, I am not there, but the thing is when I look at all the work in this book (*Alphabets of Democracy*) it is incredibly personal. Every image, every reference, I have captured somewhere and it becomes my own history. So, although I am not "in" the work, I am actually in the work.

5. Is your work political?

I, like Zapiro, am a satirist. I regard my work as a very pedestrian take on politics. I actually find politics a bit boring. There are other more interesting aspects that I look at, which is on the one hand a more humane aspect. I get caught up in politics now and then and I want to run away from it screaming. I do not want to make a social comment *per se*.

6. Who is Joe Dog?

Yes, I used to sign myself Joe Dog when I made comix, then when I started exhibiting more seriously in galleries they were concerned about Joe Dog the "comix" artist and Kannemeyer the 'serious' artist. I was not that concerned about it. When I made my prints I always signed it as Anton Kannemeyer.

7. How would you describe your relationship with Joe Dog?

It is interesting, people have quoted me before as Anton Kannemeyer when it was something said by Joe Dog - and I feel that I didn't say it, it was a character Joe Dog who said it, and there is a difference. Joe Dog is me but not me. Joe Dog can do whatever he wants, and the truth is that I am quite a private person.

What it allowed me was, when I made *Bitterkomix*, I used this character Joe Dog to deal with subject matter that was difficult for me, as Anton Kannemeyer, to address. I remember I made one comic that was so personal that I couldn't even talk to friends about it. It was something I felt very ashamed about and uncertain about, and as Joe Dog I could draw this comic. Once I drew the comic and everyone commented on it, I could actually talk about it. That (*Boetie*) was an absolute breakthrough comic for me. Some of my friends would come to me and say something similar happened to them and when I ask them to tell me about it they would say "No, it is too difficult, I can't go there". In that sense it was a cathartic process.

In a way, Joe Dog made it possible for me so, yes, in a way it was me but in a way I could distance myself when I worked through this character, Joe Dog. As time moved on, I am not so sensitive about the differentiation between me, Anton Kannemeyer, and Joe Dog.

The one thing with *Pappa in Afrika* is I now have my own kids I have sort of transformed from something that was a sort of a Joe Dog, who is sort of cool, hanging out with the *Bitterkomix* crowd, being abusive and whatever. Since becoming a Dad in Afrika I am moving into the position where my father was, that position which I always despised, of any white male authority. I now sort of ridicule that character.

The irony is that I am now that character (white male authority) but I feel I need to ridicule myself, make fun of my position. I have moved and I need to deal with it. (such as image of black angel sucking dick - *Second coming*)

I am complicitous in living here in Africa and participating in all the privileges that white people have, and this is a way of dealing with it. (shows image of black angel taking Kannemeyer to heaven - *Ascension*)

8. Is the young man in *Jeugweerbaarheid* you?

It is a character called Max Plant, who is the main character in *Bitterkomix 6, Max kom terug*. Based on a real character, a student who had an interesting face. Everything in *Jeugweerbaarheid* is real. After *Boetie* I basically decided to mostly use the Joe Dog character.

For me, the big thing about autobiography is that must be able to relate to everyone. If everyone cannot identify with the story and with that character situation then it becomes self-indulgent, it all then becomes poor me, and it shouldn't be that. To me, autobiography stands in service to the final artwork; it needs to convey the message clearly. So if the autobiography then has to become fiction that is OK, in the end the message I am trying to put across is the most important.

In *Bitterkomix* the autobiography was in many places the point of departure, but it is not necessarily entirely consistently autobiographic. For example in the start of *Boetie*, I (Joe Dog) am shown drinking vodka, but I never drink vodka when I am drawing comic. It is fiction. The thing is you manipulate things, in *Boetie* for example my father may say it happened completely different, and he may be right, but that is just my point of view.

For example, I used to give my students a project on something that happened to them and a framework and they had to draw a comic. I then said "this doesn't work" and they would say "but it really happened". I don't care if it really happened, the point that it brings across must be very clear. They get so involved with what happened to them that they do not think about the artwork.

Conrad (Botes) said, after *Boetie*, he feels that what I am doing is fiction disguised as autobiography. I find this interesting, I would use the character, you create the character Joe Dog who is believable and people read the stories and see them as real, and then you can play with their heads - you can say I woke up this morning, masturbated seven times and then vomited and everybody would believe it - because you convinced them before that it was real.

Appendix 2: E-mail interview with William Kentridge 2011

1. E-mail sent by Zietsman to Kentridge on 4 August 2011

Preliminary guideline for semi- structured interview

I am currently completing a Masters in Visual Arts at the University of Johannesburg. The focus of my dissertation is performing masculinities in the iconographies of selected white South African male artists. The artists I selected for discussion are yourself and Anton Kannemeyer.

The aim of the study is to explore visual narratives of post-apartheid white masculinity performances. In the still evolving democracy of post-apartheid South Africa, a study of this nature adds to our understanding of the broad direction that the representation of white masculinities is taking, as well as to the growing body of literature on South African whiteness, in particular literature on artists who critique performances of South African white masculinities. This proposal is aligned with the focus of the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre of the University of Johannesburg, on visualising identities in a post-colonial environment.

In my Masters study I refer to the concept of gender as performed identities, the effect of reiterated acting, and performative acts within the larger social world. This reads gender identity as a role, not a biological condition. In the dissertation, I discuss some of the ways in which performances of white masculinities are represented through an exploration of specific iconographies in your works, as a white South African male artist who grew up during the apartheid-era. The study considers the manner in which these performances are represented as responding to the pressures of socio-political exigencies.

Focus areas of the interview

The intention of the interview is to understand the extent to which select iconographies in your work were influenced by your background of growing up in apartheid South Africa, as well as your views regarding the representations of performances of white masculinities in these works.

The interview explores the following areas:

- influences from growing up in apartheid South Africa; and
- an exploration of the character of Soho Eckstein in your *Drawings for projection* series.

The table below is a guideline of the questions I may be asking. However, I expect that the interview will be a dynamic process during which the questions may change and develop.

Influences from growing up in apartheid South Africa
1. In previous interviews you spoke of how your work was informed by your growing up in South Africa during the apartheid-era. Can you describe some of your childhood experiences that you recognise as seminal influences on your becoming self-conscious of your status as a white male in apartheid South Africa?
2. In what way has your personal history influenced your iconography?
The character of Soho Eckstein
3. You said you initially conceived Soho Eckstein as an "alien, based on images of greedy industrialists from Russian and early Futurist propaganda drawings of George Grosz and German Expressionism". But you say you then saw that he looked like your paternal grandfather, and realised that he may be part of you, and also realised that Soho Eckstein and Felix Teitlebaum are two different sides of one character rather than two different characters. Dan Cameron wrote that you appear to have elements of shared identity with Soho Eckstein, particularly in the later films when Soho becomes uncomfortable with exploiting his workers and ignoring his wife. Please comment on the autobiographical elements in the <i>Drawings for projection</i> series
4. The literature suggests that performances of white masculinities are shaped by historical circumstances and social discourses. In apartheid South Africa it was 'normal' for white men to assume themselves superior to black people and to women. Were such racially and

misogynist motivated assumptions of identity part of your intention in the original character of Soho Eckstein as depicted in *Johannesburg, 2nd greatest city after Paris*? And, if so, how does this reconcile with the autobiographical elements of you in Soho Eckstein?

5. An important dynamic in your cast of characters in the *Drawings for projection* series is their apparent lack of awareness of the eugenicist socio-political environment around them. However, the overall impression I gain from your work is one of a very deep awareness of this environment. I read the character of Soho Eckstein as a metonym for the moral blindness that was inherent in many white South African men during the apartheid-era. What is your reading of Soho?

6. You admit to an interest in a political art, which you describe as “art of ambiguity, contradiction, uncompleted gestures and uncertain endings”. You have also stated that you have never tried to make illustrations of apartheid, but that your drawings and films are “spawned by and feed off the brutalized society left in its wake”. Can you expand on this?

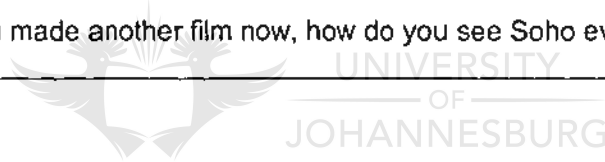
7. Soho Eckstein's personal character of greed and indifference, the archetypal capitalist, has been described by some commentators as a representation of the industrial infrastructure that supported the apartheid-state. You stated you worked from photos found in archives of Johannesburg in the 1950s, the architecture in your films often seems to date back to then. Is it a coincidence that the 1950s were also the time when the most draconian apartheid laws were enacted? Is this what you intended?

8. The feminist philosopher, Judith Butler, describes gender as “a kind of activity, an incessant activity performed ... a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint”; our identities are always matters of “becoming” as well as of “being”. Over the series of *Drawings for projection*, Soho Eckstein gradually becomes aware of his own inability to place himself within the greater societal transformations

taking place and by the end of *Weighing... and Wanting*, is seen reconsidering his priorities. I read this as reference to the need of white South African men to reconceptualise their white masculinity in line with the ideals of post-apartheid South Africa. What is your reading of Soho?

9. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev describes your work as being about subjugation and emancipation, guilt and confession, trauma and healing through memory. You have said your work is politically concerned but distant. In this context of politically focused themes, in *Drawings for projection* the work can be read as a function for societal expression, similar to the tradition of social commentary in works by artists such as Goya and Hogarth. Please comment.

10. The last characterisation of Soho was in *Tide Table*, made in 2003. In the context of Soho as a metaphor, even metonym, for performances of white South African masculinities, is his performance finished? If you made another film now, how do you see Soho evolving?



2. E-mail reply sent to Zietsman by Kentridge on 8 July 2011.

Dear Derek,

Thank you for your letter and suggested interview. I'm not sure if a formal interview is a requirement for your masters or would help it, but it seems in terms of the specific questions you would ask – apart from the last one – you have clear coherent answers. My answer to almost all the questions would be that I had no clear intention, but that the interpretations you make after the fact seem good to me. I do not think you have sufficiently grasped the blindness of the artistic process, as opposed to the analytical. Autoethnographic is not a term I have come across before, and I am very happy to leave it to you. Makes me feel as though I should be in a diorama.

Regarding question 9, there is a new Soho film, which I would be happy for you to see. It will be shown publicly in Johannesburg in either July or November. It has been seen in New York in May.

I like Judith Butler's explanation of gender. But the clear intentionality of the term the 'need of white SA masculinities' feels foreign – not how they change, but the conscious imperative described in your question.

If the interview is essential for your project, I will make time, but otherwise I think you seem to have a clear direction and thoughts about the project, and I would not add to that.

Best wishes

William