

**Frameworks of Representation: A Design History
of the District Six Museum in Cape Town**

Faculty of Arts



**UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE**

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Declaration

I, Hayley E. Hayes-Roberts, hereby declare that **Frameworks of Representation: A Design History of the District Six Museum in Cape Town** is my own work and that it has not been submitted elsewhere in any form or part, and that I have followed all ethical guidelines and academic principles as expressed by the University of the Western Cape and the District Six Museum.



Hayley Elizabeth Hayes-Roberts, March 2020, Cape Town

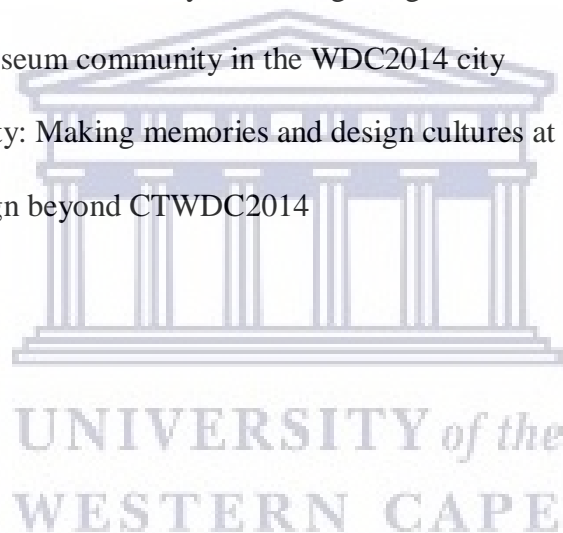


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Abstract

Since 1994, the District Six Museum, in constructing histories of forced removals from District Six, Cape Town, commenced as a post-apartheid memory project which evolved into a memorial museum. Design has been a central strategy claimed by the museum in its process of making memory work visible to its attendant publics evolving into a South African cultural brand. Co-design within the museum is aesthetically infused with sensitively curated exhibitions and a form of museumisation, across two tangible sites of engagement, which imparts a unique visual language. The term design became extraordinarily popular in contemporary Cape Town, where the city was - in 2014 -the World Design Capital. Yet at the same time as design was being inscribed into the public imaginary, it was simultaneously curiously undefined although influential in shifting representational aesthetics in the city. This research seeks to ask questions about this proliferation of interest in design and to examine this through a close reading of the work of the District Six Museum situated near District Six. In particular, micro and macro design elements are explored as socio-cultural practice in re-imagining community in the city that grew out of resistance and cultural networks. Various design strategies or frameworks of representation sought to stabilize and clarify individual and collective pasts enabling and supporting ex-residents to reinterpret space after loss, displacement and separation and re-enter their histories and the city. Post-apartheid museum design modes and methodologies applied by the District Six Museum as museumisation disrupts conventional historiographies in the fields of art, architectural and exhibition design, where the focus is placed on temporal chronologies, in a biographic mode profiling examples of works and designers/artists. Instead, the research contextualises the work of design as making in a more open sense, of exploring the very constructedness of the museum as a space of method, selection, process and representation thereby asking questions about this reified term design as method and practice. The designing ways of the District Six Museum contribute to understanding idioms mediated through design frameworks allowing for a departure from the limited ways design history has been written. Through an unlayering of projects, practices and an examination of archival case studies, exhibition curation, the adaptive reuse of buildings and through institutional rebranding my argument is that the particularities of the claims to design work at the District Six Museum provide a rich case for relating to other contemporaneous processes of making apartheid's spatial practices visible as projects such as this claim community. Therefore seeking to demystify how this community museum 'making' has been fashioned through an investment in various design disciplines, forms and practices revealing the inherent complexity in doing so.

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List of Abbreviations

CBD:	Central Business District
CTWDC2014:	Cape Town World Design Capital 2014
CTP:	Cape Town Partnership
CPUT:	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
D6M:	District Six Museum
HH-R:	Hayley Hayes-Roberts
ICSID:	International Council of Societies of Industrial Design
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
PMH:	Peninsula maternity Hospital
PROVAC:	Protea Village Action Committee or Campaign
RDP:	Reconstruction and Development Plan
WDC:	World Design Capital
UCT:	University of Cape Town
UDF:	Urban Design Framework



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Introduction

“A man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him”

Psychologist and Philosopher William James (1842-1910)

This study aims to establish a design history of the District Six Museum, an emblematic community museum founded in Cape Town, South Africa in 1994. The District Six Museum’s representational memorialisation is projected as a vital practice within various forms of ritual and remembering where museum making becomes part of how the past is challenged to constitute a place for histories and stories. In this thesis, I move the design field into an understanding of memorial and commemorative processes of museumisation to reveal a vast differentiation of design within one institution that provides a rich case study for writing considerable design histories.

Design is examined in five ways in this thesis: as an archival collection was assembled by the museum; as a museum exhibition space was conceptualised and created; as a museum brand in and of itself; as a series of buildings were planned and reconstructed culminating with the intersections between museum made memorialisation and design-led projects in the city. The central issue of this study is to rethink what design signals in a community museum in Cape Town, a port city defined by dispossession and displacement, and also a World Design Capital in 2014. I view my thesis as a creative enquiry and exploration of aesthetic and representational meaning-making utilising a lens of design to examine the contested and subjective process of reimagining District Six through the museum’s “frameworks of representation”.¹

When the museum was founded the emphasis was to create a forum and place for “recalling community” through memory as creative production around apartheid forced removals, yet design also played a significant role.² Later design values changed when the educational role, exhibition narratives and academic status of the museum were developed by a particular set of people that

¹P. Delpont, “Digging deeper in District Six: features and interfaces in a curatorial landscape” in *Recalling Community, Curating and Creating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001), 159.

²C. Rassool, “Introduction” in *Recalling Community in Cape Town: creating and curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001, vii.

informed an evolution of contemporary museum statements, products and images.³ I argue that the design of these forms is associated with post-apartheid museum design strategies and methodological approaches that influenced the development of a signature niche District Six Museum brand. To create a common culture, shared values and clear visual institutional unity Wally Olins writes:

Identity is expressed in the names, symbols, logos, colours and rites of passage, which the organization uses to distinguish itself, its brand and its constituent companies. At one level, these serve the same purpose as religious symbolism, chivalric heraldry or national flags and symbols: they encapsulate and make vivid collective ones of belonging and purpose. At another level, they represent consistent standards of quality and therefore encourage consumer loyalty.⁴

Curatorial expertise and innovative technologies moved the community museum from production into consumption as Cape Town became part of a changing globalised environment and brand management became an important feature of representation.⁵

My interest is twofold: firstly I shall be exploring the work of design in the context of the museum and seeking to demystify how this making through design has produced a set of museum projects over twenty-five years of its existence. Through an understanding of design as constructed or produced I attempt to complicate the idea that design is not merely a creative act, but intentional and political that aims to change “existing situations into preferred ones”.⁶ Secondly, to write a design history of the museum, which is the primary focus, I endeavour to explore the multiple aesthetic manifestations of the museum’s design processes in relation to making meaning and experience. To do this, the idea of museumisation as proposed by several academics shall be used to consider visual design products in a broader framework. The proposed framework seeks to disrupt ways in which design has been related in many conventional historiographies in the fields of art,

³The museum has been led and curated mainly by women who have held key positions in the museum as directors, curators, archivists, artists and architects. As a result the museum’s work appears not to be overshadowed by patriarchal values.

⁴W. Olins, *Corporate Identity making business strategy visible through design*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 9.

⁵Cape Town was World Design Capital in 2014 and the use of the word design became ubiquitous through colour coordinated marketing campaigns, interventions and events.

⁶H. A. Simon, “The Science of Design: Creating the Artificial” in *The Sciences of the Artificial*, 3rd ed, (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996), 111.

architectural and exhibition design, where the focus is placed on temporal chronologies, in a biographic mode profiling examples of works and designers/artists.

As my research seeks to ask questions about this proliferation of interest in design and to examine this through a close reading of the work of the District Six Museum I am writing into scholarship, literature and post-apartheid community histories on District Six and the District Six Museum in particular. Furthermore, I am also writing into Design History, as a subject and field of study and design histories of post-apartheid South African museums established through variances of community.⁷ I attempt to broaden interpretations and cross academic boundaries writing from a global South African perspective. In particular, my approach relates to interdisciplinary usefulness as the proposed study asks what design is and also seeks to establish the meanings of design in and of an urban post-apartheid community museum in the context of a globalising city. Stephen Pentak and David A. Lauer define design:

Design has a more universal meaning than the commercial applications that might first come to mind. A dictionary definition uses the synonym *plan*: To design indeed means to plan, to organize. Design is inherent in the full range of art disciplines from painting and drawing to sculpture, photography and time-based media such as film, video, computer graphics, and animation. It is integral to crafts such as ceramics, textiles, and glass. Architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning all apply visual design principles. The list could go on. Virtually the entire realm of human production involves design, whether consciously applied, well executed or ill considered.⁸

In this thesis, I am defining design as a blueprint, where structured planning and conceptualisation is put into practice as a process and activity to find solutions through visual organisation.

The District Six Museum houses a range of permanent exhibitions across two museum buildings and an archive comprising a photographic collection, audio-visual material, artworks, clothing, an extensive collection of visual and sound recordings, a small collection of domestic objects and children's toys.⁹ I became involved with the museum as a University of the Western

⁷In this study, due to length constraints and a focus on one post-apartheid community museum I do not provide a comparative analysis with other community museums such as the South End Museum and Red Location Museum in Port Elizabeth or the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum in Lwandle near Cape Town.

⁸D. A. Lauer and S. Pentak, *Design Basics*, 9th Edition, (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2016), 4.

⁹The District Six Museum Resource Centre comprises of a memory room, memory boxes, numerous books, academic

Cape History intern learning oral history transcription methodologies mentored by Bonita Bennett and Chrischené Julius. I later assisted in the *Huis Kombuis* (house kitchen) creative memory-led workshops with Tina Smith, head of exhibitions. I was introduced to the critical pedagogical learning journey methodology formulated by Mandy Sanger, head of education that works to create agency in youth within the museum education programmes. Later I was tasked with conducting research on an existing Museum project, The Two Rivers Project, an educational and reconstructive initiative to work with memories of forced removals in six sites in the southern suburbs of Cape Town. My design practice was embedded in the process work through research and design. I also participated in District Six Museum creative making workshops for a Harrington Square memorialisation event in 2014 when Cape Town hosted World Design Capital. In these ways guided by collective and individual knowledge, rhythms, practices, and rituals I contributed to the work of the District Six Museum.

As a museum and heritage scholar, social, textile and design historian researching post-apartheid museum design I initially sought to work with artefacts that were part of the District Six Museum's collection as an approach to researching and writing a design history. I then gravitated to a case study methodology looking at design through a lens of museumisation. This expanded view of design allowed integration of different elements to encompass a broader system of design and range of examination to create a set of atypical yet interrelated design histories. In this regard, I differentiate from how design histories are generally constructed as I explore District Six Museum idioms of return in relation to how the museum has been fashioned through a complex investment in design.¹⁰ In constructing a re-imagined political, social, and cultural identity that represents District Six I treat design in the spaces of the District Six Museum as a field of enquiry and provide some thick descriptions utilising anthropologist Clifford Geertz's methodology in order "to draw large

theses, newspaper articles, reports, posters, postcards and a variety of materials relating to the documentation of District Six histories, the District Six Museum and forced removals.

¹⁰Idioms of return include *gees* (spirit), *kanala* (Javanese word meaning 'please'), *helpmekaar* (helping each other), healing, social justice, salted earth, fragments, active citizenship, archaeology of memory, genealogy, activism, community and slogans: Hands On, Hands Off and Never, Never Again.

conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts”.¹¹ Geertz’s notion of context and descriptive methodology is particularly useful when undertaking an analysis of museumisation practices within a cultural field. Geertz writes:

As interworked systems of constructible signs culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviours, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within they can be intelligibly – that is, thickly- described.¹²

My argument is that design has been a central strategy claimed by the museum in its process of making memory work visible to its attendant publics where forms were embedded with meaning in the context of District Six memorialisation. In order to understand this, I draw upon a structuralist viewpoint after French literary scholar and critic Roland Barthes “because it reveals the underlying framework of contemporary society...where design as a series of cultural signs could be formally analysed...the mythologies of imagery and form”.¹³ According to design historian Catherine McDermott a counter-argument to structuralism that attempted to provide a “rational understanding of human conceptual activity”, was a destructualist approach. Indeed destructualism argued for “an intuitive basis for design” where the quality of unfiltered creativity, it was argued “could not be reduced to a set of principles”.¹⁴ Despite this, Barthe's view of design, “as a series of cultural signs that could be systematically analysed became an important part of the design debate”.¹⁵

In terms of my research, these twin lenses of structuralism and destructualism provide useful to understanding practices and forms of museumisation as a methodology for “recalling community” as suggested by Ciraj Rassool, historian and District Six Museum trustee.¹⁶ According to Gustavo Buntix and Ivan Karp, community museums utilise a tacit strategy which they term “tactical

¹¹C. Geertz, “Thick Description: Towards an Interpretive Theory of Culture” in *The Interpretation of Cultures Selected essays* by Clifford Geertz, (New York: Basic Books. 1973), 28.

¹²Geertz, “*Thick*” 14

¹³C. McDermott, *Essential Design*, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Limited, 1993), 57.

¹⁴McDermott, *Essential*, 57.

¹⁵McDermott, *Essential*, 31.

¹⁶Rassool, “Introduction”, vii

museologies”.¹⁷ In the context of the form, presentation and practice of this type of museum, often representing a marginalised community, Buntix and Karp state that community museums:

Display in their history, actions, and survival strategies a tactical sense of how to manoeuvre with and against other institutions. This sense of manoeuvre critical stance (which Gramsci termed “a “war of position”) is simultaneously the product of the alternative and provisional standing of these museums and their often antagonistic and frictional relationship either to established museums and/or the broader social order.¹⁸

These identified navigational and political strategies are important to understanding the role and meanings of a particular approach to design and design forms adopted by the District Six Museum and how that strategy is applied and mobilised to represent community.

Buntix and Karp offer a useful lens with which to contextualise the work of design as making in a more open sense of exploring the very constructed-ness of the museum: as a space of method, selection, process and representation thereby asking questions about this reified term design as method and practice. As noted by Rassool,

There are different ways in which the story of District Six is narrated. There are institutional histories of committees and founders, political histories of civic politics, agitations and mobilization around the scarred landscape of the district, and cultural histories of District Six memorial projects and social history research.¹⁹

This study contributes a different history of the District Six Museum manifested in a range of post-apartheid community museum signifying practices and expressions of design.

Affective design in community museum making: Countering erasures in and of the city

District Six has become a powerful local and international symbol in the urban landscape of Cape Town and post-apartheid South Africa.²⁰ Located near the site of District Six, the independent self-styled community museum, the District Six Museum is located in Buitenkant Street in the central business district of Cape Town. The museum occupies the Buitenkant Methodist Church building part of the Buitenkant Street Community Centre, a complex of three buildings, owned by the

¹⁷Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

¹⁸Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

¹⁹Rassool, “Introduction”, viii.

²⁰S. Jeppie and C. Soudien, (eds), *The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present*, (Cape Town: Buchu Books, 1990).

Central Methodist Mission. At a second site, the District Six Museum Foundation owns the Sacks Futeran buildings, a complex of five interconnected buildings renamed the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre.²¹ The District Six landscape and the District Six Museum, a relatively small museum, represents a global Site of Conscience²² and acts as a “memorial to all South Africans dispossessed by apartheid”.²³

Rassool states that “in understanding, District Six as a landscape of memory” the District Six Museum can be understood “as an expression of the idea of community” that is “intractably local as a space that grapples with complexities of nostalgic memory, even a restorative nostalgia”.²⁴ Annie Coombes, drawing on Rassool, states that the “work of the District Six Museum is able to counteract linear, grand narratives of the nation through a focus on the quotidian and embodied memory”.²⁵ In this argument, an emergence of museumisation practices where “The presence of ex-residents in the conceptualisation of the museum space through interaction between curators and community members is a key feature of the District Six Museum” is noted by Chrischené Julius.²⁶

In this light, the narrative making aspect of the museum appears organic. There is a need to understand the creative tensions and create a greater sense of comprehending the backstory and negotiations around memory work as a representational exhibition. For instance, a variety of mediums and techniques sensitive to bringing forth ephemeral qualities of intangibility and memory in the museum underpin an emotive visual language. This generates a nostalgic reading as a

²¹Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 2012.

²²The District Six Museum is a founding member of the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience – a coalition of site museums in areas where human right abuses have occurred. Historic Site Museums of Conscience interpret history through historic sites and engage in networked programs that stimulate dialogue on social issues, promoting humanitarian and democratic values in society in which they function. Source: Reflections on the Conference Hands On District Six landscape of post-colonial memorialisation Cape Town, 25-28 May 2005, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2007), 66.

²³F. Swanson and J. Harries, “Ja! So was District Six! But it was a beautiful place: Oral Histories, memory and Identity”, in *Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town*, ed S. Field, (Cape Town: David Philip, 2001).

²⁴Rassool, “District”, 1.

²⁵Rassool, “District”, 1.

²⁶C. Julius, “Oral history in the exhibitionary strategy of the District Six Museum”, (MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2007), 44.

counter-narrative to factual interpretations of South African history.²⁷ Therefore the museum through its focus on memory methodologies troubles national public histories that in specific ways challenge and counter state-sanctioned versions of history and community.

This coalesces with the argument of Zuleiga Adams that District Six is portrayed as a fairyland which she maintains lives on in the District Six Museum. She refers to the stage-like quality of the museum, evoked as “timeless images”.²⁸ In “capturing these everyday events in the life of an individual”, she maintains “it brings home with a powerful emotional force its destruction – its goneness as opposed to its pastness...It compels them to perform”.²⁹ Therefore according to Adams, the District Six Museum presents District Six as a “fairyland” created through the sentimental lens of childhood memories and biographies of prominent District Six residents, former residents and returnees made performative through curation. I agree with Adams as these focal points create a fabricated projection devoid of aspects such as crime, prostitution, alcoholism, gambling (illegal in the 1960s), violence, disease, and exploitation created and exacerbated by apartheid conditions. The curatorial decision to exclude these aspects in the museum mediates and silences the realities and trauma of dispossession leading to a belief that all people lost were their homes and fails to interrogate who benefitted from forced removals.

The Museum’s handcrafted exhibits are often described as a mosaic, kaleidoscope or tapestry comprising multiple visual elements that reference familiar landmarks such as buildings, streets and the seven steps of Hanover Street, used in the logo of the museum. Furthermore, Rassool maintains that,

From its inception with its concentration on deep layers of history stratigraphies of memory and an artefactual, documentary and visual framework for the intense outpouring of remembrance, the District Six Museum has been understood as an “archaeology of memory....research featured in [the first exhibition] *Streets* in a display of Perspex boxes filled

²⁷A form of erasure is present in the exhibitions as oral histories are spliced and repurposed accordingly to themed panels and spaces in order to achieve a condensed and essentialised narrative that do not over burden the visitor with text heavily interpretations and encourage an empathetic response.

²⁸Z. Adams, “Gazing at District Six: From Fairland to the Arab Quarter” in *Popular Snapshots and Tracks to the Past: Cape Town, Nairobi, Lumbumbashi*, eds Danielle de Lame and Ciraj Rassool, (Belgium: Royal Museum for Central Africa, 2011), 242.

²⁹Adams, “Gazing” 242.

with clay soil and District Six stones, with shards of crockery, cutlery, a little doll and little bottle”.³⁰

In the museum, storytelling, as a form of objective and subjective negotiation, is used as a “way of recovering the memory of forced removals” fostering a sense of reconstructing agentified self and locality.³¹ Piece by piece former residents were seen to continuously contribute to notions of identity and community as a site of spatialised contestation, trauma and struggle to prioritise social transformation. A process of claiming and remaking District Six through participatory memory mapping workshops with former residents allowed various modalities and multi-literacies to emerge through notions of collection, recollected memories, inscription, transcription, curation, and restitution.³² The museum claims that District Six ex-residents “were closely involved with all levels of conceptualisation, design, and construction of the permanent exhibition *Digging Deeper* that opened in 2000”.³³

Exhibitions present visitors and District Six ex-residents with representations of a lost state of humanity and provide visual, textual and aural frameworks to remember District Six pasts. The District Six Museum, therefore, sees itself as a space that serves to work with the memories of District Six, while submersing the visitor in unique human-centred aesthetics and narratives that act as affective, empathetic and sometimes entertaining experiences.

District Six ex-residents and returnees act as storytelling tour guides, some of whom also founded the museum and conduct and participate in research, clubs, creative memory workshops, oral history projects, walking tours and in many other aspects of museology.³⁴ Surrounded by

³⁰L. Witz, G. Minkley and C. Rassool, “Sources and genealogies of the new museum: The living fossil, the photograph and the speaking subject” in *Unsettled Histories: Making South African Pasts*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 212.

³¹C. Rassool, “Community museums, memory politics and social transformation: histories, possibilities and limits” in *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, eds Ivan Karp, Corinne A Kratz, Lynn Szwaja and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto with Gustavo Buntinx, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Ciraj Rassool, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 286.

³²Rassool, “Community museums”, 286.

³³District Six Museum, *District Six Museum* www.districtsix.co.za, brochure, 2002.

³⁴The District Six Museum facilitates a number of projects such as *Huis Kombuis* (Home kitchen) food and memory workshops, sport and memory research and oral history projects, re-imagining carnival and musical heritage research and recording projects, memory methodology workshops, Seven Steps club, Young ambassadors programme, Young Curator’s workshops, Friends of the District Six Museum, walking tours and monthly District Six Museum supper club. The museum is also actively involved in organising District Six Museum commemorative walks to the District Six site

photographs of family, friends, homes, sites, landmarks, memory rooms, street signs, and musical soundscapes the guides narrate biographical stories to vast groups of visitors, tourists, and school children daily.

Visitors to Cape Town are directed via the Cape Town Red tourist bus route and through various media such as tourist guidebooks and the District Six Museum website to the museum itself. Through its themed storytelling, in-house tours, District Six walking tours, exhibitions, education, public programs, brochures, book publications, commemoration and inscription practices the museum has become the primary space for visitors to relate to apartheid narratives of forced removals from the city, perhaps as an orientation to a very specific notion of the apartheid experience and community.³⁵

During the themed District Six Encounters³⁶ walking and site tours District Six returnees who live in new dwellings, such as Mrs. Bam, are visited in their homes in District Six.³⁷ As a planned and designed experience visitors are invited to interact, listen, communicate, engage, discuss, and empathise to foster an understanding that seeks not only to heighten historical and social consciousness but present real stories of forced removals and return.³⁸ As a source of museum revenue in these ways the museum extends its reach and brand utilising museum buildings in Buitenkant Street as it's administrative, educational and exhibitionary base and District Six homes.³⁹ The idea of a museum "hot spot" is evoked, as an alternative conceptual method of working, addressing "awareness making on contemporary issues in museums" therefore the museum design of these tours is linked to exposing "modern day problems and burning issues as quickly as possible" by the ex-residents and returnees themselves.⁴⁰ In this manner, places are revisited and each storyteller

and the annual Slave Emancipation walk in the city at night. It is involved in a range of annual festivals, events such as the Cape Town Book Fair, The Food and Wine Show, The Cape Town Art Fair and many more.

³⁵Cape Town Visitors Guidebook published annually by Cape Town Tourism.

³⁶District Six Encounters, District Six Museum website, [http://districtsix.co.za/Content/Museum/Featured Tours /DistrictSixEncounters/index.php](http://districtsix.co.za/Content/Museum/Featured%20Tours/DistrictSixEncounters/index.php), accessed 09.09.2018.

³⁷S Van Horn Melton, "Traveling Histories: Tourism and Transnationalism in the US and South Africa", PhD diss., Emory University, 2017), 176.

³⁸Hayes-Roberts, "From Family", 6.

³⁹Van Horn Melton, "Traveling", 176

⁴⁰Swedish-African Museum Programme, *Hot spot-awareness making on contemporary issues in museums*, (Stockholm: SAMP, 2004), 10-11.

guide in the museum or returnee in their home recounts personal issues that engage with past and current themes, thereby supporting the museum's work in the city.⁴¹

A unique visual language and brand, I am arguing, has emerged through various forms of representation: curatorial processes, museum tours, exhibitionary strategies, museumisation of buildings, commemorative events, and education programmes that the museum claims are aimed at fostering critical citizenship in the city.

Reviving District Six identity: designing a community museum in Cape Town

The District Six Museum's primary methodologies focus on storytelling, memory, spoken voice, photographs and oral history testimonies that have been utilised in various design formats and applications.⁴² These structured methodologies, as well as art, design genres and craft mediums, are traced including collaborative creative relationships, funders, and strategic partnerships.⁴³ As entry points, they provide a means to understand how 'historical recovery' is articulated and invested through design that partially disrupts conventional historiographies.⁴⁴

Various design strategies aimed at reviving and representing District Six community histories through "frameworks of representation" and "applied aesthetics" were proposed by artist and curator Peggy Delpont.⁴⁵ The museum's methodologies sought to stabilise and clarify individual and collective pasts framed as a community. These enabling creative and conceptual frameworks supported ex-residents to reinterpret space after loss, displacement, and separation and re-enter their histories and the city.⁴⁶ According to Chrischené Julius,

The definition of community - as it relates to the museum's target audience, as well as the community which was represented in the exhibitions, represents an important feature of the debate around transforming museums, as well as those which came into being in post-apartheid South Africa. At

⁴¹Van Horn Melton, "Traveling", 176.

⁴²C. Julius, "Oral history in the exhibitionary strategy of the District Six Museum", (MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2007), 55.

⁴³Exhibitions, catalogues, handcrafted elements, processes of transcription and inscription, embroidery, painted surfaces, linocut and screen prints, collage effects, naming, juxtaposition, textiles, CAD, text, photographs, scale, texture, lighting, colour, mediums and materials are referred to in this thesis.

⁴⁴Julius, "Oral", 51.

⁴⁵Delpont, "Digging", 159.

⁴⁶C. Soudien, "Memory in the remaking of Cape Town" and "Memory and critical education: approaches in the District Six Museum" in *City Site Museum. Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum*, eds Bonita Bennett, Chrischené Julius and Crain Soudien, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2008), 117.

the cusp of the transition to a democratic government, the District Six Museum arose as a ‘new’ *space* in which the particular narrative of the forced removals, and consequently one of the suppressed narratives of apartheid, was foregrounded at the *conception* of its exhibitions, and not necessarily the institution of the ‘museum’ itself.⁴⁷

Julius notes that a “new” space and slate allowed for new interpretations and conceptual forms to develop that was key to the creation of cultural capital and agency in Cape Town where reclaiming District Six was the focus. The object, text, and glass cased methodology of traditional museum constructions shifted to encompass alternative strategies. Applied design forms were based on art and craft practice as opposed to traditional museum practice in the representation of community histories. Therefore design as a socio-cultural practice set within a post-apartheid museum in the city claiming community recovery commenced as generative space where new meanings of memorialisation were practised. However, in 2014 the city was claimed through global World Design Capital assignments, the outcome of which led the museum to utilise design increasingly with intention.

Studying idioms mediated through design frameworks allows for a departure from the limited ways design history has been written and museumisation has been conceptualised. My argument is that the District Six Museum has created a designed environment that initially embodied a “museum of process” as stated by Ciraj Rassool.⁴⁸ Yet over time, it has increasingly found various design forms to be an important component to expanding the museum’s cultural footprint, institutional life cycle and transformation agenda.⁴⁹ However, in my reading, a conflict in museological values has resulted. At the outset the occupation of a church building and later procurement of a set of museum buildings in the same locale allowed the District Six Museum to grow and diversify through extended public programming thus created new audiences to ensure

⁴⁷Julius, “Oral”, 44.

⁴⁸C. Rassool, “District Six Revisited: The Politics of land and memory in Cape Town”, South Africa, Africa at noon a, A Wednesday Lecture Series Since 1973, African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 14 September 2016, 1.

⁴⁹As stated in a mission statement The District Six Museum aims to bring about transformation through adopting principles such as non-racialism, anti-class discrimination, critical debate around citizenship, non-sexism and working with marginalised communities. These link to the museum’s broader aims of transforming District Six, the City and community museum practice.

economic and cultural longevity becoming a museum brand.⁵⁰ It has made the museum more vulnerable to the influence of global and consumerist trends which in many ways counter the social justice and memory work at the heart of the museum project on the outset and could signal a new form of marginalisation. One of the most crucial District Six Museum methodologies claiming a ‘voice’ in Cape Town is based on the museum's oral history collections in the sound archive and one of the founding strategies to record memories of District Six.

The District Six Museum as post-apartheid voice

District Six Museum design is examined as a collection through a collated repository of ‘living memory’ and the modalities at play in the collections, research and documentation department. Its contents are explored by tracing its founding ethics and methodologies of assimilation through a case studies approach. How memory manifests as exhibition design was noted by District Six Museum archivist Chrischené Julius: “The memory rooms of the museum....*Nomvuyo’s Room and Rod’s Room*....were curated as spaces for oral history and the narration of lives.”⁵¹ Julius notes through an analysis of methodological approaches in the exhibition *Digging Deeper*, a shift was perceived in how oral testimony was curated in the Museum. Julius argues that the “documentary record and writings about the museum in the early nineties reveal a concern for the practice of collecting oral testimonies - initially through exhibitionary practices and later, through a purposeful research strategy adopted in preparation for the *Digging Deeper* exhibition...within the research framework of an *archive*.... allowed for the *containment* and channelling of voice”.⁵²

At this point, as noted by Julius, the memory project became the museum; an institution focused on assimilation, storage, management, and conservation and indicates an evolving archival strategy linked to the design of exhibitions. This is a crucial argument by Julius as it makes apparent design in the museum in a particular way at a specific time when the institution was seeking to expand representation and presence. Julius draws on critiques by Minkley, Rassool and Bredekamp

⁵⁰H. Hayes-Roberts, “From family business to public museum: The transformation of the Sacks Futeran buildings into the Homecoming Centre of the District Six Museum”, (MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2012), iii.

⁵¹Julius, “Oral”, 75.

⁵²Julius, “Oral”, 120.

noting how orality is woven into the exhibition strategy adding textual and visual expression that “move beyond conventional documentary based history towards viewing historical evidence as a visual, oral and ultimately aesthetic form”.⁵³ Julius further argues that people’s subjectivities in making the museum prevent the unabridged recovery of memory, itself a sensorial and emotional variable thereby fixing voices so that these voices were then made to speak for District Six.⁵⁴

Historian Nicky Rousseau argues that “South African social historians (or interviewers) impose themselves and their radical methods on ordinary people...thus create correct political [and historical] practice”.⁵⁵ What Rousseau implies by this is that oral testimonies are not the voices of the ‘ordinary’ people, as claimed by many social historians, but contain the voices of historians themselves who were engaged in the 1980s fervent “history from below” movement which sought to popularise history.⁵⁶ Such an argument presents a direct challenge to the claims made by the District Six Museum and is elucidated upon by Witz, Rassool, and Minkley in their volume *Unsettled History*. In their essay, ‘Sources and Genealogies of the New Museum’ they refer to archaeological fragments of shattered District Six material culture preserved and presented as tangible historic cultural roots being grafted to vocalised and textualised oral history snippets was conceived of as ‘history from below’:

The retrieval of oral history was also a narrative to be unearthed and restored, and be marshalled in the formulation of the whole of District Six’s history. This was almost like an archaeological move to rescue voices hidden by history’s condescension and concealed from apartheid’s repression, expressed in a language of recovery of the previously submerged.⁵⁷

In this argument by Witz, Rassool, and Minkley, the merit of common ground and District Six sociality is established and integrated as a way of recovering the area renewing original social

⁵³Julius, “Oral”, 120.

⁵⁴A. Sachs, “District Six Museum: An Experiential Dialogue” in *The 2003 Prince Claus Awards*, (The Netherlands: Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, 2003), 43.

⁵⁵N. Rosseau, “Unpalatable Truths’ and ‘popular Hunger’: Reflections on Popular History in the 1980s” in *Out Of History, Re-imagining South African Pasts*, eds Jung Ran Forts, Paolo Israel and Leslie Witz, (Cape Town: HSRC, 2016), 53-72

⁵⁶Rousseau, “Unpalatable”, 63.

⁵⁷Witz, Rassool and Minkley, “Sources”, 215.

identities thereby de-constructing apartheid District Six into contemporary wholeness once more. Disciplines of the academy were brought in to salvage the remnants “as fragments of memory also spoke to District Six’s ‘archaeology of memory’, also to be uncovered and almost excavated through practices of oral history”.⁵⁸ As an idiom of return oral history practice accompanied a range of other signifying and representational mediums inscribed by District Six ex-residents as singular recordings as well as participatory and social designs. Historical denial and erasure were recalled and communicated within the museum through design methodologies adopting the notion of fragments and inscription on the District Six floor map, memory cloths, museum panels, and tags. A petition to have District Six declared a heritage site as an interactive element in exhibition design was created to provide a platform for engaging with the museum’s heritage rights agenda.⁵⁹

The museum was embedded with a range of mediums central to the broad exhibition narrative derived from the museum’s core methodologies set against the architecture of the Methodist Church interior.⁶⁰ Peggy Delport, the first curator of the museum maintained that art mediums and art processes became a means to excavate, ignite and redeem memories in the museum. Delport writes:

Appropriate aesthetic approaches are essential in processes of active remembrance. They facilitate a fuller grasp and retrieval of the past and are conducive to a broader scope of interpretation....aesthetic form acts as the catalyst or generator of meanings.⁶¹

According to Delport’s argument, appropriate exhibits were designed to relate to the viewer on a human scale and are handmade so that the texture of materials relates to the human touch indicating a craft approach to design. Delport and Rassool claimed that through inscription walls, floors and fabric became surfaces saturated with prose, texture, and meaning that provided an opportunity to

⁵⁸Witz, Rassool and Minkley, “Sources”, 215.

⁵⁹Relates to Walter Benjamin’s approach to writing history “the fragment is the gateway to the whole” cited in J. A. Walker, *Design History and the History of Design*, (Pluto: London, 1989), 79.

⁶⁰These included photography, maps, art installations, enlarged hand-tinted photographs of the Districts buildings, murals, timelines, objects, mosaics, newspaper clippings, silk-screened portraits, archival photographs, street signs, embroidered name fabrics, religious banners and painted banners.

⁶¹Delport, “Digging”, 160.

share experiences.⁶² My argument is that by claiming a low tech approach to the implementation of a visual and conceptual framework, the artistic imperative claimed authenticity through materiality, yet representation became blurred between ex-residents inscription and the actual curator-artists design, curating and making.⁶³ I am alluding to the paint technique, textured, rusted, weathered, colour-tinted, written, drawn, burnt and faded surfaces intentionally evoked in exhibition design, logos and in other applications of the museum design. This practice evoked the lost textures, voices and histories of District Six and bring to the fore a hand-wrought craft aesthetic that continually placed the museum within a temporal frame. The museum exhibition space acted more as a repository or memory box allowing curation to project a museumised and visualised identity of community rather than community agency. My argument is that District Six community agency was intentionally curated as handcrafted to establish nostalgic “frameworks of representation”.⁶⁴ Delpont and Rassool claim this was organic and I claim it was intentional. I draw on Svetlana Boym’s work *The Future of Nostalgia* to provide grounds for my argument.⁶⁵ Boym argues that nostalgia can be understood through two main types of nostalgia:

The restorative and the reflective. Restorative nostalgia stresses *nóstos* (home) and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home. Reflective nostalgia thrives in the *álgos*, the longing itself, and delays the homecoming-wistfully, ironically, desperately. These distinctions are not absolute binaries, and one can surely make a more refined mapping of the gray areas on the outskirts of imaginary homelands. Restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather truth and tradition. Reflective nostalgia dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity. Restorative nostalgia protects the absolute truth, while reflective nostalgia calls it into doubt.⁶⁶

⁶²V. Layne “Hands on District Six”: From Memory and Reclamation To Restitution and Redevelopment, The District Six Museum, Cape Town June 2003, document in support of 9/2/018/0154 Nomination for GRAD1 status to the SAHRA Council, 26 October 2004, 14

⁶³P. Delpont, “Signposts for retrieval; a visual framework for enabling memory of place and time” in *Recalling Community in Cape Town: creating and curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis (Cape Town: District Six Museum: 2001), 31-46.

⁶⁴Delpont, “Digging”, 159.

⁶⁵S. Boym, “Nostalgia”, Atlas of Transformation, <http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/n/nostalgia/nostalgia-svetlana-boym.html>, accessed 06.07.2018.

⁶⁶Boym, “Nostalgia”, accessed 06.07.2018.

Therefore I am arguing that a handcrafted aesthetic created a locus of nostalgia where lost homes and their materiality are reimagined as the museum as the home where time is displaced and post-apartheid historical emotion flourished. According to Boym “nostalgia can be a poetic creation, an individual mechanism of survival, countercultural practice, a poison and a cure. It is up to us to take responsibility for our nostalgia and not let others ‘prefabricate’ it for us”.⁶⁷ When the museum rebranded in 2016 it continued to utilise various materiality’s to create highly stylised contemporary graphic versions of the museum's craft aesthetic. Textures of the ‘lost’ district were evoked in designs representing the vestiges of time yet utilising high tech digital processes.⁶⁸

Museumisation: ideological framework, social mapping technique, and evolving design practice.⁶⁹

From 1994 the District Six Museum, in constructing post-apartheid histories of forced removals from District Six also projected a future Cape Town. Founding director of the museum Sandra Prosalendis argued that “the museum's commitment to healing, nation-building, and capacity building necessarily expresses itself in the desire for District Six to be redeveloped and settled”.⁷⁰ Therefore to reclaim District Six and parts of the city through sites of significance and create interaction between symbolic and material traces was a founding principle.⁷¹ Architect Lucien le Grange conceptualised the Horstley Street Memorial Park design for District Six after “a series of public meetings held in 1992 and 1993 with ex-residents, who were consulted regarding the proposal of a Memorial Park in District Six”.⁷² Cobbled Horstley Street together with Clifton, Arundel, and Richmond Streets became a point of interest when District Six ex-resident Stan Abrahams conducted walks through District Six visiting over 30 landmarks in the 1990s.⁷³ According to Ciraj Rassool

⁶⁷Boym, “Nostalgia”, accessed 06.07.2018.

⁶⁸Boym, “Nostalgia”, accessed 06.07.2018.

⁶⁹R.A. Curedale, *Design Thinking Process & Methods Guide 4th Edition*, (Los Angeles: Design Community College Inc, 2018), 41-42.

⁷⁰C. Rassool, ‘Introduction: recalling community in Cape Town’ in *Recalling Community in Cape Town: creating and curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool, Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum: 2001), ix.

⁷¹V. Layne/GM, District Six Museum Foundation, 2004.

⁷²Julius, “Oral”, 58.

⁷³District Six Museum, *You are now in Fairyland, The District Six Museum, District Six Walk* brochure, District Six Museum Foundation, 1990’s.

The Museum turned Horstley Street into a site of memorial visiting, adding Museum signage that explained the site's significance. Under instructions from the architects, processes of earth removal for restitution housing saw truckloads of earth offloaded alongside Horstley Street, to be incorporated into the future memorial site, seen almost as an archaeological park.⁷⁴

This concept reinforced the memorialisation project as a designed and landscaped heritage feature enabling people to slowly re-enter spaces within a reimagined District Six as it is becoming re-inhabited by District Six returnees. Land restitution and development in District Six, between 2006 and 2018, has resulted in 139 Phase 1 and 2 new homes.

Concerning the District Six Museum, there is a diverse range of literature detailing different aspects of museum making in the narration of forced removals from District Six. A seminal in-house District Six Museum publication *Recalling Community in Cape Town Creating and Curating the District Six Museum* marked how artists, activists, ex-residents, museum employees and trustees viewed the role and success of the museum, therefore “an affirmation of its practices by insiders”.⁷⁵ In the same publication, Rassool relates to design in the museum by arguing that it is through material reminders, artefacts, inscription, vestiges, and memory that community can be “recalled” thereby creating contemporary social fabric in support of land restitution and memorialisation.⁷⁶ Design within and without the museum is infused with ideas of the past, present and future thereby provoking important questions about what critical design practice entails in the post-apartheid city. Furthermore whether linear, chronological, historical and an aesthetic account of technology and materials could be disrupted in the Museum.⁷⁷ How the museum's form of museumisation links to an internationally organised design event targeting Cape Town, is relevant to rethinking design history in the contemporary moment where inner-city gentrification is part of a globalising trend.

⁷⁴Rassool, “District”, 19.

⁷⁵S. Prosalendis, “Foreword”, in *Recalling Community in Cape Town: creating and curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool, Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum: 2001), v.

⁷⁶Rassool, “District”, 1.

⁷⁷Soil from District Six forms part of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition where soil was contained in a boxed exhibition floor stand visually anchoring the tower of District Six Street signs inside the Buitenkant Methodist Church building now occupied by the District Six Museum,

Museumisation alludes to an essentialised framing and a transformative process of identifying, extracting, processing, classifying and re-presenting a palimpsest substitute form and place marked by a register, or list after Umberto Eco, where attributes and characteristics are found to have historical worth and subjected to scrutiny, officiating procedures and legal protection.⁷⁸ Therefore to museumise, in its place making sense, creates a disjuncture or disconnect where context is remade as a confined space and historic thoroughway via curatorial intervention.⁷⁹ In this way, the museum buildings act effectively in remaking context within the ever-changing city.

Containers of memory: District Six Museum buildings

Between 2009 and 2012 the Sacks Futeran set of buildings were extensively refurbished and transformed internally and externally and became the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre. According to the District Six Museum director Bonita Bennett, the redesign and museumisation of the Sacks Futeran buildings contributed in different ways to the institutional image of the District Six Museum.⁸⁰ By utilising building features, spaces and histories allowed the museum to seek new audiences to ensure its survival in the city as seen in the design of its promotional material. I question Rassool's argument that "through its memory work, the District Six Museum has sought to contest the priorities of urban development and gentrification in Cape Town as ways of imprinting new meanings on the landscape".⁸¹ I would argue that through the restoration and re-design of the Sacks Futeran buildings including renovation and exterior re-branding of the Buitenkant Methodist Church building the museum inadvertently became part of gentrification in the East City. However, the District Six Museum as a cultural institution hosted a range of broader activities, not District Six specific that represented a significant and critical presence in the city.⁸²

The spacious District Six Museum Homecoming Centre building, therefore, allowed for different forms of design work, as asserted by Bennett, to attract multiple audiences and the

⁷⁸U. Eco, *The Infinity of Lists: An Illustrated History*, (Milan: Rizzoli Publishing, 2009).

⁸⁰B. Bennett, "Memory Work, From the Fringe to Centre Stage" in *Creative Cape Town*, (Cape Town: Brendon Bell-Roberts, 2011), 19.

⁸¹Rassool, "District", 1.

⁸²Bennett, "Memory", 19.

museum had to balance these forms of design and interactions. It achieved this by drawing on various audiences defined through NGO (non-governmental organization) tenants, design and exhibition strategies where it collaborated with local, national and international partners. Audiences ranged from school children, ex-residents, academics, local and international visitors, immigrants, students, researchers, musicians, poets, artists, curators amongst others and the museum also attended to close editing of these programmed and designed outputs.

Two District Six Museum buildings are situated in the eastern part of the city and buildings identified by the museum as standing and demolished landmarks in the East City, once part of District Six, entered the Museum's discourse as the landscape changed to generate a wider understanding of changing historical, political and cultural patterns.⁸³ A particular urban planning discourse claimed as design-led initiatives in the East City led the museum to define its role in the city more broadly. Opposition to official planning precepts was expressed and contestation over meanings of space and place in the city re-emerged from the museum in particular in 2013.⁸⁴

Indeed, the term design had become extraordinarily popular in contemporary Cape Town, where the city was in 2014 designated World Design Capital. Initiated through The City of Cape Town funded Cape Town Partnership and its subsidiary Creative Cape Town it sought to improve the city through creativity and design. The East City was rebranded "the Fringe: Cape Town's Innovation District" to create "the premier African environment for design, media and ICT innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship".⁸⁵ Almost everywhere you looked the term design was being applied to projects ranging from private artworks to urban social responsibility projects. Under this banner "design has...arrived as a serious cultural object in its own right" as noted by

⁸³The Cultural Heritage Precinct relates to a District Six Museum vision of renewal since 2003 for District Six and the area in which the museum buildings are situated. The "East City" and the "the Fringe" were terms constructed through popular trend-based urban planning discourse prior and during World Design Capital 2014 and geographically and spatially refer to the same area that the District Six Museum had mapped proposing a District Six cultural heritage precinct.

⁸⁴B. Bennett, T. Smith, C. Julius and M. Sanger, "District Six Museum comments for public discussion: The Fringe Draft Framework", District Six Museum, 04.03.2013, 2.

⁸⁵Cape Town Partnership, "Official Launch of the Fringe: Cape Town's Innovation District- Press Release". Feb 16, 2011. www.capetown.travel/media/press-releases/entry/official_launch_of_the_fringe, accessed 12.10.2014.

design historian Peter Dormer.⁸⁶ It underlined global trends in the use of cities for events, reshaping the landscape as was evident when Cape Town hosted the FIFA soccer World Cup in 2010. Prior to and during Cape Town World Design Capital 2014 (hereafter referred to as CTWDC2014), design became a series of branded colour-coded themed events, exhibitions, interventions, and creative statements.⁸⁷ This indicated a shift from the memory-led “histories from the margins” sensitivity of the 1990s, replaced with a commercial design climate where historic precincts and cities were susceptible to global rebranding and redesign.⁸⁸

At the same time design was being inscribed into the public imaginary, it was simultaneously curiously undefined and was not a word the District Six Museum itself was particularly comfortable with as it suggested outside expertise. Yet from 2014, a series of new District Six Museum design forms, curation, museumisation and rebranding became a commercial means of economic sustainability. Through increased year on year tourism, a high-profile cultural brand in the city has been created and strengthened via multiple streams including media presence, participation and hosting of national and international conferences, workshops, exhibitions, participating in urban events and actively cultivating outspokenness thereby extending institutional realms. Partnering with internationally recognised advertising agency Ogilvy Mather South Africa resulted in new graphics, advertising, packaging and print campaigns that strategically marketed the District Six Museum using design. To ensure economic and cultural continuance, the museum has moved into a formalised approach to design in a competitive museum market and has become a prominent brand.⁸⁹ In 2014 the context and application of design-led projects led to a series of debates and contestations around the role of design and memory in post-apartheid Cape Town.

⁸⁶P. Dormer, *The Meanings of Modern Design. Towards the Twenty-First Century*, (London: Thames and Hudson 1990), 135.

⁸⁷Cape Town World Design Capital 2014 brochures and exhibition catalogues.

⁸⁸World Design Capital projects did not attempt to unlayer design histories of the city and their underpinning technologies, geographies and politics nor did they appear to feature memory work, heritage or nation building.

⁸⁹Zeitz MOCCA (2017) at the V& A Waterfront, Cape Town and the Apartheid Museum (2001) in Johannesburg employed high profile advertising agencies to develop institutional branding, logo, print, graphics and ad campaigns. A Cape Town Museum was launched by the Western Cape Government’s Department of Cultural affairs and Sport in 2018.

As new museums were being established nationally in rapid succession in South Africa from the 1990s the term museumisation took on far more interdisciplinary, far-ranging and nuanced tone. Rassool refers to the exact moment when tangible symbolic visual simulations and aesthetic emotional representations of District Six were established in a former church building thereby making District Six memories into District Six museumisation practices.⁹⁰ Heritage architect Noëleen Murray and historian Leslie Witz associate museumisation with “inventing an institution” the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum in Lwandle Township near the Strand outside Cape Town that opened in 2000.⁹¹ The physical and social context at this site comprising two museum buildings denotes attention in varying measures to restoration, asserted through museumisation a desire to make the museum and Lwandle visible, attempts to transform and assert cultural difference and conditions of that difference. This practice ultimately put Lwandle on the map through student projects, exhibition design, academic scholarship, publication, and tourism.⁹² Museumisation is far more than just a remaking of context and objectification. It embraces processes of research, curatorship, community making, as well as a range of thinking strategies and I, would argue design.

As I am exploring, in this thesis, an unlayering of design, its forms, functions, processes, and trajectory in a community museum context it is not an attempt to produce a chronological, linear or historical construction of design history but instead proposes how museumisation can be constructed as a design history. Therefore, as part of my literature study, I identified, within the field of design history and various neighbouring disciplines, scholars and their approaches that would assist me in my study of post-apartheid museum design.

Design History as museum(isation) design

After the Coldstream Report of 1961⁹³ that advocated for broader and more specialised content to be applied to re-contextualising design across various disciplines, design history emerged

⁹⁰Rassool, “Introduction” vii.

⁹¹N. Murray and L. Witz, *hostels, homes museum, Memorialising migrant labour pasts in Lwandle, South Africa*, (Cape Town: UCT press, 2014), 57.

⁹²N. Murray and L. Witz, “Preface” in *hostels homes museum Memorialising migrant labour pasts in Lwandle, South Africa*, (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2014), v-ix.

⁹³A UK National Advisory Committee on Art Examinations had been set up in April 1957. It reported to the Minister of

as a theoretical component in the British polytechnic system.⁹⁴ Design historian Jonathan Woodham states that

Design history...had its main roots in the newly established polytechnic sector, formed in the late 1960s and 1970s from amalgamations of colleges of art and design, education and technology. It sought to assume what then seemed to be a more radical and inclusive agenda: an embrace of such concerns as popular culture and ephemeral styling, advertising and consumption, and the study of the anonymous and every day. Such raw material was far removed from the cultural élitism generally associated with art historical studies in Britain. In the early 1970s, the idea of a new academic field — design history — was rather ‘looked down’ upon both by the university sector and the major museum establishment.⁹⁵

The establishment of the Design History Society in 1977 stimulated further debates on the role of objects in design history as an emerging field of study.⁹⁶ British design historian Jonathan Woodham, for instance, contested architectural and art historian Nicolas Pevsner’s notion of design with a focus on the artistic genius of the individual, and instead advocated working towards “An evaluation of the wider social, economic, political, technological and linguistic climate in which design has been made and used”.⁹⁷ Woodham’s approach is useful as it assists in contextualising museumisation practice as an interdisciplinary field allowing for various forms of mapping across multiple contexts.

Categorised by styling, eras, manifestos, designers and their objects compiled by Pevsner in his seminal book *Pioneers of Modern Design from William Morris to Walter Gropius* is relevant to

Education on the possibility of giving a greater measure of freedom and responsibility to colleges in constructing their academic courses and assessing students’ work. In Circular 340, the Minister announced his intention to establish an advisory body, with terms of reference to cover all aspects of art in further education with the exception of architecture. As a consequence of this, the National Advisory Council on Art Education was set up in 1959, with Sir William Coldstream in the chair. The Coldstream Report of 1961 had advised that courses should be conceived ‘as a liberal education in art’. The report had established four areas of specialisation: fine art, graphic design, three dimensional design, and textiles/fashion. These were to be called chief studies. Experimenting in different media and materials was to be encouraged during the early stages of the diploma course. The report stated that ‘The history of art should be studied and should be examined for the diploma’ and ‘about 15% of the total course should be devoted to the history of art and complementary studies’.

⁹⁴N. Souleles, “The Evolution of Art and Design Pedagogies in England: Influences of the Past, Challenges for the Future”, *iJADE International Journal of Art and Design Education*, 32.2, 2013, National Society for Education in Art and Design, John Wiley & Sons Ltd, http://ktisis.cut.ac.cy/bitstream/10488/3218/2/ijade_souleles.pdf, accessed 03.11.2018, 248.

⁹⁵J. M. Woodham, “Designing Design History: From Pevsner to Postmodernism”, *Working Papers in Communication Research Archive*, vol 1, issue 1, 2006, University of Brighton, 3.

⁹⁶Woodham, “Designing”, 2.

⁹⁷K. Fallon, *Design History: understanding theory and method*, (New York: Oxford International publishers, 2010), 35.

understanding the origins of the discipline through writing histories of design.⁹⁸ First published in 1936 and principally concerned with architecture it sought to assimilate a progressive lineage of the modern movement citing key figures and episodes. It adopted an art history approach. Pevsner's structure has been repeated in many popular design history publications gaining acceptance as the founding and definitive text-compendium of design history. These include *History of Modern Design*, a history of design from the 18th century to present day, *A Century of Design: Design Pioneers and their works* which is a conventional approach to design history through designer's monographs while *Landmarks of the 20th Century: An Illustrated Handbook* is a study of international design, decade by decade, with essays on the trends, innovations, and significant objects of each period, again following Pevsner's formulation.

Numerous publications on the Hoch Schule für Gestaltung (1953-1968) and Bauhaus (1919-1933) indicate a continued celebration and influence of design education on mass-producible forms, especially chairs.⁹⁹ In a dissimilar vein, Siegfried Giedion's pioneering study *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History* reveals mechanisation's ability to reshape accepted roles, ideas and procedures constructing an argument against high design through his study of the slaughterhouse, the Yale lock, the assembly line, tractors and "comfort" as promoted by the furniture industry.¹⁰⁰ According to the political scientist, economist and cognitive psychologist who specialised in decision making research and artificial intelligence Herbert A. Simon writing in 1968 in *The Sciences of the Artificial* stated that "everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones. The intellectual activity that produces material artefacts is no different fundamentally from the one that prescribes remedies for a sick patient or the one that devises a new sales plan for a company or a social welfare policy for a state".¹⁰¹

⁹⁸N. Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design From William Morris to Walter Gropius*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005).

⁹⁹Designs for Living, Episode 4: *The Genius of Design* explores the History of Design in 5 episodes, (London: BBC documentary 2010).

¹⁰⁰S. Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948).

¹⁰¹H. A. Simon, "The Science of Design: Creating the Artificial" in *The Sciences of the Artificial*, 3rd ed, (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996), 111.

Design historian Kjetil Fallon attaches more significance to design history's neighbouring disciplines, such as anthropology, placing design firmly in a social framework of practice.¹⁰² According to Fallon's argument, "the use of isms as a primary system of classification is perhaps the most evident significant and troublesome aspect of design history's legacy from art".¹⁰³ Fallon advocates for a theories approach for design history as a relatively nascent research field, citing Kuhn's theory of paradigm shifts and histories of industrialisation as a productive lens with which to explore design.¹⁰⁴

The rise of material culture studies provided an alternative emphasis for the object, as did anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's notion that "from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance; from a *methodological* point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context".¹⁰⁵ Architectural historian Adrian Forty notes that design history studies generally focus on conceptualisation and production while anthropological based material culture studies, as proposed by material cultures historians and anthropologist Daniel Miller, focus predominantly on consumption, cultural use, and context of objects.¹⁰⁶ *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* by Dick Hebdige in 1979 drew on culture, Roland Barthes, ideology, Marx and hegemony as lenses with which to uncover in urban landscapes the dress codes, behaviours (including graffiti) and ethos of collective subordinate groups such as punks, skinheads, mods, teddy boys and others who sought to disrupt and challenge conventional societal norms in post-war British cities.¹⁰⁷ His case study methodology provides a wide spectrum of social and societal

¹⁰²Fallon, *Design*, 147.

¹⁰³Fallon, *Design*, 128.

¹⁰⁴Fallon, *Design*, Viii.

¹⁰⁵A. Appadurai, "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value" in *The social life of things*, ed Arjun Appadurai, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5.

¹⁰⁶Fallon, *Design History*, 35.

¹⁰⁷D. Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, (Yorkshire: Methuen-Routledge, 1979).

signifiers related to youth protest groups and creates alternative perspectives to meanings of 'community'.

Architect, Victor Papanek's research spanning several decades, questioned everything about design in its broadest applications and stated that most "design is harmful to society."¹⁰⁸ He postulated an ethical basis for the design field and argued that people and designers should "design for the people's *needs* rather than for their *wants*".¹⁰⁹ Although his views were deeply personal and controversial his approach is insightful especially in "sensing a dwelling" that resonates with intangible aspects of built structures helpful in creating another reading for the buildings under study.¹¹⁰ Fallon notes that design history "subject matter has expanded so far beyond the myopic attention to 'good design' and 'great designers' that once dominated the discipline" and prefers the term "design culture" to describe the present status of the discipline.¹¹¹ The emergence of the cultural turn in the interconnectedness of design history is a recent development and one which contributes depth, breadth and allows a comprehensive analysis to write the design history of a museum.

Thus Fallon's embedded socio-cultural positioning, Papanek's ethical enquiries and extraordinary, diverse and numerous case studies, some of which focus on disposable objects, obsolescence, biodegradable materials, leisure products, packaging design derived from pea pods, DIY cars, sliding scales to solve architectural problems, candlestick design, a muscle-powered vehicle, Third World radio receiver¹¹², solar-powered bulk-food cooler, water vehicle designed for hydrotherapy of handicapped children and numerous others provide an interrogative approach to

¹⁰⁸V. Papanek, *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 2011).

¹⁰⁹Papanek, *Design*, 3-27.

¹¹⁰V. Papanek, *The Green Imperative: Ecology and Ethics in Design and Architecture*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1995), 74-104.

¹¹²'Tin Can Radio' was designed by Victor Papanek and George Seeger at North Carolina State College in 1964. The radio receiver was designed for third world context and condition as it was made of a used juice can and used paraffin wax and a wick as a power source. The rising heat was converted into enough energy to power this nonselective receiver. Once the wax was depleted it was replaced by more wax, paper, dried cow dung, or anything else that would burn. Manufacturing costs based on a DIY basis was 9 cents (US) at the time of design. This communication device was requested by the United States Army based on the assumptions that people in third world countries are illiterate and unaware of national agendas. Design criteria included batteries or any form of external power input could not be utilised. Papanek came up with a solution using a used juice can, paraffin wax and a wick as its power source.

design history or rather histories.¹¹³ Miller's appeal for an anthropological material cultures approach, Forty and Dormer's attention to detail of seemingly banal designs and the origins and processes that accompany them, Appadurai's notion that societal creation's become embedded with meaning which in turn leads to value-laden objects in circuits of possession, all contribute to asserting theory in the design history of a museum.

Behind design making solutions and interventions trail ideas, belief systems, values, ethics, theories such as human-centred design and personal agendas filter into museum design discourse as uneven subjective and contested fields influencing processes of museumisation. The museum evolved to represent a community and as Ciraj Rassool argues "Communities are also themselves products of history, and subject to ongoing and contested processes of production and reproduction. Indeed community museums are active agents in the production of community".¹¹⁴ This points to the continual reconstruction and transformation in making the District Six community museum. District Six Museum staff past and present working in research, collections, curation, exhibition design, publications, education programming, event planning and so forth have contributed significantly to the creative and design trajectory of the museum. Networking has led to a range of creative, conceptual and cultural partnerships to build a more encompassing brand that establishes the District Six Museum's place in reconstructing an identity for the city.

Establishing a design history of the District Six Museum is a systematic approach to writing diverse readings and manifestations of design in a cultural field. The positions articulated by Forty, Miller and others allow a varied approach to the study of museumisation as design history. They provide a range of in-depth perspectives and methodologies envisaging and forwarding design histories as dependent on diverse influences and readings not explicitly aligned with any singular discipline.

¹¹³Papanek, *Design*, 3-27.

¹¹⁴C. Rassool, Introduction: The Community Museum, *City Museums on the move, A dialogue between professionals from African countries, the Netherlands and Belgium*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam Museum, 2012), 15.

As I undertake a close reading of District Six Museum design my chapters are organised as a series of unlayering from micro to macro design, each chapter resonating and informing the next. My implicit broader question is around how a post-apartheid community museum in Cape Town is conceptualised and designed to become a District Six Museum brand.

Chapter structure

In presenting this design history I commence in chapter one with the design and spatial configurations of the District Six Museum archive as a fluid repository in the specific ritualistic social context of collecting memories, lived experience narratives, photographs, and symbolic objects as a way reassembling social lives. District Six memorialisation and formative museological concepts and collections indicate strategies about how archival practice has informed a particular design aesthetic.

I include eight archival case studies drawn from the District Six Museum archive and resource centre collections which were selected and informed by my knowledge as a design, textile, and social historian and are written to create several in-depth archival design stories.

Chapter two examines through design elements the constructed-ness of presentation and representation in District Six Museum exhibitionary projects involving re-imagined urban fabric, political, cultural and social identities associated with District Six. Design as exhibition space is examined through a combination of curation, design choices, networking, research projects, creative collaborative work, sense-making and handcrafted elements. The chapter addresses questions around art direction, prototyping, iterative design processes, visual communication, materials, narrative scripts, voice, craft, text, publications, and technology as relevant props to visualizing community. Furthermore, the exhibitions, processes of exhibition production, exhibition research, collection, exhibition design, and tacit knowledge explore how historical denial and erasure are recalled within the museum through design methodologies adopting the notion of fragments, voice, performativity, memory, mapping, genealogy and other idioms.

Chapter three explores how design elements from the museum exhibitions and programmes were repurposed and fabricated towards establishing a brand and how the museum has been branded and rebranded since 1994. I trace various applications, locating design, specifically form, to indicate various museum scenarios that indicate the innovative qualities of museumisation as a practice that led to these designs. District Six Museum design reviewed in this chapter includes keychains, a gate, t-shirts, a flag, book covers, a fax letterhead, a museum letterhead, various museum logos, murals, banners, brochures, website, newsletter, signage, and poster design. The *Huis Kombuis* Reminiscence Craft and Design workshops have created a sub-brand within the museum and I explore various products relating to these workshops that contribute to theming and the museum's craft aesthetic including a cookbook.

My fourth chapter examines architectural adaptive reuse as museumisation and design history decoded through exploring one particular set of buildings located in Buitenkant Street, Cape Town and transformative processes employed to upgrade the space in 1999-2000. It traces the Dutch colonial warehouse's renovation into a set of buildings under the ownership and stewardship of the Central Methodist Mission Cape Town. A central component of this chapter is to understand how the project to renovate the buildings was established by identifying the main stakeholders and funders, and importantly how specific spaces dedicated to memorialisation were converted for the District Six Museum. Furthermore, mapping aspects of new and adapted museum architecture as an understanding of contemporary museum making raises questions around the creation of local subjectivities and the central role of architectural practice in the manipulation of form and aesthetics in the creation of District Six as a foundation, memorial museum, legacy, and geo-socio-political category. Sites containing and constructing local histories buildings primarily associated with the District Six Museum include the Methodist Mission Church and the Sacks Futeran buildings. Their adaptive reuse is read in relation to tangible statements in the process of museumisation.

Chapter five examines how the District Museum related to the unfolding and presentation of Cape Town as World Design Capital 2014 and reviews contestations over a memory-led versus

design-led project. Design in the city is examined to understand the positionality of various groups laying claim to East City urban spaces focusing on a specific site named Harrington Square. It will look at how particular urban planning policies in the city led the museum to define its role more broadly adopting design strategies sensitive to the memories of District Six and the remaining urban fabric. Museum generated design in various media was harnessed to memory work as a form of activism and knowledge dissemination. Agency was claimed through visualising and storytelling as memory mediums as personal and professional literacies intersected. Through renaming and design practices, residents of a particular locale were positioned as community when alternative notions of space and identity emerged and were contested in the city within urban renewal projects and gentrification. Institutional branding, strategic partnerships, and affiliations with reference to design developments and applications of the District Six Museum brand complete this chapter. The final chapter provides conclusions linked to the research question and reflects on the thesis findings.



Chapter 1

The rituals of archiving memory: An exploration into the District Six Museum through eight archival case studies

It is to have a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive, an irrepressible desire to return to the origin, a homesickness, a nostalgia for the return to the most archaic place of absolute commencement.”¹

This chapter concentrates on the District Six Museum archive as a repository in the specific social context of “recalling community” linked to a District Six ex-resident community.² The District Six Museum archival collections developed when the museum was founded in 1994 and donations of photographs were accepted from District Six ex-residents. Oral histories were also recorded and collected as interactive expressions of memory. Modes of working within categories of memory, oral history projects, activism, performance, art, music, inscription and a myriad of expressive forms have altered definitions of the archive towards “new post-collecting museological practices of social mobilisation and as a site of knowledge transaction”.³ The chapter begins to trace a discussion over post-apartheid archives as providing a platform creating content and narratives that are no longer about claiming official facts, historical correctness or being a reserved repository – it’s about speaking out as an “activist archive”.⁴ Peggy Delport notes that the “oral and material contributions” of ex-residents” informed directions and research strategies.⁵ “Collectible material included interviews with ex-residents, video material, and music recordings. This focus on memory, visuality, sound, and performance reflected an approach sought by the museum in its exhibitionary strategy as a whole” according to Chrichene Julius.⁶ No longer a back story the District Six Museum archive and it’s disseminating qualities actively rewrite histories, claim space in the city, inform research and shape exhibition interpretations. Furthermore, the archive serves to visualise

¹J. Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Trans. Eric Prenowitz, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 91.

²Rassool, “Introduction” vii.

³Rassool, “District Six Revisited”, 12.

⁴J. Duggan, Director Archival Platform, *A Ground of Struggle: Four Decades of Archival Activism in South Africa*, Report prepared by the Archival Platform for the Atlantic Philanthropies, 2018, <http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>, accessed 07.09.2018.

⁵Delport, “Signposts”, 37.

⁶Julius, “Oral”, 82.

identities, revise ideas about ownership and knowledge production and attempt to benefit from a digitally driven, social world⁷ where everything is connected.⁸ The museum has a variety of different archiving practices, including unaccessioned objects used as museum props, therefore archival locations represent disparate types of material that hold different implications for the way they are constituted as part of the museum.

Case studies drawn from the District Six Museum archive and resource centre collections presented in this chapter were selected and informed by my background as a graphic and surface designer and design, textile and social historian. They are written to create a number of in-depth archival stories and are no means representative of the entire archive. The case studies include the Hanover tailors jacket which is hung on a rail in a climate-controlled attic storage room, the apartheid doll which is placed in tissue paper and stored in a labelled archival box. District Six archaeological and linoleum fragments are stored in labelled plastic bags or brown paper bags and stored in labelled archival boxes and *Julia's Secret* memory box is stored in the resource centre and has an educational function. The Ginsburg photographic collection is stored in the climate-controlled attic office archival room. Sound recorders are stored in the sound studio and the sound archive is located below the resource centre. According to archivist Chrischené Julius, the “exhibition is the archive” as the District Six Museum collection is relatively small by museum standards and costs of maintaining and preserving a collection are high therefore much of the collection is exhibited.⁹ My argument is that archivability is perceived in relation to how it supports the representational work of the museum and specific preservation requirements also impact on where they are located. Vintage suitcases might be a highly symbolic trope that serve as props on commemorative marches and in Nomvuyo’s memory room. They are also utilised as storytelling containers in the museum but they are not accessioned. Vintage tea sets and ball and claw furniture

⁷The District Six Museum website has an archives section where previous exhibitions, programmes and events can be accessed as well as links to scholarly papers and popular articles.

⁸C. Hamilton, “Social History Collections: Registering Change in Iziko after Apartheid”, paper and panel discussion, Iziko Slave Lodge Lecture Theatre, 16.09.2010.

⁹C. Julius, Interview, District Six Museum, 20.11.2018.

are treated in the same way, serving as props. Photographs are highly valued as they directly link to representing and claiming a District Six community. Archaeological fragments, as primary sources were adopted as a trope and museum design. They function as symbols of destruction and are also utilised decoratively in various sizes. The map is representative of a large fragment and Julius argues that “the museum floor map, in particular, was seen to speak to the fashioning of a ‘new’ South African identity which worked with concepts of place, memory and orality in fashioning of an apartheid past and democratic future”.¹⁰

Items that are too fragile or are not perceived to fit into the exhibition narrative in some way but yet relate to District Six are stored in the archive. I attempt to surface this through enquiry and writing archival stories thereby indicating a differentiation in how the museum is made through variable archival practice.

This chapter consists of eight archival case studies that I do not view as sources but of histories in and of themselves with reference to design not as “debris” to which Achille Mbembe refers.¹¹ The District Six Museum archive partially subscribes to notions of the archive as a fusion of objects, buildings, and documents as put forward by Mbembe when he states that “the status and power of the archive derive from...entanglement of building and documents”.¹² Yet this construction is troubled and contested through the speech act, as a designed intangible intervention utilised in commemorative museum walks, gatherings and daily museum tours with District Six ex-residents.

I argue against Mbembe’s statement with a question: Where is the District Six post-apartheid museum archive? The museum is claimed as a living memorial to forced removals, much of the material archive is exhibited and speech acts where memories align to the story just heard or

¹⁰Julius, “Oral”, 58.

¹¹A. Mbembe, “The Power of the Archive and its Limits” in *Refiguring the Archive*, Carolyn Hamilton et al, (Cape Town: David Philip-Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 25.

¹²Mbembe, “The Power”, 19.

the act of listening constitutes an archive.¹³ In this chapter I set out to deepen archival practice and at the same time try to depart from the archival frame in reflective practice, to speak through writing detailed case studies that reveal design histories, thereby to test the parameters of the archive.

Archiving District Six: Designing spaces where memories are kept

The museum acquired a collection over time through donations by many ex-residents of District Six and others that provide an intimate view of life in the area. According to Chrischené Julius, the conceptual beginnings of the archive can be traced to 1992 when the District Six Museum Foundation as a District Six project of living memory brought together people in remembrance of forced removals.¹⁴ Notions of belonging, individual and collective identity surfaced in oral interactions, were explored and recorded through memories of District Six prior to the design of a memory room. According to Ciraj Rassool and Valmont Layne,

The earliest memory work inside the museum, once it opened, took the form of the collection of testimonies. Sandra Prosalendis and Linda Fortune interviewed ex-residents about their lives in District Six in the first few years after the museum opened.¹⁵

Therefore as alluded to by Prosalendis, the District Six Museum's key narrative strategy constructed identities in the space of the museum. The work of the museum asserts that it "draws on the idea of an archive as a living organism, fuelled by stories and experiences that are facilitated by the District Six ex-resident community and the Museum".¹⁶ The Collections, Research and Documentation department is comprised of a photographic collection, audio-visual collection and artworks located in the resource centre and archive. The department manages a unique collection in the form of street

¹³In the District Six Museum resource Centre as part of a UWC Visual History research project in 2010 I gained access to a set of oral histories collected from the Salt River Market in Cape Town by Carohn Cornell. I listened to 5 oral histories. I had met and interviewed the adult children and business owners of 4 of the deceased oral history interviewees who had established thriving businesses at the market until its demise. The act of listening to these recordings, sourcing archival photographs of the market and taking contemporary black and white photographic portraits allowed me to surface social and visual histories of different generations in family run businesses at the market deepening my enquiry.

¹⁴C. Julius, "Oral history in the exhibitionary strategy of the District Six Museum", (MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2007), 5.

¹⁵C. Rassool and V. Layne, "Memory rooms: oral history in the District Six Museum" in *Recalling Community in Cape Town, Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum Foundation, 2001), 146.

¹⁶District Six Museum, www.districtsixmuseum.org.za, accessed 26.09.2018.

signs and architectural vignettes, recipes, artefacts, textiles, photographic images, books, brochures, newspaper clippings, posters, pamphlets, brochures, theses, art, audio-visual and sound recordings: music and oral histories. There is notably a high level of provenance and researchers requesting access to material sign a District Six Museum code of ethics document, a legal agreement relating to permission, copyright, access and ethical research practice. Based on the sensitivity of some material permission may be granted or denied as many oral histories contain traumatic and emotional content and each research request is carefully considered and reviewed.

As new material, if related to District Six, entered the District Six Museum archive, information was requested from the donor, allocated an accession number and a donor code. To record provenance, it was documented photographically and conservation requirements were noted. An accession number was attached via different types of labels that were tied on, sewn on, adhered to, or written using indelible ink directly onto the artefact. Tags were also made of polyethylene or polyester film strips with the numbers written on or embossed with lettering machines like Dymo label guns.¹⁷



Figure 1.1: Dymo label gun and labelling technique applied to D6M signage. Photographs: Pinterest.com & H H-R

This instant and effective archival labelling technique and resultant typeface has been utilised and applied as an inscription logo with the words HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX D6 NO

¹⁷The Dymo label gun creates a very specific reading and graphic statement about the museum as it draws on counterculture design namely grunge typography made popular in the 1980s.

MATTER WHERE WE ARE WE ARE HERE in negative white text with a solid square in red or blue as visual anchor and three strips imitating the coloured film strip of the Dymo label gun as visual markers of the archive. This archival looking logo has been used in District Six banner design, Horstley Street memorial park signage, in District Six annual reports and brochures, on T-shirts and in various other mediums, surfacing the work of the archive as the work of the museum and blurring the boundaries between both. It indicates that archival tasks represent museum design.¹⁸

Exploring District Six pasts through eight archival case studies

Through a close reading from the District Six Museum archive, I created archival stories of District Six that are not evident in the exhibitions. They emerged from the development of the District Six Museum collections, a sort of historiography of collection. My argument is that the archive is undervalued and can provide a conceptual entry point and frame that differs from existing representations. Through curatorial selection, for exhibitionary purposes, a separation occurs that creates a less engaged self-analytical view and a more romanticised reading of District Six by the museum. Working with memory as the District Six Museum claims may be one methodology, yet the archive reveals an array of methodologies from scientific data orientated research in the form of archaeology, to a range of expressive processes that serve to illuminate amongst other aspects of lived experiences, the tenacity, and survival of people and places. The archive alludes to the constant remaking of the museum through archival research and practice where knowledge is constructed.

Archival stories 1: The biography of the ‘apartheid’ doll: Accession no: 3758. Donor code: CAR

My first case study historically defines the unique design and biography of the apartheid doll located in the District Six Museum archive and explores complexities of representation, geography

¹⁸I traced this visual typographical form to the archive that is applied across many District Six Museum graphic designs.

and identity. It investigates how the doll becomes a narrative device that gives graphic recognition in the mediation of relationships, identities and boundaries remembering childhood through the District Six Museum archive and exhibition spaces. The central focus is to provide critical analysis and reflect on the micro histories of material culture as significant to the contribution of another reading of South African histories through a two-headed bi-racial topsy turvy doll: the problématique.

A conference on Survivor Objects conceptualised by the Centre for Material Culture Studies at the University of Delaware considered “the cultural power accrued by artefacts that have endured social conflict. By bearing historical witness, such objects can come to hold a privileged place in cultural memory and, as a result, play a powerful role for present-day communities”.¹⁹ The potent form of the doll as a semantic unit provides visual and indextual clues and also functions as an archetype that illuminates the doll as an object of agency and fantasy. The case study attempts to trace the bi-racial doll’s unusual form, design, manufacture, circumstances of acquisition, and movement after forced removals, its donation to the District Six Museum in 2013 and re-entry into the symbolic space of District Six, Cape Town, a port city defined by dispossession and displacement. How does the doll relate to existing archival objects, exhibitions and narratives within the District Six Museum’s reflections and constructions of memory, identity and community?



Figure 1.2: Topsy turvy apartheid doll in an archival box. D6M archive: Photograph: HH-R

¹⁹Centre for Material Studies, “Survivor Objects Conference”, 14-15 November 2014, University of Delaware https://events.udel.edu/event/survivor_objects#.W7917dczZVk, accessed 27.11.2017.

As a design historian and museum and heritage scholar, my motivation and interest in researching the ‘apartheid’ doll was aroused when it was shown to me at the District Six Museum archive. When I first saw the two-headed bi-racial doll I thought it was a prototype of some bizarre kind. It evoked mixed feelings in the staff and interns within the Museum.²⁰ The doll in question, a child’s toy, entered the archive of the District Six Museum as a donation and was placed in an archival box, for safekeeping much like a body is placed in a coffin. It raised a number of questions within me around how material culture is designed, used, confined and stored, and how processes of curatorship impact on the ‘position’ of the object. Therefore, a study of the doll would allow for the creation of a design history case study in the context of museumisation as opposed to ubiquitous design histories of technology, materials and designers. The unique biography and role of the doll in the context of a larger system of design and archival histories further contributes to the histories of childhood under apartheid. The interpretation of history through the biography of a community museum archival object, the apartheid doll is concerned with artificial and semi machined forms of material culture including models and representation of human bodies classified as “a child’s plaything in human form”.²¹

As indicated earlier ex-residents contributed to the reconstruction of the District Six through biographies, oral histories, personal photographs, artefacts, and childhood experiences often recalled through visits to the corner shops, favourite sweets, games played, school experiences and memories of neighbours, teachers and special feast days.²² Many District Six photographs depict children in the street playing, hanging around, working or shopping with parents or older siblings.²³ Ex-resident Linda Fortune draws a vivid picture of a place and time in her autobiography that focuses on childhood memories.²⁴ A broader social landscape also emerges, that of a whole

²⁰District Six Museum archive research visit 10.03.2014.

²¹D. S. E Coleman and E. J. Coleman, *The Collector’s Encyclopaedia of Dolls*, (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1970), 1.

²²N. Ebrahim, *Noor’s Story: My Life in District Six*, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001). Linda Fortune, *The House in Tyne Street: Childhood Memories of District Six* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 1996), Hettie Adams and Hermione Suttner, *William Street District Six*, (Cape Town: Chameleon Press, 1988).

²³District Six Museum photographic collections, UCT Digital Collections, Afrika Media Online photographic collections, South African History Online, accessed periodically during 2016.

²⁴L Fortune, *The House in Tyne Street: Childhood Memories of District Six* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 1996), 11.

community of people: shop-keepers, teachers, barbers, entertainers, musicians, neighbours and specific places: movie-houses, shops, streets and lanes still recalled by many who lived there.²⁵

Washday rituals at the Fortune home in Tyne Street District Six meant a cessation of games:

It was a Saturday afternoon. Warm sunlight filtered down onto the stone-paved backyard. Mom was doing the washing at the cold-water tap near the kitchen door. She was bent over the washing plank on the large off-white porcelain basin, soaping in and rubbing the white things – sheets and pillowcases and shirts and bits of underwear.... Then Mom rinsed the washing, pulling each piece out of the clean water with two hands, dropping it back again and pulling it out again until she was sure it was properly rinsed. She hung it up on the washing lines which ran from one end of the yard to the other. She took the washing plank and quickly pushed it underneath the middle washing line to prevent it from sagging to the ground. Playtime was over unless we wanted to be soaked by the dripping water because when Mom hung up her washing it was always sopping wet and it would soak everything in the yard. Mom could not twist the wet washing like the other women in the District did. She just sort of squeezed the water out, so when she hung the sheets up they were still heavy with water.²⁶

This account confirms Adams's argument that places childhood as a central conduit and theme in reclaiming the spaces of District Six in the District Six Museum's exhibitions and narratives.

In examining the archival and exhibition design practices of the District Six Museum the role of a relatively new object in constructing and framing existing biographies of District Six ex-residents was insightful. According to the donor of her childhood toy, a topsy turvy doll, District Six Museum ex-resident Olga Carlse stated, in an oral history interview:

I was eight in 1955 when my mom bought for me a doll from Namso's department store in Hanover Street. When she bought it, she didn't know it had two faces, a white face and arms and if you turned it upside down, a black face and arms, There was a ticket hanging from its arm "apartheid doll" but I didn't pay attention to that. It was only when I started playing with the doll and wanted to look at her feet that I realized there were no legs but a black doll. I loved my doll and loved making her new clothes – this isn't her original dress. I kept my doll all these years but now I am happy to give the doll to the Museum so other people can see her.²⁷

²⁵J. Maingard, "Cinemas-going in District Six, Cape Town, 1920s to 1960s: History, politics, memory", *Memory Studies* 2017, Vol. 10(91), 17-34.

²⁶Fortune, *The House*, 12.

²⁷District Six Museum archive, apartheid doll donated by Olga Carlse to the District Six Museum, details of donated objects, Accession no: 3758, Donor Code: CAR, donated April 2013.



Figure 1.3: The topsy turvy doll in two positions. D6M archive. Photographs: HH-R

More commonly documented as two-headed or topsy turvy dolls this type of doll is constructed with two upper bodies joined at the waist with a long reversible skirt that covers or hides the one not being played with. It is, therefore, legless and cannot stand but must be held or laid down. A 1901 marketing slogan promoting this type of doll describes its visual and racial identity “Turn me up and turn me back, first I’m white, and then I’m black” and traces a developmental moment in the origins of topsy turvy doll design according to doll collector Jamila Jones.²⁸ It could be described as a novelty: 25cm in length and cries when moved from one end to the other. It has kewpie doll type facial features and printed colour celluloid faces in perfect condition. Clothing differs from one side to the other.²⁹

According to Evelyn Coleman, referring to personal attachments to dolls in general, “it is sometimes said that the dolls that have survived for collectors are the failures of the doll world – the ones that did not perish from over loving in the nursery, but this does not appear to be true in many instances. Even children tend to guard and protect the dolls they love the most. Many of the best dolls that find their way into collections have been carefully cherished in a family, through the years

²⁸V. Borey, “Two Headed American Storytelling”, suite 101.com, February 2004, [http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/topic in anthropology/106949](http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/topic%20in%20anthropology/106949), accessed 10.06.2018.

²⁹Description based on observation of the topsy turvy doll under study.

and may well have survived the affection of several generations of children.³⁰ This is a salient point as the doll, it can be argued is a “survivor object” also subjected to forced removals along with its child owner and especially looked after and “carefully cherished” as its excellent condition shows.³¹

The apartheid doll, donated in 2013 has not been included in the District Six Museum children’s games installation yet. This installation is located in the District Six Museum *Digging Deeper* exhibition on the upper floor situated in a recessed wooden cabinet display case below a large sepia-toned mural and wooden platform. The central themes are games and toys with black and white photographs of children at play in the streets of District Six forming the contextual framing of the small exhibit. Objects are strategically placed at floor level of the exhibition cabinet to link images to objects such as chalk, a homemade kite and string, marbles, small stones, hula hoops, a plastic doll dressed in hand-knitted clothing, cricket bat and small wooden planks that excavates the imaginative and physical activities of children. The topsy turvy doll perhaps disrupts the existing exhibit too profoundly and raises questions relating to its unique (and perhaps unsettling) form, historiography and biography. It constructs histories of racial stereotypes, identity, gender and the politics of mass-produced toys aimed at child-owners, in this case, under apartheid.

Doll types have been extensively classified and Evelyn Coleman notes that “a new and successful doll was immediately copied by other makers” and “many dolls were assembled from parts made in several different countries”.³² Upon viewing the donated apartheid doll Maureen Archer notes that in South Africa similar topsy turvy dolls were produced:

In the early 70s I belonged to a group called “Friends of the Ciskei People” that used to raise money for the very progressive community health work of the very progressive Dr Trudie Thomas at and around the hospital at Keiskammahoek in Ciskei. To raise money the group would sell clothes made by women’s sewing groups in the Ciskei, African print dresses, skirts, tops – and they also made “reversible” black and white dolls and dressed them in the same style. These were cloth dolls, cloth faces and all, and bigger than the apartheid doll which I’ve now seen but the same idea. The dolls were sold via the Quaker Service Centre in Cape Town and perhaps

³⁰Coleman, *The Collector’s*, 1.

³¹Centre for Material Studies, “Survivor”, accessed 27.11.2017.

³²Coleman, *The Collector’s*, 2.

elsewhere and nobody thought of them as apartheid dolls, but just as rather nice dolls being sold for a rural development project.³³

Bi-racial topsy turvy or two-headed dolls were originally hand made with leftover cloth in the southern states of America by African slave women and/or children from 1850 onwards.³⁴ Various meanings and theories exist around how this doll evolved. According to Larry Vincent Buster, "the world of black dolls is steeped in history and lore, with roots that are long and deep. Many of the most treasured dolls today have the humblest of origins, fashioned by the hands of anonymous black seamstresses, craftsmen, and other plain folk...Among the most unusual and prized folk dolls is the topsy turvy doll which originated in the antebellum South".³⁵

How this doll form arose may link to African ritual traditions associated with dolls, such as *ere ibeji* practices by the Yoruba people in Nigeria.³⁶ African Image, a shop (now closed) in Burg Street, Cape Town sold an array of colourful plastic dolls in different sizes used as contemporary *ere ibeji*.³⁷ According to Harry Sitole, owner of African Image they were popular decorative items as well as tourist souvenirs.³⁸ Perhaps it is the case that enslaved children in the US South were trained to care for their owners children and dolls served that purpose and in order to play with dolls that they could identify with and conceal when necessary, the topsy turvy design was developed by enslaved women/children who possibly prioritised the need to preserve an African identity in America.

Termed "a traditional American folk doll" or "upside-down doll" these topsy turvy rag dolls initially had hand-painted faces but were later commercialised through the invention of colour printing processes developed in the 1880s. Whole doll prints were sold "by the yard produced by Laurence & Co of Boston", cut out and transformed by individuals on domestic sewing machines

³³District Six Museum archive, Research notes and interview with Maureen Archer located under Details of donated objects: Apartheid Doll donated by Olga Carlse to the District Six Museum, Accession no: 3758, Donor Code: CAR, donated April 2013.

³⁴C. E. King, *Dolls and Doll's Houses*, (London: Hamlyn, 1977), 93

³⁵L V. Buster, *The Art and History of Black Memorabilia*, (New York: C. Potter, 2000), 129-130.

³⁶Dolls were originally carved from wood and relate to the cult of twins specifically deceased infants and worn on the body by the mother: Ere Ibeji (Ere ibeji - from 'ibi' = born and 'eji' = two; 'ere' means sacred image Ibeji - The Cult of Yoruba Twins).

³⁷H. Sitole, Interview African Image shop owner who imported plastic dolls, used as Ere Ibeji, 25.09.2016.

³⁸The Cult of Yoruba Twins.

into stuffed cloth dolls.³⁹ Later as the transfer of photographic prints onto fabric became less expensive, realistic faces were printed onto fabric along with many other costume details.⁴⁰

Albert Bruckner of New York was a lithographer by trade who patented an embossing process in 1901 which allowed him to manufacture dolls with moulded faces thus making the dolls more lifelike. He produced a two-headed doll “representing an 18 inch white child and a black mammy”.⁴¹ A Bruckner Playtime 1905 patent described the face of the ragdoll as designed with finely textured cotton or silk so a photograph could be printed as a surface design to create a face. The rest of the body, back of the head, and limbs were made of coarser material. The 18-inch doll could be stuffed with rags, cotton batting, sawdust, or excelsior. Early dolls produced had a celluloid head and limbs or partial limbs with a cloth stuffed body, although celluloid material is rather fragile. In 1908 the material improved and the dolls were then made entirely of celluloid, and proved more durable. In the 1940s the USA outlawed the use of celluloid for dolls, as the material can be flammable if exposed to high heat or open flame, however, other countries continued to use the material long after the 1940s. Also, the celluloid material deteriorated when exposed to moisture. Celluloid dolls were made from cellulose nitrate, alcohol, fillers, and camphor pigments.⁴² The topsy turvy doll donated to the District Six Museum is manufactured using this type of technology.

Brucker dolls featured a “negro Mammy” at the one end and a “white girl” on the other side. Mass-produced versions include storybook characters such as combinations of Red Riding Hood/Grandma/Wolf, smiling/crying, awake/asleep, Little Boy Blue/sheep Mary/lamb, Mother Hubbard/dog. Two different topsy turvy European dolls in cloth and plastic, as prototypes, were created by Roddy, a British doll manufacturing company.⁴³ Therefore various methods of creating a

³⁹King, *Dolls*, 93.

⁴⁰King, *Dolls*, 92.

⁴¹King, *Dolls*, 92.

⁴²D. B. Garrett, “Black Doll Collecting: Topsy-Turvy a.k.a. Double Doll”, <http://blackdollcollecting.blogspot.co.za>, accessed 09.10.2016.

⁴³C. Mansell, *The Collector's Guide to British Dolls since 1920*, (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1983), 12.

more interesting doll were attempted such as ‘upside down’, or ‘turnabouts’ whose unwanted heads were covered by a skirt, or whose unwanted faces were covered with a cap or hat.⁴⁴

According to Constance Eileen King, Celia and Charity Smith designed dolls from 1892 and their patterns were printed by Arnold Print Works of Massachusetts. King writes: “among the most attractive of their dolls is Topsy, a coloured doll wearing a long pink dress with neatly buttoned cuffs, all of which, being printed, would remain in perfect order until the doll was worn away”.⁴⁵ Eva and Topsy, female characters, from the widely read first anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1852) were transformed into cloth topsy turvy dolls.⁴⁶ In the 1920s to the 1950s, they were revived by toymakers as the Duncan sisters Vivian and Rosetta “performed as the title characters of their minstrelsy blackface Tom Show *Topsy and Eva* in front of thousands of audiences in the United States and abroad”, including South Africa.⁴⁷ Topsy turvy dolls are still popular tourist craft items in Jamaica and Barbados.⁴⁸ It would appear then that early forms of antebellum era craft practiced by enslaved African people and later entertainment based on racial stereotypes continued to inform popularity.

As a child’s plaything or toy, the topsy turvy doll allows a full range of imaginative possibilities. Valerie Borey in her study of the Duncan sister’s appropriation of the characters of black slave girl Topsy and white angelic girl Eva in their 40-year career portraying racial stereotypes in a popular comic musical Tom show argues that this type of racial doll possessed the ability to:

Emphasise the differences between the powerful and the powerless. For this reason, it is a doll uniquely able to detect and reflect cultural tensions as they changed with the times and economic conditions...the two-headed, reversible, up-side doll is...a symbol of power, of resistance, of secrecy, and of revolution.”⁴⁹

⁴⁴King, *Dolls*, 92.

⁴⁵King, *Dolls*, 92.

⁴⁶Coleman, *The Collector’s*, 463.

⁴⁷J. L. Buckner, “The Angel and the Imp: The Duncan Sisters’ Performances of race and Gender”, *Popular Entertainment Studies*, Vol. 2. Issue 2, (Newcastle: The University of Newcastle Australia, 2011), 55-72.

⁴⁸Garrett, “Black Doll”, accessed 09.10.2016.

⁴⁹Borey, “Two”, accessed June 2016.

The doll also offers pure fantasy in play while imposing perplexing social conditioning upon the child owner as it comes to represent a stereotype and from the doll makers and sellers position perpetuate the tropes of colonial racial hierarchies. As Elisabeth L Cameron notes “there can be little debate that within the play world or in the imagination of a child, dolls are people and act as agents. An adult onlooker may simply see a child serving tea to or staging a mock battle with a group of dolls, but the child perceives the figures as having their own life and volition. They drink or spill the tea on their own, have personal likes and dislikes about what type of sandwich they want to eat. They disobey commands and control the conversation. When the child leaves the play world, however, the doll becomes an inert physical manifestation of the person who lives in this extra-mundane world”.⁵⁰

As a commodity the unusual topsy turvy doll, labelled the apartheid doll by a District Six shopkeeper, displays what Rachel Hoffman, cited by Cameron, claims has an “inner power” to stimulate emotions in the viewer, besides the obvious inherent dichotomies of race and identity.⁵¹ Although referring to art Hoffman’s argument resonates with the causal power of objects and relates to Ivan Karp’s definition of actor, agent, and agency:

The actor refers to a person engaged in action that is framed, as is all social action. An actor’s action is rule governed or oriented. The agent refers to persons engaged in the exercise of power in its primary sense of the “bringing about of effects”, that is, engaged in action that is constitutive. Agency applies the idea of “causal power” through which we realize the potential of the world.⁵²

In relation to the doll, it refers to the social complexity and circuits of meaning at play within society and social construction of identity albeit in an inanimate object and perhaps to classify difference. Furthermore, it resonates with Latour's arguments that, “facts and artefacts develop as a result of negotiations between the various actors involved applying strategies preconditioned by their different interpretations, agendas, needs and desires...objects and social groups are products

⁵⁰E. L. Cameron, “In Search of Children: Dolls and Agency in Africa”, *African Arts*, Vol. 30, No 2 (Spring, 1997), 93.

⁵¹Cameron, “In Search”, 19.

⁵²Cameron, “In Search”, 19.

of network building. Both humans and artefacts can be actants in the network”.⁵³ Therefore the process and underlying ideologies of an object do not merely inform us about the object under study but how other processes such as production, consumption, domestication, and use inscribe meaning dependant on a different network of actants at each stage.

The doll under study might appear a lesser object of historical inquiry but it informs various transactions and relationships: between adult and child, fantasy and reality, designer and manufacturer, buyer and seller, race and gender, identity and performance, intangible and tangible, museum and donor, literature and theatre, memory and time, exhibitions and buildings, displacement and geography, colonial tropes and so forth. The apartheid doll opens up a set of questions. Although it visually constructs apartheid (and slavery) through a representation of co-joined bodies, can it also be a device that provides abstract expressions of agency during play, interrogate popular forms of racial stereotyping and cultural diversity within a community museum?

As the doll moved from private ownership into the District Six Museum archive the biography of the owner Olga Carlse and the biography of the apartheid doll altered, the now archived object was no longer a plaything but become a marker of converging biographies. Its donation caused a rupture and uneasiness yet also an appreciation of its construction and skillful application of the two facial features which were printed and hand-tinted. Igor Kopytoff notes the change in meaning and role biographies play as objects move from one context to another,

In the homogenized world of commodities, an eventful biography of a thing becomes the story of various singularizations of it, of classifications and reclassification in an uncertain world of categories whose importance shifts with every minor change in context. As with persons, the drama here lies in the uncertainties of valuation and of identity.⁵⁴

As noted the doll displays obvious inherent biographies of race and identity. Madeleine Akrich “uses the term ‘script’ as a metaphor for the instruction manual she claims “is inscribed in an

⁵³Fallon, *Design History*, 113.

⁵⁴I. Kopytoff, “The Cultural biography of things: commoditization as process”, *The social life of things*, ed Arjun Appadurai, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2000), 90.

artefact...contains a message (the script) from the producer/designer to the user describing the product's intended use and meaning".⁵⁵ The notion of a script is useful in the evaluation of the social construction of this type of doll. As it enters the archive, the doll's meaning is re-scripted to one that resonates with a post-apartheid community narrative.⁵⁶ According to Arjun Appadurai's argument there exist underlying social and political mechanisms that regulate taste, trade, and desire and indicate the ways people attach value to objects.⁵⁷ The doll is indicative of the proliferation of objects of capitalist production under apartheid and the rise of mass consumption. Meanings, needs, desires, practices, and systems converge. How does the doll relate to apartheid censorship of the body/bodies? As a child, Mrs. Olga Carlse played with the doll "in two parts – one black, one white: pink and red dotted dress for the black doll and green and yellow dotted dress for the white doll".⁵⁸ Experiences of growing up and playing with toys is an experience common to most people. The museum reinforces the trope of innocence lost and childhood trauma experienced through forced removals through actively excavating childhood memories. Ex-District Six resident Fatima Steyn inscribed, in nostalgic terms, on the District Six Museum memorial cloth "Today I met my childhood friend, Gabieba, 45 years later".⁵⁹ District Six childhoods and associated objects and images reinforce the centrality of the social and cultural experience of displacement and the universal loss of childhood as argued by Zuliega Adams.⁶⁰

Design forms are shaped by political ideologies or patterns of consumption and continuity. James Gibson's theory of "affordances" that map what an object allows the user to do is pertinent to this case study of a topsy turvy bi-racial two-headed doll.⁶¹ Ultimately the doll is a narrative device

⁵⁵M. Akrich, "The De-Scripture of Technical Objects", *Shaping Technology / Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*, eds Wiebe E Bijker & John Law, (London: MIT Press, 1992), 205-224.

⁵⁶Akrich, "The De-Scripture", 205-224.

⁵⁷Appadurai, "Introduction" 3.

⁵⁸District Six Museum archive, donation form: Apartheid Doll donated by Olga Carlse to the District Six Museum, Accession no: 3758, Donor Code: CAR, donated April 2013.

⁵⁹Book cover, "Inscription on the District Six Museum memorial cloth" in *Recalling Community in Cape Town Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (District Six Museum: Cape Town, 2001).

⁶⁰Adams, 'Gazing', 229.

⁶¹Fallon, *Design History*, 38.

imbued with agency that affords fantasy, role-playing and alludes to the way objects are used to teach gender-appropriate behaviours. Simone de Beauvoir notes a women “is treated like a live doll and refused liberty”, as femininity is purposefully sexualized and objectified.⁶² The potent form of the doll as a semantic unit provides visual and indextual clues and furthermore functions as an archetype in the mediation of relationships, identities, and boundaries and provides the District Six Museum with a visual and conceptual basis to forward this particular idiom of return to District Six.

The purpose of this case study was an attempt to unmask the history of gendered man-made form and illuminate a biography, that of the apartheid doll, and how that narrative intersects with biographies of the District Six Museum and Mrs. Olga Carlse. As a community museum, the District Six Museum collections are based on donations of often very personal items indicating the long-term relationships built with ex-residents. This intersection of biographies disrupts notions of apartheid histories towards a subjective form of constructing histories. It further provokes and stimulates a new basis for histories that challenges the static displays in museums and the notion that histories of the personal and “memory of the senses... constitute the sphere of hidden historical otherness” as proposed by Nadia Seremetakis. Her exploration into memories of taste, smell, touch, sound, and feeling act as alternative sources of historical enquiry.⁶³

The topsy turvy doll disrupts the central narrative of the museum and its assimilated archive of memory and if it were put on display, in my view, it would deepen debates on forced removals, apartheid propaganda, design histories and contest romanticised view of childhood in the Museum. It is stored under specific conditions in the attic storerooms of the District Six Museum archive. As colonial and apartheid constructions of material culture are being critiqued, the doll that personifies apartheid could also symbolize agency in a community museum setting. Furthermore, it offers critical new perspectives on design, contributes to surfacing histories of children and their experiences within the context of apartheid and relates to how childhood, through exhibitions of

⁶²M. G. Lord, *Forever Barbie: the unauthorized biography of a real doll*, (New York: Avon Books, 1994), 15.

⁶³C. Nadia Seremetakis, *The Senses Still, Perception and memory as material culture in modernity*. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), 19.

toys and photographs, is represented in a South African community museum. An analysis of the apartheid doll can be utilised to generate a complementary set of concepts, a wider understanding of historical and cultural contexts, changing social patterns and geographies of urban displacement. It is also concerned with how the agency of community museum archives may contribute to societal transformation.⁶⁴ This unique biography and role of the doll in the context of a larger system of design and archival histories provide critical analysis and reflect on the micro histories of material culture significant to new expressions of engagement with South African histories. It traced the dolls unusual form, historiography, design, manufacture, circumstances of acquisition, and movement after forced removals to Silvertown, its donation to the District Six Museum archive in 2013 and re-entry into the symbolic space of District Six, Cape Town, a port city defined by dispossession and displacement.

Archival stories 2: Mobile memories- *Julia's Secret* memory box

My second case study is a memory box that has no accession number as it is utilised as an archival and educational resource. It is called *Julia's Secret*. This unique and unusual memory box was designed and decorated with black and white photographs and made at the District Six Museum by Tracey Prosalendis, sister of former museum director Sandy Prosalendis, in 2000. The box contains research conducted by Larramie Damstra, who approached the District Six Museum with revealing family history research he had conducted that linked apartheid social and racial engineering to District Six. He is the grandson of Julia Lavinia Rudolf born in Caledon on 28 March 1906 and died in Cape Town on 25 December 1954, and who, according to Larramie's extensive research, constantly attempted to hide one form of a racial identity under apartheid. The main box contains another box that consists of four individual boxes, each measuring 34,5cm by 25,5cm by 21cm in height that fit into one large decorated box covered in berry coloured fabric with black lace trim evoking Julia's profession as a milliner in Cape Town. Black satin ribbon and a large black button

⁶⁴Z. Minty, "The Freedom to Dream", *Art South Africa*. Vol 08, Issue 03, (Autumn 2008), Bell-Roberts Publishing: Cape Town, 65-68.

secure the four sides at the top of the box which has a kinetic feel to it as it has to be untied and the sides fall away to reveal four separate boxes decorated as one with black and white photographs.



Figure 1.4: *Julia's Secret* memory box. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R.

These are sequenced so when the individual boxes are returned they are replaced like puzzle pieces and are colour coded in berry red, sepia, navy blue and sage green with black and white individual and family studio photographs that are glued onto the boxes forming a whole image but when unpacked only fragments of each image are visible.



Figure 1.5: *Julia's Secret* memory box showing construction detail. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R

Larramie Damstra's curiosity was raised after reading his grandmother Julia's will in which it was stated: "I give and bequeath to my maid Marie Valentine, the sum of £20". The bequest of unusually large sum money to a servant was remarkable and led him to embark upon research into her biography and to uncover an unknown family tree in the process. He learnt that his grandmother had close relatives in District Six before forced removals. Her father was a tailor and she had many siblings classified coloured under apartheid. Julia moved out of her family home in District Six and worked as a milliner in Cape Town later marrying widower Mello Gerardus Damstra (b. 1873-d. 1945), a successful Cape Town architect in December 1929.⁶⁵ He joined the Cape Institute of Architects in 1927 and the Artefacts website records his biography as follows:

Mello was born in Leeuwarden, Friesland in the Netherlands, the son of well-known Dutch architect, who was in turn the son of one of the most famous builders and designers in Friesland. He studied at the 'French college, Oudenbosch...(and was) a particularly graceful figure on the stretches of ice" in winter. By 1895 Mello was working in Cradock in the Cape where he saw the construction of several houses and was employed as an inspector of public works. At the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, Damstra left for Holland via Durban. He went to New York shortly afterwards and, having travelled through the U.S. and Canada, worked as a journeyman architect in Sacramento, California where he won a prize for his design of a log cabin. He was then employed as a draughtsman by a San Franciscan architect Newton J. Tharp. A chance meeting with some South

⁶⁵L. Damstra, *Julia's Secret* memory box presentation, Education Museum & Centre for Conservation Education, Wynberg, Cape Town, 18.09.2018.

African friends drew him back to South Africa, where he settled in Stellenbosch where he 'built most of the residences of the Professors University....his taste and skill became known far and wide'. In 1909 he went to live in Cape Town. Oranjezicht contained 'many a magnificent specimen as testimony of his almost matchless taste'. He entered into partnership with JJ Ingber in Cape Town in about 1933. In 1904 he married Miss Annie Gird of Stellenbosch. His daughter Minna Damstra later trained as an architect at UCT.⁶⁶

Photographs of Mello and Julia Damstra in front of their palladium styled double story home which he designed are included in *Julia's Secret* memory box. On the cover of the main outer box is a black and white photograph of Julia Damstra (nee Rudolph) depicted at the beach sitting on a large boulder clothed in a bathing costume in a relaxed pose. Other photographs are glued to the sides of the box such as a large portrait of Julia as an older respectable woman with hair neatly tied back away from her face. Another set of photographs show family portraits in different settings. The four inner coloured boxes are lined with copies of Julia's original marriage certificate, church records: registers of baptisms, death notices of Julia and her husband who were classified white under apartheid law as well as a map locating St Marks in District Six, a Cape Town street guide, correspondence with the Caledon Museum, as well as a family tree and correspondence in the form of letters form part of Larramie's extensive research findings.



Figure 1.6: *Julia's Secret* memory box, D6M archive. Photograph HH-R.

⁶⁶Mello Gerardus Damstra, Artefacts website, <https://www.artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/archframes.php?archid=348>, accessed 28.04.2019.

The boxes contain photographs, objects, letters, and maps. All copies of letters, wills, correspondence and Larramie's research notes in black koki pen are laminated in plastic for protection. The sepia-colored box contains two A5 sized books bound by hand and the first book contains a text entry that reads: Did you know Julia or the Rudolph family? If so, please fill details in this book with your contact number. Thank You.⁶⁷

Larramie discovered through years of research and information gathered from newfound various distant relatives in Cape Town and the Western Cape, that his grandmother Julia's father, a Mr Rudolph was a "high class ladies and gents tailor in Sir Lowry's Road and lived at 101 Canterbury Street and later Vernon Terrance in Caledon Street, District Six".⁶⁸ Julia was the oldest child in her family, had many siblings and cared for them as her mother had passed away. After being apprenticed to a milliner she moved out of the family home and many years later returned to have suits made for her children by a tailor in District Six, her father, but never revealed this to her own children or husband Mello Damstra. When Laramie contacted the extended family Rudolf family members he was told: "You must be wrong the Rudolph's are not white". Larramie shared this significant finding with the audience during a *Julia's Secret* memory box presentation on 18th August 2018 at the Education Museum and Centre for Conservation Education in Wynberg, Cape Town. He also mentioned that he had gained a new family after the research into his grandmother and that the box represented for him a "new way of seeing".⁶⁹ The beautifully constructed memory box contains detailed family history research centred on one biography unearthing the silences and choices an individual made prior to and during apartheid. Often people claiming white status were called *vensterjies* in District Six as they looked into shop windows when they recognised someone on the streets of Cape Town.⁷⁰ Larramie created this box based on objects and documents associated

⁶⁷L. Damstra, hand bound A5 book, *Julia's Secret* Memory Box, District Six Museum archive, accessed 12.02.2018

⁶⁸L. Damstra, *Julia's Secret* memory box documents, 18.02.2018.

⁶⁹Damstra, *Julia's Secret*, 18.09.2018.

⁷⁰Damstra, *Julia's Secret*, 18.09.2018.

with his personal account and memories. Significant items and mementos express tangible reminders of his grandmother such as a brooch and many photographs.



Figure 1.7: *Julia's Secret* memory box, D6M archive. Photograph HH-R.

During the presentation of *Julia's Secret* memory box, at the Education Museum⁷¹ in Wynberg, Larramie unpacked the box and introduced the secret as a journey of discovering his complex family history and their “memories” to everyone.⁷² He talked about the associations and stories attached to the contents of the memory box. This alludes to the integrity and significance of objects and documents in people’s lives and the object as a signifier of value, experiences, and desires.⁷³ It was evident that this memory box is very important to him as a tribute to his grandmother, her own bereavement, loss, and happiness. It serves to fill an absence and explain to other family members the breadth of Julia’s secret life and the pains she took to protect her identity. Furthermore, in the District Six Museum it serves as a prompt for discussing biography, memory, history, geography, research, documentation, family history research, educative and expressive arts functioning as an interdisciplinary learning tool. School learners are encouraged to conduct research

⁷¹The Cape Education Museum at the Centre for Conservation Education in Wynberg, Cape Town collects and documents histories of all Western Cape schools with an extensive database for each school including: the written history of the school, a photograph of the school, the school song, the school motto and a cloth blazer badge. Previously the Aliwal Road Primary School building, the museum houses exhibitions relating to the development of education through different time periods and has a large object archive and school bells are displayed in the entrance foyer.

⁷²Damstra, *Julia's Secret*, 18.09.2018.

⁷³Damstra, *Julia's Secret*, 18.09.2018.

and create family histories. Stored in the District Six Museum archive and used as an educational resource it forms part of post-apartheid social forms of historical memory.



Figure 1.8: *Julia's Secret* memory box series. D6M archive. Photograph HH-R.

The design of the archive itself as a memory container is evoked. The memory box form and methodology creates a system and category found in various forms in the museum, not only confined to the archive.⁷⁴ *Julia's Secret* memory box is stored in the memory room on the upper floor of the museum therefore not available for public scrutiny except through special requests for research purposes.



Figure 1.9: *Julia's Secret* memory box research files. D6M archive. Photograph HH-R

⁷⁴District Six Museum memory box forms vary in scale from memory rooms to themed archival boxes and mobile storytelling suitcases. Wooden Sacks Futera warehouse packing crates were also transformed to hold themed mini exhibits.

Julia did not leave a memoir or diary yet this box reveals personal details of past lives associated with a family divided by apartheid and reunited in the course of a research project. It raises the question of how loved ones are memorialized and the afterlife of photographs. What happens to those memories? They fade, photographs get put away, damaged, forgotten, and these people are thought of less. By using family photographs on five customised empty archival boxes a transformation took place and changed the boxes into intimate archival repositories. By making each of these boxes a feeling of memory, loss, and a call to attention of Julia in various settings and at different life stages was achieved. Though not true to every person lost, people are forgotten and the little we have left of them fades. Everything is symbolic in a memory box and the included photographs are expressed as experiences of intensely lived moments and when the secret of Julia's identity is revealed this is a poignant discovery. Although the box was conceptualised and designed to hold memory interpreted as a hidden story, celebratory and memorial meanings are evoked through colour choices, content and the process of opening the boxes reveals Larramie's reflections of his grandmother's life. Through its design and presentation, it encourages interaction and engagement with memories of Julia Lavinia Damstra (nee Rudolf).

Memory boxes are an important design device used at various post-apartheid museums such as the Robben Island Museum where political prisoner's cells and boxed belongings served as memory boxes.⁷⁵ Later the Red Location Museum in Port Elizabeth, although on a much larger scale, entire purpose-built cubist style rooms as containers of memory were utilised. As a way of interpreting and stabilising memories of apartheid pasts, the memory box form has become a powerful design intervention and technology with which to house and evoke memory for public consumption and memorialisation. Memory boxes speak to and in some ways mimic the archival process through classification, categorisation, confinement, and storage in boxes and are represented as aesthetically archival.

⁷⁵C. Rassool, "The Rise of Heritage and the reconstitution of history in South Africa", *Kronos* No. 26 (August 2000), 1-21.

Archival stories 3: The Two Rivers Project decoupagéd archival memory boxes

The Two Rivers Project is a District Six Museum research initiative to work with the memories of forced removals in the southern suburbs of Cape Town. The project's departure point was stated as "a continuation of our research into forced removals in District Six, the histories of Cape Town and the documentation and recording of displaced communities along the Liesbeeck and Black Rivers".⁷⁶ The project started in 2001 headed by architect and District Six Museum researcher Donald Parenzee, assisted by Uthando Baduza and District Museum staff providing research and workshop support to ex-residents of Protea Village, below Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. The project underwent various stages, engaging with ex-residents from different areas "who suffered the trauma of forced removals in the southern suburbs of Cape Town".⁷⁷ District Six Museum objectives outlining the scope and content of the project included:

1. To bring into public awareness six sites of 1960s forced removals along the Liesbeeck and Black Rivers.
2. To create a learning journey for the teachers and learners and act as a stimulus for debates around land ownership and apartheid spatial engineering.
3. To foster environmental stewardship and appreciation of historic places, sites, and landmarks and to make visible what has become invisible through forced removals.
4. To develop an educational resource for educators, learners and researchers that encourages oral history research projects in local communities and the creation of alternative archives.
5. To create tangible resources that act as a catalyst to inspire research and all forms of enquiry into the past, dialogue and debate regarding heritage, reconciliation, and restitution.

I was employed as researcher and designer from 2011-2013 to create a systematic approach for collating the vast existing museum resources relating to the areas of forced removal along or near the Liesbeeck and Black Rivers in Cape Town. I drew on author Richard Rive's statement to provide the guiding principle, "I want to help restore a sense of history to people, people who have long been buffeted by hostile laws and made exiles from the homes of their choice, because of eviction under the group areas act".⁷⁸ Existing scholarship and previous District Six Museum

⁷⁶T. Smith, "Two Rivers Project brief", District Six Museum 2011.

⁷⁷Smith, "Two Rivers", 2011.

⁷⁸N. Stewart, "Resisting apartheid through pen and paper by Richard Rive", South African History Online, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/resisting-apartheid-through-pen-and-paper-richard-rive-05-march-2018>, accessed 17.09.2019.

research material provided directives for the scope of the project. After mapping the rivers historically, geographically, culturally and environmentally I identified six sites of late 1950s and 1960s forced removals: Protea Village (Bishopscourt), Newlands Village, Claremont, Harfield Village, Mowbray and Black River (Rondebosch) where various aspects of the area had previously been researched and in some cases published scholarship was available.⁷⁹

The buildings of District Six were erased from the landscape, but in the southern suburbs of Cape Town, many ex-resident homes remain, symbolic of loss and the struggle against the inhumanities of the apartheid system.⁸⁰ People were moved away from their neighbours, friends and extended family and made lives for themselves in new unfamiliar areas of the Cape Flats. Their ties to the rivers were severed. Yet the role of churches, mosques, sports clubs, musical troupes, bands, choirs, and schools has been profound, continuing to provide support, strength and a sense of community to ex-residents. An official land claims process sought to compensate those who were unjustly treated by allocating land, if available, and/or financial restitution, inadequate in many cases.⁸¹ The Land Restitution Act 22 of 1994 aimed “to provide for the restitution of rights in land to persons or communities dispossessed of such rights after 19 June 1913 as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices; to establish a Commission on Restitution of Land Rights and a Land Claims Court, and to provide for matters connected therewith”.⁸²

Oral history has the power to enable and re-imagine connections between people and the landscape that underpinned two District Six Museum exhibitions: *A History of Paradise* on Protea

⁷⁹Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie’s extensive research and scholarship on forced removals in Rondebosch: *Tales of Urban Restitution, Black River, Rondebosch* (2006) and Anna Bohlin’s scholarship on *Protea Village; Idioms of Return: Homecoming and Heritage in the rebuilding of Protea Village, Cape Town* were academic sources drawn upon when I was tasked with the developing the project further in 2011.

⁸⁰Oral histories accessed and interviews conducted during the course of the Two Rivers Research reveal that in many circumstances ex-residents revisit their former neighbourhoods often with grandchildren and family members to reminisce. Dr Salie Abrahams spoke to me regarding this invisible pull back to Newlands Village where he grew up and how the family continue to revisit and walk around the area.

⁸¹In the Southern suburbs of Cape Town in Constantia a land claim by the Solomon family was successful in reclaiming title deeds to the land they were removed from in the 1960’s. The Solomon Family Trust developed a high end shopping centre: The Constantia Emporium Lifestyle Centre which opened in November 2019. This is an exceptional example of a successful restitution process as the majority of land claims are difficult to resolve due to urbanisation and high property prices making it unaffordable to offer fair compensation to victims of apartheid forced removals.

⁸²South African Government Department of Justice, “Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994”, <http://www.justice.gov.za/lcc/docs/1994-022.pdf>, accessed 17.10.2019.

Village, Bishopscourt 2002 and another on Black River, Rondebosch: *Return to the Rivers*. In the process of creating these exhibitions, families had the opportunity to tell their stories utilising photograph albums and family trees, and over time many people came forward to share their memories of forced removals and life in the places they were moved to.

As freshwater sources, the Liesbeeck and Black Rivers have played an important role in the creation of Cape Town. First inhabited by the nomadic Khoi who named the city bowl and its prolific waters *Camissa*⁸³ (Khoi word for place of sweet waters), then Dutch farmers and slaves inhabiting its banks. Viticulture flourished and washerwomen worked in the rivers plying their trade and anglicised villages later developed near and along these waterways.⁸⁴ More recently both urbanised and landscaped green spaces along the banks of these rivers are a testament to the extensive relationship people forged with sites along the rivers through time.⁸⁵ In Cape Town, many suburbs along the Liesbeeck and Black Rivers were declared “brown spots” in the 1960s after the Group Areas Development Act, (Act No. 69 of 1955) was passed.⁸⁶ Places such as Protea Village below Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Newlands Village, Claremont, Belletjiesbos, Harfield Village, Mowbray and Black River in Rondebosch were identified where people were classified non-european. After living in these areas for generations residents were labelled “disqualified” and by law had to leave, often suffering emotional trauma and economic deprivation in the process.⁸⁷ By mapping these spaces through various methodologies The Two Rivers Project was conceptualised as a way to reconstruct and reconnect social histories with these rivers.

⁸³The fresh water streams, or sweet drinking waters, to the Khoena (or Khoi) was //Amma. In the old Khoi language Qua or Ssa denoted people. The term ‘Camissa’ is a modern creolised version of ‘sweet water of the people’ in reference for both the river and the people settled alongside as a trading community. Source: Patric Tariq Mellet, “A brief explanation of Camissa”, Camissa People Cape Slavery & Indigene Heritage, <https://camissapeople.wordpress.com/about-2/> accessed 17.11.2017

⁸⁴H. Robinson, *The villages of the Liesbeeck: from the sea to the source*, (Wynberg: Houghton House, 2011), 3.

⁸⁵Friends of the Liesbeeck and the Two Rivers Urban Park, Observatory as well as pathways along the Liesbeeck allow public access to the river, although the river has mainly been canalised below Paradise Road Bridge in Newlands due to seasonal flooding.

⁸⁶Group Areas Act of 1950, South African history Online, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/group-areas-act-1950>, accessed 21.12.2019.

⁸⁷For a comprehensive analysis of apartheid forced removals in Cape Town see Social Geographer John Western, *Outcast Cape Town* (Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1996).

Memory boxes or suitcases as containers of memory were developed by the museum through memory methodology workshops with youth and elderly ex-residents and created a conceptual framework to think about design. I developed tangible resources in the form of memory boxes as containers that extended the professional museum practice, unique visual language, and methodologies of the District Six Museum.



Figure 1.10: Protea and Newlands village decoupage archival box covers, 2012. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R.



Figure 1.11: Claremont and Harfield Village decoupage archival box covers, 2012. D6M archive. Photograph HH-R.

In order to make the Two River archival research boxes standard A3 black and white speckled archival boxes were procured and covers designed for the lids. The boxes open like a book to reveal archival sources within. I utilised a decoupage technique, requiring multiple sourced images: maps, archival photographs, Cape Town street directories, family photographs, newspaper clippings, contemporary photographs, a book cover, and after an extensive collating, mindful of scale, I began the process of cutting and assimilating the images into an approach that embraced scanned and photocopied graininess.

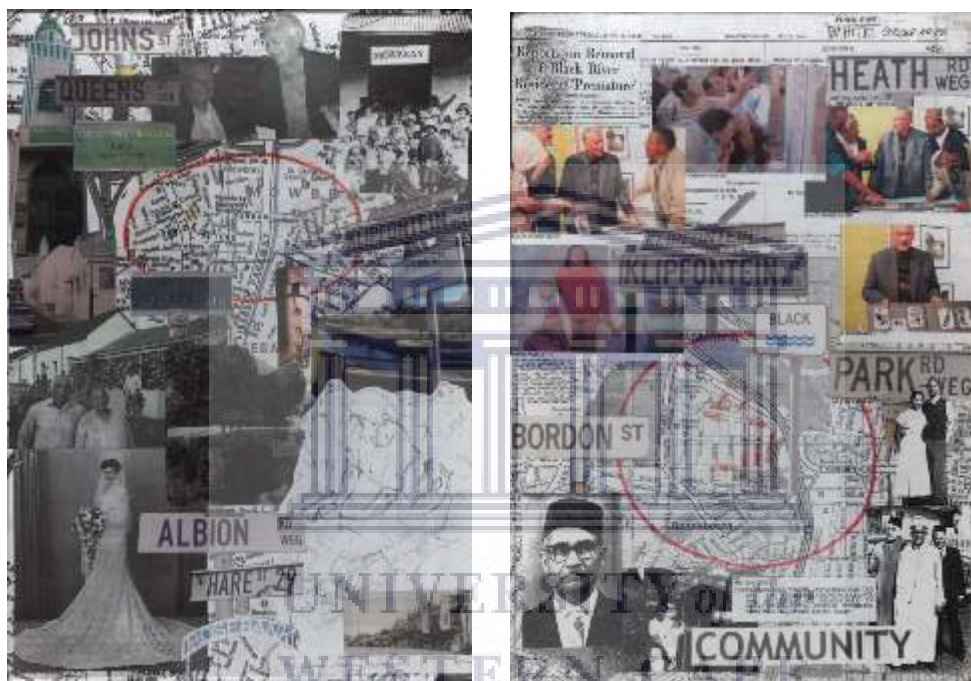


Figure 1.12: Mowbray and Black River decoupage archival box covers, 2012. D6M archive. Photograph HH-R.

In a sense I was creating a visual identity for each area, utilising an existing museum idiom: fragments and creating a collage effect using a very inexpensive method of defining each box. Images were stuck down with white wood glue and when dried a protective coating was applied. Coloured pencil was also utilised to circle or highlight a geographical or environmental feature.

A Two Rivers Educational Resource Folder was designed to provide alternative methodologies and references with a focus on forced removals, oral history methodology, and research. The folder and DVD with supplementary material were organised into six sections, each examining a site of forced removal with case studies that represent living links to the past: musical

heritage, social biographies, memory maps, graveyards, archival photographs, landmark buildings, family trees, and oral histories are included. It was intended that learners would gain an understanding of how studies in local history and geography are linked to many aspects of their daily lives and the future of their areas. By examining and questioning readings, documents, maps, photographs, and by engaging in activities, learners could connect these locations to the broad themes in South African history. The Two Rivers Heritage Trail that I proposed, along the Liesbeeck River from Protea Village to the Two Rivers Urban Park in Observatory includes sites of forced removals, environmental projects, and existing Dutch and British colonial heritage sites, was not developed beyond the conceptual stage. To foster environmental stewardship and appreciation of historic places, sites, and landmarks and to make visible what has become invisible through forced removals and gentrification thereby create awareness of local histories and urbanisation. The boxes or images of the boxes and their contents are excluded from the Museum exhibition's although there is a narrative descriptor of the project found on the District Six Museum website. Profiling these sites and narratives in the museum exhibition are a few images of the Constantia and Claremont forced removals that provide a limited perspective of other forced removals in Cape Town. The main museum focus is the District Six experience of forced removals from Cape Town.

The Protea Village, Newlands Village, Claremont, Harfield village, Mowbray, Black River archival research boxes are stored in the District Six Museum resource centre. As the main core function of the museum was claimed to be centred on exhibiting memories of District Six in an urban context of the city the Two Rivers Project geographically moved representation and agency elsewhere. The museum has served to support land restitution claims through diverting staff to research, record oral histories, create photographic documentation and mount an exhibition on Protea Village, Bishopscourt that now forms part of the District Six Museum archive of forced removals. The boxes are not accessioned and accessible by appointment with the archivist Chrischené Julius who has worked at the museum since 2003.

The implications of archiving these memory boxes as representations of place-making research and design indicate archival and exhibition tensions where curatorial selection results in the six boxes being utilised only for educative and research purposes allowing the District Six story to remain the main forced removal narrative in Cape Town.⁸⁸

Archival stories 4: Oral Life History Jazz interviews from the Sound Archive

Historian Bill Nasson argued in 1990 that due to a “scarcity of sources” the history and reconstruction of District Six would primarily depend on the narratives of ex-residents recorded as “a history of District Six”.⁸⁹ He stated that the challenge of recreating a dense social history of District Six in its remembrance required crafting layers of perspectives as much could be overlooked or excluded due to the enormity of the historical project.⁹⁰ Nasson’s short social history of District Six written at a time when a District Six memory project was not even in its formative stage speaks to the multivocality of reconstructions that the district represented through the medium of oral histories.⁹¹

Oral history recordings about District Six later grew out of a seemingly fluid, responsive, expressive organic memorialisation practice as the post-apartheid museum memory project commenced. However, Chrsichené Julius states:

The origins of the sound archive “have largely been attributed to three influences on oral history practice within the museum, namely that of social history, secondly, a radical practice that is both committed and engaged and lastly, the impact the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions’ framework of ‘telling, confessing, healing and catharsis’ which emerged in the years after the first democratic elections in 1994.”⁹²

⁸⁸Other community groups have formed their own memory and memorialisation projects. The Constantia Heritage and Education Project (CHEP) which was founded in December 2017 but has been operating on an ad-hoc basis since 24th September 2016, National Heritage Day. It began with a spontaneous memory walk initiated by a group of former residents of Constantia who were victims of apartheid forced removals. <https://constantiaheritage.org.za/projects/>. Harfield Village holds an annual Carnival where ex-residents who left the area under forced removals actively engage with current residents in a convivial atmosphere. A Voicemap walking tour app was launched in July 2015 to provide a historical entry point and context to the area. www.harfield-village.co.za › [harfield-village-carnival](http://www.harfield-village.co.za/harfield-village-carnival).

⁸⁹B. Nasson, “Oral History and the Reconstruction of District Six”, *The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present*, eds Shamil Jeppie and Crain Soudien, (Cape Town: Buchu Books, 1990), 47.

⁹⁰Nasson, “Oral History”, 51.

⁹¹Nasson, “Oral History”, 44.

⁹²Julius, “Oral”, 86-87.

The method and process of establishing a sound archive according to Valmont Layne and Ciraj Rassool lay in the museum's mission statement and founding methodologies “because the key organising principle in the museum is the collections of memory”.⁹³ According to the museum’s website:

The Sound Archive was started in July 1997 and was charged with the collection, preservation, documentation and dissemination of the Museum's audio-visual heritage collection. Groundbreaking at the time for its focus on memory, the Sound Archive is largely responsible for generating oral histories as part of the Museum’s research, exhibitionary and education practice. In addition to a number of life histories with District Sixers and ex-residents from other sites of forced removals in the city, the AV collection consists of home video footage from District Six, documentaries relating to apartheid South Africa as well as footage related to the New Year Carnival and musical traditions in Cape Town.⁹⁴ The music collection, together with the oral history recordings, forms the foundation of the Sound Archive. The music collection in particular was shaped by founding trustees such as Vincent Kolbe, Ruth Cookson and Irwin Combrink. The collection comprises field recordings of musical traditions ranging from klopse (carnival) traditions, Christmas choirs and bands, ballroom traditions, Malay choirs and a jazz collection.⁹⁵

District Six memories as oral testimonies swelled the sound archive and collections were subsequently grouped in such themes as sport, cuisine, music and so forth and included a range of recording environments.⁹⁶ The main collecting phase of oral histories related to particular foci as gathering information for specific research was mainly directed towards exhibition purposes.⁹⁷ The museum places a strong emphasis on music in its past and present public programming and encompasses diverse expressions of sound such as hip hop and indigenous music often developed through workshop processes prior to museum performances.⁹⁸

Under the Museum directorship of Valmont Layne, the musical heritage of District Six related to “its status as a birthplace of South African jazz” and broader Cape Town was researched

⁹³Rassool and Layne, “Memory rooms”, 146.

⁹⁴District Six Museum, “About the Sound Archive Collections”, <http://www.districtsix.co.za/Content/Education/Collections/Sound/index.php>, accessed 10.12.2018.

⁹⁵District Six Museum, “About”, accessed 10.12.2018.

⁹⁶Rassool and Layne, “Memory rooms”, 153.

⁹⁷Interview with Chrischené Julius, District Six Museum archivist, District Six Museum Resource Centre, 20.11.2018.

⁹⁸District Six Museum annual reports and newsletters 1994-2018.

and recorded as the *klopse* (minstrels), *nag trope* (night troops), Malay and Christmas choirs, Cape Jazz musicians and Jazz venues.⁹⁹ Layne had curated and performed with a number of projects relating to the music and cultural life of District Six before becoming Director of the Museum in 2005. He established the audio-visual research archives and collections of music and oral histories – focusing on the music and culture of District Six and the inner city.¹⁰⁰ Musical heritage in places such as Harfield Village¹⁰¹ and District Six were erased with forced removals and continued to thrive in alternative spaces in Cape Town.¹⁰² Jazz musician Winston Ngozi Mankunku was subject to forced removals from Harfield Village in the 1950s and *klopse* troops, choirs, informal jamming sessions in *shebeens* (illegal bars where alcohol could be procured), dance bands, orchestras were once a vibrant feature of Harfield village as I recall.¹⁰³ Forced removals displaced musical traditions and the museum has broadened its scope to collect oral histories from musicians as a contribution to musical histories, heritage, and legacies in Cape Town.

In order to create a sound archive recording equipment was acquired and I present a brief overview of the types of recorders used by the museum. The reason for the inclusion was to understand how sound technology has allowed the establishment of the oral history collection and the development of the sound archive. The equipment might disrupt handcrafted exhibition aesthetics and textures in the exhibition and not sit comfortably with the idea of voice as a scripted narrative, not as an organic conversation. The equipment is not displayed or depicted in the public spaces of the museum or on the museum's website. Rather it might be listed as an asset or archived on the accessions register and sound equipment is stored in the sound studio which sits

⁹⁹V. Layne, "The District Six Museum: An Ordinary people's Place", *The Public Historian*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (February 2008), University of California Press, 57.

¹⁰⁰District Six Museum Annual Report 2005/6, District Six Museum archive

¹⁰¹Jazz guitarist and educator, Alvin Dyers was born in Harfield Village (Cape Town) in 1953. He started playing guitar from the age of seven. He formed his first band called Sacred Legion with his equally talented brother, Errol Dyers. He also formed part of the group musicians that played in Pacific Express in the 1980s. Some of the musicians he has played with included Winston Mankunku, Ezra Ngcukana and Johnny Fourie.

¹⁰²Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Western Cape Government, *Western Cape Jazz Legends*, Booklet, 2011, Western Cape Government, https://www.westerncape.gov.za/assets/departments/cultural-affairs-sport/wc_jazz_legends_book_web_18_june.pdf, accessed 02.06.2018.

¹⁰³I lived adjacent to Harfield Village and often walked through the area to Harfield station in the 1970s and moved into the area in the early 1983 but was evicted after contravening the Groups Areas Act.

apart from the 'archive' and is not the site of collection and research. The sound archive and its means of production, that is, the sound equipment occupy different museum zones physically and conceptually. They are viewed as two distinct forms of archiving and this divisive practice creates silences around the production of the aurality of the oral archive which comes to stand somehow for testimony.



Figure 1.13: Marantz Model CP430 a portable stereo cassette recorder (strap not shown). Photograph: Marantz website.

The first recorder used from the 1990s until 2004 in the District Six Museum was the Marantz Model CP430 a portable stereo cassette recorder.¹⁰⁴



Figure 1.14: Fostex DV-40 professional stereo recorder. Photograph: Foster website.

¹⁰⁴Marantz Model CP430 specifications: three head mechanism, full auto shut off features: memory rewind, Dolby B/dbx NR system, MPX filter, Monitoring speaker none, R, L or R+L, pitch and bias fine controls, switchable mic attenuator – 15 or -30 db, two round VU meters, tape types selection Norm, Cr02, metal. Powered either via 3 type D cells or external 4, 5 V DC.

From the early 2000s and last used in 2016 was a portable Fostex DV-40 professional stereo recorder utilising a new DAT (Digital Audio Files) format.¹⁰⁵ The Foster 2013 annual company report states that “Fostex is our own brand for audio equipment marketed worldwide for professional studios and audiophiles, with a philosophy of supporting sound specialists for A/D and D/A conversion.... in systems that are designed to achieve consistently high sound quality, and which are based on acoustic technologies that have been constantly refined”.¹⁰⁶



Figure 1.15: Sony DAT Walkman with a cassette. Photograph: Sony website.

The Sony DAT Walkman was utilised in the District Six Museum from the 1990s onwards for recording and is still in use to capture DAT tapes in the sound archive.¹⁰⁷ A global design phenomenon in 1979 the portable miniaturised Sony Walkman was an instant design success



Figure 1.16: Zoom H2n and Zoom H5 multifunctional recorders. Photographs: Zoom website.

¹⁰⁵Mr. S. Nishimura and Mr H. Shinohara designed and manufactured prototype loudspeakers under the name Pearl in 1949 and registered the trade name Foster in 1959 renamed Foster Electric Co. Ltd listed on the Tokyo stock exchange with branches and factories across Japan and the Far East. Under the brand name Fostex the company specialises in speakers, microphones, wireless microphones, head phones, radios, data converters, Hi-fi systems, home theatre systems and highly specialised components. <https://www.foster-electric.com/about/history/index.html>, accessed 09.06.2019.

¹⁰⁶Foster Corporate Social Responsibility Report 2013, https://www.foster-electric.com/csr/commitment/pdf/20130627_en_csr_report2013.pdf, accessed 06.06.2019.

¹⁰⁷A DAT file is a generic data file created by a specific application. It may contain data in binary or text format (text-based DAT files can be viewed in a text editor). DAT files are typically accessed only by the application that created them. Many programs create, open, or reference DAT files.

bringing to attention the design aesthetics of Japanese-ness to a desirable global modern product.¹⁰⁸

Sony introduced Digital Audio Files (DAT) in 1987.

In early 2017 the District Six Museum acquired the Zoom H2n and Zoom H5 multifunctional recorders to record oral histories and other audio and these two types are currently in use.¹⁰⁹ This series of portable Handy Audio Recorders (HAR) developed by the Zoom Foundation function as:

A high-quality sound linear PCM recorder, with which uncompressed sound can be recorded instead of compressed digital audio like MP3 used for music distribution. The H5 provides four tracks of simultaneous recording allowing specific microphones to be enabled for different recording situations. It is used to create multi-track recordings, audio for video, state of the art podcasting, broadcasting and electronic newsgathering.¹¹⁰

The H2n portable recorder has five built-in microphones and four different recording modes and many high tech advanced features.¹¹¹ Documenting the development of various types of sound recorders contributes to a history of design and technology within a community museum where the recorders form an integral part of post-apartheid collecting methodologies. The sound archive allows sound to be designed, manipulated and engineered to dovetail with exhibition content using high tech recording devices.

Since inception and commencement of oral history recordings at the District Six Museum sound quality has improved. Digital oral history recording takes place as a singular function since 2017. Older cassette tape recordings are converted from DAT format for preservation, storage, ease of use and retrieval thereby moving the sound archive from analogue in the 1990s to digital in

¹⁰⁸Sony co-founder Masaru Ibuka commissioned Sony designer Norio Ohga to adapt an existing Sony product the TC-D5 cassette player to create a more portable sound listening and recording device. Drawing on Sony's Pressman cassette recorder he designed and built a prototype that became the Sony Walkman, Sony Corporate-History –Sony (HK), <https://www.sony.com.hk/aboutsony/html/history>, accessed 19.11.2018.

¹⁰⁹Zoom was co-founded in 1983 by Masa Iijima in Tokyo. The Zoom Corporation was listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in 2017, <https://www.zoom-na.com/news/zoom-corporation-goes-public-listing-tokyo-stock-exchange>, accessed 19.11.2018.

¹¹⁰Zoom, <https://www.zoom-na.com>, "Evolved Recording: The Zoom H5 Flexible Audio for Video perfection", <https://www.zoom-na.com/products/field-video-recording/field-recording/h5-handly-recorder>, accessed 11.11.2019

¹¹¹Zoom, <https://www.zoom-na.com>, "The Workhorse of Field Recorders: The Zoon H2N Handy Recorder" <https://www.zoom-na.com/products/field-video-recording/field-recording/zoom-h2n-handly-recorder>, accessed 11.11.2019

2000s. Progressive sound technology allowed for the museum's collection to develop seamlessly and also this museological aspect required a high level of expertise and skill in managing live recordings and the sound archive. As a founding archival collection strategy, it is important to note how high tech digital equipment is not publically displayed or referred to but remains in the store of the studio as the technical prosthetic that enables the recovery of voices supposedly hidden.

In the case of the Cape Town Jazz musical heritage, musicians were identified through their musical profile and museum's social network and interviewed. The technologies and portability of the Marantz model CP430 and Sony DAT Walkman recorders in the late 1990s allowed District Six Museum staff to master these machines in a variety of environments including people's homes and furthermore to gather and collate monologues of their musical experiences. The Western Cape Oral History Project jazz interviews formed part of a joint project between the University of Cape Town and the District Six Museum. Copies and transcripts of the tapes were deposited with both institutions and can be accessed online as the archival records of the Centre for Popular Memory forms part of the UCT Libraries Digital Collections.¹¹² Jazz pianist Gerry Spencer's oral history transcript is accompanied by this introduction:

This is one interview in a collection of interviews composed of the life histories of twenty Cape Town jazz musicians. Some of the themes explored are the effects of apartheid in the music scene in the 1950s and 1960s; priorities of recording labels; music reception across social groupings in District Six and the extensive influence of American jazz. Music genres referred to span big band, the avant-garde, bebop, dance, jive, marabi, township jazz, goema and Latin.¹¹³

Colin Miller, who was employed in the Museum's sound archive, conducted all of the interviews between July 1998 and April 1999 of which there are 21. Referred to as Oral Life History interviews, 19 were transcribed by me including that of Gerry Spencer. Many of the musicians featured in the recordings have passed away since the time of recording the interviews. Release forms and transcripts are located in the files of the District Six Museum sound archives. The

¹¹²UCT Libraries Digital Collections, <https://www.digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za>, accessed 18.06.2017.

¹¹³UCT Libraries Digital Collections "Gerry Spencer", <http://www.digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/oral-history-interview-gerry-spencer-jazz-pianist-transcript>, accessed 18.06.2017.

uniqueness of this particular set of oral histories is captured by Jerry Spencer in reference to a genre of music defined by a particular cultural dynamic defiant in its celebration of musical camaraderie. As he states “that’s also the nature of jazz. Integration was a central feature of jazz and that’s why the system never allowed it to grow. It played to different audiences...Cape Town it’s like a second Brazil”.¹¹⁴ The interviews were systematically recorded, categorised and stored in the sound archive until years later when I was employed in 2011 to transcribe 19 oral histories in English and create a narrative synopsis of each musician summarising key events in an ethnopoetic style which resulted in approximately 13-15 pages of transcript text per musician. The oral histories had been recorded and stored on individual CD discs and as a way of orientation and training, I was shown previously transcribed oral histories in which the ethnopoetic style of documentation was utilised. This method renders the aural into written and visual form through a specific approach to interpretation as it is transferred into writing utilising an emotive poetry format.

Transcribing oral histories was a profound, rewarding and intimate experience because of the rich detail and insight they offer and I found that the process required sensitivity, skill, insight, and research into ethnopoetic translation methods. The emotional content was noted and separated from the main text included in brackets and the interviewee and interviewee’s voices were transcribed verbatim. An attempt was made to reconstruct word for word in the text the feeling and mood of the oral history and the recording environment, although this was not a big feature of the Jazz Musician's oral history recordings. I listened to how the interview was constructed by the interviewer and what was spoken in order to become familiar with both narrators before embarking on the lengthy process of transcription. Colloquial, slang and unfamiliar words were noted and researched using both online dictionaries, general dictionaries and in conversation with museum staff members. Interviews often contained faint noises and, in some instances, stops and start although most appeared as a single session in duration as the interview progressed.

¹¹⁴J. Spencer, Oral history recording, District Six Sound Archive, District Six Museum, accessed 20.02.2011.

After transcribing each oral history I then extracted and summarised the life history focusing on a musical thread as the main guide to content. Therefore many details were subsequently edited out and the summarised synopsis preceded each transcript. Quotes from the oral histories were not included in the synopsis and the summary followed the temporal trajectory of the oral history as transcribed. The resulting transcript and synopsis were in multiple ways disappointing, a shadow in comparison to the engaging voices and unfolding journey far removed from present-day dynamics. I listened with deep concentration while transcribing often replaying certain sections. The transformation from voice to text is great and a serious emotive deprivation occurs in this transition and that is possibly the reason why certain oral histories, as authentic voice, are played in their original form through sound domes in the District Six Museum exhibitions.

The questions put to interviewees by Colin Miller were similar in each interview and digressed when a particular point of interest emerged and it was followed with further sub-questions. Short questions were designed to create specific responses and answers were lengthy. Main questions related to date of birth, place of birth, family, occupations of parents and grandparents and extended family, early memories, position in the family, community environment, religion, schooling and education, early musical influences within the family or through church, musical trends, shows and playing music, instruments learnt, musical mentors and teachers, individual musical learning style, instrument specialised in, mixed audiences, laws and difficulties related to playing, names of bands and vocal groups of the period, clubs, musical venues in Cape Town, popular dance types, work and playing, professionalism, notable musicians and their styles, dances, playing covers, standards and original tracks, touring locally and overseas, jazz concerts and sponsors, remuneration, African jazz sounds, classical influences, American jazz influences, Ghoema and Cape Malay choirs influences, vinyl favourites, genres, defining Cape jazz, blues of Cape Town and jazz with Cape flavour. Each set of similar questions posed resulted in extremely varied narratives across the oral histories reflecting a geographical and stylistic nexus in the emerging sounds of Cape Jazz therefore questions led to a diverse range of insightful responses.

The interview and transcription table below is a reproduction of the archival inventory and lists musicians interviewed. It is to be found in the Jazz Musicians Interview file with the transcription of the recordings and serves as an index to find each transcript.

NAME	Date interviewed	Transcribed/date	Tape ref
Donald Tshomela passed away	8 th August 1998	Hayley Hayes-Roberts Feb 2011	
John Ntshibilikwana	7 th December 1998	H H-R 2011	
Cliffie Moses	6 th October 1998	H H-R 2011	AT056
Gary Kriel	2 nd Dec 1999	H H-R 2011	AT055
Brian Eggelson	27 th Nov 1998	H H-R 2011	AT054
Robbie Jansen passed away	23 rd Nov 1998	H H-R 2011	AT049
Maud Dammons	12 th Nov 1999	Pat Fahrenfort	AT115
Mertin Barrow	31 st July 1998	H H-R 2011	AT043
Morris Gawronsky	6 th April 1999	H H-R 2011	AT064
Zelda Benjamin	12 th Dec 1998	H H-R 2011	AT058
Stoto Zibi	23 th Nov 1998	H H-R 2011	AT050
Cups Nkanuka	16 th Nov 1999	H H-R 2011	AT047
Jerry Spencer	12 th August 1998	H H-R 2011	
Joe Schaffers	14 th April 1999	Gloria Fahrenfort	AT065
Willie van Bloemstein	26 th Nov 1998	H H-R 2011	AT053
Gilbert Lang	26 th Nov 1998	H H-R 2011	AT052
'Boeta' Gus Gamba	18 th Nov	H H-R 2011	AT048
Richard Schilder	30 th July 1998	H H-R 2011	
Harold Jephthah	30 th Sept 1998	H H-R 2011	AT045
Monty Weber	8 th December 1998	H H-R 2011	DAT057

Figure 1.17: Jazz Musician interview and transcription table. D6M archive. Table: D6M Jazz Museum Interview file.

Some interviews commenced with playing instruments and looking at photographs that are mentioned in the interview. The interviews are peopled with a range of familiar jazz names, various band members, gigs played, and mentioned places they frequented and travels they went on. The interviews are saturated with references to fellow musicians directly mentioning the people the interviewee knew, clubs in Cape Town and detailed descriptions of the kind of sound and shifts in stylistic arrangements that occurred. This assists in verifying details and dates as information can be cross-referenced across the majority of the oral histories. Names and dates created the intersection of the local, national and international jazz scene, recorded as first-hand experiences. Numerous notes had been added to one of these transcripts, that of Joe Schaffers which was transcribed on 1st February 2000. Colour coded highlighter bars at the top right hand of the first page of the transcript noted as cassette one of side one had been included and related to theming the history into categories such as family, political history, peoples/places, culture, and work/labour. In the transcript, the text was highlighted indicating a link to the selected themes and where they were located in the transcript and an attempt to deconstruct the narrative was visible. Under a specific date and year page numbers followed with a short textual reference to an event or highlight that referred to the themed categories or key moments in the oral history thereby fragmented it to serve another purpose. It appeared to either be prepared for exhibitionary or publishing purposes as a raw data source still to be refined in another narrative context.

Splicing and grafting the lifted oral history extracts externally from the sound archive was a textual and visual process in readiness for exhibition purposes where the oral extract was blended and crafted with other media to construct narratives in line with the main theme and sub-themes of the exhibition. Oral history text in this amalgamated context where the archive was made to perform situates blended oral histories in various ways. As a biographical oral history within a community museum setting oral histories become oral traditions in this framing to establish local histories that are claimed as authentic. In the museum, the oral was reformulated as textual yet it is continually remade as oral in museum tours where certain District Six stories have been repeated and conveyed

continuously for over 20 years acquiring, I am arguing, longevity associated with oral tradition. According to Jan Vansina, “Oral tradition applies both to a process and to its products. The products are oral messages based on previous oral messages, at least a generation old. The process is the transmission of such messages by word of mouth over time until the disappearance of the message”.¹¹⁵ As I have shown sound technologies, oral history methodology, the sound archive repository, and the museum's storytelling tours established a tradition of orality. Indeed various forms of mediated voice created from oral histories extracts have erased rich linguistic discourses edited out in favour of English.¹¹⁶

Archival stories 5: Hanover Tailor double-breasted man’s woollen jacket: Accession no. 3835/001 donated by Alan Damascio

The Museum has acquired a collection of donated jackets that contribute to understandings of the material culture of the area and furthermore indicate the high level of tailoring expertise that was present in District Six. Stored in the climate-controlled loft storage room in the District Six Museum each jacket was hung separately on a clothing rail. A few donated jackets with sporting or musical club colours are protected by paper stuffed into the arms and cover the entire jacket. As a donated and now accessioned item the jacket was carefully wrapped over a supportive wooden jacket hanger covered in foam to protect the fabric shoulders from stretching out of proportion and enclosed in archival paper for protection against fish moths and dust. I became interested in a double-breasted jacket in the small collection.

The double-breasted jacket is a formal men’s garment type where one half of the front overlaps the other half, with two rows of buttons and one row of buttonholes with an inner hidden button.¹¹⁷ The design references leisure attire, military uniforms, and gangster dress codes and can be worn with trousers as a suit or worn less formally paired with white trousers to create a nautical

¹¹⁵J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press: 1985), 3.

¹¹⁶Julius, “Oral”, 113-114.

¹¹⁷S.L. Hamilton, *Clothing: a pictorial history of the past one thousand years*, (Minneapolis: Abdo, 2000), 17.

themed debonair style made famous by George, Duke of Kent (b.1902-d.1942). Referred to as classic elegance “George’s preference for a double-breasted style resulted in it being called ‘the Kent’, especially when seen in an evening suit. He was seen almost exclusively in a double-breasted suit with a long, rolled lapel and with the bottom button fastened”.¹¹⁸



Figure 1.18: Vintage double-breasted suit illustration. Source: Pinterest.

Although this form of design can be traced to Victorian coats and Dandyism, mainstream double-breasted suit jackets were popular from the mid-1930s until the late 1950s, and again from the mid-1980s to the early 2000s.

¹¹⁸E. Musgrave, “The Forgotten Prince”, Icons/May 2016, The Rake The Modern Voice of Classic Elegance, <https://therake.com/stories/icons/the-forgotten-prince>, accessed 29.08.2019.



Figure 1.19: Hanover Tailors double-breasted grey woollen jacket. D6M archive. Photograph HH-R.

The grey double-breasted jacket in the District Six Museum archive is a picture of elegance and a lot smarter than an average jacket. Its styling, cut and form shows that it was influenced by International Fashion trends. Firstly it uses more fabric, therefore, it is more expensive to make. In contrast to a single-breasted jacket that has a single row of buttons this jacket has a double row of buttons and a hidden button on the interior lining of the jacket to fasten it. On the inner pocket is stitched a label indicating it was made at Hanover Tailors, therefore made in Hanover Street, District Six.



Figure 1.20: Hanover Tailors fabric label sewn onto the inner jacket pocket. D6M archive. Photograph HH-R

The quality of tailoring is superb, evident in the jacket's lining and is neatly stitched. A single worsted-spun yarn was used to create the worsted fabric, spun from fibres that have been combed, to ensure that the fibres all run in the same direction, butt-end (for wool, the end that was cut in shearing the sheep) to tip, and remaining parallel. A short draw is used in spinning worsted fibres (as opposed to a long draw). This well-cut and stylish fashion garment is made in a neutral dark grey colour and was probably part of a suit worn to work or worn on special occasions, such as weddings, parties, funerals, dances, town hall dances or for a job interview perhaps.

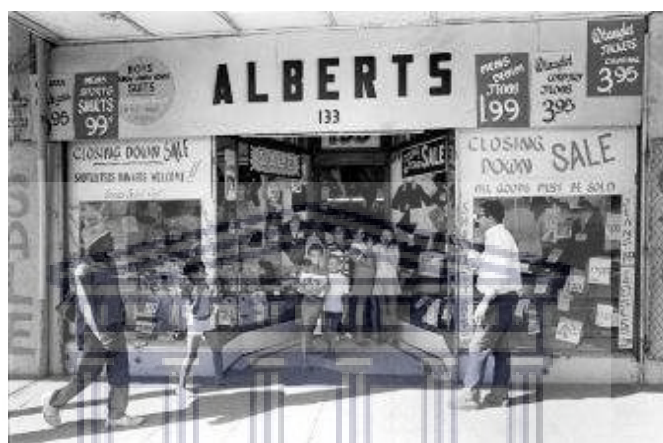


Figure 1.21: Alberts clothing store in District Six. Photograph: UCT digital collections.

Entire new outfits, including suits, shoes, socks, ties, shirts were paid off through the lay-by system of credit during the course of the year for Eid and Christmas celebrations. Working people of District Six were paid their wages weekly and often used lay-by systems at various shops.¹¹⁹ Sacks Futeran and Co was a Jewish owned fabric and clothing wholesaler that supplied numerous shops in Hanover Street, District Six.¹²⁰ A suit as a gendered set of clothing in a fashionable style of the period reflected the status, position, and customisation of clothing that epitomised the man about town. Tailoring expertise was highly concentrated in Cape Town where in 1905, Jewish tailors numbered 210 according to Evangelos Mantzaris.¹²¹ Numerous small tailor shops and home-based sewing businesses within District Six produced the annual minstrel costumes

¹¹⁹Martin and Gordon Futeran, Sacks Futeran oral histories, District Six Museum sound archive, accessed 15.02.2015.

¹²⁰G. Futeran, Interview by Thulani Nxumalo, 1st April 2003, District Six Museum sound archive, accessed 15.02.2015.

¹²¹E. A. Mantzaris, "Jewish Trade Unions in Cape Town, South Africa 1903-1907: A Socio-Historical study", *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 3/4 (Summer - Autumn, 1987), 251-26.

of parti-coloured satins in bright colours¹²² purchased at Sacks Futeran.¹²³ Gordon Futeran, co-owner of business situated on the periphery of District Six recalled in a District Six Museum oral history interview that, “we supplied thousands of meters of the satins” and “we tried to give them a good price” and “they made their costumes up from it” as “lots of people set up small factories we used to supply them with materials also at discounted prices so they could build up their home businesses”.¹²⁴



Figure 1.22: Sacks Futeran sequined and satin fabric swatch cards. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R



Figure 1.23: Annual minstrel parade. Hanover Street, District Six. Photographer: Cloete Breytenbach.

¹²²Sacks Futeran & Co. (Pty) Ltd sequined and satin fabric swatch cards form part of the District Six Museum archival collections.

¹²³Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 54.

¹²⁴Futeran, Interview, accessed 15.02.2015.

Hanover Street District Six and to a lesser degree Caledon Street were the main thoroughfares into the city and utilised daily by District Six residents to access places of work, shops that were transformed during minstrel parades.¹²⁵ Fabrics purchased were reconfigured into dresses, suits, shirts, skirts, aprons, and curtains through skilled seamstresses and tailors of the District.¹²⁶

Sacks Futeran influenced the clothing and dress style of the district as it stocked large quantities of fabric imported from Manchester, England by ship and also owned a shirt factory in Harrington Street, District Six.¹²⁷ As one of the District's shopkeepers, Gordon Futeran notes that "we tried to play a part in the community".¹²⁸ Most of the goods purchased in bulk were sold in smaller shops in District Six and transformed clothing styles. Therefore, bespoke tailoring businesses were an integral part of the informal economic livelihoods of many in District Six. Political activism was related to this sector. Victoreen Gilbert (nee Gomas) ex-resident of District Six remembers assisting her father John Gomas as a child in his tailoring business in District Six. As a girl of 12 years old, she used to hawk small items, door to door, such as socks and pantyhose bought in bulk from Sacks Futeran to supplement the family income.¹²⁹ She recalled that her father John Gomas was politically active:

He was a member of the Garment Workers' Union. He served as secretary of the Cape Town branch of the Communist Party of South Africa (CP) in the late 1920s and was elected to the CPSA political bureau in 1933. He was the Western Cape provincial secretary of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) until December 1926 when he was expelled from the ICU in its clash with the CPSA. In 1928 he was elected vice-president of the Western Cape African National Congress (ANC), and he became a leader of the short-lived independent ANC in that area in 1930. With Cissie Gool and James La Guma, he founded the National Liberation League in 1935. In the 1940s he was secretary of the Tin Workers' Union and continued to be active in the Communist Party.¹³⁰

¹²⁵C. Breytenbach, *The spirit of District Six*. (Cape Town: Purnell & Sons (Pty) Ltd, 1970.

¹²⁶Futeran, Interview, accessed 15.02.2015.

¹²⁷Breytenbach, *The spirit*, 1970.

¹²⁸Futeran, Interview, accessed 15.02.2015.

¹²⁹V. Gomas, conversation at the District Six Museum, May 2011.

¹³⁰South African History Online, author unknown, "John Stephen Gomas", <https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/john-gomas>, accessed 13.08.2018.

According to Martin Nicol, La Guma and Gomas were then actively engaged in forming trade unions on a joint income of £4.10s. a month. Both assisted a group of garment workers who came out on strike against a wage cut of 10 shillings on a weekly wage of £3.10 shillings or less.¹³¹

Gomas or La Guma, members of SAGWU organised a call to strike.¹³² A pamphlet read, in part:

Because you are the most unorganized your wages are the lowest The garment workers of Johannesburg, they are organized! They struggle! They strike! Against sweating! Against wage cuts! Against short time and unemployment! They are more successful. Cape Town factory and bespoke tailors, do the same! Wake up! Organize! Strike!¹³³

The strike they organised began on Monday 24 August 1931. Tracing political activism and mobilisation within the garment making industries led by two District Six residents La Guma and Gomas are important to District Six histories. They contribute to understanding the economic dynamics and struggle histories of the area and resistance to external conditions imposed.

The Sacks Futeran buildings were not within the boundaries of District Six earmarked for demolition as determined by the Apartheid government. A conversation is vividly recalled in the oral history of Gordon Futeran, co-owner of the business that took place within the Sacks Futeran building. A man entered the building and informed him of the proposed rezoning of District Six and commented that “we’re planning the whole area from Pretoria”. Futeran replied ‘but you don’t even know Cape Town’.¹³⁴ Futeran remembers the traumatic events severing long-standing relationships with businesses that had been there for generations and altering the course of the wholesale clothing business forever. According to Futeran:

We had big changes here through the system of apartheid...Hanover Street where we had probably about 50 or 60 shopkeepers that were dealing with us was wiped out people were moved out we had amongst our customers you could call them friends. We supplied hundreds of them with goods...we were very sorry to lose the connection with them.¹³⁵

¹³¹M. Nicol, “A History of Garment and Tailoring workers in Cape Town 1900-1939”, PhD diss., University of Cape Town, 1984), 140.

¹³²SAGWU: South African Garments Worker’s Union

¹³³Nicol, “A History”, 73.

¹³⁴Futeran, Interview, accessed 15.02.2015.

¹³⁵Futeran, Interview, accessed 15.02.2015.

On the 16th January 1969, the *Cape Argus* reported that “District Six’s non-White shopkeepers and traders are going to be hard hit hard by the replanning of the area – from which they must in time move – with the twin problem of the disposal of their businesses and the purchase of new property elsewhere.”¹³⁶ The traditions and economies of tailoring came to an end in District Six as people were removed.

The Hanover Tailor grey double-breasted man’s woollen jacket represents the gendered codes, economies, politics and street style fashions behind the craft of fine tailoring in District Six. Reading into many archival District Six photographs taken by photographers such as Cloete Breytenbach, District Six was a place attuned to the performative role of fashion in establishing identities of difference within the area. The most popular leisure activity in District Six was going to the bioscope and Jacqueline Maingard notes:

The cinemas they frequented and the films they saw structured and shaped their lives and their identities; for most of the District Six residents, recalling the past involved recalling cinemagoing. In this sense, they might be seen as ‘cinema citizens’, members of a global seam of cinema entertainment and participants in its imaginative opportunities while at the same time, both before and during the years of apartheid, they were stripped of all other citizenship rights.¹³⁷

District Six gangster and elegant popular dress code styles, amongst men, were clearly aimed at mimicking favourite movie stars and heroes of the big screen bringing a bit of Hollywood glamour into the district.¹³⁸ The museum’s photographic collections depict and reveal fashion was influential in shaping stylistic clothing trends.¹³⁹ The suit jacket is a significant example of tailoring expertise yet as it is made of fabric it has a limited lifespan. The archive consigns the jacket to a place in fashion history asserting that District Six shaped men’s taste and style in clothing now claimed by the museum. Furthermore through the ownership of the Saks Futeran buildings which housed a wholesale textile business that disseminated a wide variety of apparel and household fabrics and the

¹³⁶Cape Argus “Sell up now or wait? District Six shops face a dilemma”, 16 January 1969.

¹³⁷Maingard, “Cinemagoing”, 31-32.

¹³⁸Breytenbach, *The Spirit*, 84.

¹³⁹The van Kalker and Ginsburg photographic Collections at the District Six Museum.

museum's works on fabric such as the memory cloths, canvas map painting, and the *Huis Kombuis* textiles continues to, in a sense, 'fabricate' District Six.

Archival stories 6: Linoleum fragments from Horstley Street (classified archaeological)

Accession no. A1039/001.

Fragments of linoleum were stored in archival boxes relating to an archaeological dig conducted in 1992-1993 under the supervision of the University of Cape Town archaeology department in partnership with the District Six Museum Foundation.¹⁴⁰ Hundreds of fragments of coloured and patterned linoleum have been collected or unearthed at District Six.¹⁴¹ A few exist in the archive stored in plastic zip-lock bags. The fragments related to reclaiming the space through scientific and didactic data, functioning as evidence and tangible reminders of the historic, social and environmental layers at the site. Reflecting on archaeological building foundation excavations at No's 73 and 75 Horstley Street post forced removals at District Six archaeologists Antonia Malan and Elizabeth van Heyningen state:

It is to be hoped that archaeological and historical research will provide a less romanticised framework which ultimately proves more satisfying both for the residents of the District and for others who wish to understand the complexity, contradictions and ambiguity provide space... for a more democratic society than dogma and bureaucratic planning. The more diverse the range of knowledge that is recovered about the people and the places they inhabited, the richer the choice of stories that will be left for their descendants. Once the remaining open areas have been developed, a source of archaeological information is removed.¹⁴²

Locating an appropriate site suitable for archaeological investigation was not an easy task according to Malan and van Heyningen "despite the extent of open ground left by bulldozing of District Six, there are few areas that are suited for archaeological excavation. In some places the ground has

¹⁴⁰A. Malan and E. van Heyningen, "Horstly Street in Cape Town's District Six, 1865-1982" in *The Archaeology of Urban Landscapes: Explorations in Slumland*, eds Alan Mayne, Tim Murray, (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2001), 53.

¹⁴¹School children from various Cape schools under direction of History and Art teachers have over the years collected debris, including linoleum fragments from District Six. Richard Rive's *Buckingham Palace, District Six* was a prescribed textbook in South African schools and a District Six Museum exhibition in 1998-1999. A touring theatre production of the same name generated interest in the area and large school groups as far as Gauteng Province arrived on cultural tours to learn about District Six forced removals. Artists and District Six Museum workshop participants as well as ex-residents of District Six participating in expressive art and craft memory workshops have drawn on myriad collected fragments to create imaginative and evocative art and craft pieces.

¹⁴²Malan and van Heyningen, "Horstly Street", 53.

been completely scoured, removing all traces of foundations, while in other areas several meters of rubble cover the original land surface, making extraction impractical".¹⁴³

Due to the construction of the Cape Technikon buildings, roads and car parks most traces of earlier urban fabric over a large part of District Six had been erased. According to Malan and van Heyningen:

The top segment of Horstly Street was initially chosen for fieldwork in 1992 because the foundations of several houses were still visible on aerial photographs and the cobbles and pavement had been left undisturbed. This offered a chance of relating excavated house plans to archival plans and 19th century maps. Archaeological excavations at No's 73 and 75 Horstly Street working class dwellings revealed an original core of two rooms, one behind the other, with a passage connecting them along one side.¹⁴⁴

They were guided by Walter Thom's survey plan of c 1900 that showed small rear extensions although later concrete slabs obscured the original provision for sanitation and ablution.¹⁴⁵ Blocks of Table Mountain sandstone were utilized for the foundations and the walls were "brick and mud mortar, plastered originally with mud and painted at various times with colours including light blue and ochre brown".¹⁴⁶

It was noted that at No. 75 traces of floorboards could still be seen and in No. 73 in the back room, a semi-circular brick feature on the stone foundation could have been the remains of a fireplace. Architectural and structural differentiation was evident in Horstly Street itself as Malan and van Heyningen noted: "There were no sheltering *stoeps* (verandahs) as in some of the dwellings further down the street. Neither were there provisions for workshops or garden allotments: domestic or household production was effectively curtailed by these structures".¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³Malan and van Heyningen, "Horstly Street", 53.

¹⁴⁴Malan and van Heyningen, "Horstly Street", 44.

¹⁴⁵Walter Thom was an ordinance surveyor from England and came to the Cape 1892 as surveyor, plans examiner and draughtsman. He was commissioned to complete a survey of the whole city for a drainage system that was to be put in place. In 1895 he was employed in District Six to help set out road improvement lines. In 1900 he returned to England, having completed a detailed map (scale 50 feet to one inch) that showed every building and public space or park drawn in the most meticulous detail. Source: L. Graaff, "Re-presenting Cape Town through landscapes of social identity and exclusion: an interpretation of three power shifts and their modifications from 1652-1994", (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 2008), 72.

¹⁴⁶Malan and van Heyningen, "Horstly Street", 44.

¹⁴⁷Malan and van Heyningen, "Horstly Street", 44.

Besides the architectural knowledge generated through archival photographs, urban planning maps, surveys and diagrams relating to the construction of low-cost homes in District Six multiple fragments were discovered: porcelain, plastic, metal, glass, linoleum and other items of interest. Most of these items were archived and others curated into an archaeological display cabinet in the District Six Museum memorial hall as part of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition, opened in 2000.



Figure 1.24: Archival boxes with separated and labelled District Six archaeological finds and fragments. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R.

Peggy Delpont senior curator of *Digging Deeper* recalls the design and making of a mosaic floor inspired by fragments from the archaeological dig and texts generated by poetry workshops and established poets. The “Poets floor: A mosaic of texts embedded in an earthly surface: little white ceramic notes, handwritten in cobalt blue. The subject of lino fragments is a reference to the archaeological excavation of 17 layers of linoleum on the site of a Horstley Street home”.¹⁴⁸ Fragments of linoleum from District Six reveal that linoleum, a flexible floor covering, was a highly desired material for homemaking, therefore, part of District Six décor and aesthetic practices. This

¹⁴⁸P. Delpont, “Digging”, 156.

indicates practices of homemaking specific to the area and alludes to its ubiquitous use in urban residential settings in South Africa for over a century.



Figure 1.25: Linoleum fragments unearthed at Horstley Street. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R.

Rolls of linoleum or lino were extremely popular as a floor covering in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's, utilised in hallways and passages or as a surround for carpet squares.¹⁴⁹

Linoleum was imported from the United Kingdom where it had been invented by English rubber manufacturer Frederick Walton who noticed how linseed oil formed a leathery skin on top of paint.¹⁵⁰ He patented linoleum in 1863, made through an industrial process of mixing linseed oil with powdered wood or ground cork dust (or both), resins (pine rosin), pigments, ground limestone, and drying agents bonded through heat onto a burlap or canvas backing.¹⁵¹ In 1863 Walton applied for a further patent, which read:

For these purposes, canvas or other suitable strong fabrics are coated over on their upper surfaces with a composition of oxidized oil, cork dust, and gum or resin ... such surfaces being afterward printed, embossed, or otherwise ornamented. The back or under surfaces of such fabrics are coated with a coating of such oxidized oils, or oxidized oils and gum or resin, and by preference without an admixture of cork.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹In contemporary terms traditional Linoleum would be categorised as eco-friendly as it can be completely re-cycled and is bio-degradable although it is flammable.

¹⁵⁰L. Gross, "The Evolution of Linoleum", March 18 2018, Hagley Museum and Library, <https://www.hagley.org/librarynews/evolution-linoleum>, accessed 23.06.2019.

¹⁵¹Gross, "The Evolution", accessed 23.06.2019.

¹⁵²E. Blakemore, "Why Once People Loved Linoleum", February 27, 2017, J-Store Daily, <https://daily.jstor.org/why-people-once-loved-linoleum/>, accessed 03.09.2018.

Walton derived the name linoleum from the Latin words "linum" (flax) and "oleum" (oil).¹⁵³ In 1864 he established the Linoleum Manufacturing Company Ltd., with a factory at Staines, near London.¹⁵⁴

Between the time of its invention by Frederick Walton in 1855 and later, being largely superseded by other hard floor coverings in the 1950s, cheaper patterned linoleum came in different grades or gauges. As the company Walton founded operated at a loss for the first five years, Walton began an intensive advertising campaign and opened two shops in London for the exclusive sale of linoleum. Walton's friend Jeremiah Clarke designed the linoleum patterns, typically with a Grecian urn motif around the borders.¹⁵⁵ By 1869 Walton's factory in Staines, England was exporting to Europe and the United States.¹⁵⁶ In 1877, the Scottish town of Kirkcaldy, in Fife, became the largest producer of linoleum in the world, with no fewer than six floor cloth manufacturers in the town, most notably Michael Nairn & Co., which had been producing floor cloth since 1847.¹⁵⁷ Walton brought a lawsuit against Michael Nairn & Co's use of the name linoleum for trademark infringement.¹⁵⁸ However, the term had not been trademarked, and he lost the suit, the court ruled that even if the name had been registered as a trademark, it was by now so widely used that it had become generic, only 14 years after its invention. It was considered to be the first product name to become a generic term.

Walton also tried integrating designs into Linoleum during the manufacturing stage, coming up with granite, marbled, and jaspé (striped) linoleum. For the granite variety, granules of various colours of linoleum cement were mixed together, before being hot-rolled. If the granules were not completely mixed before rolling, the result was marbled or jaspé patterns. Walton's next product in

¹⁵³Blakemore, "Why Once", accessed 03.09.2018.

¹⁵⁴Gross, "The Evolution", accessed 23.06.2019.

¹⁵⁵A Linoleum fragment pattern of a Grecian urn found in District Six was later interpreted as a mosaic tile design and laid into the District Six Museum Memorial Hall Writers floor installation made in 2000 as part of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition under the curatorship of Peggy Delpont, Jos Thorne and Tina Smith.

¹⁵⁶Gross, "The, Evolution", accessed 23.06.2019.

¹⁵⁷B. Campbell, 'Made', accessed 05.09.2018.

¹⁵⁸Gross, "The Evolution", accessed 23.06.2019.

1882 was inlaid linoleum, which resembled encaustic tiles. Previously, linoleum had been produced in solid colours, with patterns printed on the surface if required. In inlaid linoleum, the colours extend all the way through to the backing cloth. Inlaid linoleum was made using a stencil type method where different-coloured granules were placed in shaped metal trays, after which the sheets were run through heated rollers to fuse them to the backing cloth. In 1898 Walton devised a process for making straight-line inlaid linoleum that allowed for crisp, sharp geometric designs. This involved strips of uncured linoleum being cut and pieced together patchwork-fashion before being hot-rolled. Embossed inlaid linoleum was not introduced until 1926.¹⁵⁹

Based on research conducted I suggest here that linoleum produced in Kirkcaldy, Scotland was exported to South Africa where it was made popular by agents and wholesalers and sold in Cape Town. It was utilized as a floor covering in District Six and other areas, which attests to the age, good quality, colours, quantity and patterns of the linoleum fragments found at District Six post removals. According to T M Devine and John M MacKenzie, “a few examples of notable exports help to demonstrate the bilateral relationship between Scottish production and global consumption...there were major markets in Canada, South Africa, and Australia. Linoleum from Kirkcaldy had a strong export market with 58 % of all floorings exported from Britain heading for the empire in 1913. These trends were encouraged by the opening of colonial branches and the circulation of catalogues overseas...and help to secure a certain amount of cultural and design uniformity across the ‘British world’”.¹⁶⁰

Ok Bazaars a South African national furniture chain store consistently sold linoleum floor covering from the 1930s. They offered a variety of linoleum prints sold by the roll as did local merchants and hardware stores in and around Cape Town.¹⁶¹ Vinyl, Multi-vinyl or polyvinyl

¹⁵⁹Gross, “The Evolution”, accessed 23.06.2019.

¹⁶⁰T. M. Devine and John M. Mackenzie, “Scots in the Imperial Economy” in *Scotland and the British Empire*, ed John M. Mackenzie, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 234.

¹⁶¹In South Africa Ok Bazaars was established in 1927 when Johannesburg's shopping hub consisted of four blocks along the west side of Eloff Street above Pritchard Street. Michael Miller and Sam Cohen, opened a store a full block south of Pritchard Street, and on the wrong side of the road. OK Bazaars expanded rapidly throughout South Africa, becoming a household name focusing on a low operating cost base specializing in an inexpensive furniture, home goods and groceries. In 1929 the business was listed as a public company on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. And by 1967,

plastic-based floor coverings are more widely used today and replaced traditional hessian backed linoleum although mimics its patterning and colours. Linoleum design, durability, quality, and patterning have changed substantially. As referenced earlier plastic-based floor coverings marketed as multi-vinyl or polyvinyl have replaced traditional hessian backed coloured and patterned linoleum floor coverings. Sold in a roll this is an instant method of surfacing a floor although colours are printed and brighter than original linoleum.

Linoleum has largely been replaced as a floor covering by polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which is often colloquially but incorrectly called linoleum or lino. PVC has similar flexibility and durability to linoleum, but also has greater brightness and translucency, and is less flammable. The fire-retardant properties of PVC are due to chlorine-containing combustion products, some of which are highly toxic. Dioxins are released by burning PVC. While the polymer itself is generally considered safe, additives such as plasticizers, and unintentional impurities such as free monomers, are considered a hazard by some.¹⁶²

The highly decorative modern equivalent multi-vinyl has been available since the 1960s and was used in the District Six Museum as a decorative device and a methodology in reclaiming memories of people's home life. In preparation for the District Six Sculpture project "A number of artists were invited to participate in a public sculpture festival which sought to challenge conventions around public art. The process for participating artists included workshopping ideas and approaches, accessing material from the museum archive, and interacting with District Six ex-residents" according to Julius.¹⁶³

Vinyl appeared as a medium in the 1997 District Six Sculpture Project exhibition. A 3 metre by 5 metre artwork by Ena Carstens *Empties* combined vinyl and wood on the site of the old rugby

OK Bazaars had opened 100 stores. Today it has 410 OK Furniture stores that sell colourful multi-vinyl. <https://www.okfurniture.co.za/index.php/flooring/vinyl/183x500-multivinyl-heavy-duty-m.html>, accessed 10.09.2018.

¹⁶²S. L. Jones, *Resilient Flooring: A Comparison of Vinyl, Linoleum and Cork*, Georgia Tech Research Institute, Fall, 1999, Jones, S. 1999, Georgia Tech Research Institute,

<http://maven.gtri.gatech.edu/sfi/resources/pdf/TR/Resilient%20flooring.pdf>, 1-14, accessed 16.08.2018,

¹⁶³Julius, "Oral", 68.

field in District Six.¹⁶⁴ Carsten's artwork "portrays the floor of a room in a house. It shows a phantom image of a domestic animal and territorial guard and plays with the idea of remembrance and memory".¹⁶⁵ The artwork consists of reused pallets of wood joined together creating a floorscape on which a large dog cut out of blue patterned vinyl is lying in a curved sleeping or resting position.¹⁶⁶

There are other ways vinyl has been used in the District Six Museum. *Bankies* (benches) in District Six Museum on the upper floor gallery are partially covered in patterned multi-vinyl in the tradition of linoleum. A piece of red floral multi-vinyl has been laid on the floor between the District Six Homecoming Centre and the Fugard Theatre at the interior side door entrance. The multi-vinyl was curated with a ball and claw half round table containing a vase with artificial flowers representing a domestic touch in the cavernous former warehouse interior.

Due to its relatively cheap cost, durability and functionality in working class areas South African residents continue to buy this colourful and decorative floor covering and the DIY practice of laying new linoleum (now multi-vinyl but mostly still referred to as lino), over the old worn out layer before the annual Christmas holidays and summer season persists and provides an inexpensive way to redecorate or create a home. Newspapers are laid down on earth, cement or wooden floors, and then vinyl is placed on top of the newspaper. When a new roll is purchased, it is cut and layered over the old also utilising newspapers between the layers for insulation and to prevent movement. Very rarely was the new layer glued as continuous pressure of foot traffic settles the covering into position. The floor coverings were not only valued for their aesthetic attributes but were also water-proof, provide insulation, have acoustical properties, comfortable underfoot, low-maintenance, durable and functional.

¹⁶⁴E Carstens, "Empties", in *The District Six Public Sculpture Project*, eds Crain Soudien and Renate Meyer, Cape Town: District Six Museum, 1998), 43.

¹⁶⁵Carstens, "Empties", 43.

¹⁶⁶Carstens, "Empties", 43.

The linoleum fragments in this case study are made of traditional hessian backed linoleum that has been rebranded as a high-end eco-friendly floor covering in the 21st century. Linoleum was largely superseded by other hard floor coverings in the 1950s and cheaper patterned linoleum came in different grades or gauges and was printed in thinner layers that were more prone to wear and tear. Pigments were often added to the materials to create the desired colour finish and decorative patterning as the colour permeates through all the layers.¹⁶⁷ Therefore the fragments found during the Horstley Street archaeological excavation in the archive could be 2 or 3 different types of linoleum. Linoleum was mostly associated with high-use areas such as kitchens in the twentieth century. The reason for its popularity was due to its low cost, easy maintenance, water resistance, and its resilience made standing easier and reduced breakage of dropped crockery. It also provided insulation against the cold due to its high flaxseed oil content and it was water resistant although a fire hazard.

Linoleum was not only confined to covering floors as it migrated into art, design and craft practice when South African artists in the 1990s adopted traditional hessian backed linoleum as it was relatively inexpensive and widely available. Linoleum was first adopted as an art medium in the early twentieth century, when a group of Dresden artists adapted the printmaking techniques for woodcut prints to linoleum, thus creating the linocut printmaking technique known as linocuts¹⁶⁸. A design is cut into the linoleum surface with cutting tools and then rolled with printing ink and pressed onto paper by hand or between 2 felted rollers. The result is a printed one colour design or artwork. Numerous copies can be produced from one linocut and this art form is popular in South Africa. Peter Clark, Rod Sauls, and Lionel Davis have created a large body of work representing themes of District Six and Cape Town social life from the perspective of their own witnessing and expressive storytelling. In the District Six Museum, linocut artworks have been printed on the

¹⁶⁷B. Campbell, commentator, *Made in Kirkcaldy*, 1964, Moving Image Archive, National Library of Scotland, <http://movingimage.nls.uk/film/4325>, accessed 05.09.2018

¹⁶⁸Prominent artists who created linocut prints included Picasso and Henri Matisse.

District Six floor map painting border (quite faded), utilized in t-shirt design, flags and poster designs.

The qualities of linoleum and the archaeological dig that unearthed these colourful fragments indicate the diverse disciplines and processes involved in establishing the social histories of District Six. As authentic textural and decorative reminders stored in the archive, these fragments are referenced in the permanent exhibitions. According to Antonia Malan and Elizabeth van Heyningen, “the intention was to demonstrate both the importance of archaeological context for even the recent past and the symbolic value as well as tangible power of apparently useless rubbish”.¹⁶⁹ As representative of lives lived, linoleum fragments as material artefacts offer the possibility of assembling and integrating homemaking practices into museum making. Excavated linoleum fragments, conventionally viewed as waste were re-categorised and deemed archival through archaeological practice. In doing so this became socio-historical evidence and formed the basis of an archaeological claim to District Six. Although the archaeological project at District Six assisted in establishing social histories of the area the museum sought to claim the work of archaeology as professional practice in the Memorial Hall rather than District Six lives and histories of lived experience. Therefore the archaeologist determined District Six social lives in the museum rather than the ex-residents themselves as noted by Ciraj Rasool.¹⁷⁰ I shall draw upon Rassool’s argument more closely in chapter two when I discuss the Horstley Street exhibition in the District Six Memorial Hall.

James Deetz argues that there is archaeological merit in studying the “small things forgotten” which are linked to “commonplace activities” and the

ways they left their imprint on the world...porcelain teacups from the eighteenth century carry messages from their makers and users. It is the archaeologist's task to decode those messages and apply them to our understanding of the human experience.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹Malan and van Heyningen, ‘Horstly Street’, 46.

¹⁷⁰Rassool, “Community museums” 306.

¹⁷¹J. Deetz, “Recalling Things Forgotten: Archaeology and the American Artefact” in *In Small Things Forgotten An Archaeology of Early American Life*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), 6.

He points to objects such as doorways, gravestones, musical instruments, and even shards of pottery fill in the cracks between large historical events and depict the intricacies of daily life.¹⁷² I agree with Deetz as these fragments have a vibrancy and attraction that is difficult to articulate.

In the District Six Museum Memorial Hall on the *Writers Floor*, the small Horstley Street archaeological exhibit contains linoleum fragments. Furthermore, in the District Six publication *Words in the house of Sound* “images of lino scraps are included as a decorative reference to the archaeological excavation”.¹⁷³ Therefore the museum exhibitions are infused with domestic qualities drawn from the archive and diverse fragmentary material which created one of the most powerful idioms that signified the aesthetics of community retrieval. Broken pieces of material remains, found at the site made the archive into a place of domestic and family recovery, although the work of archaeology and its claims to recovery have resulted in a contested interpretation.

Archival stories 7: The Protea Village Memory Map

Oral histories, family tree lightboxes, black and white photographic portraits and a large memory map painted on hardboard formed part of the Protea Village Action Committee or Campaign: PROVAC community’s land claim in Bishopscourt and a District Six Museum exhibition held in 2002. As with the District Six painted floor map located in the District six Museum the large painted memory map of Protea Village was created from oral histories, sketches, official cartographic maps, and aerial photographs. Utilising memories of an area from the late 1950s forced removals an exhibition: *Protea Village: A History of Paradise 1829-2002* became a means to reclaim the site. After the exhibition ended the large map was stored, unaccessioned and uncatalogued, in the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre.

Protea Village first developed before 1834 when slaves had settled, prior to the abolition of slavery and emancipation in South Africa, during the British colonial period. The Church of the Good Shepherd was later established in 1864 and became a central institution in the lives of the

¹⁷²Deetz, “Recalling”, 6.

¹⁷³P. Delport, *Words in the House of Sound The writer’s floor of the District Six Museum*, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2000), 4.

Protea villagers. At Boscheuvel, farmworkers settled near the estate's western border with Kirstenbosch.¹⁷⁴ This area later became known as the *bo-dorp* (top end of the town-village) of Protea Village. Oral histories, lodged at the District Six Museum, of the ex-residents of Protea Village reveal that for generations the cottages were occupied by a community of gardeners, woodcutters, stonemasons, domestic workers and flower sellers with generational ties to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and Bishopscourt.

Those employed by Kirstenbosch were skilled stonemasons and created many of the stonework pathways and retaining walls in the older parts of Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. Protea Village was proclaimed 'whites-only' in 1957 and forced removals took place between 1964-1969. The three stone cottages vacated by families with the Group Areas proclamation were then occupied by Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. All the other houses in the village were bulldozed and the area was renamed Boscheuvel Arboretum. Residents were removed to the Cape Flats and now reside in suburbs such as Mannenberg and Lotus River.

Bosheuvel Arboretum is a natural wooded green belt where hundreds of white Arum lilies and snowdrops bloom in the winter months. It is a parcel of land below Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens set within the exclusive suburb of Bishopscourt. The Arboretum is popular with dog walkers, families who picnic next to the Liesbeeck River and some use it for wedding photographs. It has natural springs that rise to the surface forming ponds but grass has covered the remains of Protea Village. An abandoned washing well is visible among the trees and one often finds old bottles, bottle tops, fragments of china and interesting nails embedded in the large trees. The three stone Stegman cottages, the cemetery and the Church of the Good Shepherd where ex-residents of Protea Village still worship are visible. Strong ties to the church ensure the historical continuity of a community erased from the landscape by apartheid. Reunions are held, such as the spring walk, where ex-residents reunite with old friends, family, and neighbours through personal recollections

¹⁷⁴The name 'Boscheuvel' dates from 1658 when Jan van Riebeeck, the Dutch colonial administrator at the Cape made an inspection of the free burgher settlement in the area with the intention of establishing viticulture.

with the site. Working within the transformation agenda of the museum and under the theme ‘District Six and beyond’ in 2002 the exhibition on Protea Village was conceptualised.

Uthando Lubabalo Baduza who was directly involved in the research and mounting of the Protea Village exhibition provides an insider’s perspective on social participatory mapping:

The memory map of Protea village exhibit was largely the initiative of two ex-residents, Geoff van Gusling and Cedric van Dieman who were both members of PROVAC. We were able to develop this exhibit during the workshops and it functioned as quite a powerful catalyst for invoking memories of Protea Village. In the Saturday workshops it was a scene of lively debate and discussion. It was a fairly simple map based on a Surveyor General diagram which was blown up into a large scale. Garth Erasmus, one of curators and an artist, was tasked to bring together the different layers of memory, that the ex-residents would inscribe on the map. The ex-residents identified landmarks, where various people lived, affixed excerpts and photographs that were connected to particular places on the memory map. The eventual direction that Erasmus took was to try and emulate an old tattered map that could be found in the archive. Each Saturday, after the ex-residents have added materials to the map, he would blend them into the map rendering it more ‘final’ each week. This happened until the ex-residents themselves stopped adding material when they began to see it as more final.¹⁷⁵

Reflecting on making the memory map Baduza says “I think it’s interesting that this exhibit was seen as ‘final’, as the memory work has not stopped and will continue to occur in the future when the community is able to proceed with a heritage project at the Stone Cottages”.¹⁷⁶

Graphic elements on the colourful map depict symbolic spaces such as the streets of forced removal Moss Street, Rose Street, Bishopscourt Drive, Kirstenbosch Drive, Rhodes Drive, Appian Way, and Boshof Avenue. Oral histories extracts, landmarks such as the bus stop, the rugby field, the thatched roof school,¹⁷⁷ the Church of the Good Shepherd, the Church graveyard, Boscheuwel Arboretum, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, the Stegman cottages, Kirstenbosch provision store - café, the Liesbeeck River and the wash trough where washing was done.

¹⁷⁵Baduza, “Memory”, 89-90.

¹⁷⁶Baduza, “Memory”, 90.

¹⁷⁷The original stone steps and stone foundations were retained and a school was rebuilt. A pre-school called The Hill now operates from the space where the Protea Village school once stood.



Figure 1.26: Protea Village memory map. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R.

The memory map involved mapping the social histories and geographies by residents of the former village below Kirstenbosch in a visual intersection of people and landscapes when the environment of the mountain, vegetation, and rivers were deeply felt. According to Uthando Baduza:

The District Six Museum needed to go beyond the narrative of District Six and to extend its methodologies to other experiences in order to further legitimise its memory work. The Protea Village community needed to turn its land claim activism into a powerful visual statement of history and the land in order to stake its powerful claim. The desire of Protea Village land politics of representation met the exhibition-making expertise of the District Six Museum's methodology to create a powerful exhibition about Protea Village. In the process of this negotiation, a more coherent narrative and a visual sense was given to the idea of a Protea Village community with strong roots and powerful historical claims.¹⁷⁸

Working with different forms of memory such as oral histories, photographs, artefacts, writing, drawings and landscapes, a memory map allowed for individual and collective memory to develop and become visible. A map may represent a geographic journey but in the context of forced removals mapping drew on oral histories, photographs, sketches, paintings, that recreated a particular time and place often accompanied by emotional reminiscing. Therefore trees, roads, house numbers, street names, landmarks, and events symbolising community associations were

¹⁷⁸Baduza, "Memory", 98.

depicted. Collaboration, writing and mapping along these lines assisted in engaging with intergenerational memories and connecting them to common issues in the present. Such an exchange between images and writings, past and present, memory and imagination, narratives, mobility, and movement built inter-connected stories that contributed to representing new thoughts, dreams, histories, and stories into the map.

Lawrence Cassidy, researching the District Six Museum practices of memory work and relating them to Salford 7, an area in the UK also similarly erased, notes:

At the time of my visit to the museum in 2006 a recent land claim had been won by the Protea village community of 86 families, located on the slopes of table mountain near District Six. This involved using material culture such as mental maps, family photographs and oral histories in the memory workshops as a part of the legal process of land restitution, as proof those families had lived in former properties prior to relocation. The use of the same material artefacts as legal evidence in the land claims process at District Six has resulted in an alternative form of legal process, where material culture is valued as directive evidence. This methodology was used because of the lack of other legal documents, such as deeds to former houses, or rent books. The Protea Village community land claim was modelled on the District Six land claim.¹⁷⁹

The mapping project and creation of the map represents what Edward William Soja has termed “spatial justice” or the rise of “critical spatial imagination” as the map becomes an experienced process and device, in a sense unrelated to standard cartography.¹⁸⁰ This draws and relies on Ingold’s notion of “wayfinding”¹⁸¹ or “wayfaring”¹⁸² excursions, making a distinction between mapping (wayfinding/wayfaring) and cartography (map-making). For Ingold “knowledge is cultivated by moving along paths that lead around, towards or away from places...we know *as* we go, not *before* we go”.¹⁸³ Furthermore, he notes that “neither placeless nor place-bound but place-making... wayfaring, like writing, is a fundamentally creative act.”¹⁸⁴ Viewed in this way “everyday

¹⁷⁹L. Cassidy, “Salford 7/District 6. The use of participatory mapping and material artefacts in cultural projects” in *Mapping Cultures: Place, Practice, Performance*, ed L. Roberts, (London: Palgrave MacMillian, 2012), 181-201.

¹⁸⁰E. W. Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 46

¹⁸¹T. Ingold, *The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 219-242.

¹⁸²T. Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History*, (Abington: Routledge, 2007), 72-103.

¹⁸³Ingold, *The perception*, 229-230.

¹⁸⁴Ingold, *Lines*, 101.

praxis is constituted and reconstituted by the mappings conferred upon it by movements and itinerates, not by cartographic representations (maps) by which bound in time and space, and *from* which geographical knowledge's are otherwise framed".¹⁸⁵ As Ingold points out "all wayfinding is mapping, though not all mapping is wayfinding".¹⁸⁶ According to Les Roberts, "unlike maps, cultures of mapping mobilize, temporalize and above all *humanize* space".¹⁸⁷

In light of Soja's notions of "critical spatial imagination" the map and mapping practices, which in his reading deconstruct official mapmaking became a defining trope in the District Six Museum.¹⁸⁸ I would include in this understanding an innovative art process termed body mapping where participatory research and an outline of the body becomes an image and visual story through a personal mapping experience.¹⁸⁹ The Protea Village memory map embodied qualities and principles proposed by Ingold and Soja of (re) orientation akin to "place-making" and "wayfinding" seeking "spatial justice" drawing on memory to chart its visual excursions. Sean Field notes that "People's struggles for restitution are driven by dreams of returning to the home or community where they feel they belonged. But this struggle is also about wanting to be heard, wanting to be seen, and wanting to be remembered".¹⁹⁰ According to Melanie Boehi

The majority of the maps and panorama drawings of Kirstenbosch published in the Journal of the Botanical Society indicated the botanical sites, offices and housing of the white staff, as well as the roads and roads and directions leading to the white suburbs, they failed to include references to Protea Village and the accommodation of black Kirstenbosch staff members. An exception to this is a map published in the Botanical Society's Journal in 1925 which included Protea Church was marked, as well as the accommodation of black staff consisting of "Workmen Cottages" that were allocated to "coloured" labourers and "Native Huts" that were allocated to African labourers. On the current map that the Kirstenbosch hands out to

¹⁸⁵Ingold, *Lines*, 101.

¹⁸⁶Ingold, *The perception*, 232.

¹⁸⁷L. Roberts, *Mapping Cultures: Place, Practice, Performance*, (London: Palgrave MacMillian, 2012), 87.

¹⁸⁸E. W. Soja, "The city and spatial justice", *Justice spatiale / Spatial Justice*, n° 1 September 2009, 21.

¹⁸⁹Body Mapping was a creative and exploratory initiative that grew out of the Memory Box workshops in Khayelitsha, Cape Town South Africa. The original purpose of this project was for these Memory Boxes to serve as bereavement therapy. Cape Town artist Jane Solomon first used the Body Mapping technique with a group of ten women living with HIV/AIDS later known as Bambanani Women's Group.

¹⁹⁰S. Field, "Turning up the Volume: Dialogues about Memory Create Oral Histories", *South African Historical Journal* 60, 2, Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2008.

visitors, the cottages are included on the map and named “Kirstenbosch Stone Cottages”, but again no reference is made to Protea Village. Similar to other gentrified areas with a history of forced removals in Cape Town, the use of new toponyms adds to the production of racialised space in which black ex-residents’ and workers’ histories and memories are marginalised. The map, as well as the sites of monumental gardening continue to reproduce colonial presents at Kirstenbosch.¹⁹¹

The Protea Village Memory map moves mapping into the terrain of reimagining social fabric connecting people and places, contesting and confronting official versions of the area alluded to by Boehi.¹⁹² In doing so it deconstructs assumptions about the meaning of maps where nature was and is often valued over human occupation.

The map is not on display but stored in the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre although a scanned digital weatherproof version could be created and installed at the Protea village site or made public through an online website as there are no markers to indicate the significance or history of the site. Although the map remakes, reconfigures and reconstitutes Protea Village the map as an archival object, created for an exhibition by ex-residents of Protea Village from memory and sketches, has become a record of institutional museum exhibition design. Indeed the District Six Museum assisted in surfacing memory through its memory mapping methodologies, yet the map is testament to how practices of representation and agency can be unmade in archival storage space. As the map represents a landscape with substantial social histories of slavery and forced removals removing it from public view renders it obsolete. After all the research, numerous oral histories, photographic documentation, creative workshop processes, and Protea Village exhibition its position creates a discontinuance with the work of revitalising Protea Village. This indicates different archiving and digitisation practices at the museum dependent on the forms and histories they represent.

¹⁹¹Melanie Boehi, “A South African social garden: people, plants and multispecies histories in the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden”, paper, WISER Seminar, University of the Witwatersrand, 15.10.2018, 12.

¹⁹²Boehi, “A South”, 12.

Archival Stories 8: The Ginsburg photographic collection: SAL or D6M no.91912-18/03/1998

Photographic studio portraits, family and informal photography was popular in District Six and the city. Donated photographs currently form a large part of the District Six Museum archival collections. The Ginsburg collection consisting of numerous negatives, individual black and white photographs and 76 hand-tinted colour portraits entered the District Six Museum archive in 1998. All photographs selected and included in this case study are from this collection although the sitters are unknown. Shulamit Rozowsky had acquired the collection from Gerson Ginsburg's son and donated the collection to the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town in 1998.¹⁹³ The University of the Witwatersrand borrowed 37 portraits from the Ginsburg Collection and they were returned to Cape Town on 6th November 1998.¹⁹⁴ The Ginsburg collection was later donated to the District Six Museum on 18th August 1998. This collection forms part of the District Six Museum photographic collections and is housed within the archive of the District Six Museum building in Buitenkant Street. Acquisitions of photographs and of photographic collections generally are acquired by the District Six Museum through donations as the museum does not actively purchase or seek out photographs except when engaged in research for an exhibition, a specific project or during the course of a memory workshop.¹⁹⁵

Gerson Ginsburg (b.1912- d.18/03/1998) is recorded as a photo and picture framer, according to South African National Library accession records, who worked with Golshevsky of Bridge Studios at 455 Albert Road, Woodstock and Van Kalker at 47 Victoria Road, Woodstock from approximately 1939 to 1983.¹⁹⁶ According to Geraldine Freislaar "the Van Kalker Studio, started by Mr. J. G. Van Kalker in 1937, became one of the most popular photographic studios in Cape Town".¹⁹⁷ Ginsburg arrived in Cape Town in 1929 from the military city of Dvinsk, Latvia,

¹⁹³District Six Museum accession record, District Six Museum archive, 12.11.2018.

¹⁹⁴District Six Museum accession record, 2018.

¹⁹⁵Julius, Interview, 2018.

¹⁹⁶District Six Museum accession record, 2018.

¹⁹⁷G. Frieslaar, "Picturing dreams: visual representations of the self in the Van Kalker studio", *Critical Arts South-North Cultural and Media Studies*, Volume 32, 2018 - Issue 1: Vernacular Photography, 150

then part of Russia. He was a Jewish immigrant joining an established diasporic community in Cape Town.¹⁹⁸



Figure 1.27: Studio portraiture. Ginsburg collection. D6M archive. Photographs: HH-R

The Ginsburg collection is not on display in the District Six Museum and is similar in content to another District Six Museum photographic collection, the Van Kalker photographic collection. It was donated to the District Six Museum “at the end of 2004 by Irvine Clements, current proprietor of the studio known as the Van Kalker studio” and resulted in a black and white photographic exhibition in 2012: *Chamber of Dreams: Photographs from the Van Kalker Studio*.¹⁹⁹ Photographs dated 1955 feature on the District Six Museum’s website under the Galleries section:

The Van Kalker photographic collection is a vault of private moments in which special events such as weddings, birthdays, graduations and christenings were immortalised and memorialised. They offer an intimate yet still unfolding account of the city of Cape Town and its people.²⁰⁰

The Van Kalker photographic donation provided an impetus and community engagement that created a “District Six Museum methodology project” as a way of “working with living memory and collections” according to Bonita Bennett, the District Six Museum director.²⁰¹ District Six ex-residents recalled photographic moments and memories of studio portraiture within the contextual

¹⁹⁸M. Shain and R. Mendelsohn, *The Jews in South Africa: An Illustrated History*, (Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2008), 12.

¹⁹⁹B. Bennett, “Working with living memory and collections: Van Kalker – a District Six Museum memory methodology project”, *City Site Museum Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum*, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2008), 120.

²⁰⁰District Six Museum, Chamber of Dreams, Galleries, District Six Museum website, <http://www.districtsix.co.za/Content/Exhibitions/Interact/Multimedia/ChamberDreams/index.php>, accessed 17.12.2018.

²⁰¹Bennett, “Working”, 120.

frame of special occasions, family life and homemaking at District Six Museum workshops in 2006-2007.²⁰² Workshop participants brought images of themselves or family members photographed by Van Kalker or other studio photographers that expanded research on the technologies, practices, and rituals of studio photography.²⁰³

In this manner, visual histories were established as another layer of retelling or recalling the details of the photographic experience such as the props or backdrop, furniture or atmosphere, clothing worn, the occasion and the manner in which the photographers posed the individual sitter or group for the photograph.²⁰⁴ This honorific and domestic circuit of framing the individual and family vignettes largely resulted in carefully curated and prized family photograph albums and large portraits, often hand-tinted in colour and framed. These were hung on walls or placed on mantelpieces in homes becoming a measure of pride and achievement. In the post-apartheid period, this type of photographic collection has been claimed by museums, educational and cultural institutions often placing the commercial photographer at the centre of reclaiming social lives. The District Six Museum claims the family as a trope, research topic, lens and theme where familial relationships and notions of the family, family histories, family links, and networks play a pivotal role in visualising and representing social histories.



Figure 1.28: Formal wedding photograph, Ginsburg collection. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R.

²⁰²Bennett, “Working”, 120.

²⁰³Bennett, “Working”, 120.

²⁰⁴Van Kalker was well known for working with sitters in complete silence during photographic studio engagements.

The universal theme of kinship in the Ginsburg collection is in many ways similar to the van Kalker collection in its neutral visual mock-up of a studio backdrop, props, lighting, and poses, although it is much smaller and I have only seen a limited number of images from each collection due to their fragility. Both collections pre-date forced removals in Cape Town in such areas as Tramway Road Sea Point, Schotschekloof and District Six. The Ginsburg collection features large hand-colored photographs indicating a high degree of technical expertise in Cape Town studio portraiture. As noted by Patricia Hayes referring to the Van Kalker photographic collection: “its intergenerational quality marks photography as a long-standing tradition and popular visual expression in all classes of Cape Town society”.²⁰⁵ The existence of both photographic studios in Woodstock indicates a social point and desire for studio portraiture. As realised in recent 21st century acquisitions by the District Six Museum, they reveal an economy and proliferation of domestic portraits as being a thriving industry in urban Cape Town.

Photographers and photography have contributed greatly to the way District Six and is remembered and exhibited yet often photographers remained invisible in public histories and this was one of my motivations for selecting the Ginsburg collection. On the photographs details of the sitter(s) were often not recorded, which left a void when conducting research. Where names of the sitters were recorded, these were mainly recorded on the back of the photograph, sometimes in handwriting that is difficult to decipher. In the Ginsburg Collection, I did note that on many of the photographs the name and address of the photographic studio were stamped in red ink onto the back of the photographs. Perhaps the stamp indicated to Ginsburg where to return the framed, and often colour tinted, photograph as he worked for both Van Kalker and Bridge Studios.

Various large tinted colour and black and white portraits I viewed from the Ginsburg collection depicted a diverse range of sitters, some in full-length poses and others as head and shoulders portraits looking directly at the camera in the calmness of the studio with its neat and

²⁰⁵P. Hayes, “Power, Secrecy, Proximity: A Short History of South African Photography”, *Kronos*, No.33 (November 2007), 156.

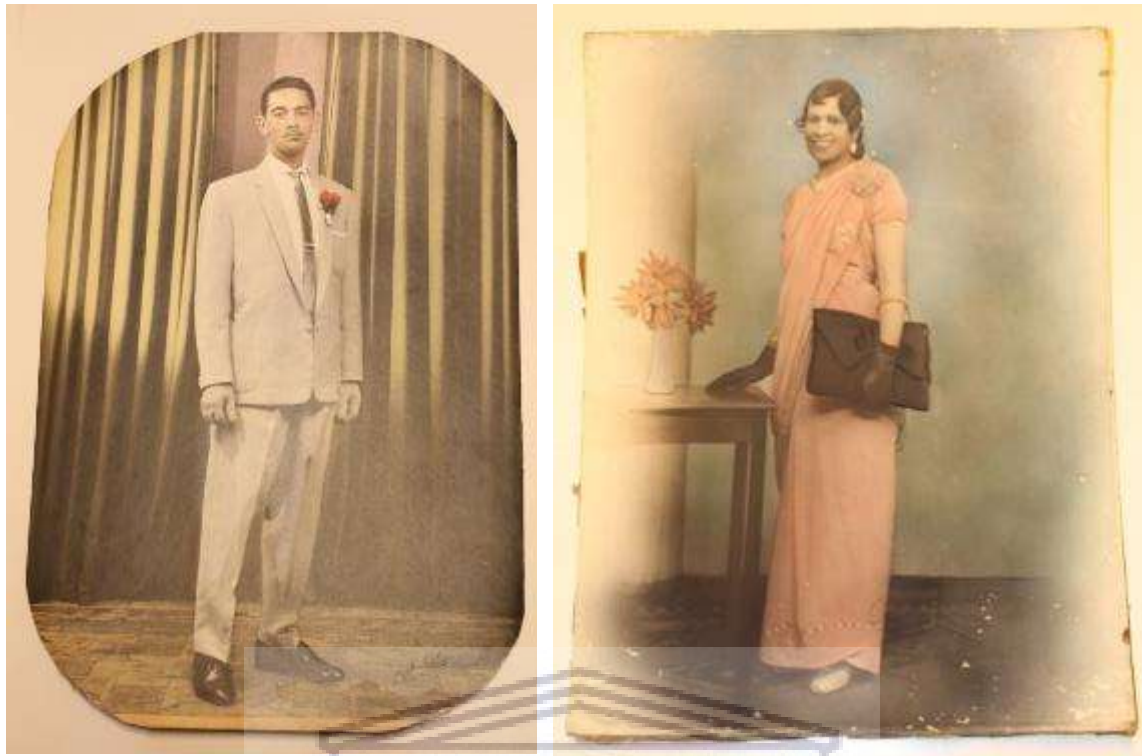


Figure 1.29: Posed full-length studio portraits with colour tinting. Ginsburg collection. D6M archive. Photographs HH-R

orderly arrangements. The quality varies in the black and white photographs, some clearly rejected by the photographer indicated by graininess, blurring and an unfocused quality creating a sense of a technical and darkroom struggle to perfect the image for the client sitter. A series of large hand-tinted colour photographs of high quality were extensively re-worked and touched up with colour washes rendered on top of the black and white image. The washes in the backgrounds are faded out indicating a watercolour medium although some images of this type are gaudier and livid which could possibly mean that an aniline colour palette was utilised although it is hard to determine this in the photographs without scientific analysis. Over painting to the degree that photographic detail is secondary was not evident and it appeared that the photographic artist applied artistic license to create an almost surreal quality in certain hand-tinted photographs from the Ginsburg Collection. A portrait of a young man wearing a Fedora hat has a bright glow with patches of green and blue advancing and framing his face creating a surreal aura and lifelike vitality that demands the viewer lingers on this impression.



Figure 1.30: Studio portraits with extensive colour tinting. Ginsburg collection. D6M archive. Photographs: HH-R.

The use of hand-colouring and tinting black and white photographs has a fairly established history dating back to the mid-19th century as the desire to create lifelike qualities and appearance continues to result in contemporary photoshopped images resembling the quality of hand-tinting.²⁰⁶ According to Ann-Sophie Lehmann reviewing the historical relationship between colour and photography notes:

Hand-tinted photography remained an easy and cheap way to enhance black-and-white images until colour photography became available to a wide consumer market in the 1940s. Interestingly, while color was certainly meant to heighten photography's reference to reality, the exact relation between the referent and its color seems of secondary relevance to the practice.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶P. R. Choudhuri, Hand-Tinted Photography – How It Was Forgotten, <https://www.distinguished-mag.com/hand-colouring-hand-tinted-photography/>, accessed 09.11.2018.

²⁰⁷A. S. Lehmann, "The Transparency of Color: Aesthetics, Materials, and Practices of Hand Coloring Photographs between Rochester and Yokohama", *Getty Research Journal*, No. 7 (2015), The University of Chicago Press, 83.

As the hand-tinted colour photograph was created for the client sitter, according to cost rosy checks could be added at a minimal expense, and a sliding scale of costs would relate to the amount, quality and scope of hand-tinting applied to the photograph.²⁰⁸ The client sitter might also request a particular colour or colour combination in the details of a dress for instance. The Ginsburg Collection also appeared to showcase the work of a hand colourist and technical skill. Furthermore, it stands for a portfolio of work possibly shown to clients before work was conducted or to reference a particular pose or stylistic arrangement. From what I have observed in the photographs themselves, lighter or mid-toned coloured garments and accessories allowed for successful colouration therefore under or overexposed photographs were not suitable. Research into the practice revealed that there were various styles of colouring and various mediums prescribed:

As an art and craft for which the nature, light-fastness, and transparency of color materials, the preparation of the surface, and the application of the colors were just as important as the questions of which colors were suitable for a particular pictorial element and of how hand coloring would shift the photograph from the domain of reproduction to that of art.²⁰⁹

This raises an important point as the skilled hand of the colourist added intrinsic value to black and white photographs which could be associated with class difference and affordability and operated as a type of status symbol. Lehmann states that “hand coloring also provided for a new line of employment in photography studios and stimulated manufacturers of photographic materials to develop and market special photographic colors from the 1850s onward”.²¹⁰ In the case of Ginsburg arriving in Cape Town in 1929, the established photographic economy present in the city created a long tenure of skilled employment. Ginsburg appears to have been involved in the creative and technical aspects of photographic manipulation. In assessing the Ginsburg Collection it is far removed from the suppressive black and white ID photograph of the passbook under apartheid and represents, in my view, an integral part of a dignifying visual regime.

²⁰⁸C. Johnston, “Hand-Coloring of Nineteenth Century Photographs History and Social Context of Hand-Colored Photographs”, paper, School of Information, The University of Texas at Austin, <https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~cochine/pdfs/c-johnston-04-hand-coloring.pdf>, 2, accessed 09.11.2018.

²⁰⁹Lehmann, “The Transparency”, 83.

²¹⁰Lehmann, “The Transparency”, 13.



Figure 1.31: Large format studio portraits. Ginsburg collection. D6M archive. Photographs: HH-R.

The photographers who created the Ginsburg collection represent a transformation of the personal into the professional and the public, representing the self and self-image at life's high points and milestones. The collection provided a rich case for tracking changing photographic technologies, processes, conventions, and developments. Besides the practice of studio photography, roving street photographers also plied their trade in the Cape Town central business district for many decades and this practice informed the black and white photographic exhibition *Movie Snaps*, held in 2014 at the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre.



Figure 1.32: Military styled full-length portrait. Ginsburg collection. D6M archive. Photograph: HH-R.

The Ginsburg Collection broadens the District Six Museum archive to include the roles and uses of photography. It claims through the mediums of photography, biography, and memory a role in historical discourses in Cape Town establishing visual histories. Furthermore, the museum utilises different photographic collections and visual sources that are curated into District Six narratives seen in exhibitions and publications, utilising the same extractive methodology applied to oral histories. Photographs from various sources and collections were reconceptualised and reframed to stand for a District Six community on the museum’s marketing material such as brochures, signage, pamphlets and on the museum’s website. The Heseltine collection of photographs was an exhibition *Going and Coming Back* in the Homecoming Centre, which formed part of a District Six Museum Public Education Programme. The invitation utilises a Heseltine photograph of a group of boys sitting on a wall in District Six.

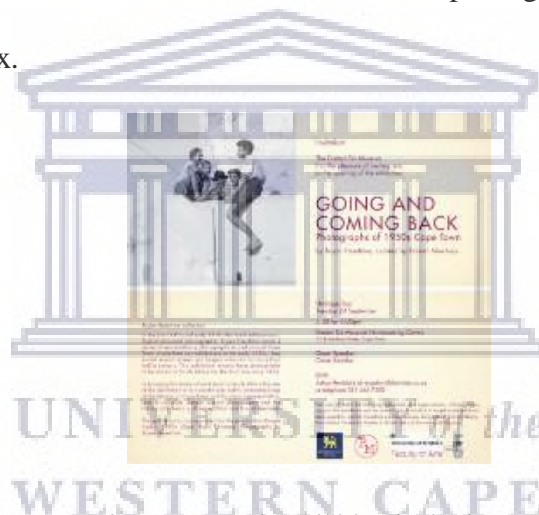


Figure 1.33: *Going and Coming Back* exhibition invitation. D6M archive.

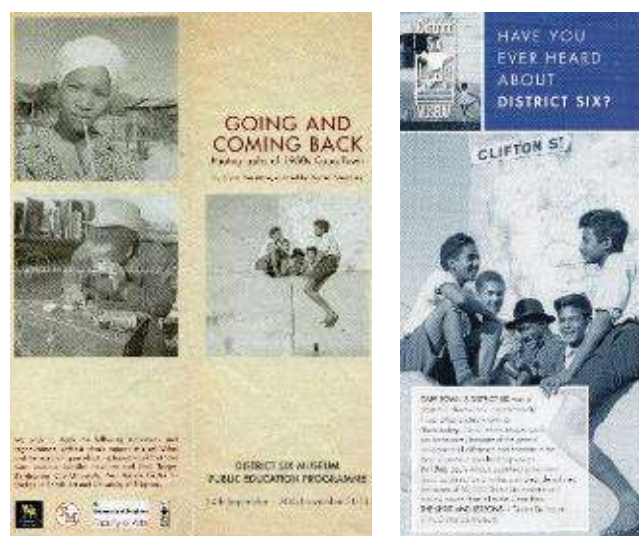


Figure 1.34: *Going and Coming Back* District Six Museum Public Education Programme brochure and District Six Museum HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT DISTRICT SIX? brochure. D6M archive.

Later the same photograph was used on a museum brochure accompanied by the slogans ‘Have you ever heard about District Six?’ and on the reverse side ‘60 000 STORIES WILL NEVER BE DEMOLISHED’.²¹¹ On the top far left of the brochure is a smaller photograph taken by Jansje Wissema of a young girl posing in front of a wall in District Six and the museum’s vertical logo in white is overprinted onto the photograph. The Wissema photograph appeared as a book cover in the publication *District Six* by Adam Small and Jansje Wissema, on the museum external graphic banners, museum brochures and pull up banners. This indicates that photographs are museumised as they appear useful in creating interest and the trope of childhood memories or innocence lost is again evoked through the use of this particular Heseltine image by the museum.

Apartheid and anti-apartheid documentary photography have led and captured the national and international visual field and imagination, whereas social and ordinary photographic practice is linked to making things tangible and visible signifying social moments in life. Utilised by the District Six Museum photographs hold an unusual visual power as photography is one of the most important methodologies adopted by the museum to depict and recover the District Six story.²¹² Family photograph albums allow a view into domestic milieus, private realms, familial relationships and technical photographic skill providing historical interpretations that conceptualise, design and establish social value. In addition to reflecting on the uses, roles, and systems of visual representation within Cape Town, it further brings together the histories and archives in dialogue about the first global visual medium, private archives, historical and social memory. This photographic nexus has influenced, informed and constructed social lives in numerous post-

²¹¹District Six Museum pamphlet, “Have you ever heard about District Six?”, 2014.

²¹²Photographic collections are used across various media by the museum and the constant role of the photograph and photographer in making the museum ranges from capturing behind the scenes intimate museum moments, to documenting commemorative events, depicting exhibitions on the museum website and showcasing community in the annual report. In early museum publications photographs were utilised as context but later the museum utilised larger format photographs which draw the viewer into the content of full colour digital photographs. Numerous District Six Museum contemporary photographs have been taken by professional photographer Paul Grendon and his particular photographic eye and technical expertise have contributed to a particular empathetic and vital framing of museum moments. The District Six Museum annual report 2017 & 2018 utilises many of his photographs in an edge to edge page format and are high impact statements about the work of the museum.

apartheid museums specifically those emphasizing community where the photograph acts as a temporal and co-habiting informant. The photograph in a community museum acts as a common denominator. Indeed through photographic curation, sets up tangible and visible connections enabling the boundaries of the community to be made through this visualisation practice.²¹³

Archival conclusions

In this chapter, I explored as an archival sliver eight selected case studies from the District Six Museum archive where design was surfaced in different ways through observation, research, writing, and photography. What was revealed is that the ‘archive’ is a series of spaces, where different archival variables are practiced and where records are produced that ultimately shape or “configure” the archive and “what can be said”.²¹⁴ Items are stored in different areas as the archive works to create a hierarchical system of importance as it relates to archival usefulness. This points to differentiation in how the museum is made through variable archival practice. I wrote in-depth micro histories that contributed to surfacing archival differentiation and histories that contested the mythological fairyland readings of District Six in the Museum exhibitions.²¹⁵ Research into the collections sought to advance interdisciplinary texture to the histories of forced removals and provided rich details. Furthermore, I contributed new findings to further amplify certain aspects of cultural production. The District Six Museum archive as a post-apartheid struggle repository opened up questions about how and what the preservation of memory entails. The repository of “living memory” influenced frameworks of representation, idioms and narrative structure in exhibition-making. As an established authoritative archive its positionality provides a highly public historical dimension to Cape Town which gives it significance in constructing identities of a displaced and returning urban cosmopolitan populace. My findings included the notion that this particular archive

²¹³Every District Six photograph, whatever its location or type is claimed to substantiate the museum’s slogans especially ‘60 000 stories will never be demolished’.

²¹⁴C. Hamilton, V. Harris and G. Reid, “Introduction” in *Refiguring the Archive*, eds Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Michèle Pickover, Graeme Reid, Jane Taylor and Razia Saleh, (Cape Town: David Philip-Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 9.

²¹⁵Adams, “Gazing” 242.

was a physical place, a conceptual departure point, the social palimpsest of a diasporic community, a space of confinement and a vital working part of the museum. An exploration into its collections is relevant to understanding how remnants of apartheid systems and the post-apartheid, are interwoven and coexist. I attempted to explore this dichotomy and confront these historical dynamics by writing eight histories from the archive and found it to be a repository containing multiple conceptual and interpretative possibilities.



Chapter 2

District Six Museum designs: Exhibiting and representing community

In museum exhibitions, design determines the layout, appearance and placing of every physical element, including the selection and placement of objects. Design is always linked with and expressive of the culture in which both designers and users function.¹

This chapter seeks to examine District Six Museum exhibitionary projects through reading design elements in constructing re-imagined District Six social identities and histories. As a post-apartheid memory project that evolved into a museum, design has been a central strategy claimed by the museum in its process of making memory work visible to its attendant publics. Seeking to understand District Six Museum representational design within post-apartheid exhibitionary strategies, I explore how the original design features of the exhibition *Streets: Retracing District Six* were reconfigured in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. I utilise the terms exhibition and exhibit in the broadest possible sense so that a picture emerges of memorial practices coupled and enabled by various aesthetic modalities. The museum exhibitions are claimed as “signposts of retrieval” that also adopted a low tech approach thereby establishing the visual culture of the museum. This changed when the museum later procured the Sacks Futeran buildings and adapted them as a Homecoming Centre. The District Six Museum increasingly drew on expert knowledge, materials, narrative scripts, techniques, and technology as relevant props to visualising community.² As a field of enquiry, the exhibitions are critically examined in the implementation of processes of exhibition production to explore curatorial design. Conceptual frameworks adopting idioms such as fragments, family photographs, street signs, inscription, birds and other symbolic tropes indicated a strategic and coordinated approach to design applied across various design mediums.³ Exhibits interpreted the loss of District Six and the rebuilding of a community through simulated and performative experiences and in turn, the exhibitions have created a series of design applications

¹F. Monti and S. Keene, *Museums and Silent Object: Designing Effective Exhibitions*, (England & USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2013), 32.

²Delport, “Signposts”, 31.

³Relates to Walter Benjamin’s approach to writing history, “the fragment is the gateway to the whole” cited in J. A. Walker, *Design History and the history of design*, (Pluto: London, 1989), 79.

and visual statements susceptible to shifting design trends in Cape Town. District Six Museum design and re-design represent an evolving lifecycle over the past 25 years in which the museum's work is supported increasingly through "art and design" strategies.⁴

Firstly I review various exhibitionary representations by the District Six Museum commencing in the early 1990s, with the founding exhibition *Streets: Retracing District Six* across two locations where various designed features established a visual structure. Then I critique the current permanent exhibition *Digging Deeper* as the main case study noting shifts in museumisation as design changed to incorporate a more explicitly curated environment. I then proceed to establish museumisation design at the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre through *die Tafel* (the Table) exhibition theme and what the centre has allowed the Museum to achieve in terms of design.

Through the adoption of mobility as an idiomatic theme, certain design elements were re-interpreted as interactive mobile museum units and moved to different sites. The District Six Museum provides an opportunity to investigate post-apartheid museum design in Cape Town where as a cultural brand it "has emerged as one of the pre-eminent examples of new museums whose memory methodologies are based on participation, annunciation, and inscription, and as a model of memory work based upon the idea of "transactions of knowledge" as asserted by Ciraj Rassool.⁵ I am in part challenging this claim through my emphasis on branding and design.

Transactions of knowledge to which he refers operate in a variety of contexts and mediums and relate to different transactive forms. On the outset, District Six ex-resident testimonies, stories and memories guided the original impulses of the museum. Although as the museum evolved visually, design in specific ways allowed these transactions to emerge unevenly. My argument challenges this romantic vision and points to the important work of design expertise in defining the museum. Museum staff with expertise and external graphic designers, layout artists, photographers, and illustrators make the final design decisions relating to the technicalities of printing and

⁴B. Bennett, "Memorialisation through art and design for a new generation", August 2013 Slideshare, <https://www.slideshare.net/CapeTownTourism/district-six-by-bonita-bennett-director-district-6-museum>, 2September 2013, accessed 10.10.2019.

⁵Rassool, and Slade, "Fields of Play", 188.

considerations of cost for publication. Selecting a format, writing content, selecting graphics, creating logos and fonts, brainstorming a title, selecting an image or text, deciding on a layout, editing, proofreading and sourcing a printer are important design tasks. And these must not be underemphasized through evoking the idea of knowledge transactions.

Collecting and re-designing District Six as a memory-making museum

The formation of the Hands Off District Six (HODS) campaign in 1988 an “alliance of civic, religious organisations, schools, sports organisations and political structures” came “together to struggle against attempts to redevelop District Six with the involvement of the ex-residents themselves”.⁶ Meeting regularly since 1988 member Crain Soudien states,

In the winter months of 1989, a group of us led by Elaine Clark, Anwah Nagia, Lucien le Grange and myself, met week after week to talk through the idea of a museum for District Six. Advised by Dickie Nacerodien, a lawyer friend from Woodstock, we frantically worked over the issues constituting ourselves legally and spent several months arguing over the kind of organisation we thought would best serve the struggle to preserve the memory of District Six. We spent hours asking questions such as where we could find a home for such a museum, how we would resource it, and critically what we would put in it? Also present at those meetings were Naz Ebrahim, Robin Edwards, Terence Fredericks, Peggy Delport, Stan Abrahams, Vince Kolbe, André Odendaal and Stan Kannemeyer.⁷

As an outcome to these discussions, the District Six Museum Foundation was established in 1989 and in 1992 District Six ex-resident Stan Abrahams became a trustee.⁸ As a member of the Methodist Church, he facilitated the use of the old Central Methodist Church in Buitenkant Street at the periphery of District Six.⁹ To the left of the church’s main entrance was an exterior commemorative wall plaque representing the first memorial to apartheid forced removals in South Africa commissioned by Rev Peter Storey in 1971.¹⁰

⁶C. Rassool and J. Thorne, “A timeline for District Six a parallel text” in *Recalling Community, Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, eds. Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum: 2001), 146.

⁷C. Soudien, “Foreward”, *District Six Museum Annual Report 2008/9*, 3.

⁸The District Six Museum Foundation was established as a Trust in 1994.

⁹C. Soudien, “The First few years of the District Six Museum Foundation” in *Recalling Community, Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, eds. Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum: 2001), 5.

¹⁰Interview with Rev Alan Storey, son of Rev Peter Storey of the Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town, 23rd August 2018.

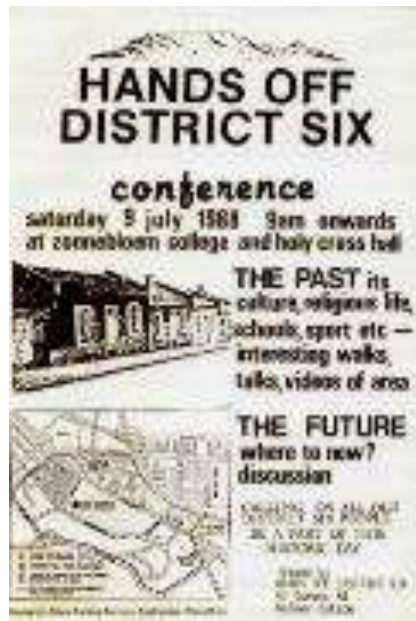


Figure 2.1: Hands Off District Six leaflet design, 1988. Source: District Six Museum publication: *City Site Museum Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum*, 114.



Figure 2.2: Rev. Peter Storey holding Methodist plaque in 1971. Photograph: Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town.

The plaque was stolen shortly after installation and replaced a number of times. According to Richard Marbeck:

Instead of marking a place, the District Six plaque evokes a memory. It recalls the human cost of apartheid. Recalling the cost, the District Six plaque calls people to construct their recollections, their geography of apartheid...marking not a presence but an absence. The plaque on the

church satisfies a need different from that of marking a boundary so as to erase barriers.¹¹

Tracing the political, cultural and social mobilisation in reclaiming District Six pasts Ciraj Rassool notes: “The District Six Museum Foundation was one of a number of non- governmental organizations and cultural projects that had come into existence between the 1970s and the 1990s to preserve the memory of District Six”.¹² As District Six, approximately 42 hectares, “was proclaimed salted earth... a group of conference participants were tasked to develop a memorial project around the area. The programme for the conference included sessions and efforts to visualize and ‘perform’ District Six, and included slide presentations, videos, poetry readings, and a photographic exhibition”.¹³ These assembled items resulted in small Hands Off District Six (HODS) displays.¹⁴



Figure 2.3: Buitenkant Street Methodist church interior, Rennie & Goddard Architects photographic survey, 1993.

¹¹R. Marbeck, “A Tale of Two Plaques: Rhetoric in Cape Town”, *Rhetoric Review*, Vol. 23. No. 3 (2004), Taylor and Francis Ltd, 12.

¹²Rassool, “Community Museums”, 287-288.

¹³C. Julius, “‘Digging Deeper than the eye approves’: Oral histories and their use in the *Digging Deeper* exhibitions of the District Six Museum”, *Kronos*, vol.34, n.1. Cape Town (Nov. 2008), 106.

¹⁴Julius, ‘Digging Deeper’, 106.

Mini exhibitions were held at a minor hall on Zonnebloem Estate, Cavendish Square Shopping Centre and “Robin Edwards held an exhibition at a small hall in Newlands”¹⁵. These diminutive memorial displays stimulated interest in a possible District Six memorial. Rassool writes:

In 1992 the foundation held a two-week photographic exhibition in the Central Methodist Church in Buitenkant Street on the edge of District Six. Former residents assembled in the pews of the old District Six Church to exclaim their recollections, as a powerful body of photographs and the enlarged images of projected slides and old film footage sent them back into their pasts in the district. It was this desire to reassemble and restore the corporeal integrity of the District through memory that created the District Six Museum itself two years later.¹⁶

The church at that time was underutilised because of District Six forced removals of the majority of the church congregation from the city. The Central Methodist Mission allowed the church to be used as an exhibition and meeting space.

Streets: Retracing District Six: Wayfinding design and thinking in fragments

On the 10th December 1994, the museum opened when “District Sixers not only claimed the right to tell their stories in a public space but also started the official process of restitution of the area to its original inhabitants”.¹⁷ The exhibition *Streets: Retracing District Six* was opened by Minister of Justice Dullah Omar after converting the Central Methodist church building in Buitenkant Street into a provisional memorial space.¹⁸ Thus museum design originated from a sense of enquiry into District Six pasts drawing on mapping the streets and former homes where people lived and worked in the erased district culminating in a series of visual motifs and collections.

The main space within the disused inner-city church building was repurposed to narrate deeply moving stories of apartheid experience representing a historical event: forced removals from District Six Cape Town. Design and curation in this first exhibition evolved from the relationships forged via political activism engaged around the struggles for human rights, protecting the site and

¹⁵Soudien, “The First”, 6.

¹⁶Rassool, “Community Museums”, 287-288.

¹⁷S. M.M.A. Geschier, “Remembering and imaging trauma in the District Six Museum”, *Imaging the City Memories and Cultures in Cape Town*, eds Sean Field, Renate Meyer & Felicity Swanson, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007), 39.

¹⁸T. Morphet, “Archaeology of Memory”, *Mail and Guardian*, 30 February 1995.

ex-residents reconnecting with each other. Personal objects, photographs, documents, banners and news clippings were brought into the church and displayed.¹⁹



Figure 2.4: District Six Street Signs in the Buitenkant Methodist church. Photograph: D6M archive.



Figure 2.5: *Streets Retracing District Six* exhibition. 01.10.1998. Photograph: Rennie & Scurr architects and *Streets Retracing District Six* © District Six Museum/Africa media Online Image no. APN263432, undated.

¹⁹District Six Foundation Newsletter, a complimentary first edition, January 1996.

One of the key design elements introduced and utilised were original municipal District Six blue and white enamel street signs, rescued from the District.²⁰ Sandra Prosalendis, former museum director recounts that after locating David Elrick who had salvaged the street signs after the forced removals and demolition of District Six she discovered that he had hidden them in his cellar for 20 years.²¹ He was ordered to dump the signs with building rubble into Table Bay.²² Prosalendis recalled in an interview with Uthando Baduza “that the negotiations that ensued between the museum and Elrick were tremendously intense and they eventually had to purchase the street signs for R2, 000.00” and “the Museum got an artist to hang them up”.²³



Figure 2.6: *The Last Days of District Six* photographic exhibition 1996 within the *Streets Retracing District Six* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

²⁰Enamel street signs were produced in white on black or black on white that were standardised street sign combinations in c1850 but by 1870 white lettering on a blue background was popular.

²¹Baduza, “Memory”, 18.

²²Baduza, “Memory”, 18.

²³Baduza, “Memory”, 18.



Figure 2.7: *Streets Retracing District Six* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.



Figure 2.8: Individual street alcoves in the *Streets Retracing District Six* exhibition. Photographs: D6M archive.

These rectangular objects made of baked enamel were part of the former colonial system of municipal road signage in District Six and were now suspended in three rows in the Central Methodist Church. Valmont Layne, former District Six Museum director notes that the signs

“immediately created a form of magic; the signs really jolted memory in a very effective way”.²⁴

People coming into the museum would:

See the name of the street they had lived in, and this would open up a flood of memories and stories. One man even brought in his old postcards addressed to him in District Six and hung them on his street sign.²⁵

This led to the creation of “an imaginative tool” a large floor map painted on canvas, measuring 5 metres by 7 metres conceptualised and formulated “collectively by a broadly composed working group and curated by artist Peggy Delport”.²⁶ Based on mapping the District artists were invited to print images and inscribe poetry on the large map border. The map was placed “in the centre of the ground floor exhibition space creating an interior courtyard effect”.²⁷ Layne argues that through representations of everyday lived experience and identity the ordinary transformed. It became a collective signpost and iconographical presence. According to Layne,

The *Streets* exhibition was planned to last for two weeks. But the museum found that once it had opened *Streets*, we could not close the doors. People started to come in for all sorts of reasons. They would come and stand on the map and talk to the different people who work in the museum, who are mainly ex-residents and children of ex-residents, and tell their story. The museum is an ordinary people’s place. Not a day goes by without people coming to be heard, to tell their stories, to share their memories, to laugh, and to cry.²⁸

Homes, streets, and places were marked on the map as people remapped the old district where memory and inscription acted as a defensive tool, literally rewriting apartheid urban planning. As the reimaged map allowed people to stand in District Six it embodied identities, histories, and stories as well as intangible qualities. As a large exhibition graphic the District Six map painting “looks nothing like the landscape or cityscape it represents, the symbols and scale tell us how to navigate its space” according to Layne.²⁹ It intentionally invited interactivity and spontaneity in the

²⁴Layne, “The District”, 7.

²⁵Layne, “The District”, 7.

²⁶Delport, “Signposts”, 44.

²⁷Layne, “The District”, 7.

²⁸Layne, “The District”, 62.

²⁹J. Schirato and J. Webb, “Visual technologies” in *Reading the Visual* (London: Sage, 2004), 51.

exhibition space. The map enabled and supported ex-residents to reinterpret space after loss, displacement, and separation and re-enter their own histories and the city.



Figure 2.9: District Six painted floor map inscription process in *Streets Retracing District Six* exhibition with black and white photographic building models. Detail of inscribed texts. Photographs: D6M archive.

In design terms, Charmaine McEachern describes the map template as displaying “graphic minimalism”³⁰, namely “the lack of written texts to depict factual information and experiences of District Six, provided space for...orality to take form”.³¹ Julius drawing on McEachern states:

McEachern’s observations rest on the notion that oral acts of remembrance as ‘oral cultural representation’ – a representation enabled by the aesthetic framework of *Streets* and its ability to evoke memory and narrative through fragments...narratives are anchored around these fragments, namely the spaces and places in District Six depicted through the street map and street signs”.³²

Therefore District Six as it was in the 1960s when removals commenced was recreated as an interactive hand-painted floor map that through inscription came to embody stories where an experience of place was reflected. As “a visual technology that rendered space” the map’s scale and navigational elements geographically and graphically represented³³ and located ways of seeing and interpreting District Six.³⁴

³⁰C. McEachern, “Working with memory: the District Six Museum in the new South Africa”, *Social Analysis* 42 (2), July 1998, 62.

³¹Julius, “Oral”, 80.

³²Julius, “Oral”, 80.

³³Julius, “Oral”, 80.

³⁴Schirato and Webb, “Visual”, 51.

The map as a large “narrative fragment” was painted in warm tones of sepia, brick red, and yellow with indigo outlines referencing the blue colour of the street signs. Therefore through the “notion of fragments – in the form of archaeological evidence from the Horstley Street site – an alternative and more representational way of interrogating historical evidence for the narrative of District Six was enabled” according to Julius.³⁵ Inscribed text was of various colours and often the family name and the street address were connected visually through colour and text on the map.

Around the central map, as a way of framing, were printed poems and linocut artworks featuring *Homage* by Peter Clark and artworks printed by Rod Sauls, a District Six ex-resident and artist. As a way of orientation, small black and white photographs were made into two-dimensional architectural models of familiar buildings and placed on top of the map during the *Streets* exhibition so ex-residents could move them into various positions and locate familiar locales: streets, homes, shops, schools, churches and so forth.³⁶

The map was intended as an interactive task for ex-residents and was a recreation of the streets and places of District Six on which former residents could:

Write themselves back into the centre of the city, to claim their history and their space. Visually creating patterns of human occupation and less indicative of topographical details but an essential and interesting framework for local detail to emerge. People marked bus stops, places where somebody sold peanuts, their old schools, and their homes.³⁷

Signing the map in their own handwriting provided a marker of authenticity. An important point made by Julius is “how narrative fragments accompanied by visual stimulus become central to the ways in which narratives of the area were constructed, and forged ways of speaking about the past within a post-apartheid context”.³⁸ Inscription also commenced on lengths of calico fabric as people left their comments and reflections writing in felt tip pen: “Two lengths of calico – one for

³⁵Julius, “Oral”, 80.

³⁶G. Grundlingh, black and white photograph of Peggy Delpont and Noor Ebrahim on the floor map painting, 1995 in *Recalling Community in Cape Town Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001), 31.

³⁷Layne, “The District”, 59.

³⁸Julius, “Oral”, 80.

visitors and the other for ex-residents...located near the pulpit” according to Julius.³⁹ Therefore, map and cloth inscriptions developed simultaneously. The collective memory cloth and map inscriptions, embodied and acted as the first tangible archive of District Six memory.

High levels of interactivity marked this design phase of the museum when reunions of former residents led to inscription on the map and memory cloths, often in a celebratory atmosphere. Telling stories and sharing perspectives in an impromptu manner created a platform for poetry, song, performance allowing others to witness and become part of each other’s District Six narratives within schematic museum arrangements. Sharing experiences and perspectives in this way opened up spaces for healing, dialogue, and memory mapping that created new concepts and forms of post-apartheid socio-historical knowledge and museumisation.

According to Prosalendis, the map alongside other exhibits intended to:

Harness the memories that would critique received notions of race and representation in South Africa. One of the ways the museum did this was to create a portrait gallery.⁴⁰

Enlarged honorific photographic portraits of prominent District Six residents were printed on architectural paper and hung from the upper gallery forming a group and further peopling the space thereby resurrecting social aspects of District Six personalities and inter-relationships.⁴¹

An important feature of the *Streets* exhibition were the street views: panels that worked with individual and collective street signs suspended from the upper gallery and decorative wrought iron poles of the museum intended to evoke the surfaces, textures, and *gees* (spirit) of the former streets of District Six.⁴² Included in the exhibition was an interior view of domestic arrangements curated by artist Peggy Delport: cups and saucers displayed on a shelf, decorative newspaper shelf linings with cut-outs designs, an old primus stove on a colourful printed plastic-covered table drawing on

³⁹Julius, “Oral”, 8.

⁴⁰Layne, “The District”, 7.

⁴¹Jos Thorne utilised a process to print enlarged portrait photographs onto film transparencies that were adapted from architectural design practice. See J. Thorne, “The Choreography of display: Experiential exhibitions in the context of museum practice and theory”, (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 2003), 90.

⁴²District Six streets were curated as alcoves within the exhibition space. These included Hanover, Horstley, Tyne, and Constitution streets and Vernon Terrace where facades and windows allowed interior views of a kitchen, workshop, café and lounge curated in a style and arrangement typical of District Six.

popular ways of homemaking.⁴³ The everyday domestic object in the curated District Six kitchen stood for reclaiming memory and acted as a bearer of meanings and values. As material traces of home in the spaces of the museum they represented the working life of people, rituals of homemaking, home, belonging and personal and family possessions.

In 1997, relating to the proposed renovation of the three joined Methodist Church-owned buildings and to motivate for the funding of Stepping Stones Educare and museum renovations Sandra Prosalendis, then director of the District Six Museum reported:

The District Six Museum is a successful and ongoing concern. It has been an important ambassador for the new South Africa and has gained positive national and international recognition. The District Six Museum Foundation has been largely responsible for this success through its extensive fundraising campaigns, day to day management of the site and their compilation of a viable business plan. In the past four years, it has received hundreds of thousands of visitors including heads of state, royalty and other representatives of numerous governments. It has an extensive educational programme resulting in 10 000 scholars a year visiting the Museum. It has mounted twelve exhibitions and provided a venue for plays, concerts, meetings and functions.⁴⁴

Prosalendis outlines the broad scope of the museum's activities, alluding to its growing popularity and impact where exhibitions played an important role in establishing the museum. The *Streets* exhibition attempted to reconstruct a sense of community that District Six represented in text, paint, photographic and intangible expressions involving "storytelling as a way of recovering the memory of forced removals".⁴⁵

Recasting District Six: *The District Six Sculpture Festival*

Tracking phases of District Six Museum graphic, exhibition and logo design indicates that *Streets* was an experimental exhibition; an organic assemblage created for and by a limited audience where District Six ex-residents found a space for recovery, reflection, and common ground. A second design phase that I detect in visually reading the curatorial transitions from the late 1990s relates to

⁴³C. Soudien and L. Meltzer, "Representation and Struggle" in *District Six Image and Representation*, South African National Gallery 28.10.1995 – 25.2.1996, (Cape Town: ISANG & the District Six Foundation, 1995), 10.

⁴⁴S. Prosalendis, District Six Museum Foundation correspondence to Ms Hanneljie Du Preez, 5th December 1997, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 03.09.2018.

⁴⁵District Six Museum Brochure, Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2010.

a formalising quality, a growing sense of museumisation within an increasing level of academic, design and artistic expertise available to the museum. Improved funding revenues to implement the making of exhibitions and increased demand for heritage tours in Cape Town.

In Cape Town, a museumising impetus materialised on a large scale in 1997 when *The District Six Sculpture Festival* was held.⁴⁶ It was a big event in the life of the museum and influenced its future aesthetic and design directions as it recast District Six as a living art and design canvas.⁴⁷ Working with artists directly at the District Six site brought forth innumerable interpretations and cultural positions that created a platform for creative memorialising as “symbolic reparations”.⁴⁸ Ex-District Six resident and Cape Technikon (now CPUT) industrial design lecturer and artist Kevin Brand acted as curator and Renate Meyer co-ordinated the festival. After a nine-month process of meetings, workshops and work, the festival opened on Heritage Day 24th September 1997.⁴⁹

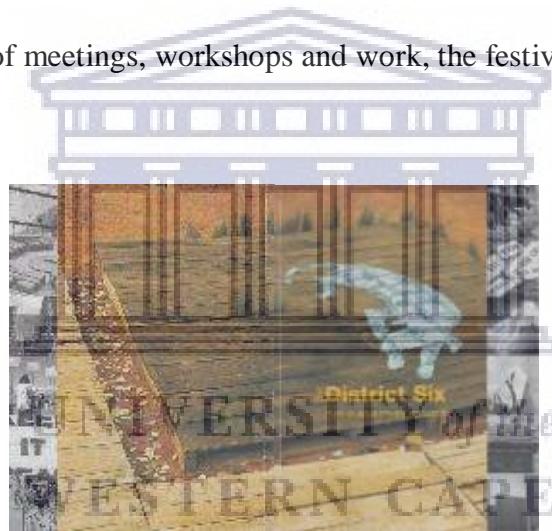


Figure 2.10: The *District Six Public Sculpture Project* catalogue cover design. District Six Museum Foundation publication. 1998.

According to Zayd Minty former District Six Museum programme and marketing coordinator:

Under the auspices of the District Six Museum, Brand delivered the project with support from a team of artists, organisers and museum staff. A collaborative project involved a series of engagements by artists, poets, teachers and community workers with the District Six Museum archive and with the memories of people forcibly removed by apartheid from the area.

⁴⁶Another large site was being museumised in Cape Town. Robben Island was declared a National Monument in 1996 and a National Museum in 1996. The Robben Island Museum was officially declared on 1st January 1997.

⁴⁷R Meyer and K. Brand, “Introduction” in *The District Six Public Sculpture Project*, eds Crain Soudien and Renate Meyer, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 1998), 1.

⁴⁸Z. Minty, “Post-apartheid Public Art in Cape Town: Symbolic Reparations and Public Space”, *Urban Studies*, Vol 43, No. 2, 421-440 (February 2006), 428

⁴⁹Meyer and Brand, “Introduction”, 1.

Over 90 pieces of public sculpture and installations were created and scattered around the barren landscape of 40 hectares that make up the site.⁵⁰

Participating artists Jos Thorne and Rod Sauls later became important stylistic contributors in shaping the curatorial vision, design and aesthetic outcome of the District Six Museum *Digging Deeper* exhibition.

This indicated a network of developing relationships and modes of working in Cape Town's cultural and expressive arts sector as an alternative to mainstream art making and curating. "The reworking of the land mingled the historical processes of destruction and restitution with the creativity of artists, the stories of ex-residents and a renewed hope for the future".⁵¹ The sculpture festival layered new interpretations and expressions of District Six into the museum's work. Furthermore, it signalled the District Six archive as its source, although in many ways it transcended the museum's own curated exhibition of District Six in its complexity of themes, materials, and interpretations. What was made explicit by both the festival and the museum exhibitions was that the District Six story was a powerful narrative in and of the city that worked across various disciplines and groups.

Returning to District Six: The *Streets: Re-tracing District Six* exhibition

In 1998, the museum offices and *Streets* exhibition relocated to the Moravian Chapel in District Six while the phased renovations and alterations commenced at the Central Methodist Church building in Buitenkant Street. The chapel building with white interior spaces provided a similar layout to the Central Methodist church although less hanging space was available, as the chapel comprised one level only. Key elements of the *Streets* exhibition were reinstalled on large freestanding white rectangular wooden exhibition blocks placed along the left interior wall below arched windows.

⁵⁰Minty, "Post-apartheid", 428.

⁵¹District Six Museum, District Six Sculpture Festival, www.districtsix.co.za, accessed 03.03.2019.



Figure 2.11: *Street: Retracing District Six* installed at the Moravian Chapel, District Six. Photograph: D6M archive.

This arrangement created alcoves and flat surfaces on which to recreate the streets of District Six. Silkscreen portraits fixed to the chapel windows took advantage of light creating a lightbox effect that explored how the portraits of District Six people have their own stories to tell. They pointed to the technical and biographical aspects of popular image making through photography in Cape Town.

A faded green hawker's barrow was displayed as well as a freestanding circular mosaic cartouche-like artwork placed on the floor. Against the white walls and white exhibition box installations, the displayed objects and framed images created a high contrast minimalistic effect. In the ordered temporary exhibition text was minimal. Two admin offices were created as one entered the chapel to the left and right.

This modest exhibition was well visited by tourists on townships tours, being part of a narrative relating to apartheid spatial engineering and felt very much like a new local history

museum.⁵² The absence of wall textures and technology accentuated the high ceiling and ample natural light allowing individual items to stand out boldly and to be contemplated individually.

The framework of District Six streets as signifiers of social life and stories interfaced directly with streets found on the map in a geography of remembrance. The simplicity, scale and the use of repetitive elements of photographs, painted building facades, enamel street signs in the exhibition reinforced the collection as a mix of conceptual details encapsulating the foundation of a museum brand identity. In exhibitions, white space is often referred to as negative space devoid of content and is an important design element as it serves to create uniformity through spacing, avoid complicated designs and allows the visitor a reflective interruption before proceeding to the next image or object displayed.

The original District Six street signs combined with painted front doors and windows themed the exhibition cubes as streets where visitors could walk from street to street. Visitors could view framed black and white photographs representing particular street stories and landmark buildings. The scale of the doors represented actual door sizes and coupled with a gallery of framed photographs created a vignette of each street as a unique social microcosm.



Figure 2.12: Portrait, object and Exhibition panel views of District Six Museum exhibition *Streets retracing District Six* installed at the Moravian Chapel District Six. Photographs: D6M archive.

⁵²Visit to the District Six Museum as part of a township tour in February 1999.

Set apart the painted and now inscribed District Six floor map was brought and placed in the centre of the wooden chapel floor. The map acted as a key to locating all the streets as not all streets correlated to a street sign in the exhibition. Four hand-embroidered and appliquéd religious banners were hung vertically on a wall opposite the entrance. Below these were a set of three painted elaborate and detailed District Six Victorian buildings sourced from black and white photographs. Between the buildings were small panels pointing inwards that also were utilised as display surfaces for images and text. In front of the painted building facades, three wooden crate-like boxes with glass frames contained various District Six archaeological fragments and artefacts.



Figure 2.13: Assembled and boxed artefacts, fragments and stones exhibit from a 1993 archaeological dig at Horstley Street in *Streets retracing District Six* installed in Moravian Chapel District Six. Photograph: D6M archive.

In the Moravian Chapel, an exhibition *Four Stories* (1998-1999) was displayed as part of the *Streets* exhibition and contained biographies of three District Six ex-residents: Nomvuyo Ngcelwane, Linda Fortune and Noor Ebrahim.⁵³ Furthermore, an exploration into the musical heritage of District Six, including live musical performances in the museum space, provided the fourth story and marked the first District Six Museum sound archive recordings.⁵⁴

⁵³District Six Museum Newsletter no. 4, 1999.

⁵⁴District Six Museum Newsletter no. 4, 1999.

Commissioning community: putting the archive to work in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition

After over a year of closure and extensive refurbishment, the restored Methodist Church buildings became the permanent home of the museum as it relocated and reoccupied spaces of the building in 2000. The adapted and renovated Buitenkant Methodist Church buildings were transformed into the Buitenkant Street Community Centre encompassing the District Six Museum allowing a fresh curatorial slate. The de-installed *Streets* exhibition from the Moravian Chapel was reconfigured, redesigned and redeployed to form part of an extensive District Six story of recovery and memorialisation in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition.

As part of an extended approach to remembering forced removals in District Six, the main elements of the *Streets* exhibition were reinterpreted in the new *Digging Deeper* exhibition layout.⁵⁵

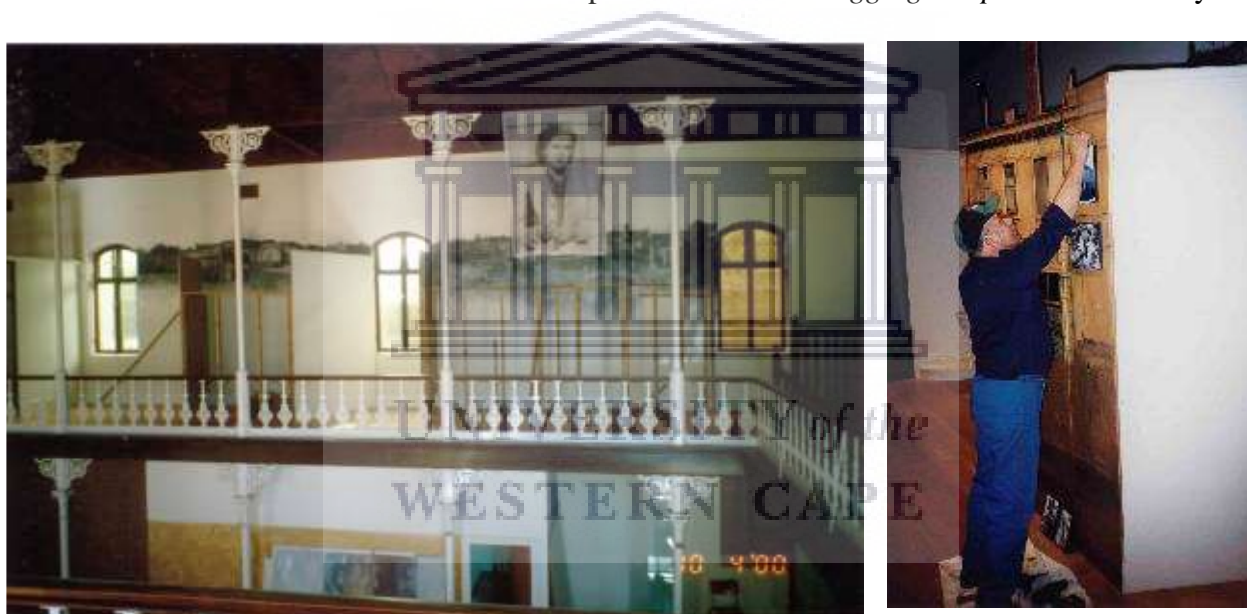


Figure 2.14: Installing the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. 10.04.2000. Photograph: Rennie & Scurr Architects. Mounting framed photographs onto a sepia-toned District Six building exhibit. *Digging Deeper* exhibition. D6M archive.

Drawing on an accumulated archive *Digging Deeper* sought to expand memorialisation processes and design practice within the Museum.⁵⁶ According to Zayd Minty:

Notions of community participation, interactivity and tactility [were] ... central to the museum's first major show 'Streets' (1994), which marked the opening of the museum's current key space and the ... semi-permanent

⁵⁵The District Six floor map, the inscribed and embroidered memory cloths, street signs, black and white photographs, Silk screen portraits, architectural facades, circular mosaic panel, religious banners, *strikkies* (bunting made from colourful strips of leftover fabric from the minstrel costumes), green hawkers barrow, artefacts, and District Six archaeological fragments.

⁵⁶Delport, "Digging", 154.

exhibition installed in 1999/2000: 'Digging Deeper'. Both these seminal shows were curated by artists Peggy Delpont and Tina Smith who lead teams of artists and exhibition installers to actualise the exhibitions.⁵⁷

Minty alludes to the performative quality of memorialisation in the conceptual and creative management of the curatorial process. The *Digging Deeper* exhibition was designed as a journey that traversed its way through the building on two levels utilising timeline panels in the main ground floor gallery space. The museum narratives were designed as visual, textual and aural elements working in union set against the architectural framework of the Methodist church interior. The white Victorian ironwork poles and balustrades as a decorative and structural feature of the church interior looked similar to District Six Victorian house façade detail being of a similar period. This created a visual connection between District Six, as it almost appeared as if part of the old material fabric of District Six had been utilised as a framework.



Figure 2.15: Installing District Six painted floor map with a plastic overlay with the District Six hawkers' barrow in the foreground. *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

As suggested by Minty, curatorial expertise figured increasingly with the involvement of architect and curator Jos Thorne, artist and painting lecturer Peggy Delpont, artist and curator Tina Smith, artist Qanita Lilla, architect Donald Parenzee. Artists "Garth Erasmus, Craig Carbutt, Leora Lewis, Paul Grendon, Sonia Geyer and David Brown" were closely involved in creating the

⁵⁷Minty, "Post-apartheid", 428.

exhibition as well.⁵⁸ UWC university interns, full and part-time staff and District Six trustees also provided direction.⁵⁹ “A research framework was laid by a research team led by historian Crain Soudien” which included “Ciraj Rassool, Peggy Delpport, Sandy Prosalendis and initially Shamil Jeppie”.⁶⁰ Valmont Layne was the museum director when the *Digging Deeper* exhibition opened in September 2000.

The *Digging Deeper* exhibition was multifaceted and often metaphorically described as a mosaic, kaleidoscope or a tapestry indicating a hand-wrought and visually eclectic quality. The space of the public exhibition spanned five rooms including a primary double volume space with upper galleries open to the ground floor, thematically arranged, two memory rooms, a coffee shop and a large Memorial Hall. A gift shop, passages, corridors and stairways also formed part of the exhibition space. Two glassed offices in the upper gallery space that were not open to the public created a behind the scene effect in the museum.

As one entered the museum on the left lower level of the main exhibition space the narrative was structured through designed and layered exhibition panels. A series of District Six *Timeline* panels commence at this point. According to Jos Thorne,

The *Timeline* is the culmination of many people’s discussions and input including Museum staff, members and trustees, interviewers and ex-resident interviewees, researchers, academics and designers. Different elements of the *Timeline* were conceptualised and designed by myself.⁶¹

A black and sepia-toned sailing ship painted on a wall panel was visible behind a large memorial text panel that historically linked colonisation and settlement to a poem about dispossession.

⁵⁸P. Delpport, “Curator’s Note”, *A Guide to the District Six Museum and the Digging Deeper exhibition*, brochure, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2000).

⁵⁹When the *Digging Deeper* exhibition opened in 2000 the District Six Museum Trustees were Stan Abrahams, Irwin Combrink, Ruth Cookson, Peggy Delpport, Delysia Forbes, Terence Fredericks, Vincent Kolbe, Lucien Le Grange, Lalou Meltzer, Anwah Nagia, Mathokoza Nhlapo, Ciraj Rassool, Berne Searle, Jean September, Crain Soudien, Les Van Breda. Staff included: Charmaine Abrahams, Bonita Bennett, Sicelo Bulana, Edith Bulana, Menisha Collins, Noor Ebrahim, Nompandolo Gosa, Revina Gwayi, Margaux Bergman, Chrischené Julius, Valmont Layne (Director), Atsho Madubula, Zayd Minty, Philisande Ndzwana, Nomawethu Nobaza, Donald Parenzee, Megan Parenzee, Shamila Rahim, Mandy Sanger, Joe Schaffers, Vincent Taylor, Maheerah Gamielien, NxumaloThulani, Wilma Adams and Hobe Thobeka.

⁶⁰P. Delpport, “Curator’s Note”, 2000.

⁶¹J. Thorne, “The Choreography of display: Experiential exhibitions in the context of museum practice and theory”, (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 2003), 97-99.



Figure 2.16: Former District Six resident Menisha Collins conducts a guided storytelling tour of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

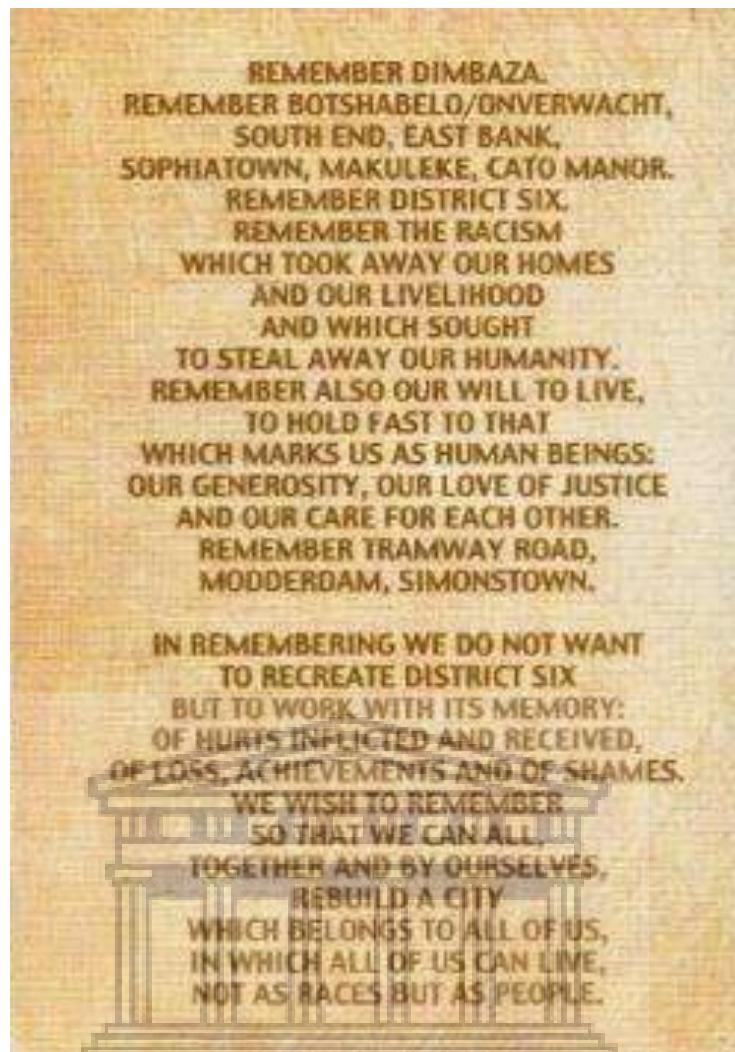


Figure 2.17: Remember Dimbaza poem, *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

“Remember Dimbaza...”, a poem in large hand-painted text was rendered on a mustard coloured paint technique exhibition panel made mention of other sites of forced removals in South Africa and urged one to remember these places and people affected. Opposite the *Formation* panel a hanging slave bell and a conserved wooden tree stump was integrated as a stand-alone feature.⁶² It was part of a tree in Spin Street where slaves were auctioned.⁶³ It inserted the histories and legacies of colonial Dutch and British slavery at the Cape into the Museum.⁶⁴ The selection of these objects and a focus on slavery, related to the origins and social histories of District Six and colonial

⁶²The Dutch colonial era cast iron slave bell and Spin Street slave tree stump are on permanent loan and are part of the Civic Collection of the City of Cape Town.

⁶³A memorial plaque was erected in Spin Street, Cape Town where the ‘slave tree’ once stood.

⁶⁴The Dutch colonial era cast iron slave bell and Spin Street slave tree stump are on permanent loan and are part of the Civic Collection of the City of Cape Town.

settlement at the Cape. It created associations with District Six ex-residents and to people in Cape Town as descendants of enslaved people.



Figure 2.18: Slave exhibit and newspaper cuttings exhibit in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: HH-R. The museum exhibition printed guide stated that the timeline of themed panels “acts as a base on which a narrative of life in District Six emerges” where maps “mark different eras”.⁶⁵ The themed panel *Formation* spanned a time period 1800 to 1930 from the earliest inhabitation at the Cape by the Khoi, colonial settlement and dispossession by Dutch farmers, immigrants, imported slaves and post 1834-8 freed slaves who moved into the area. Emphasis was placed on the date 1901 when the first forced removals of African residents from District Six occurred.

The next panel *Resistance* charted District Six from the 1930s to 1970 where apartheid-era newspaper clippings were pasted onto a cylindrical exhibition stand and political biographies are displayed. Four biographies of District Six residents: Lionel Davis, Amina Gool, Phyllis Fuku and Vincent Kolbe are exhibited and act as an entry point foregrounding the “political, historical and social developments relating to District Six”.⁶⁶ The *Resistance* panel incorporated text extracts and Julius questions how text was selected during curation to make extracts into design elements thereby “assert the value of the oral history extract”.⁶⁷ According to Julius:

It is in the form the extract took with these four particular interviews, namely that of enlarged text printed onto Perspex, that the primacy of the oral history extract is asserted through its visual prominence in the display

⁶⁵District Six Museum, “A Guide”, 2000.

⁶⁶Julius, ‘Oral’, 110.

⁶⁷Julius, ‘Oral’, 110.

area... when thinking through how oral history extracts do not act ‘alone’ in the exhibition space but are anchored curatorially and aesthetically to visual and documentary forms in the exhibition space”.⁶⁸

In the context of the Museums “frameworks of representation,” proposed by Delport this is an important aesthetic consideration made by Julius as the text is arranged, manipulated and embedded to become a design feature that:

Reveal a research and curatorial practice that in the pursuit to provide entry points for making meaning, modified, fragmented and curated the meaning of oral histories into a broader, cohesive exhibitionary framework that entrenched visual fragments of oral histories as whole representations of history.⁶⁹

In *Digging Deeper*, extracts were made visible in three forms: “printed as an extended caption” and “enlarged extracts and quotes” were later “transferred onto Perspex sections and printed onto panels. Oral history extracts were also applied directly onto the display “where they are made to appear seamless interventions into the display, as noted by Julius.⁷⁰ “*Digging Deeper* exhibition co-designer and curator Jos Thorne writes:

Interview extracts are powerful signifiers in exhibitions. As texts they are representational on many levels. In the design of *Digging Deeper* extracts are used throughout the exhibition. They are regarded as both image and artefact and are placed as objects amongst others, forming relationships and reflecting new meanings. Like photographs, the text extracts represent the presence of community in affirmation and support the exhibition and the museum.⁷¹

Thorne claims that the digging deeper physically moves the viewer/visitor through the exhibitions in “choreography of display” implying that not only images but text played a significant role in curating a museum experience.⁷²

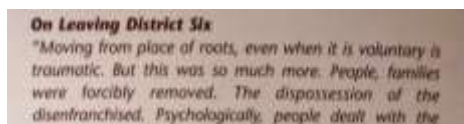


Figure 2.19: Stan Abrahams Interview (2000) from a District Six Museum exhibition panel.

⁶⁸Julius, “Oral”, 110.

⁶⁹Julius, “Oral”, 92.

⁷⁰Julius, “Oral”, 91.

⁷¹J. Thorne, *Designing Histories*, *Kronos*, No. 34, Making Histories, (November 2008), 146.

⁷²Thorne, “The Choreography”, 1.



Figure 2.20: Name or memory cloth exhibit in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

Also from the *Streets* exhibition on the ground level, an inscribed memory cloth exhibit was positioned near a displayed typewriter. A panel detailing the history of the church culminated in the themed *Restitution* panel and posed questions, written on a panel, to the future. On the opposite wall in the main exhibition space were themed areas named *Decay*, *Demolition*, *Departure* and *Displacement*.

As mentioned earlier the elements from the *Streets* exhibition were reconfigured and incorporated into the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. In the new format as a squarely configured installation piece, the tower of blue and white enamel street signs was held in position by steel cabling and steel mounting clips that dominated the central space. At the base, a wooden frame contained soil and stones from District Six. It had been positioned in front of the wooden church pulpit and had a 3+ meter vertical reach moving the eye to the upper galleries. Hung from the church rafters were colourful vertical embroidered and appliquéd religious, sporting and club banners that framed and vertically emphasised the street sign tower on either side.

Another compelling centrepiece in the main exhibition space was the reinstalled iconic inscribed floor map, which people walked on, therefore looked down to view the detailed written

inscriptions in thick felt-tip pen. The map was designed as a simulation (6 years old in 2000)

countering apartheid mapping practices that related to all who visited the museum, mainly tourists

and schoolchildren who congregated on the map to read the map inscriptions and take photographs.

District Six ex-residents related very differently to the map argues Zuliega Adams who writes:

The map on the floor provides no other alternative, as it compels the visitor to look for the lost streets, which are no longer *there*, and possibly for traces of people whom one has not seen since childhood. In evoking the irretrievable past through most of the exhibition space, the museum gaze is as 'socially organized' and constructed as that of the tourist and the media. With the map in the centre, a kind of stage is produced for a theatrical enactment of memory. The map forms the parameter within which ex-residents lose themselves in the search for a lost place. It is a point of distinction, a marker of difference between those who react and those who reflect, between ex-residents and those who create meaning. The museum produces a space for its own gaze and reflection. What is the link between the museum's telling and other forms of telling? Since it responds to the desperate search for a lost place, it encourages a need to re-enact the ways things were, which is often re-enactment of the mythologizing gaze of various artistic and cultural productions. The map as centre, but also as enclosure, becomes divided between those who reflect and those who relive, it creates a space for the performance of othering. The othering grounded in evoking severe loss, is linked to an othering founded in celebratory acts, such as Herman Binge's *Daar was eenmaal n' plek*.⁷³

This suggested theatrics of scale, content, and design in which the District Six Museum map

allowed narrow readings and experiences to surface indicated by Adams. But, Adams interpretation

is contested by *Digging Deeper* curator Jos Thorne who argues that multiple conceptual entry points

allow for various interpretations to emerge. According to Thorne:

Curatorial intentions of the District Six Museum such as inclusivity, interactivity, discussion...have created an environment that is able to better invoke bodily experience and feeling [which] is achieved by the participatory framework of the exhibition involving the viewer with the exhibits.⁷⁴

Thorne's argument to claims of performance and the performative space implied that community

was performed thereby constructed although differently than argued by Adams. Adams argues for

its very limitations and Thorne argues for its openness.

⁷³Adams, "Gazing", 242-243.

⁷⁴Thorne, "The Choreography", 1.

Thorne's interpretation and argument concurs with Albie Sachs experience of the museum

when he states:

The District Six Museum does not rely on spectacular high tech effects or dramatic architecture. The central figure is the viewer, who is guided and enticed into an experiential dialogue with the images and fabric of the museum. The curators and guides are themselves friendly participants in this dialogue. I have difficulty in distinguishing former residents from visiting scholars, members of the public and museums staff. The space, imagery and narratives are intertwined and seamless. So many museums bombard the visitor. With apparent guileless art, this one guides the viewer, both visually and emotionally through a multiplicity of resonant human stories to produce an ultimate sense of upliftment. Everything is close-up, intimate and tangible. This is not a museum to the epic, but to the everyday. By its very existence and the democratic, participatory way in which it has been developed, it reinforces and adds to the dignity of the people who constituted the District Six community.⁷⁵

Sachs experienced the map in conjunction with the other elements of the exhibition as a totality. He raised the notion of scripted performative curation that concurs with Thorne's argument where inclusive psychology of experience was created to bring forth an emotional response.

I see the map as constructed experientially according to the viewer-participant's own biography and interpreted from that perspective. It is an orientation to an area and guide into three timeframes. As utilitarian, it symbolizes the streets and layout of District Six but as it is hand-drawn, it references antique map making. The incorporated imagery on the map border creates a narrative edging that leads the eye away from the map to view other pictorial elements nearby the map thereby creating a bridging or linking to less floor-bound exhibits that are easier to view. The view of the map from the upper gallery turns it into a backdrop to the movement of people across its surface so it acts differently from an aerial perspective. As a reproduction or simulation, it symbolises the period in which it was made, 1994, yet details on the map predate this year. The large map also functions as an institutional record and contemporary multifunctional floor surface.

⁷⁵Sachs, "District Six", 43.



Figure 2.21: Map, street sign tower and exhibition panel in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: HH-R.

Furthermore, the map relies on the street sign tower to visually connect to places, specifically streets, which existed. Names of streets on the map move the viewer to look for the street names on the tower and then again on the stairs where the signs are positioned below the treads and again in the exhibition panels where street names appear. This repetition leads to the exploration of District Six through its streets that reposition the viewer as discovering the people of District Six through photographs and through the ex-resident storytelling guides who again relate to a particular street name. Therefore, the viewer maps the museums in this constantly shifting manner and discovers the district through these strategic markers. The map also makes explicit the dispersal and movement of people away from District Six and evokes notions of diasporic identities. It would be difficult to imagine District Six without the large painted museum floor map as its scale creates an interactive experience. When I walk off the lines and text of the post-apartheid map it feels as if I have somehow departed and moved into a more contemporary time zone of museum visiting with its sounds and movement.

Moving out of the main exhibition space, interleading doorways lead to the Memorial Hall, left to a staircase, and magnetised exit door for handicapped visitors and staff working beyond museum hours to enter and exit. A wooden staircase lead to the upper-level exhibition spaces. The patterns of the street signs positioned beneath the staircase treads provided momentarily, eye-level engagements as one ascended to the upper level of the exhibition space. Photographs on the walls of the stairwell depicted ex-residents in their youth posing in different settings such as on Table Mountain as part of a hiking club and various sports club photographs are framed as if in a home setting. In this manner, personal photographs are museumised creating a visual history of District Six.

In the museum, some photographs are framed like family photographs. It's almost as if the framed images were removed from a lounge, dining room or bedroom and hung on the walls of the museum. This type of domestic picture framing reinforced the underlying message of the exhibition: the resonance of human meaning making through shared experience, shared communal interests and comradeship. The viewer becomes part of the construction of meaning by being inserted into a three-dimensional schema and at certain moments it feels as if one is entering someone's home. Each photograph can be read as a sign within a system of juxtaposed exhibitionary texts and visuals.



Figure 2.22: Framed photographs, text and cityscape exhibition panel in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

Photographic images and maps act as backgrounds on panels although often recoloured and enlarged to provide a contrasting scale with regular-sized framed photographs. The recurring photographic image in the museum exhibitions provides an excavative motif that not only emphasizes the title of the exhibition but also binds objects of differing origins into a common humanity - the human impulse to make, decorate and imbue objects with power and signification often in domestic milieus transported into the space of the museum.

On the ground floor near the map and street sign tower, the clearest visual feature was a large photographic image of a yellow bulldozer in the *Destruction* section, dated 11 Feb 1966, with its metal drill posed in a threatening position. Adjacent to an upright wooden piano, an apartheid-era bench and signage were used to convey separate amenities during apartheid. A freestanding panel in the *Demolition* section covers forced removals from Claremont and placed on an interleading wall family photographs of Claremont and Constantia families removed were displayed.

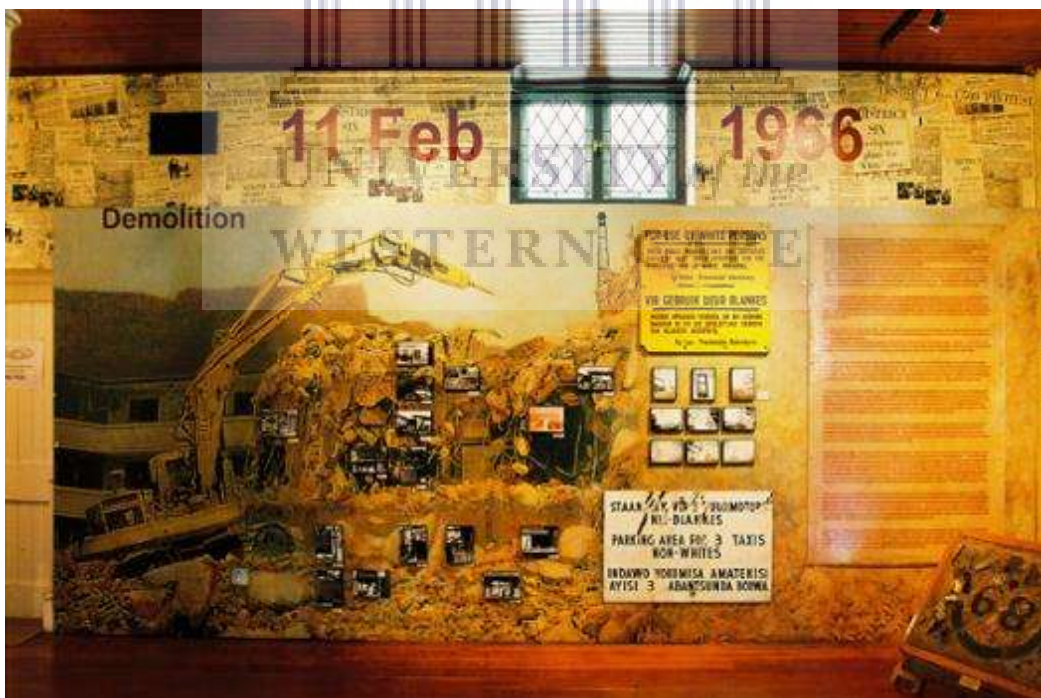


Figure 2.23: Demolition panel in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: H H-R.

To the right of the yellow bulldozer image, was a separate memory room curated as an interior domestic space called Nuvuyo's room. This memory room was recreated as a domestic interior

located next to the Museum gift shop. According to Ciraj Rassool in making Nomvuyo’s Room, the Museum worked closely with Nomvuyo Ngcelwane to reconstruct her family home at 22 Cross Street District Six through her memory and records, drawing on her autobiography *Sala Kahle District Six*, published in 1999”.⁷⁶



Figure 2.24: Cups and saucers displayed in Nomvuyo’s Room, *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.



Figure 2.25: Nomvuyo’s Room in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: HH-R.

⁷⁶V. Layne and C. Rassool, “Memory rooms: oral history in the District Six Museum” in *Recalling Community in Cape Town Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001), 147.

Everyday items populate the multipurpose room where space was limited. The room was a complete home and experienced as a storied life by the museum visitor with Nomvuyo's voice permeating the room through a radiogram. The stacked suitcases neatly arranged on top of the wardrobe presented the idea of mobility, travel and forced removal. As museum props, the suitcases were utilised to create an atmosphere of habitation and home life. The room was designed as a separate museum space with a single door to create an intimate and emotional experience centred on biography. It was designed as a nostalgic intervention set apart from the main and often noisy main exhibition area. It required the visitor to pause and reflect on Nomvuyo's life before moving on.

Adjacent and sharing a wall was the Little Wonder Store: the museum gift shop where an array of publications, CD's, branded District Six Museum T-shirts, bags, pen and note pad sets, cushions, stickers, postcards, fridge magnets, aprons, books, and other merchandise was displayed and sold.⁷⁷ The shop's layout and design mimicked the corner cafes and "babbie" shops that were part of the experience of shopping in District Six.⁷⁸

Opposite the museum shop, freestanding swing *Introduction* panels with elements drawn from apartheid's laws and policies such as pass books, re-zoning documents, racial classification, aerial photographs, and other documentary evidence is presented. The panels provide information on the apartheid system and the enforcement of removals at District Six. According to Jos Thorne,

I originally designed the *Introduction* panels for the Museum when it was housed in the Moravian Church where they were stationary boards, but with a view to the *Digging Deeper* exhibition I conceptualised them from the start as pivoting panels.⁷⁹

They are popular with tour guides and ex-resident storytelling guides alike as they assist in locating and contextualising a political and historical time frame in South Africa

⁷⁷Books, posters and cards were sold from a wooden pew in the *Streets: Retracing District Six* exhibition before the District Six Museum gift shop the Little Wonder Store, named after a District Six shop, was built as part of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition in 2000.

⁷⁸J. Thorne, "The Choreography of display: Experiential exhibitions in the context of museum practice and theory", (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 2003), 106.

⁷⁹Thorne, "The Choreography", 94.



Figure 2.26: Upper gallery space view, *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: Paul Grendon/D6M archive.



Figure 2.27: Enlarged photographic silk-screened portraits printed on architectural paper. *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

In the upper gallery, the enlarged ethereal screen-printed portraits were rehung and mounted horizontally between the *broekie* (frilly) lace balustrades of the upper level. As in the *Streets* exhibition, *strikkies* (bunting) of brightly coloured satin offcuts of the *klopse* (minstrels) garments remade annually for the minstrel parades were strung together. The inclusion of the *strikkies* makes aesthetic and conceptual reference to the musical heritage of District Six that was displaced to apartheid townships. Different genres of popular music drawn from the sound archive played softly in the museum enhance the exhibition. The call of the muezzin resounded, as well the District Six musical rhythms, aural routines and religious practice, into the museum space.



Figure 2.28: Hanover Street map, text and photographic panel illuminated by light filtered by church windowpanes. *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: H H-R.

In the redesigned spaces created for *Digging Deeper*, windows were not covered and actively utilised. The organising principle of light was used effectively to draw the viewer through the exhibition spaces. The former church stained glass windows were retained in 1999 after the restoration of the church building and emitted a spiritual aura thereby enhanced the mood of the

main double volume spaces. Shafts of light emphasised and expanded the sentient quality of the content and objects shown in *Digging Deeper* into an idea that they had been church-sanctioned or blessed. In doing so created a spiritual dimension that to some degree linked the former church building to the religious buildings left untouched in District Six. Furthermore, emphasised the interior wooden church architecture resulting in an ambiguous reading of the exhibition.



Figure 2.29: Upper and lower gallery view of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: Paul Grendon/D6M archive.

The recognizable built environment of District Six was rendered in enlarged hand-tinted photographs of buildings in warm sepia tones. The photographs formed a background, context and set the tone for the upper story galleries focused on domestic, commercial and civic interiors created as small alcoves. District Six interior spaces were represented by the Bloemhof Flats, Langarm bands, Barbershop/Hairdresser, Places of Work, Public Washhouse, Hanover Street, the Bioscope and Carnival alcoves mapping architecture and streets as an urban network.⁸⁰ According to Thone the interiors were curated by Tina Smith and Peggy Delport.⁸¹

⁸⁰Julius, "Oral", 8.

⁸¹Thorne, "The Choreography", 102.

This signifier of domestic and working lives represented inter-communal relations that reinforced the familiar through a handmade craft aesthetic methodology. In the museum exhibitions, the adopted craft aesthetic worked on the premise of altering time and collapsing the artist-craftsman categories and by overlaying texture, images, signage, text, silk-screened portraits, embroidered cloths, painted and inscribed surfaces showed a reverence for the effects of collaborative practice. This involved long time frames where designs were sometimes in the planning and making phases for a number of years due to the research and labour-intensive processes involved.⁸²



Figure 2.30: Barbershop and hairdresser alcove installations in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photographs: H H-R.

Craft practices and hand-made elements infused the exhibitions that created a diverse palette of colour and textures. Traditional museum exhibition tactics were employed to make the exhibition relatable. The use of inscription as a form of visual commentary was an important link to the title of the exhibition and between the combined historical layers on display. It again emphasised the significance of recorded history and of the act of participation. Julius notes that in “The hairdresser/barbershop alcove, the visitor’s eyes are drawn around the shape of the hairdresser’s

⁸²I am referring to research, design and exhibition fabrication as well as to craft process such as mosaic and fresco painting which are time consuming. The phased adaption and redesign of the museum buildings took many years to complete, and the continual maintenance of the exhibitions and buildings is another factor to consider. Maintenance sometimes takes place after hours or over weekends.

mirror by the placement of extracts along the outline of the mirror”.⁸³ The inscribed differing texts of the map painting, the embroidered memory cloths, sepia-toned mural line work and printed linocut artworks resonated with the hand-crafted wooden surfaces of the apartheid era bench, stairs, ceiling support beams and wooden floors as museum elements were curated together to construct a narrative. The painted mark also acted as a visual link between objects and representations of people. The soft muted colours of hand-tinted photographs reverberate with the chalky sepia tones of the upper gallery space and the faded inks and distressed colours of District Six objects, such as the enamel bowls in pastel shades. Walls, floors, and fabric become surfaces saturated with prose, texture, and meaning where colours also create visual links.⁸⁴

In *Digging Deeper* captions and blocks of text were interspersed within panels and displays to provide a historical context to the objects whereas inscription only featured on the floor map, the memory cloths and on certain panels. However, as mentioned earlier Chrischené Julius notes how orality was woven into the exhibition strategy of *Digging Deeper* adding textual and visual expression to the interpretation of historical experience that “move beyond conventional documentary based history towards viewing historical evidence as a visual, oral and ultimately aesthetic form”.⁸⁵ According to Julius, “the use of text – as interpretative exhibition text or extracts from oral history interviews – is a key feature of the exhibition”.⁸⁶

This methodology of adapting oral histories is not without contentious processes of extracting, editing, splicing and manipulating and then these versions are “made to speak” in which “the Museum is the narrator”.⁸⁷ Julius argues:

That with the progressive success of the museum, and the decision to dig deeper into the social history of District Six with *Digging Deeper*, the exhibitionary principles envisioned by *Streets* gave way to a productive tension between the museum’s impulse to systematically collect memory in

⁸³Julius, “Oral”, 116.

⁸⁴The fresco mural “No matter where we are we are here” after an inscription text by ex-residents the Abrahams family designed by Peggy Delpont in 2000 was completed in 2006.

⁸⁵ Julius, “Oral”, 15.

⁸⁶C. Julius, “Digging Deeper than the eye approves: Oral histories and their use in the *Digging Deeper* exhibitions of the District Six Museum”: *Kronos*, vol. 34, no.1. Cape Town, (Nov. 2008): 110.

⁸⁷Julius, “Digging”, 138.

the form of oral histories, and its desire to incorporate the spontaneous, oral acts of remembrances which characterised *Streets*.⁸⁸

Julius noted that a focus on individual testimonies delivered in an open and fluid speech act coupled with donations of personal artefacts in *Streets* gave way to a systemised approach in *Digging Deeper* where oral histories were specifically collected and curated to generate social histories of the area and altered the narrative. Julius extrapolates further:

Parallel to the visual sense evoked by the ‘artefact’ was the visual sense of District Six evoked by textual elements in both the *Streets* and *Digging Deeper* installations. In the provision of inscriptive surfaces through the map painting on the church floor, the calico name-cloth and other spaces for inscription, an aesthetic relation was created between artefacts as signs and text as artefact. Thus the ultramarine blue and white coloured street signs from District Six were echoed aesthetically in the colour of lines of *Streets* and in the street names themselves. In order to re-write District Sixers back into history (within the context of an emerging museum, and where exhibitions were a primary form of depicting this presence), archaeology lent itself to the language of representation and display, while oral testimonies were tasked with the ability to uncover hidden histories.⁸⁹

I agree with Julius’s analysis, as exhibition text was made into artefact in various ways: as inscription by ex-residents onto calico and map surfaces, later remade by embroidery over inscription text during *Streets* therefore rendered text into museum artefact.

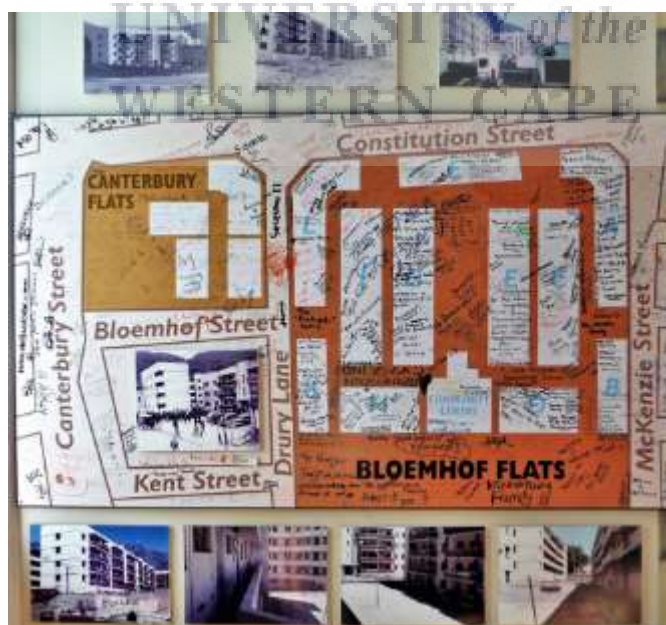


Figure 2.31: Inscribed Bloemhof Fats panel in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: H H-R.

⁸⁸Julius, “Oral”, 15.

⁸⁹Julius, “Oral”, 65.

Within the main exhibition spaces of *Digging Deeper* another memory room was constructed to personally reflect and interpret District Six memories. Rod's Room in the upper gallery was created by artist and District Six ex-resident Roderick Sauls. The room he created in the museum had formed part of a much larger artwork and exhibition, an academic project he designed when at Michaelis School of Art at the University of Cape Town. It was not a conventional domestic interior but an artwork themed around personal memories. He notes that, "It was never designed for the District Six Museum it was my final artwork...the question of space came up as panels had to be put outside... I had to design it again".⁹⁰ Sauls mentioned the original installation was much larger and he reconfigured it. In his discussions about the installation with the Museum "we never talked about design... not consciously thinking about design... not called design...design came naturally I love space and I love installations...design is like a kind of dream you want to put this into it and that into it".⁹¹



Figure 2.32: Interior view of Rod' Room installation in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

A flight of steps leads into the interior of the room in the upper gallery adjacent to the mural, almost an attic space. Rod explained that the room "explores what memory means to me and also to

⁹⁰Interview with artist Rod Sauls, 07.09.2016.

⁹¹Interview with artist Rod Sauls, 07.09.2016.

those who experienced...loss within our country ...I created clothing for Rod's room with family photographs" and, following Milan Kundera, claims "the work represents the struggle of memory against forgetting".⁹² In design terms, he states further:

My installations are always printmaking. You see Rod's room – the block is part of the printmaking. Some people might say it's a sculpture, but first you create the block.⁹³

White plaster of Paris type surfaces contain submerged and partly visible objects, documents and text applied into and onto the interior and exterior walls as containers of memories. The quality of light and textures created an enclosed system of illumination. Rod's Room was less theatrical compared to the main scripted and staged exhibition and map. It worked within abstract, intimate reflectivity and contemplation of a storied life, as a secondary exhibition space.

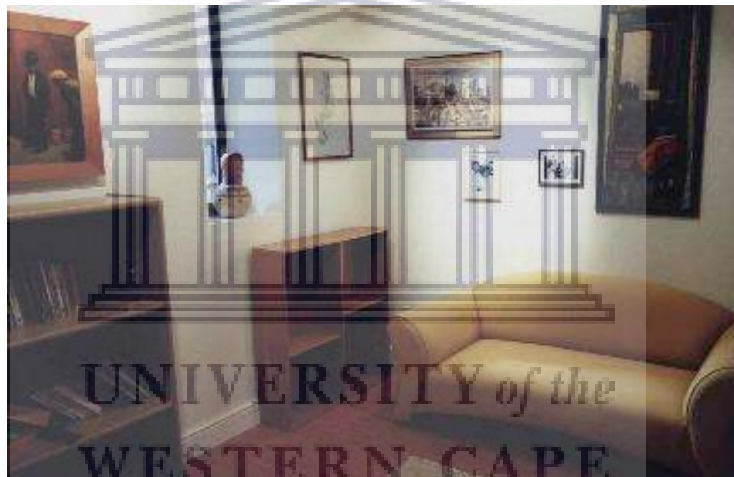


Figure 2.33: Interior view of the District Six Museum memory room. Photograph: D6M archive.

A special room in the upper gallery, not open to the public, was reserved for memory work, where the recording of oral histories and viewing of audio-visual footage was undertaken. Painted in a soft yellow with a yellow couch the room was decorated with black and white images of jazz musicians and contained a large bookcase. Adjacent to the memory room was a multimedia soundproof studio for editing and producing audio-visual material. A library containing books and theses as well as other collated resource materials were neatly arranged in what was once the choir

⁹²District Six Museum, *A Guide*, 2000.

⁹³Interview with artist Rod Sauls, 07.09.2016.

gallery of the church that overlooked the museum. It served as a quieter area for research and study. Sounds of children at play filtered through from the Stepping Stones Children's Educare centre next door and sometimes as the museum became busy, the noise of people chatting resounded throughout the upper floor. The research and archival spaces are not open to the public but accessible by appointment.

In the upper gallery of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition, a small display of popular games children played in District Six is exhibited.⁹⁴ In the children's games installation, various objects are exhibited in an alcove cabinet with wooden window frames situated under a raised stage-type platform that is not at eye level. As with some of the displays containing objects, the curatorial stylistic approach has been to draw the visitor's vision into an intimate view, almost as if one is looking through a window.

Depictions of children in photographs within the children's games installation display cabinet are interpreted through photographer's eyes. The children's games installation includes a number of black and white photographs of children playing in District Six streets taken by photographers such as George Hallett, Cloete Breytenbach, Jansje Wissema, and Bryan Heseltine, amongst others, that depict children's playtime games or activities such as running errands.⁹⁵ Therefore, photographs construct visual histories of the lives of District Six children supported by published biographies of childhood memories by ex-residents Linda Fortune, Noor Ebrahim, Hettie Adams, and Hermione Suttner.

The three-dimensional boxing in, is very effective as it focuses the viewers' attention on a specific theme within the museum and demarcates boundaries between exhibition spaces. Photographers, working independently, created a visual history of the district prior to forced removals. Many of these images depict groups of children playing in the streets and marching with the *klopse* minstrel troupes and Christmas choirs, devising wind catchers out of plastic, climbing a

⁹⁴P. Delpont, "No matter where we are, we are here Beginnings: the fresco wall of the District Six Museum" in *City Site Museum. Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum*, eds B. Bennett, C. Julius, and S. Soudien, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2008), 130-147.

⁹⁵Visit to the Children's Games Installation, District Six Museum, 12.12.2016.

large tree, carrying buckets of wet washing, playing on a jungle gym in the Marion Institute, playing in a car, racing along in go-carts, receiving food from a soup kitchen, catching a ride on the back of a car, eating ice cream on a *stoep* (veranda), playing with hoops and balls in the lanes, dressed in smart clothes on special occasions and making swings out of rope tied to street poles.⁹⁶



Figure 2.34: Children's games exhibit with *Where ever we are we are here* fresco mural above and entrance to Rods Room in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: Mike Peel/Creative Commons website



Figure 2.35: Children's games exhibit in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: H H-R.

The idiom of childhood and identity in the museum provides a powerful framework evoking an emotional response utilising storytelling to engage an audience in a design that sets the scene.

⁹⁶Afrika Media Online, African Pictures by African Photographers, District Six Collection. <http://www.africamediaonline.com>, accessed 10.01.2017.

Furthermore, photographs of childhood appear in the Museum's brochures, therefore, create a nostalgic cue and a resonant framework where visitors could cross an emotional threshold into a special place.⁹⁷ Zuliega Adams's critique of the museum's interpretative representation as one of a "fairyland" is evoked here.⁹⁸ Social relationships are constructed through the lens of childhood experiences in District Six streets and link to how the museum first marketed itself through this imaginative visualisation.⁹⁹

On the museum's lower level behind the main exhibition area, *Memory Traces* and *The Writers Floor* exhibitions were developed within the District Six Museum Memorial Hall as another narrative space within *Digging Deeper*. A desire to move beyond existing boundaries of geography under the theme of *District Six and beyond* was conceptualised and a durable tiled mosaic floor design embedded with poetry was created.¹⁰⁰ According to curator Peggy Delport:

Written texts have always been visual elements in the museum and when the need to design a floor in the Memorial Hall arose, the notion of writers tiles were immediately envisaged as part of a mosaic. Almost 60 writers are represented on the floor and over 40 writers took part in the workshops where they used brush or pen to write the texts with glaze on ceramic floor tiles, which were later fired in a kiln".¹⁰¹

Exhibitionary inscription was used in a very different way to the painted floor map. Making a floor in handmade mosaic as craft established notions of working in community as a valid process in rebuilding and reclaiming community. Heritage architect Mike Scurr writes that the mosaic floor project:

Was a collaborative effort between the Museum staff Peggy Delport and Jos Thorne, Architect and builders, with workshops organised by the Museum to produce the glazed tiles with text by local poets and writers. Mosaic inlays in the Corcolem floor recall fragments of material found in District Six, while the central mosaic depicting the peninsula speaks of the dispersal

⁹⁷In the District Six Museum storytelling tours with ex-residents tour guides sometimes commence with narratives of early childhood experiences prior to forced removals in District Six.

⁹⁸Adams, "Gazing" 242.

⁹⁹See chapter 3 of this thesis on District Six Museum branding, specifically the design of the fax letterhead, letterhead, first website and brochure.

¹⁰⁰Julius, "Oral", 9.

¹⁰¹P. Delport, "Preface" in *Words in the House of Sound: The Writer's floor of the District Six Museum*, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2000), 4.

of communities. The mosaics were done by local artists from the Cape Flats.¹⁰²



Figure 2.36: Conceptual design and layout for *The Writers Floor* in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition 24.03.2000
Photograph: Rennie & Scurr Architects. Final designed floor with the archaeological installation. Photograph: Mike Peel/Creative Commons.



Figure 2.37: Fabrication of the Horstley Street archaeological exhibit formed part of the *Memory Traces* exhibition in the Memorial Hall in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photograph: D6M archive.

The Writer's Floor reflected, according to Delpont, “diverse responses to the memory and meanings of District Six in Cape Town life”.¹⁰³ According to Julius:

¹⁰²Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, District Six Museum & Stepping Stones Children's Centre: Buitenkant Street Methodist Church Building, Cape Town, CIA/SAIA Conservation Award Submission, 2001, 3-S1 101, 3/12/1999, 52.

¹⁰³Delpont, “Preface”, 4.

With the re-curation of the Horstley Street archaeological displays into the Memorial Hall, a key approach to oral histories in the museum began to take shape. Key to this was the notion of ‘collecting’ oral histories in accordance with archival practices, yet attempting to transcend the limits of this practice by speaking of the collecting of memory.¹⁰⁴

Working within this paradigm of memory District Six archaeological fragments were re-interpreted with the assistance of archaeologist Antonia Malan who “played a central role in developing the Horstley Street exhibit”.¹⁰⁵ Excavated Horstley Street archaeological fragments in three glass-fronted cabinets were embedded in a shallow raised platform that was set within translucent resin and set within scaled-down walls. The discipline of archaeology on display together with an architectural model by Lucien le Grange provided a basis for claiming and conceptually developing Horstley Street as a District Six Memorial Park.

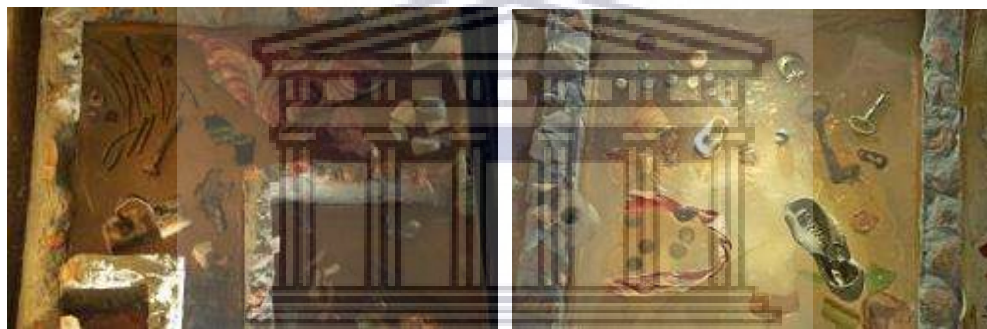


Figure 2.38: Two views of the Horstley Street archaeological exhibit in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photographs: D6M archive.

The potential for the disciplines of architecture and archaeology to move the museum into site museum status and claim official heritage status for District Six was contested by Ciraj Rassool.¹⁰⁶

Rassool argues:

The limits of public archaeology relate to the difficulties it has in transcending the paradigm of service and outreach as the basis for its mediations. It is this framework of the academy’s engagement with institutions and sites of public culture that the District Six Museum has been ambivalent about, because of the ways in which its claims of “offering” and empowering are at the same time the very basis of disempowerment. The preparation over the Horstley street display involved quite complex negotiations over the ownership of archaeological knowledge and the rights to the history and material traces.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴Julius, “Oral”, 75.

¹⁰⁵Delport, “Curator’s Note”, 2000.

¹⁰⁶Rassool, “Community Museums”, 306.

¹⁰⁷Rassool, “Community Museums”, 306.

He notes that it is through the discipline of archaeology and fragmentary evidence, that ex-residents voices and agency were silenced through the Horstley street exhibit in the museum and academic expertise was made to speak on behalf of ex-residents.¹⁰⁸ Archaeology turned fragments into scientific inquiry to verify the evidence of social lives.¹⁰⁹



Figure 2.39: *Where ever we are we are here* fresco by Peggy Delpport in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Photographs: D6M archive.

The *Digging Deeper* exhibition was produced under the curatorial direction of Peggy Delpport working with ex-residents, artists, curators, museum staff, interns, scholars, musicians, trustees, poets, and volunteers to sustain the museum's memorialisation work. Exhibition designer Jos Thorne's insider analysis of designing the performative and experiential dimensions of the exhibition *Digging Deeper*.¹¹⁰ Specifically, her argument that "exhibition design is less effective if

¹⁰⁸Rassool, 'Community Museums', 306.

¹⁰⁹For a broader interpretation and analysis see Julius C, "Oral history in the exhibitionary strategy of the District Six Museum", MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2007.

¹¹⁰For an extensive analysis of *Digging Deeper* exhibition making see J. Thorne, "The Choreography of display: Experiential exhibitions in the context of museum practice and theory", (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 2003).

it is thought of as a process that follows the written text” thereby setting up design as intangible elements within various frameworks of representation.¹¹¹ Thorne suggests,

Those experiential exhibitions like the District Six Museum offer a more balanced and reciprocal relationship between the exhibits and the viewer...viewers are invited to insert themselves in the exhibits and the curatorial process...viewing themselves and each other as both subject and object. ...the generation of such an experience can aptly be described as the choreography of display.¹¹²

Thorne references the spatial layout and navigation of the exhibitions and a lack of clear direction or signage challenging visitors to explore and experience various displays leading from the central exhibition space.¹¹³ According to Sarah Van Horn Melton citing Sandra Prosalendis, this was designed intentionally:

The District Six Museum has broken with traditional ideas of museums and collecting. It has created and implemented the concept of an interactive public space where it is people’s response to District Six that provides the drama and the fabric of the museum.¹¹⁴

Thorne argues further that, “The Museum’s emphasis on the interpretive and expressive processes of aesthetic production, whether visual, spatial or aural, was developed through a principle of developing exhibitions through collaborations with artists, writers and performers”.¹¹⁵

The collaborative method of working in groups and teams to which Thorne makes reference was another framework, a call to action, not explicitly expressed, to prevent the memories of District Six from being appropriated or fading away. In this reading, the museum was dramatised as community utilising vocabulary that supports the narrative journey created through research and exhibition. This opens up questions about who speaks for whom in establishing a District Six Museum brand and the role of exhibition design making is significant. Qanita Lilla, an artist who worked as part of the *Digging Deeper* curatorial team reflects on her experience:

The *Digging Deeper* exhibition was a creative process and Tina was an artist. Jos Thorne, the other curator, was an architect and they worked very differently. Artist Peggy Delpont, who had been involved with the District

¹¹¹Thorne, “Designing”, 139.

¹¹²Thorne, “The Choreography”, 1-3.

¹¹³Van Horn Melton, “Traveling”, 167.

¹¹⁴Van Horn Melton, “Traveling”, 167.

¹¹⁵Thorne, “Designing”, 49.

Six Museum from its very early days, directed. Things sometimes became quite heated between Peggy and Tina. At those times, I felt thankful that I worked with words. It was none the less a productive and energised working environment. Although the process was also creative for Jos, it was largely solitary. Tina was loud and bristled with energy. Most of the process on the ground, the hard labour, was overseen, managed, and produced by women. These were women with conviction and belief in the urgency to tell a hidden story. We used to tell each other when we stayed late and rolled up our sleeves toward the end, ‘it’s all women, all women’. We found strength in that belief and it brought us back the next day.¹¹⁶

Lilla argues and makes clear the very absence of a patriarchal value system that appears to form part of meaning making and exhibition making in a traditional museum. Working within this contentious and volatile paradigm of museumising District Six memories in the dynamics of exhibition making, Rassool argues that, “the museum was a space that offered the possibility of the redemption for museum professionals and members of the public, especially those who saw their visit to the museum as part of supporting democracy”.¹¹⁷

Post-apartheid memorialisation projects allowed new forms of participation and expression to emerge and in the context of a museum environment such as one framed around community enabled diversity and inclusion, often in the form of volunteerism or donation. Certain projects within the District Six Museum such as *The Writers Floor* found ways to express multi-vocality. Though text and poetry different geographies, biographies and experiences reconfigured connections between District Six, Cape Town and its places set apart through forced removals.

The District Six Museum Homecoming Centre exhibitions

Through a grant from the Atlantic Philanthropies Foundation, the District Six Museum purchased the Sacks Futeran complex of five interconnected buildings in 2002 with a view to creating new spaces of engagement that worked with exhibitions, issues of social justice, and District Six returnees.¹¹⁸ The Sacks Futeran buildings at 15 Buitenkant Street were renamed the District Six Museum

¹¹⁶Q. Lilla, “Setting Art Apart: Inside and Outside the South African National Gallery 1895-2016”, (PhD diss., Stellenbosch University, 2018), 98.

¹¹⁷C. Rassool, “Contesting ‘museumness’: towards an understanding of the values and legacies of the District Six Museum” in *City Site Museum Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum*, eds Bonita Bennett, Chrischené Julius and Crain Soudien, (Cape Town: The District Six Museum, 2008), 68.

¹¹⁸Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 1.

Homecoming Centre and “marked a new phase in the life of the District Six Museum” and the buildings.¹¹⁹ After 97 years the Sacks Futeran business officially stopped trading in 2007 and after co-habitation with the District Six Museum for a few years, the set of buildings were extensively refurbished.¹²⁰ By blending older histories of the site with aesthetic and technical expertise, the Museum’s visions, philosophies, and concepts were an integral part of the redevelopment.¹²¹



Figure 2.40: District Six Museum Homecoming Centre inscription panel. Photograph: HH-R. ‘District Six on the Fringe’ Public debate. Photograph: Ralph Borland.

The buildings were transformed internally and externally to include new exhibition spaces, offices, archival storerooms, studios as well as incorporating the Fugard Theatre.¹²² According to Bonita Bennett:

The potential unlocked by this space has taken the museum into new terrain which includes a major renovation and restoration project. The plans involve expanding it as a centre for the Museum’s programmes which have long outgrown the current building, and as a community centre to support the on-going work relating to the return of former residents to the District.¹²³

The exhibitions *Fields of Play: football memories and forced removals in Cape Town* and *Offside: Kick Ignorance Out* opened in the internally reconfigured, restored and renamed set of buildings.¹²⁴

¹¹⁹Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 63.

¹²⁰The Hands-On District Six! Media and donor event was held in 2003 in the Sacks Futeran building where the new director Valmont Layne reaffirmed the museums work foregrounding a ‘hands on’ approach to District Six memorialisation.

¹²¹Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 1

¹²²Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 1

¹²³Sacks Futeran Building Project, www.districtsix.co.za/docs/sacks-futeran.pdf, accessed 06.04.2016.

¹²⁴For a comprehensive history and transformation of the buildings see: H Hayes-Roberts, “From Family Business to Public Museum: The transformation of the Sacks Futeran Buildings into the Homecoming Centre of the District Six Museum”, MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2012.



Figure 2.41: Exhibition logos developed for the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre exhibitions. D6M archive.



Figure 2.42: District Six Museum publication *Fields of Play: football memories and forced removals in Cape Town* book cover design 2010. D6M archive.

In 2012, after the soccer exhibitions were de-installed the exhibition *Die Tafel* (The Table) opened. *Die Tafel* as the main idiom of return to the city was conceptualised to host commemorative gatherings with ex-residents such as the *Huis Kombuis* craft food and memory workshops, book launches, poetry readings, AGM's, workshops with youth and museumising processes that extend the museum's methodologies.¹²⁵ The Homecoming Tafel panel in the museum reads:

Welcome to the Homecoming Tafel experience of the District Six Museum. The Tafel or (Table) is a powerful symbol for the District Six community. It represents the coming together of community and of collective sharing (kanala) around a common space. In District Six and Bo Kaap, tafels were laid out for Christmas Choirs on Christmas Eve and for nagtroepe (Malay choirs) on the eve of Tweede Nuwe Jaar. Laden with seasonal fruit like watermelon as well as pastries and cakes, the tafels were celebratory – marking the festival calendar between Slave Emancipation Day on 1

¹²⁵I attended various events at the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre between 2011-2019.

December to the parade of the klopse performed on Tweede Nuwe Jaar on the 2nd January. Tafels also reference the intimate family rituals around food, work and religion that were performed in District Six homes on a daily basis. Based on this, the Homecoming Tafel is the central gathering space from which the meaning of return to District Six will be explored in creative ways.¹²⁶

The idiom of the Homecoming Table refers to the creation of a welcoming and orientating environment for District Six returnees who had moved back to District Six and lived in purpose-built low rise flat complexes. A permanent convivial themed environment was created where returning ex-residents could host birthday parties and functions at the Museum. In contrast to the District Six Museum Methodist Church building exhibitions, the spaces of the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre comprise a larger floor and wall square meterage on three levels. The increased size and space accommodated large gatherings and changed notions of public giving for the museum.¹²⁷

The Museums expansion programme resulted in a range of spaces for museum specific collaborative exhibitions, catered functions, conferences, events, and educational programmes and a monthly District Six Museum supper club. I would argue that the Homecoming Centre functions in a similar way to the *District Six Sculpture Festival* where different voices, expressions of identity are showcased through art, design and exhibitions thereby extending the cultural platform of the museum, as a social hub in the city. Through the building, the museum is also able to host film screenings and provide a venue for public events such as Open Book, and link to city-wide commemorative events. The annual Slave Emancipation walk is an important District Six Museum commemoration. The Homecoming Centre as a venue does not cater to tourists. Its programming focuses on returning ex-residents, education, exhibitions and events.

Exhibition conclusions

As I analysed the *Streets: retracing District Six* and *Digging Deeper* exhibitions I became aware of the low-tech approach to design was intentional. Audio visual monitors and touch screen

¹²⁶Die Tafel exhibition panel, District Six Museum Homecoming Centre. 2019.

¹²⁷Hayes-Roberts, "From Family", 2.

technology would interfere with the sound of the human voice speaking that stood for the antithesis of apartheid suppression of voice and agency. Sound was highly regarded and valued as a resource in the museum exhibition spaces as was various types of text and illumination that I referred to earlier.

To assess the exhibitions visually and in terms of my design argument, the first exhibition *Streets* in the Methodist church drew on subjective and creative responses and was informed by the Hands On District Six Conference. This call to action drew on mobilisation and memory to build a framework that would safeguard District Six itself. The hands on ethos influenced design making and meant that whatever people could bring in terms of their craft, art, expertise, materials and resources was utilised to make small intimate exhibitions with ex-residents where the idioms for reclaiming District Six as memory and site originated. Remnants of the church fittings and fixtures were utilised. Pews were rearranged and used to sell books from and create seating in the museum. External signage was hand-painted. A floor map was painted depicting District Six streets. Photographs were mainly mounted in frames or unmounted and painted street scenes provided an exploration of different streets. Calico curtains were repurposed to create an inscription canvas, posters were screen-printed, banners were handmade and flyers were photocopied. The primary exhibition space was on the ground floor level in the mainly untouched church interior and this made it feel like an outreach project of the Methodist Church, which it was.¹²⁸ Due to the many exhibitions held within the *Streets: Retracing District* exhibition, the exhibition space became layered over time and was built upon as inscription intensified and research and exhibition themes developed.

When the *Streets* exhibition moved to the Moravian Chapel the architectural simplicity of the chapel and white interior provided a template upon which to reassess the District Six story and build an intensified historical framework of representation. Situated in District Six the museum became a popular destination on the evolving township tours route. These museum milestones

¹²⁸The Methodist Inner City Mission printed the first District Six Museum Newsletter dated January 1996.

provided motivation and opportunity to develop a fuller historical emphasis for District Six within a broader context of post-apartheid Cape Town. Methodist Church renovation funding had been secured and expert knowledge in the form of artists, archaeologists, architects, historians, and curators conceptualised and created the *Digging Deeper* exhibition.

I am arguing here that a transition took place in design. The memory project evolved into a museum based on working with shared memories, an outcome of which created the first museum designs, where ex-residents claimed District Six streets and spaces. This changed into a storytelling brand where tourists were offered a District Six experience as the museum through *Digging Deeper* claimed space in the city with an international reach. Ex-resident voices became more mediated, scripted, filtered and curated to fit into a visual framework that was meant to represent them. In this way, a brand was established through a handcrafted design style that came to stand for a community and an event: District Six forced removals.



Chapter 3

Design scenarios: Locating District Six brand innovation and museumisation

In this chapter, I explore how key design elements from the two first exhibitions *Streets: Retracing District Six* and *Digging Deeper* were repurposed and fabricated towards establishing a brand. Furthermore, how the museum has been branded and rebranded since 1994. The institutional branding of the museum through design is less mediated, curated and negotiated by ex-residents. Curators, artists, and designers made decisions about the final packaging of the museum to create a range of museum designs. I trace various applications, locating design, specifically form, to foreground museum design scenarios that indicate innovative qualities of museumisation as a practice that led to these designs. District Six Museum design reviewed in this chapter includes a fax letterhead, museum letterhead, logo, mural, banner, brochure, website, newsletter, signage, poster, keychain, gate, t-shirt, flag, and book cover designs. The *Huis Kombuis* Reminiscence Craft and Design workshops created a sub-brand within the museum and I explore various products relating to these workshops that contribute to theming and the museum's craft aesthetic that includes a cookbook. This indicates a shift and divergent processes emerging as the museum had to service a growing range of audiences, especially tourists, therefore not only ex-residents in order to fund exhibitions, research projects and support public and education programmes.

District Six Museum Foundation fax, letterhead, logo, banner and signage design

In the mid-1990s the foundation communicated via faxed documents and utilised letterheads as well as a logo as a requirement of funding and promotion. The design of the District Six Museum Foundation fax letterhead shows visual application featuring two black and white photographs of the Central Methodist Church. An exterior street view taken from Buitenkant Street established this landmark as housing the museum. Another photograph depicted an interior view of the church, taken from the entrance. In the photograph, a large wooden cross was visible in the upper arched choir gallery and below on ground level was a raised wooden pulpit. Pews, elongated light fittings, and the white Victorian cast iron *broekie* lace interior

supports were visible.¹ The two photographs were placed in a diagonal central position overlapping each other and three objects were placed on top of the photographs: a pair of old-fashioned round-framed prescription spectacles, a small object that resembled a broken piece of a wooden chair leg with a tag tied to it by a piece of string and a pencil pointing inward.

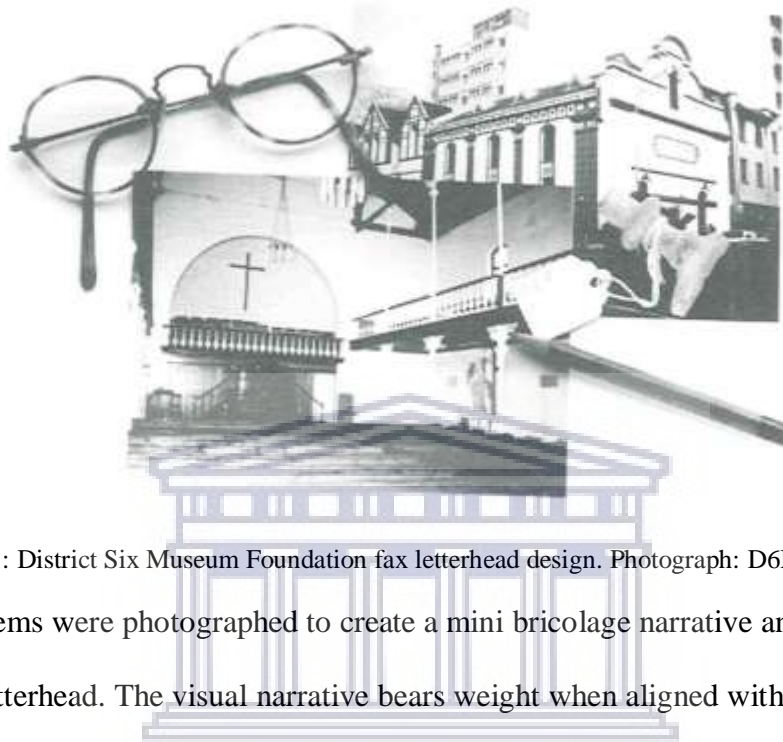


Figure 3.1: District Six Museum Foundation fax letterhead design. Photograph: D6M archive.

These assembled items were photographed to create a mini bricolage narrative and utilised as a provisional fax letterhead. The visual narrative bears weight when aligned with a District Six Museum funding proposal in which it is stated:

The aim of the project is to securely house the historic collection, which include relics from the era of forced removals from the area, such as historical photographs and the authentic collection of the original nameplates of the streets of District Six, in order that this collection, as well as the historic building, can be utilised for its youth educational programmes.²

This juxtaposition of the photographs and objects acted as visual aids that reinforced the content, therefore conveyed and proposed a pedagogical function. The letterhead referenced the architectural containment within a former sacred space while the pencil and reading glasses denoted an archival quality through research, the pencil often used as a symbol of primary education or early learning.

¹In South Africa, an Afrikaans word *broekie* means women's underwear and is used to refer to ornate ironwork found on Victorian buildings as well as moulded plastic and aluminium reproductions of the style.

²Arts and Culture RDP projects for the stabilisation of Youth and Children; Application for RDP funding: The District Six Museum: Restoration, Refurbishment and Redevelopment of the old Methodist Church in Buitenkant Street, Business Plan, Cape Town, September 1996, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Resource Centre, District Six Museum, 1.

This assemblage and collaged approach created a visual story and spoke to the storytelling happening within the *Streets* exhibition. It also referenced Stepping Stones Children’s Educare Centre where, in both places, childhood was the interest point, focus, and idiom.



Figure 3.2: District Six Museum Foundation letterhead design. Photograph: D6M archive.

The foundation letterhead featured a black and white photograph of six children leaning on a plastered balcony standing facing the camera in front of an old door and small window. The image appears to be faded out at the borders. Placed above and on top of the photograph was a wooden toy train with two wooden carriages. As with the fax, the letterhead was photographed again as an assemblage of 2D image and 3D objects. Images of children and the pedagogical function of the museum are conflated, as childhood becomes an important visual feature in establishing the museum.

Combined with the letterhead image one of the first District Six Museum logos incorporated a graphic interpretation of the seven steps, a landmark in former District Six constructed from granite kerbstones that led into Hanover Street, the main road of District Six.



Figure 3.3: District Six Museum Foundation logo design 1994-2000. D6M archive.

The simple and symbolic black on white logo representing the steps leading into a street with a background view of domestic homes was rendered and framed in imperfect rough horizontal and vertical line work on three sides. The dark silhouette of Table Mountain was placed above the buildings and created a solid uneven frame. Perspective was used to create depth in the logo. Text reading 'The District Six' was curved above the central image and the words 'Museum Foundation' were placed below the brand mark in a straight line.³ As a one colour and simple logo, it would have been inexpensive to reproduce, allow successful photocopying and would remain legible on faxed documents (the main means of transmitting correspondence before the advent of emails). The designer of the logo selected a contemporary and complementary typeface, Modern No. 20 designed in 1982 by American type designer Ed Benguiat showing a high degree of contrast between thick and thin strokes, as well as a large x-height. Benguiat drew on historic typefaces to create revival fonts reproducing the qualities inherent in early advertising fonts. Modern No. 20 is more suited to advertising display purposes than the setting of long-running text or books.⁴

In creating and making use of a brand mark, the symbol of the seven steps, the District Six Museum Foundation reframed the steps as aspirational. It represents an opportunity to ascend or embark on a journey into a discoverable and reimagined place. While it stood for the holistic framing of a contemporary version of District Six, it also pointed to the beginnings of an institutional brand.

A redesigned District Six Museum logo appeared in 2000 in a tighter, more unified, vertical arrangement of brand mark and text. In the new configuration, the text 'District Six' was placed and spaced above Table Mountain and the word 'Museum' was positioned below the seven steps and enclosed in a vertical framed format. Placing the brand mark and text in closer proximity formulated a distinctive character thereby creating a connection between District Six and Table

³A trademark is utilised to manage and represent the identity of a brand. A picture, drawing, colour, design, symbol, and typeface of a brand conveys a unique aspect and expressive quality differentiating it from other similar institutions and brands. See W. Olins, *Corporate Identity Making Business Strategy Visible Through Design*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 9.

⁴Ed Benguiat, Age of Information, www.historygraphicdesign.com, accessed 05.12.2018.

Mountain The text was not exactly lined up and is incrementally irregular creating a sense that time had weathered and eroded the surfaces. This weathering metaphor appears almost as a printing error, but this intentional use of aging evokes an old printing press and historicises the logo.



Figure 3.4: District Six Museum Foundation logo design 2000-2019. D6M archive.

The irregular distressed quality of the updated logo and its vertical format became highly effective as a large standing banner where it functioned as a stamp. As the seven steps were enlarged, it evoked the architectural loss and social significance of District Six. The logo was applied in various ways and in a variety of sizes in indigo blue and white. It is highly legible and represents a distinctive Cape Town museum brand.

The museum created another logo in 2014 that retained in the design the main brand mark of the seven steps but consolidated the text within the logo into a longitudinal rectangular format surrounded by slightly irregular line work.



Figure 3.5: District Six Museum positive and negative logo design versions 2014. D6M archive.

The dark indigo, almost navy blue in the logo together with white made its appearance and was derived from the form and colouration of the museum's collection of blue and white enamel District Six street signs. Colour historian Michel Pastoureau argues, "colour is a social phenomenon. It is society that 'makes' colour, defines it, gives it meaning, constructs its codes....colour's primary

function is to classify, mark, announce, connect or divide”.⁵ Therefore, the adoption of the colour blue associated the District Six Museum with the popular symbolism of blue. According to Pastoureau, “Blue is not aggressive and violates nothing, it reassures and draws together”.⁶ Seen in the logo of the League of Nations, United Nations, UNESCO, UNICEF and the EU “blue has become an international colour charged with the mission of promoting peace and understanding between peoples”.⁷ Although it is argued by Pastoureau that the colour and popularity of blue are socially constructed, the colour of the District Six street signs played a significant role in the selection of a particular shade of blue for museum branding.

The new horizontal logo was designed to mimic the District Six street signs, appeared on the museum’s upgraded website in 2014 and functioned in tandem with the vertical logo recoloured in blue and white. The museum designed a range of logos with logo variations that were adapted according to vertical, horizontal or circular application formats. This built a visual toolkit and created a strong brand identity within logo variations across locations. Another vital aspect that illustrated branding and rebranding was the creation of slogans or catchphrases, an important element that created consistency throughout the museum brand.⁸ These were applied to innumerable museum products with the museum’s logo.

Another District Six Museum logo was designed in 2000 utilising the oval shape of the enamel Victorian numbering system in a circular format. The letter-number combination ‘D6’ in a stamped style represented a number or address and the text ‘Hands on District Six’ was designed in a distressed font. This layout created positive and negative text in a circular logo design and had various museum applications.

⁵M. Pastoureau, *Blue The History of a colour*, (New Jersey: Princeton University press, 2001), 10.

⁶Pastoureau, *Blue*, 180-181.

⁷Pastoureau, *Blue*, 180-181.

⁸A slogan, catchphrase, tagline or pay off-line, also called a punch line is a short statement conveying the the key message of the institution or company. It requires brand research and strategic placement in order to communicate effectively with a target market. “A diamond is forever” by De Beers is a global and well-known tagline.



Figure 3.6: District Six Museum logo mural design 2010. Photograph: H H-R.

In the early 2000s, this circular logo was updated and adapted to include embossing Dymo tape lettering in 3 strips to create a logo combining two slogans namely *Hands On District Six* and *Where ever we are we are here.*



Figure 3.7: District Six Museum button and logo designs 2010. D6M archive.

Because of the distinctively industrial, workaday image of embossing tape, it has been common for designers to use images of embossing tape as lettering and it may be intended to evoke hand punched labelling used in an archive. The lettering on the updated logo in a 3 strip format one below the other reads NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE WE ARE HERE. It has appeared on a District Six Museum Memorial Park Horstley street sign and on the *District Six Museum a collection of memories* photograph postcard series. Substantially enlarged, the logo was utilised in the design of a large 2012 commemorative blue and white banner. In another 2012 commemorative

banner, a small version of the logo was printed onto a large black and white photograph of a District Six street scene.⁹ It also featured in other marketing materials.



Figure 3.8: District Six Museum banner designs 2013, Photograph: District Six Museum annual report 2012/3 cover. The logo also acts as title and slogan on the architectural District Six landmarks brochure *HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE WE ARE HERE* where colour blocking, archival photographs, and Dymo strip lettering featured as headings throughout. The logo was used twice in this brochure. The texture that the lettering conveys is a handmade quality evoking an older technology of labelling or marking goods.¹⁰ In terms of the District Six Museum practice of museumisation the use of this logo represents a key branding strategy to manage changing environments through coordinated design innovation. It also points to how the museum utilises logo's to stand for its social commitment through a consistent approach to branding.

⁹Printing the logo over an enlarged archival photograph museumised and branded the banner then utilised for memorialisation during a commemorative mark pointing to the mobility of the logo across various mediums.

¹⁰District Six Museum, *HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE WE ARE HERE* brochure, 2011.



Figure 3.9: District Six Museum Hands on District Six No matter where we are we are here brochure cover 2011. D6M archive.

Besides many brochures, flyers, and leaflets the museum has produced different types of vinyl banners. These range from large printed and painted banners that are carried on commemorative walks, to pull-up banners for interior use at events and vertical museum building banners.¹¹ Featured designs on banners included the interior District Six Museum fresco mural, a scanned archival photograph of Lydia Williams, black and white District Six archival photographs and one of the museum's logo.

The Hands on District Six: Landscapes of Postcolonial Memorialisation Conference¹² hosted by the District Six Museum in 2005 was publicly articulated through a banner and slogan, 'Hands On District Six: Taking Action: Re-Building Community' that was carried in a street procession.¹³

¹¹Hand painted banners are often created at District Six Museum creative themed workshops where participants make banners that they later carry in a march or commemorative walk. As they call to attention a particular issue or visual reminder they are rendered as another form of inscription in which subjective agency is publically expressed.

¹²The Conference was marked by key debates on memorialisation, human rights and heritage practices

¹³District Six Museum, "Introduction" in *Reflections on a Conference Hands on District Six landscapes of post-colonial memorialisation*, Cape Town, 25-28 May 2005, 5.



Figure 3.10: District Six Museum HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX TAKING ACTION RE-BUILDING COMMUNITY banner design 2005. Photograph: D6M archive.

Internal applied and embroidered fabric banners depicted the various District Six religious affiliations, sporting and cultural groups that were a feature of both the *Streets* and *Digging Deeper* exhibitions. These cloth banners referenced the religious vestments once worn in the Buitenkant Street Methodist church. The theme *Beyond District Six* presented in the memorial hall *Writers Floor* exhibition was applied to the exterior painted mural banners commissioned by the museum. The painted banners each measured 1m in width by 5mts in length and were exhibited vertically between the architectural plastered wall pillars on the Albertus Street façade. Created at 5 different centres under the theme Home and Belonging the banners each showcased artwork of school children and adults. Involved in the expressive arts project were STREETS (a training and activity centre for street children in Salt River), CRED (Creative Education with Youth at Risk, Oude Moulen), PHILANI Flagship Printing Project (Crossroads) CAP (Community Arts projects, District Six), SID RULE Primary School (Grassy Park) and ONS PLEK (a shelter for female street children which occupied part of the building complex that housed the museum).¹⁴ In 2016, the banners were removed and replaced with photographic banners when the museum rebranded itself.

¹⁴District Six Museum, *A guide*, 2002.



Figure 3.11: Hand-painted community banner designs hung on the District Six Museum building, the former Buitenkant Methodist church building brochure, 2006. D6M archive.

A hand-painted museum building sign in red and black text was utilised when the museum first opened in 1994 and the text almost appears as if painted on the white church wall as graffiti.



Figure 3.12: District Six Museum signage in 1994, 2000 and 2016. Source: D6M archive and HH-R.

After the renovation and adaptive reuse of the Buitenkant Street Methodist church buildings in 1999-2000, a new museum sign was installed in regular black italicised text against a soft yellow background. This colour combination was juxtaposed against the pink and white postmodern colour palette of the renovated buildings. In 2016 the buildings were repainted and a new sign was designed in white negative text against a blue ground that divides the sign into three ordered blocks of text. The simplified signage in blue and white utilised negative space and had a higher visual impact, with the sans serif text making it appear contemporary. It created more visual texture, was more legible and formed part of a colour blocking style adopted by the museum in 2016 therefore as part of a system of signage varying the logo as text to fit different applications.

District Six Museum T-shirt design

Screen-printed T-shirt designs with political messages featured in the *Mediaworks CAPS* exhibition within the *Streets* exhibition and influenced the design of the Museum's t-shirts. Screen-printed t-shirts were first created when the museum launched the exhibition based on Richard Rives's novel *Buckingham Palace* within the *Streets* exhibition. As a methodology of extending its cultural work and footprint, the District Six Museum commissioned an institutional printed T-shirt. The t-shirt had a dual function. It provided the staff with a collective identity at events and was sold at the District Six Museum gift shop called the Little Wonder Store named after a former shop in District Six. The navy blue-shirt is printed with the adapted District Six Museum circular logo in white textile paste in a top-right chest position, and on the back of the t-shirt is printed a large round logo in white. The distressed lettering in a circular design reads HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX and partially frames a solid white disc in which lettering is designed in a stencil typeface, which is negative text in blue and reads D6. The oval circle is reminiscent of Victorian blue and white or black and white enamel house numbers attached to door frames widely used in Cape Town.



Figure 3.13: District Six Museum Hands on District Six T-shirt design 2010. D6M archive.

In the District Six Museum T-shirt design, the visual language of grunge text and stencil text were combined in this design visually fusing two elements.¹⁵ Firstly the “grunge typography

¹⁵The typeface stencil was designed in 1937 by R. Hunter Middleton and Gerry Powell. This font consists of only capital letters with rounded edges and thick main strokes, with breakages in the face, to give it the appearance of the stencilled alphabets used mainly for boxes, crates, rubbish bins and military signage suggesting extreme authority, uniformity and control with masculine overtones.

graphic design period of the 1990s and 2000s, which often used composited images produced by computer”.¹⁶ According to type designer Sharan Shetty, it produced a subculture range of new distressed fonts and created, digitally, a lookalike font viewed as untraditional and stemming from the grunge movement expressed in music, fashion and lifestyle. Various hand and later computer designed fonts provided a new edgy and raw appeal drawn from graffiti, fanzines, art, club posters generally promoting postpunk underground or alternative rock music.¹⁷ Secondly, the stencil typeface, in South Africa under apartheid, was widely utilised to mark the hostels of migrant workers, hostel beds and housing in townships where people were forced to relocate. Associated with military barracks, marking dustbins and government-owned movable and immovable property the stencil typeface conveyed an ethos of ownership, control, and commodification.¹⁸ Relating it to the central design element: D6 printed in a stencil font the design appeared to be engaging with individual and collective memory as people were moved to low-cost sub-economic housing on the cape flats where the stencil typeface was extensively utilised as a numbering system. Therefore, the stencil font design and the t-shirt slogan HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX was a call to reclaim from officialdom the land that was expropriated and to overcome the official ways in which places and people have been marked and assigned in Cape Town.¹⁹

District Six Museum website and newsletter design

A website was developed for the District Six Museum in 1999 and imagery depicted the promotion of the District Six Museum as a fairyland drawing on a black and white archival photograph in which two children are standing next to a graffitied wall painted with the words ‘you are now in fairyland’.²⁰ One of the first District Six Museum brochures also stated as a slogan inset

¹⁶S. Shetty, “The Rise and Fall of Grunge Typography”, August 21, 2012, The Awl website, <https://theawl.com/the-rise-and-fall-of-grunge-typography-854d8aa88555#.sdr7tlpf0>, accessed 12.10.2018.

¹⁷Shetty, “The Rise”, accessed 12.10.2018.

¹⁸H. Hayes-Roberts, “Man is the measure of all things: towards human-centred typeface design within Lwandle”, curatorship course project paper, (University of the Western Cape, 2010), 1.

¹⁹The City of Cape Town continues to use the typeface stencil for signage/numbering on property under its management although murals, artwork and creative acts of customisation are transforming a few sub economic housing projects built during apartheid.

²⁰District Six Museum website, Wayback machine internet archive, 11 November 1999, <https://web.archive.org/web/19991111021539/http://districtsix.co.za/>, accessed 21.10.2019.

between texts and images the words ‘You are now in fairyland’. On the same brochure, a black graphic logo featuring the silhouette of District Six chimney pots against a dark turquoise background also appeared. Web Factory designed a new District Six Museum website in 2003. It included:

Info on all previous exhibitions and collections about our educational work and much more. Two new interactive features are Stan’s Walk based on a popular walking tour which Stan Abrahams, one of our trustees occasionally leads through District Six and an interactive timeline beginning in the 1400s and highlighting events through to the creation of District Six and into the present.²¹

The second website logo references a branded feel where the letters appear as if they have been incised with something hot like a blacksmiths fire iron and may also reference laser cutting which leaves a blackened edge. The faded out misty edges look as if it survived a fire or burning and it appeared to be weathered by the elements that referenced old objects. A timeline and fob watch and chain also featured in the website design perhaps to communicate a historical timeframe older than forced removals, the inner working of the museum and a nostalgic reference.²²

An updated website logo appeared in 2014 when the museum commemorated its 20th anniversary and functioned as a graphic link across most brochures, signage, and advertising material. The professional looking logo references District Six street sign design and as a 2 colour graphic symbol does not allude to a cut and paste application or handmade aesthetic but instead references the digital process of computer software in its design application.



Figure 3.14: District Six Museum website logo designs from 1999, 2003 and 2014.
Source: Wayback Machine internet archive.

²¹District Six Museum Newsletter, 2003.

²²Pocket watches were popular during the 19th Century. Utilising this image refers to the British colonial period in South Africa when the first forced removals from Horstley Street District Six occurred in 1901.

In terms of information dissemination, marketing, and design the museum's updated website acted as an interactive showcase of exhibitions and offerings. Tickets for the museum Encounters tours and Supper Club events could be bought online and was an engaging, functional and well-designed feature of electronic museumisation. Although I do not cover website design in-depth in the thesis it was an important portal to viewing museum designs. It indicates the immediate and contemporary scope of District Six Museum design and the museumisation of electronic media.

Another design application were newsletters produced by the museum since January 1996.²³ The early District Six Museum Newsletter designs featured mainly text with a few small photographs, later it incorporated archival photographic imagery on the front page and each newsletter looked quite differentiated from the next.



Figure 3.15: District Six Museum newsletter front cover designs from 2003 and 2015. D6M archive.



Figure 3.16: District Six the musical inscribed poster design, 2002, Photograph: HH-R.

In 2004 a Hands On District Six Newsletter design appeared that became standardised over the next few years. On a museum newsletter the words 'District Six' were printed in a similar graphic style to *District Six* the musical by David Kramer and Taliep Petersen. The museum's focus

²³District Six Museum Foundation newsletter, January 1996, A complimentary newsletter for our founders, members and friends, First Edition, District Six Museum archive, accessed 12.03.2019.

at that time was musical heritage and it signalled how the museum was influenced in design terms by the highly popular musical.

It is interesting to note that the poster advertising the musical was possibly inscribed by the actors as a tribute to the museum's practice of inscription by ex-residents on the memory cloth and floor map. I interpret this as a design crossover and synergy as both the musical and the museum utilised a common visual language to represent District Six being black and white photographic representation and distressed lettering.

The 2015 District Six Museum newsletter design again references a softer faded and slightly fire iron branded word/text D6 logo combination. Lettering featured a painterly panel to the right with intensified texture and colour indicated that this could have been an enlarged element from the *Digging Deeper* exhibition.

District Six Museum poster, brochure, gate, keychain and flag design

A full colour printed poster advertising the 1992 District Six Museum Foundation photographic exhibition was designed by artist Peter Clark and featured one of his linocut artworks: *Homage* (1984). The imagery consisted of a large hand with the thumb pointing upward and remaining fingers pointing right in an arrow configuration. The thumb almost touched the tail of an abstract bird in flight. A crosshatched border framed the two main pictorial elements and indicated a fleeting moment. Either the bird in flight was being released by the hand or the hand was reaching out to the bird in order to be transported elsewhere or the bird represented freedom and mobility. A poem by Langston Hughes in hand-rendered text reads 'Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly'.²⁴ The choice of this poem and text combination provided a visual metaphor for removals and recovery utilised in the poster for a museum's founding exhibition in the Central Methodist Church in Buitenkant Street.²⁵

²⁴District Six Museum, 11 February 1966 Commemoration, 2014 pamphlet, District Six Museum archive.

²⁵C. Rassool and S. Prosalendis, "Beginnings and trusts" in *Recalling Community in Cape Town Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, (District Six Museum: Cape Town, 2001), 1.

The early visual language and processes of the District Six Museum can be partially traced to anti-apartheid forms of resistance art and design as well as artists in Cape Town. The visual output of the grassroots institution, the Community Arts Project in Salt River founded in the 1980s bordering District Six acted as a stimulus for a number of disenfranchised artists providing them with a context and environment to train in a variety of mediums.²⁶ At CAPS an array of artistic and design mediums such as silkscreen²⁷ and linocut established creative cultural practices as a way of promoting activism and protest.²⁸

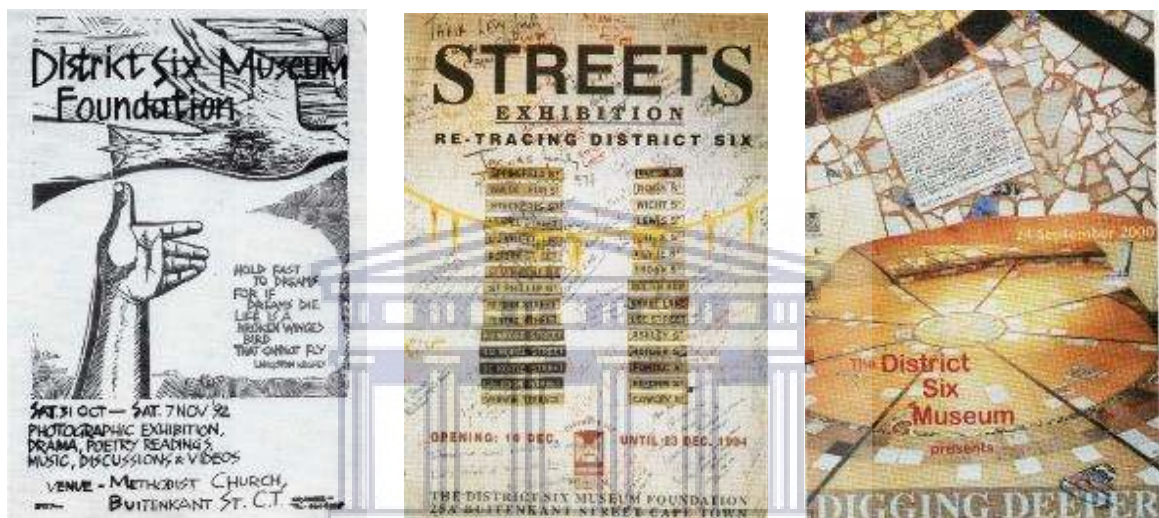


Figure 3.17: District Six Museum Foundation exhibition, *Streets Re-tracing District Six* exhibition, and *Digging Deeper* exhibition poster designs. D6M archive.

The *Streets: Retracing District Six* full colour printed exhibition poster, designed by Peggy Delpont and Louis Jansen van Vuuren, utilised surface design in the form of handwritten messages and signatures as an edge to edge background. Overlaid in a central position were two columns generously spaced apart, depicting thirty District Six enamel street signs. The overlay of a top element of *strikkies* (bunting) formed a left to right curved horizontal line in yellow dividing the poster in two from top to bottom. The poster text used a combination of two main sans serif and serif

²⁶CAPS offered art and design classes and training in screen-printing, graphic poster design, placards, t-shirt design, fundraising, drawing, art, mural painting, mosaic design, design process, performance, music, poetry and photography.

²⁷The CAPS poster collection forms part of the UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye archive.

²⁸The Community Arts Project (CAP) was established in Cape Town in the 1977 following the Soweto uprisings. By the late 1980s two CAP's had emerged: the 'art school' (Chapel Street, Woodstock) and the Media Project (Community House, Salt River). The latter constituted as an independent trust Media Works, before joining again with the mother body to form the Arts & Media Access Centre. CAP/AMAC closed in 2008.

typefaces.²⁹ The serified typeface was Modern No.20 and san serif typeface appeared to be Arial bold. Utilising the typefaces in combination created clear readability and referenced both historical and modern fonts used in mass media. Layering the words with different text styles and the use of bright yellow in the *strikkies* created an eye-catching convivial promise to would-be exhibition attendees and also signalled the musical heritage of District Six.

Designed by Peggy Delpont and Jos Thorne the *Digging Deeper* exhibition poster comprises two edge to edge photographic exhibition images and the first version of the District Six Museum logo in black. The date of the exhibition opening was the 24th September 2000 (Heritage day). The text 'Digging Deeper' placed at the bottom of the poster alludes to archaeological extraction.³⁰ Although the new exhibition was a complete reconfiguration and reorganisation of the first *Streets* exhibition elements it also themed the museum spaces and provided expanded layered narratives, more visuals, text, and sound. Therefore in comparison to *Streets*, the *Digging Deeper* exhibition was a far more comprehensive and conclusive District Six Social History narrative with increased wall, floor and hanging spaces dedicated to an exhibitionary public environment. It is interesting that two photographic images from the refurbished and museumised Memorial Hall are utilised in the exhibition poster to advertise the *Digging Deeper* exhibition and not the main double volume exhibition space. By shifting the Horstley Street archaeological fragments into the Memorial Hall moved processes of District Six museumisation practice into a relationship with the District Six landscape itself.

Both images in the poster showed a mosaic floor as a highly designed environment where every element is engineered to fit into a radial perspective. The circular floor design had at its centre a circle in black linework which contained geographical features representing District Six. Black

²⁹*Strikkies* (bunting) are a decorative and symbolic feature made of fabric offcuts from the *Klopse* (minstrel) costumes that are remade each year into bright two or three tone ensembles. The many leftover satin and sequin offcuts are tied onto a piece of rope and strung across streets in areas where particular minstrel tropes reside, practice and prepare for the annual minstrel carnival held in the Cape Town CBD on 1st January each year. Performances continue at various competition venues in Cape Town.

³⁰P. Delpont and J. Thorne, "Museum interjections" in *Recalling Community in Cape Town, Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001), 95.

lines project from the circle to the edges of the floor space. The linework creates a number of readings. The lines conveyed bi-directional movement also conveying the sun's rays, a cartwheel, segmentation, and division deconstructing space into sections. As an organising principle, the design created an abstract floor pattern relating to space mapped differently to the District Six floor map. The expansive earth coloured ochre floor tones contrasted effectively with the white tiles and mosaic fragment insets and attempted to bring the exterior earthly environment of post forced removals District Six onto the Corcolem floor. In this way, it referenced the *District Six Sculpture Festival* where the barren earth became a template and canvas for art installations. Similarly, the flat and levelled floor surface was treated as a canvas and neutral ground where restoration of the church floor became a place to restore the community as the exhibition poster indicates.

In the photographed image covering the top half of the poster was an enlarged view of a small section of the floor where an inscribed tile with poetry text in blue by the author Alex la Guma was a central feature. Surrounding the tiles were broken tiles that created the mosaic floor surface where patterns of china fragments alluded to District Six found objects reworked as a decorative pattern. The poster celebrated hand-wrought craft qualities of combined mosaic fragments that spoke to a District Six archaeological excavation and poetry texts as metaphors for creating community forged through museum projects.

The museum has promoted its work through full-colour brochure design in various formats from A4 size 3-panel folding brochures to larger A3 size 6-panel folding formats and an A2 6-panel folding format. To orientate visitors to the many components of the exhibition a large and detailed District Six *Digging Deeper* exhibition guide brochure was produced by the Museum in 2000 to highlight the key features within the exhibition spaces. In order to retain interest and promote its cultural image the District Six Museum was rebranded through *Digging Deeper* exhibition design and an updated new version of the museum's vertical logo appeared on a *Digging Deeper* exhibition brochure. Brochure design included a combination of photographs, text and graphic elements.

A photographic image of Lydia Williams, a former slave, and teacher who lived on Zonnebloem estate was featured in a brochure, a colourful graphic poster design and a banner design. It was reinterpreted to commemorate Slave Emancipation in Cape Town by the District Six Museum. The banner was carried on 30th November 2017 in the annual commemorative walk to celebrate the freedom of enslaved people at midnight on 30th November 1834 in the Cape. The walk was organised by the District Six Museum and called a *Walk in the Night* after Alex La Guma's novel. The walk began at the Zonnebloem Estate, moved through District Six and ended at the Lydia Williams Centre of Memory in Chapel Street with a night picnic.³¹



Figure 3.18: District Six Museum brochure designs: Lydia in the Wind, Friends of the District Six Museum 2011 and a 20th anniversary Museum brochure 2014. D6M archive.

³¹The Walk in the Night is an annual event held since 2006, which commemorates and marks the abolishment of slavery at the Cape. District Six Museum lantern making workshops have in the past been part of how slavery is remembered in Cape Town. Music, performance and dance increasingly form part of the Emancipation Day march and acknowledges the musical influences of enslaved people on the development of Cape Jazz and the Cape Minstrels tropes.

Another feature incorporated into brochure design were elements from the interior figurative fresco by Peggy Delport *Where ever we are we are here*. It was utilised in various publications including a museum brochure in 2006 and as the cover image of a District Six Museum book publication.



Figure 3.19: District Six Museum brochure detail, 2006. D6M archive.

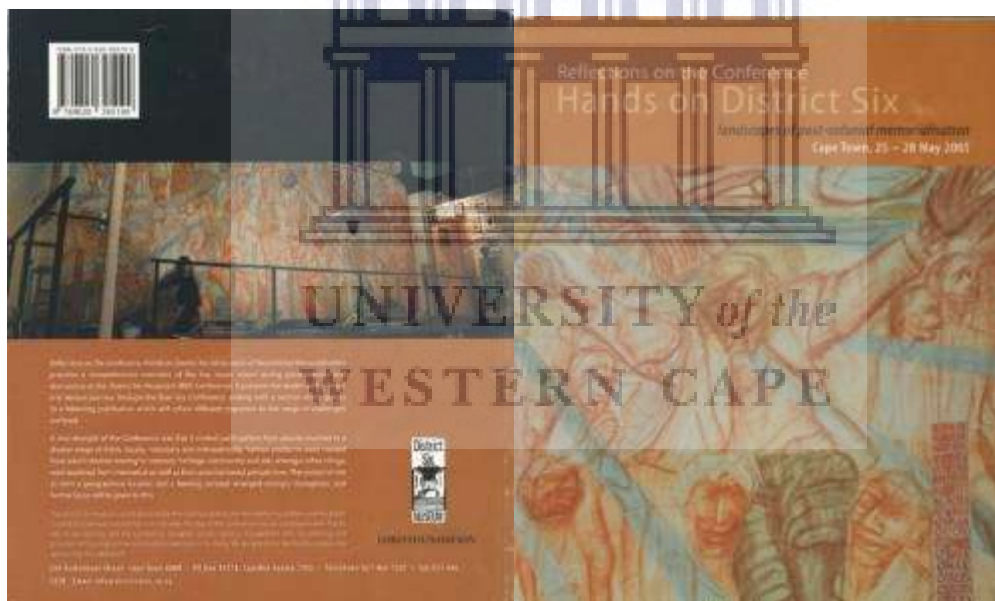


Figure 3.20: Peggy Delport's *Where ever we are we are here* fresco images featured in a museum brochure and as a cover design on a District Six Museum book publication. D6M archive.

The design became a pull-up banner during the 2005 *Hands on District Six, Landscapes of post-colonial memorialisation* conference hosted by the District Six Museum in Cape Town with the circular blue Hands On D6 wherever we are we are here logo placed over the edge to edge fresco design. A segment of the fresco was recreated as a large commemorative banner that read 'I am

every stone in this place of stones' referencing the cairn of stones at District Six. It was carried by participants in a District Six Museum walk of remembrance in 2009.³²

As a museum promoting a cultural and community lifestyle, the Homecoming Centre was purchased in 2002 and acted as a site of return and symbolic restitution to District Six returnees. Earlier, in 2004 at a handing over ceremony held in the Moravian Chapel specially designed District Six key rings were handed to returning residents as they moved back to District Six. The keyring designs drew on blue and white oval and rectangular Victorian era enamel District Six street signs and numbering system used in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition and were applied to various museum products. Returning ex-residents were given these museum mementos when they returned to take up residence in new District Six homes on 11th February 2004.³³



Figure 3.21: District Six Museum key chain design 2004. Photograph D6M archive

On 11th February 2005, a further 15 symbolic key chains were handed to returning ex-residents.³⁴

The key chain designs shifted the museum brand into a restitution brand as did the purchase and renovation of buildings renamed the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre in 2002. This marked an important moment in how design within the museum brand became differentiated.

Restitution provided the value and significance of embedding design with symbolic significance.

³²District Six Museum Annual Report 2009/10, cover image.

³³Layne, *Hands*, 1.

³⁴The District Six Museum 1994-2005, Presentation Transcript, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 04.03.2019.

This can be seen in the District Six keychain designs and the redesign of the Sacks Futeran buildings into the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre. Together, these indicate and stand for the possession of immovable property and actual return to District Six and the city. In these contemporary tangible forms, museum design represented social justice, critical citizenship, and aesthetics of restitution in remaking the District Six community. Design in this context goes beyond superficial styling or transient appeal to embody the politics of return and the potential to symbolise a post-apartheid quality of life.

On 11th February 2014, to mark 48 years since forced removals from District Six and the museum's 20th anniversary the museum included a living tribute to Cape Town artist Peter Clark in the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre. Clark had a long-standing relationship with the museum and its work of memorialisation in Cape Town.³⁵



Figure 3.22: District Six Museum Homecoming Centre gate design. Photograph: HH-R.

³⁵Peter Clark (b.1929-d.2014) worked across a range of mediums including writing, painting, collage, printmaking and poetry although he is most associated with powerful imagery produced through his linocuts and woodcut techniques mainly depicting social life under apartheid and the physical effects of social engineering.

Clark's linocut artwork *Homage* was reinterpreted as a 3-dimensional tall metal gate made by blacksmith Simon Beebe "using techniques such as etching and painting to create textured contrasts on the surface of the gate".³⁶ It created a highly aesthetic and stylised portal into the large and voluminous spaces of the Homecoming Centre via an alley and evokes ex-resident Noor Ebrahim's homing pigeon story of return. The dove as a recurrent theme in Clark's work was utilised with permission from the artist. It is utilised in the District Six Museum Foundation exhibition poster in 1992, as a print on the District Six floor map in 1994, printed as a flag and T-shirt design in 2014 and inspired the creation of dove-shaped bunting decoration in the Homecoming Centre from 2014 onwards.³⁷

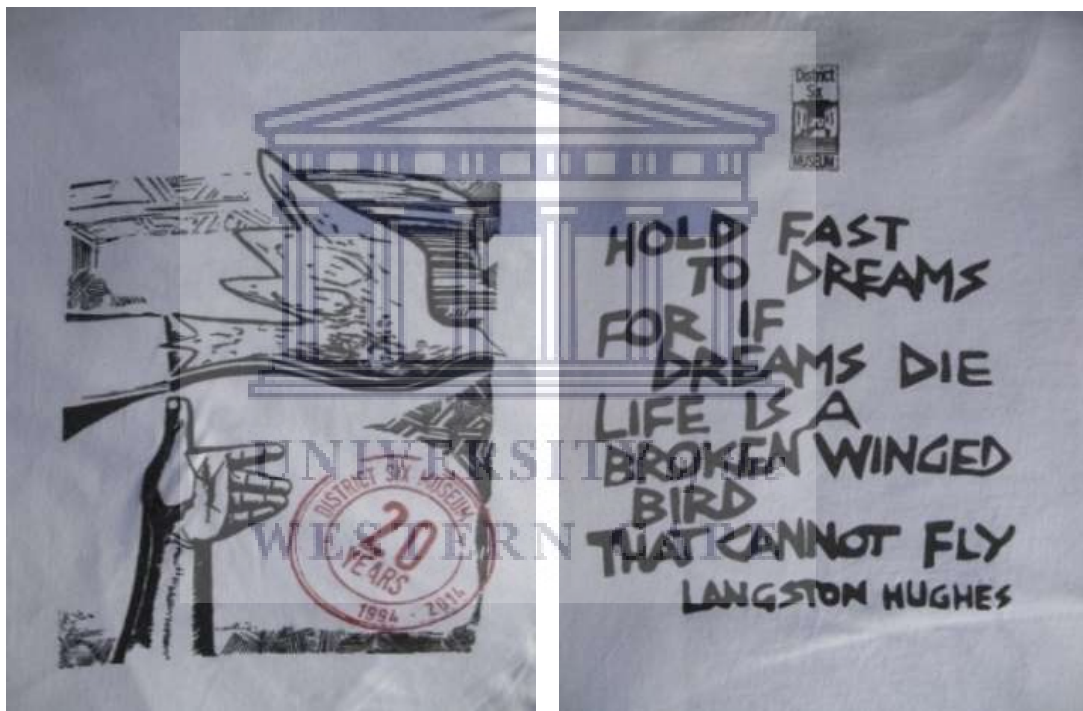


Figure 3.23: Front and back view of the District Six Museum commemorative t-shirt design, 2014. Photograph: H H-R

The 20th year District Six Museum commemorative t-shirt design featured a return to the early imagery of Peter Clark's linocut artwork *Homage* printed in black on a white t-shirt accompanied by the poem from Langston Hughes utilised on the 1992 District Six Museum foundation exhibition. A circular stamp design in red printed in the negative space of the framed

³⁶District Six Museum, 11 February 1966 Commemoration, 2014 pamphlet, District Six Museum archive.

³⁷The dove as a symbol and image took on different forms in the process of museumisation becoming a popular museum motif.

crosshatched border proclaims in text DISTRICT SIX MUSEUM 20 YEARS 1994-2014. This form of date stamp layout visually infers a travel stamp or an official marker providing a sense of authenticity and longevity evoking imagery utilised in 1992, to commemorate 20 institutional years.

The application of birds as aspirational carriers of memories, especially white doves within the museum by 2014 had become a firmly entrenched trope. Touching on biographical stories such as ex-resident museum guide Noor Ebrahims homing pigeons narrative in which his homing pigeons returned to District Six after removals were incorporated into the District Six Museum storytelling tours.

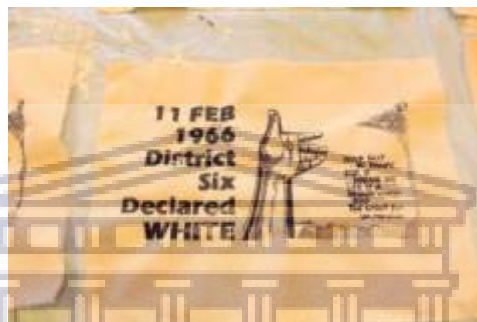


Figure 3.24: District Six Museum commemorative flag design 2014. Photograph: D6M archive.

The dove motif has also been utilised as bunting in the Homecoming centre alongside colourful *strikkies* (bunting) and white doves have been released on an annual commemorative walk to District Six.



Figure 3.25: *District Six Huis Kombuis Food and Memory Cookbook* launch, District Six Museum Homecoming Centre. November 2016 Photograph: Photo: #huiskombuis© Instagram

The *Huis Kombuis* Reminiscence Craft and Design workshops

The *Huis Kombuis* Reminiscence Craft and Design workshops initiated by District Six Museum curator and artist Tina Smith in 2006 with ex-residents was a restorative platform to facilitate forms of knowledge-making.³⁸ Commemorating women's work in District Six resulted in a range of designed heritage museum products. In terms of my argument around making museum design and branding through expertise, the *Huis Kombuis* project functions as a sub-brand within the museum that relies on ex-residents participation. Knowledge transactions between ex-residents themselves take place in producing a range of designs. Drawing on memories of food and homemaking in District Six, designs are reconfigured and packaged into museum products to provide an income for the museum and the workshop participants.

Craft practices at the District Six Museum were not reliant on traditional or rural notions of timeless craft but aligned with urban expressions of craft and the maker's identity in which "products speak of individual fantasy, of the primacy of instinct, of direct relationships with materials".³⁹ The context and process of making craft were important as the resultant craft item was part of a collective and social group crafting identity in the accumulation of skills and abilities. The craft aesthetic established the museum's frameworks of representation through inscription and continues to inform the look and feel of a variety of museum designs including logos, signage, brochures, posters and other items produced by the museum. The craft workshops were not part of a living museum exhibit although embroidery of the memory cloths by an individual in the museum exhibition has occurred. As a sensory portal to stimulate memory:

Tea parties were spaces for the performance of identities...in the sounds and textures, aromas and taste of memory. Participant's memories were triggered by *moppies*,⁴⁰ doilies, cinnamon and cardamom, and the sweet

³⁸T. Smith, "*Huis Kombuis* and the senses of memory: a textile design project" in *City Site Museum Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum*, eds Bonita Bennett, Chrischené Julius and Crain Soudien, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2008), 152.

³⁹E. Lucie-Smith, *The Story of Craft: The Craftman's Role in Society*, (Oxford: Phaidon Press Limited, 1981), 281.

⁴⁰*Moppies* are comical rhyming songs created by minstrel troupes. See Armelle Gaulier and Denis-Constant Martin, *Cape Town Harmonies: Memory, Humour and Resilience*, (Cape Town: African Minds, 2017), 168-171.

spiciness of *koeksisters*.⁴¹ With all senses enlivened by familiar sensory references, as well as the visual splendour of the party, participants produced history through design, cuisine and the documentation of recipes...In essence, the Huis Kombuis concept answered a growing demand in the museum to create a set of unique cultural heritage products with a distinctive District Six sense and sentiment that could be sold in the Museum shop. This has the potential to open up a new area of work for the museum which mobilises the creativity of ex-residents in a programme linking memory work and design.⁴²

A range of items were crafted, although the emphasis was on a “memory journey” which was firmly established in reflective art processes and social aspects of production.⁴³ The rituals of homemaking, including sewing and cookery, were expressed in an array of artistic practices as an expression of inherited values. Partly nostalgic, articles such as aprons, oven gloves, table runners, cushions, connected with home and family and were created through sewing by hand or machine, embroidery, and hand painting.

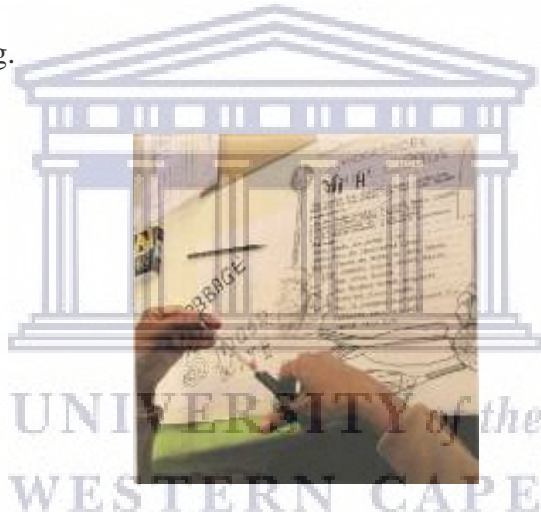


Figure 3.26: Designing a recipe in a *Huis Kombuis* Food and Memory workshop 2010. *Huis Kombuis* exhibition. Photographs: D6M archive.

⁴¹A koeksister is a fried ball of spicy dough that is rolled in sweet syrup with desiccated coconut. They are known as the traditional Cape Malay koe'sister, which differs from the Dutch style South African koeksister which is plaited and coated in sweet syrup.

⁴²Smith, “*Huis Kombuis*”, 156.

⁴³Smith, “*Huis Kombuis*”, 156.

Therefore weekly art and craft workshops, facilitated by Tina Smith brought together ex-residents exploring a varied range of art mediums in the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre.

Fragments of blue and white china collected at the site, patterns of china tea sets, textile patterns and other references were utilised as inspiration and interpretation from memories.



Figure 3.27: *Huis Kombuis* one colour textile design. Photo: #huiskombuis Instagram

A one colour printed surface design of everyday kitchen and household objects depicted a primus stove, enamel kettle, mortar and pestle, colander, cast iron pots, singer sewing machine, and other items were graphically illustrated and printed as a museum coffee shop tablecloth and apron design.⁴⁴ Digital high res scanning enabled certain *Huis Kombuis* items to be reproduced, such as hand-painted and embroidered recipe panels printed as dishcloths and postcards as a means of generating income.



Figure 3.28: *Huis Kombuis* Quivertree Publications book launch invitation designs 2016. Photographs: Quivertree©.

⁴⁴A textile design printed in two colours: white and pale aqua and laminated to create a highly durable resinous surface.

The launch of the *Huis Kombuis* Cookbook in 2016 and *Memory Threads* product range in 2018 has extended and created a food and memory brand within the District Six Museum brand, in which some of the products are now commercially produced but bear the stamp of the museum.

The museum has been prolific in terms of design outputs and I detected a shift in storytelling methodology. On the outset in the museum ex-residents shared stories, later collected as oral histories that evolved into guided storytelling. Visual storytelling utilising photographs is the most recent development in the methodology of how District Six stories are communicated. A series of large format colour portraits for the *Huis Kombuis* cookbook and exhibition depicting ex-residents holding enamel street signs or meaningful objects were produced in 2016. The honorific portraits set against an expansive weathered background were photographed by Jac de Villiers and produced by Tina Smith, curator of the District Six Museum.⁴⁵ They move imagery in this format and portrait style to enhance and establish the *Huis Kombuis* as a sub-brand within the main museum brand to create visual and meaningful connections with museum audiences. The curation of these portraits marks a shift back to individual stories, studio portraiture, and biography. They reference the museum's portrait gallery prints in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition and create a system of museumisation through the use of photograph technologies. Unique props and possessions held in the portraits are very effective symbols in these visual stories making the portraits more meaningful.⁴⁶

⁴⁵J. de Villiers and T. Smith, *Huis Kombuis – The Food of District Six*, issuu, published online Feb 15, 2016 <https://issuu.com/jacdevilliers/docs/huiskombuis>, accessed 10.10.2019.

⁴⁶As professional studio type portraits, utilising a large format with quality printing and framing the portraits could be viewed as contemporary artworks and documentary photographs.



Figure 3.29: District Six Museum café logo design and curated *Huis Kombuis* Food and Memory table with fragments detail. D6M archive and #huiskombuis© Instagram.



Figure: 3.30: Revina Gwayi, a *Huis Kombuis* group member and District Six Museum member of staff contributed to the content of the *Huis Kombuis* cookbook. Revina spent seven years embroidering the names of former District Six residents and their memories on District Six Museum memory cloths. Photograph: ©Quivertree Publications/Jac de Villiers.

In terms of design, *Huis Kombuis* contributes an important craft aesthetic to museum branding which works in tandem with the craft practices and handmade qualities that are reflected in the exhibitions. Curatorial knowledge was initially applied to *Huis Kombuis* but later changed when expert knowledge was drawn upon during the making of the *Huis Kombuis* photographic portraits and the cookbook itself by Quivertree Publications.

Brand conclusions

In this chapter, I explored the work of design in the context of establishing the District Six Museum brand seeking to demystify how this making had created numerous museum designs. From an early grassroots initiative Hand Off District Six to Hands On District Six, the museum evolved into one of Cape Town's main cultural brands. From designs and technologies that enabled and assisted memory the District Six Museum brand has become a hybrid brand that encompasses and caters to memory, tourist experience, and restitution. Internal and external art, craft and design expertise and technologies shaped the brand's museumising agenda and the resultant designs functioned as a metaphorical timeline of the Museum's activities.

Design is a vital lens with which to view variable claims made at the District Six Museum in reconstructing community through curatorial and spatial museumisation within post-apartheid museum making. The primary curators Peggy Delpont, Tina Smith and Jos Thorne established key idiomatic design frameworks and slogans. Exhibition elements were drawn upon and applied to brand the museum through a variety of print and electronic mediums utilising outside expertise. From 1994 I identified the main slogans created by the museum: *Never, Never Again, Hands Off District Six, To build Cape Town as a city of people, not races, Hands On District Six: Taking Action: Re-Building Community*, and *Hands On District Six Where ever we are we are here*. The slogans and catchphrases also function as statements about shared social assumptions and values informing the everyday life of the museum that is part of branding. All sections of the museum are affected by the slogans and catchphrases and they are visible on marketing material, banners, exhibitions, and the website. They were devised to create cohesion representing the ideals both internally to employees, and externally to various museum audiences. Repetition in various mediums, colours and media reinforced the message, functioning as a brand across various platforms. New slogans and designs were developed after the museum brand was updated between 2014 -2016 and shall be discussed in chapter five.

The reasons for building a strong design identity is twofold. The museum competes with other cultural brands and attractions for funding and visitor numbers in Cape Town. Furthermore, it can symbolically engage with a variety of museum audiences and the community it claims to represent. When Cape Town was nominated and selected as World Design Capital in 2014 and became host to an international event, the museum approach to design shifted to incorporate world-class design in its rebranding yet also contested this new design climate.



Chapter 4

Building for community: intersecting histories and adaptive re-use in the Buitenkant Street Community Centre

The focus of this chapter is architectural practice as museumisation and the design history of Methodist Church buildings located in Buitenkant Street, Cape Town and their adaptive reuse for a post-apartheid memorialisation project: the District Six Museum. The buildings are explored by tracing the form of the building's design from a Dutch period warehouse into a set of buildings under the ownership and stewardship of the Central Methodist Mission Cape Town. Therefore, this chapter sets out to create a set of atypical yet interrelated design histories. In doing so, it maps the main church building in the Buitenkant Street Community Centre occupied by the District Six Museum since 1994 surfacing aspects of adapted architecture to understand contemporary museum making. I include the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre buildings that the museum purchased in 2002. My central argument is that the repurposed built fabric of the church became another framework of representation and was treated as a symbolic context for the application of inscribed and curated District Six Museum memorial exhibition layers. This created an interesting intersection where the influence of religious aesthetics, architectural expertise, memorial inscription, local, national and international funding and community dynamics are entangled in making this post-apartheid museum. Furthermore, this chapter seeks to raise questions around the creation of local subjectivities and the central role of architectural practice in the manipulation of form and aesthetics in the creation of District Six as a foundation, memorial museum, legacy, geo-socio-political category and cultural brand in Cape Town.

The Buitenkant Methodist church building has symbolic power representing collective social lives linked to colonial slave and wine trading. A Methodist ministry and church-going community during the late 19th century and the 20th century reshaped the building's architecture.¹

¹Rennie & Goddard Architects cc, Central Methodist Mission Buitenkant Street Church and associated buildings: Report, June 1993, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed February-March 2019.

Since 1994, the three interconnected church buildings housed the District Six Museum and Stepping Stones Children's Centre for preschool children. The buildings were utilised as a safe house for female street children called *Ons Plek* (Our Place), until recently.² A central component of this chapter is to understand how the project to renovate the buildings was established identifying the main stakeholders and funders. Furthermore, how it was managed and importantly how specific spaces dedicated to memorialisation were converted for the District Six Museum. The buildings are protected under the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 and Heritage Western Cape, a provincial heritage resources authority established in January 2003 to identify, protect and conserve “landscapes, sites, artefacts, buildings and structures that are of significance to the people of the Western Cape”.³ Architecturally mapped in 1973 by architect John Rennie and recognised as an urban heritage asset, from 1998 to 2000 major interior and exterior structural changes redefined spatial layout. The requirements of two of the three tenants, namely the District Six Museum and the Stepping Stones Children's Centre, occupying the building were an integral part of the redesign plan.⁴ Thus adapting the building encompassed historical research, preservation-conservation, surveys, assessment reports, architectural plans, and models, phased construction according to funding, aesthetic detail, and a consideration of new materials and services by heritage architects Rennie and Scurr. The District Six Museum Foundation assisted by the Central Methodist Mission raised funds for the renovation that included upgrading the Stepping Stones Children’s Centre joined to the church building which was renovated and customised. The renovation project required the three stakeholders: the Central Methodist Mission (the client), Rennie and Goddard, (later Rennie and Scurr) architects and the tenant: The District Six Museum Foundation to attend numerous design, planning and construction meetings and agree upon on a phased plan for

²J. Rennie, *The Buildings of Central Cape Town 1978*, Volume one, two and three, (Cape Town: Cape Provincial Institute of Architects, 1978), 342-343.

³Heritage Western Cape, <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/public-entity/heritage-western-cape>, accessed 04.03. 2018.

⁴Buildings older than 60 years are protected as heritage assets and proposed structural and stylistic alterations must be approved by Heritage Western Cape. The 60 year clause is a discretionary clause which triggers attention be paid to heritage worthiness as a mandatory function. In essence, all buildings should be assessed for heritage worthiness although it is enforced at the 60 year stage. Sometimes older buildings do not have plans and heritage architects are appointed to create plans in order for older structures to be legally protected.

completion.⁵ Two of the interlinked buildings housed two outreach projects of the Central Methodist Mission and the underutilised church building was seen as a suitable space for the District Six memory project. A conceptualised joint institutional theme - Memory, Sanctuary, Community, Education: Foundations for a better tomorrow - was developed by the stakeholders. The overall ethos of the Central Methodist Mission Cape Town, the museum, the architects and the requirements of Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) funding resulted in a public-private participative project until successful completion. Furthermore, an architectural brief realised the full potential of these highly desired social spaces and sensitive reworking of the characteristic building resulting in the architects receiving a CIA /SAIA conservation Award in 2001.⁶ This makes explicit notions of institutionalisation, social design, and legitimisation in the founding of the District Six Museum that is closely aligned to the adaptive reuse of an existing set of church buildings. Modifications to the buildings indicate a designed investment to communicate to its audiences and stakeholders with integrity and I argue designed *for a* specific community setting up locus for museumisation. The introduction of a formal design process around the set of buildings reflected a shift from subjective non-discursive knowledge making to objective discursive knowledge production. This entailed unlayering historicity to the customisation of the buildings in the creation of District Six identities and a museum brand.

Since 1994, museum programmes, public giving and the cultural footprint of the District Six Museum had increased extensively through its engagement and active role in architectural adaption as co-designer in two substantial building projects.⁷ Firstly through the adaptive reuse and restoration of the Buitenkant Methodist church building into the Buitenkant Street Community Centre to accommodate District Six Museum exhibitions, office space, a memory room, an archive, resource centre, coffee shop, memorial hall, museum shop, and a sound archive. Secondly, the

⁵Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum & Stepping Stones Children's Centre, Cape Institute of Architects Conservation Award and South African Institute of Architects Conservation Award CIA/SAIA Conservation Award Submission 2001.*

⁶Weekly building project meeting minutes indicated a high level of engagement and commitment by all stakeholders despite challenges relating to funding the project, Buitenkant renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre accessed February-March 2018.

⁷Hayes-Roberts, "From Family", iii.

transformation of the Sacks Futeran Buildings into the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre, also situated in Buitenkant Street, one block away from the Buitenkant Methodist Church building, the Museum's main site of engagement. This indicates the value of varied knowledge, methodologies, approaches, interpretations, and applications of design in the making of the museum.⁸ Buildings are bound by place and by mapping the buildings as they became museumised allows an understanding of wider social narratives in the urban projects of the city.⁹

In 1997 The District Six Beneficiary Trust was formed to drive, coordinate and monitor the processes of restitution and redevelopment in District Six, in consultation with the relevant authorities.¹⁰ The Land Claims Court held a session in the District Six Museum to ratify a decision by the local and provincial governments not to process with section 34 of the Act.¹¹

While the Museum continued to host restitution meetings and a range of programmes and exhibitions in the church building a set of detailed architectural plans were drawn by Rennie & Scurr architects. They produced a cardboard architectural model to convey the planned reorganisation of internal spaces.¹² In *How Buildings Learn* historian and architectural theorist Stewart Brand views buildings less as stylistic representations but focuses on what buildings do.

Brand states:

Buildings grow, alter, learn, almost as living organisms and most of them grow even when they are not allowed to...buildings are not permanent, they change in time, they discount and misuse time, although they are constructed, and maintained not to adapt, they do adapt with time because their usages are changing constantly.¹³

Brand proposes an “operational theory of buildings and a long-term commitment to record what he calls “re-photography of a building” tracking changes in visible transformation as landlord,

⁸Julius, “Digging”, 137-8.

⁹Hayes-Roberts, “From family”, 2

¹⁰Anwah Nagia interviewed by Colin Miller, “Memory, Restitution and Conscience” in *Recalling Community creating and curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001), 166.

¹¹Rassool and Thorne, “A timeline”, 156-7.

¹²Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, District Six Museum, 2001, 1.

¹³A.Yaneva, “A Building’s Trajectory” in *Coping with the Past: Creative Perspectives on Conservation and Restoration*, eds Pasquale Gagliardi, Bruno Latour, Pedro Memelsdorff, (Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 2010), 19.

occupants, and uses as well as the area around the building change.¹⁴ Brand's theory as it relates to the interpretation of buildings is utilised to study the buildings to substantiate my design argument in which the buildings represent another District Six Museum framework of representation and memorialisation.

The historical trajectory of the Buitenkant Methodist Church buildings

Spatially the city of Cape Town and architecturally the Methodist church buildings trace their lineage to Dutch colonial legacies of design. The VOC (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie 1602-1800) or Dutch East India Company's main purpose was exploration, colonisation, and trade throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. It established a port in 1652 to provide safe anchorage in Table Bay and victualing during long sea voyages to Eastern trading ports and colonial outposts from Amsterdam. The Cape was also developed as a market for slaves, textiles, ceramics, and spices among a variety of trade goods and benefitted from inbound and outbound colonial capital.

According to urban historian Mark Giroaurd, Amsterdam as a port city was a seat of colonial power.¹⁵ It "was a city entirely dedicated to making money. It could not be fitted into any of the accepted conventions for looking at and describing cities".¹⁶ Commercial enterprise had altered the architectural landscape into a maze of waterways and impressive trading buildings. Giroaurd traces how the extent of colonial trade determined the development of warehouse buildings which featured large storage capacity.¹⁷ Giroaurd notes that "the earliest documented reference to a warehouse in Amsterdam dates from 1548 in which year it was already in disrepair."¹⁸ Therefore, the establishment of private and commercial warehousing architectural styles developed in Amsterdam to support the extensive trade in Eastern goods as "dedication to money-making had lifted the population of Amsterdam from about 20,000 in the mid-16th century to 200,000 by the end

¹⁴Yaneva, "A Building's", 19.

¹⁵M. Giroaurd, M, *Cities and People A Social and Architectural History*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1985), 158.

¹⁶Giroaurd, *Cities*, 158.

¹⁷Giroaurd, *Cities*, 158.

¹⁸Giroaurd, *Cities*, 158.

of the 17th century. Dutch ships became the chief carriers of goods to Europe, and Amsterdam owned the Lion's share of Dutch shipping".¹⁹

At the Cape, a Dutch colonial port, slave labour allowed for passing ships to be provisioned and established both farming and the built environment.²⁰ The immediate area below Table Mountain was imprinted with Dutch colonial design strategies often branded with the VOC logo.²¹ According to archaeologist Martin Hall:

The Cape of Good Hope was claimed by the Dutch East India Company in 1652. A rough fort –and later, a more substantial castle – was built and an orthogonal grid of streets laid out, the skeleton of present-day Cape Town... Actual plans sent from the Hereen XVII in the Netherlands...drew on conventional models of military fortification from northern Europe.²²

A formal layout favouring the polygon, for military buildings, served as a symbol and insignia of Dutch colonial power and presence in the landscape.²³ The design of central Cape Town was laid out in 1660 by the VOC surveyor on a regular grid, which mimicked on a larger scale, the layout of the Company Gardens. Similar geometrics of order, expressed in the design of forts is also present in the town layout, and both can be seen to reflect very specific "regimes of order" as noted by Hall cited by historian Gavin Lucas.²⁴ Moreover, Cape Town's economic activity resulted in storage requirements of trade goods and in Buitenkant Street Dutch styled warehouses were built in close proximity to Woodstock Beach and Table Bay.²⁵ Urban buildings dedicated to commerce, religion, civic authority, leisure and domestic living developed in close proximity.

¹⁹Girouard, *Cities*, 158.

²⁰Barnard (Lady), *Mode of building with clay and water*, painting c.1800, File AG15689, Western Cape Records and Archive Service, 13 August 2014, Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AG_15689_Slaves_building_house_with_clay,_Lady_Anne_Barnard.jpg, accessed 02.03.2019.

²¹The VOC architectural design motif was the star as seen in the pentagonal design of the Castle of Good Hope and duplicated where the VOC had a vested interest. The VOC text insignia was applied to ceramics, buildings, furniture, flags, ships, postal stones, bells, canons, gates, coins, seals, books, maps, rings, silver bars, swords, documents, silverware and is possibly one of the first global brands due to colonial mobilities and various technologies of inscription.

²²M. Hall, "Subaltern Voices" in *Historical Archaeology: back from the Edge*, eds Pedro Paulo A. Funari, Martin Hall and Siân Jones, (London: Routledge, 1999), 202.

²³As an insignia of colonial economic enterprise it is featured as a floor tile design in two areas in the Cape Dutch gabled Groot Constantia Wine Estate manor house.

²⁴G. Lucas, *An archaeology of Colonial Identity: Power and Material Culture in the Dwars Valley, South Africa*, (US: Springer, 2006), 35-36.

²⁵Lucas, *An archaeology*, 35-36.

This dedication to commerce had a profound effect on the architectural developments of building styles termed Cape vernacular or Cape Dutch style. Archaeologist Nick Shepherd and architect Noëleen Murray describe Cape Dutch architecture as a South African architectural trope:

Is the 'high' architecture produced in the period of Dutch colonisation after 1652...Recognisable for their strong references to Dutch metropolitan built forms, with whitewashed gables and laid out H-, T- or L-shaped plans these buildings in Cape Town and on farm estates represented substantial societal capital. The Cape Dutch is an important historical trope as it has come to signify not only the period of Dutch rule at the Cape (1652-1795) but was later (under apartheid) considered the most authentic form of South African architectural heritage. In this way recovery of Cape Dutch architecture became synonymous with conservation practice as well as nationalist Afrikaner history.²⁶

The Cape Dutch style was stylistically differentiated according to the period and rural or urban site in the Cape.

Tracing the development of Methodism in Cape Town, leading up to the purchase and adaption of the Buitenkant Street Church buildings, provides details of the building's trajectory.

According to the Methodist Church of Southern Africa website:

It is in 1795 at the Cape that the earliest record of Methodist presence in southern Africa practiced amongst British soldiers during the first British Occupation. During the second British occupation from 1806, soldiers built a stone chapel near Table Mountain, where they held class meetings and Sunday worship services, and 1816 marks the establishment of the first Methodist mission station at Leliefontein, Namaqualand.²⁷

The Methodist Church in Cape Town had acquired "a site in Burg Street on which were the ruins of a Mohammedan mosque and the building was completed in 1831" according to Rev J. Whiteside.²⁸

Whiteside documented Methodism's extensive missionary accomplishments in Southern Africa in the *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa* published in 1906.²⁹ Drawing on Cape Town deeds office records in the course of conducting historical research on the Buitenkant

²⁶N. Shepherd and N. Murray, "Space, memory and identity in the Post-apartheid City" in *Desire Lines Space, memory and identity in the post-apartheid city*, eds Noëleen Murray, Nick Shepherd and Martin Hall (London: Routledge, 2007), 3.

²⁷The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Earliest Origins of Methodist Church in MCSA, Our Heritage, <https://methodist.org.za/our-heritage/>, accessed 20.02.2019.

²⁸ Rev. J. Whiteside, *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa*, (Cape Town: Messrs Juta & Co, 1906), 70.

²⁹Whiteside, *History*, 70.

Methodist church building architects Rennie and Scurr were able to establish the identity of the successive owners of the *erf* (the Dutch word for a plot of land).³⁰ The *erf* on which the Methodist Mission Church building in Cape Town is situated was owned by the Burger Senate and formed part of a larger area of divided land sold to private owners for the first time in 1809.³¹ The *erf*, numbered as D6, was described as “situated in the Table Valley on the southern side of the town measuring 34 square roeden and 104 square feet”.³² Stretching North West to the town’s *buitenkant* (the Dutch word for the area of settlement outside the confines of the inner city) and southeast to the descending gully known as the Plattekloof stream.³³ It was measured and surveyed by the town surveyor J W Wernich.³⁴

The erf was bought by Amsterdam born slave trader Constant van Nuld Onkruydt, landdrost of Swellendam who owned the property till 1818.³⁵ He was involved in the Madagascan slave trade and the salt trade in the Saldanha area on the west coast of southern Africa. He settled in Cape Town, became a private merchant and president of the Burger Senate.³⁶ In 1818 Laurens Herman, a wine merchant purchased the *erf* and in 1833 built a wine warehouse on the corner of Albertus and Buitenkant Streets.³⁷ As with many early Dutch warehouse buildings, it was tall and had typical wall openings secured with vertical iron bars built into the walls, similar to the openings in the original VOC Slave lodge.³⁸ According to historical and conservation research by Rennie & Scurr architects the original built fabric indicated that two separate narrow warehouse buildings shared a roof covering. The warehouse buildings had very dark interiors suitable for wine storage and sales

³⁰Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, Historical background of the old Methodist mission church in Buitenkant Street, Cape Town, The District Six Museum & Stepping Stones Children’s Centre: Buitenkant Street Methodist Church building, *Cape Town Architects Report: CIA/SAIA Conservation Award 2001*, 01 July 2001, 5.

³¹Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5.

³²Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5

³³Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5

³⁴Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5

³⁵Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5

³⁶Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5

³⁷Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5

³⁸The former VOC slave lodge dated 1680 is one of the oldest buildings in South Africa and was adapted into a British colonial government administrative building, post office, supreme court, Cultural History Museum under apartheid and renamed the Iziko Slave lodge in 1998. As a post-apartheid museum the exhibitions narrate Cape urban and rural histories of enslaved people under the theme From human wrongs to human rights.

were sustained by viticulture founded on slave labour in the wine-producing areas of the Cape.³⁹ In

1846 the property in Buitenkant Street:

Was transferred to Jonathan Calf, a wine merchant of English descent. Calf also owned another warehouse for storing wine in Harrington Street and elsewhere in Cape Town. Living conditions in the area around the warehouse had at this time become increasingly poor due to the tremendous overcrowding – many working class people lived in his part of the *buitenkant* after slave emancipation under British rule in 1834-8.⁴⁰ Smallpox took its toll on the area and around 1865 it is another wine merchant, Daniel B de Waal that is listed as the owner of the property on the corner of Albertus Street and Buitenkant Street.⁴¹

Rev J Whiteside records that in 1831 “The labours of the Wesleyan ministers of Cape Town were not limited to Burg Street. Services were held in the prison, in private houses, in some of the most degraded parts of Cape Town, at Robben Island, Rondebosch, Somerset West, Stellenbosch, and Hottentot’s Holland, in addition to Wynberg, Diep River, and Caledon.”⁴²

From commerce to house of worship: Adapting a wine warehouse into the Buitenkant

Methodist Mission church (1870-1993)

According to Whiteside in the vicinity of the wine warehouse, Methodist mission work among enslaved people was conducted at the Barrack Street and Sydney Street chapels in the 1820s and 1830’s on the urbanising periphery.⁴³ In 1837, a separate congregation was formed for coloured people most of whom were emancipated slaves drawn mostly from District Six.⁴⁴ Due to the magnitude of post-slavery poverty and unemployment, ministering to “overflowing” congregations “in the chapels in Sydney and Hope Streets” resulted in the sale of the Sydney Street church in 1882.⁴⁵

³⁹J. Rennie, *The Buildings*, 342.

⁴⁰Whiteside, *History*, 80.

⁴¹Rennie & Scurr, Historical background, 5

⁴²Whiteside, *History*, 70.

⁴³Whiteside, *History*, 80.

⁴⁴Central Methodist Mission, *A brief History of the Central Methodist Mission cnr. Longmarket & Burg Streets Cape Town, South Africa*, CMM pamphlet, 2018.

⁴⁵Central Methodist Mission, *A brief History*, 2.



Figure 4.1: An elevated view of Buitenkant Street depicting the Methodist church building on the right, Panorama c.1880s. Photograph: Western Cape Archives.

A “large wine warehouse was purchased on the corner of Buitenkant and Albertus Streets” and “converted into a place of worship” for the Methodist congregation.⁴⁶ According to Whiteside the site together with the building were purchased as

The spiritual wants of the coloured people were not neglected. In the year 1883, a large wine store at the corner of Buitenkant and Albertus Streets was purchased on their behalf...and under the direction of the Rev. R. Ridgill extensive structural alterations were effected....which made it an excellent place of worship. It was capable of seating 900 persons and was speedily filled by the increasing congregation.⁴⁷

Therefore, the storage of wine on a large scale ceased at the site and the premises saw a different group of people with a vision for improving and altering the building claiming the site. The church building was physically altered, adapted and renovated to meet the increased needs of the congregation in the area. A decorative plastered façade was added that completely altered the building stylistically as it provided a unifying feature and added status to the building, yet no bell tower was constructed in the roof of the converted building.⁴⁸ A variety of workshops with skilled artisans working in wood, metal, leather and in the building trades existed in Cape Town at that time, therefore in close proximity to the church.⁴⁹ It was recorded that the “modest but beautiful church” was “to be used in its mission to the descendants of slaves, many whom had settled in

⁴⁶Central Methodist Mission, *A brief History*, 2.

⁴⁷Whiteside, *History*, 80.

⁴⁸The bell perhaps symbolised the oppression of enslaved people as it regulated working lives in both rural and urban areas of the Cape and due to this association a bell was not installed as the congregation were mainly of slave descent.

⁴⁹Numerous factories, light industrial, trade workshops and their suppliers were part of Cape Town’s urban fabric prior to decentralisation and the creation of industrial zones beyond the city.

District Six once they were freed”.⁵⁰ It became widely referred to as the “Buitenkant Street Methodist church”.⁵¹

The wine warehouse purchased in 1883 was made into a place of Methodist worship in various ways. As a secular space in order for church services to commence, the building was consecrated according to the Methodist tradition. The service was based on the “ancient tradition that the consecration of a church building is the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of Holy Communion as the first act of worship in the new building”.⁵² It commenced with the gathering of the congregation and officiating bishop or minister outside the building, certain items were carried in a procession such as a bible, water for the baptismal font, plate for communion bread and cup, a cross, paraments (liturgical vestments) of the Lord’s table, and other works of art into the building.⁵³ A singing choir ushered people into the building that was officially presented by a designated person who offered “this building to be consecrated for the worship of God and the service of all people”.⁵⁴

The building was then named and consecrated. Thereafter the pulpit was consecrated and a bible placed on the pulpit.⁵⁵ The baptismal font was consecrated where the officiating minister laid a hand on the font and water was poured into the font after which people may have been baptized.⁵⁶ The consecration of the Lord’s Table required that the officiating minister laid hands on the table and offerings were received such as communion vessels, bread, wine, flowers, and candles were lighted.⁵⁷ Thereafter Holy Communion was performed and concluded with hymn or song, blessing

⁵⁰District Six Museum, Formation exhibition panel, *Digging Deeper* exhibition, 2000.

⁵¹Central Methodist Mission, *A brief*, 2.

⁵²Discipleship Ministries, “The United Methodist Church, Service for the consecration or reconsecration of a church building”, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/a-service-for-the-consecration-or-reconsecration-of-a-church-building>, accessed 26.02.2019.

⁵³Discipleship Ministries, “The United”, accessed 26.02.2019.

⁵⁴Discipleship Ministries, “The United”, accessed 26.02.2019.

⁵⁵Discipleship Ministries, “The United”, accessed 26.02.2019.

⁵⁶Discipleship Ministries, “The United”, accessed 26.02.2019.

⁵⁷Discipleship Ministries, “The United”, accessed 26.02.2019.

and going forth.⁵⁸ These steps were interspersed with prayers, hymns, songs, gospel, and themed scripture read in a specific order.⁵⁹

Thus the simple and voluminous form of the warehouse as a generic building type allowed for ease of architectural and stylistic adaption and religious inscription over its vernacular built fabric. It was made into a religious building through this process, its congregation and their social histories in the *buitekant*.



Figure 4.2: Wine warehouse converted into a Wesleyan Mission church. c1882: INIL 11370. Photograph: Special Collections National Library of South Africa, Cape Town.

According to Methodist church historians Alan Brews and Jacky Jooste the first Methodist conference was held in the newly renovated Central Methodist Mission church. It was officially opened by the President of the Wesleyan Mission Society during the session of conference in April 1883. The minutes of the 1883 District meeting read:

Cape Town Dutch circuit. The Central Mission Church in Buitenkant Street has been completed and was opened by the President during the session of Conference in April last. It is admirably adapted to our requirements, centrally situated, well lighted and ventilated, and furnishes accommodation

⁵⁸Discipleship Ministries, “The United”, accessed 26.02.2019.

⁵⁹Discipleship Ministries, “The United”, accessed 26.02.2019.

for an increasing congregation. It also has a spacious vestry⁶⁰ and extensive galleries.⁶¹

In 1884, the *Cape Directory* mentions, for the first time, the Wesleyan Mission on the corner of Albertus Street and Buitenkant Street.⁶² According to Brews and Jooste “The Central Methodist Mission (CMM) is the mother church of Methodism in Southern Africa. The earliest historical records tell us that the congregation in Cape Town was made up of people from different racial, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds”.⁶³ The church-owned buildings also served the area by providing a “small primary school known as the Albertus Street Primary School” and “some leading figures from District Six attended this school”.⁶⁴ The form of the old school building is still clearly evident and is a reminder of the old monitor system of education, which generated the plan form of the school and the inter-relationship of the spaces: four classroom areas off a central space in a courtyard configuration.⁶⁵

Unlike the church building, the school was built as an addition to the church building and dates to the late 19th century.⁶⁶ Stylistically it is quite different from the church building and has a character of its own with many elements of the period including crisscrossing vertical and horizontal plaster banding on its façade.⁶⁷ The architects responsible for the design of the school building were the firm of Tully and Waters and architectural drawings were approved by the Municipality of Cape Town in 1897.⁶⁸

⁶⁰A vestry also known as a sacristy is a room in a church, especially one in which priests and the group of people who sing in church put on the special clothes they wear for church ceremonies, and in which items used in church ceremonies are sometimes kept and therefore part of a religious building, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/vestry>, accessed 06.02.2019.

⁶¹A. Brews and J. Jooste, *Two Traditions: One Future Celebration of the Amalgamation of the Buitenkant Street and Metropolitan Methodist Churches into the Central Methodist Mission Cape Town, 31 January 1988*, (Woodstock: Laughton & Co, 1988), 2.

⁶²Brews and Jooste *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2-3.

⁶³Brews and Jooste *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2-3.

⁶⁴Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2

⁶⁵Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2

⁶⁶Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2

⁶⁷Central Methodist Mission, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2

⁶⁸Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 5.

Another reason the Buitenkant Street Methodist church became known as the “Mother Church” was due to new churches established in other parts of greater Cape Town.⁶⁹ A large choir and Sunday school characterised the early life of the Church.⁷⁰ The annual Sunday School picnic and anniversary were great events in District Six and attracted many people, including people from other church denominations.⁷¹ The Women’s Association also made an important contribution to the life of the church.⁷² The Central Methodist Mission in Buitenkant Street was a strong thriving, well established Church with “a long history of faithfulness to the preaching of the Gospel, caring for its members, and ministry to District Six”.⁷³

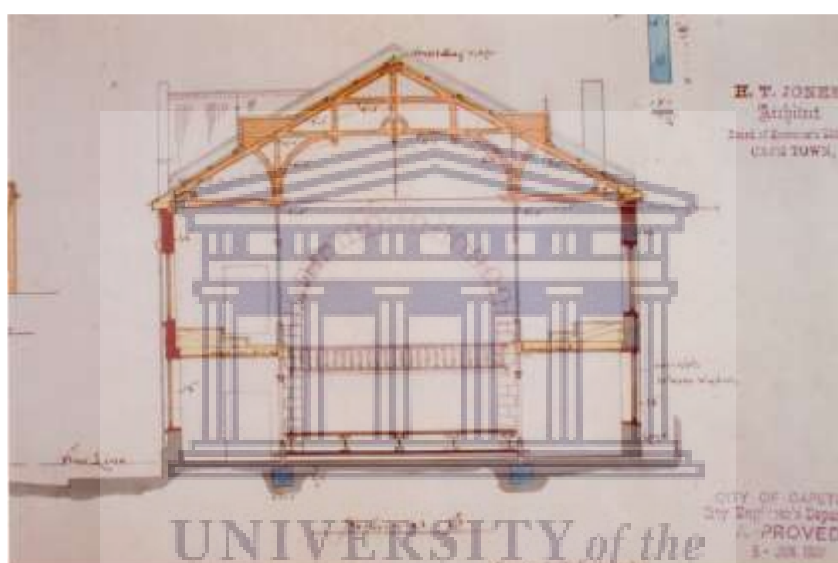


Figure 4.3: H. T. Jones 1902 architectural cross-section drawing indicating the raised walls, new roof height, reconfigured arch and new roof profile. Source: Rennie, Scurr & Adendorff Architects.

By 1900, the evening congregation grew to 1000 worshippers and the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church became an important place of worship in District Six. During this period, the Church was served by Reverend’s George Robson and William Mason.⁷⁴ According to Rev J Whiteside “In 1902 the building showed decay, it was renovated at a cost of £2000; the roof was raised, larger windows were inserted, and the choir gallery reconstructed. To the success of this scheme, the Rev. G.

⁶⁹Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2.

⁷⁰Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2.

⁷¹Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 2.

⁷²Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 1988, 3.

⁷³Central Methodist Mission, *A brief*, 2.

⁷⁴Central Methodist Mission, *A brief*, 2.

Robson devoted much of his time and energy”.⁷⁵ New additions and alterations to the building were intended to create further spaces for mission work to take place, namely a school and a manse for the resident minister.⁷⁶ The building’s façade on two sides was altered and embellished with a decorative plastered gabled façade with fluted pilasters and cement roses, retaining two entrance-exit doors on Buitenkant Street.⁷⁷ Rennie & Scurr during conservation assessment found that “the 1902 semi-circular arch over the choir gallery was simply built below the c.1882 pointed arch which was found virtually intact”.⁷⁸ A simple large wooden cross was positioned on the choir gallery wall and a central raised wooden pulpit and two sets of timber steps leading to the pulpit were installed on the lower level. A wooden communion rail was customised to fit below the pulpit in a square configuration with decorative cast iron supports and wooden pews installed on two levels.⁷⁹ Leaded glass windows with a latticed vertical and horizontal design were installed to provide ventilation and to light the dark interior.⁸⁰ The use-value, symbolic significance and status of the building were upgraded again due to these improvements transformed by Methodist missioning.

By 1925, the building was again renovated. Increased church membership indicates that further funding was available to upgrade, remodel and improve the existing structure. This represented a wider religious Methodist landscape and communities who drew ministering, outreach and educational support from the “Mother” church.⁸¹

⁷⁵Whiteside, *History*, 80.

⁷⁶Ministers of the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church: Richard Ridgill 1883-1892, George Robson 1893 – 1922, William Mason 1922 – 1939, John R.L. Kingon 1940 – 1942, H. Gwyn Leverton 1943 – 1950, Duncan M. Wyllie 1951 – 1952, E.C.W. Beynon 1953-1955, Martin H. Miller 1956 – 1958, W. Horace Stanton 1959 – 1962, J. Francis McCreath 1963 – 1966, Peter J. Storey 1967 – 1970, James V. Leatt 1971 – 1972, Trevor V. de Bruyn 1973 – 1974, Charles M.L. Villa-Vicencio 1975 – 1976, Douglas Barnes 1977 – 1979, Derrick Jolliffe 1980 – 1983, Alan S. Brews 1984 – 1987.

⁷⁷Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 9.

⁷⁸Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 17.

⁷⁹Rennie & Goddard cc, Central Methodist Mission Buitenkant Street Photographic survey June 1993, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 23.10. 2018.

⁸⁰Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 63.

⁸¹Central Methodist Mission, *A brief*, 3.



Figure 4.4: Buitenkant Street Methodist Church a collection of memories. District Six Museum postcard series no.8, District Six Museum, 2014. D6M archive.

It was recorded by the Methodist church that the “Sunday school grew to over 40” and youth attended a camp while “our people continue to gather in class meetings”.⁸² A Methodist pamphlet encouraged multi-racial worship in the “Freedom Church” in 1962.⁸³ Buitenkant Street Methodist church membership in 1966 stood at 700 with many adherents by the time District Six was proclaimed a white Group Area on the 11th February 1966. Rev Peter Storey writes:

I ministered in District Six from 1967 to 1972 and in spite of the protests we mounted, had to see one family after another lose their home and be carried away to dreary rows of ‘matchbox’ houses fifteen miles away. In 1971 our congregation determined that this monstrous evil had to be marked in some way. Out on the street, directly opposite Cape Town’s main police station, we placed an engraved plaque on our church wall. After a service of protest and prayer in the sanctuary, we went into the street to dedicate it. The Plaque of Conscience on the wall of Buitenkant Street Methodist church, District Six, was South Africa’s first public memorial to the horrors of apartheid, and it survived much abuse until freedom came. Today, the church with its plaque has become the District Six Museum, visited by thousands of people from all over the world each year”.⁸⁴

⁸²Central Methodist Mission, *A brief*, 3.

⁸³D. Venter, *Inverting the Norm Racially-mixed congregations in a segregationist state*, (Cape Town: Galjoen Press, 2007), 53.

⁸⁴P. Storey, “Celebration at the District Six Plaque of Conscience” in *With God in the Crucible: preaching Costly Discipleship*, (Nashville: Abington press, 2002), 109.

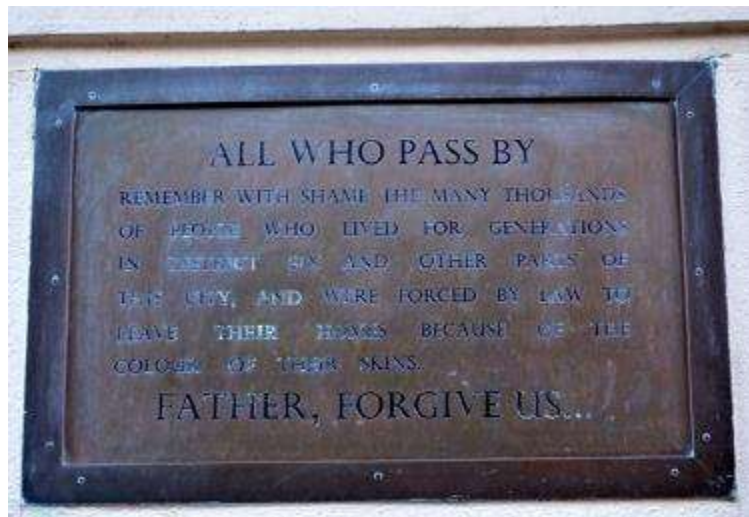


Figure 4.5: District Six Plaque of Conscience on the exterior wall of the Buitenkant Methodist Church building.
Photograph: HH-R

In 1970, Rev Peter Storey submitted a document “Towards Inclusive Congregations” to the Methodist Renewal Commission “based on his successful attempts to integrate Buitenkant Street Methodist Church, Cape Town in which he “outlined a three year plan to convert an inner-city congregation to one that is racially inclusive”.⁸⁵ According to Storey, many church members continued to “worship at Buitenkant Street because the buildings” and the “community were the scene of significant events in their lives”.⁸⁶

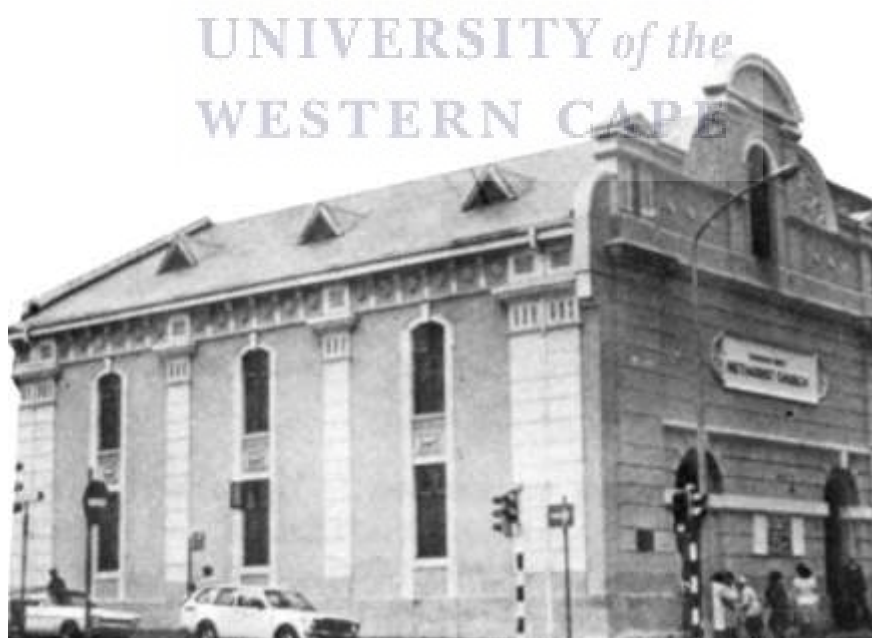


Figure 4.6: Buitenkant Methodist Church c.1960s. Photograph: Central Methodist Mission.

⁸⁵Venter, *Inverting*, 53.

⁸⁶Storey, “Celebration”, 109.

Due to the church's active role in resisting forced removals in District Six, "there are many who worship at Buitenkant Street as a Christian protest against the political system of a country which divides one race group from another and discriminates against people on the basis of their skin colour".⁸⁷ He noted further that many of the congregation joined supportive Methodist churches in the areas they were removed to "for practical reasons, but who 'come home' every Easter and Christmas" to worship at the Buitenkant Methodist Church.⁸⁸ The vision for the church at this juncture was that "increasingly Buitenkant Street would like to be a bridge church ministering to all sections of the community who are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to build a new South Africa where Jesus is Lord".⁸⁹ During this period, the Carpenter's House provided a lunchtime ministry to city workers and a Saturday night programme for youth was initiated. Buitenkant Street Church membership reduced to 260 in 1983, although well over 100 worshippers still gathered every Sunday.⁹⁰ Mosques and churches remained in District Six⁹¹ as "The community from the mosques and churches continued to worship in District Six, refusing to sell or deconsecrate their grounds".⁹²

During this traumatic time, Buitenkant Street Methodist church provided support and comfort – both spiritual and material – for those who had to move. Under the leadership of ministers of the calibre of Revs. Peter Storey, James Leatt, Tevour de Bruyn, Charles Villa-Vicencio and Doug Barnes the Church ministered pastorally to the fragmenting community of District Six and rallied opposition to the Group Areas Act in the highest courts of the land.⁹³ Rev. Dr. Charles Villa-Vicencio implemented an educational and care project focusing on children from

⁸⁷Storey, "Celebration", 109.

⁸⁸A. Brews and J. Jooste "Buitenkant Methodist Church: Symbol of Resistance and Hope" in *Two Traditions: One Future Celebration of the Amalgamation of the Buitenkant Street and Metropolitan Methodist Churches into the Central Methodist Mission Cape Town, 31 January 1988*, Woodstock: Laughton & Co, 1988, 4.

⁸⁹Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 4.

⁹⁰Central Methodist Mission, *A brief*, 3.

⁹¹Technically Mosques are not consecrated ground but they survived forced removals as the National Party state deemed them the same as churches. Such was the cultural blindness of the Christian national approach during apartheid.

⁹²D. J. Newby, (Rev), *The Buitenkant Street Community Centre incorporating: The District Six Museum, Stepping Stones Children's Centre, Ons Plek Shelter for Female Street Children, Memory Sanctuary, Community and Education Foundations for a better tomorrow, A Project of the Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town, April 1998*, 47, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed February-March 2018.

⁹³Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 5.

lower income families. He found that many parents who had been forcibly removed from District Six still came to work in the city. They had no safe place to leave their children while they were at work. According to Brews and Jooste:

Dr. Villa-Vicencio recalls an old man who had to look after three children in a tiny room in Hanover Park. It was situations such as these that prompted the church members to ask, “What can the church do to help in this situation?” A decision was taken to establish a daycare centre, and this became a community project. One founding principle was that the school refused to classify children according to race, and so throughout the apartheid years, the school received no funding from the State. The school started with a minimal budget, and for a long time relied on volunteers in the classrooms, the kitchen and the office.⁹⁴

Therefore, Stepping Stones Children’s Centre was started as a church project in 1976 by the members of the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church in response to the need of former District Six residents for a day-care facility for pre-school children focusing on children of working parents. Twenty pre-school children were accommodated on the premises of the old Albertus Street Primary School closed since the late 1960s as part of forced removals under the Group Areas Act.⁹⁵

During this period as part of an “urgent stocktaking” by the Cape Institute of Architects, over 900 city buildings, were inspected by architect John Rennie. He inspected the “Buitenkant Street Methodist Church” buildings situated on two erven: 5365, and 5366 with a property reference noted as WA 23B 13 in March 1978.⁹⁶ In *The Buildings of Central Cape Town 1978, Volume Two:*

Catalogue of a three volume publication Rennie documented the following:

Simple hall shape, main gable front on Buitenkant, pair matching reeded battened teak double centre-folding entrance doors (round headed openings), deep v-jointed rusticated plaster including main end pilasters. Ornate curving Victorian gable with plaster embellishments, pilaster pediment tops, central segmental gable top. Albertus street side similar, basic 3 bay with pilasters (simple capitals). 2 levels lead-glazed hardwood framed windows (gallery level segmental arched), plaster bracketed frieze (also applied plaster roses). Bosed eaves and Welsh slate roof with louvered dormer roof vents. The lane on opposite side has similar detailing without the trappings and trimmings. Interior: lofty, dark stained timber open roof construction with sloping matchboard ceiling, elegant slender white painted two-level cast-iron colonnade supporting gallery on three sides. Fine gallery

⁹⁴Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 5.

⁹⁵Newby, *The Buitenkant Street*, 41.

⁹⁶Rennie, *The Buildings*, 8.

cast-iron balustrade. Cast iron marked “Phoenix Foundry Cape Town” (partially indistinct), a fine example of local manufacture. Gallery colonnades support timber roof trusses (slender steel tie-rods). Pulpit end plain plaster arch with choir gallery over organ. Twin entrance doors lead into paneled (bolection-moulded) wind lobbies and matching gallery stairs. Various church monuments e.g. “This church was renovated in 1925.....” Several memorials. Windows generally plain diagonal leadwork, several inserted stained glass windows. Church apparently consecrated c1880 (records, baptism, etc. date back to the Sydney Street Methodist congregation begun c1850). Fine well maintained period church interior. Clearly visible on Pocock panorama c 1884. Memorial tablet on Buitenkant wall: “All who pass...”⁹⁷

The ornamental cast iron upright supports and the balustrades on the two gallery levels were made at the Phoenix Foundry at 19 Buitenkant Street, a building constructed in 1900.⁹⁸ At the time of the inspection of the city’s buildings by Rennie (March 1978) it housed La Fiesta restaurant and take away.⁹⁹

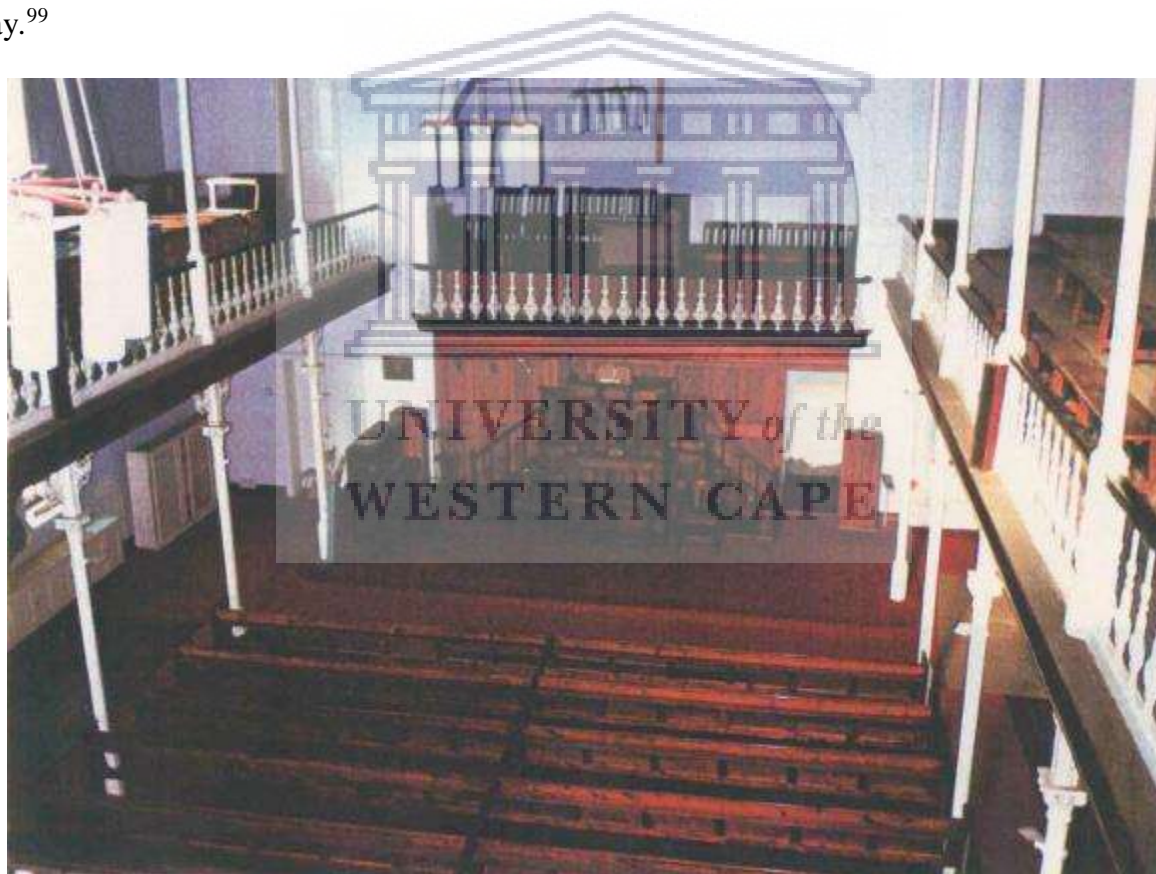


Figure 4.7: Buitenkant Methodist Church view from rear upper gallery 1993. Photograph: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

⁹⁷Rennie, *The Buildings*, 342.

⁹⁸No. 19 Buitenkant Street was repainted charcoal and currently houses ubër trendy Haas Collective, a gift, coffee and meeting hub described as ‘hip with a Victorian flair’ in a 2018 Cape Town Tourism brochure.

⁹⁹Rennie, *The Buildings*, 339.

Rennie also inspected no 2 Albertus Street, also numbered 25a Buitenkant, and recorded it as “Buitenkant Methodist Church (daycare centre and office)” as portion 5367. Rennie notes the following detail:

2 storey irregular high 3 gabled façade abutting rear of church, all painted to match. Various finishes (banding, pebbledash), plaster quoins, moulded string courses etc. projecting pilasters (on first floor), triangular pediment gables with plaster coping moulds and extensive banding etc. Steel anchor plates on central gable (previous structural movement?). Generally large pane timber casements. Covered recessed balcony entrance with cast-iron railing matching church gallery. Street level doors segmental arched with decorative plaster hood moulds. General layout shows on Thom’s survey c 1895. Refer Cape Archives photograph E 8101.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, no 4 Albertus Street was inspected and recorded as attached to the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church, a portion of 5367. According to Rennie, it comprised:

2 storey, narrow street frontage. Entrance via covered *stoep* (Afrikaans word for verandah) on north-west yard side. Plain pebbledash plaster, large pane sashes, elegant cast-iron and timber verandah on lane side, also large pane windows (louvered shutters), “big six” asbestos cement roof. Site layout unchanged since Thom’s survey c1895. Possible older fabric within.¹⁰¹

The Methodist church buildings were assigned a place in Cape Town’s urban design history through an architectural survey. A three volume publication *The Buildings of Central Cape Town* was published by the Institute of Architects after the detailed and comprehensive survey conducted by Rennie. The set of publications functioned as an objective study of buildings as stand-alone features in the cityscape where a sense of place relating to the buildings is absent.¹⁰² Structural features, materials, historical age, conservation concerns, and stylistic attributes are noted with care. In volume one, the survey area map on the cover clearly shows the survey areas from Buitengracht Street to the eastern edge of the city. The areas of District Six and the Bo Kaap are left out of this survey in the 1970s as perhaps the Cape Institute of Architects was not given permission to conduct

¹⁰⁰Rennie, *The Buildings*, 345.

¹⁰¹Rennie, *The Buildings*, 345

¹⁰²In the three volume publication *The Buildings of Central Cape Town*: Volume one covers formative influences and classification contextualises Cape Town supported by many maps, panoramas and descriptions of the city as it evolved. Successive volumes two and three numbers and documents individual buildings in central Cape Town.

a survey of these areas. Forced removals had commenced at District Six and residents of Bo Kaap were classified as an authentic Malay community under the Group areas Act.¹⁰³ The scale of the survey and listed criteria related to tangible heritage value and urban planning as well as notions of urban buildings as assets. References to the colour of buildings were excluded and this is a frustrating aspect as photographs of the buildings featured in the catalogue are reproduced in black and white. The catalogue was an inventory and does not include any mention of the District Six built environment or loss of architectural landmark buildings.



Figure 4.8: Buitenkant Methodist Church interior view of the upper gallery from below 1993. Photograph: Rennie & Goddard Architects.

At the time of Rennie’s survey, the buildings were utilised by the church as Methodists continued to commute to Buitenkant Street on Sundays. A “lively congregation of more than 100 people still worshipped regularly” in the late 1980s.¹⁰⁴ The church was also utilised as “a venue for many anti-apartheid meetings despite attempts to break the spirit of the people through forced removals, detention and harassment”.¹⁰⁵ In taking cognizance of the role that the church and community

¹⁰³Iziko Museums of South Africa, History of the Bo-Kaap Museum, Bo Kaap Museum, <https://www.iziko.org.za/museums/bo-kaap-museum>, accessed 12.09.2019.

¹⁰⁴A brief History, Central Methodist Mission Cape Town, <http://cmm.org.za/a-brief-history/>, accessed 05.03.2019.

¹⁰⁵Central Methodist Mission, History of the CMM, <http://cmm.org.za/about-us/about/>, accessed 16.12.2018.

centre played in the liberation struggle, it is interesting to note that the early offices of the African National Congress were situated opposite from the Methodist Mission Church in Albertus Street.¹⁰⁶ Church members who were active at the time speak of being proud of belonging to the congregation, also known as “*the Buitenkant Street*”.¹⁰⁷ Church members drew inspiration from “the fellowship” and this increased “their willingness to serve in the life of the Church” according to Brews and Jooste.¹⁰⁸

The old mission house at no 4 Albertus Street formed part of the Buitenkant Methodist church buildings were unoccupied. Another church outreach project was initiated that sought to assist street children in the city.¹⁰⁹ As a joint project of the Central Methodist Mission and Child Welfare *Ons Plek*, (Afrikaans word for Our Place) shelter for female street children was started in 1988. This development was a response to the growing problem of homeless female street children strolling and living outside in the urban environs of Cape Town.¹¹⁰ As the “first of its kind in South Africa, *Ons Plek* was established as a residential care facility” providing “for the emotional, spiritual and social needs of abandoned, abused or neglected children”.¹¹¹

After decades of separate worship, the Buitenkant Street and Metropolitan Methodist Churches amalgamated into the Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town on the 31st January 1988.¹¹² Brews and Jooste write:

These two congregations, although hewn from the same rock and with ancestors who had worshipped together in the early days of Methodism, maintained their separate witness until 1988 when they decided to amalgamate and form the Central Methodist Mission. This commitment to be obedient to God’s call to unity has borne much fruit, and today a vibrant congregation with more than 200 members worship at the church on

¹⁰⁶D. J. Newby, (Rev), Historical Background of the Old Methodist Mission Church in Buitenkant Street, Cape Town, Annexure 3, The Buitenkant Street Community Centre incorporating: The District Six Museum, Stepping Stones Children’s Centre, *Ons Plek* Shelter for Female Street Children, Memory Sanctuary, Community and Education Foundations for a better tomorrow, A Project of the Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town, April 1998, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed February-March 2018.

¹⁰⁷Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 6.

¹⁰⁸Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 6.

¹⁰⁹D. J. Newby, (Rev), Status of Agreement between Central Methodist Mission and District Six Museum, letter to Ms Hanneljie du Preez, 21 October 1996, Central Methodist Mission, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed February-March 2018.

¹¹⁰Newby, *The Buitenkant Street*, 30.

¹¹¹Newby, *The Buitenkant Street*, 30.

¹¹²Brews and Jooste, *Two Traditions*, 8.

Greenmarket Square. The Buitenkant Street church accommodates a number of outreach projects to the people of the city, including the Ons Plek Shelter for Female Street Children, Stepping Stones Children's Centre and the District Six Museum. Apart from worship services, both Buitenkant Street Church and (since 1988) the church on the Square have been venues for protest and other community events. Many regarded Buitenkant Street Church as a place of sanctuary during the turbulent 1980s. Families of detainees and victims of police brutality were offered sanctuary whilst trade unions and other community-based organisations used the venue for public meetings.¹¹³

Therefore, for 151 years, there existed two separate Methodist congregations in central Cape Town, the Metropolitan Church on Greenmarket Square and the Central Methodist Mission Church in Buitenkant Street.¹¹⁴

The Buitenkant Street Methodist Church had functioned as a church until 1987 and was not fully utilised for five years. In October 1992, a series of meetings around the District Six land claim commenced in the Church. District Six ex-residents began to share their memories of forced removal and relocation as well as brought various objects and photographs into the building. This altered the religious purpose of the church and infused secular meanings into the space, which I argue, marked the beginning of a process of museumisation.

Creating narrative space in a “House of Memories”: memorialising and museumising District Six.¹¹⁵

In the church-owned buildings on the corner of Albertus and Buitenkant streets, “the District Six Museum was launched in October 1992 with the aim of ensuring that the historical memory of forced removals in South Africa endures.”¹¹⁶ Paul Williams states that buildings, sites and landscapes associated with events, political activism and struggles for human rights have the potential to become cultural nodes with which to invest meaning.¹¹⁷ In South Africa, numerous sites

¹¹³Central Methodist Mission, History of the CMM, <http://cmm.org.za/about-us/about/>, accessed 16.12.2018.

¹¹⁴Central Methodist Mission, *A brief*, 3.

¹¹⁵N. Davids “Inherited Memories: Performing the archive”, (PhD diss., University of Cape Town, 2007), 90.

¹¹⁶The Buitenkant Street Community Centre funding proposal, Memory, Sanctuary, Community and Education, Foundations for a better tomorrow. Revd David J Newby (compiler), Central Methodist Mission, (Cape Town: Central Methodist Mission, April 1998), Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, 1.

¹¹⁷P. Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities*, (Oxford, UK: Berg, 2007), 190.

have been identified for post-apartheid memorialisation.¹¹⁸ Williams states that in memorial museums:

Their display of sensitive artifacts and images requires ethical attention to issues of emotional effect; their geographic location is often more critical; they are more directly implicated in political controversy; visitors are often directly situated in relation to the event; memory and testimony have a comparatively enlarged status; their pedagogy has a weightier gravitas.¹¹⁹

As alluded to by Williams the geographic location of the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church and its histories of ministering in District Six became important. The design and architecture of the main church building reflected interior usage and enclosed space specifically adapted for the purpose of conducting church services and ministry. The exterior activity was shut out due to the thick walls and narrow elongated small paneled glass windows. Therefore as a relatively closed-off space, it was suitable for museum exhibitions, events and gatherings of large groups due to its open-plan interior configuration and double volume spaces.

Rev Peter Storey, at a commemoration of the District Six Plaque of Conscience on the 1st November 1992 in the church, reiterated what he had said 21 years previously as bulldozers nearby were reducing homes to rubble:

It is now exactly forty years since the defiant congregation of the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church unveiled their Plaque of Conscience and Shame at the entrance of the church, no matter how many people and families are moved, none will be able to remove the spirit of District Six out of our hearts and whatever happens to the buildings and streets around this church, let us commit ourselves to preserve this place. Let it stand as a sacred shrine of hope, as one small part of District Six that none can take away from its people- and as a promise that they will return. Until then, let this plaque be a judgement on those who are destroying this community and as an offence to those who let it happen.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸G. Houston, S. Mati, D. Seabe, J. Peires, D. Webb, S. Dumisa, K. Sausi, B. Mbenga, A. Manson and N. Popiwa, *The Liberation Struggle and Liberation Heritage Sites in South Africa Report*, Democracy, Governance, and Service Delivery (DGSD) Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), 15 November 2013.

¹¹⁹Williams, *Memorial*, 190.

¹²⁰Storey, Commemoration, 2.

The plaque of conscience, originally commissioned by Storey, was ripped off the exterior church wall and defaced in the first month after its unveiling and had been replaced a number of times.¹²¹ Storey's rhetoric implicated the church as a site of pilgrimage, a public place imbued with District Six "spirit" requiring collective historical preservation and engagement.¹²²

As a longstanding building, the exterior church walls and façade displayed a weathered patina in Buitenkant Street and its functionality and surrounding areas had altered since purchase, consecration, and adaption by the Methodist church. A photograph showed dirty walls at street level, damp patches, faded exterior and rust lines marking the Buitenkant Street façade of the building that reflected a lack of maintenance.¹²³

Due to a dwindling congregation, the church had been unused for 5 years. The main church building was rarely used after the 1988 amalgamation. The congregation made a decision to worship in the Metropolitan Methodist Church, a gothic revival styled church, in Burg Street at Green Market Square. Therefore the modest Buitenkant street church building fell into disuse and "this left us with the opportunity to think of creative ways in which to use the Buitenkant Street building".¹²⁴

The halls and mission house were already being put to good use housing Stepping Stones Children's Centre and Ons Plek shelter for street girls but the church remained unused throughout the week".¹²⁵ After "a District Six exhibition was held in the church and was so successful that we set about formal discussions with the group. They saw the church as the logical venue for the museum and we saw them as the logical group to help us achieve our aims".¹²⁶

¹²¹P. Storey (Rev), Commemoration of the Plaque of Conscience, District Six, Sunday 1 November 1992, paper, Central Methodist Mission papers, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed 14.03.2018, 1.

¹²²Storey, Commemoration , 2

¹²³L. Muller, Central Methodist Mission Church, Cape Town, 1994, Independent Newspapers Archive, Islandora Repository, Photographic Collections University of Cape Town Libraries, <https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-17323>, accessed 14.01.2019.

¹²⁴D. J. Newby, (Rev), Funding Proposal for Buitenkant Street Community Centre, The Buitenkant Community Centre is a project of the Central Methodist Mission Cape Town, Central Methodist Mission papers, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed 14.03.2018, 4.

¹²⁵Newby, Funding Proposal, 4.

¹²⁶Newby, Funding Proposal, 4.



Figure 4.9: Central Methodist Mission Buitenkant Street 1993. Photograph: Rennie & Goddard Architects.



Figure 4.10: Central Methodist Mission Buitenkant Street, Stepping Stones Children's Centre and Ons Plek entrance at far left 1993. Photograph Rennie & Goddard Architects.

Architectural and artistic re-imaginings were projected onto the buildings by different groups of people.¹²⁷ Peggy Delport noted that the processes unfolding within the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church building evoked the potential of placemaking and memorialisation:

I'll go back to the beginning when there was an empty space; I'm not speaking of the wall, but the space of the present Museum building. And the emptiness began to fill when the sound of words, and the actions of people, and then names and thoughts and facts began to be inscribed on surfaces, and this is when the Foundation first began to meet in that empty space. It is a very strong image in my mind, of that emptiness, as the old church had emptied, and things began to happen steadily more and more.¹²⁸

With the opening of the first exhibition *Streets: Retracing District Six* on 10th December 1994 the pews and the communion rail were removed in order to make way for the District Six floor map and suspended street signs. Where once people kneeled to pray they now kneeled to memorialise District Six through inscribed text on a reimagined grid of streets.¹²⁹ The grid as a design template ordered the building's interior spaces where vertical and horizontal perspective was created through an interplay between the map and church interior. Street signs were also attached to the Phoenix foundry cast iron decorative architectural supports turning the interior into a gallery that simulated District Six street poles and architectural features. Four religious banners were suspended from the rafters in front of the upper choir gallery obscuring the view of a large wooden cross set against the choir gallery wall. Fabrication of the banners saw groups of crafters hand stitching, embroidering and appliquéing. According to Nadia Davids "Text and textuality, the politics of texture and the freedom of expressing sentiment and statement onto cloth have been a hallmark of the museum since its early informal days".¹³⁰

The vertical interior fabric banners were "representative of the four major religious denominations of District Six... Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism" and replaced the

¹²⁷Peggy Delport painted a mural *District Six: 'Res Clamant'* in District Six on an exterior wall of the Holy Cross Church Hall in Nile Street between 1984-5.

¹²⁸P. Delport, *Reflections on the Conference, Hands on District Six Landscape of post-colonial memorialisation, Cape Town, 25-28 May 2005, Cape Town: District Six Museum: 2007*, 18.

¹²⁹Davids, "Inherited Memories", 96.

¹³⁰Davids. "Inherited Memories", 97.

Methodist liturgical vestments in the church.¹³¹ Although this was a secular move in which the museum wanted to project a non-denominational stance the District Six Museum Foundation through the fabric banners “evokes a return to the sense of the sacred” argued Nadia Davids.¹³²

In 1993, the Central Methodist Mission commissioned a sociologist to conduct a needs analysis in the city “to give recommendations on how the building could be utilised effectively” named the City Care Project.¹³³ After 5 months of data collection, a 100-page report was completed in consultation with the UCT Sociology Department. The main recommendations of the report included the following:

- Providing a platform for responding to housing problems in the city
- Mobilising residents to address the broader socio-economic inner-city issues
- Encourage training programmes for employees
- Highlight discriminatory employment practices and work with relevant organisations in order to address them.
- Set up a city Care office to facilitate development projects amongst street people.
- The entire building should be used as a common centre housing various projects and with qualified staff to manage and administer it.
- The CMM should continue its work of social reconciliation through: Studying the history of CMM, Studying the history of the broader Cape Town community, Recording oral histories and establishing a living museum to record the above.¹³⁴

Key to the report was the desire to recommission the church building as it “held memories for many of the congregation”.¹³⁵ A referendum was held to decide the fate of the building that resulted in “unanimous and enthusiastic support” reported to the church council after a congregational meeting. A decision was made “arising out of research and because of the roots of the majority of the congregation being in District Six it was felt that it would be appropriate to consult with the District 6 Museum Committee (a community based organisation) about the possibility of co-operating in a joint venture”.¹³⁶ Furthermore, the decision was premised on the aims of Methodism in Cape Town

¹³¹District Six Museum, Draft Stain-glass design proposal, Buitenkant building renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed October 2018.

¹³²Davids, “Inherited Memories”, 98.

¹³³The City Care Project was the first study of its kind in the city, funded by the church and focused particularly on the businesses, residents and street people within the central business and one of the founding documents relating to the redevelopment of the church into the Museum as it incorporates a statement of interest by the District Six Museum foundation.

¹³⁴UCT Sociology Department, City Care Project Report for the Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town, 1993, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre.

¹³⁵Newby, Funding Proposal, 4

¹³⁶Newby, Funding Proposal, 4.

reflected in a mission statement: “Central Methodist Mission is a city church which is committed to Jesus Christ. We have been called out of division into community and seek to bring wholeness to each and the world”.¹³⁷ The joint venture contributed to the ideological and aesthetic missionizing and museumising agendas for both parties working with various groups in Cape Town.

The report encouraged the continuation and development of the existing projects operating in the building – Stepping Stones and Ons Plek and saw them as complementing the envisaged museum project.¹³⁸ A renewed focus and revival of mission work followed the political transition in South Africa when the church embarked on a new vision of Methodism expressed as a “Journey to a new land”.¹³⁹ As a result, the Ons Plek shelter situated adjacent to Stepping Stones was renovated between 1995-6 by Rennie & Goddard Architects established in 1990. The two principal architects were John Rennie and Gregg Goddard.¹⁴⁰

Therefore conceptualising how to put the church building back into use commenced taking cognisance that the site was more than just a building but contributed to the church’s mission work and the city’s history. The Central Methodist Mission in Cape Town, who managed the Buitenkant Methodist church buildings, “is part of one of the geographical Methodist Church districts namely District 1 – Cape of Good Hope”.¹⁴¹ Under the auspices of the national Methodist Church in Southern Africa and their national brand, profile and mandate the heritage value and extensive assets of the church allowed the continuation of public giving. The Methodist Church in Southern Africa website states:

As the Methodist people in southern Africa, we have a rich legacy which has profound value for our present and future generations. This heritage, left to us by those gone before, must ignite a sense of pride in each of us, but also ought to be preserved. Our heritage includes buildings & artefacts, mission endeavours, involvement in education, numerous Methodist homes

¹³⁷Central Methodist Mission, Mission Statement, CMM pamphlet, Bull-18826 dated 2018 05 27.

¹³⁸Newby, Funding Proposal, 3.

¹³⁹Methodist Church in Southern Africa, Journey to the New Land (1992 & 1995), <https://methodist.org.za/who-we-are/journey-to-the-new-land/>, accessed 05.03.2019.

¹⁴⁰Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, “*District Six Museum*”, 21.

¹⁴¹Methodist Church in Southern Africa, Our Structure, <https://methodist.org.za/our-structure/districts/district-1-cape-of-good-hope/>, accessed 05.03.2019.

& institutions, our organisations, and our many attempts of a united determination with the poor and marginalised.¹⁴²

After consultation with various stakeholders in May 1993, Rev David J Newby commissioned architects Rennie & Goddard and Quantity Surveyors Bernard James and Partners to undertake a detailed architectural survey of the buildings and calculate the cost of restoration.¹⁴³ Furthermore to provide a needs analysis from the two organisations occupying the unrenovated buildings “to be used as a basis for the intended restoration of the complex of buildings”.¹⁴⁴ The District Six Museum Foundation was registered as a trust in 1994 and commissioned an architectural report on the building in the same year “for the specific requirements for the functioning of the Museum”¹⁴⁵ This indicated that there was architectural interest in redeveloping the two of the three interlinked buildings. According to architect and museum trustee Lucien Le Grange:

District Six was a community of strong and varied faiths. It is these churches and mosques that remain of the original District Six after removal and bulldozing of its people and buildings, during which process they were the community’s main support. In fact, people still return to worship in these buildings as an act of protest and loyalty....In District Six where a unique architecture was almost entirely destroyed, any opportunity to conserve a building should be grasped. This applies, in particular, to a building such as the Buitenkant Methodist Church, which is so redolent with memories and architectural significance. It is the place that has been chosen by the community to house their memories and the District Six Museum.¹⁴⁶

Rennie & Goddard Architects compiled a ‘Central Methodist Mission Buitenkant Street and Associated Buildings Report: June 1993’ and included a separate photographic survey of the buildings. The report recommended that the “photographic survey to be read in conjunction with the report”.¹⁴⁷ The report noted that the main church building and Stepping Stones building had not been upgraded by the Central Methodist Mission since 1925.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴²Methodist Church in Southern Africa, Our Heritage, <https://methodist.org.za/our-heritage/>, accessed 05.03.2019.

¹⁴³Newby, Funding Proposal, 13.

¹⁴⁴Newby, Funding Proposal, 13.

¹⁴⁵Newby, Funding Proposal, 13.

¹⁴⁶L. Le Grange, Refurbishment of the District Six Museum, draft document, Buitenkant church renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 09.09. 2018, undated.

¹⁴⁷Rennie & Goddard cc, Central Methodist Mission Buitenkant Street and Associated Buildings Report: June 1993, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 23.10. 2018.

¹⁴⁸Rennie & Goddard cc, Central Methodist Mission, 12.

The written site and condition report included the context, significance, history and general configuration, design, and usage of all three interconnected buildings noting heritage aspects. The report also included an appraisal and recommendation.¹⁴⁹ Photographic documentation of the interior and exterior of the buildings noted a range of conservation issues relating to the built fabric as well as addressing spatial reconfiguration to repurpose the interior volumes. Original features were highlighted as well as the practical functionality of high traffic zones where specific dedicated areas were identified.¹⁵⁰

An appraisal of the project by the architects was directed towards a basic understanding of the buildings and an assessment of the general structural condition of the buildings and their elements. The report featured an assessment of dilapidations and recommendations, in order to assist the QS in establishing a cost estimate for the restoration and alteration work as envisaged.¹⁵¹ The report allowed for the creation of a new chapel and the conversion of the choir gallery into two new offices.¹⁵² Rennie and Goddard submitted a further report to Rev David J Newby in July 1994 “making recommendations for the restoration and alterations at Buitenkant Street, Cape Town”.¹⁵³

The collated information allowed the compilation of a comprehensive funding proposal for a Buitenkant Street Community Centre, a project of the Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town.¹⁵⁴ A full account of the projects housed in the building: Ons Plek and Stepping Stones as well as the District Six Museum project formed the basis of the detailed funding proposal.

One of the heritage initiatives promoted by the Methodist Church in Southern Africa was to “Motivate storytelling especially from older folk” thereby extending the intangible legacy of

¹⁴⁹Rennie & Goddard cc, Central Methodist Mission, 12.

¹⁵⁰Rennie and Goddard, Restoration and Alterations at Buitenkant Street, Cape Town for the Central Methodist Mission, 21st July 1994, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 20.02.2018.

¹⁵¹D. J. Newby, (Rev), Funding Proposal 14.

¹⁵²Rennie & Goddard cc, Central Methodist Mission, 12.

¹⁵³Rennie & Goddard, Buitenkant Street Community Centre, Restoration and Alterations report, 21st July 1994, District Six Museum archive, Accessed 14.03.2018,

¹⁵⁴Methodist church members assisted with gathering information for the UCT sociological report although the church paid for the report and with the sanction of the CMM church council Rev David Newby travelled to Britain and the Netherlands to raise funds for the restoration and renovation project. Rev David J Newby, Funding Proposal for the Buitenkant Street Community Centre, June 1993, 2 & 6.

Methodism in South Africa.¹⁵⁵ This heritage and memory focus directly aligned with the District Six Museum's emphasis that prioritised storytelling and lived experience. According to Sandra Prosalendis and Jenny Margot, "What we continue to collect is the intangible spirit of community".¹⁵⁶ Therefore, the prospect of occupying an adapted and renovated church building supported community memory-making methodologies and the professional archival tasks of the fledgling museum.¹⁵⁷ These included creating a memory booth and repository for collected sound recordings that required specific enclosures and conditions for preservation, conservation, and cataloguing.

The District Six Museum Foundation was not preoccupied with representing political transition, objects, tangible collections and acquiring buildings at the onset of the District Six memory project. Lucien Le Grange states:

The public history of places such as District Six was embedded in urban space and in the greater urban landscape of which it was a part. This public history, and indeed memory, is influenced by both the aesthetics of experiencing places in the area before its destruction and the politics of experiencing the place today as 'contested territory'...the attachment ex-residents have to 'place', to the District, in recollecting and recording their memories is indeed important...¹⁵⁸

He argues that the relationship of people to place "does demand that new interpretations of public history incorporate more of the urban landscape".¹⁵⁹

According to Rev. D. J. Newby, a "synergy" between the three projects: Ons Plek, Stepping Stones and the District Six Museum "enabled the 3 projects to persevere through all kinds of adversity" where "the dynamic of a community of people with a history of more than 200 years of

¹⁵⁵Methodist Church in Southern Africa, Our Heritage, <https://methodist.org.za/our-heritage/>, accessed 05.03.2019.

¹⁵⁶D. J. Newby, (Rev), The Buitenkant Street Community Centre incorporating: The District Six Museum, Stepping Stones Children's Centre, Ons Plek Shelter for Female Street Children, Memory Sanctuary, Community and Education Foundations for a better tomorrow, A Project of the Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town, April 1998, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 14.03.2018, 48.

¹⁵⁷C. Rassool, "Community museum, Memory Politics and Social Transformation in South Africa: Histories, Possibilities, and Limits" in *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, eds Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 298.

¹⁵⁸L. le Grange, "District Six: urban place and public memory" in *Recalling Community in Cape Town Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis (eds), (Cape Town: District Six Museum Foundation, 2001), 112.

¹⁵⁹le Grange, "District Six", 112.

serving the city...Memory, Sanctuary, Community and Education are the 4 pillars upon which we have built”.¹⁶⁰ Thus, terminology found within the historiography and texts relating to church ministry were present in the conceptual origins of the District Six Museum’s early institutional statements. Words such as community, memory, sanctuary, and education were evoked and applied to theme the building project.¹⁶¹ Terminology was determined by various stakeholders at the onset of working relationships around the buildings.¹⁶² Hereafter they became firmly established collective values as a guiding framework in two project and funding proposals compiled by Rev. D. J. Newby. The established and agreed upon terminology: “Memory, Sanctuary, Community and Education” was later utilised on a large sign mounted on the front façade of the church during the restoration process.

Thus, terminology altered the restoration project thereby making it into a unified institutional structure. This indicated partnerships that forwarded “the development of its use as a community centre, the Central Methodist Mission has agreed to the need to restore the buildings properly and at the same time undertake certain alterations to accommodate additional requirements that have been identified as being necessary for the functioning of the Centre”.¹⁶³ Included in the funding proposal for the renovation and creation of the Buitenkant Street Community Centre the District Six Museum Committee expressed its objectives in a mission statement:

The mission of the Museum of District Six is to ensure that the historical memory of forced removals in South Africa endures. Central to its mission is the documentation and material culture of the District Six community.¹⁶⁴

The two mission statements of the church and museum share notions of working in and for a community as a central feature. Here two stories and historic associations of District Six come

¹⁶⁰Newby, *The Buitenkant Street*, 28.

¹⁶¹Newby, *The Buitenkant Street*, 28.

¹⁶²During the course of my archival research on the renovation of the church buildings I read through numerous documents that established the common language and terminology of various stakeholders which was applied to the project as it progressed. This was seen in funding proposals, drafts, internal museum and church correspondence, minutes of renovation project meetings, faxes and emails and led to agreements over terminology utilised.

¹⁶³Newby, *Funding Proposal*, 13.

¹⁶⁴D. J. Newby, (Rev), Appendix A, District Six Museum Committee, *Funding Proposal for The Buitenkant Street Community Centre*, The Buitenkant Community Centre is a project of the Central Methodist Mission Cape Town June 1993, CMM papers, District Six Museum archive, accessed 14.03.2018, 8.

together and the church buildings allow for the reconstruction of District Six histories framed through the normalizing gaze of the Methodist church in the construction of social institutions. As visual and guiding textual statements, they act in creating a partnership and alliance thereby acknowledging joint struggles and histories in the city.

According to Tom Troller, the founding of the 21st Century museum can be attributed to textual beginnings: “the well-framed mission statement represents the confluence and distillation of numerous interwoven issues that make museums a useful barometer of social, cultural and technical change”.¹⁶⁵ The agreement and partnerships formed with the Central Methodist Mission, the University of Cape Town and the University of Western Cape, as well as the popular response to the 1992 exhibition, allowed District Six Museum making in the building. This substantiates my claim that the church building indeed became an important framework of representation for the memory project becoming the museum. The District Six Museum Committee statement of intent reads:

We are anxious to ensure that the proposed Museum be more than a conventional place for storing artefacts and staging various exhibitions. We intend creating a ‘living museum’ – a public forum which will foster public debate of relevant cultural issues and of questions of restitution and reconciliation in a ‘post-apartheid’ South Africa.¹⁶⁶

The specific and complimenting “synergies” identified between the three working projects within the buildings were recognised by the church council and Rev Newby as a shared asset to further capitalise on the legacy and future of the building.¹⁶⁷ The relationship between the church and museum for the purposes of securing funding for the building renovation and support for outreach projects was made explicit in a funding proposal. Rev David J Newby clarified and validated the status of the Central Methodist Mission’s relationship with the District Six Museum as follows:

The Central Methodist Mission has a commitment to housing the museum on a long term basis. Many of the congregation grew up in District 6 and have a firm commitment to ensuring that the history of District Six is reflected in the building which served the community for more than 100

¹⁶⁵M. J. Crosbie, “Introduction: The 21st Century Museum”, *Designing the World’s Best Museums and Art Galleries*, (Australia: Images Publishing, 2003), 8-9.

¹⁶⁶Newby, Appendix A, 9.

¹⁶⁷Newby, The Buitenkant Street, 27.

years. There is unanimous and enthusiastic support of the Museum among the congregation...95% of respondents in a congregational referendum voted in favour of the church housing the museum.¹⁶⁸

Post-apartheid memorialisation, therefore, became a project of the Methodist Church and Sandra Prosalendis and Jenny Margot claimed that ‘the absence of individual ownership of the Museum means that every participant, donor, visitor, employee or trustee can lay equal claim to owning the Museum’.¹⁶⁹ Yet in doing so within the church building it “tends to mirror and reflect the thinking that District Six is somehow holy....that it achieves its position as a site of pilgrimage” as argued by Nadia Davids.¹⁷⁰ I agree with the statement as the former religious space can be classified as “emotional territory” as argued by Ittelson, Franck and O’Hanlon where secular and religious intersections and experiences are associated with and applied to a familiar building.¹⁷¹ Therefore, this concurs with my argument as the conflation provided not only a physical framework but also an emotional resonance effectively framing representations of District Six between material and religious domains.

According to architect Mike Scurr, “With the opening of the District Six Museum’s first exhibition in 1994, the building entered a new phase in its history. However, its community based links remained constant as the historical ties of the District Six community to this church were important factors in its selection as venue for the Museum”.¹⁷² Architect Gregg Goddard left the architectural partnership of Rennie & Goddard and Mike Scurr joined John Rennie in 1996. The partnership of Rennie & Scurr Architects cc continued to provide heritage and architectural expertise to the Central Methodist Mission. Scurr was appointed project architect tasked with historical research and design as well as managing the demanding detailed restoration and alteration process. The architect’s brief included the Central Methodist Mission’s view that the buildings have

¹⁶⁸D. J. Newby, Status of Agreement between Central Mission and District Six Museum, letter to Ms Hanneljie du Preez, Director of Cultural Affairs dated 21 October 1996, Methodist Church renovation box file, District Six Museum archive, accessed 09.09.2018.

¹⁶⁹Newby, District Six Museum, 50.

¹⁷⁰Davids, “Inherited Memories”, 98.

¹⁷¹W.H. Ittelson, K.A. Franck, and T.J. O’Hanlon, “The nature of environmental experience” in *experiencing the Environment* eds S. Wapner et al., (New York: Plenum Press, 1976), 204.

¹⁷²Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 6.

“particular historical significance” and would like to “see them preserved for the use of future generations”.¹⁷³



Figure 4.11: District Six Museum signage on the Buitenkant Methodist church building, 1994. Photograph: Rennie & Goddard Architects.

¹⁷³Newby, Funding Proposal, 13.

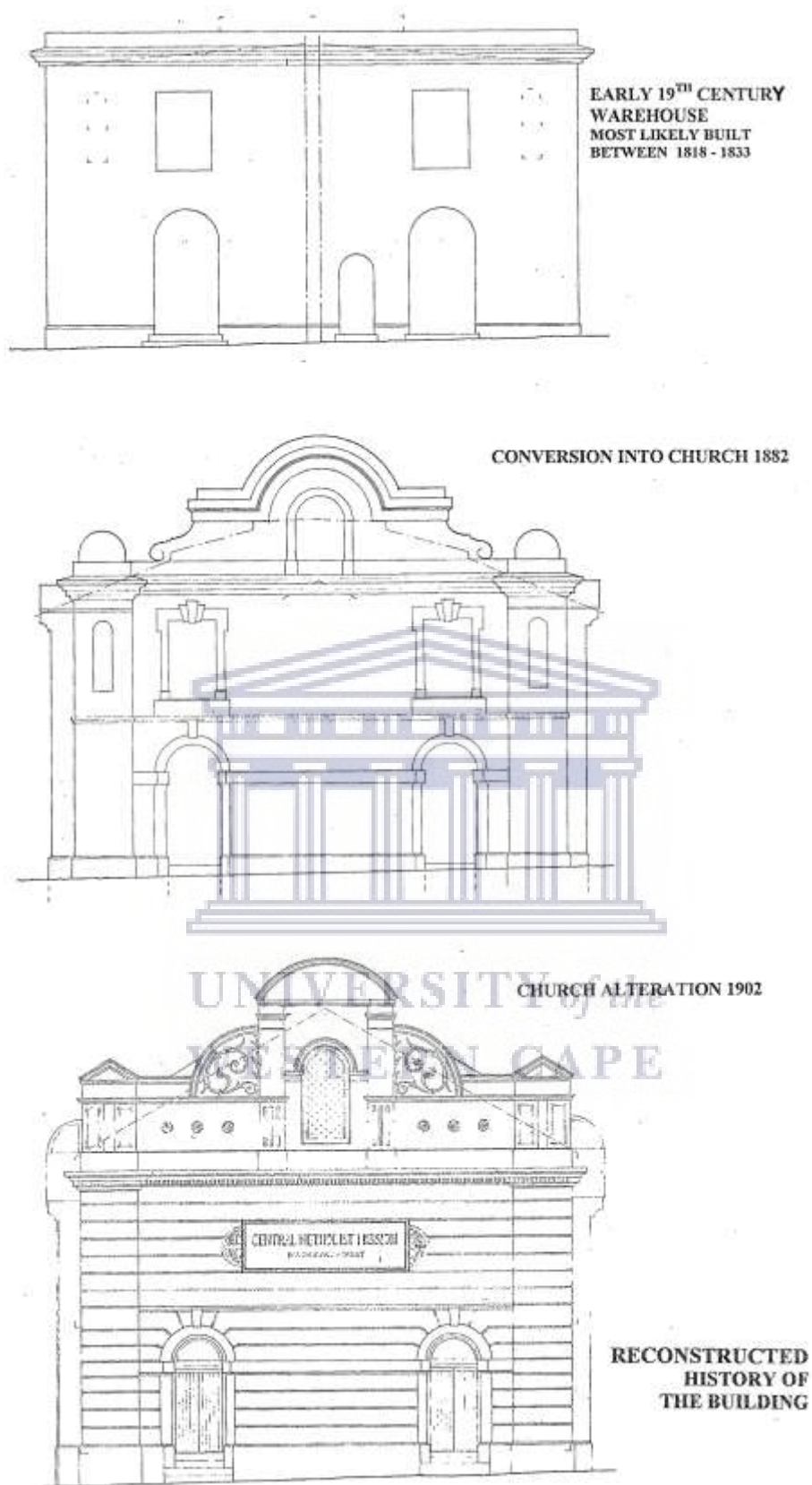


Figure 4.12: Architectural drawing of the reconstructed history of the Buitenkant Street Methodist building, 1998.
Source: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

Rennie & Scurr were to undertake preservation, restoration, conservation in line with restoration guidelines to preserve the heritage integrity while at the same time adapting the buildings to

regenerate the social and built fabric of the area in which it was situated. Furthermore, the architects were expressly instructed to approach the report and subsequent brief with a long term view to restoring the buildings so that they “will remain for at least another 75 years”.¹⁷⁴ It was noted further, by Newby, that certain repairs were done possibly with limited funds that had affected the current state of the building such as leaking roofs, birds entering the roof cavity and other defects not properly maintained or repaired.¹⁷⁵ The church proposed that a “thorough job” be undertaken even if that required undoing or redoing what had previously been done in the way of repairs.¹⁷⁶ Utilising historic photographs, H T Jones’ architectural drawings and their own photographs and measurements the architects drew a visual timeline indicating the stylistic and structural changes the wine warehouse and church had undergone.¹⁷⁷ The built fabric of the earlier warehouse structure was revealed when plastered layers were removed and previous openings, features, and materials were discovered and documented.¹⁷⁸

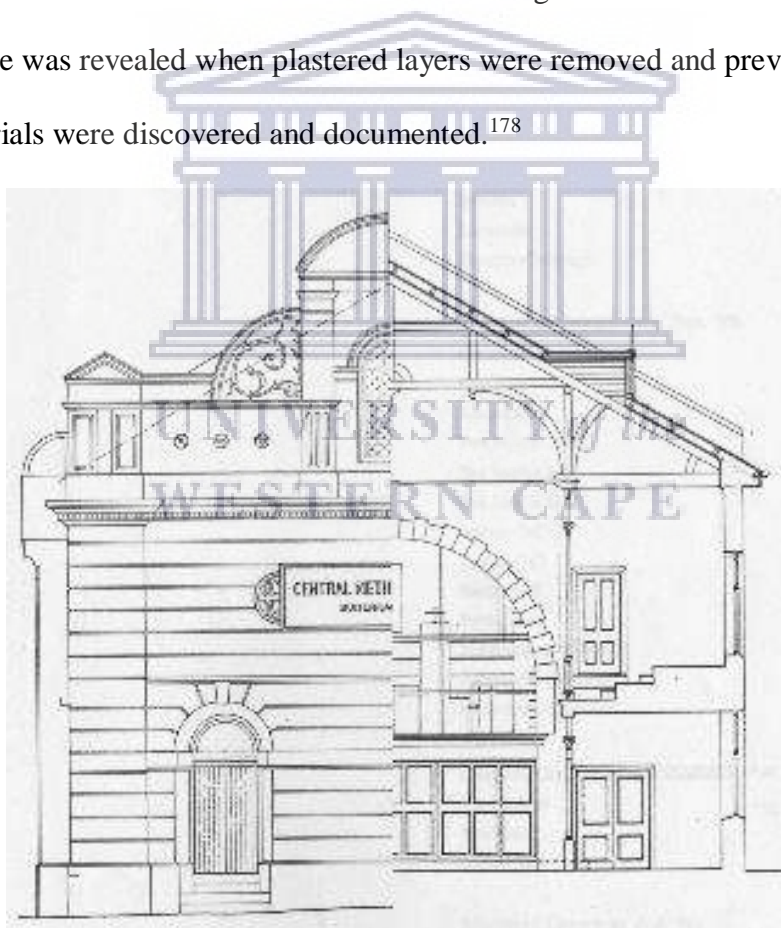


Figure 4.13: Cross-section architectural drawing, 1998. Source: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

¹⁷⁴Newby, Funding Proposal, 13.

¹⁷⁵Newby, Funding Proposal, 13.

¹⁷⁶Newby, Funding Proposal, 14.

¹⁷⁷Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 20.

¹⁷⁸Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 11-18.



Figure 4.14: Buitenkant Methodist church building cardboard scale model, 1998. Source: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

In considering the proposed restoration and alterations, the stated intention of the Central Methodist Mission was to use the entire building complex as a Community Centre housing the following:

Firstly, the old mission house to continue to house Ons Plek. Secondly, the upstairs and downstairs halls to house Stepping Stones Children's Centre. These do not need structural changes but rather restoration. Thirdly the existing church building including store-room, office and choir gallery: the wings of the church (upstairs and downstairs) are to be leased to the District 6 Museum Committee to house a District 6 Museum. Lastly, the remainder of the church is to be used as a multi-purpose meeting place suitable for drama and music presentations but flexible enough for exhibitions, seminars and church services. There is also the need for a small chapel, 2 offices and 2-storerooms to be included in this area.¹⁷⁹

Inside the church building, proposed for renovation, an exhibition dedicated to vanished District Six buildings and architecture *The Last Days of District Six* opened. At the opening, on the 7th

¹⁷⁹Arts & Culture RDP Projects for stabilisation of Youth and Children: Application for RDP Funding, draft document, 23/10/1996, Buitenkant Church renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 09.09.2018.

December 1996, Cabinet Minister Prof. Kader Asmal said: “Friends, Comrades, District Six was physically destroyed by bulldozers and jack-hammers nearly 20 years ago, but the memory will never be destroyed”.¹⁸⁰ In his address, he voiced two points relating to processes of memorialisation and restitution namely memories of the built environment and the significance of photographs as transmitters of memory and experience. He cites photographs as representations which ‘informs our past and informs our future, and photographs provide the ‘visual image’ that “keep our memories, our recollections alive and in focus”.¹⁸¹ Representations of District Six buildings in the exhibition established the significance of the old unrenovated Methodist Church building as a surviving monument to forced removals.

Black and white photographs by architect Jan Greshoff of District Six buildings in the exhibition visually recorded the architectural traditions of the built environment.¹⁸² These visual reminders were supported by a written catalogue authored by District Six Museum trustee, UCT academic and heritage architect Lucien le Grange and architectural historian Hans Franssen.¹⁸³

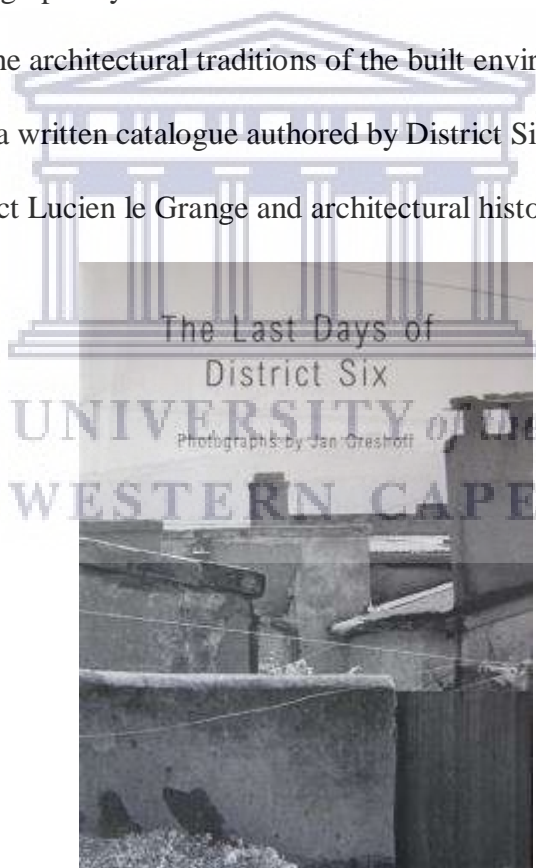


Figure 4.15: *The Last Days of District Six* Photographs by Jan Greshoff, District Six Museum exhibition catalogue 1996. D6M archive.

¹⁸⁰District Six Museum, Kader Asmal speaks at the museum, *District Six Museum newsletter June 1997*, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed 14.02.2019.

¹⁸¹District Six Museum, Kader Asmal, 2019.

¹⁸²The *The Last Days of District Six* exhibition and exhibiton catalogue published in 1966

¹⁸³District Six Museum, *The Last Days of District Six* Photographs by Jan Greshoff, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 1996).

In 1967, during the course of research for a book, Fransen identified specific buildings and precincts in Cape Town “for possible preservation”.¹⁸⁴ He pinpointed a number of architecturally distinctive buildings and precincts in District Six.¹⁸⁵ Fransen writes, “It was areas such as these that featured in the recommendations for preservation drawn up in 1967. The rest is history. The Department of Community Development (was there ever a less appropriate name?) never took the slightest notice of the advice they had sought, and proceeded to bulldoze every single building named in the report” engineered as “slum clearance”.¹⁸⁶

The first demolitions of the District Six buildings began in 1968 and by 1970 most buildings in the area were flattened by bulldozers and only churches, mosques, schools and earmarked buildings remained in the area re-named Zonnebloem. According to historian Shamil Jeppie, the absence of District Six buildings was a lost opportunity to record social, architectural and economic histories.¹⁸⁷ Jeppie notes:

The destruction of District Six was about far more than the reduction of buildings to rubble and dust. These structures were homes and dwellings, carrying intimate layered histories often stretching back into the middle of the 19th century. Individual houses or blocks also represented whole ethnic or class subcultures, as well as the depths of family experience and personal memory. If bulldozed walls could speak....¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴H. Fransen, *The last Days of District Six photographs by Jan Greshoff*, exhibition catalogue, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 1996), 20.

¹⁸⁵Among them were the precinct around Roger and Tyne Streets, containing the most representational cluster which, because of the irregular street pattern (the transition between two different grids), provided attractive streetscapes complete with a small square. Tyne Street had an attractive double-storey Hanover Street block as its upper termination. Another unspoilt area, dating from the 1880s, centred around Lee Street, with its rows of multi-coloured houses, flat-roofed on one side and pitch-roofed on the other. Nearby, the block bounded by Pedersen, Lee, Aspeling and Russell Streets was almost intact and full of charm. The Moravian Hill church of 1885 still stands today, but used to be surrounded by rows of stone cottages probably built around the same time by the missionaries, using a German style. The best of these stood just below the church property in Ashley Street, as well as a row in Cross Street. Possibly the most interesting precinct in the district, through very run down, was well-known Vernon Terrace. This irregular shaped interior square of about 1890 probably owed its existence to increasing pressure on building space, which the fairly large block bounded by Mount, Caledon, Van der Leur and Constitution Streets could provide by being ‘hollowed out’. Thus room was found for some 25 additional dwellings surrounding a quiet, traffic-free square of pleasing proportions. One side ran obliquely, expressing a rise in the terrain. The treatment of the precinct, with sculpted lions adorning the *stoep* (veranda) walls, cast iron railings and an impressive entrance gateway in Mount Street, showed decided forethought in its planning.

¹⁸⁶Fransen, *The last Days*, 20.

¹⁸⁷S. Jeppie, “Interiors, District Six, c.1950” in *Blank: Architecture, Apartheid and After*, eds Judin, H, Vladislavić, I, (Rotterdam: NIA, 1999), 387.

¹⁸⁸Jeppie, “Interiors”, 387.

The loss of the District Six built environment was staged in the museum through a photographic exhibition in a building associated with District Six identities adding depth, texture, and sense of place to the *Streets: Retracing District Six* exhibition. This convergence coupled the professionally trained architect, architectural knowledge and the architect's photographic eye with memories of lived experience. Therefore, the memory project and District Six architecture as material and visual traces foregrounded the real and present architecture of the church as being part of District Six. As a framework to recover community, the photographic record of District Six's built environment served as a touchpoint to excavate memories. Furthermore, photographs of the built environment along with the District Six floor map laid an alternative framework for storytelling. This enabled historical memory to function within notions of the social and cultural value of architecture such as the Buitenkant Methodist Church, described as "a beautiful example of District Six architecture" by Lucien Le Grange.¹⁸⁹

The architectural and conservation challenge was to adapt the buildings "so redolent with memories and architectural significance" while providing a fully functioning museum and pre-school.¹⁹⁰ In 1996, architect Mike Scurr undertook a research process including photography that highlighted conservation issues. Research on the buildings included accessing archival records of the Methodist church, historic photographs in the South African Library and Western Cape archives collections, copies of the 1902 H. T. Jones drawings of the church alteration work, copies of the 1897 Tully & Waters drawings of the school building as well as extensive on-site investigation, measuring and recording, both prior to and during the building work.¹⁹¹

After construction work commenced embedded details were revealed that later become features in the museum's exhibition *Digging Deeper*. From my reading, the survey intended to create an inventory based on a client-architect relationship yet a far more detailed report for the museum was produced. The Hands On District Six ethos within the District Six Museum

¹⁸⁹Le Grange, Refurbishment, undated.

¹⁹⁰Le Grange, Refurbishment, undated.

¹⁹¹Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, *District Six Museum*, 2001.

Foundation challenged architectural conservation and placed emphasis on the preservation of the remaining built environment associated with social histories of District Six. Thus as knowledge, meaning, and interpretation of the buildings increased over time the heritage value and meanings of the buildings were not only established but shifted.

This relates to my central argument as through the work of the museum and its inscription practices the architects increasingly acknowledged how buildings created a sense of place, post-forced removals. In the context of restitution, social justice, apartheid wrongs and the museum's objectives to recover District Six memory the architects become sensitised to the museum's guiding principles. My archival research enquiry indicated that they worked within a paradigm of community as the contractual agreements and minutes of renovation meetings reflect.¹⁹² The heritage architects became in this frame, I argue, architects of community where agreements between parties indicated a commitment to that ethos and way of working.

Funding to renovate and adapt the church buildings came from a number of sources although, initially, the church had funded the museum project. The extensive renovations needed to create the Buitenkant Street Community Centre required substantial and sustained funding throughout the project. Therefore, a comprehensive business plan was compiled and approved by the Director General of the Provincial Administration of the Western Cape.¹⁹³ The plan included supporting documents from all stakeholders as part of an application for Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) funding under the 'Arts and Culture Reconstruction and Development Plan Projects for the stabilisation of Youth and Children'.¹⁹⁴ This included Stepping Stones Children's Centre and the District Six Museum that were jointly occupying and shared spaces in the buildings. The provincial project manager tasked with drawing up the business plan

¹⁹²Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, District Six Museum.

¹⁹³Business plan, Arts and Culture Reconstruction and Development Plan Projects for the stabilisation of Youth and Children included The District Six Museum: Restoration, Refurbishment and Redevelopment of the old Methodist Church in Buitenkant Street, Cape Town, 1998, Buitenkant Church renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 09.09.2018, 1.

¹⁹⁴Business plan, Arts and Culture, 3.

was Ms H M J du Preez, Director of Cultural Affairs.¹⁹⁵ The business plan was recorded as ‘The District Six Museum: Restoration, Refurbishment and Redevelopment of the old Methodist Church in Buitenkant Street, Cape Town’.¹⁹⁶

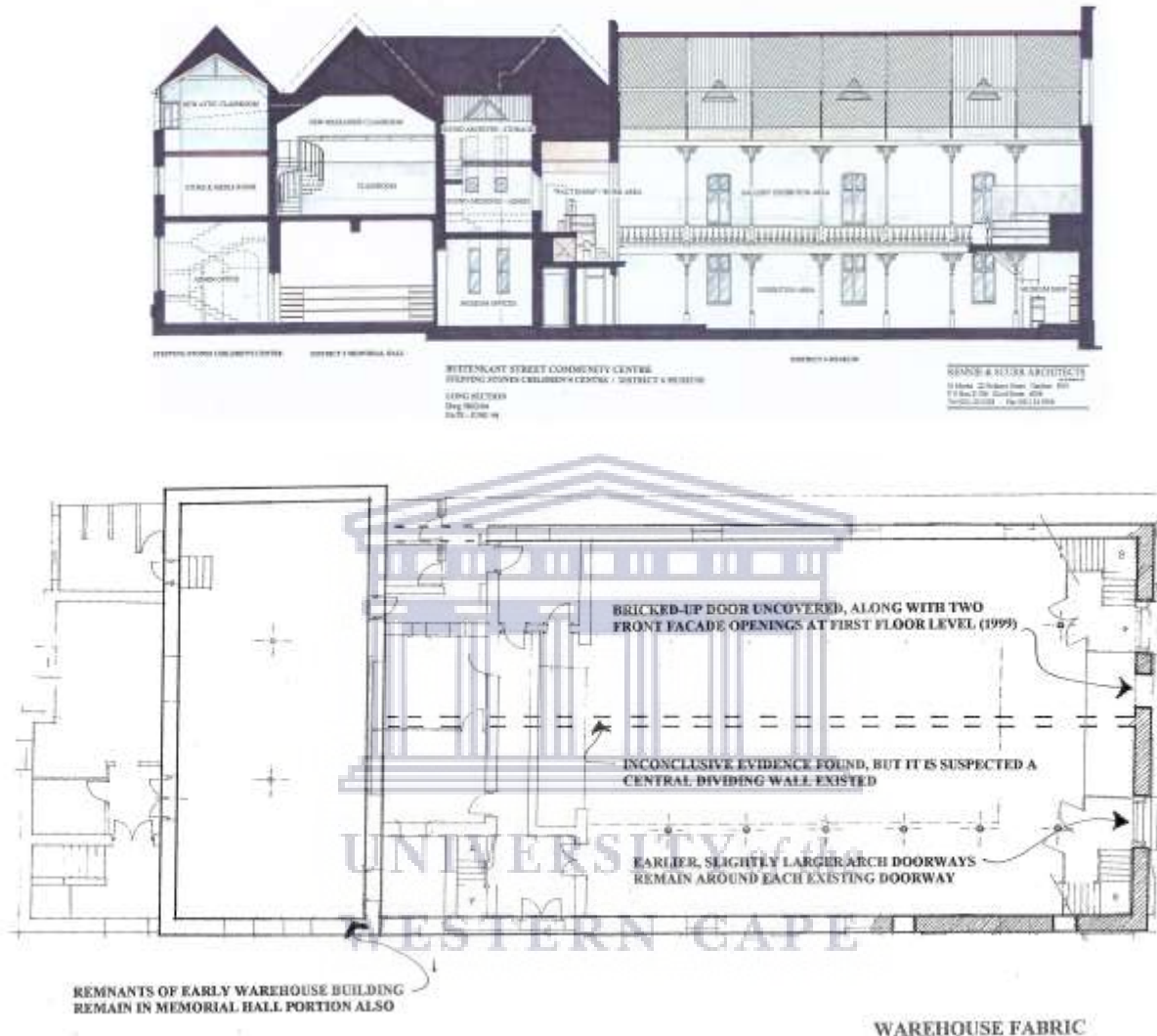


Figure 4.16 : Above: Rennie & Scurr architectural Buitenkant Methodist church side view drawing depicting District 6 Museum exhibition area, gallery exhibition area, sound archive storage and admin, museum offices, ‘fact room’-work area and museum shop. Below: Rennie & Scurr architectural Buitenkant Methodist church floor plan drawing shows remnants of early warehouse fabric.

Two leases were drawn up between the Interim Council for Cultural Affairs (Western Cape) later changed to Western Cape Cultural Commission, The Methodist Church of Southern Africa and the District Six Foundation on the 20th Dec 1998 in a tiered system to facilitate funding stipulations. The Department of Arts and Culture, Science & Technology and the Western Cape Cultural

¹⁹⁵Business plan, Arts and Culture, 3.

¹⁹⁶Business plan, Arts and Culture, 3.

Commission RDP funding imposed strict criteria. An independent two person task team managed this administrative function. Special RDP requirements and project execution required job-creation “as far as possible, local and ex-residents of District Six will be kept informed about the process to enable them to tender for work within the cost limitations. They would have the advantage to be employed in temporary jobs during the restoration and refurbishing phase” and “could also create permanent job-opportunities”.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, the project should include providing training opportunities for youth, community participation, and interaction, the use of labour intensive methods, opportunities for medium and small enterprises, provision for the disabled, programmes targeting youth and children and human resource development.¹⁹⁸ To provide project monitoring and evaluation, financial controls, monthly and quarterly financial and narrative progress reports and progress, weekly meetings where required. A communication strategy was an important component as it was noted that “this project will have a high profile, both locally, nationally and internationally, media releases will have to be made on a regular basis”.¹⁹⁹

As funding partners were identified and architectural plans were in motion a land restitution meeting was convened in the church on the 13th September 1998 where “a Record of Understanding aimed at facilitating the process of land restitution is signed by government, City Council and the District Six Beneficiary Trust at a packed meeting in the District Six Museum”.²⁰⁰ Ciraj Rassool and Jos Thorne write:

As the museum building created a space to continue the struggle for the land of District Six “It was in the museum that a moral victory was declared by former residents when the court decided redevelopment of District Six should be community driven. Land Claimants had vigorously contested a controversial application brought by the City of Cape Town and the provincial government to re-develop the area”.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁷Business plan, Arts and Culture, 7-8.

¹⁹⁸Business plan, Arts and Culture, 8.

¹⁹⁹Business plan, Arts and Culture, 9.

²⁰⁰Rassool and Thorne, A timeline, 158.

²⁰¹Rassool and Thorne, A timeline, 158.

Therefore the former church building, museumised through the *Streets: Retracing District Six* exhibition also became a space for large meetings and a platform for political and social activism around the land restitution process.

Through extensive proposals outlining the long term vision of the Museum, drawing on the expertise of Rennie & Scurr Architects, further funding was secured in 1998 from overseas donors and funding agencies some of whom had visited the District Six Museum and Stepping Stones. International funders included The Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), The Ford Foundation, The Irish Government, USAID, The Norwegian Government, Pro Helvetia SDC (Switzerland), The Netherlands Government, Union of Christian Education, The Spanish Government, Ms Anita Nonneman (USA).²⁰²

In 1999 the District Six Museum director Sandra Prosalendis, through Rennie & Scurr Architects, requested the Cape Town City Council to attend to “the upgrading of the urban area around the District Six Museum, 25A Buitenkant Street, due to the considerable investment the Central Methodist Mission and Museum are investing in the city to the benefit of the tourist industry and the general upgrading of the area”.²⁰³ A large signboard displayed on the exterior façade of the Buitenkant Street Church building indicated that there were seven main stakeholders in the renovation of the buildings.²⁰⁴

The Methodist church logo appeared on the building to signal the relationship between the church and its partners and to announce the core values in making the Buitenkant Street Community Centre. The Church states:

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) brand is our unique promise to all our stakeholders. It defines the relationship we have with them and signals a consistent image and promise, shaped by our heritage and our vision to be ‘a Christ healed Africa for the healing of nations’ that Proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ for healing and transformation.” Our

²⁰²District Six Museum Foundation and Digging Deeper exhibition donor gala event invitation 10th December 2000, Methodist church renovation archival box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 14.10.2018.

²⁰³S. Prosalendis, District Six Museum Foundation letter to the Cape Town City Council dated 20th April 1999, Buitenkant church renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 14.10.2018.

²⁰⁴They are listed as the South African Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, The Central Methodist Mission, The District Six Museum Foundation, Ons Plek, Stepping Stones and the Provincial Government (now Western Cape Government).

brand captures our values as an organisation that respects diversity; embraces the poor; encourages innovation and the preservation of our heritage. Our brand represents our identity; our work, our distinctiveness and our competitive advantage. Remaining a strong member of the Body of Christ, with what we believe is an approach vital to a healthy Doctrine and ministry; unique whilst displaying considerable growth requires consistent and coherent custodianship of our most important asset, our brand. Our brand consists of all the identifying symbols, words or marks that distinguish the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Brand and all its related services and offerings across the world. The image of the church and how it is portrayed by and to all our stakeholders is paramount as it is a representation of who we are and what we stand for and has a direct impact on our witness as a church and on perceptions that develop about the MCSA brand.²⁰⁵

With designs, funding, agreements and working partnerships in place between 1999 and 2000 the Buitenkant Street Methodist Church premises were renovated and adapted to house Stepping Stones and the District Six Museum. Due to the scale and processes of the building project, the District Six Museum had to relocate to the Moravian Chapel in District Six. The District Six Museum wanted to remain open during the renovations. A lease agreement was signed on the 30th April 1999 to secure the Moravian chapel as interim Museum premises.²⁰⁶ This allowed the *Streets: Retracing District Six* exhibition to be de-installed from the Buitenkant Methodist church building and re-installed in the Moravian Chapel where it remained until April 2000.²⁰⁷ Here the Museum “became part of a new route, one dependent on motorized transport. At least seven tourist buses visited us every day on the newly developed tourist route from ‘City to Township and Flats’, a route the Museum is proud to be part and to have facilitated” according to Sandra Prosalendis.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Revised MCSA Branding policy, <https://methodist.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Revised-MCSA-Branding-Policy-.pdf2>, accessed 08.10.2018.

²⁰⁶D. A. Carstens, Registrar, Cape Technikon, Lease Agreement Moravian Chapel, Letter addressed to Ms Sandra Prosalendis, Project Director: District Six Museum, 5th November 1999, Buitenkant building renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 16.10.2018.

²⁰⁷D. A. Carstens, Registrar, Cape Technikon, Extension, Buitenkant building renovation box file, District Six Museum resource centre, accessed 16.10.2018.

²⁰⁸S. Prosalendis, J. Marot, C. Soudien and A. Nagia, “Punctuations: periodic impressions of a museum” in *Recalling Community in Cape Town Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum Foundation, 2001), 89.

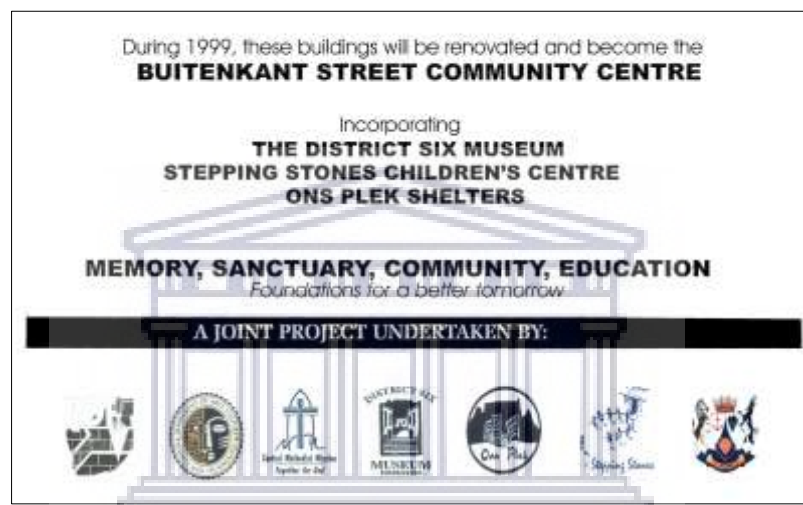


Figure 4.17: Reinstating two upper-level ornamentation window facades on the Buitenkant Methodist Church and building project signage. Source: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

Therefore, the history and adaptive reuse of the church buildings and a District Six Museum exhibition focusing on District Six buildings created an important idiom through which entitlement to place was articulated and expressed. The practice of heritage architects Rennie & Scurr and the processes of museumisation by the District Six Museum brought about structural and cultural transitions, which impacted on how a particular layered past was constructed, understood, integrated, and a community represented in the city.

Making District Six visible: Museumising through adaptive reuse, renaming, roof wetting, and architectural curation

Buildings remained in District Six where building foundations, rubble, and remnants of roads were visible after demolition. A review, selection, and salvage of building materials at District Six was

undertaken by project architect Mike Scurr and building site manager Roland Beckett in 1999. Material was selected for incorporation into the *Writers Floor* memorial hall floor formed part of the *Beyond District Six* theme. The design of exterior community banners were also created under this theme. Reclaiming building rubble for inclusion in a new design feature enabled another perspective for reclaiming and recovery of District Six. It also blurred the role of the architect, curator, and archaeologist as items were specifically selected for inclusion into the renovated building. Debris of former District Six was built into the fabric of the church further blending histories and disciplines in making the museum. New granite steps, salvaged from District Six rubble were created at the main entrance to the museum evoking the seven steps of stone, a famous landmark in District Six, recreated as a found object artwork in the 1997 District Six Public Sculpture Project, and featured in the District Six Museum logo.²⁰⁹

The Central Methodist Mission also took part in reclaiming religious artefacts and salvaged materials for adaption into the Metropolitan Methodist Church at Greenmarket Square. After the congregation of both churches amalgamated worship and mission work was conducted from the Central Methodist Mission Church and its adjoining offices. Two benches, one from the Buitenkant Street church and one from the Metropolitan church were dismantled and the wood from both was remade into a large simple wooden cross to symbolise the 1988 amalgamation.



Figure 4.18: Wooden cross symbolising the 1988 Central Methodist Mission and the Metropolitan Methodist church amalgamation. Photograph: HH-R.

²⁰⁹Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, Buitenkant Street front façade painting, *District Six Museum & Stepping Stones Children's Centre: Buitenkant Street Methodist Church Building, Cape Town, CIA/SAIA Conservation Award Submission, 2001*, technical drawing 3-S1 101 dated 3/12/1999.

The cross was mounted in a prominent position at the side entrance to the Metropolitan Methodist church with accompanying explanatory text.²¹⁰ The communion railing and surplus wooden doors removed from the Buitenkant Methodist church were remade into a large semi-circular console desk. This stands at the back of the Metropolitan Methodist Church where a multitude of church and informational pamphlets relating to societal welfare and wellbeing are placed.²¹¹ According to Rev Alan Storey, who heads the Central Methodist Mission Church in Greenmarket Square Cape Town,²¹² the Buitenkant Methodist Church buildings continue to house church projects therefore it remains a consecrated site.²¹³ Rev Alan Storey is the son of Rev Peter Storey, who was the minister at the Buitenkant Methodist Church as the time of forced removals in District Six.

To mark the culmination and completion of the District Six Museum's 5 year strategic plan and acknowledge those involved in the church building renovations, a celebratory roof-wetting event was held on the 24th November 1999.²¹⁴ Attended by dignitaries, the Rev David Newby as well as District Six Trustees, architects, subcontractors, and workers. The programme included rap poetry, a Methodist church choir, choral and jazz bands, a visit to the District Six Museum at the Moravian Chapel, lunch at the South African Gallery and a community Development and Museum co-operation seminar at the South African Museum.²¹⁵ As a ritual event, the roof wetting indicated a milestone in the building project, when the repairs to the roof were completed and also functioned as a media event highlighting role players, funders and stakeholders. Furthermore, the event acted as a forum for feedback, discussion and a celebration of progress towards final completion.

²¹⁰Visit to the Metropolitan Methodist church, Burg Street, Greenmarket Square, 23.08.2018

²¹¹Interview with Rev Alan Storey. Central Methodist Mission, Church Street, Cape Town, 23.08.2018

²¹²Interview with Rev Alan Storey, Central Methodist Mission, 2018.

²¹³Interview with Rev Alan Storey, Central Methodist Mission, 2018.

²¹⁴H. Esau, M Jordan, R. Salie, J. Marot, *The District Six Museum Foundation, Roofwetting Programme – November 1999*, The District Six Museum Foundation, 1999, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed 16.10. 2018.

²¹⁵Esau et al, *The District Six Museum*, 2018.

Building work proceeded according to a deadline for reopening the Museum as did the phased museumisation of the buildings. The refurbishment of Stepping Stones Children’s Day Care Centre included new stairways, extra classrooms, mezzanine level, new kitchen and it was re-opened in January 2000. The creation of the Memorial Hall had required the removal of structural columns and the installation, at ceiling height, of steel I-beams to span the space and support the floor above. This enabled the large hall to function optimally as a shared space and an open-plan design to be achieved for the envisaged exhibitions. The District Six Museum coffee shop, designed adjacent to the hall was linked by opening up the west wall through the installation of folding-and stacking glass doors. A wood and glass coffee shop counter was designed by Lucien le Grange, architect and District Six Museum trustee.

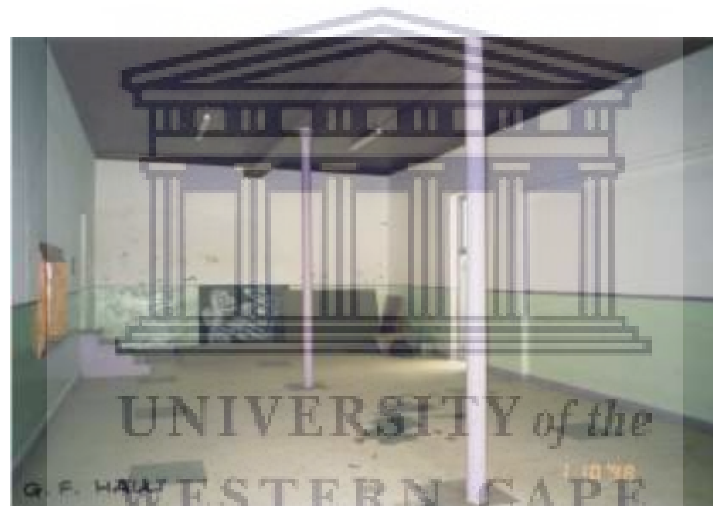


Figure 4.19: Stepping Stones classroom and entrance were reconfigured as the District Six Museum Memorial Hall. Columns were removed and I beams installed to support the ceiling to provide an open plan design. Photographs Rennie Scurr Architects.



Figure 4.20: Walls opened up and doors installed to create a District Six Museum coffee shop open plan design in the District Six Museum memorial hall. Photographs: Rennie Scurr Architects.

Glazed aluminium glass panels defined a new entrance lobby space, and similarly, two new offices in the upper gallery spaces became part of the exhibition imparting a behind the scenes effect. Spaces dedicated to administration and a memory room were created using this format. High visibility and illumination was therefore improved with the inclusion of these materials.



Figure 4.21: Installation of the District Six Museum black aluminum and glass entrance lobby, 14.03.2000. Photograph: Rennie & Scurr Architects.



Figure 4.22: Installation of the District Six Museum lift for disabled visitors. Note older warehouse material fabric to the right-left exposed to form part of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition 10.04.2000. Photograph: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

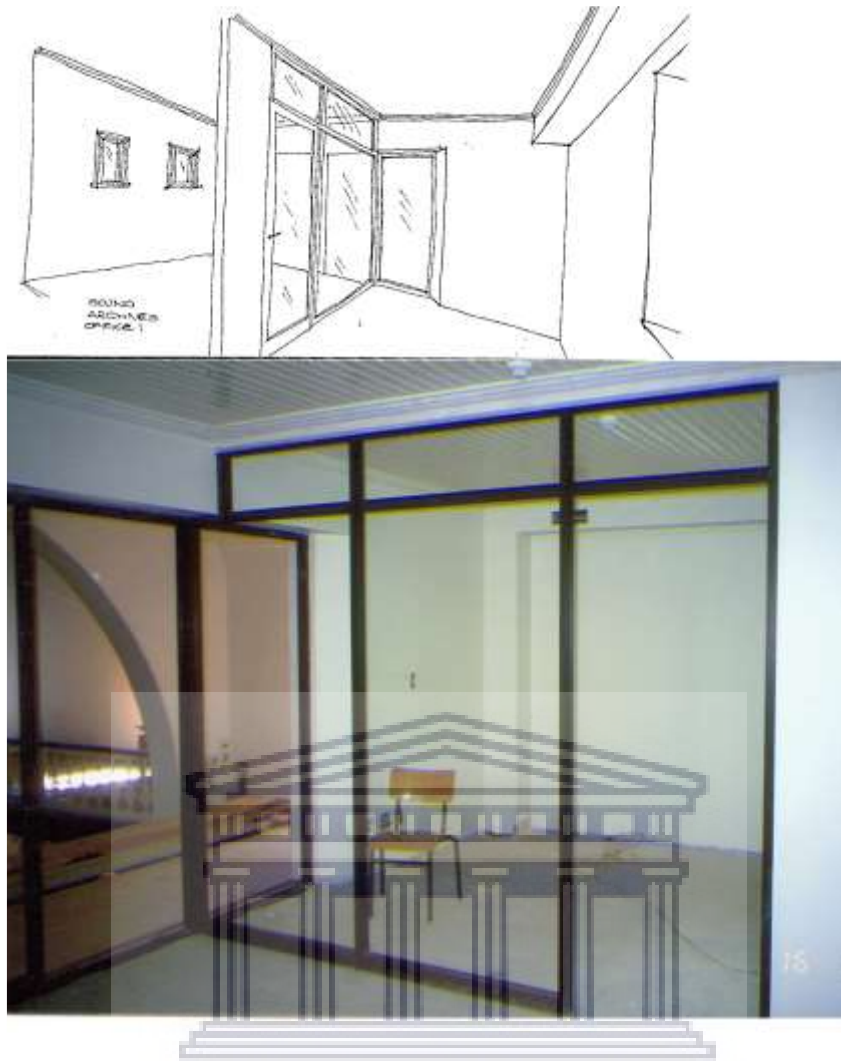


Figure 4.23: District Six Museum Resource Centre aluminium and glass panelled framework to create the sound archive and memory room 16.03.2000. Sketch and Photograph; Rennie & Scurr Architects.

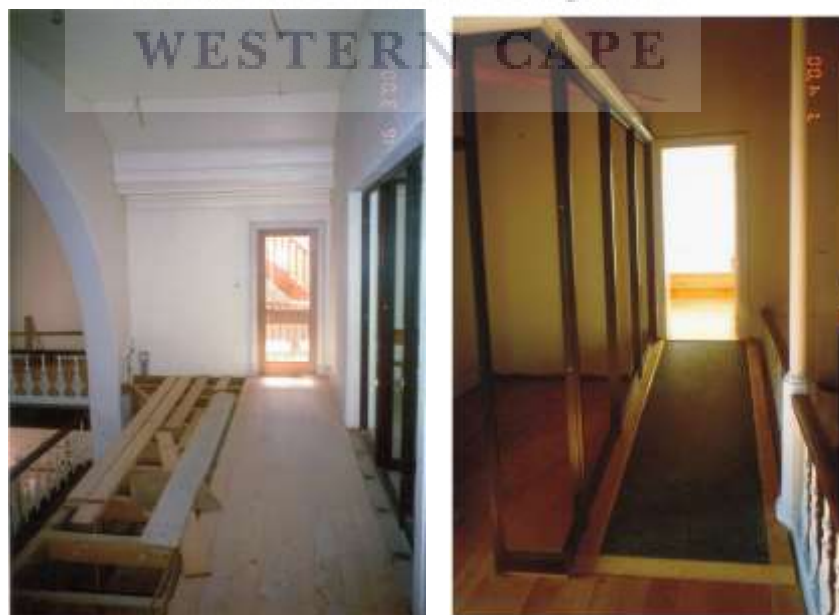


Figure 4.24: District Six Museum Resource Centre entrance, 16.03.200. Disabled ramp and a new office in upper gallery exhibition space 16.03.2000. Photograph: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

Conceptually the form of the domestic room had become a defining element influencing District Six Museum exhibition design to accommodate “a method of exploring lives and space. The ‘room’ became a certain aesthetic organisation in the Museum, a trope through which lived experience could be reproduced”.²¹⁶ It had an influence on the architectural redesign of the church spaces where a necessary museum inclusion was a memory booth later changed to a memory room, first raised by Lucien Le Grange in an earlier proposal. A memorial chapel tabled for inclusion by the Central Methodist Mission in the initial project proposal was no longer included due to the multi-purpose shared spaces between Stepping Stones and the District Six Museum. The need to create more administrative and exhibition space placed a premium on space.

During the renovation of the Buitenkant Street Community Centre, a myriad of design issues were discussed in project meetings. Many technical and structural engineering aspects, as well as aesthetic issues, were debated by District Six Museum staff and the architects. These relating to creating functioning spaces while decisions adopted or discarded, later impacted on how the installed *Digging Deeper* exhibition would be read and perceived. In building progress meetings, a proposal was discussed relating to repositioning the painted District Six floor map. It was proposed that the map be “sunk into the floor” and “it was noted that this would be neither simple nor cheap to do but that it would be an exciting component of the Museum”.²¹⁷ A discussion between fine artist Peggy Delport and Museum staff, was proposed, to discuss this design issue “in greater detail” and “prior to this, the conservation suitability of the existing map fabric should be ascertained to assist in the debate of how the map is re-incorporated into the museum”.²¹⁸

Therefore, museumisation occurred during the architectural design phase where religious purpose gave way to memory work and the museum’s agenda.²¹⁹ The date of practical completion

²¹⁶Layne and Rassool, “Memory rooms”, 149.

²¹⁷Rennie & Scurr Architects, Central Methodist Mission – Buitenkant Street Community Centre: District Six Museum & Stepping Stones. Minutes of Project Team Co-ordination Meeting No. 26.

²¹⁸Rennie & Scurr Architects, Central Methodist Mission, 2.

²¹⁹Numerous design decisions and fabrication choices were made about optimal archival storage, the sound archive, museum shop, coffee shop, memory room, shared spaces with Stepping Stones. Key design elements and specific finishes to walls, floors, lighting, treatments, stained glass windows, security, lift, upper-level offices, new staircases to

for the museum spaces was 20th April 2000 including the installation of the lift, alarm and panic buttons.²²⁰ Extras and additions to the original contract were noted such as the granite steps and ramp at the Albertus Street side exit/entrance door created for ease of access for disabled and elderly visitors. Practical completion referred to the completion of the architectural and building process and was a contractual obligation to ensure requirements and standards were met for occupation except for minor details listed on a snag list.²²¹

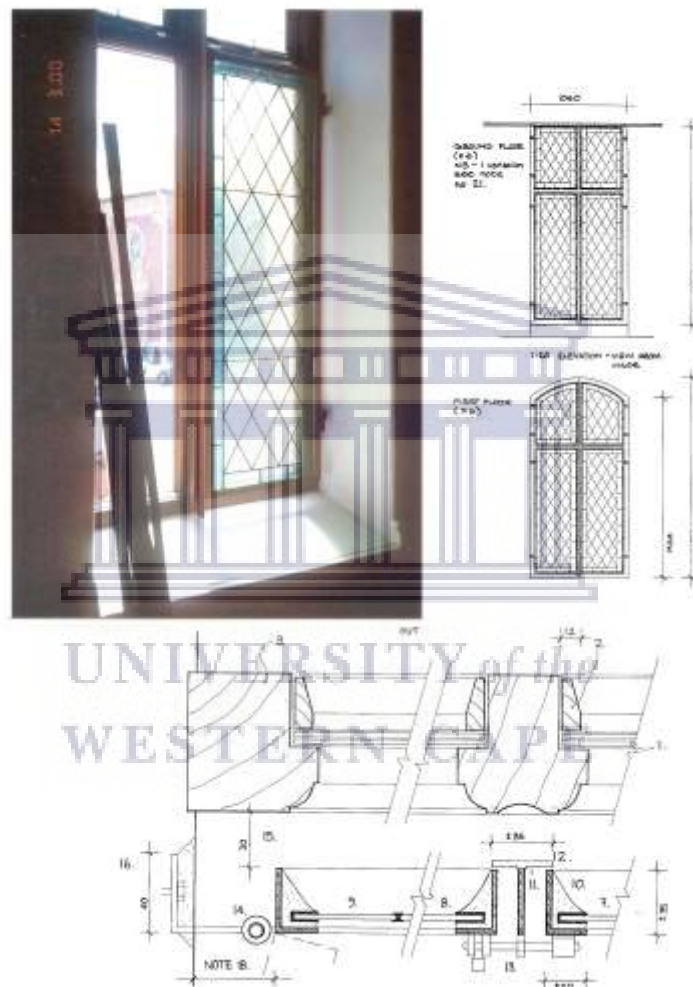


Figure 4.25: Restoration of leaded glass church windows in the museum. The leaded glass was mounted in steel subframes on the inner face to provide protection for the delicate glass and to permit the installation of u.v. protected security glazing in the window rebates. The leaded glass frames hinge out for ease of cleaning and maintenance. Source: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

upper archive, air conditioning, fire, magnetic door, and many other details were discussed and solutions found relating to practical usage safety and visitation.

²²⁰Rennie & Scurr Architects, Central Methodist Mission – Buitenkant Street Community Centre: District Six Museum & Stepping Stones. Minutes of Project Team Co-ordination Meeting No. 26 held on site at Buitenkant Street Community Centre on 5th May 1999 at 08H00, 6th May 1999, 2, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed 16.10. 2018.

²²¹A certificate of final completion was issued by the architects being the principal agents managing the renovation process and indicated that major works had ben completed in a stipulated timeframe according to the contract.

New railings at the main entrance to the Museum were installed and new external District Six Museum signage was commissioned to advertise the museum's reopening. Thereafter snags, touch-ups, and maintenance were completed within 3 months including the completion of the Memorial Hall and coffee shop floor according to the architect's progress report.²²²

In September 2000, the City of Cape Town granted approval to hang six vertical *Beyond District Six* community banners on the exterior of the Buitenkant Methodist Church building. The banners were designed to fit between the plastered pilasters of the Albertus Street church façade showcasing the expressive arts community projects on the refurbished museum building.



Figure 4.26: The renovated Buitenkant Methodist church building before external District Six Museum banners were installed c.2000. Photograph: Rennie & Scurr Architects.

In preparation for the *Digging Deeper* exhibition to be installed the “readiness of the building” was assessed, as the exhibition had to be “mounted and displayed in a dust and noise free

²²²Rennie & Scurr Architects, Central Methodist Mission – Buitenkant Street Community Centre: District Six Museum & Stepping Stones. Minutes of Project Team Co-ordination Meeting No. 26.

environment”.²²³ The design and installation of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition elements were carefully engineered to fit into the renovated church spaces. In the upper galleries, an alcove design format reminiscent of street corners and interiors was implemented. Enlarged and colour tinted photographs of District Six buildings encircled the upper floor walls of the Museum. The height of the continuous blended photographs drew the viewer’s eye upwards and positioned the viewer in the streets of District Six where buildings formed the urban silhouette and skyline.

As layers of old plaster were removed from the interior walls, discussions arose on exposing the older built warehouse fabric as a design feature and texture which is evident in the main exhibition space where a large section of the interior front façade wall was not replastered. Again, the built fabric was treated as a prop to project a longer historical timeline in the exhibition.²²⁴ It was termed the ‘old wall’ in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition catalogue where the “original arched door which dates from the early history of the building as a wine store, was filled at some point”, which can be seen by “its remaining outline in the original unplastered stone and clay brick wall”.²²⁵

Two beheaded concrete lions were also salvaged from District Six. They had been an architectural building feature “perched on pillars at the entrance of the Vernon Terrace in District Six and were beheaded before forced removals”.²²⁶ A model of the Cape Peninsula reflecting the geographic relocation of people and as a way of orientation to the dispersal was created.²²⁷ Its supporting base comprised “a steel frame holding the model refers to the image of one of the toppled Vernon Terrace decorative urns, possibly an acroterion from the pediment”²²⁸ A few timber

²²³Rennie & Scurr Architects, Central Methodist Mission – Buitenkant Street Community Centre: District Six Museum & Stepping Stones. Minutes of Project Team Co-ordination Meeting No. 26 held on site at Buitenkant Street Community Centre on 8th September 1999 at 08H00, Buitenkant Church Renovation box file, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed 16.10. 2018, 3.

²²⁴Rennie & Scurr Architects, Central Methodist Mission – Buitenkant Street Community Centre: District Six Museum & Stepping Stones. Minutes of Project Team Co-ordination Meeting No. 35 held on site at Buitenkant Street Community Centre on 8th September 1999 at 08H00, 3.

²²⁵District Six Museum, *A Guide*, 2000.

²²⁶District Six Museum, *A Guide*, 2000.

²²⁷The model of the Cape Peninsula is no longer on display in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition.

²²⁸District Six Museum, *A Guide*, 2000.

church pews were also retained in the museum to serve as seating benches in the main exhibition area.²²⁹

The exterior of the church buildings were painted soft pastel hues in 2000 chosen by Rennie & Scurr. The exterior relief plastered mouldings were painted white while the flat spaces on the exterior walls were painted Amber Coral. The pilaster and moulding colours were painted in Stucco Pink and the street level plinth colour selected was Bongo Brown. What emerges from these co-ordinated colour selections is a gentle, warm and refreshed building façade where the white detail highlighted the stylised and decorative Victorian plastered elements. The architects colour intentions serve to highlight the design of the building reinforcing its historic and sculptural details. This treatment appears postmodern in the urban context. My argument is that the new pastel church colours assigned by the architects Rennie and Scurr work to indicate the re-birth of the church building into a centre where the museum claims the most space visually.²³⁰

Creating a District Six Homecoming Centre: Adaptive reuse and museumising the Sacks Futeran buildings

The District Six Museum applied curatorial methodologies, spatial frameworks and architectural references to inscribe aural, textual and visual design elements in its exhibitions and branding. This reinforced the geographical location of District Six through the occupation and museumisation of buildings to reconstruct a past in “social memory...places that represent reinforcement of, rather than an escape from public tragedy”.²³¹ This place-making ethos and the District Six Museum’s increased space requirements informed the purchase, in 2002, of a set of five interconnected buildings at 15 Buitenkant Street near the former Central Methodist church that the District Six Museum occupied at 25a Buitenkant Street. A fabric wholesale business Saks Futeran and Co (Pty) Ltd operated from the premises and the buildings and business were owned by Martin and Gordon

²²⁹District Six Museum, *A Guide*, 2000.

²³⁰Colour works within social constructs. Symbolically pastel tones of pink and blue reference colours selected to indicate the gender of a baby. Perhaps the motivation for the colour selection is indeed a Postmodern approach to enhancing the spatial and architectural features but in my reading the building becomes gendered due to colour association.

²³¹Yaneva, “A Building’s”, 19.

Futeran who had inherited this once thriving business adjacent to District Six.²³² As a result of the forced removals, loss of their company motor repair garage building in District Six and the development of shopping malls in the suburbs of Cape Town their clientele had dwindled. Their business was in decline and through negotiations with the museum, which was leasing part of the building at the time, they sold the building to the District Six Museum.²³³ Atlantic Philanthropies provided funding assistance to purchase the set of buildings with the aim to expand the Museum's public programming capacity and to focus on its core function: working with District Six returnees and ex-residents. According to Archival Platform Director Jo-Anne Duggan:

Atlantic's investments in heritage and archival work contributed to the energetic reshaping of the landscape. The generous grants that were made to institutions such as Constitution Hill, Robben Island and District Six reflected the bountiful spirit of the times. They allowed these new heritage sites to be established. Atlantic's investment also allowed for nascent civil society archives to explore different pathways and deepen their roots as well as for important public programmes to take place at institutions across the country where people vigorously thrashed out the new challenges that were being confronted in building a democracy from scratch.²³⁴

The acquisition of a combination of 19th and 20th century buildings marked a turning point in the work of the museum. These comprised of two narrow Art Deco era warehouses and a Victorian, Gothic Revival dressed stone building once the Caledon Square Church Sunday School. Valmont Layne became the new museum director in February 2003. The museum was posed to provide a convivial space in the city for returning ex-residents and their extended families when they occupied new homes being constructed for them as part of the District Six land restitution process. In order to fully realise the spaces of the new museum site Rennie, Scurr & Adendorff Architects were appointed to provide heritage expertise and architectural solutions. This entailed conservation research and tracking the visual and architectural histories of the buildings as the interconnected building had been stitched together over time.²³⁵

²³² Hayes-Roberts, "From family", 50.

²³³ Hayes-Roberts, "From family", 58.

²³⁴ J. Duggan, "Preface", *A Ground of Struggle: Four Decades of Archival Activism in South Africa*, prepared by the Archival Platform, (Cape Town: Archival Platform-Atlantic Philanthropies, 2018), 12.

²³⁵ Hayes-Roberts, "From family", vii.



Figure 4.27: The District Six Museum Homecoming Centre in Buitenkant Street, once the Saks Futeran wholesale business occupying 5 interconnected buildings. The warehouse building on the left and the Fugard Theatre building on the right link to the main double-story warehouse building. Photograph: HH-R

Renaming the buildings the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre indicated that buildings in Buitenkant Street were being museumised by the District Six Museum.²³⁶ The buildings are in close proximity to District Six and its remaining buildings. The buildings are active in claiming relationships with one another through positioning the buildings firmly within memory work and material reminders enhancing the museum's cultural footprint. According to District Six Museum former marketing and public programmes manager Zayd Minty, “The Sacks Futeran Complex in Buitenkant Street could well be one of the key spaces to help rejuvenate the East City Precinct”.²³⁷ Minty writes:

The Sacks Futeran Complex presents exciting possibilities for changing the face of the area and the city as a whole. It is envisioned that the complex will host a 220-seat theatre, a restaurant, exhibitions and educational spaces as well as an exciting educational youth internet café project. Most of the museum’s staff will be moving from the Methodist church space to the complex, which will also house a large conservation centre and archive....At the moment the Sacks Futeran building serves as a base for the Beneficiary Trust’s Homecoming Centre. Key to the new complex’s success will be the “commercial shop front”. This will provide a space for an extended museum shop which will stock books and CDs as well as locally made products. It is hoped that products associated with indigenous craft and knowledge systems will be available: goema drums, outfits for the minstrel’s carnival, kaparangs and indigenous foods. Sacks Futeran will provide a gathering place for the returning community of District Six as

²³⁶ Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 64.

²³⁷ Z. Minty, “Sacks Futeran, an engine house in the East City Precinct”, *District Six Museum Newsletter December 2004*, Volume 6, Number 4.

well as for the broader Cape Town community. It will become an important space for transforming the city.²³⁸

Minty points to the commercialisation and expansion of the museum, yet he also positions the museum as forward-thinking and innovative with a renewed focus on restitution in its programming and agenda. The motivation for both sets of buildings to be adapted and redefined as community museum spaces deeply engages with notions of “recalling community” and reclaiming District Six.²³⁹ This has shaped the functionality of each built environment under museum management.

Museum trustee and historian Ciraj Rassool notes:

The processes of museumisation and professionalisation were set in motion almost from the moment the memory work of the District Six Museum Foundation become associated with a presence in an identifiable, ‘visitable’ building, the ‘Freedom Church’, building of the Central Methodist Mission on the corner of Buitenkant and Albertus Streets

The buildings became the continuum acting as a canvas for a renewed focus to explore living histories and architectural adaption driven by expert knowledge in the form of architectural and curatorial expertise. The Sacks Futeran Buildings spaces were re-configured for offices, exhibitions, studios, storage, archives and film projection in two of the three buildings.²⁴⁰ The remaining three buildings of different periods and architectural styles were renovated and tenanted.²⁴¹



Figure 4.28: Two District Six Museum Buildings in Buitenkant Street in the eastern part of the city. At the far left is the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre and depicted on the right is the District Six Museum, located in the former Buitenkant Methodist Church. Photograph HH-R.

²³⁸Minty, “Sacks Futeran”, 4.

²³⁹Rassool, “Introduction”, vii.

²⁴⁰Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 63.

²⁴¹Hayes-Roberts, “From Family”, 108.

After the Sacks Futeran renovation project, the built environment of the area and the museum's permanent occupation of two city buildings, the museum's discourse in remembering standing and demolished landmark buildings deepened.²⁴² Specifically, those that District Six ex-residents could identify with thereby continuing to develop the local landscape as a memory framework.²⁴³

In 2014, the museum published a series of large postcards: *A Collection of Memories* with the Hands On District Six logo and the slogan 'No matter where we we are here'. Each postcard featured an archival photograph of a landmark building and on the other side of the postcard asked the question: What do you know about this area? As an interactive tool, evoking memories and providing a short synopsis of each of the 12 featured buildings, the cards were launched during a joint District Six Museum/District Six Memory Design Lab participatory community project and Cape Town partnership event at Harrington Square.²⁴⁴

The scale of forced removal in District Six, Cape Town and nationally not only "changed the geography of the country, both physical and political – it is clear too that the experience of removal has politicised a whole generation of South Africans."²⁴⁵ It has clearly also changed the perception of the built environment, architecture and the design of buildings as well. Material reminders serve to reinforce contemporary social identities. The museum buildings are situated on Buitenkant Street in the CBD of Cape Town fostering a spatial and metaphysical relationship to the old district that the museum claimed.²⁴⁶

²⁴²District Six Museum, *HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE WE ARE HERE* brochure, 2011.

²⁴³ These included places of worship such as St Marks Church, the bioscopes - the Avalon, Star, National and the British, local cafes and shops, the fish market, the Peninsula Maternity Hospital, the Rose and Crown pub in Hanover Street, barbershops, Bloemhof Flats, schools, the District Six washhouse, and many other landmark and residential buildings.

²⁴⁴District Six Museum and Cape Town partnership Harrington Square event and programme included art and craft making, inscription onto large fence mounted reproductions of archival photographs, discussions and conversations under the theme of the memorialisation of Harrington Square, 19 & 20 September 2014.

²⁴⁵E. Unterhalter, *Forced removal: The Division, Segregation and Control of the People of South Africa*, (London: IDAF Publications Ltd, 1987), 3.

²⁴⁶A memory project conducted by the Centre for Popular Memory based at the University of Cape Town sought to collect and publish the reflections of individuals on varied aspects of their engagement with city spaces and places with a chapter dedicated to District Six ex-residents oral testimonies and biographies. See S. Field, R. Meyer, and F. Swanson, *Imagining the City: memories and Cultures in Cape Town*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007).

Paul Williams notes that buildings, sites, and landscapes that were associated with events, activists, and struggles for human rights become cultural nodes with which to invest meaning in the creation of memorial museums.²⁴⁷ Williams further states:

their display of sensitive artifacts and images requires ethical attention to issues of emotional effect; their geographic location is often more critical; they are more directly implicated in political controversy; visitors are often directly situated in relation to the event; memory and testimony have a comparatively enlarged status; their pedagogy has a weightier gravitas.²⁴⁸

Repurposed buildings became a canvas for exhibitions and restoration projects as a prolific number of sites emerged worthy of commemoration and memorialisation in Cape Town such as the Robben Island Museum and the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum.²⁴⁹ In District Six, buildings and their resonance were deeply felt therefore the buildings occupied and adapted by the museum are an important framework of community representation and represent architectural histories. The voluminous and generic warehouse design of the church building enabled adaptive reuse and transformation to house a post-apartheid apartheid memory project. Tamara Leora Meents notes that when W. J. T. Mitchell, American a scholar and theorist of media, visual art, and literature, visited District Six in 1997, he said: "It is unprecedented ... that a community would have such a powerful cling to a site. It seems when buildings are torn down the erasure of memory is pretty much complete. I don't see that loss of memory...that loss of community here".²⁵⁰ Therefore, buildings that are deemed symbolic informed intangible connections and allowed constructions of historical memory to create interactive social spaces as mentioned by Mitchell.

Architectural conclusions

This chapter set out to trace how design transformed the Buitenkant Methodist Church buildings and reshaped them into post-apartheid museum spaces. Architectural heritage expertise and re-design through adaptive reuse and restoration of the buildings allowed the church to consolidate long term

²⁴⁷Houston et al, *The Liberation*, 15 November 2013.

²⁴⁸P. Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities*, (Oxford: Berg, 2007), 190.

²⁴⁹Post-apartheid museums include, The Robben Island Museum, The Lwandle Migrant labour Museum

²⁵⁰T. L. Meents, "Deconstructing museums and memorials in re-and post-apartheid South Africa", (MA Thesis, University of South Africa, 2009), 58.

provision of spaces for outreach and cultural projects fostering sustainable relationships under its ethos. Adapting the main redundant Buitenkant Methodist Church building in the urban environment of Cape Town, where land values have become high, saved the church from demolition, preserved the histories of the church, character of the area and redefined the identity of the building. The future of the building was uncertain as a decline in church membership due to forced removals also impacted on church revenue, the costs of maintaining the buildings and sustaining outreach projects. The remaining District Six buildings in an altered post-apartheid urban landscape took on a resilient and symbolic meaning in Cape Town endowing the church buildings with new perceptions and qualities.

The Buitenkant Street Methodist Church buildings were not significant in architectural terms until they were architecturally mapped, renovated, adapted and coupled with a geographically sensitive post-apartheid memory project. The church building was subjected to architectural adaptive re-design and re-use premised on a greater good ethos and post-apartheid community recovery. Winning an architectural award in 2001 for the architects Rennie and Scurr Architects further changed the status of the buildings.

Notions of community were influenced, redefined and asserted through association with the Central Methodist Mission and the Buitenkant Methodist Church buildings. These relationships and connections were not initially apparent to me yet these details provide additional impetus and meaning to museumisation and constructions of District Six. This occurred in Central Methodist Mission correspondence where the Buitenkant Street Methodist congregation was constantly referred to as the church community, mostly drawn from District Six. The District Six memory project and museum also referred to ex-residents as a community, therefore, the term became conflated in early proposals and funding documents where ‘community’ was broadly referenced as the beneficiary of the renovated buildings. The term community was naturalised and adopted to describe an identified set of people and was applied to RDP funding criteria and to a themed slogan ‘Memory, Sanctuary, Community and Education Foundations for a better tomorrow’. Furthermore renaming the church buildings the

Buitenkant Street Community Centre was significant in forwarding joint Central Methodist Mission and District Six Museum objectives.

Due to a progressive broad vision expressed by Rev David Newby on behalf of the Central Methodist Mission, owners of the buildings, in consultation with the District Six Museum Foundation various museumised aspects were inscribed onto the symbolic church surfaces and into the material and spatial frame. The church buildings hold District Six narratives and aesthetically evoke the spirit of collective worship in former times within the building. This is achieved through tangible reminders of the Methodist religion that are still evident and explicitly presented through the remaining features, fixtures, and fittings. The church's intangible qualities contribute to the Museum's goal in evoking the *gees* (spirit) prevalent in District Six in the enclosed space of the former church building. It serves to confirm my argument that the repurposed built fabric of the Buitenkant Methodist Church became another framework of interpretation as it was treated as a symbolic memorial surface for the inscription and curation of a reimagined District Six. This served to heighten engagement and transformed the District Six Museum exhibitions into an experience imbued with religious overtones such as resurrection and ritual. The solid exposed roof trusses, firmly rooted within the 19th-century craft tradition, acted in contrast to exhibitions rich with inscribed methodologies made from memories, it was claimed, reinforcing and setting the scene for new cultural, political and social meanings. Through adaptive reuse and museumisation the church building assimilated a new set of actors, histories, and associations very different to the ones that originally constructed the building.

Histories of the Buitenkant Methodist Church were turned into a museum exhibit in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition that opened in September 2000 within the "living" museum space.²⁵¹ The church museum exhibit was based on architectural conservation research and church records presented alongside curated versions of apartheid experience.²⁵² What is absent from the adapted and renovated building is a biography of Rev Peter Storey, who played an important role in providing

²⁵¹District Six Museum, *A Guide*, 2000.

²⁵²District Six Museum visits, January- March 2019.

relief to District Six congregants as they were removed and to the families of political prisoners on Robben Island as well as to the prisoners themselves.²⁵³

Under Methodist stewardship, the vision and desire to transform the buildings from a run-down state into a centre that would fully serve the community was achieved. A school for pre-school children, a shelter for girls and young women living on the streets and a District Six memorial space was at the heart of the restoration project. A social commitment and investment continues in the adapted buildings where various design forms were utilised and new forms of representation were generated through the work of the District Six Museum. The museum building serves the Methodist Church, museum staff, ex-residents and the general public in particular ways. In the case of the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre, as a dedicated centre for community life, it functions to support the broader land restitution process in Cape Town.²⁵⁴

In relation to the transformation of the Buitenkant Methodist Church building, I argue that architectural adaptive reuse was an inscriptive act that museumised the buildings. The District Six Museum became involved in the conversion of the buildings drawing on a continuation of inscribing methodologies seen in the floor map and memory cloths to alter the building's meaning and identity. The Museum's conceptual framework for inscription was found in District Six itself when children drew hopscotch grids on the street with chalk. Graffiti on District Six walls and Naz Gool Ebrahim's defiant interior textual inscription of walls in her District Six home before demolition influenced the museum's inscriptive practice within a frame of resistance.²⁵⁵ The making and inscribing of the memorial museum project into the church building resulted in spatial impact, an awareness of architectural context, deconstructed meta-narratives, created nostalgic sensations,

²⁵³Peter Storey was the former bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and a Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Duke University in North Carolina. Once chaplain to Nelson Mandela on Robben Island, he founded Life Line SA and Gun Free SA and led the South African Council of Churches when it was fierce opponent of the apartheid state. Source: Peter Storey, *I Beg to Differ: Ministry amid the Teargas*, (Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers Ltd, 2018).

²⁵⁴Anwah. Nagia interviewed by Colin Miller, "Memory, Restitution and Conscience" in *Recalling Community creating and curating the District Six Museum*, eds Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001).

²⁵⁵When Naz Gool Ebrahim was facing eviction from District Six, her home became a focal meeting point. In an effort to make one last stand and let their voices be heard, Naz started writing slogans all over the walls of her house and soon the rest of the community joined in. See: Naz Gool Ebrahim, Donna Ruth Brennie and Shahena Wingate-Pearse, *The Truth is on the Walls*, (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2012).

museumised surfaces, contributed to constituting an archive and revitalised the historic urban environment.



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Chapter 5

District Six Museum image making: Mapping Memories and Design at Harrington Square during Cape Town World Design Capital 2014

“Cape Town is again reinventing itself, and the world is invited to its renaissance”.¹

In this chapter, I review contestations over a memory-led project during World Design Capital 2014 when Cape Town was the host city of an international design event. Design in the city is examined in order to understand the positionality of various groups laying claim to urban spaces focusing on a specific site, Harrington Square in the eastern part of the central business district (CBD). District Six Museum buildings are situated in the East City with a section that was rebranded the Fringe in Cape Town in 2012.² The chapter will look at how particular urban planning policies applying design in the city led the District Six Museum to define its role more broadly, adopting “tactical” design strategies sensitive to the memories of District Six and the remaining urban fabric.³

A particular focus is on how the District Six Museum related to the unfolding and presentation of Cape Town as World Design Capital 2014 (CTWDC2014). Research and design by the Museum in various media was harnessed to memory work as a form of activism, placemaking, and historical knowledge dissemination. The museum moved memorialisation into the East City to encompass the landscape between its buildings in Buitenkant Street and District Six in order to reimagine interactive social spaces. Issues of gentrification and urban heritage renewal in shaping histories of District Six and the city are analysed with reference to District Six Museum design methodologies and a World Design Capital iterative project.

Redevelopment in the eastern CBD area was aligned to the objectives of the East City Creative Industries being driven by the Cape Town Partnership funded by the City of Cape Town

¹S. Reinders, “The New York Times, 1. Cape Town, South Africa, 52 Places to Go in 2014”, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/01/10/travel/2014-places-to-go.html>, accessed 02.02.2019.

²The District Six Museum in 2003 had proposed that the East City be incorporated in a District Six Cultural Heritage Precinct to reinstate a sense of place in the remaining fabric of District Six.

³G. Buntix, and I. Karp, “Tactical Museologies” in *Museum Frictions Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, eds Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szewaja and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto with Gustavo Buntix, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Ciraj Rassool, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 207.

becoming one of 77 design-led city projects in 2014.⁴ As the Museum contested, participated and experienced World Design Capital (CTWDC2014) my argument is that the museum was later influenced by the potentials of global and local design applications. The museum had existing design frameworks through its exhibitions, buildings and produced a range of designs that represented a cultural brand. However, the museum adopted new design strategies and visual directions as a result of CTWDC2014. Renaming, design practices and occupation by different groups, who identified themselves as a community in Cape Town's East City altered the identity of the area. Alternative notions and interpretations of space, identity and design emerged, were claimed and contested in the city.

Welcome to Cape Town! ⁵

In 2014, the *New York Times* placed Cape Town on a tourism list as the number one place to visit that year. Naming Cape Town as World Design Capital established international and commercial credibility that propelled Cape Town into a highly desirable hip and happening destination.⁶

Historians Nigel Worden, Elizabeth Van Heyningen and Vivian Bickford-Smith note that by the end of the twentieth century Cape Town "had become a multi-cultural tourist Mecca, where the likes of British celebrities Kate Moss and Richard Branson could jive to Peter Gabriel's song Biko".⁷ Nelson Mandela's iconic legacy and notions of a transforming society emerging from the shadows of apartheid faced with challenges, that design could resolve, was at the forefront of Cape Town's prestigious nomination. Furthermore, it intimated that the visitor to Cape Town could be part of supporting upliftment through design while sampling various high end to budget leisure offerings. In *52 places to Go in 2014*, the city was framed as an exciting new creative project in Africa:

Cape Town's importance to Mandela, who made his first address there as a free man, will doubtless draw many visitors in the wake of his death. The

⁴P. de Lille, "How the City is embracing design" in *Designing our City together, The City of Cape Town's World Design Capital 2014 Public Sector Programme*, booklet, Cape Town: City of Cape Town, 2014, 12-13.

⁵The name of a song popularising the touristic and commercial view of Cape Town and the annual Kaapse Klopse or Cape Town Minstrel Carnival.

⁶Reinders, "The New", accessed 02.02.2019.

⁷N. Worden, E. Van Heyningen and V. Bickford-Smith, *Cape Town in the Twentieth Century: An Illustrated Social History*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1998), 139.

country has transformed itself since Mandela's imprisonment, but there's still much to be done. Many in Cape Town have been grappling with that challenge, including its creative class, which has been examining whether inspired design can solve some of the issues stemming from years of inequality. The city formally takes up that issue this year during its turn as World Design Capital. Cape Town is celebrating design in all its forms, putting on fashion shows by students and established designers alike, hosting architecture open houses, welcoming the public into artists' studios and folding the annual visual arts spectacular Design Indaba conference, which took place in February, into the design capital program.⁸

The selection of Cape Town as World Design Capital 2014 was preceded by a lengthy and highly competitive scenario. Three cities were chosen as runners up from a selection of 56 cities in a global design competition for the best city. Cape Town represented the first developing world and African city to be chosen.⁹

Every two years, the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) based in Montreal, Quebec, Canada selects a World Design Capital, in recognition of a city's effective and creative efforts to use design as a tool for progress.¹⁰ As the ICSID judges stated, "A World Design Capital is not a status designator, rather a state of being. It is defined by the commitment that a city has made to use design to reinvent itself. Sustainable results or a commitment to developing the city are visible and a changing attitude is detectable".¹¹ Previous cities selected as World Design Capitals included Torino in 2008, Seoul in 2010 and in 2012, it was Helsinki.¹²

It was announced by the City of Cape Town at the beginning of 2010 that the City of Cape Town was bidding for World Design Capital 2014. To create a cohesive and identifiable design culture The Cape Town Design Network was launched on the 24th March 2010 as "an informal network that enables designers from different disciplines to interact with each other".¹³ It was

⁸Reinders, "The New", accessed 02.02.2019.

⁹Creative Cape Town, "Word Design Capital bid", www.creativecapetown.com/world-design-capital-bid, accessed 08.04.2014.

¹⁰The World Design Organization (WDO)™, formerly known as the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid), <https://wdo.org/>, accessed 07.06.2019.

¹¹Creative Cape Town, www.creativecapetown.com/design-in-the-central/world-design-capital-bid, accessed 13.11.2014.

¹²World Design Organization, accessed 07.06.2019.

¹³Creative Cape Town, "The Cape Town Design Network 2010 Launch Event", <http://www.creativecapetown.net/the-cape-town-design-network-2010-launch-event/11/15/2010>, accessed 06.06.2018.

established and coordinated by Creative Cape Town a project of the Cape Town Partnership. Creative Cape Town:

was formed in 2006 in recognition of the essential role that the creative industries play, both as an economic stimulus and as the expression of the soul of a city. The Cape Town Partnership, together with more than 30 leaders in the fields of culture and creativity, formed Creative Cape Town to innovate, debate and stimulate the creative sector. Creative Cape Town strives to support, connect and inspire Cape Town's vibrant creative community and ensure that Cape Town continues to go from strength to strength as a creative capital and a centre of knowledge and innovation – both in Africa and around the world.¹⁴

In developing a Design Network, Creative Cape Town collaborated with established institutions such as the Cape Craft and Design Institute, Cape Town Fashion Council and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology's Faculty of Informatics and Design.¹⁵ These constituted a self-proclaimed creative class and community as seemingly the experts in determining creative-design values in Cape Town's economic and urban transformation and regeneration.

One such institution was tasked with providing creative solutions to the city's problems reframed as "design challenges".¹⁶ The Cape Town Partnership, "a public-private partnership that focuses on the regeneration of the Cape Town Central City" was headed by Managing Director Bulelwa Makalima-Ngewena and Chief Executive Andrew Borraine.¹⁷ It was initiated by "the city in 1999 and formed as a non-profit (section 21) organization to mobilize and align public, private and social resources towards urban regeneration of Cape Town's central city".¹⁸ The Partnership coordinated the WDC2014 bid, costing R 6 million on behalf of the City of Cape Town which was the primary funder of Cape Town for WDC 2014.¹⁹ It was stated that "the City believes in the role

¹⁴C. Jordan, Creative Cape Town, Visual Arts Network of South Africa website, <http://artmap.co.za/creative+cape+town/>, accessed 15.04.2019.

¹⁵Creative Cape Town, "online archive", <https://10and5.com/2009/09/21/new-site-for-creative-cape-town/>, accessed 15.04.2019.

¹⁶C. Ernsten, "Renaissance and Revenants in an Emerging Global City Discourses of Heritage and Urban Design in Cape Town's District One and District Six, 2002-2014", (PhD diss., University of Cape Town, 2017), 146.

¹⁷The partnership was created in 1999 when the City of Cape Town, the South African Property Owners Association, the Cape Town Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other stakeholders came together to address the impact of urban decay, capital flight and other problems present in Cape Town's City Bowl/Central Business District.

¹⁸I. Rawoot, "Cape Town: A City Designed to Forget", May 19 2014, The Con, <http://www.theconmag.co.za/2014/05/19/cape-town-a-city-designed-to-forget/>, accessed 15.03.2015, 3.

¹⁹City of Cape Town, *World Design Capital Cape Town 2014 The Story of an African City*, (Paarl: Cape Town Design NPC, 2015), 12-13.

that design can play in economic and social transformation and has made a firm commitment to embedding design into the fabric of the city administration”.²⁰

One of the ways design in the city was seen was through the City of Cape Town funded Central City Improvement District where a circular green and black CCID logo and branding appeared on uniforms as the city was visibly policed, cleansed and promoted through its community newspaper format publication *City Views*.²¹ Internationally and nationally, Cape Town Tourism specifically promoted the Cape Town central city in text and image online and via annual visitor orientated publications disseminated widely.²²

The Cape Town Partnership *Best Sites* publication also promoted natural and cultural destinations including the Castle of Good Hope, Table Mountain, Bo Kaap, Kaapse Klopse (minstrels), Robben Island and Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens and the District Six Museum utilising a colour coded area map of the Cape Town CBD clearly demarcating city zones. On the map, cerise pink was the selected colour marking the East City that had become branded as the Fringe where according to Shani Engelbrecht, manager of the Field Office coffee shop-restaurant located in the East City “everyone is authentic. It inspires me every day. We are part of a community”.²³



Figure 5.1: Logo designs: the Cape Town partnership initiated Creative Cape Town that established the Fringe. Source: Wayback Machine internet archive.

A certain idea of the city linked to the clustering of similar small to medium-sized businesses or specific job sectors developed as districts promoted various sector economies. Legal, art,

²⁰de Lille , “How the City”, 12-13.

²¹Arising out of the Cape Town Partnership, the Central City Improvement District was a private-public partnership formed in November, 2000 by the property owners within the central city to provide complementary services over and above what the City of Cape Town provides, <https://www.capetownccid.org/>, accessed 14.04.2019.

²²Cape City Improvement District, *Best of Cape Town Central City 2013*, (Cape Town: New Media, 2012).

²³Cape Town partnership, *City Views*, Official magazine of the Cape Town Partnership, September 2012 issue.

heritage/museum, performing arts, craft, medical, fashion, design and leisure districts such as the V & A Waterfront as separate zones was an existing worldwide urban trend that mapped cities along commercial lines. This trend increasingly defined a future for Cape Town despite extreme spatial inequalities and legacies of apartheid social engineering. As Deborah Stevenson observed, “cities divide into geographically discrete precincts which rarely conform to imposed administrative or political boundaries. Rather, they form around the activities of commerce, sociability, domesticity, and/or collective identity. The resulting precincts have vitality and a ‘look’ that marks each as unique”.²⁴

Everywhere the marketing slogan "Cape Town for World Design Capital 2014" appeared, from websites, posters, postcards, large window stickers and advertising in various media calling for public participation. On-line visual and textual self-declaration by designers to invest, promote and forward re-designing the city on dedicated websites was promoted.²⁵ Furthermore, those interested in forwarding a design-led agenda were urged to interactively engage by branding their websites with the WDC2014 logo as well as wear the logo: “You can download the ‘I support Cape Town’ button to show your support for Cape Town as the World Design Capital 2014”.²⁶



Figure 5.2: World Design Capital logo, Cape Town 2014 World Design Capital promotion sticker, button, and postcard designs. Source: HH-R.

In order to make the marketing campaign visually appealing design savvy people of Cape Town were urged to “join Cape Town by flying your World Design Capital colours and go yellow

²⁴D. Stevenson, *Cities and Urban Culture*, (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2003, 73.

²⁵Creative Cape Town, “World Design Capital Bid”, www.creativecapetown.com/world-design-capital-bid, accessed 08.04.2014.

²⁶Creative Cape Town, “World”, accessed 08.04.2014.

wherever you are. If you haven't already, visit [www. capetown2014 .co.za](http://www.capetown2014.co.za) download your World Design Capital button, and use it in the spirit of the city's bid – on your email signature, your company website, your personal blog".²⁷ The City of Cape Town appointed a service provider World Wide Creative that "was tasked to build the online campaign to generate support for the campaign and garner awareness around the bid".²⁸ It appeared that mass participation, engagement and commitment to all forms of design were required from ICSID.

Creative Cape Town under the auspices of the Cape Town Partnership was tasked in 2010 with developing a vision to transform the East City precinct into an "innovative Design district" named the Fringe. I would argue that this was a superficial naming process that "planned and managed the Cape Town Central City's design-centered development initiatives based on global design competition criteria".²⁹ It suggests an edginess outside the parameters of the central offerings of the city. The use of the term fringe has festival connotations of a live multi-arts festival showcasing local and international creativity, encouraging experimentation, collaboration, and innovation.

In August 2010, the Cape Town for World Design Capital 2014 Organising Committee made a call for "existing or planned projects/initiatives that use design, for inclusion in the Bid Book".³⁰ A submission questionnaire and 15 categories were supplied including a category 'Heritage, Memory'.³¹ On-line websites provided event updates and Creative Cape Town coordinator Zayd Minty released a statement on the 9th September 2010.³² Minty states:

Cape Town is getting a bid ready to enter as the World Design Capital. Shortlisted cities need to demonstrate their accomplishments and commitment to design as an effective tool for social, cultural and economic development. The city must be home to design professionals and agencies, showing an appreciation for communication design, industrial, interior and

²⁷Creative Cape Town, "World", accessed 08.04.2014.

²⁸Behance, R. Janse van Vuuren, Cape Town World Design Capital – Case study video, <https://www.behance.net/gallery/19459971/Cape-Town-World-Design-Capital-Case-Study-Video>, accessed 10.10.2019.

²⁹A nightclub called 'the Fringe', within the East city, located on the corner of Canterbury and Constitution Streets for 14 years burnt down in 2000 killing disc jockey Andre Smalberger and barman Greg Searle. They were trapped inside the first-floor nightclub and they were burnt to death as fire safety regulations were contravened due to the padlocked exit doors. The club never re-opened.

³⁰Creative Cape Town, "World", accessed 08.04.2014.

³¹Cape Town Partnership, Cape Town 2014 World Design Capital Projects submission form, August 2010.

³²Creative Cape Town, "World", accessed 08.04.2014.

sustainable design initiatives, and there must be faculties in education institutions dedicated to the field. Architectural interest points and urban renewal and reconditioning projects that have transformed neighbourhoods are also relevant. Part of the application is a proposal for a year-long programme of design-related events that the City will run, if selected.³³

Partnerships, funding, collaborations, and working relationships had swiftly shaped the vision and development for the “East City” the demarcated urban area that was “officially launched as the Fringe”.³⁴ It was labelled as “Cape Town’s Innovation District” to create “the premier African environment for design, media, and ICT innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship” indicating future and potential developments of a newly mapped space.³⁵ The Cape Town’s Design and Innovation District was a key component of the city’s World Design Capital 2014 bid.³⁶ According to Minty:

Pitching for the World Design Capital 2014 title provides an opportunity for collective action that could re-invent our city. Our experience of bidding for a major event – the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ – will have taught us the potential for a range of diverse parties to work in concert towards a common goal. Let’s draw on our immense local resources, talent and infrastructure, and position Cape Town as a sustainable, inclusive and creative city to be reckoned with. Will you join us?³⁷

Minty’s statement created idealistic, almost utopian, visions of urbanity by inviting creative players to a game of reinventing the city that generated hype and allure around what could be achieved through WDC2014 in Cape Town. On 21 June 2011, Cape Town was shortlisted together with Dublin, Ireland and Bilbao, Spain for the title. In celebration of the nomination Bulelwa Makalima-Ngewana, Cape Town Mayor Patricia de Lille, Andrew Borraine and Premier Helen Zille posed

³³U. de Waal. Cape Town in bid for World Design Capital, News, Creative Cape Town archive on 10and5, <https://10and5.com/2010/09/09/cape-town-in-bid-for-world-design-capital/>, accessed 15.04.2019.

³⁴Previously known as East City, ‘the Fringe’, Cape Town’s Innovation District stretched between Roeland and Darling Streets, Buitenkant and Canterbury Streets, and connected to CPUT (Cape Peninsula University of Technology) from Longmarket through to Tenant Street. The Fringe was modelled on an urban science park model managed by professionals that focused on community prosperity, promoting innovation and developing an integration of education and business. The long term the vision of this district was to develop and align itself with successful urban generation international projects like 22@Barcelona, Toronto Fashion Incubator and Design London.

³⁵Cape Town Partnership, “Official Launch of the Fringe: Cape Town’s Innovation District- Press Release”, Feb 16, 2011. www.capetown.travel/media/press-releases/entry/official_launch_of_the_fringe, accessed 12.10.2014.

³⁶Portfolio collection blog, “Cape Town World Design Capital bid to be judged next week”, <https://www.portfoliocollection.com/travel-blog/cape-town-s-word-design-capital-bid-to-be-judged-next-week>, accessed 16.04.2019.

³⁷de Waal. “Cape”, accessed 15.04.2019.

together with the bright yellow and black World Design Capital 2014 Bid Book prepared for the next round.³⁸ A Bid Committee was tasked to conceptualize the theme of the Cape Town bid and to source content and case studies for the bid book. A popular personalised response to the marketing campaign, by designers, was to publically declare support utilising their names and surnames in the statement ‘I’m _____ and I support Cape Town for World Design Capital 2014’.³⁹ These declarations and responses were collated and some appeared with black and white portraits of the designers in the CTWDC2014 bid book.⁴⁰ On the 31st March 2011, the 465-page bid book was formally submitted to the International Council for Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) in Canada, with the theme, “Live Design. Transform Life”.⁴¹

The ICSID judges visited all three shortlisted cities and were presented with diverse design forms. In Cape Town, they were transported to various locations in bright yellow and black Cape Town WDC 2014 branded taxis.

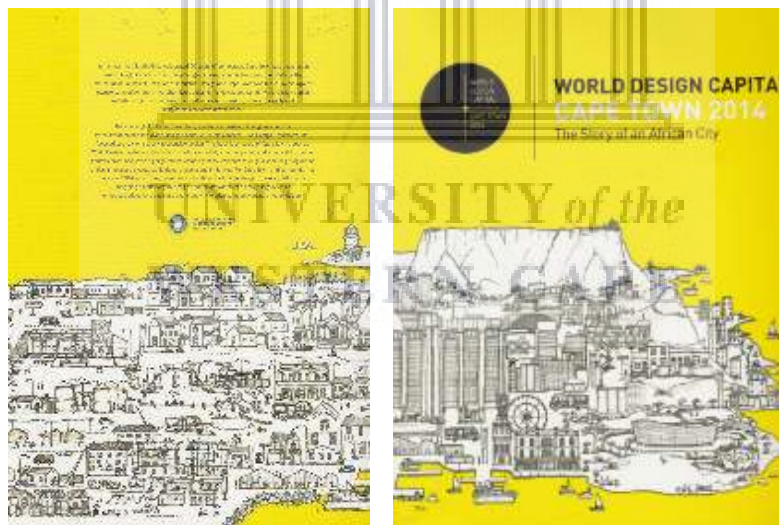


Figure 5.3: World Design Capital publication by the City of Cape Town, 2015. Source HH-R.

It was reported that a high-level delegation, “led by Executive Mayor of Cape Town,

³⁸A. Reed, photograph in A. Rose Cowrie, “Cape Town shortlisted for World Design Capital 2014”, News, Creative Cape Town archive 10and5, <https://10and5.com/2011/06/22/cape-town-shortlisted-for-world-design-capital-2014/>, accessed 15.04.2019.

³⁹City of Cape Town, *World*, 86.

⁴⁰City of Cape Town, *World*, 78-97.

⁴¹Co-working Cape Town office, “Cape Town named World Design Capital 2014”, 26 October 2011, <https://capetownoffice.com/tag/international-council-for-societies-of-industrial-design-icsid/>, accessed 18.04.2019.

Patricia de Lille” was “heading to Taipei for the official announcement of the winning city, taking place on the final day of the International Design Alliance (IDA) ‘Design at the Edges’ Congress on 26th October 2011”.⁴² Two planned events located in the Fringe design district tracked the announcement:

The Taipei announcement will also be closely followed here at home. The Cape Town Design Network (CTDN) will be hosting two announcement events in The Fringe innovation district – a pre-announcement party at The Assembly on the evening of Tuesday 25 October, by invitation; and an early-morning live screening of the announcement on Wednesday 26 October at the Field Office. The results are anticipated to be announced at around 06h00 our time and the Field Office will be open to the public from 05h30.⁴³

It was announced on the 26th October 2011 that Cape Town would be World Design Capital in 2014.⁴⁴ The public was encouraged to find out more about the World Design Capital 2014 and how design could transform lives, “visit www.capetown2014.co.za and join the conversation on the World Design Capital 2014 Facebook and Twitter pages”.⁴⁵

After Cape Town’s winning nomination, the World Design Capital implementing agency Cape Town Design NPC was created and “in 2013, the Programme and Communication Sub-Committee drew up a 40-member volunteer curatorial panel”.⁴⁶ Five themes were conceptualized, developed and activated under the main slogan “Live Design Transform Life”.⁴⁷ The themes were presented as a design brief and included ‘African Innovation’, ‘Global Conversation’, ‘Bridging the Divide’, ‘Today for Tomorrow’ and ‘Beautiful Spaces. Beautiful Things’.⁴⁸

“Designing our city together” became the City of Cape Town’s internal and external design-led thinking agenda in 2014 based on the “Danish ladder of design” and “WDC’s goal...to inspire

⁴²Portfolio Collections, “Cape Town gears up for World Design Capital announcement as delegation heads to Taipei” <https://www.portfoliocollection.com/travel-blog/cape-town-gears-up-for-world-design-capital-announcement-as-delegation-heads-to-taipei>, accessed 07.06.2019.

⁴³Portfolio Collections, “Cape Town”, 07.06.2019.

⁴⁴The World Design Organization (WDO)™, formerly known as the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid), <https://wdo.org/>, accessed 07.06.2019.

⁴⁵Cape Town 2014, www.capetown2014.co.za, (website domain/URL was sold and currently functions as an advertising platform unrelated to CTWDC2014).

⁴⁶City of Cape Town, *World* 286.

⁴⁷City of Cape Town, *Designing*, 9.

⁴⁸City of Cape Town, *Designing*, 9.

people to move up a step or two. To have a conversation about design, therefore, it is crucial to agree on a definition of what design-led thinking means in a civic” according to the City of Cape Town Executive Mayor Patricia de Lille.⁴⁹

According to Makalima-Ngewana, the impact of World Design Capital 2014 meant “transforming Cape Town through Design” where the “vision” was “to rebuild and reconnect a divided city through design” and “look at the plan to position Cape Town on the world stage as a centre of innovation and a city of problem solvers”.⁵⁰

ICSID and the WDC organising committee were not concerned with colonial and apartheid constructs or Cape Town’s “long and distinguished design history”.⁵¹ Instead, favoured the adoption of a new global design ideology and visual language which is evident in Cape Town being nominated World Design Capital 2014. Under this banner design had “arrived as a serious cultural object in its own right” according to design historian Peter Dormer.⁵²

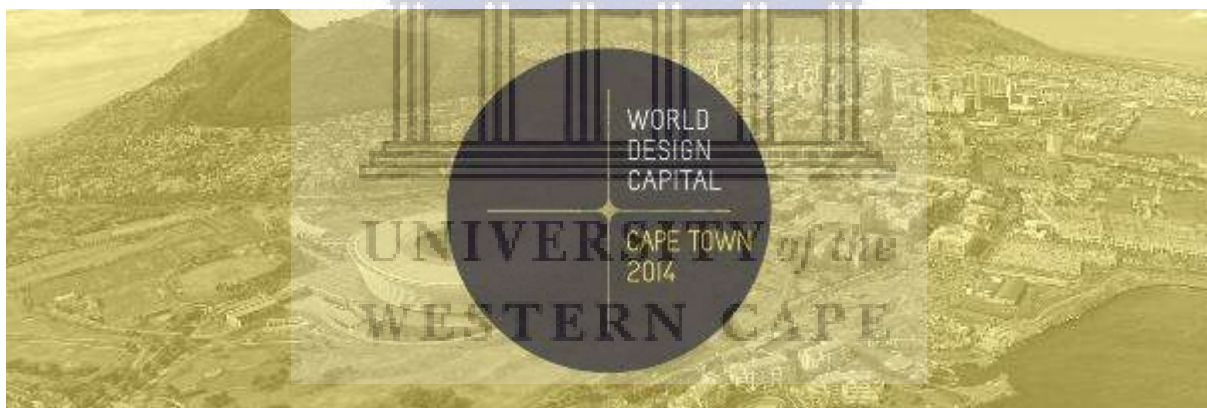


Figure 5.4: World Design Capital visual branding of the Cape Town metropole. Source: Creative Cape Town website.

It underlines global trends in the use of cities for events, reshaping the landscape as was evident when Cape Town hosted the FIFA soccer World Cup in 2010 according to imposed conditions. It resulted in the construction of one of the biggest post-apartheid structures, the Cape

⁴⁹City of Cape Town, *Designing*, 11.

⁵⁰B. Makalima-Ngewana, “World Design Capital 2014: transforming Cape Town through design”, lunch time lecture series, University of Cape Town, 01.02.2013.

⁵¹City of Cape Town, *World*, 87.

⁵²P. Dormer, *The Meanings of Modern Design: Towards the Twenty-First Century*, (Thames and Hudson: London, 1990), 135.

Town stadium, and Fan Walk.⁵³ As with the FIFA soccer world cup event in 2010:

The World Design Capital title is awarded in advance, allowing winning cities sufficient time to plan, develop and promote a year-long programme of World Design Capital-themed events for their designated year. The winning city is required to pay a licensing fee of 160 000 Euros to ICSID over two years for the use of the title, and this investment is then leveraged by the winning city to attract significant private sector funding for promotion of the title year.⁵⁴

Furthermore, a commitment to “host seven mandatory signatory events that the City of Cape Town is obligated to deliver as part of the Host City Agreement” was stipulated.⁵⁵ Official WDC projects amounted to 460 besides the 77 City of Cape Town projects planned as well as 81 ward projects during 2014.



Figure 5.5: The historic clock tower at the V & A Waterfront branded in CTWDC2014 colours and WDC2014 marketing. Source: Cape Town Partnership website.

It seemed as if the “time for design” had arrived in Cape Town where the old clock tower at the V & A Waterfront “has been rebranded in black and WDC 2014 yellow -Pantone C109, the official colour of the World Design Capital 2014, “as a vibrant indicator of a wealth of opportunity to

⁵³The Cape Town stadium was designed and built for the FIFA soccer world cup in 2010 in South Africa, the 1st country in Africa to be host. It became a white elephant and costs the City of Cape Town, therefore ratepayers, millions a year in maintenance. In 2016 it was reported that the 55,000-seat stadium was losing an estimated R6-million to R10-million annually. Western Province Rugby is relocating to the Cape Town Stadium from February 2021.

⁵⁴Co-working Cape Town office, “Cape Town”, accessed 02.05.2019

⁵⁵City of Cape Town Mid-term review (2011-2013), 21.11.2013, 1-44

<http://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/City%20strategies,%20plans%20and%20frameworks/2013-11-21%20Mid-term%20Review.pdf>, 11, accessed 05.05.2019.

improve lives for citizens into the future”.⁵⁶

Reinventing the East City as the Fringe on a District Six historic street grid

Prior to the yearlong World Design Capital events calendar, the District Six Museum in 2010 had conceptualised and proposed an urban renewal project: the Cultural Heritage Precinct. The Cultural Heritage Precinct related to a District Six Museum vision of renewal for the East City area in which it was situated. It formed part of the Museum’s heritage agenda that reinforced urban stewardship and a call to have District Six declared a national heritage site. The East City was once part of District Six and geographically formed part of the Hands Off District Six campaign in 1989 that placed an emphasis on preserving the remaining urban fabric of District Six although quite altered by apartheid urban planning. The integration of the older urban fabric with the newer District Six built environment was conceptualised as part of the Hands On District Six campaign in 2003 that related to restitution and people returning to District Six.⁵⁷

Easterly portions of District Six were not completely destroyed and remained for inner-city urban regeneration after the Group Areas Act was abolished in 1991.⁵⁸ District Six Museum trustee and architect Lucien le Grange had in 2007 proposed a set of urban design principles and informants to guide the formulation and implementation of a pilot project for the District Six urban redevelopment process:

The promotion of relatively fine-grained land parcels, the retention/reinstatement of the small historic street grid and town blocks, as opposed to the modernist ‘superblock’, the promotion of intensity and land use mix, the celebration of landmark buildings by the appropriate design of related public space and forecourts and the crafting of appropriate public-private interfaces between private development abutting street space.⁵⁹

These precedents worked within notions that District Six represented an opportunity rarely found in other areas and that District Six could be redeveloped as a Cultural Heritage Precinct as proposed

⁵⁶City of Cape Town, *Designing*, 8.

⁵⁷Rassool, “District Six Revisited”, 13.

⁵⁸J. Garside, “Inner city gentrification in South Africa: The Case of Woodstock”, *GeoJournal* Vol.30, No.1 South African Geography and Post-Apartheid Reconstruction (May 1993), 29.

⁵⁹L. Le Grange, “Conservation and Development: the case of District Six”, *Architecture South Africa*, March/April 2007, 58-61.

by the museum.

Buildings in the vicinity had been identified by District Six Museum as significant in the histories of District Six and the city. Through the production of a *HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE WE ARE HERE* landmarks brochure the Museum sought to encourage debate on various landmarks in the area:

Buitenkant Street Methodist Church which is our home, Bloemhof flats, Vernon Terrace, Beinkinstadt booksellers, the Presbyterian Church, Peninsula Maternity Hospital, Vernon Terrace, Shakesby Lewis Hostel, the City Mission Church...maybe there are other places in this area that we have missed out. We need your input!⁶⁰

It was stated in the museum brochure that “We are witnessing exciting changes in our city. New buildings are being built, old ones renovated, others are being demolished”.⁶¹ The museum claimed architecture, buildings and the streets near the Museum’s location as District Six sites of remembrance and genealogy within the East City. The design of the brochure worked by visually mapping the geography of the District into the city. The District Six Museum’s frameworks of representation included the built environment as “particularly important for the District Six area”.⁶² In this way, identified standing and demolished landmarks entered the Museum’s discourse as a means of generating a wider understanding of changing historical, political and cultural patterns.⁶³

Popular trend-based urban planning discourse heralding change in the area where terms such as the “East City” and the “the Fringe” district did not consider the context of District Six redevelopment, SAHRA heritage policy, District Six Museum’s forced removals, memorialisation, social displacement, and homelessness past and present happening in that area of the city.⁶⁴ Instead, adjacent buildings were renovated attracting trendy hip young designers and companies who frequented places such as Charley’s Bakery, the Field office (a coffee-restaurant), Truth Coffee

⁶⁰District Six Museum, “*HANDS ON DISTRICT SIX NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE WE ARE HERE*”, brochure, 2011.

⁶¹District Six Museum, “*HANDS*”, 2011.

⁶²District Six Museum, “*HANDS*”, 2011.

⁶³District Six Museum, “*HANDS*”, 2011.

⁶⁴The terms “East City” and the “the Fringe” were constructed by Creative Cape Town and The Cape Town Partnership to drive redevelopment of the area and meant a move towards inner city urban renewal.

(large steampunk-themed coffee shop), Haas collective (high-end designer coffee space with trendy boardroom hired by the hour for collaborative meetings) New York Bagel, Harley Davidson Motorcycle club and others moved into the area. Christian Ernsten argues:

That the idea of a Cape Town renaissance was based at least partly, on a dream. It was a dream that produced additional fantasies, or dreamtimes, in the neoliberal city. ... The reinterpretation of history at the heart of these projects does not repair or change the historical injustices suffered by the affected communities who lived in these areas. While these communities fight for restitution, others play in like a fantasy time-space”.⁶⁵

According to Ernsten “during preparations for the 2010 FIFA World Cup” and the “2014 World Design Capital events, both districts (Greenpoint and the East City) became dreamscapes for Cape Town’s city planners. Located on the edge of the city centre, they were understood as sites of opportunity. As such, they were transformed: rapid gentrification and new forms of spatial exclusion ensued”.⁶⁶

Drawing on Walter D. Mignolo’s scholarship, Ernsten further argues that “the global discourse on the city reinforces a series of local knowledge-based power-relations, and thereby strengthens the “colonial matrix of power”.⁶⁷ As global and local urban-design discourse merged, urban design was framed as an important tool for improving South African society. Moreover, over the course of the World Design Capital in 2014, the traumatic remnants of apartheid were reframed as “design challenges”.⁶⁸ As a consequence “of a future-orientated praxis, the idea of a transformed society was projected into a future time”, writes Ernsten.⁶⁹

In recognizing increasing gentrification in the East City influenced by design-led urban renewal interventions were seen by the Museum to overlook memories and oral histories of the area, once part of District Six.⁷⁰ The intangible heritage of District Six, District Six land claims and the work of the District Six Museum was concerned with deconstructing the spatial, social and

⁶⁵Ernsten, “Renaissance”, 146.

⁶⁶Ernsten, “Renaissance”, 146.

⁶⁷Ernsten, “Renaissance”, 146.

⁶⁸Ernsten, “Renaissance”, 146.

⁶⁹Ernsten, “Renaissance”, 146.

⁷⁰Bennett et al, “District”, 2.

racial geographies of apartheid's "Grand Design".⁷¹ This created a conceptual schism and resulted in divisive positionalities of various groups laying claim to East City urban spaces.⁷²

Yet it is important to note that the Museum itself was part of urban heritage renewal and gentrification in the East City through its involvement in the renovation and adaptive reuse of two sets of rundown buildings in Buitenkant Street. Design had also been at the forefront of making the District Six Museum and at the District Six site itself, design was seen as a means to reclaim the urban and social heritage of Cape Town.

A final *Draft of the Fringe UDF Urban Design Framework: Request for comment* was issued in March 2012. In the draft, the area "previously known as the East City Design Initiative or ECDI, a central city project" was rebranded the Fringe. The *Draft of the Fringe UDF Urban Design Framework: Request for comment* was funded and approved by the "provincial government of the Western Cape's Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT) through its Cape Catalyst Initiative". It was stated in the draft that "the City of Cape Town supports the Fringe and has been a strong partner in the project ever since its inception".⁷³

The official City of Cape Town's World Design Capital 2014 Public Sector Programme booklet listed 76 projects. Under economic development, not heritage and memory, one of the projects was based on "unlocking the potential of the East City" and allocated a blue turquoise dot.⁷⁴ The project heading referred to the East City as an experimental zone:

The 'Fringe' was set up as a partnership initiative to explore ways to stimulate economic growth, through design, in the East City area, which is relatively run-down, despite its proximity to the central city. The Fringe was established as an urban laboratory in which to test solutions to the city's urban challenges. It has already undergone several changes and will continue to evolve in response to lessons learned.⁷⁵

⁷¹S. A. Stevens, "Grand Design", *Diplomatic History*, Vol 36, No. 5 (November 2012), 797-800, Oxford university Press, 797.

⁷²Bennett et al, "District", 2.

⁷³City of Cape Town, "Final Draft of the Fringe Urban Design Framework: request for comment", April 2012.

⁷⁴City of Cape Town, *Designing*, 21.

⁷⁵City of Cape Town, *Designing*, 21.

The City of Cape Town's perception of the area, once part of District Six, was again being targeted as an undesirable run-down place, and in dire need of improvement that through iterative practices could be rejuvenated and redesigned to become economically viable.⁷⁶ Applying clinical terminology to the area such as "laboratory" erased an understanding of the historic and social environment replacing it with notions of the space as a prototype. It is interesting to note that the Charly's Bakery building which housed a highly successful and established business in a garishly painted and themed historical building, in the Fringe was utilized as a visual example of successful design in the East City.⁷⁷ The claim by the City of Cape Town and its creative and managing subsidiaries of the area's economic state was not a researched reflection. Part of the city had been erased due to the loss of the built environment during forced removals. Open spaces were used as ad hoc or city leased parking areas where mural art proliferated.

In the city, design became a series of colour-coded themed events, exhibitions, interventions, and creative statements.⁷⁸ The concept of geographically branded heritage precinct including streets, buildings, and landmarks relating to District Six and sites of significance within city limits was not understood or forwarded by the City or other heritage bodies as an urban design proposal. Despite the imperatives to rethink design in Cape Town where histories of the city included 20th century apartheid spatial planning aimed at the mass suppression and policing of sections of society, global design was embraced as a themed game changer and ultimate problem solver to the city's woes.

Promoting a new vision of the city and Cape Town as a brand the City of Cape Town commissioned a new institutional profile in 2014 "at a cost R 313 720" which was "spent on the design of the proposed new corporate identity, a new visual language, and brand architecture

⁷⁶One of the reasons given for the destruction of District Six was that it was a slum. Apartheid Prime Minister P. W. Botha stated "District Six is a blot which the government has cleaned up and will continue to clear up." Source: "District Six is declared a 'White' area", South African History Online, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/district-six-declared-white-area>, accessed 03.01.2020.

⁷⁷Rawoot, "Cape Town", accessed 06.06.2019.

⁷⁸Cape Town World Design Capital 2014 brochures and exhibition catalogues.

development...as the current corporate identity and pay-off line is approximately 10 years old”.⁷⁹ It’s slogan: the “City that works for you” changed to a slogan “Making Progress possible. Together”.⁸⁰ A new graphic logo was designed as colourful concentric circles with a continuous Table Mountain silhouette edging that appeared on everything from websites, stationery, depots, uniforms, and vehicles, to municipal bills and public signage.⁸¹



Figure 5.6: City of Cape Town’s redesigned logo 2014. Source: City of Cape Town website.

This refreshed corporate identity was a central component to how Cape Town was visually perceived in marketing material, principally through website design and print media dedicated to offering the visitor a range of exciting vistas, interactions, and cultural experiences during 2014. Design historian Penny Sparke, notes that design as a “significant activity” in society underpins, technology, politics, fashion and consumerism.⁸² and the city through its own rebranding and investment in design indicated its commitment to supporting the creative and design industries despite some negative reviews of the new logo and previous misguided forays into design.⁸³

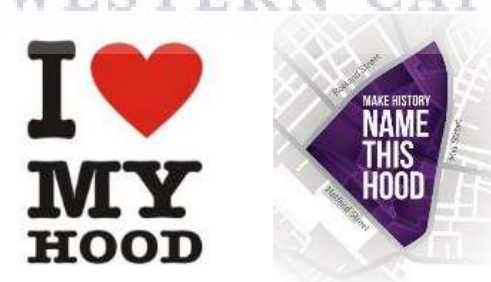


Figure 5.7: Private initiative logo’s for branding neighbourhoods in Cape Town linked to WDC Cape Town 2014. Source HH-R.

⁷⁹P. de Lille, “Cape Town’s new logo and slogan explained – Patricia de Lille”, 24 February 2014, <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/party/cape-towns-new-logo-and-slogan-explained--patricia>, accessed 10.03.2019

⁸⁰de Lille, “Cape” accessed 10.03.2019.

⁸¹A. Lewis, City of Cape Town’s new logo revealed, 21 February 2014, <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/city-of-cape-towns-new-logo-revealed>, accessed 09.08.2018.

⁸²P. Sparke, *Design in Context: History, Application and Development of Design*, (London: Bloomsbury, 1987), 24.

⁸³Unfinished city freeways. N2 National gateway housing Project, CPUT campus, Good Hope Centre, sub-economic Cape Flats housing projects, District Six redevelopment, Cape Town stadium, Disa Park: a residential design of 3 towers, leasing part of the Prestwich memorial to Truth coffee were some of the problematic design projects associated with City management.

Linked to WDC Cape Town 2014, private initiatives for branding neighbourhoods in Cape Town proliferated where logos and stickers such as ‘I love (heart symbol) my hood’ and ‘Make History Name this Hood’ appeared on cars, post boxes and in shop windows.⁸⁴

Museumising the city: reconstructing District Six social histories

As mentioned in the previous chapters processes of museumisation by the District Six Museum led to the creation of frameworks of representation as an archive and collections were established, as exhibitions were designed and as buildings were occupied and adapted. Since 1994 these processes of making memory work visible in various ways had established the District Six Museum as a prominent memorial museum popular with tourists. Located in the East City area later rebranded the Fringe the museum celebrated 20 years of democracy and cultural work in 2014. The museum buildings, the Central Methodist Church and the Sacks Futeran building were part of the older urban fabric of the city. Through intense architectural processes of adaptive reuse, they were repurposed as a distinctive example of post-apartheid museum design, garnering architectural and cultural awards in the process.⁸⁵

The buildings the Museum occupied were geographically located to act as a city museum from where a range of museological practices was conducted. The cultural footprint of the District Six memory project, and later Museum, developed over time after it opened its first photographic exhibition in 1992 and thereafter established itself through social justice activism, oral and visual history projects, education and exhibitions. As a long-standing cultural institution in the city and in the spirit of participation, the District Six Museum submitted a project via a World Design Capital funding proposal in April 2013. The project was named “District Six heritage tour routes: memorialization through art and design for a new generation” and was described as “drawn from our ongoing memorialization of the District Six site and relates to the CTWDC2014 themes:

⁸⁴I love my hood stickers proliferated in 2014 and were seen on cars, post boxes and pasted on coffee shop windows.

⁸⁵In 2001 Rennie & Scurr Architects cc, received a Cape Institute of Architects Conservation Award and South African Institute of Architects Conservation Award for the District Six Museum and Stepping Stones Children’s Centre renovation. In 2003 the museum received the Prince Claus award and received the Western Cape Arts and Culture Award for Museum Project of the year 2011. In the same year Rennie Scurr Adendorff Architects received a Bronze Loerie Award for the Fugard Theatre, three buildings that formed part of the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre.

Bridging the Divide, Today for Tomorrow and Beautiful Spaces. Beautiful Things”.⁸⁶ Furthermore, an important part of the proposal outlined the Museum’s perspective on design:

The Museum design methodology is premised on working within collaborations that bring together the creative energy of ex-residents, visual artists, creative writers, performing artists, crafters, architects, academics, youth and designers in an interdisciplinary manner. It gives contemporary expression to the rich cosmopolitan traditions of District Six. In the museum, design is used as a creative ‘mediatory channel’ through which memory work can be innovatively interpreted and developed. Our permanent exhibition, *Digging Deeper*, is a successful example of how this can be achieved.⁸⁷

Therefore the museum positioned itself as an intermediary between various creative collectives and individuals that were part of its community making networking methodology established over a 20 year period. The museum saw itself “as a catalyst – channeling new design terrains and linking design approaches with heritage to create a platform to bring divergent cultures, traditions, and creative thinkers together”.⁸⁸ Working within the museum’s existing themes *Beyond District Six* and *Hands On District Six* the CTWDC14 project aimed to develop “linking tour routes and products with other displaced communities”.⁸⁹

Cape Town’s World Design Capital 2014 “conflicting rationalities” in the East City

In response to extensive rebranding through World Design Capital design initiatives in the East City and urban planning design-centered discourse, the District Six Museum employed “tactical museologies”, after Gustavo Buntix and Ivan Karp .⁹⁰ The museum did so by both confronting and engaging with the unfolding and presentation of Cape Town as World Design Capital 2014, as well as openly questioning the principles, objectives, and modus operandi of CTWDC2014. Through the City’s initiatives, Cape Town Partnership and Creative Cape Town transformation was proposed via design-led interventions and urban gentrification of the East City area. Opposition by the museum was expressed to official planning precepts that disregarded, “the absence of memory” and

⁸⁶District Six Museum, “World Design Capital Funding Proposal Submission April 2013”, District Six Museum Resource Centre, accessed February 2014.

⁸⁷District Six Museum, “World Design”, February 2014.

⁸⁸District Six Museum, “World Design” 2013.

⁸⁹District Six Museum, “World Design” 2013.

⁹⁰Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

resulted in a contestation over meanings of space and place in the East City.⁹¹

The Museum as a representative of the city's histories and an urban heritage stakeholder had played an active role in the East City Precinct Association (ECPA) since inception in 1999.⁹² The ECPA area was identified as “bordered by Darling, Parliament, Roeland and Canterbury Streets including Roeland Square and the area bordered by Drury Lane between Glynn and Constitution Streets”.⁹³ The District Six Museum had participated in ECPA and occupied two large buildings in the East City which affiliated itself with the District Six site. Yet it was not listed as a major partner in the extensive visual and textual planning document *the fringe / DRAFT urban design framework* produced by Guy Briggs Urban Strategy, Planning + Design created for clients the Cape Town Partnership, City of Cape Town and the Western Cape Government.⁹⁴

The exclusion of the Museum is perhaps due to three reasons. Firstly, the idea of a museum as a design authority was not acknowledged, contemplated or accepted by Guy Briggs Urban Strategy, Planning + Design. Secondly, the notion of the category museum by the framework compilers perhaps drew on stereotypical notions of static timeless historical representation utilising objects and text as the main narrative mode thus justified excluding the museum's participation in urban design. Thirdly, the compilers were not able or declined to include protest, activism, commemoration or contestation in the *Fringe Urban Design Framework* (UDF) which were at the heart of the museum project since inception.

Therefore, the category of a post-apartheid community museum model that represented new social identities claiming parts of the city in memorialisation proved contentious to the compilers of the Fringe UDF. According to Geoffrey White, “stories of the past are always discourses of identity”.⁹⁵ The “discourses of identities” forged from a District Six shared past claimed and

⁹¹Bennett et al, “District”, 2.

⁹²District Six Museum, East City Precinct Association, District Six Newsletter 20 October 1999.

⁹³East City Precinct Association (ECPA) meeting notice dated May 1999, fax (to faded to scan), Buitenkant Methodist church renovation file District Six Museum resource centre, Accessed 26.03.2018.

⁹⁴G. Briggs, *THE FRINGE / DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK*, Guy Briggs Urban Strategy, Planning + Design, April 2012.

⁹⁵G. M. White, *Identity through History: Living Stories in the Solomon Islands*, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology, No.83, (Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 1991), 20.

represented by the District Six Museum countered the contemporary social identities that the Fringe UDF was proposing which asserted the East City for design and innovation oblivious to what the Museum claimed as the “spirit and lessons” of District Six.⁹⁶

As a result, the Fringe was experienced and confronted by the Museum as a “social” and “political” discomfort.⁹⁷ Appropriating urban spaces and places in the name of design specifically under the WDC theme “Live Design. Transform Life” was questioned. Ciraj Rassool confirmed the discomforts felt by the Museum:

The museum began to hold discussions with members of the city and province and its implementing agents about these problems...it emerged that for the city planners, in attending to the implementation of the Urban Spatial plan Development Framework, heritage was not a priority. It was merely one of the themes to take account of alongside issues such as water provision and transport.⁹⁸

It became evident that histories of the city, its modes, and technologies of production were of little significance to the WDC rubric nor were a community museum “telling the hidden stories of the apartheid era”.⁹⁹

In response to *the fringe | DRAFT urban design framework* on 4th March 2013 Bonita Bennett, District Six Museum director, Tina Smith, lead curator exhibition concepts and design, Chrischené Julius, collections, research and documentation archivist and Mandy Sanger, education and youth development officer of the museum issued a document: “The Fringe Draft Framework, District Six Museum comments for public discussion”.¹⁰⁰ They argued that District Six and its memorial the District Six Museum represented “a symbol of the 42 sites of forced removal along the foot of Table Mountain”.¹⁰¹ In response to the idea of the Fringe, it stated that the uneven politics of placemaking related to parachuting the concept into the East City resulting in an uneasy “social” and “political discomfort” with the entire concept.¹⁰² Furthermore, this created tensions

⁹⁶District Six Museum, 60 000 STORIES THAT WILL NEVER BE DEMOLISHED, pamphlet, District Six Museum, 2016.

⁹⁷Bennett et al, “District”, 4.

⁹⁸Rassool, “District”, 22.

⁹⁹Layne, “The District”, 53.

¹⁰⁰Bennett et al, “District”, 1.

¹⁰¹Bennett et al, “District”, 5.

¹⁰²Bennett et al, “District”, 4

with those tasked with implementation. According to Bennett, Smith, Julius and Sanger:

Many of the requests for our participation in the development of the Fringe failed to acknowledge the important role we play in reconstructing the memory of this part of the City through our internationally recognised work. We were never asked to participate in any significant way in the development of the Fringe but always asked to rubberstamp and provided a marketing space for an already concluded concept. Consultation has more often than not been about promoting an idea rather than calling for the deconstruction and critique so important to any notion of innovation and design.¹⁰³

The politics of space at the centre of the “discomforts” related to how proponents of “the fringe should not try to rename an area which is in the process of reclaiming a very contested name i.e. District Six”¹⁰⁴ where “history helps us to make sense of the current landscape of our city”.¹⁰⁵

The Museum did not discount the idea of design-led thinking but found it difficult to comprehend the complete de-emphasis of histories and post-apartheid memorialisation of the area by *the fringe* / *DRAFT urban design framework* compilers. It was almost as if one type of discipline, urban planning, and architecture, had out-manouvered the discipline of history and its derivative heritage in the contest for the East City. As a highly productive and complex institution, the museum also represented itself as a dynamic research community, valued intangible heritage, established alternative methodologies and had created a platform for sharing the legacies of forced removals and storytelling.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, it had established design networks and practice through its “frameworks of representation” which were implemented through exhibition design and museumisation.¹⁰⁷

The event and discussions that followed stemmed from concerns around the perceived contemporary urban social engineering happening in the East City. The comment by the District Six

¹⁰³Bennett et al, “District”, 5.

¹⁰⁴District Six Museum, “Feedback on the Fringe”, Seven Steps members update newsletter, District Six Museum, April-June 2014, 3.

¹⁰⁵B. Bennett, “A Cape Town Story of opportunity and inclusivity”, Department of Arts & Culture Making Progress possible. Together, City of Cape Town, 2013/14,

<https://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/Graphics%20and%20educational%20material/Department%20of%20Arts%20and%20Culture%20Brochure.pdf>, accessed 25.03.2019.

¹⁰⁶See Bonita Bennett, Chrsichené Julius and Crain Soudien, *City Site Museum: Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum*, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2008).

¹⁰⁷Delpont, “Digging”, 159.

Museum in response to the Fringe Draft UDF and lack of engagement by the City funded WCD projects to acknowledge heritage and memory in its planning discourse was noted. The District Six Museum stated: “the groundbreaking role that the museum played as a ‘design laboratory’ and ‘incubator’ for reimagining museum, memorialization and design is not recognized in any way”.¹⁰⁸

Furthermore, it was argued by the museum:

Despite the many valuable references of the heritage of District Six and recognition that important sites like Harrington Square (the Holy Trinity Church site) and Beinkenstadt Bookshop, for example, are District Six sites, the Fringe innovation District is then modelled to obliterate this memory by amongst many other things celebrating Charly’s Bakery as innovation and the Fugard Theatre as if there is no connection to the District Six Museum – as if the concept of a world class theatre emerged as a separate development to the District Six Homecoming Centre.¹⁰⁹

After Buntix and Karp one of the “tactical museologies” employed by the Museum was the utilisation of WDC terminology to contest what was happening in the East City and also adopted a strategy that utilised design describing terms to forward its own agenda.¹¹⁰ Foregrounding forced removals in the city geographically remapped the contemporary as understood through social histories as articulated by the museum. Therefore, museumisation by the District Six Museum illuminated not only design but design as local representational politics of forced removals in a post-apartheid memorial “community” museum context.¹¹¹

The cultural struggle for memories of the East City vs creating design culture for the Fringe

As a resolution to differing perspectives and agendas on the 29th May 2013, the museum created a forum to open up questions around the Fringe: District 6 on the fringe: The absence of memory in design-led urban regeneration,¹¹² was the topic of a public discussion, presentations, and debate in the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre. The discussion was co-hosted by the museum and the Africa Centre for Cities Public/Culture Citylab.¹¹³ Chaired by Ralph Borland, panellists included

¹⁰⁸Bennett at al, “District Six”, 2.

¹⁰⁹Bennett at al, “District Six”, 2.

¹¹⁰Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

¹¹¹Rassool, “Contesting ‘museumness’”, 68.

¹¹²Centre for African Cities, “INVITATION – D6 on the Fringe: The absence of memory in design-led urban regeneration”, May 29 2013.

¹¹³The Public Culture CityLab focused on the impacts of public art in public spaces in Cape Town and was a project of the African Centre for Cities University of Cape Town.

District Six Museum director Bonita Bennett, African Centre for Cities Central Citylab-Public Culture Lab.¹¹⁴ researcher Ismail Farouk, artist and WDC-Cape Town Partnership-Creative Cape Town representative Andrew Putter and global gentrification scholar Kai Berthold speaking on his project ‘The Gentrification Relay’.¹¹⁵ Questions posed in relation to the Fringe Innovation District in the East City included: What place is there for memory and history within culture-led urban development? What risk is there that contemporary stylizations of Cape Town might serve to obliterate local histories and entrench status quo? What of District Six, not only as symbol and museum but as marker of the pasts that haunt the present?

The discussion commenced with a presentation by Kai Berthold who in conjunction with Cape Peninsula University of Technology design students conducted research about the change that was taking place in the East City, primarily gentrification. Andrew Putter co-ordinating “a two-and-a-half-year project for the Cape Town Partnership called Neighbourhood Communication Project” that “investigates how best to enable communication between collaborators who work across complex social divides” followed.¹¹⁶ He proposed a temporary transformation in Harrington Square parking lot space bordered by Dias Taverna, Woodheads Leather Dealers, Charly’s Bakery, Get Wine and other businesses—into an animated and expressive public space. In a deeply empathetic light, he sketched the existing space of Harrington Square as frequented by visible and invisible stakeholders ready for economic empowerment in the area. Many images reflected the humanity of the area through homeless people who had made the square and surrounding area their home. The

¹¹⁴The African Centre for Cities (ACC) was established at the University of Cape Town in 2007. It is an interdisciplinary research institute that facilitates critical urban research and policy discourse for the promotion of vibrant, democratic and sustainable urban development in the global South from an African perspective. The ACC works at local, national, Africa and global scales. ACC’s research programme on Cape Town was called the CityLab programme. It was initiated during 2008 as an interdisciplinary applied research programme for learning from the unique experience of Cape Town. Source: African Centre for Cities University of Cape Town Annual Report 2011, https://www.africancentreforcities.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/acc_annual_report_2011.pdf, 07.06.20189

¹¹⁵Centre for African Cities, “INVITATION”, May 29 2013.

¹¹⁶UCT Archive and Public Culture Research Initiative, “Alumni: Andrew Putter”, University of Cape Town, www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/alumni/andrew-putter, accessed 06.06.2019.

challenge he posed was how to create a scenario where inclusion, upliftment, empowerment and real change for the better benefitting the most disenfranchised could occur in this public space.¹¹⁷

As a city-funded WDC 2014 project aimed at reimagining Harrington Square utilising creative arts and design interventions with specific partnered programming including design components, was planned.¹¹⁸ Putter stated: “the area designated as ‘the Fringe’ is intertwined with District Six and yet that history of the space, with its memory of forced removals, has not figured significantly in the ‘cultural regeneration’ plans for the East City”.¹¹⁹

The District Six Museum’s position regarding the Fringe concept and the social and political “discomfort” the museum was experiencing in the East City, its home, was raised by Bonita Bennett:

The Fringe is an edgy, current, catchy term that immediately negates the very politics of belonging, inclusion, and marginalization that imbues the very ground designated for urban renewal. If the Fringe was meant to designate the periphery...historical narratives of former District Six residents make no distinction between the city center and the periphery. How then does such sanitized, gimmicky language of redesignation enter into a politics of belonging and inclusion in the city?¹²⁰

Talking to the geographical fragmentation and legacies of dispossession in the city and surrounding townships Bennett pointed out that renaming the East City, part of District Six, the Fringe was more than just a claiming and naming process. It also erased the intangible qualities of sounds and senses and turned the area into a foreign and unrecognizable place for former residents of the city.¹²¹

Ismail Farouk posed a central question: “Does The Fringe provide an effective institutional framework to drive social transformation, or merely serve to further entrench legacies of segregation and dispossession that characterize the history of Cape Town?”.¹²² Drawing on

¹¹⁷Public debate, “District 6 on the fringe: The absence of memory in design-led urban regeneration” at the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre, 29.05.2013.

¹¹⁸Harrington Square prior to and during 2014 was utilised by various design faculties for student projects: student designs from the nearby Cape Peninsula University of Technology, architectural student projects and architectural partnerships designed an array of temporary and permanent designs in reimagining the square such as a design pavilion, a memorial fountain and a sunken garden.

¹¹⁹Centre for African Cities, “INVITATION”, 2013.

¹²⁰D. Jethro, “The District on Cape Town’s Fringe”, <https://africasacountry.com/2013/06/the-fringe-district/06.17.2013>, accessed 05.02.2019.

¹²¹Public debate, “District 6”, 29.05.2013.

¹²²Public debate, “District 6”, 29.05.2013.

research he compared the making of Fringe to similar projects in Cape Town to parts of Johannesburg. He stated that “conflicting rationalities” were implicit and often covert in making and imagining the corporate city.¹²³ As noted by post-apartheid heritage and senses scholar Duane Jethro who wrote about the discussion:

One of his (Ismail Farouk) poignant observations was that the fundamental problem with these developmental initiatives is their logic of time. These projects are almost always speculative property ventures that hedge against the possibility of future economic potential of a particular urban space. This is at the expense of the reality of the present and those who occupy the spaces that apparently bare economic potential. The consequences of such framings of time... are that they buy time, suspending the fulfillment of the pressing needs of the disenfranchised with the promise of imminent future redemption that never arrives. It also negates time, obscuring the histories of social life and suffering that attach to these urban spaces and render them free for acquisition by those with means.¹²⁴

According to Bonita Bennett “thinking of memory, history, and heritage not as décor that comes after, but as the very stuff at the heart of projects that reimagine the city....it means placing the history and politics of struggle against unjust dispossession at the center and not on the fringe of our thinking about the future of the city and what it means to belong in post-apartheid urban space”.¹²⁵

During the presentations and discussions that followed what sprung to mind was that the Fringe concept was experienced as invasive by some discussants, creating a form of toxicity imposed as a kind of ego and disconnect that created a newer “community” unrelated to the everyday social realities and histories in the East City. Conflicts of interest and the unsettling work of the Fringe design district created for WDC in the public spaces of District Six posed questions of possession and authenticity. It brought forth questions such as: Where does the new city come from? How does the politics of memory and dispossession feature in the city where WDC2014 design marketing and tourism shifted to consumption in Cape Town?

Activating a post-apartheid museum community in the WDC2014 city

As WDC gained momentum in Cape Town, 2014 also marked an important milestone for the

¹²³Public debate, “District 6”, 29.05.2013.

¹²⁴Jethro, “The District”, accessed 05.02.2019.

¹²⁵Public debate, “District 6”, 29.05.2013.

District Six Museum. It had been operating for 20 years and this was celebrated through commemoration with the making, installation and unveiling of the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre's new entrance gate. After lengthy phased renovations to the buildings, the gate was the final design element on the exterior of the building.

By 2014 people had returned and taken up residence in District Six in architecturally designed low rise buildings conceptualised and designed by Lucien le Grange Architects. In 2004, "24 District Six former residents and their families selected to return after an absence of nearly forty years. Their struggle to return has been both a personal and political journey marking the spirit and dignity of the dispossessed and their quest to be reunited with the land they lost".¹²⁶ The buildings represented notions of a community reconstructed through architectural practice re-inhabiting the city and environs. Due to the museum's proactive mapping strategies seen through designed brochures, the district that ex-residents returned to was defined symbolically as a space to transmit and trace genealogical connections.

In reconstructing memories of forced removals from Cape Town, the District Six Museum had come to embody an idea that moved beyond representing the community identified as ex-residents of District Six and their descendant community. The concept of a "heritagescape" as postulated by Mary-Catherine E. Garden, "grasps with the idea of a heritage site as a landscape" which was an existing museum approach in working with memories of District Six."¹²⁷ This notion of Garden's "heritagescape" concurs with Rassool's argument that the museum "continued to work with inscriptive methods by turning District Six itself into a museumised landscape of meaning through regular processions, parades, and regular interpretive walks."¹²⁸

Furthermore, the museum's official WDC listed project numbered #WDC365 District Six Heritage Routes was described as follows:

The project is drawn from the ongoing work of memorialization of the District Six site where residents were forcibly removed and buildings razed

¹²⁶District Six Museum, "The Return" brochure, District Six Museum 2004.

¹²⁷M-C. E. Garden, "The Heritagescape: Looking at heritage Sites" in *Heritage Studies Methods and Approaches*, eds Marie Louise Stig Sørensen and John Carman, (New York: Routledge, 2010), 274.

¹²⁸Rassool, "District", 15.

under Apartheid government's Group Areas Act. It relates to the WDC themes: Bridging the Divide, Today for Tomorrow and Beautiful Spaces. Because of the dynamic nature and continuing changes to the city – the District Six land restitution process as well as the emerging East City district – the memorialization of the site becomes increasingly challenging. The Museum has mapped various heritage routes across the area under the concept “hands on District Six: no matter where we are, we are here”. Fourteen sites have been identified, each representing a microcosm of life in the neighbourhood revealing hidden narratives of a gone-but-not-forgotten past.¹²⁹

The District Six Museum actively sought South African Heritage Resources Agency sanctioned National Heritage site status for District Six for many years, without success. The museum recognized “the significance of heritage and the contribution it makes to the quality of life” in the post-apartheid city.¹³⁰ Design and the heritage aspects at District Six itself were an important feature of how the museum practiced and claimed the site for memorialisation. In post-apartheid South Africa “Heritage has become a right” according to Christiaan Beyer's and Andrea Witcomb, which was confidently expressed by the museum, in the name of the District Six community, to claim buildings, sites and streets for District Six heritage.¹³¹

Creative tension in the East City: Making memories and design cultures at Harrington Square

As a tactical strategy, the words ‘design’ and ‘lab’ entered into the Museums discourse as it sought to work with Creative Cape Town coordinator and artist Andrew Putter in re-imagining space and place centered on the Harrington Square part of the old urban fabric of District Six.¹³² As part of this event, Harrington Street was themed and street events with food trucks and DJs turned the space into a hip and happening district.

¹²⁹City of Cape Town, “*World*”, 221.

¹³⁰J. Schofield, “Heritage Management, Theory and Practice” in *The Heritage Reader*, Graham Fairclough, eds Rodney Harrison, John Schofield, John H. Jameson Jr., (New York: Routledge, 2007), 20.

¹³¹A. Witcomb, “The past in the present: Towards a politics of care at the National Trust of Australia (WA)” in *Heritage and Identity*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 174.

¹³²The adapted large spaces of the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre, partnering with higher education institutions as well as the museum's growing investment in design resulted in the District Six Museum hosting the 4th Design, Development & Research Conference: Student Symposium at the Homecoming centre on 8th September 2014.

As an identifiable place to develop what Ciraj Rassool has termed “memorial visiting”¹³³ the District Six Memory Design Lab inscription event sought to active Harrington Square Cape Town during Creative Week 14-22nd September 2014. An invitation to develop a joint programme reads:

In partnership with Cape Town Partnership and the African Arts Initiative (AFAI) and supported by Woodheads the District Six Museum has launched a District Six Design Memory Lab that will look at creative forms of memorialisation on Harrington Square. We are inviting a number of artists /performers/creatives to collaborate around the development of Harrington Square as a public space in District Six during the Cape Town Creative Week. The interventions will be temporary, surface the heritage of the Square and provide possibilities and interrogation of memory and public space usage in the City as well as to activate usage for people marginalised to the edges of the City.¹³⁴

The District Six Memory Design Lab invitation issued by District Six Museum curator Tina Smith stated that on the 28th August 2014 “everyone was invited to participate in a creative conversation about the past, future and memorialization of Harrington Square on Friday 19 September and Saturday 20 September 2014... We’d like to invite you to participate in the activation of Harrington Square during #CreativeWeekCT, 13 – 21 September 2014”.¹³⁵ This formed part of the District Six Museum’s Heritage month programme.¹³⁶



Figure 5.8: Harrington Square parking lot, east city, Cape Town. Photograph: Ndifuna Ukwazi/GroundUp website.

¹³³Rassool, “District”, 19.

¹³⁴T. Smith, “District Memory Design Lab invitation”, District Six Museum Homecoming Centre, 15 Buitenkant Street, Cape Town, District Six Museum 10am-2pm, 28th August 2014.

¹³⁵Smith, “District”, 28.09.2014.

¹³⁶R. Williams, “Creative tension in the East City: the District Six Memory Lab and Michaelis City Project, History & Memory in Public Spaces”, 26th September 2014, <http://www.afai.org.za/district-six-memory-lab-harrington-square-creative-week/>, accessed 20.04.2018.



Figure 5.9: Harrington Square parking lot, East City, Cape Town. Photographs: HH-R

As an act of memorialisation at Harrington Square the District Six Museum designed an A5 sized full colour postcard series that depicted archival photographs of landmark buildings and maps. The postcards were numbered in a sequence with the words: ‘A collection of memories’ accompanied by the D6 Hands on District Six no matter where we are we are here logo in blue and white printed over the photographic image. Featured landmarks included the Holy Trinity Church, Beinkinstadt Jewish Bookstore c 1970s, Cape Town City Mission, Vernon Terrace, Peninsula Maternity Hospital, Buitenkant Street Methodist Church c.1940s, Caledon Street buildings, and Bloemhof Flats. On the reverse side of the postcards was printed in large text “What do know about his area? Please write your memories and reflections of Harrington Square on this postcard. Hand it into the security guard on the Square, or email your words to info@districtsix.co.za”.¹³⁷

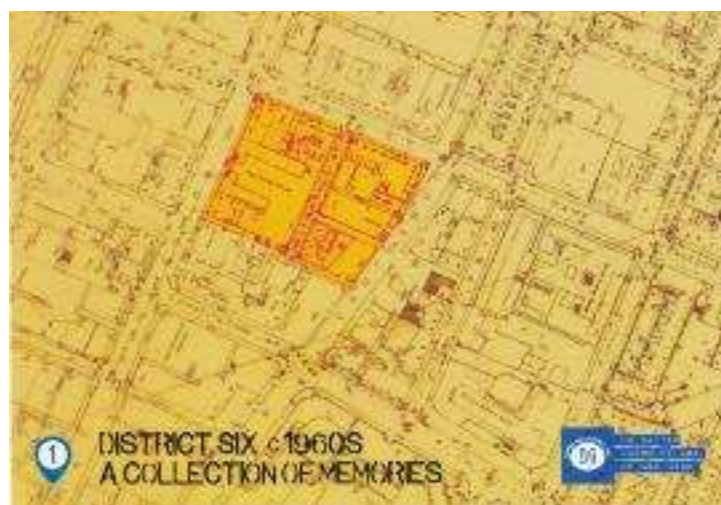


Figure 5.10: District Six 2014 Postcard: District c1960s A Collection of Memories. D6M archive.

¹³⁷District Six Museum, “Harrington Square What do you know about this area?”, A Collection of Memories, postcard series no 1. District Six Museum, 2014.

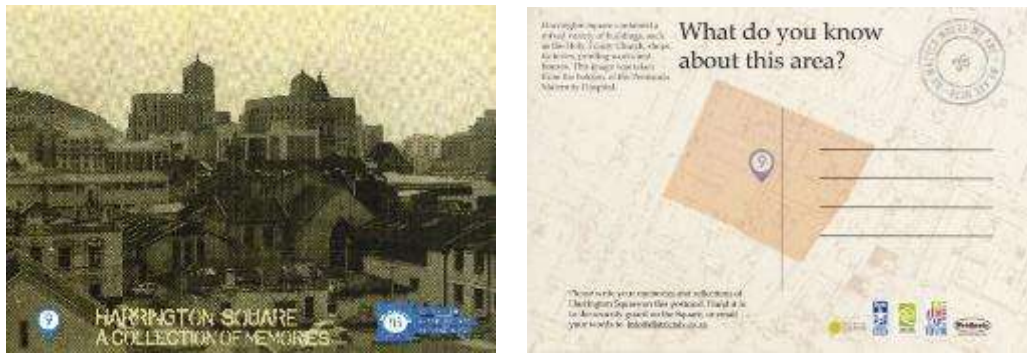


Figure 5.11: Harrington Square: A collection of memories. Postcard no. 9: Harrington Square contained a mixed variety of building such as the Holy Trinity Church, shops, factories, printing works and houses. This image was taken from the balcony of the Peninsula Hospital. District Six Museum archive.

The District Six Museum Memory Design lab was held with the intention “to reveal the D6 heritage of ... [Harrington] Square in creative interventions by artists” and “to provide various surfaces for inscription that enables visitors to the square during CREATIVE WEEK to encounter and reflect on the heritage of the square, memorialization in the City and future possibilities”.¹³⁸ The agenda included a speed dating ice breaker and a Harrington Square creative intervention brief and walkabout where District Six heritage and stories of the East City were shared. Ideas and possibilities for narrating the past in the present were shared by participants. Thereafter content and form of the Creative Week event at Harrington Square were discussed.¹³⁹



Figure 5.12: District Six Museum 2014 postcard 4. caption side 2: District Six was declared a White Group Area in 1966. More than 60 000 to the Cape Flats over twenty years. D6M archive.

¹³⁸Smith, “District”, 28th August 2014.

¹³⁹Smith, “District”, 28th August 2014.



Figure 5.13: District Six Museum 2014 postcard 3: Caption side 2: Harrington Square was part of the Jewish quarter of District Six. Beinkinstadt Jewish Bookstore was started in 1903 by Moshe Beinkinstadt. It served as a meeting space for local Jewish families. The store closed in 2008 after 105 years. It now houses Charly's Bakery. D6M archive.



Figure 5.14: Charly's Bakery was utilized as a visual example of successful design in the East city by the City of Cape Town. Photograph HH-R.

Bordered on three sides by Harrington Street, Caledon Street, and Canterbury Street, Harrington

Square was created during 1960s forced removals after the Holy Trinity Church, built in 1846, was

demolished as well as residential homes.¹⁴⁰ Harrington Street was once home to numerous diasporic Jewish families and businesses. The square was turned into a paying parking lot managed by Woodheads Leather business on behalf of the City of Cape Town. The large parking lot was covered with small grey gravel stones and planted with pepper trees that formed three lines. A fenced playground for children from Stepping Stones Children's Centre in Albertus Street, an outreach project of the Central Methodist Mission, bordered one side of the square. The Charly's Bakery building opened onto the square and was bordered by Canterbury Street. The building had housed one of the last remaining District Six shops Beinkinstadt Jewish Bookstore and Judacia opened in 1903 by Moshe Beinkinstadt of Vilna. The shop "served as a meeting space for local Jewish families", and after being run as a family business closed down at the end of July 2008.¹⁴¹

Erected as part of World Design Capital, near the corner of the Charly's Bakery building, an enormous bright yellow painted metal frame was positioned in Harrington Square in June 2014. Its upper horizontal top bar read TABLE MOUNTAIN, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA and on the lower frame horizontal bar GPS co-ordinates 33°55'42.25" S 18°25'30.00" E were etched into the frame together with the words SHARE #LOVECAPE TOWN.¹⁴² This was part of the Table Mountain Frames project that took shape in partnership with Cape Town's World Design Capital 2014 programme.¹⁴³ Conceptualized and produced by South African artist Porky Hefer as part of the Table Mountain New 7 Wonders of Nature legacy project, the interactive artwork was listed as an official World Design Capital 2014 project #WDC533.¹⁴⁴ Painted in WDC yellow Pantone C109, the official colour of the World Design Capital 2014 the picture frames measured 2.8 meters wide by 4 meters high. The frames were set up in seven locations around the city: Signal Hill, V&A Waterfront, Eden on the Bay, Harrington Square, Cape Town Station, and Lookout Hill in

¹⁴⁰UCT Photographic Collections, Independent Newspapers archive, Islandora Repository, "Holy Trinity Church of the Church of England, Cape Town, 1967", <https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-17299>

¹⁴¹Cape Jewish Chronicle, "This is indeed the end of an era!" June 1 2008, <http://cjc.org.za/this-is-indeed-the-end-of-an-era/>, accessed 07.05.2019.

¹⁴²H. Hayes-Roberts visit to Harrington Square, May 2019.

¹⁴³Table Mountain Aerial Cableway, "Be in the frame with Table Mountain", <https://www.tablemountain.net/content/page/be-in-the-frame-with-table-mountain>, accessed 04.03.2019

¹⁴⁴City of Cape Town, "World", 243.

Khayelitsha. The intention of the project was to provide a framed prepackaged view of Table Mountain utilised as a backdrop for a selfie or group photograph. Harrington Square was not memorialised in any permanent way and by placing a large yellow intrusive rectangle with novelty appeal in the landscape displaced the histories of Harrington square. The City of Cape Town approved the installation of the frame as it owns the square while the Cape Town Partnership and other stakeholders “have been exploring ways to activate the square as a more culturally rich public space for a while through pop-up events and by installing free public Wifi”.¹⁴⁵

In contrast, the District Six Museum’s event for Harrington Square was driven by a memorialisation agenda in the politics of recovery. It resulted in the “District Six Memory Design Lab...workshops bringing together artists, filmmakers, performers, students, community members, and ex-residents to remember Harrington Square before people were forcibly removed from it, and the many buildings on it were demolished”.¹⁴⁶ Collaborative tools for memorialising the past were developed. According to the CTP website:

The Cape Town Partnership has long wanted to work more closely with the District Six Museum and this year’s Creative Week programme of citizen-driven urban creativity, running from 13 to 21 September, presented itself as the perfect opportunity to begin open public experiments on the square.¹⁴⁷

The event was enabled by funding from Woodheads Leather business and shop, as well as the African Arts Institute, which had taken up occupancy in the museum’s Homecoming Centre. The significance of the event was to revive the spirit and story of Harrington Square. Cape Town Partnership CEO Bulelwa Makalima-Ngewana wrote in her *Cape Times* column:

The thing for me about stories versus monuments is that stories live on in people and in the telling. For instance, a story that came up in the [District Six Memory Design Lab] workshop was that when District Six was leveled, and the people and pigeons scattered, the pigeons eventually came back but the residents did not. Thus they became a symbol of hope. I will never look at those pigeons in the East City the same way again!¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵B. Makalima-Ngewana, Creative narrative of our city, Opinion, 17 September 2014, <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/opinion/creative-narrative-of-our-city-1752547>, accessed 23.02.2019.

¹⁴⁶Smith, ‘District’, 28th August 2014.

¹⁴⁷Makalima-Ngewana, “Creative”, accessed 23.02.2019.

¹⁴⁸Makalima-Ngewana, “Creative”, accessed 23.02.2019.

This particular story stems from Noor Ebrahim's experience of forced removals and is recounted during District Six Museum tours by Noor himself and has taken on a mythical quality.

On Saturday 13th September 2014, marking the first day of Creative Week, there was a day of activities and artwork installations based on the workshops. On Friday 19th September, which was also International Parking Day, urban activists around the world repurposed parking spaces; there was a smaller gathering on the square between 11am and 2pm to continue this process. Finally, on Saturday 20th September there was a picnic celebration, with performances, games, art-making, storytelling, and installation with an interactive inscription event 'People lived here'. A Memories of Harrington Square invitation was designed, utilising Peter Clark's *Homage* artwork imagery and disseminated widely.

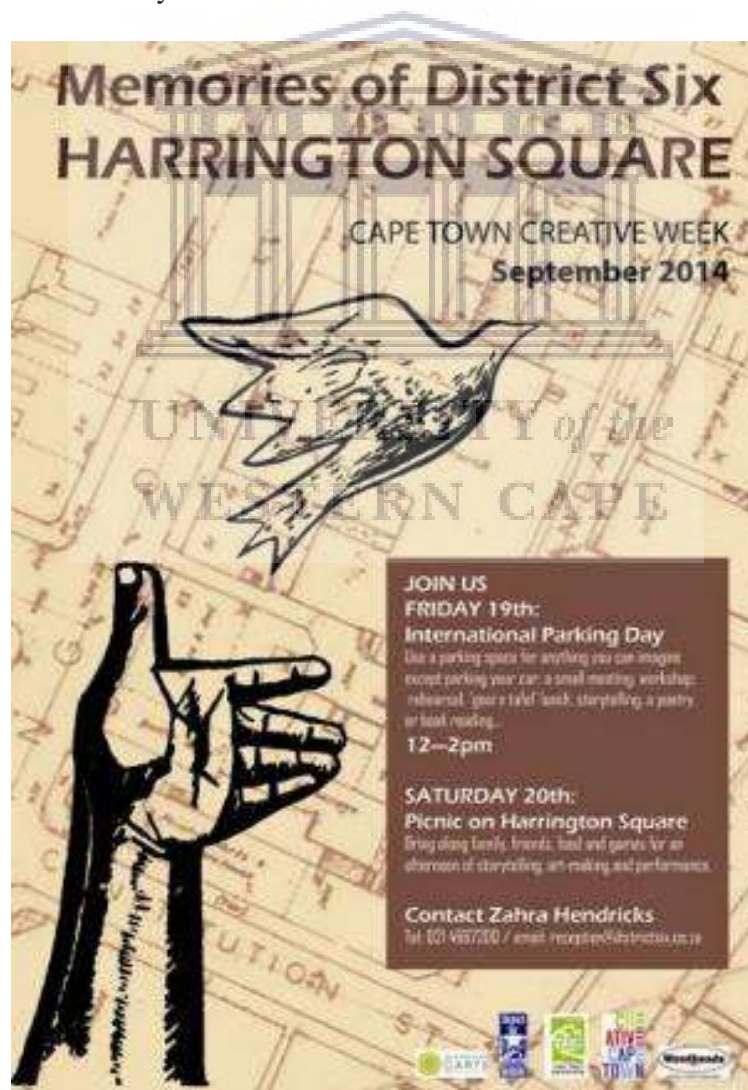


Figure 5.15: District Six Museum *Memories of District Six Harrington Square* invitation design 2014. D6M archive.



Figure 5.16: Harrington Square and District Six Memory Design Lab inscription event. Photographs: Creative Cape Town website.

Lead by Andrew Putter the ‘District Six Memory Lab and Michaelis City Projects’ was part of the 2nd year Discourse of Art course at UCT’s Michaelis¹⁴⁹ School of Fine Art course of using “the city as a context” and “a valuable opportunity for students to learn from the enabling pressures of the real world and to see how involuntary audiences respond to unexpected encounters on the street”.¹⁵⁰ It appeared to be a spontaneous photovoice type project. According to CTP Bulelwa Makalima-Ngewana,

Another project that we are facilitating in the East City through our Neighbourhood Communication Project is a collaboration with the Michaelis School of Fine Art. Some 70 second-year Discourse of Art students have been challenged to break out of their comfort zones and make artworks that question their own creative process and engage with their surroundings. I love that in this way, the city is being used as a playground and an urban lab and that everyone who will encounter one of these wacky interventions will have a unique story about Cape Town to share.¹⁵¹

In response, Rory Williams argued that “the exploratory art projects by the District Six Museum community and Michaelis Fine Art School students in and around Harrington Square during Creative Week 2014 reflect the unpredictability and negotiation that goes into reshaping a city”.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹The Michaelis School of Fine Art was founded in 1925, and is the Fine Arts department of the University of Cape Town.

¹⁵⁰Creative Cape Town, “The District”, accessed 12.10.2014.

¹⁵¹Makalima-Ngewana, “Creative”, accessed 23.02.2019.

¹⁵²Williams, “Creative”, accessed 20.04.2018.



Figure 5.17: “People lived here”, District Six Memory Design Lab at Harrington Square inscription event. Charleys Bakery building is in the background. Photograph: Creative Cape Town website.

At the “People Lived Here” main District Six Memory Design Lab Harrington Square inscription event the fences surrounding the square were transformed into a curated exhibition space by the Museum. Large archival black and white images of buildings text and people were installed. Chalkboards and squares of white fabric were inscribed with pens and hung from a rope across the rows of pepper trees on the square creating a bunting effect. Harrington Square became museumised through inscription utilising established District Six Museum methodologies.



Figure 5.18: Harrington Square District Six Memory Design Lab inscription event 2014. Creative Cape Town website.



Figure 5.19: Hip Hop group performance led by Cape Flats cultural activist Emil X (Emil Jansen).¹⁵³ Photograph: Creative Cape Town website.

A poetry reading, choir and a Hip Hop group performance led by Cape Flats cultural activist Emil X (Emil Jansen) were part of the festivities at Harrington Square.¹⁵⁴

At the District Six Museum, the *Vacant Possession's* exhibition was listed as World Design Project #WDC415 and “proposed to combine information, history pictures, books, stories, food, music, and artefacts in a permanent installation to celebrate the richness of the life and culture that once bloomed in District Six”.¹⁵⁵

Although the District Six Memory Design Lab centered on Harrington Square it “was a temporary intervention” as a kind of outdoor interactive memory room. According to the African Arts Institute, “the hope was to grow these experiments over time, engaging all stakeholders on and near the square, as well as others in the broader city”.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³Hip Hop group Black Noise were banned by the apartheid government. Emil Jansen was a member of Black Noise. Their music commented on racism, conditions in the Cape Flats and identity and a focus on youth-development resulted in a “Heal the Hood project”. Source: Iziko Museums of South Africa, *Singing Freedom, Music and the Struggle Against apartheid*, Exhibition catalogue, Iziko Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 2017, 31.

¹⁵⁴Hip Hop group Black Noise were banned by the apartheid government. Emil Jansen was a member of Black Noise. Their music commented on racism, conditions in the Cape Flats and identity and a focus on youth-development resulted in a “Heal the Hood project”. Source: Iziko Museums of South Africa, *Singing Freedom, Music and the Struggle Against apartheid*, Exhibition catalogue, Iziko Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 2017, 31.

¹⁵⁵City of Cape Town, ‘*World*’, 228.

¹⁵⁶African Arts Institute, “District Six memory Lab Harrington Square Creative Week” <http://www.afai.org.za/district-six-memory-lab-harrington-square-creative-week/>, accessed 20.04.2018.

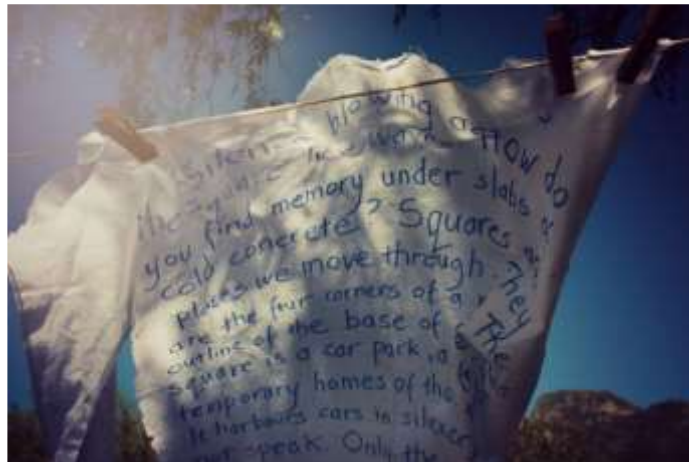


Figure 5.20: Creative tension in the east city: The District Six memory Lab and Michaelis City Project. 19th & 20th September 2014, Photograph: HH-R

The manner in which the District Six Museum challenged the Fringe district concept found expression through participation in WDC on its own terms at Harrington Square. But more importantly, it raised questions around design and its implications and applications in the inner city and the role that design played in reinforcing social divisions. Yet a tension emerged as the museum was firmly entangled in redevelopment and urban gentrification through the renovations of its two East City buildings as part of District Six. The experiences and design legacies of CTWDC2014 through the creation of the Fringe, by Creative Cape Town and the Cape Town Partnership funded by the City of Cape Town, resulted in the museum deploying “tactical museologies” and continued to mark its visual presence through design.¹⁵⁷

District Six Museum design beyond CTWDC2014

In the East City, post WDC2014 many buildings were painted black demarcating the space for increased gentrification that turned the precinct adjacent to Harrington Square into a designed micro environment derived from a steampunk aesthetic.¹⁵⁸ A range of signifying design practices

¹⁵⁷Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

¹⁵⁸Steampunk is an aesthetic and expressive movement based on the the speculative and fiction of the late 20th century; alternate history fantasy of “Gaslight London” or any variety of speculative realms with a retro futurist touch. Steam punking is the craft of taking modern technology affecting or re-imagining the piece with Edwardian/Victorian style mixed in with a more rugged sensibility. The culture puts curiosity, benevolence of technology, and using one's own hands and mind above all else. Since steampunk has it's tinkerer roots in cyberpunk, there is sometimes a thread of dystopian, post-apocalyptic self-reliance to the aesthetic. A particular thread that is best represented in the creativity and utility of those in the Burner culture and the industrial Victoriana look steampunk diverse the range of expressions are in comics, games, wearable art, industrial sculpture, literature, design, stage/performance. In this way steampunk is as much an approach as it is a 'style'. Source: Kimberly Burk “Creating the Future-Past: Understanding Steampunk as

were implemented by a set of new role-players in the East City affiliated with the design and creative sector. New shops with bright lighting and curated interiors popped up against the darkened facades where the tar on the street surfaces blended with the wall tones creating a nighttime effect.

At the time of writing Harrington Square continues to function as a city leased car parking lot and costs R5 per hour or R30 per day to park.¹⁵⁹ The term ‘the Fringe’ district was abandoned by The Cape Town Partnership acting on behalf of the city. In a *Mapping the Work of the Cape Town Partnership 2013: A Journey in Placemaking* fold-out brochure the CTP states:

The Fringe brand was born as a way to market this area. While it has been successful in establishing a ‘Design and innovation District’, the aggressive branding and promotion of a ‘future vision’ for the district also attracted criticism. Concerns about the serious risk of ignoring the historic significance of the area, which falls largely within District Six, potential gentrification and displacement of economically vulnerable people as well as the lack of opportunities for meaningful engagement in the project, were raised.¹⁶⁰

In mid-2017 the City of Cape Town withdrew funding from The Cape Town Partnership. Deputy Mayor Ian Neilson confirmed the cut in funding as the city reviewed its relationships with its partner organisations.¹⁶¹ While certain City of Cape Town funded initiatives diminished post WDC2014 the District Six Museum continued with its cultural and memorial work in Cape Town. Its relationship with design changed when it starts working more closely with the advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather.

In order to compete in an increasingly design-led environment of the East City, the District Six Museum partnered with international New York based British design, branding, marketing, public relations and advertising agency Ogilvy Mather, Cape Town to create a District Six print campaign. The “spirit and lessons” of District Six were evoked:

To produce a limited edition newspaper insert in the Cape Argus dated 23 September 1966, in honour of Heritage Day. The idea is to provide Cape Argus readers with an ‘alternative history’, through offering another view as

Triadic Movement”, (MA thesis Bandeis University August 2010), 8-9.

¹⁵⁹Harrington Square visit 10th July 2019.

¹⁶⁰Cape Town Partnership, “Economic Development, 01 Design Beyond Borders, Project: The Fringe”, *Mapping the Work of the Cape Town Partnership 2013 A Journey in Placemaking*, A5-A0 size pull out brochure map.

¹⁶¹M. Charles, “City pulls plug on partners in the CBD”, IOL news, 20 July 2017, <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/city-pulls-plug-on-partners-in-cbd-10381142>, accessed 07.04.2019.

to what the newspaper might have looked like if the apartheid regime had never proceeded on its destructive course. Real people were used to pay tribute to the sporting, academic, music, artistic and literary achievements of the once vibrant community that was District Six. The aim is to generate conversation of what might have been and what lessons we can learn going forward, by looking back and not making the same mistakes we did then.¹⁶²



Figure 5.21: Ogilvy Cape Town ‘What if District Six had never been demolished’ newspaper. Source: Ogilvy-Blogilvy website.

The printed District Six themed newspaper disseminated on the 24th September 2014 conveyed the museum’s message through a mass media platform. It related to the museum’s intention to take design beyond the confines of the museum and reignite the importance of the District Six story and its heritage for Cape Town¹⁶³.

In 2015 the District Six Museum again partnered with Ogilvy Cape Town to develop a campaign in which the museum offered Worcester residents a ‘free pass’.¹⁶⁴ According to the Ogilvy Blogolvy website:

District Six Museum, together with Ogilvy Cape Town, launched a poignant campaign in The Times on Friday, 13 March, in response to recent media reports concerning Worcester’s introduction of green cards for workers. The campaign took a bold approach in an effort to reach out to citizens of the Boland town a ‘free pass’ to the museum so that they can be reminded of South Africa’s harrowing past. The green card, likened to the ‘dompas’ system from the Apartheid era, was a system used to segregate the

¹⁶²Admin O & G, “What if District Six had never been demolished?” September 23, 2014, <http://www.blogilvy.co.za/2014/09/what-the-cape-argus-would-have-looked-like-in-1966/>, accessed 25.11.2018.

¹⁶³Bestadsontv website, Print ad: District Six Museum: Alternate Reality Newspaper, http://www.bestadsontv.com/files/print/2014/Oct/65979_D6NEWS.jpg, accessed 10.10.2019.

¹⁶⁴Blogilvy, “District Six Museum offers Worcester residents a free pass”, <http://www.blogilvy.co.za/2015/03/district-six-museum-offers-worcester-residents-a-free-pass/>, accessed 03.11.2018.

population and limit the movements of non-white South Africans.¹⁶⁵

The museum utilised advertising and marketing expertise to challenge apartheid thinking and thereby created design leverage and credibility through the ‘free pass’ campaign.

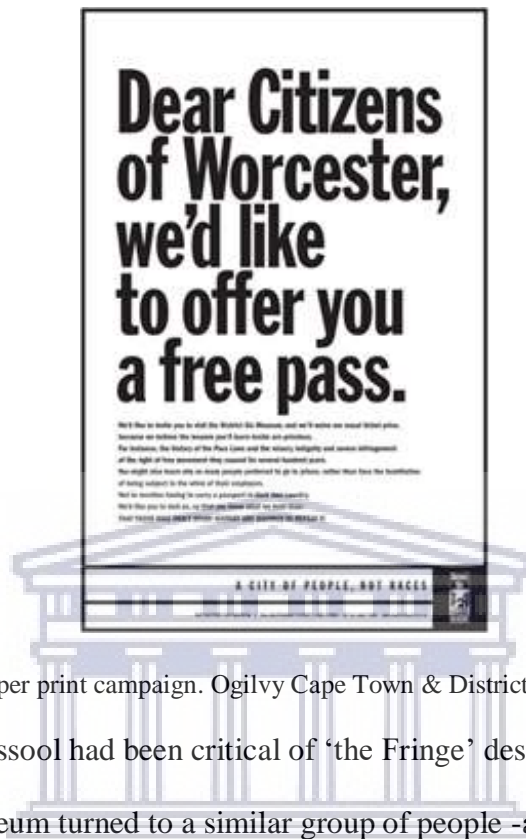


Figure 5.22: District Six newspaper print campaign. Ogilvy Cape Town & District Six Museum, 13th March 2015.

Although the museum and Rassool had been critical of ‘the Fringe’ design district and its hip and trendy design publics the museum turned to a similar group of people - a creative design team - at Ogilvy Cape Town to provide compelling creative design and communication solutions.¹⁶⁶

Museumisation in this context repositioned the museum within a system of world-class advertising. The museum sought to explore and utilise design to improve its image as contemporary relating to newer modes of memorial representation. This moved image making and representations of the District Six community into a more essentialised and professional packaging I am arguing. Utilising text, photography, artefact-symbols and institutional rebranding Ogilvy Cape Town produced a range of new design applications for the District Six Museum.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵Blogilvy, “District Six”, accessed 03.11.2018.

¹⁶⁶In 2014 Ogilvy & Mather Cape Town clients included, VW, Audi, KFC, Cell C, News 24, NSRI Kyknet, Cape Town Tourism, WWF, SAB Miller, Castle Lager, GoPro, DSTV, Defy, Médecins Sans Frontières, The Haven Night Shelter, metropolitan, Coca Cola, Kimberly-Clark, Clorox, Valpre, Mondelez International: Halls and Stimerol.

¹⁶⁷The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, the Robben Island Museum and Zeitz MOCCA in Cape Town utilised advertising agencies to create logo, TV, radio, online and print campaigns.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the declaration of District Six on the 11th February 1966 as a white area and the commencement of forced removals from the area, in 2016 the District Six Museum implemented a number of commemorative projects. It also embarked on institutional rebranding. The introduction of a reworked District Six Museum brand by Ogilvy Cape Town came at an important time in its institutional life cycle. It acted as a galvanizing moment to clarify the values, programmes, and legacies with a view to future museological strategic plans in the city.

Since CTWDC2014, the area around the museum had altered at a fast pace with urban development, businesses and shops attracting younger educated, creative, and urban living publics who had changed the character of the East City area. In 2016 buildings near the museum were being painted dark charcoal or black influenced by a steampunk aesthetic as mentioned earlier.

A number of visual practices by the museum were reformulated and updated to create a consolidated identity. It did so to reposition its brand, attract younger audiences and represent new products and services the museum had co-created with Ogilvy and District Six ex-residents. Moreover, to remain appealing to international visitors, a consolidated graphic institutional brand was produced indicating design modifications to the museums established and applied aesthetics.¹⁶⁸ The museum worked with Ogilvy to produce District Six travelling suitcases as part of a mobile storytelling campaign in which suitcases became memory boxes and marked a renewal of the museum's oral history project. Specialised blue and white tags were designed and printed and District Six Museum walking tours were promoted through remapping District Six with a photographic print campaign. The buildings were repainted and also rebranded with new blue and white signage. Five large vertical black and white District Six photographic vinyl banners were mounted externally as well as a banner naming areas people were removed to.¹⁶⁹

In June 2014 Ogilvy & Mather created a print campaign for the District Six: Museum Walking Tours:

One of the unique experiences offered by the District Six Museum are

¹⁶⁸I am referring here to suitcases, tags, banners and logos that were existing designs within the museum.

¹⁶⁹Mitchell's Plain, Langa, Bonteheuwel, Gugulethu, Heideveld, Nyanga, Mannenberg, Rylands, Hanover Park, Retreat, Lavender Hill, Bridgetown and Silvertown.

Walking Tours of the destroyed site, led by ex-residents. The Walking Tours bring the District back to colourful life and share with visitors a few of the 60 000 stories that will never be demolished. Below are a series of print ads that we have developed for the District Six Museum. Alison Hingle and Tania Barker were the lead creatives on this work and according to them the shoot was extremely challenging as there are only bits of the old streets left and all of the street signs were taken down with the demolition. Overlaying old maps over the most recent maps, they were able to find approximately where each house used to be. Also, a lot of the District Six site is now covered by CPUT. Finding ex-residents for the shoot has been a lot easier – virtually all of them are relatives of people who work at Ogilvy. Because 60 000 people were forcibly removed, many Capetonians have a direct link to District Six.¹⁷⁰



Figure 5.23: Ogilvy District Six Walking Tours print campaign: “Mrs. Aleah Gamielien, 90, at her home at 43 Clifton Street, District Six, Cape Town 60 000 stories that will never be demolished. Book a walking tour through District Six at [www.district six.co.za](http://www.districtsix.co.za)’ Source: Blogilvy website.

Utilising digital colour large format photography Ogilvy updated that the District Six story for the museum were thought-provoking images stimulate concepts and raise questions *about* what is conveyed. The Ogilvy District Six Walking Tours print campaign photographs are very differentiated from the visual storytelling of the intimate *Huis Kombuis* portraits.

¹⁷⁰Blogilvy, “Sixty Thousand Stories that will never be demolished”, June 13, 2014, <http://blogilvy.gloootogilvy.co.za/2014/06/page/3/>, accessed 20.04.2019.

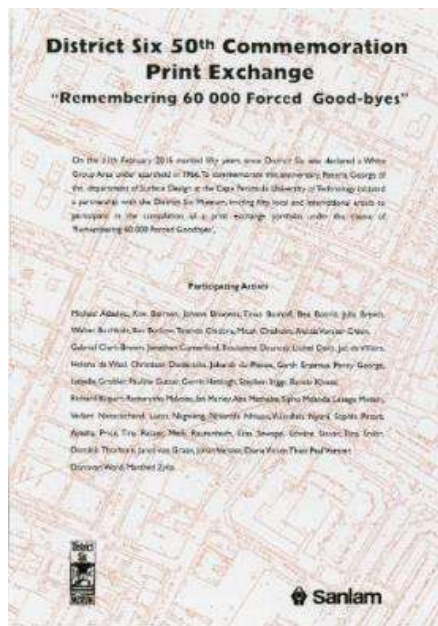


Figure 5.24: “Remember When... Remember Where...” by Micah Joël Chisholm. The artwork is the introduction page for the *District Six 50th Commemoration Print exchange 1966-2016 “Remembering 60 000 Forced Goodbyes”* catalogue, District Six Museum. D6M archive.

In the spirit of the District Six Sculpture Festival of 1997, an exhibition of 50 artists prints in the Homecoming Centre was held. The museum produced a printed catalogue: *District Six 50th Commemoration Print exchange 1966-2016 “Remembering 60 000 Forced Goodbyes.”*¹⁷¹ The exhibition was curated by Penny George from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology’s Surface Design Department in collaboration with the District Six Museum and Hardground Printing Studio.¹⁷² The slogans ‘Leaving District Six Remembering 60 000 forced removals’, ‘Remembering 60 000 Forced Goodbyes’ and ‘60 000 stories will never be demolished’ were developed to mark “50 years since apartheid destroyed our most diverse community” in partnership with Ogilvy Cape Town.¹⁷³

Ogilvy’s creative team created a series of new high contrast blue and white graphic designs consisting of white text and image applied on a colour block of blue ground and incorporated the three new slogans. It was applied in horizontal and vertical formats to t-shirts, pull up banners and tags that were utilised as *strikkies* (bunting) and suitcase tags.

¹⁷¹District Six Museum, *District Six 50th Commemoration Print exchange 1966-2016 “Remembering 60 000 Forced Goodbyes”*, catalogue, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2016).

¹⁷²What’s On @ D6M blog, “50th Commemoration Print Exchange – Exhibition now on at the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre”, accessed 06.07.2019.

¹⁷³Blogilvy, “Sixty”, accessed 20.04.2019.



Figure 5.25: District Six Museum horizontal logo incorporated into colour blocked high impact design featuring three new slogans 2016. D6M archive.

These new design developments were articulated by Luca Gallarelli, Managing Director of Ogilvy & Mather Cape Town:

District Six and the District Six Museum occupy a very special place in Ogilvy & Mather Cape Town's hearts. O & M Cape Town is located right on the fringe of where the displacements happened; we stare out over the empty space on a daily basis. Our partnership with the museum is our way of contributing back to an area which has given us so much. O & M Cape Town is determined to play our part in telling the stories of so many who never had the opportunity.¹⁷⁴

Storytelling suitcases were developed as a design that engaged with the legacy of apartheid spatial engineering in Cape Town.¹⁷⁵ The suitcases symbolised and re-enacted multiple journeys that contained objects people packed when they were removed.¹⁷⁶ F. Vilette, Cape Times newspaper reported writes:

Working with the museum and with some of the evictees, the agency found several vintage 1960s suitcases and filled them with items from the era including personal items, books, clothing, valuables, actual photographs and apartheid-era identity documents with racial designations like "Cape Coloured" and "Bantu". In March the suitcases were placed on the international and domestic baggage carousels at Cape Town International Airport where they were exposed to a captive audience of 23 000 people per day. The collection is still on display at the District Six Museum.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴Blogilvy, "District Six Museum offers Worcester residents a free pass", <http://www.blogilvy.co.za/2015/03/district-six-museum-offers-worcester-residents-a-free-pass/>, accessed 03.11.2018.

¹⁷⁵The District Six Museum utilised suitcases as inscription surfaces and memory boxes in workshops with ex-residents. Suitcases were also utilised as props in the museum to symbolise removals from District Six.

¹⁷⁶Blogilvy, "A suitcase named Forced Removal", May 30 2016, <http://www.blogilvy.co.za/2016/05/a-suitcase-labelled-forced-removal/>, accessed 07.03.2019.

¹⁷⁷F. Vilette, "Suitcases open up window to the past", *Cape Times*, 29 May 2016,

DISTRICT SIX TRAVELLING SUITCASES



2/60 0000 stories



On the 4th of October 1963, the Ngqeleno family were loaded onto the back of a truck to Nyanga West, 30 kilometres from District Six. Against the odds, **NOMVUYO NGQELWANE'S** love of learning helped her qualify as a primary school teacher. Nomvuyo kept plenty of photographs – both formal and informal – of her life in District Six.

In researching Nomvuyo's suitcase, we realised how precious books were to her and her family. Education was key to rising out of poverty and so we had to build her objectivity around books. Her love of family and friends was portrayed through reprinting her personal photographs from the District Six Museum's archives and including a vintage 35mm film camera. As her family never had electricity, a paraffin lamp would have been a necessity.

Suitcases had previously been personalised and utilised as mobile memory containers by a number of District Six ex-residents participating in mobile storytelling projects facilitated by the museum.¹⁷⁸ The concept was taken further by Ogilvy by using the suitcase as artifact and symbol of forced removals to create a branded version. The suitcases became mini-exhibits and extended the museum's exhibitionary framework. Ogilvy "also took some of the original District Six evictees to the airport to share their stories with visitors one-on-one".¹⁷⁹ Each suitcase is numbered as a series and focuses on one particular narrative of removal from a biographical perspective. Objects in the suitcase create a nostalgic reading as one is drawn into the details of photographs and items precious to the person featured. In this framing, the suitcase represents national, local and individual forced removals but the graphic text turns the suitcase into a District Six Museum branded product. Ogilvy designed blue and white graphic custom-made luggage tags "each telling an individual eviction story and offering a discount on entry to the museum, tied onto incoming suitcases.

<https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/news/suitcases-open-up-window-to-the-past-2027738>, accessed 05.03.2019.

¹⁷⁸District Six Museum, Suitcase Exhibition, <https://www.districtsix.co.za/project/suitcase-exhibition/>.

¹⁷⁹Villette, "Suitcases", accessed 05.03.2019.



Figure 5.26: The District Six Travelling Suitcases conceptual design solution by Ogilvy Cape Town at Cape Town International airport. The suitcases were later incorporated into the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. Source: Ogilvy website.



Figure 5.27: Ogilvy conceptualised and designed suitcases with District Six Museum branding in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. The District Six as a Heritage Site petition form is visible on the left standing upright in a suitcase. Photograph: HH-R.

The tag could be termed “anonymous design” such as a paper clip, buckle, cork, screw, clothes peg, and drawing board pin. Printing the tags moves the ordinary tag into a themed branded tag.¹⁸⁰ In terms of extending the District Six Museum’s institutional brand, design methodologies and museumisation the suitcases were turned into evocative and nostalgic museum memory boxes.



Figure 5.28: District Six Museum branded suitcases by Ogilvy and the District Six Museum mobile storytelling campaign suitcases are aesthetically differentiated. Photographs: HH-R.

¹⁸⁰C and P Fiell, “Anonymous design” in *Design Handbook concepts materials styles*, (Köln: Taschen, 2006), 14.



Figure 5.29: District Six Museum tag design and application as decorative *strikkies* (bunting) hung in the museum and as a pull up banner design. D6M archive and Photographs HH-R.

New external museum banners for the Methodist Church building were designed utilising enlarged black and white archival photographs of District Six depicting people and the urban landscape. New blue and white two-tone external museum signage appeared in 2016 complementing the Ogilvy graphic colour blocking aesthetic designed for the suitcases, banners, and tags inside the museum.



Figure 5.30: Color-blocked blue and white signage engineered to sit within the historic plaster detail of the Buitenkant Street Museum façade created more visual unity and legibility. Photograph HH-R.

On the Methodist Church building, the external paint colours of soft pink and white were overpainted with a deep taupe and beige colouration creating a neutral background for the high contrast digitally printed matt black and white photographic banners with oversized images. The hand-painted craft aesthetic of the previous banners was replaced with high impact imagery.

Utilising archival photographs found within the museum collections, displayed in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition and museum advertising brochures created greater association. This coordinated approach blended institutional, architectural and social histories through manipulation, subject matter, and placement. It grafted District Six onto the walls of the church building refocusing on the District Six social landscape resulting in a shift away from the Beyond District Six theme. The new two-tone logo, memorial and marketing material by the museum illustrated a purposeful change that assisted in transforming the brand's image into a mainstream institutional design across various applications. Branding the building through the technologies of digital photographic print processes and a more graphic style leveraged the institutional and cultural profile of the museum into an enhanced landmark in Cape Town.



Figure 5.31: Above: Vertical photographic vinyl banners and museum colour blocked signage on the Albertus Street side of the museum building.

The visible branded high contrast elements including museum signage convey that design is an influential memorial museum methodology. Photographic billboard curation of the exterior facade converts the building into another museum memory project as the images do not directly correlate with the building's history. Design in this context firmly establishes how the building proclaims a new set of social histories representative of post-apartheid identities as a cultural node with which to invest meaning in the city.¹⁸¹



Figure 5.32: The 'District Six in Peninsula Maternity Hospital, Peninsula Maternity Hospital in District Six 1921-1992' mural was designed and painted by PMH memory project participants on the District Six Clinic wall as a project of the District Six Museum 2017. Photograph: HH-R.

¹⁸¹Houston, et al *The Liberation Struggle* 15 November 2013.



Figure 5.33: D6M graphic blue and white banner signage against a backdrop of black and white archival photographs with the museum's horizontal logo attached to a fence where a District Six phase three new apartment and housing complex was in the early stages of construction Photograph: David Harrison.¹⁸²



Figure 5.34: Museumisation includes preparing District Six for inscription. Middle: A photograph of Hanover Street positioned on a fence located in the same position as the former street set against CPUT's student residence buildings. Photograph: Araf Hendriks.¹⁸³ Below: A large blue and white museum logo pasted on the road surface where a remaining piece of Hanover Street was visible. A cairn of painted stones was reconfigured in a D6 formation and marks this as the museum's District Six memorial site. The cairn of stones dates from 1994 and is rebuilt each year. Photograph: D6M archive.

¹⁸²David Harrison, photograph in Ilham Rawoot, "District Six fails to rise from the ashes of apartheid" Mail and Guardian, National, 19 Feb 2016, <https://mg.co.za/article/2016-02-18-district-six-is-failing-to-rise-from-the-ashes-of-apartheid>, accessed 04.07.2017.

¹⁸³Ashraf Hendriks, "Hanover Street superimposed over CPUT student residences in original position before, push for District Six to be Heritage Site", 23 September 2016, GroundUp, <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/decade-long-push-district-six-be-declared-heritage-site/>, 03.02.2019.



Figure 5.35: District Six Museum annual Walk of Remembrance 2017 invitation. Mobile museum design methodologies include street signs, photographs, suitcases, banners and branded tags for inscription. D6M archive.

Claiming District Six through inscription by ex-residents means no longer writing on the map and memory cloth as in the early years of the *Streets: Retracing District Six* and *Digging Deeper* exhibitions. Instead, exhibition openings and events curated by the museum have become opportunities to perform identity and community to showcase, reinforce, record, inscript and document community milestones. Processes of inscription have shifted to specific moments during workshop processes, at exhibitions openings, or during commemorative walks where messages are written on tags and tied to fences or wrapped around stones. Blue and white printed graphic tags are fixed to the CPUT fence in District Six by ex-residents as commemorative inscription. The inscripted tags re-create and re-visit the first inscriptions on the memory cloths and map that create a continuation of memorialisation through this methodology. Photographed, these inscripted reminders are utilised in annual reports and applied in various forms.

CTWDC2014 made explicit in the museum the realisation of its own design work in which design was no longer a signifier of community rituals, remembrance or agency but increasingly represented “tactical museologies”.¹⁸⁴ Utilising design terminology and design-led marketing and

¹⁸⁴Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

branding by the museum has created tensions over representing a community marginalised by apartheid. Indeed, as well as increasingly forefronting design which I am defining as museumisation, collaborations with Ogilvy Cape Town lead to manifestations of world class design. The District Six Museum as an independent community museum utilising “tactical museologies” after Buntix and Karp redesigned District Six through museumisation. In line with the restitution process and reclaiming District Six Keizersgracht Street, a dual carriageway, was renamed Hanover Street on Heritage day 24th September 2019. Keizergracht was not built over Hanover Street, therefore this renaming erases the original street and its histories referencing apartheid practice. Zonnebloem was renamed District Six on 17th Dec 2019 by the Western Cape Provincial Geographical Names Committee, therefore, returning to its original name.

Image making conclusions

This chapter examines how claims to local histories and memorialisation of dispossession and a global design event CTWDC2014 collided and in doing so made apparent questions about how entitlement to place was articulated in the East City. As Cape Town was identified as a highly desired global long haul tourist destination and became more urbanised, “conflicting rationalities”, as described by Ismail Farouk, emerged between preserving historic urban fabric and the memories associated with the city’s past, its cultural capital, yet providing new interpretations of the city’s future.¹⁸⁵ The effects of the WDC2014 bid resulted in the East City being rebranded ‘the Fringe’ claimed as urban regeneration in Cape Town. Shaping the East city into ‘the Fringe’ was enabled by new digital technologies such as social media, websites and the consumerist practices of visual cultures. This indicated a shift from the memory-led “histories from the margins” sensitivity of the 1990s which has been replaced with a commercial design climate in the post-apartheid city.¹⁸⁶ Although complicit in gentrification and urban renewal in the East City, as a mechanism for cultural

¹⁸⁵I. Farouk, “District Six on the Fringe: The absence of memory in design-led urban regeneration, Conflicting rationalities: post-apartheid spatial legacies and the creative city”, paper presentation, District Six Museum, 29th May 2013.

¹⁸⁶World Design Capital projects do not unlayer design histories of the city and their underpinning technologies, geographies and politics nor do they appear to feature memorywork.

survival, the museum contested yet also adopted contemporary versions and incarnations of design. Zayd Minty, one of the conceptualisers of the Fringe concept on behalf of the City of Cape Town, reflecting on CTWDC2014 states:

The conversations around design as a cross-cutting activity was invaluable and helped many sectors to think strategically. It was an opportunity to work at a more audacious scale. It created the possibilities for new connections, sharing of skills and knowledge and opened potential for new collaborations.¹⁸⁷

Further applications in website design and a range of branded *Memory Threads* soft furnishing products, cushions covers, bags, D6M stickers, gift bags, caps, pens, publications, and postcards extended the distinctive District Six Museum design promoting the brand for consumption by museum visitors.

The museum contested and collaborated in CTWDC2014 on its own terms but in doing so also became far more enmeshed in branding itself. The work with Ogilvy Mather was a signifier of this. Through design, I argue the museum represents simultaneously local landscapes and global branding as it entered into a commercial phase in museum making by rejuvenating its brand as an economic survival strategy making a contemporary move exploiting the power of visual culture. It did not just turn into a brand but utilised the creative team at Ogilvy to create high impact visual solutions thereby emphasising tensions in museumising District Six. The District Six Museum as institution, cultural brand and signifier of a community became firmly established in the post-apartheid urban landscape of Cape Town through design.

¹⁸⁷Z. Minty, "The Missed Opportunity: World Design Capital 2014", December 14, 2017, Creative City South <https://creativecommons.org/blog-1/2017/12/13/missed-opportunity-wdc14>, accessed 12.06.2019.

Conclusion

The central aim of this study was to rethink what design signals in a post-apartheid community museum and to map understandings of museumisation as design. I endeavoured to establish a design history of the District Six Museum through an unlayering of design, exploring the very constructedness of the museum as a space of method, selection, process and representation. Navigating the museum through the social made visual generated a diverse and prolific range of museum designs. In re-imagining forced removals and people slowly returning to District Six I sought to problematise remembrance and District Six Museum design making within globalising and touristic Cape Town.

I was guided by the research question: What does a design history of a South African post-apartheid community museum, the District Six Museum, signify within the context of a city defined by dispossession and designated a World Design Capital in 2014? My key finding is that community recovery in a post-apartheid museum relied on various design frameworks, practices, expertise and forms. To substantiate this I traced how the practice of museumisation created design differentiation which acted as a significant component to how District Six has been constructed and represented as a community museum, mainly through visual production.

In order to contest the museum's romanticised construction of District Six, I utilised design history, a relatively new discipline established in the 1970s, to track museumisation as design. Design history globally, as a field of enquiry and research, has shifted conceptually to incorporate new paradigms resulting in expanded interpretations and intersections becoming an increasingly interdisciplinary field. I noted a gap in terms of how specific applications of design and technologies influenced and constituted post-apartheid museum forms, as new museologies were established to make meaning of apartheid experience.

I closely read the District Six Museum's design work and created thick description after Clifford Geertz.¹ Researching and writing a design history revealed innovative design frameworks cast as idioms where aesthetic forms were seen as a relevant approach rather than objects. Objects do not play a significant role in how District Six narratives and visual brand are expressed by the museum. I investigated the practice and research processes behind how District Six Museum design was conceptualised and applied as musemisation reviewing collections, exhibitions, branding, buildings, and within the context of CTWDC2014.

District Six Museum design phases are evident. Firstly, as individual memories and biographies in the *Streets: Retracing District Six* exhibition. Secondly, as District Six social, oral and visual histories in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition in the Buitenkant Methodist Church building. Thirdly as restitution in *Die Tafel* exhibition in the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre building. The Museum's relationship with Ogilvy Cape Town and the subsequent design solutions that were applied moved the museum from an original District Six project of memory and community recovery into a visual culture of branding and world-class design with inherent tensions.

Indeed, the museum has become differentiated and hybridised as it continues to nurture its founding ethos, sustain community, appeal to younger audiences and create revenue. In doing so, it depended increasingly on a range of expertise to create design solutions and graphic interpretations, which was an intentional "tactical" strategy I am arguing.² It complicates the idea that design is merely a creative act but a position where musemisation is utilised as a political medium to inscribe and encode meaning as well as a means to disseminate and communicate that position.

¹Geertz, "Thick Description", 28.

²Buntix, and Karp, "Tactical", 207.

Indeed, I identified that various design strategies were utilised in the District Six Museum as “tactical museologies”, after Gustavo Buntix and Ivan Karp, creating a visual culture to represent a community in order to forward social justice, human rights, heritage and restitution agendas.³ Leverage created through design applications strengthened claims to parts of the city for the museum and District Six ex-residents who were framed as a community by the Methodist Church, the museum and the restitution process. Investment in design increased cultural capital as well as enabled the museum to contest design-led urban planning in East City.

As the District Six Museum's cultural footprint expanded over time, the scope and aims of design increased that created a transition from craft-based low-tech systems to a reliance on specialised technologies producing high quality products. The craft and hand-made aesthetic of the first wave of museum designs materialised in the embroidered memory cloths, District Six hand-painted and inscribed floor map, fresco mural, silkscreen portraits, Memorial Hall floor mosaic and reproductions of colour tinted District Six photographs in the *Digging Deeper* exhibition. The second wave of design was linked to a particular social aesthetic where curated and mediated “frameworks of representation”, informed by art and design processes, established common graphic characteristics – a visual language –that constituted an effective branding and corporate identity.⁴ The visual language was applied to a constellation of design outputs and museum products in re-imagining District Six. It established that design innovation and branding were important to the museum project and its politics of memory. The craft aesthetic and weathered textures seen in the exhibitions continued to be referenced in museum graphic designs when rebranding was applied to the District Six Museum in 2016.

³Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

⁴Delpont, “Digging”, 159.

A key realisation in this thesis was that by adopting more immediate forms of documenting “history from below” design strategies initially emerged that platformed sensibilities sensitive to testimony.⁵ Historian Bill Nasson argued and advocated that the histories of District Six would ultimately utilise oral history as the main methodology where a sound recorder was the key collecting technology.⁶ The archive of sound recordings collected from ex-residents allowed the “channelling” of “voice” where, according to the Chrischené Julius “historical evidence was viewed as visual, oral and ultimately an aesthetic form”.⁷ This lens of working, and I would argue seminal museum moment, noted by Julius thus established a system of knowledge production and research that created numerous visual and aesthetic frameworks. I include and classify voice as a form of design as it continues to be a curated aspect of the museum experience.⁸ Julius argues that through the interview process, transcription and extraction text was manipulated to create visual applications, in the exhibition where ex-residents “voices” were so altered and mediated that the museum almost spoke on behalf of ex-residents.⁹

Julius notes that a “key focus of its displays was to render the hidden voices of a District Six story in a public forum where they could be acknowledged”.¹⁰ Furthermore, as the museum became more structured and systemised it “provided a receptive space where these stories were told, *heard*, and cooperatively incorporated into its displays. Its agency, however, in ensuring that these voices were heard by others and made visible, became a key role that defined its own institutional narrative”.¹¹

⁵Julius, ‘Oral’, 11.

⁶Nasson, “Oral History”47.

⁷Julius, “Oral history”, 120.

⁸Sound domes, storied lives and voices of ex-resident tour guides are an integral feature of the museum exhibitions.

⁹Julius, “Digging”, 131.

¹⁰Julius, “Oral”, 121.

¹¹Julius, “Oral”, 121.

Notions of revealing “hidden voices” shaped the adaptive reuse of the Methodist church building for the District Six Museum.¹² Acts of oral transference took place and were regularly recorded, contained and stored in the sound archive, a dedicated space designed for that purpose. Voice defined the design of space in the museum during the Methodist Church building renovations and adaptive reuse where memory rooms were designed to evoke and transmit lived experience. Archaeology also stood for District Six social histories in the museum rather than ex-residents storied lives as noted by Rassool.¹³ Therefore particular qualities were lost in curation and contradictions arose around representativeness, customisation and commodification.

To unlayer design, I created eight archival stories from seemingly ordinary objects that had been relegated to the archival storage rooms and resource centre of the museum. After James Deetz I studied the “small things forgotten” that proved to be insightful as the museum has a variety of different archiving practices, including unaccessioned objects used as museum props. The diverse archival stories I created from a post-apartheid community museum collection were so different from one another and the exhibitions yet signalled memory in different ways. The case studies foregrounded and established a rich source of social history although more importantly revealed different archiving and accessioning practices in each case study. Each case study revealed its history and connection to District Six thereby constructing further knowledge relating to its position of archivability and relationship to the exhibition narrative. Yet I also detected repository isolation and setting apart where a hierarchy of importance connected to District Six representativeness determined value and held different archival implications. For instance, the sound recorders were accessioned apart from the sound archive and are not displayed in the exhibitions. Yet

¹²Julius, “Oral”, 121.

¹³Julius, “Oral”, 66-67.

oral histories are claimed to be a vital founding methodology that informed research, exhibition narratives and influenced the aesthetic form of the exhibitions.¹⁴

The museum exhibitions provided an opportunity to understand fabricated design, curatorial selections, art and craft mediums, voice-sound combinations and photographs exhibited as visual histories of District Six that evoked a compelling otherworldly time capsule effect. The museum was through its first permanent exhibition in 1994 *Streets: Retracing District Six* and in 2000 *Digging Deeper* embedded with a range of mediums central to expressing the broad conceptual narrative of “wherever we are, we are here” that further structured the notion that to remember is the museum’s core methodology. The deft manipulation and application of design elements and principles in the museum underscored curatorial knowledge and design expertise.

I found the exhibition *Digging Deeper* was a carefully measured example of creative planning where multiple variables, including empathetic constructs, and design solutions informed the final aesthetic outcome that created a physical, aural and visual environment essentialised to fit into the buildings. The museum through its exhibitions, permanent, temporary and mobile, allow people to develop a relationship with the District Six story and narratives, especially through interactive Encounters tours with ex-residents. This is a highly emotive engagement where the claim to authenticity is qualified through the centrepiece of voice and biography. Due to my nostalgic, overly sentimental and sometimes romantic nature, writing about the District Six Museum’s exhibitions and the convivial energy experienced in those spaces meant that it was the most difficult analysis to write.

¹⁴In the *Digging Deeper* exhibition, the fresco wall “No matter where we are, we are here” conceptualised and painted by Peggy Delpont corresponds with the audio extracts from museum’s oral history and sound collection, as well as its photographic collection. The mural is the result of consultation with the overall museum collection, but interviewee and ex-resident voices drive the meanings behind the mural. The title itself is that of a message written by an ex-resident on the name-cloth in the early years of the museum with its emphasis on voices and narrative in the shaping of the content of the mural. See C. Julius, “Oral history in the exhibitionary strategy of the District Six Museum”, MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2007, 89, and District Six Museum, Commemorative leaflet, *Dedication of Fresco Wall, “No matter where we are, we are here”*, 21 March 2006.

Photographs are another form of inscription and a framework of representation, however also utilised as design, playing a pivotal role in how the District Six Museum uses photographic images as a medium to practice museumisation. Photographs and photographic collections, as well as the museum's own photographic practice, are a key narrative feature of the museum where curated photographs establish idioms of return, such as childhood. Visual entanglements between the family album, the studio and street photographer were conflated in the exhibitions creating a blended interpretation where photographic context is remade to stand for District Six forced removals.

The performative, experiential and interactive qualities of the *Digging Deeper* exhibition were the basis for Jos Thorne's argument about exhibition design. According to Thorne, the curator authors "the experience of the museum as theatre- the viewer as performer".¹⁵ where "the performance of the viewer becomes simultaneously a response to the exhibit and part of it"¹⁶ resulting in a "choreography of display".¹⁷ Zuliega Adams, referring to the experience of ex-residents performativity argues that exhibition design, specifically the District Six floor map, creates a "Fairyland"¹⁸ where ex-residents "lose themselves in the search for a lost place".¹⁹ Therefore, they react in a scripted manner that "compels them to perform".²⁰ The curation of design elements, in both cases determined how people interacted, performed and constructed meaning and identity differently through the museum's exhibitionary strategy.

The District Six Museum conveys the values and mission of the institution in visual and graphic forms that makes it distinct from other cultural brands. It has through an adapted visual language extended its exhibitionary frameworks via in-house and outsourced design

¹⁵Thorne, "The Choreography", 79.

¹⁶Thorne, "The Choreography", 117.

¹⁷Thorne, "The Choreography", 1-3.

¹⁸Adams, "Gazing" 242.

¹⁹Adams, "Gazing", 242-243.

²⁰Adams, "Gazing", 242.

strategies. In doing so, it has become a methodology to brand community and functions as a community museum brand. In a continual process, “Communities are also themselves products of history, and subject to ongoing and contested processes of production and reproduction. Indeed community museums are active agents in the production of community” notes Ciraj Rassool.²¹ This combination has created a high impact brand based on a coordinated approach where colour and visual association across various media is achieved.

The museum’s brand identity creates interplays across different design platforms to sustain a spatial and visual identity in the city. Brand consolidation, in this manner, as a composition of symbols and slogans representing a system of knowledge moved museumisation into design applications such as logos, letterheads, website, brochures, banners, posters and other applications thereby extending the museum’s lifecycle. Stages in District Six Museum brand development are closely aligned to iterative and research processes and product development. New themes and concepts evolved and were developed to create an expanded audience. The *Huis Kombuis* food and memory sub-brand is an example of this design differentiation where reconstructions of memory create expressive art and craft products in a recognisable style yet visually link to the main museum brand. Therefore branding is utilised by the museum as another form of curation and museumisation that forms part of the exhibitionary framework.

The District Six Museum was closely involved in the adaptive reuse of two sets of buildings in Buitenkant Street, Cape Town where specific spaces for memorialisation and museumisation were created. The Methodist Church as owners of the Buitenkant Methodist Church buildings where two established outreach projects were based, utilised the term ‘community’ in RDP renovation funding proposals. The District Six Museum also utilised the

²¹Rassool, “Introduction: The Community Museum”, 15.

term ‘community’ to describe District Six ex-residents and the category of community became conflated. The renovation project was primarily structured around notions of community outreach and recovery and the architect's design brief expressly reflected the adaptive reuse of the church building for a re-imagined community. The buildings represented architectural, social and Methodist Church histories in the city and the museum, through its involvement in the redesign of the buildings, established a firm connection to District Six. The Buitenkant Methodist Church Building retained many religious features that were appropriated by the museum to enhance exhibition inscription that evoked a sense of the spiritual and an “aura” of “authenticity”.²²

The District Six Museum’s Homecoming Centre was redesigned with the aim to expand the Museum’s public programming capacity, enhance museum participation and provide a social space in the city for returning ex-residents and their extended families as part of the District Six restitution process. In both renovations, a high level of heritage and architectural expertise was drawn upon to create spaces for memorialisation.

The District Six Museum’s established “frameworks of representation” and transformation agenda were utilised as a *modus operandi* when it contested design-led solutions in the East City rebranded the Fringe when Cape Town was World Design Capital.²³ Although the museum had been part of the gentrification in Buitenkant Street through the renovations and adaptive reuse of two buildings it employed “tactical museologies” after Buntix and Karp.²⁴ The Museum utilised WDC terminology to contest what was happening in the East City and also adopted a strategy that utilised design describing terms to forward its own participation in CTWDC2014 at Harrington Square. After the Museum contested the branding of the Fringe design and innovation district, it

²²W. Benjamin, “The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction” in *Illuminations*, Trans.by Harry Zohn, ed Hannah Arendt, (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 220.

²³Delport, “Digging deeper”, 159.

²⁴Buntix, and Karp, “Tactical”, 207.

harnessed the power of design through a partnership with Ogilvy Mather Cape Town, where creative teams conceptualised refined graphic forms in a range of high impact creative and cultural products for the District Six Museum. Through increased design investments to forward its institutional objectives and strategic long term plans, the museum's journey into world-class design, meant that by 2016 it had become a major cultural brand in Cape Town based on a strategic design partnership.

The Museum did not set out to become a brand through design. Instead, the District Six Museum commenced rather as a forum to share memories and the experiences of displacement and loss. An activist stance and mobilization of stakeholders ignited the Hands Off District Six campaign that subsequently deepened into a memory project adopting a museum model with which to memorialise District Six that also supported restitution.²⁵

The museum has experienced creative shifts, changing dynamics, economic difficulties, and transitions in its institutional life cycle. Adaption meant the museum generated in-house design work and incorporated outside expertise working with: fine artists; craft practitioners; archeologists; graphic designers; textile designers; layout artists; professional photographers; advertising professionals; cultural activists; website designers; editors; architects; digital reproduction specialists; audio-visual specialists; book designers; publishers; textile printers; lighting specialists and has firmly established academic partnerships hosting interns from local and international Universities.

Collaborative creative networks created new meanings and contained aspects of social design as a transformative and edifying agenda in making the museum brand through an innovative approach to design. Therefore, museum staff mediate and negotiate between expert and non-expert designers in the creation of a long term vision for the Museum brand

²⁵Two post-apartheid museums the Robben Island Museum in Cape Town and the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg commissioned advertising agencies to create memorial brands through design.

where relationships forged through design ensure longevity, permanence, and place in the city. Design as a methodology took shape as a post-apartheid strategy where visual language shifted from the object to a combination of voice, inscription and reproduced image that gravitated towards a visual history.

Reproduction technologies afforded the District Six Museum an ability to create multiple platforms for museumisation. One of the key founding attributes of how District Six was remembered was through the photographic image. I located photographic collections in the archive and an extensive array of photographs are displayed in the exhibitions. Numerous photographs were used in multiple branding applications to create a range of products for the museum. Enlarged archival photographs were attached to the Buitenkant Church museum building. Photographs were again utilised at Harrington square during a CTWDC2014 pop-up event seen in postcards and enlarged for inscription. The museum itself engages in consistent photographic documentation to produce a visual record where intangible commemorative District Six Museum moments are photographed indicating a practice of institutional documentation and recording. Considering the extent to which photography is claimed by the museum, I am arguing that it is utilised as a “tactical museology” as it becomes clear that image making is a particularly powerful medium of communication that the museum harnesses to forward its transformation agenda and brand in the city.

My findings point to an increasing reliance on technologies to create a visual world that is District Six in two buildings that are central to the museum's work, emphasising and allowing an exploration of the illusion of District Six. The role of the photograph and technologies of analogue and later digital reproduction are central to how the visual culture of the District Six Museum has been established. Innovation in information technology, digital processing, cell phone technology, the internet, social media, website, and digitisation coincided with the birth of the museum and this development proved fortuitous.

Writing within the scope and rich range of design history brought forth another realisation that design also masks aspects of District Six museology. A core of highly committed museum professionals guide and steer the museum where relationships with the District Six ex-resident community and their own histories play a vital role in how the museum negotiates its place in the city. These protectionist, dynamic and activist interplays and psychologies simultaneously filter and influence the functioning and importance of design applications and positions.

In this thesis, I sought to examine design through an unlayering of projects, practices and an examination of archival case studies, exhibition curation, the adaptive reuse of buildings and institutional rebranding. The particularities of the claims to design work at the District Six Museum provided a rich case for relating to other contemporaneous processes of making apartheid's spatial practices visible as projects such as this claim community. Therefore, I demystified this reified term design as method and practice where post-apartheid community museum 'making' has been fashioned through investment in various design disciplines, forms and practices revealing the inherent complexity in doing so.

There is an absence of design histories in the global South where all too often the discipline of Design History is viewed from a northern, western and developed worldview perspective, its point of origin. Memorial and commemorative processes of museumisation revealed a vast differentiation of design within the District Six Museum, a post-apartheid community museum in Cape Town. Writing a post-apartheid community museum design history from the margins has created awareness of emergent forms of museumisation and speaks to how design history and practice intersects and converges with social, public and visual histories. The District Six Museum actively utilises design to assert cultural claims and represent social identities that claim tourist imaginations and part of the urban landscape in the contests over meaning in post-apartheid Cape Town.

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