



ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021

UNTOLD STORIES: recognising,
understanding, and reimagining the untold
and hidden narratives through visual art



29 SEPTEMBER – 2 OCTOBER, 2021



Hosted by the Research Niche:
Visual Narratives and Creative Outputs (ViNCO), North-West University



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The South African Visual Arts Historians Association (SAVAH) and Research Niche Visual Narratives and Creative Outputs (ViNCO) would like to thank our partners and sponsors for their generous support.

We are grateful to Prof Mirna Nel, Deputy-Dean, Research and Innovation, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, for financial support of the conference.

We also thank the National Research Foundation (NRF) grant that provided us with the funds to host our conference speakers, finance technical support of the virtual conference, pre-conference workshops for emerging scholars and the *Untold Stories* exhibition. The views expressed at the conference are not the views of the NRF, but of individual participants.

ViNCO would like to thank the NWU Art Gallery, curator Amohelang Mohajane and the 2021 History of Art Honours class for hosting and curating the *Untold Stories* exhibition which opens during this conference. The exhibition was also generously supported by NWU Arts.

Finally, we are grateful to members of the SAVAH Council and ViNCO for their hard work in organising and making this conference possible.



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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE THEME

Dear SAVAH delegates,

The story of this conference begins with a LinkedIn message from then ViNCO research director, Dr Moya Goosen, to me about possible collaborations in late 2018. Fast forward a series of discussions, two years, many proposals, a few job changes, some tears and a pandemic later and we here we are, welcoming you to 35th Annual SAVAH conference generously hosted by the Research Niche: Visual Narratives and Creative Outcomes (ViNCO) of the North-West University (NWU). Thank you Moya, for making contact, and taking the leap for ViNCO to host the conference!

As Dr Annemi Conradie (the current ViNCO research director) points out in her welcome note, this is the first time the conference is being hosted by NWU. Holding our annual conference at higher education institutions where it has not previously been held is part of SAVAH's ongoing aim to grow and transform the discipline of art history, and to open up the conversation to as wide an audience as possible. We are grateful to ViNCO and NWU, especially Prof. Mirna Nel, Deputy Dean of Research in the Faculty of Humanities at NWU, for believing in and supporting the project, both financially, and with expert scholarly advice from day one.

The theme for this year's conference, which relates directly to ViNCO's research focus on exploring visual narratives, emerged from critical conversations around the work that artists, art historians and visual culture theorists do: we uncover and engage with the stories of others, and in the process we tell our own stories, creating new ways of narrating experience. To explore innovative ways of telling 'untold stories' is urgent as we grapple with the need to find new ways of doing art history in the decolonial turn.

SAVAH and VINCO believe strongly in supporting post graduate students and emerging academics to join the scholarly conversation. We therefore raised funds to award 6 conference participation grants to postgraduate students whose abstracts were accepted but who did not have funds to attend the conference. Huge congratulations to Nocebo Bucibo, Manuela Holzer, Andrew Sutherland, Abri de Swart, Catherina de Klerk and Heidi Sincuba, the recipients of the competitive 2021 SAVAH/ ViNCO Conference Participation Grants.



Part of the grant included a series of pre-conference academic skills development workshops, facilitated by Dr Irene Bronner. Thanks Irene, for sharing your expertise; for your mentorship and commitment to developing the next generation of arts historians.

This conference would not be possible without the commitment and dedication of all who worked to make it possible. Thank you to all our colleagues at ViNCO, especially Dr Annemi Conradie and Ms. Ellynette Lartz, who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes for months to make this conference happen. Thanks to the SAVAH council, especially, Dr Justine Wintjes for working to get the website registration and voting platforms working. Thanks to our invited speakers and panellists for sharing your experience and work with us. Thanks must also go to our session chairs, who generously accepted our request for help. Finally, but definitely not least, thank you everyone who participating in this conference, I am looking forward to robust dialogues and geeking out about art, theory and storytelling together.

Dr Alison Kearney
(SAVAH President)



WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE THEME

Welcome note from the ViNCO Research Director

It is with pleasure and great excitement that the Research Niche: Visual Narratives and Creative Outcomes (ViNCO) of the North-West University welcomes you to the 2021 SAVAH conference. This is the first year that the conference is hosted by NWU and it is the first year that SAVAH goes virtual.

While the ViNCO team regrettably can't welcome you to the campus in Potchefstroom and we won't be meeting face to face, working in a virtual platform has offered new possibilities for the ways we present and engage with visual arts historical scholarship. The relative ease and affordability of connecting remotely also afforded us greater scope for seminars and workshops held with local and international participants in the run-up to the conference.

This year's topic attracted a diverse array of topics and methodological approaches, including several proposals by artists-scholars who reflect on their own practice. I am certain that presenters and audiences alike will find the sessions to be thought-provoking and that the shared work and ideas may spark conversations, debate, and new connections.

My sincere thanks to everyone who made this conference possible: the sponsors and participants noted in the acknowledgements, keynote speakers Christine Eyene and Senzeni Marasela, the presenters and panellists, colleagues at SAVAH, ViNCO administrator Ellynette Lartz and the conference organising team.

Best regards,

Dr Annemi Conradie



MEET OUR CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Image courtesy: Eyonart

Christine Eyene

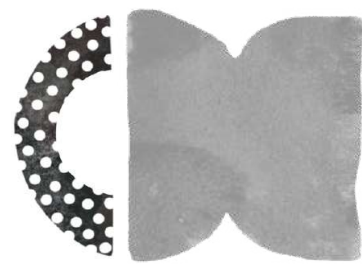
Christine Eyene's keynote address will focus on Black representation in the work of photographer George Hallett (1942-2020), bridging South African and Diasporic visual narratives through iconography and aesthetics, the transmission of images across generations, and the methods of resistance to institutional erasure through the formation of independent forms of archives.

Christine Eyene is an art historian, critic and curator. She is a PhD candidate at Birkbeck, University of London and is writing a thesis on the relationship between image-making processes and African literature in the work of George Hallett, under the supervision of Professor Annie E. Coombes.

She is also a Research Fellow in Contemporary Art at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) where she collaborates to Making Histories Visible, an interdisciplinary visual arts research project led by the artist and Professor of Contemporary Art Lubaina Himid. Eyene's areas of research and curatorial practice encompass contemporary African and Diaspora arts, feminism, lens-based media, and sound art. Her other interests include: socially-engaged initiatives, urban culture, music, design, and most recently, art in the rural environment.

As an art writer, her latest essays include contributions to *Cosmogonies: Zinsou, an African Collection*. (Milan: Silvana Editoriale; Montpellier, MO.CO, July 2021), Alice Mann, *Drummings* (London: Gost Books, Nov. 2021), Lubaina Himid (London: Tate Publishing, Nov. 2021) and *Tracey Rose: Shooting Down Babylon* (Cape Town: Zeitz Mocaa, Dec. 2021).

www.eyonart.com



MEET OUR CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Image courtesy: Sezen Marasela

Sezen Marasela

Sezen Marasela is a cross-disciplinary artist who explores photography, video, prints, and mixed-medium installations involving textiles and embroidery. Her work deals with history, memory, and personal narrative, emphasising historical gaps and overlooked figures. Her SAVAH keynote will focus on her artistic practice and the body of work *Commemorating Marikana*.

Born in 1977 in Thokoza, Sezen Marasela lives and works in Soweto, South Africa. She graduated from the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in 1998, and shortly thereafter completed a residency at the South African National Gallery, culminating in her work for the Gallery's Fresh exhibition series. Marasela's work has been widely exhibited in South Africa, Europe, and the United States. Her work features in prominent local and international collections, including the Newark Museum, Smithsonian Institution and MoMA, New York, as well as some private collections such as the Leridon collection in Paris, the Harry David collection in Athens and the Sindika Dokolo collection in Angola. She was part of the 56th Johannesburg Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2015).

Her solo exhibitions include *Waiting for Gebane*, Zeitz Museum of Contemporary African Art, Cape Town (2020 - 2021) *Waiting for Gebane: Dolly Parton* (Toffee Gallery, Darling: 2018); *Sarah, Theodorah and Sezen* in Johannesburg (Art on Paper, Johannesburg: 2011); *Beyond Booty: Covering Sarah Baartman and other Tales* (Axis Gallery, New York: 2010); *"Oh my God you look like shit. Who let you out of the house looking like that?"* (Solo performance, Sternersen Museum, Oslo: 2009); *JONGA – Look at Me! A Museum of Women, Dolls and Memories* (Devon Arts Residency: 2009); *Three Women, Three Voices* (Johannesburg Art Gallery: 2004); *Fresh* (South African National Gallery, Cape Town: 2000).

OPENING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
ANNUAL SAVAH CONFERENCE, NWU ART
GALLERY IS HOSTING:

*UNTOLD STORIES: LEGACY OF THE UNIBO (UNIVERSITY OF BOPHUTHATSWANA)
ARCHIVE, Art of our Alumni, North-West University Collection*



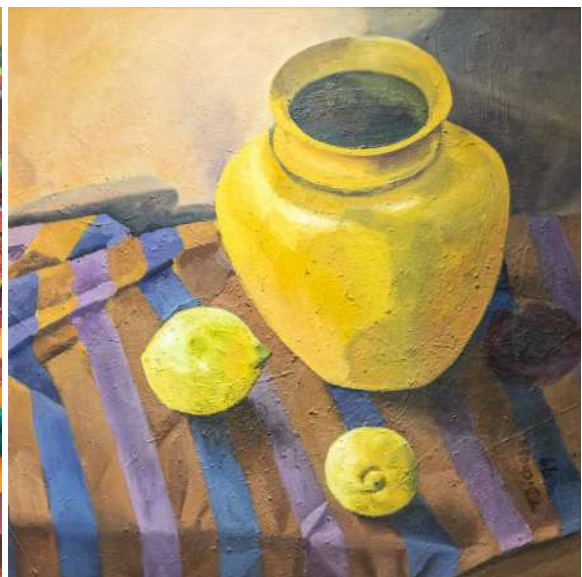
Frank Ledimo 1989. Prospero.



Felicious Dichaba 1989. Untitled



Untitled. Artist not known



Felicious Dichaba. 1997 Untitled



LEGACY OF THE UNIBO ARCHIVE: CONTEXT AND FOCUS OF THE EXHIBITION

The North-West University Art Gallery is proud to present an exhibition of works by art students from the former University of Bophuthatswana (UNIBO). In 2019, more than 50 artworks were found in a storeroom on the Mahikeng campus, where the paintings and sculptures had been relegated for nearly three decades. The works date from the mid-1980s to the 1990s, when the UNIBO (later renamed University of the North-West), offered a Fine Art degree.

There is currently very little published information and no scholarship on art education at UNIBO and UNW during these turbulent years of struggle and transition from apartheid to democracy. While Bophuthatswana and UNIBO's history are no doubt burdened, this archive of artworks testifies to the former university's educational ideals at a time when black students had scant opportunities for studying art in South Africa. This exhibition, curated by Amohelang Mohajane, is an attempt at opening critical discussion and research on the archive.

UNIBO was founded in 1980 in the erstwhile Tswana 'homeland' of Bophuthatswana, one of ten Black 'homelands' or Bantustans. Under various laws promulgated from the early 1950s, the apartheid government assigned a 'homeland' to Black persons according to their presumed ethnic origin. The apartheid government granted a spurious autonomy to 'homelands' such as Bophuthatswana, but it further denied Blacks civil and political rights in what was designated 'white' South Africa. In 1994, the Bantustans ceased to exist and were again incorporated into South Africa.

For president of Bophuthatswana, Lucas Mangope, supporting the arts was vital to both cultural heritage and skills development, and he requested that a department of art be established at UNIBO. The department was established in 1984 and from 1985 to approximately 1994, the art department offered a degree in Fine Art that included painting, drawing, sculpture, Art History, printmaking, educational and maths-based courses focused on visual art.

The exhibition provides an overview of both the arts curriculum of the former department and the personal voices and burgeoning styles of individual students. The subject matter includes still life, figure and perspective studies, portraits, and genre scenes in paint on board, plaster busts, wood carving and lino cuts. There are also striking self-portraits, exploratory and expressive paintings and sculptures that make strong social-political statements and others that experiment with Cubist and Surrealist influences. While most of the works are unsigned and undated, artists such as Daniel Mosako, George Bhunu, Tommy Motswai, Felicious Dichaba, Frank Ledimo and Gemma Tabane are represented in the archive and exhibition.

This is clearly a neglected chapter in South Africa's historical and art historical record. This exhibition and an accompanying panel discussion by alumni and art historians on 2 October are held in the hope of stimulating discussion, research, and scholarship on this rich archive, the students, artists and lecturers, and the socio-historical context of the former art department.

This exhibition was made possible by support from the National Research Foundation and Faculty of Humanities, North-West.

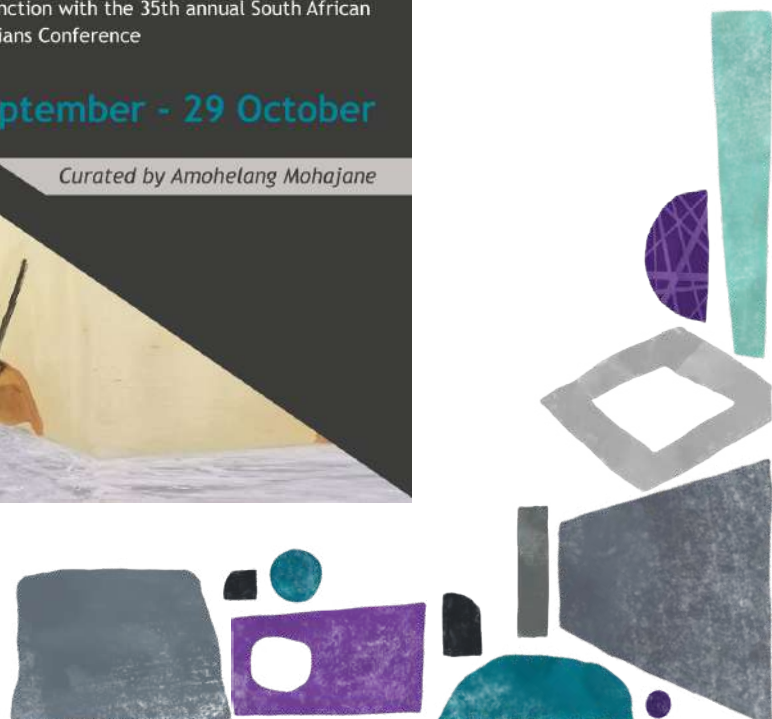
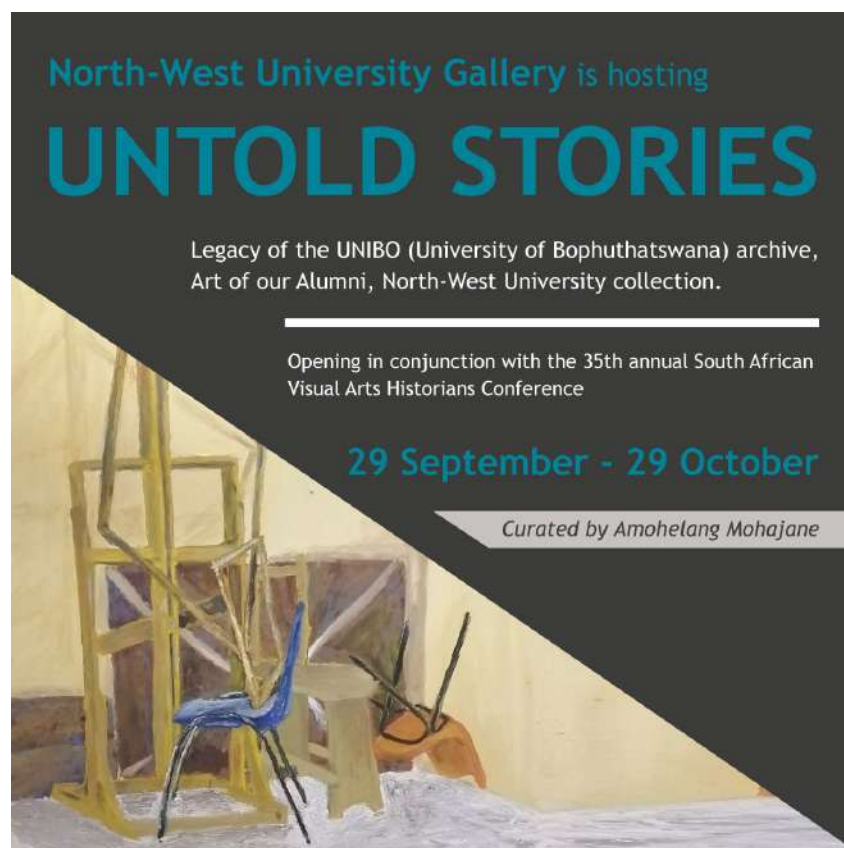
PANEL DISCUSSION: *UNTOLD STORIES: LEGACY OF THE UNIBO ARCHIVE, 2 OCTOBER.*

The following panellists will share their insights and reflections on the archive, the former art department, and its contexts:

Athi Mongezeleli Joja is an art critic and member of the Azanian Philosophical Society.

Prof Estelle Marais is an art historian, artist, and former head of the Art Department, 1984-1999, at the former University of Bophuthatswana / University of the North-West.

Daniel Mosako is an artist, curator, archivist, and alumni of the UNIBO/UNW Art Department.



SAVAH 2021: *UNTOLD STORIES: recognising, understanding, and reimagining the untold and hidden narratives through visual art*

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

DAY 1 • 29 September

8:30 – 8:45	Welcome and introduction to the conference theme: SAVAH president and ViNCO Research Director
8:45 – 8:50	Welcome from the Executive Dean: Faculty of Humanities, Prof Dumisani Moyo
8:50 – 8:55	Practical arrangements for the virtual conference

	SESSION ONE REVISITING ARCHIVES Chair: Karen von Veh	SESSION TWO APPROPRIATIONS Chair: Annemi Conradie
9:00 – 9:30	Highlighted and Hidden Stories: a reconstruction of the Bleek and Lloyd !kun digitised archive. Magdaleen du Toit.	Rupture and Futurism: New Narratives of African Art in the Work of Hilaire Balu Kuyangiko. Alison Kearney
9:30 – 10:00	<i>Plantasie vir die Nasie</i> / Plantation for the Nation: Archive of Body and Sacredness. Mischka Lewis	The Ancestors You Make: Settler Colonialism, Chronic Whiteness, and Art's History. Anna Stielau
10:00 – 10:30	Narrating Nelson Mandela's Experiences in the 1950s: Marco Cianfanelli's <i>Shadow Boxing</i> . Brenda Schmahmann	Cultural Appropriation is Such Fun! <i>SCOPE</i> Magazine in a 1970s South Africa. Stella Viljoen

10:30 – 10:50 BREAK

	SESSION THREE VISUAL CULTURE AND/OF PROTEST Chair: Estelle McDowall	SESSION FOUR PLANETARY RELATIONS Chair: Justine Wintjes
10:50 – 11:20	#EndSARS Movement on Social Media: Memories and Visual Narratives of SARS' Brutality in Nigeria. Sule Ameh James	Memoire of a <i>Pelargonium Cucullatum</i> : exploring the making of an artist book about a particular plant as a method to reveal a relational model for human plant interaction. Marili Jefferies
11:20 – 11:50	On the Margins: A visual narrative of Headloading in 'Lazy Nigerian Youths'. Trevor Vermont Morgan	"The Attempt To Be Here Now": Storying spacetime through photographic exploration. Larita Engelbrecht
11:50– 12:20	Behind Closed Doors: The Hidden Narrative of Graffiti/Vandalistic Inscription at Stellenbosch University. Andrew Sutherland	Between the pages: human fragility and the patina of time in Guy du Toit's <i>Book of Play</i> . Catharina de Klerk.
12:20 – 12:30	BREAK	
12:30 – 13:30	KEYNOTE: CHRISTINE EYENE	

18:00 – 18:45 VIRTUAL EXHIBITION OPENING:
UNTOLD STORIES: LEGACY OF THE UNIBO (University of Bophuthatswana) ARCHIVE.
Art of our alumni: North-West University Collection
 Curated by Amohelang Mohajane

DAY 2 • 30 September

	SESSION FIVE SITES, SPACES, LANDSCAPES Chair: Landi Raubenheimer	SESSION SIX: MODES AND METHODS OF STORYTELLING Chair: Alison Kearney
8:00 – 8:30	Photographing a city as a liminal space. Hein Grové	The stories we tell: of art; of money. Winnie Sze
8:30 – 9:00	Failure and (un)becoming in the work of Lien Botha: Landscapes of Memory and Loss. Leana Van der Merwe	“Spread it (thread it) for me”: Narrative frustration, refusal, and parody in work by Ilené Bothma. Irene Bronner
9:00 – 9:30	Pauline Gutter's re-imagining of the sublime landscape. Willem Venter	How Architects Tell Archaeological Stories. Dominik Lengyel & Catherine Toulouse

9:30 – 9:50 BREAK

	SESSION SEVEN INTERROGATING NARRATIVES & NATIONS Chair: Stella Viljoen	SSESSION EIGHT SILENCING AND VOICING QUEER VOICES Chair: Deirdre Pretorius
9:50 – 10:20	Narratives of Power: Art, History and Cultural Authority in the Central Interior. David Riep	Sunstrokes of Voice. Abri de Swardt.
10:20 – 10:50	Our Africa: the Anti-colonial Struggle in Russian Propaganda Posters (1950s to 1980s). Olga Speakes	The visual representation of Afrikaner identity and homosexual figures in the South African Defence Force and <i>Moffie</i> . Chris Maas
10:50 – 11:20	Stories we tell ourselves: Mythology for the ‘new’ South Africa in Diane Victor's Birth of a Nation Series. Karen von Veh.	Homomasculine performativity and the legitimisation of hegemonic Afrikaner ideals in Oliver Hermanus's <i>Skoonheid</i> and Etienne Kallos's <i>Die Stropers</i> . Danél Boshoff.

11:20 – 11:30 BREAK

11:30 – 12:30	KEYNOTE 2: SENZENI MARASELA
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DAY 3 • 1 October



	SESSION NINE DECOLONIAL METHODOLOGIES Chair: Sule James	SESSION TEN LEGACIES AND (AUTO)BIOGRAPHIES Chair: Danel Boshoff
8:00 – 8:30	From <i>whats to whos</i> : Grounded Theory interviewing as a response to the avatarisation and folding away of gender/ race in the South African art world. Leandra Koenig-Visagie	Following the paths of the labyrinth: attribution of the “Mancoba textile”. Winnie Sze & Johanne Løgstrup.
8:30 – 9:00	Multi-Modes of Erasure: An analysis of the Art History and Visual Culture Curriculum. Mbali Khoza	The Photo-Biography of the Artist in the 20th Century: the Case of Pablo Picasso. Pierre-Emmanuel Perrier de La Bâthie
9:00 – 9:30	A Cabinet of Curiosities in the Postcolony. Deirdre Pretorius	Abstract Expressionism and the Autobiographical Impulse: Forms of Presence and Absence. Carl Schmitz.
9:30 – 10:00	Flying paintings and the thickness of time: emplotment metaphors for narratives of art history. Suzanne Human	Bertina Lopes: The Unspoken legacy. Nancy Dantas

10:00 – 10:20 BREAK

	SESSION ELEVEN DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES Chair: Leandra Koenig-Visagie	SESSION 12 CLOSE LISTENING, QUIET NARRATIVES Chair: Irene Bronner
10:20 – 10:50	Sigiya ngengoma: Ughubhu and African ontology. Heidi Sincuba	Digital narratives of home during lockdown. Jenni Lauwrens
10:50 – 11:20	Forgotten (her and his) stories. Decolonial practices in Latin American and non-Western art. Katarzyna Cytlak	A Story of Strange Comfort: On Hyper-Sincerity, and Online Video Reflexivity, in Kirsten Lepore's <i>Hi Stranger</i> . Johanet Kriel-de Klerk & Martin P. Rossouw
11:20 – 11:50	“All Your Faves are Problematic” – Decolonizing Research at the Johannesburg Art Gallery. Andrea Fitzpatrick	Gamified Grief: Video Games, Artmaking, and Digital Pilgrimage as Commemorative Narrative. Lyrene Kühn-Botma
11:50 – 12:20	Interrogating the notion of ownership of the black female body. Sanelisiwe Neli Nkonyane	Heterochronistic time-space: a queer world-making practice in Steven Cohen's <i>Put Your Heart Under Your Feet... and Walk</i> . Ellynette Larz

12:20 – 14:00 BREAK

14:00 – 15:00 SAVAH Annual General Meeting (For SAVAH members)

DAY 4 • 2 October

	SESSION 13 ARTISTS THINKING FROM/THROUGH PRACTICE Chair: Alison Kearney	SESSION 14 NARRATIVE MATERIALITY Chair: Bulelwa Mbele
8:00 – 8:30	Not By Bread Alone: a tale of a reckoning. Josie Grindrod	Stories (un)told ... narratological possibilities in Jan van der Merwe's <i>It's cold outside</i> . Louisemarié Combrink
8:30 – 9:00	Opening up Toward/Closing away from: Investigating a liminal identity through the construction of a fictionalised autobiography. Marina Herbst	A Visual Narrative: The Aesthetic Manifestations of Nothingness. Robyn Munnick
9:00 – 9:30	'Don't make me over': Mattering intergenerational selves through making. Farieda Nazier	Challenging the stereotypical artistic depictions of madness by discussing the emerging counternarrative offered by" mad artists. Manuela Holzer
9:30 - 10:00	On the fence or building bridges? Jo-Ann Chan	Wearing Your Clothes, Imprinting Your Name: Embodied Storytelling in the Work of Senzeni Marasela and Paul Emmanuel. Alexandra Halligay

10:00 – 10:20 BREAK

	SESSION 15 MEMORY AND REMEMBERING Chair: Katerzyna Cytlak	SESSION 16 VISUALISING THE UNSPOKEN Chair: Ellynette Lartz
10:20 – 10:50	In Order to Know, We Must Imagine for Ourselves: Artistic Responses to Historical Events that Evade Recorded Delineations. Dale Washkansky	Surfacing the hidden through Visual storytelling. Kim Berman
10:50 – 11:20	A story of love and migration emanating from the artworks of Senzeni Marasela (2003 – 2019). Tshegofatso Seoka	The untold stories of survivors. Estelle McDowall
11:20 – 11:50	Relating experiences of place and space or situatedness through Stories. Nocebo Bucibo	Encountering the unspeakable: curating self-narratives. Dineke van der Walt

11:50 – 12:15 BREAK

12:15 – 13:15	PANEL DISCUSSION: <i>UNTOLD STORIES, THE UNIBO ARCHIVE</i> Athi Mongezeleli Joja, Estelle Marias, Daniel Mosako. Moderated by Annemi Conradie
13:15	CLOSING REMARKS by Alison Kearney

DAY 1 • 29 September

ABSTRACTS

(In order of presentation)

Highlighted and Hidden Stories: a reconstruction of the Bleek and Lloyd !kun digitised archive.

Magdaleen du Toit

University of Cape Town

Email: maggiedutoit95@gmail.com

The Bleek and Lloyd collection comprises of more than 13 000 notebook pages, drawings and watercolours from various !xam and !kun informants, collected in the second half of the nineteenth century by philologist, Wilhelm Bleek, and his sister-in-law, Lucy Lloyd. The collection is listed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, has been studied extensively and from many different perspectives - anthropological, linguistic, historical, to name a few - and has been the subject of many creative interventions. Interest in the collection has mainly been focused on the oral histories related by !xam contributors from the now Northern Cape. The material related and created by four !kun boys of northern Namibia southern Angola, collected by Lloyd, which includes nearly 500 drawings and watercolours, has largely been overlooked. Her extensive studies on the !kun language and her personal engagement with !nanni, Tamme, Juma and Da was published in 1911 as no more than an appendix to Specimens of Bushman Folklore. Currently housed between the National Library, the University of Cape, and Iziko South African Museum, scanned copies of the entire collection are accessible online as The Digital Bleek and Lloyd. Like the vast !xam collection, the !kun collection has been ordered and categorised, partially following the initial categories introduced by Bleek in his report to Cape Parliament in 1873, and partially according to scholarly interests alive in the early 2000s at the time of the site's launch. The website's categories and organisation – or curation, I will argue – consequently generate a framework within which certain information is highlighted. A framework, however, neglects whatever does not fit inside it. In the case of an understudied collection such as the !kun notebooks, drawings and watercolours, much stands the risk of being lost to a decided dominant narrative. At a glance, the !kun collection holds the four boys' memories from childhood, insight into their personal histories, in-depth knowledge of plants and animals, and stories of a shape-shifting character named !xue. Lloyd's meticulous marginalia to the collection and the boys' drawings and watercolours inform one another, in a way which is almost like cracking a code. With a focus on the !kun collection, I argue that the Digital Bleek and Lloyd represents a curated version thereof, yet does not indicate authorial accountability, consequently hiding certain readings while highlighting others. I propose an entire reconstruction of the !kun collection, chronologically adherent and thus contextually sensitive.



Plantasie vir die Nasie / Plantation for the Nation: Archive of Body and Sacredness

Mischka Lewis

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History is not kind to us
we restitch it with living
past memory forward
into desire
into panic articulation
of want without having
or even the promise of getting.
- Audre Lorde.

In exploring the relationship between bodies, remembering and the historical trauma of slavery, specifically in relation to indigenous black women, the paper mediates alongside Khoi artist and filmmaker, Deidre Jantjies, on how she negotiates meanings of identity through embodied interventions in (post-) slavery South Africa. In that light, this paper considers the spiritual, imaginative, and poetic elements in storytelling as a way of illuminating the consciousness of people. The positioning of the body as an archive probes questions on how the memory of traumatic wounding in a (post-)slavery South Africa body politics are inscribed to convey meaning, memory, and identity. The notions of embodiment that this paper is concerned with asks in what ways can we creatively and imaginatively re-construct, outside of conventional historiographies and knowledge(s), that which has been disembowled through colonial dominating narratives of enslaved subjects? The aim of this paper is to enter the pedagogical problem of remembering and gendered representational voids by seeking to explore how artistic representations offer insights in the absence of detail in the colonial archives.





Narrating Nelson Mandela's Experiences in the 1950s: Marco Cianfanelli's Shadow Boxing

Prof Brenda Schmahmann

*SARChI Chair in South African Art and
Visual Culture, University of Johannesburg
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In 2013, Marco Cianfanelli completed *Shadow Boxing*, a sculpture that is more than five metres high and constructed from laser-cut painted steel. A sign informs the viewer that the work refers to a photograph taken by Bob Gosani in 1957 – one that shows a young Nelson Mandela sparring with Jerry Moloi, a boxing champion, on the rooftop of the nearby South African Associated Newspaper office building in Johannesburg. Placed outside the Magistrates' Court, where Mandela – as a young attorney – defended his clients, *Shadow Boxing* is also just opposite Chancellor House, where Mandela and fellow activist Oliver Tambo had their law offices. Functioning together with the space, *Shadow Boxing* invokes a sense of Mandela's experiences in the 1950s while also encouraging insights and thoughts about the statesman and how apartheid histories have had impact on the present. Inviting a metaphoric reading by being a rendition of Mandela boxing outside the Magistrates' Court as well as his own law offices, the image of Mandela boxing invokes the ways in which he navigated the practice of law. But *Shadow Boxing*, I reveal, also encourages associative interpretations and references through its formal and material properties. I propose that the work provides an example of how a representational sculpture on a large scale may avoid some of the pitfalls associated with traditionalist public statuary. By inviting a reading in terms of metaphor and in evoking a photograph of Mandela taken in the area in 1957 rather than portraying him more literally, *Shadow Boxing* avoids the narrow didacticism that is often a feature of traditionalist commemorative sculpture. Rather, it operates discursively with its site to encourage viewers to be aware of differences between the 1950s and the present as well as to encourage the workings of individual memories and associations.




Rupture and Futurism: New Narratives of African Art in the Work of Hilaire Balu Kuyangiko

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Western art history is filled with examples of European artists appropriating material culture from their colonies – the Fauves, the Expressionists, and Picasso spring to mind. In his discussion of why the West should value African art, Danto (1988) argued that the West should value African art because Picasso was influenced by African art: The West must value African art because an artist celebrated by the West values African art. Arguments such as Danto's (1988) gloss over that Picasso's reverence of African art was rooted in a primitivist rhetoric in which the African art works were exoticised, considered other, and savage - not even equal; definitely not superior. Contemporary Congolese artist Hilaire Balu Kuyangiko re-engages these debates from an African artist's perspective by appropriating iconic imagery from American popular culture and combining these with Congolese spiritual iconography in his multifaceted art practice. In this paper I explore how Kuyangiko's artworks propose a counter discourse that re-centers African art, and challenges neo-colonial attitudes such as those presented by Danto (1988). I begin with a critical analyses of selected recent works in which Kuyangiko mixes referents from American popular culture and Congolese culture. I show how through combining Congolese minkisi with characters from American comics and Disney movies, in works such as *Nkisi Mangaaka Fait Face à Hulk, au Terme de nos Accords, / Nkisi Mangaaka Faces Hulk, at the End of our Agreements* (2018), Kuyangiko creates a pantheon of new African heroes that critique cultural homogenization and the erosion of Congolese culture in the wake of colonization and globalization. I argue that through these works, the artist presents alternative, Afro-futurist representations of African art. I conclude that Kuyangiko's artworks can be understood as acts of reverse- appropriation, which break with traditional Western narratives of African art, and propose a central position for African art in the global contemporary art space.



The Ancestors You Make: Settler Colonialism, Chronic Whiteness, and Art's History

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Canonically, the appropriation of Indigenous aesthetic codes into Western art-making is part of how art becomes Modern, making major ideological moves from particular to universal and stable past to dynamic present. However, in settler colonial contexts a secondary story is told less often: specifically, how the elaboration of Indigeneity as an aesthetic formation and a fixed temporal coordinate allows white artists to imagine becoming Indigenous, a project undertaken in affective and aesthetic registers from 'going native' to 'begging to be Black.' Although superficially less lethal than other settler occupations, these romantic attachments are the flip side of a colonial coin, enacting a fantasy that the anxieties associated with conquest may someday be transcended. Locally those attachments draw on the figures, forms, and material of Khoisan life in particular, an understudied precondition for the assembly of white and national South African identities and the destruction of Khoisan worlds. By attending more closely to the role of Khoisan aesthetics and aesthetic sensibilities in white South African art, my paper theorizes "becoming Indigenous" as a mode of settler self-fashioning and imagination for which art provides a principle staging ground. I trace shifts in this mode through the work of J.H. Pierneef, Walter Battiss, Andrew Putter, and beyond, in order to denaturalize its exclusionary sociohistorical scripts, signal some generative ambiguities, and connect the formal treatment of Indigeneity in art to the displacement of Khoisan populations and claims in South Africa's political present. Arguing that we need a *counterhistory of art's history* to confront such scripts and connections, I then turn to recent work by artist Bronwyn Katz, who radically unsettles the historical imaginary on which settler appeals to Indigeneity depend for meaning.





Cultural Appropriation is Such Fun! SCOPE Magazine in a 1970s South Africa

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At *SCOPE* magazine's inception in 1966, it was a men's lifestyle magazine in the sense that it was targeted at men and concerned with an aspirational syntax of gentlemanliness. But, it was only a decade later that its interest was slowly introduced as the semi-clad feminine body, the more notorious business of the so-called men's press. Although *SCOPE* was more populist in the seventies and the femininities on offer were so tired, even then, that it is challenging to critique them in a way that is not itself clichéd, this paper unpacks the gentle arts of misogyny and racism in *SCOPE* as powerful forms of pleasure offered to white, women readers of the magazine and tries to understand the, perhaps, secret pleasure they derived from reading a magazine that addressed them primarily as bodies. I focus on the 13 August 1976 issue as a case study of the moment when *SCOPE*'s considerable readership was comprised of 48% women. At a time when even academic communities are divided about which side of the culture wars to defend, it seems important to occasionally look back across one's shoulder at the representational practices that desensitised us to the slow violence of ridicule. The iconic apartheid-era, soft-porn magazine, *SCOPE*, has garnered much attention for its sexual politics. In this brief presentation I look at how this intersects with race. At the heart of this talk, is a question about cultural appropriation and how we need to remember our past in order to move forward as a nation.

#EndSARS Movement on Social Media: Memories and Visual Narratives of SARS' Brutality in Nigeria

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In October 2020, Nigerians from all walks of life thronged out in major cities across the country, and camped for days, sharing memories and circulating visual narratives of theirs and others' experiences of brutality in the hands of SARS operatives. SARS, which stands for Special Anti Robbery Squad was a unit of the Nigerian police force assigned the task of addressing the challenges associated with robbery. But rather than focus primarily on the discharge of their assigned duties, they were identified with unethical practices against Nigerians. Perhaps, the operatives were unmindful of the fact that no society makes significant progress when it is at war with her people. Thus, in the light of their uncalled for activities, thousands of Nigerians gathered, carrying placards with the hashtag #EndSARS, and also posted visual narratives of some brutal experiences on social media, with the hashtag #EndSARS. Besides, during the protests, they conducted themselves peacefully, while demanding that the federal government disband the unit. Their concerns were not just the negative experiences recorded over the years, but going forward, the protesters did not want more people to become victims of SARS' brutality. To this end, the peaceful protests, like the protesters of the "BlackLivesMatter" movement, soon gained support and turned to a movement not only in Nigeria but in the diaspora. Given that they shared memories and visual narratives on social media that have not received much mainstream art historical discourse, I argue that the medium used, the memories, and visual images shared are worthy of interrogation. It is for this reason, I focus on contributing a paper that interrogates some of the memories and visual narratives they shared on social media, and the ideas conveyed. In so doing, I employ the visual hermeneutics theory to interrogate the visualised experiences and narratives, by contextualising them in their cultural histories and the ideas communicated. The following research questions guide the analysis. What memories did Nigerians relive about SARS on social media? What visual images and narratives did they reflect about SARS on social media? What ideas did the memories and visual narratives about SARS convey?

On the Margins: A visual narrative of Headloading in 'Lazy Nigerian Youths'.

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Headloading is the practice of moving loads by carrying them on the head by humans. It is a practice known across Africa and several developing countries of the world. The social media conversation The Lazy Nigerian Youths was prompted by a statement made by Nigeria's president in 2018 around social-political issues in Nigeria. From the political statement, youth felt that they were referred to as lazy, so they took to the social media to vent their displeasure using series of visual posts of which images of headloading was one. Although the posts and conversation were not about headloading, its inclusion in the response only instigated our interest in investigating the phenomenon of headloading beyond its social practice. This is in order to draw a link between the practice or representation of headloading and socio-political issues from Nigeria's perspective. We explore headloading representation in this paper with focus on its implication as representing a social structure. The aim of the study is to underpin how headloading portends voices of such individuals as the youths who are on the margin of social structure. This is an interpretive study which has sought to examine meaning through a discursive insight around the social practice of headloading. As a representational narrative, our visual data of headload is drawn from Facebook. This is supported with few relevant images of artwork. We also take into account existing literature on the practice and representation of headloading. Focusing largely on its practice, existing studies seems to have neglected the socio-humanistic implications of headloading. Positioned on a semiotic analysis, this study expands interpretation and ideological structures to touch on the social, economic and political spaces of the subject following Barthes' denotation and connotation frameworks. The analysis gives the visual information of the images and their discursive interpretation. Our discussion uses the representation of headloading to signify the subject of social subjugation. In conclusion, our reading communicates a better understanding of headloading and its concern of the social, cultural and the economic divides between peoples and societies. Yet, a more nuanced reading of the online conversation and other representations of headloading is proposed.



Behind Closed Doors: The Hidden Narrative of Graffiti/Vandalistic Inscription at Stellenbosch University

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Twenty-five years after the first free and democratic elections in South Africa, there has been an ever democratizing of public and institutionalised spaces. Stellenbosch University represents an academic institution which is seen as a Historically White Institution (HWI). Such institutions occupy a previously exclusionary space, based on racial politics, but can still hold reoccurring prejudices to minority groups. This was uncovered in the 2015 documentary *Luister*, by Contraband Cape Town (Nicolson, 2015), detailing the lived experience of a discriminatory exclusionary space. Such experience included racial abuse, discrimination, and exclusion. The documentary commented on the exclusion from normality of the daily lived, Stellenbosch, experience. The stagnation of a discriminatory environment of Stellenbosch University led this research to question as to how a visual expression of exclusion may occur. In answering this question, I look closer at the occurrence of graffiti/vandalistic inscription as an expression of inequality experienced at Stellenbosch University by minority groups. Michel Foucault's theorizing of power relations is used to theoretically investigate the use of graffiti/vandalistic inscription as a form of communication which speaks in resistance to the affective nature of an exclusionary space. This research was conducted through an empirical investigation of the occurrence of graffiti/vandalistic inscription within varying spaces at Stellenbosch University. Viewing the comparison of the private space of bathrooms, where graffiti/vandalistic inscription occur, to the public space of the JH Marais statue, where a governing of protection against contemporary didactics of communicative re-inscription. Lefebvre's (1991) concept of space as socially constructed played a role in the comparative spaces which this research reflects on, as these spaces reflect varying socio-political contextual settings according to their social production and secluded, or public, visibility. A dialectics in the occurrence of graffiti/vandalistic inscription is taken through a discourse analysis. This analysis investigates the power relations which occupy a post-apartheid (and post-colonial) environment, which reflect the discourse of an exclusionary space, and encompasses the nature of a palimpsest.





Memoire of a Pelargonium Cucullatum: exploring the making of an artist book about a particular plant as a method to reveal a relational model for human plant interaction

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Currently, a surge in artworks incorporating the presence of living plants draws attention to the growing awareness of its centrality to human being. This paper looks at how one such artwork draws attention to the interspecies dialogue that occurs in these works by narrating an in-depth engagement between a balcony gardener and a Pelargonium Cucullatum, a tough perennial shrub. This reflection on the process of making an artist book titled *The story of a proliferating plant* (2017-ongoing) examines how treating the book as a garden journal allows it to function as a mediator between a gardener and a plant, albeit from an anthropocentric perspective. The attentive observation and documentation of this plant that was required to make the book draws attention to the plant as a sentient being with problem-solving ability in its aim to not only survive but thrive, a common goal between plant and gardener. *The story of a proliferating plant* (2017-ongoing) outlines just how this plant survives by, amongst other ways, enlisting the care of the gardener who carefully tends to the needs of the plant. While it is traditionally understood that the gardener's desire is realised by the plant, the process of attentive care requires a shift in the gardener's intent to prioritise the desires of the plant. At some point in the study of the plant, despite its alien appearance, some of the plant's needs and behaviours start looking distinctly human. The gardener, controversially, anthropomorphise the plant to create a point of connection with the possibility of eroding its distinctly unhuman characteristics. This examination of the artist book therefore suggests that documenting the performance of care in a garden journal can start shifting perceptions of plants as far removed from being human and instead suggests an entangled relation between plant being and human being. This paper aims to highlight how the artist book casts the plant in a different light resulting in a changed understanding of the plant and therefore changed behaviour towards it. The reflective and attentive gardener can then re-narrate the story of plants as active contributors in the garden. The garden journal as an artwork is revealed as a vessel for re-imagining human relationships with plants in a way that adapts the anthropocentric perception of the garden as a product of human labour to a relational perspective where the gardener is one of many contributors.

“The Attempt To Be Here Now”: Storying spacetime through photographic exploration

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This paper explores how indigenous conceptions of spacetime are visualised and ‘storied’ in the collaborative photography and video project *Hemelliggaam*, Or, The Attempt To Be Here Now by Cape Town-based photographers Tommaso Fiscaletti and Nic Grobler. *Hemelliggaam* is a developing visual archive of photography and video installations “exploring the existential aspects of the human-environment-astronomy relationship” (Hemelliggaam 2021). Centred on a discussion of a selection of photographs and videos, my investigation attempts to unravel the human-environment-astronomy relationship as it plays out in the visual narrative of the project. Spanning over five years, Fiscaletti and Grobler’s project entangles a number of communities, landscapes and objects located throughout South Africa that share “a special connection to the sky”. Combining representations of science sites (such as the Square Kilometre Array in Carnarvon), with fragments of Afrikaans author Jan Rabie’s mid-century sci-fi novels, the project seeks to visualise the multifaceted complexity of human engagement with spacetime. I argue that *Hemelliggaam* should be recognised as a project that visualises the overlapping of the sciences and the critical humanities. My study is anchored in a theoretical framework that draws on critical theorist Dipesh Chakrabarty’s argument that discussions of the Anthropocene within the Humanities need to recognise the differences between human-historical time and geological-planetary time. The paper contextualises *Hemelliggaam* within contemporary discourses of the Anthropocene that recognise the contributions of both the sciences and the critical humanities to storytelling. Fiscaletti and Grobler’s project endeavours to encapsulate the scope and complexity of spacetime in a range of poetic audio-visual narratives through visualising both planetary timescales (scientific narratives) and subjective timescales (indigenous narratives). By examining the ‘storying’ of spacetime in *Hemelliggaam*, I suggest that an interdisciplinary approach to storytelling is increasingly important for our age of global environmental crisis.



Between the pages: human fragility and the patina of time in Guy du Toit's Book of Play

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The contemporary South African artist Guy du Toit is known for his evocative bronze sculptures of everyday objects. In Du Toit's *Book of Play* (2017) two rectangular bronze sheets with a green patina serve as the covers of a book. The textured surface appears to have been submerged in water, with the gap between the book covers, where the pages should be, empty. In this paper, I argue that Du Toit's artist's book signifies the fragility of people's lives through the transformation of the medium of bronze, and the conceptual echoing thereof. After introducing the artist, the theoretical framework will be outlined, followed by an interpretation of selected artworks by Du Toit, illustrating how the artist's book can evoke collective experiences of loss and transience. The work could be a playbook to live by, containing the scripts of plays or strategies to follow, but the pages are inaccessible. The aim of this paper is to explore stories that remain untold, as felt through the gaps left within the book covers. I suggest that Du Toit's book sculptures *Book of Play I* and *II* possess narrativity, depicting changes brought by the passage of time and the workings of water, as characterised by the transition from one state to another – from past to present, life to death. This paper builds on David Macauley's environmental philosophy, specifically his suggestion to re-evaluate how we relate to the natural world by viewing ecological considerations as a form of re-story-ation. Du Toit's book sculptures offer a starting point for an exploration of our fragile relationship with the natural world through untold stories. Du Toit can be considered an established South African sculptor, but with the exception of a few articles, little academic research has been published on his work. This study contributes to the discussion on the ways visual storytelling can work towards re-visualising narratives, making untold stories visible, with specific reference to selected sculptures by Du Toit.

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Photographing a city as a liminal space

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The photographic portrayal of early cities as empty was due to technical photographic limitations. Early techniques (such as the Dauggerotype of 1839) used to take between 4-60 minutes (Bate 2016) to take a photograph and were not able to freeze action. In contrast, contemporary photographs of empty cities deliberately exclude people in subjective interpretations of urban space. The “betwixed and between” (Turner 1977, p. 95) nature of liminality is portrayed through camera and editing techniques. This liminality of an urban space is the idiosyncratic viewpoint of the city in contemporary photography (Paeslack 2010). The paradox of a bustling city, portrayed as empty, results in the precise observation of the detail of both buildings and cities (Jacobs 2006). Using this lens of liminality, I photographed Pretoria through the interpretation of viewpoint, paradox and effects. Themes from a thematic analysis of liminal activities, resulted in the term *beyond liminal*, linking the city of Pretoria photographs of my portfolio with liminal activities. The first human trace captured photographically in 1938/1939 foresaw the uses of contemporary material-traces of absent people and of the city being rebuilt and replaced (Gańko 2019). These traces are indications of *memory, remembrance and visual narrative* as well as a link to *liminality and boundary crossing*. Traces are thus omnipresent reminders of *tensions between visibility and materiality* and show the trace of what was there. Bate, D 2016, 'Daguerre s Abstraction.pdf', Photographies, 9:2, doi: 10.1080/17540763.2016.1185881. Gańko, A 2019, 'Empty city spaces. Practices of unseen' *Journal of Education Culture and Society VO - 10*, no. 2, p. 245, doi: 10.15503/jecs20192.245.251. Jacobs, S 2006, 'Amor Vacui: Photography and the image of the empty city' *History of Photography*, doi: 10.1080/03087298.2006.10442853. Paeslack, M 2010, 'Introduction-Urban image now: Photographic and filmic manifestations of a subjective city experience' *Visual Resources*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 3-11, doi: 10.1080/01973760903537827. Turner, VW 1977, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure (Symbol, Myth, and Ritual Series)* | Victor Witter Turner | digital library Bookfi, Cornell Pa, Cornell University, New York, Retrieved from <http://en.bookfi.org/book/1391987>.



Failure and (un)becoming in the work of Lien Botha: Landscapes of Memory and Loss

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Lien Botha (b. 1961) is an artist who works across media, both visual and literary. Her fictional debut, *Wonderboom* (2015) (Marvel Tree), is accompanied by a series of 18 photographs, exhibited under the same name and reproduced in the book. In the novel, forgetting where you are from, who you are, and where you are going, is explored as a deep loss and failure but also as the only means by which you can be released from a traumatic past, shame and guilt, and enter a transformed - albeit deeply troubled - futurity. Whilst acknowledging that the repression of the past as somewhat problematic, Botha's work suggests forgetting not as a strategy of evading responsibility but a strategy that disrupts the continuity of white privilege through generational lineage, by challenging the idea that one should remain anchored to a long history or tradition, suggesting instead that relinquishing thereof might have more productive, creative and surprising possibilities of living with others and with nature. Botha's novel explores a journey, figured as a series of devastating losses, from Betty's Bay in the Western Cape to Pretoria. The desolate Karoo landscapes encountered on this journey is figured as a desert in which the nomad confronts the past and challenges patriarchal and colonial control over bodies and land. The nomad is linked to the land nostalgically and affectively, but instead of offering points of refuge and identification, the land becomes a 'post-colonial gothic site' at once a place of discontinuity and haunting but also redemption. Nevertheless, the haunting of the present by objects and landscapes from the past, and postapocalyptic visions of the future, all unsettle conventional understandings of history as a narrative in which scientific progress and discoveries lead to better futures. Botha's postapocalyptic novel suggests the opposite of this trajectory of progress: Instead of improving nature through science and cultivation, it has been destroyed. Botha's work thus considers the complex relationships between landscape, affects and histories of oppression. She explores how violent masculinities, patriarchy, and colonization are linked not only to the suffering of people, but also to the degradation of the environment. Her narrative revises a familiar trope of the homecoming journey in postcolonial novels, and subverts the idea of a fixed beginning and end, or the journey as a possibility for growth and healing. Rather, she suggests forgetting and failing as a strategy for undermining mainstream historiography and exploring feminine unravelling as a revolt against violent masculinities and the fantasy of wholeness. A contrapuntal reading of Botha's visual and literary work suggests a perpetual search for Utopia. Instead, the world as she encounters it, is a journey of loss and frustrated desire which cannot be resolved.



Pauline Gutter's re-imagining of the sublime landscape.

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Pauline Gutter's (born 1980) solo exhibition of 2008, *Opslag*, portrays the terror and daily fear experienced by those South Africans who have been affected by, and live with the threat of brutal farm attacks. My article focuses on Gutter's inclusion of the rural landscape of the Free State in many of the works which make up this exhibition. The principles of the sublime landscape, prominent within European—and specifically British—landscape painting in the 19th century, seem disconnected with the outwardly barren, empty, and endless Free State landscape present in Gutter's work. Working more than a 150 years after the pinnacle of European landscape painting, on another continent and within an entirely different cultural context, Gutter's focus on the inclusion of the landscape invites further scrutiny. This article posits that Gutter's inclusion and use of this farming landscape displays a re-imagining of the principles of the sublime landscape. I argue that Gutter employs the onlooker's understanding of the sensibilities of the sublime, as solidified in the Romantic period, to transfer the awareness of the overwhelming power of nature to an overwhelming power present outside of the painting, and the landscape, itself.



The stories we tell: of art; of money

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In 1910, in an anthropology study, William Furness described the people of Uap, as the people of “the island of stone money”, for their currency consisted of large stones, many immovable. In March 2021, a purely digital work was auctioned at the global auction house Christie’s with payment in a crypto-currency. The hammer price makes it the third highest price paid for an artwork by a living artist, at the time of the sale. The two occurrences seem unconnected: the Uap lived on an island in an archipelago in the Western Pacific Ocean (between Micronesia and Papua New Guinea) and at that time their language had not been set down in writing; the digital artwork is made by a contemporary artist living in the United States of America using computer code, and the currency that paid for it was created by software engineers in a language most people do not understand. However, what connects the two is the fundamental human need to believe. It is what makes us see art as “art” and to trust a deemed “currency” to be a store of wealth: in short, to deem what is fictive to be factual. This paper explores how belief is created by and transmitted through the stories we tell ourselves.



“Spread it (thread it) for me”: Narrative frustration, refusal, and parody in work by Ilené Bothma

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The vintage handkerchief works of Cape Town-based artist Ilené Bothma are found objects onto which the artist stitches heavily worked, parodic portraits with embroidery thread or delicate, abject patterning with human hair. The explicitly sexualised imagery and conventionalised, limited tropes of the series *There's no place like home* (2017), from her exhibition *Theatre of the Mother-cord*, explore issues around female subjectivity, bodily autonomy, work, worth and taboo. I consider these works together with the triptychs *Leda and the Swan* (2014) and *Elysium* (2016) where Bothma stitches in an interventional manner into photographs of a filmed performance that she created while pregnant on the residency *Est-nord-est* in Canada. Here the artist ambiguously invokes characters, events and places in Greek mythology. Bothma's pregnancy becomes a participating character in its own right and is central to how, I argue, she offers through parody intimations of alternative narratives to well-worn tales. These works in fabric, paper, line and thread that I examine all initiate, I propose, a deliberately unresolvable tension between the materials into which she works and the kinds of threads with which she stitches. I demonstrate how this unresolvable tension does not begin or end with parodying existing threadbare narratives, but rather refuses in the first place a viewer's desire for a navigating narrative. Bothma's eponymous “mother-cord” is not an Ariadnean thread through the labyrinth of (gendered) human experience, but rather visualises possibilities for when trauma is not cathartically released into the signification of narrative. These ‘non-narratives’ in her work seek to represent how the day-to-day experiences of parenting young children affects a woman's sense of identity, a topic that is often either sentimentalised or avoided in artistic practice. An overarching theme is of the constant, repetitive, often trifling, tedious, yet chaotic, labour of parenting. The conceptual relationship between labour and temporal duration in Bothma's art work is also explored. Far from celebrating an inherent ‘femininity’ or ‘maternity’, Bothma re-inscribes this labour as compulsive and obsessional activity; she hyperbolises the daily activity that she herself experiences, and in so doing renders it urgent and open to reflection on the parts of both artist and viewer.



How Architects Tell Archaeological Stories

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When archaeologists draw their conclusions from a discovered site and develop hypotheses, for example about architecture, which they consider to be probable at this specific site, they are not only telling a story about architecture, but also about the tension between the visible, materiality and the entire experience of archaeology. They articulate an idea for the site, a story from their own perspective. This can range from certainty to probability to scientifically based assumptions, which are based on analogies and can even be contradictory. We call this complex uncertain knowledge. Giving this story a visual form then requires a completely different capability, namely that of creating architecture based on variously precisely defined specifications. This skill is the core competence of architects. Architects are trained in translating vague ideas of a client into a conceptual design that already promises a lot, but at the same time leaves a lot in a state of indistinctness. An architectural rough design is a story with an open end. It is certainly not trivial to translate the inherent uncertainty of language from the verbal to the visual. After all, visible reality consists of the very concrete, while the linguistic is constantly dealing with abstract concepts. The very general idea of a house can easily be formulated verbally, whereas in the visible world there are only a great number of very different concrete houses. The house as such does not exist in the visible world. In order to convey abstract ideas visually, therefore, a formal design process is required that tells visual stories. By this, the invisible becomes visible. And because science tells the same story using several media, it becomes much more comprehensible. The tradition of visualisation in architecture can thus help archaeology to tell its stories in a new manner, without being limited to scientificity. It is expressly not a question, though, of film sets that are for the most part made up of pure fantasy. The presentation illustrates the corresponding method developed by the authors in cooperation with archaeological research institutions: – Cologne Cathedral and its Predecessors (for Cologne Cathedral, exhibited on site), – Bern Minster – its first century (for Bern Minster Foundation) – The Metropolis of Pergamon (for German Research Fund, exhibited in the Pergamon Museum Berlin), – The Palatine Palaces in Rome (for German Archaeological Institute, exhibited as above), – The Ideal Church of Julius Echter (for Martin von Wagner Museum in the Würzburg Residenz).

Narratives of Power: Art, History and Cultural Authority in the Central Interior

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If one considers Hegel's notion that a work of art reflects one's sense of self and the world in which one lives, the ability of visual objects to assert - and contest - histories is perhaps inherently evident. This body of research examines works of art, oral and written histories, and social contexts in order to explore the complexities of seniority and belonging among South Sotho peoples in the area that was formerly designated as the bantustan Qwa Qwa and continues to maintain this local moniker today. Historically, this region in the eastern Free State was home to three major South Sotho paramountcies - the Makgolokwe, the Batlokwa, and the Bakwena - each of whom have asserted authority over the area since the late 19th century. Such claims have resulted in contested histories and seemingly dominant narratives that continue to impact the paramountcies to this day. While efforts have been made to outline the relationship of one kingship to another, such approaches - including the government-generated Nhlapo commission - have arguably taken a limited view of exploring South Sotho notions of seniority and belonging and have not considered the visual arts and their role in society as contributors to defining power and status. By exploring such narratives and examining the relationship of the visual arts with South Sotho concepts of seniority, this paper seeks to offer an alternate interpretation on the history of this complex region, and its continued impact on Traditional Leadership.



Our Africa: the Anti-colonial Struggle in Russian Propaganda Posters (1950s to 1980s).

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The Soviet Union Propaganda machine had the crucial and strategic task of asserting its ideological stance on the international arena and positioning the Soviet Union as an ideological and political ally of the African nations fighting for their liberation from colonial and other forms of oppression. Cultural diplomacy expressed via visual means in the form of propaganda posters was just one of its manifestations. It was seemingly directed not just outwards to the international allies and wider world but also towards the Soviet State's citizens, intending to project a self-image of brotherhood, world leadership, and unity in the struggle against the oppressors and aggressors on the African continent and beyond. Hundreds of state-sanctioned images were produced over several decades. What do they reveal, beyond their declared intention, about the social and historical context they came from, the context that was in reality far removed from the struggles that were taking place in Africa? The paper examines the ways, in which the visual language employed by the state commissioned artists in the Soviet Union for Africa – themed propaganda posters, becomes the vehicle for conducting unintended messages about the Soviet society itself and its relationship with and attitudes towards Africa, African people, and anti-colonial struggle. The paper references the research conducted on a privately owned collection of over 30 original posters spanning 30 years from the late nineteen fifties until the nineteen-eighties. The collection is based in South Africa and offers a rare opportunity to witness the visual expression of the political alliance between the Soviet Union and the liberation movements in Africa while revealing unintended truths about the artists and the society they came from - their affinities, convictions, misconceptions, and stereotypes.

Stories we tell ourselves: Mythology for the 'new' South Africa in Diane Victor's Birth of a Nation Series

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In 2009 South African artist, Diane Victor, travelled to Rome and was struck by the sense of civic pride, history and glory that imbues the remnants of Classical Antiquity. She began to imagine what such a cultural history of storytelling might express if transposed into a South African context. The result is a set of rather cynical sepia drawings (later developed as drypoint engravings) titled *Birth of a Nation* (2010). This series demonstrates how antiquity's 'afterlife' can be subverted to demonstrate how little our nation has to be proud of. Victor's mythological satires are parodies not only of well-known classical antiquities (such as the wolf with Romulus and Remus) but of their reinterpretation during the Renaissance and Baroque periods by artists including Michelangelo, Bernini and Rubens. Michelangelo's *Punishment of Tityus* (1532), for example, becomes an accident victim tormented by a tow truck driver (known as 'vultures' in South Africa) demanding exorbitant payment. The humour in these parodies does not detract from the darker content that emerges, as each story is manipulated to engage directly with the fears and shortcomings of the new post-apartheid South African nation. In this paper I engage with the parodic reworking of these myths and their source imagery to show how Victor interrogates and complicates their original content, with the purpose of exposing South Africa's vulnerability to ongoing follies, the exploitation of our resources and the fact that this 'new' nation has emerged into an imperfect world.



Sunstrokes of Voice

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“Sunstrokes of voice” enact a queering of voice through its ultimate depletion. This self-termed mode of dense, delirious, searing orality is used in my work to short-circuit the autonomous subject by exceeding the limits of its articulation. Voice is understood not only as a sonic artefact registered by way of the ears and the attention capacities of listening, but as something indelibly bodily, transmitted multi-sensorially, situating an awareness of embodiment, felt as a type of heat. In both my video *Ridder Thirst* (2015 – 18) and performance *Words Beneath Bridges* (2018, 2020), sunstrokes of voice are narrative devices responding to the inabilities of officially sanctioned forms of journalism, and archival practices more broadly, to document the complexities of queer experiences – in as much as these vocal arrangements respond to the filter-bubbled, self-broadcasting platforms of social media where voice echoes in proliferation. Through sunstrokes of voice testimony finds its own forms beyond the injunctions of transparency and legibility wielded by those who hold power over language as the interface of reality. Here heat is also fervour, an erotics of outrage and pooled joy, which suffuses hitherto orthodoxies of historiography. No longer beholden to singularity or silencing, queer voices can fluidly invoke and unsettle literary, cinematic, and theatrical forms, like cut-ups, voice-over narration, and soliloquies, towards polytemporal, polyvocal articulations that recognise our bodies as living archives. Moreover, sunstrokes of voice function in both works to “unwrite” place, namely Stellenbosch, fabulating the lingering conditions and effects of an entrenched colonial whiteness, while simultaneously dispossessing the discursive, systemic powers of framing that normalise the socio-political discrepancies that sustain the town. “Sunstrokes of voice” entail a new social grammar of relation to place where orality shifts what is seen.

The visual representation of Afrikaner identity and homosexual figures in the South African Defence Force and Moffie

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The South African Defence Force was likely one of the most hegemonic institutions in South African history during the apartheid era. Moreover, Afrikaner society subscribed to religious superiority, militarism, patriotism and nationalism as mythologies that sustained their perceived autonomy. My research employs the visual representation of the South African Border War as well as Afrikaner identity in popular culture. The recent South African film *Moffie* (Hermanus 2019) is also used to explore the queering of alternative figures such as homosexuals within these mythically imbued imaginaries. What becomes evident in the representations of Afrikaner identity in popular culture is that it pivoted on critical moments from earlier eons such as the settlement of the Cape, the Great Trek inland and later the Anglo Boer War as well as the inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument. The collective conceptual treaties that emerged from these historical cues relegated queer figures to the periphery. Particularly in the SADF some homosexuals were forced to undergo sexual reassignment surgery. Since *Moffie* is one of the first South African films with the thematic objective to address inequality in the SADF, I argue that the film has an ethic responsibility to impeach the myths that informed the toxic environment of South Africa's apartheid military force. By employing purposive sampling of various screenshots from the film I explore *Moffie's* progresses towards delivering a cinematic product that impeaches toxic Afrikaner mythology. It is hoped that *Moffie* will recognise these myths and subvert the contemporary mythologies that have defined the previous visual representation of Afrikaner identity during apartheid as well as the War.



Homomasculine performativity and the legitimisation of hegemonic Afrikaner ideals in Oliver Hermanus's *Skoonheid* and Etienne Kallos's *Die Stropers*

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The representation of homosexuality is almost non-existent in South African cinema up until 1985, and Afrikaans films especially have very few openly gay characters before 1994. Even though the film industry in post-apartheid South Africa has made significant progress concerning LGBTQ+ visibility on the big screen, these films do little to confront contemporary issues. This is because these films mainly focus on past contexts or serve as comedic depictions that minimise the urgency of the social issues being addressed in the films. This is problematic because it prevents audiences from sincerely and seriously reflecting on the restrictive social conditions in Afrikaner communities and the effect on homosexual individuals in those communities. For this reason, I have chosen to focus on two seminal South African queer films: *Skoonheid* (2011, directed and co-written by Oliver Hermanus) and *Die Stropers* (2019, directed and written by Etienne Kallos). Both of these films attempt to interrogate and challenge hegemonic Afrikaner ideals through an exploration of the male Afrikaner protagonists, Francois and Janno, and their performativity of homomascularity. While *Skoonheid* exposes many underlying dynamics of gender, race, and sexuality in South Africa, *Die Stropers* explores identity and sexuality among young men within the Afrikaner culture. Unlike many other Afrikaans films with LGBTQ+ characters, *Skoonheid* and *Die Stropers* confront issues of homomascularity in a contemporary South African context. However, they also show how, despite its detractors and obstacles, hegemonic Afrikaner masculinity still seeks to carve itself onto the South African consciousness. The aim of this study is therefore to explore how strict norms and morals represented in *Skoonheid* and *Die Stropers* perpetuate and legitimise hegemonic masculinist identities. This study also aims to show how Francois and Janno reinforce these heteronormative ideals through performative strategies. The performativity of homomascularity by these two characters is analysed based on selected scenes that demonstrate the severe societal pressure for homosexual men in Afrikaner communities to conform to hegemonic masculinity. It is argued that idealised masculine ideals negate mobility and fluidity of identities and, therefore, end up restricting the possibility of identity politics to be negotiated.

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From whats to whos: Grounded Theory interviewing as a response to the avatarisation and folding away of gender/race in the South African art world

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This paper considers a 2010 government-commissioned report on the South African art industry, which stands to date as one of the only available accounts of its kind. Using a Foucaultian analysis, I establish that this report produces a discourse on 'gender' and 'race' in the art world in which these terms function only as quantitative and statistical categories in relation to an economic model for the art industry. The report organises and presents its findings according to four figures, namely the 'white male', 'white female', 'black male' and 'black female' – which I conceptualise as 'avatars' for a much greater deal of complexity in the field. Despite this ready representation of 'gender' and 'race' terms throughout the report, no remedy is offered in its final recommendations to the government for the gender/race imbalance clearly revealed – it is simply *folded* out of sight or performed away discursively. To counter this avatarisation and to *unfold* the issues of gender/race, I use the Constructivist Grounded Theory Method to create an oral archive of interviews through which to explore the lived experience and self-understanding of the situation of artists, gallerists and other agents in the art world. This archive was coded according to the Grounded Theory Method and revealed findings that I situate in terms of the continuing struggle for transformation and equality in South Africa. Drawing on both Jacques Rancière's thinking on political transformation and Hannah Arendt's valuation of storytelling and the political, my paper proposes a methodology and key findings that shift from the '*whats*' created in the report – avatars conceptualised according to gendered and racial categories which are ultimately left unattended – to '*whos*' – agents who speak back to and act in the struggle for democratisation. My research seeks to reveal the complex entanglement of gender/race in participants' experience and their strategies of resistance, negotiation and transformation.



Multi-Modes of Erasure: An analysis of the Art History and Visual Culture Curriculum

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It is important to make visible the contemporary Art History and Visual Culture curriculum's erasure of multi-modal black art histories. By 'multi-modal' I mean the many mechanisms that have and can be employed by art educators to delete, omit black visual cultures from contemporary South African art history curriculums. My goal is to show how the inclusion of these untold multi-modal black art histories can spark new conversations about black art practitioners, their work, the manner in which they choose to express themselves and visualise black life through various visual apparatuses. I believe these stories can be told through curriculum transformation. My interest in curriculum transformation is informed by two important events: my exposure as an undergraduate art history and visual culture student to a curriculum that centred and valorised Western art history and the student led Fallist movements demands that included the decolonisation of the educational system, transformation of universities to address racial and gender inequalities in terms of staff composition (Langa 2017, 6). Although students' demands were valid, on-going discourses on curriculum decolonisation have shown that institutional transformation could not simply be accomplished by employing black academics nor should it be the sole responsibility of black academics to do the work of transformation. For example, in her essay *Trying to Transform* feminist scholar Sara Ahmed argues that for true institutional transformation to take place, institutions must first acknowledge that appointing someone to transform the institution is "not the same thing as an institution being willing to be transformed (by someone who is appointed)" (Ahmed 2017: 94). Secondly, that the inclusion of black scholarship in curriculums may be one way to help undo Western scholarships' authority over disciplines. But it is not enough. If institutions want to effectively respond to students' demands Ahmed says, then they need to start "thinking differently". An integral part of this decolonial process requires institutions to acknowledge their complicity: that they are not exterior to the problem but are part of the problem that is "under investigation" (Ahmed 2017: 94). Thinking differently, art historian and curator Nontobeko Ntombela insists that it is imperative that teaching and learning for both teachers and students is not reliant on theoretical frameworks from elsewhere but is drawn from ones that are "premised on understanding the context within which the African learner and teacher lives and works" (Ntombela 2017:169). Simply put, true curriculum transformation involves telling new narratives from different perspectives.

A Cabinet of Curiosities in the Postcolony

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After years of lobbying by academics in the creative disciplines across South Africa, the Department of Higher Education finally published a policy on the evaluation of creative outputs as research in 2017 to be implemented in 2019. This acknowledgement that creative work can be formally recognised and rewarded as research through a process of peer review has created an incentive for academics to pursue their creative practice. Whereas there are several academics in South African higher education institutions who have created notable examples of creative output parallel to a body of accredited textual output, some, myself included, have limited ourselves mostly to textual research. My textual research, which I frame as Design History spans across multiple disciplines, including historical-, visual-, material- and cultural studies and I am intrigued by the question of how this research, which usually results in textual output in accredited journals, can inform and be extended into my creative practice. The opportunity created by the 2017 Policy has encouraged me to explore this question through what Hazel and Dean (2009) refers to as “research-led practice.” This term is used by Hazel and Dean (2009:7), alongside the better known and more frequently used term “practice-led research,” as it more overtly asserts that creative work can result from scholarly research. Hazel and Dean (2009:8) acknowledges the interconnectedness of research-led practice and practice-led research in their development of an “iterative cyclic web” model which: combines the cycle (alternations between practice and research), the web (numerous points of entry, exit, cross-referencing and cross-transit within the practice-research cycle), and iteration (many sub-cycles in which creative practice or research processes are repeated with variation). The proposed paper will reflect on the results of a research-led practice project undertaken by myself using Hazel and Dean’s (2009:8) iterative cyclic web model. The research is driven by my interest in the link between colonialism and cabinets of curiosities. In particular, I explore how the medium of cabinets of curiosity can be used to tell stories informed by postcolonial theory that confront colonial narratives in the contemporary South African context. References Smith, H. & Dean, R.T. 2009. Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.



Flying paintings and the thickness of time: emplotment metaphors for narratives of art history

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There is an increasing awareness of the complexity of a *World Art History* when time is conceived to have multiple forms (Keith Moxey) when time becomes a “plenary” (James Elkins) experience of historical and cultural density, when “contemporaneity” is understood in all its “thickness” issuing from “a new sense of what constitutes ‘the world’” (Terry Smith), and when George Didi-Huberman describes the “anachronistic urgency” of the discipline of art history. In a drawing by William Kentridge titled *World Drawing for Il Sole 24 Ore* (World Walking) (2007), the *World Walker*, simultaneously resembling a globe and an eyeball on mechanical legs, stumbles or staggers – like so many of Kentridge’s other migrant figures in interminable processions – across a barren landscape while looking somewhat lost in the *World*. In an earlier video animation *Easing the passing (of the hours)* (1992) Kentridge’s fascination with the animation and agitation of pictures from art museums seems to go in tandem with his fascination with the fertility of inner images, and the depiction of an overabundance of events. A number of centuries earlier, long before the First World War era of air-to-air dogfights, another socially aware, transgressive artist, William Hogarth, had shown an interest in aerial skirmishes among airborne paintings in his *The battle of the pictures* (1744). I ask what a grouping together of more examples of this apparent troublemaking in the art museum and in the history of art – in a cluster or cascade of related artworks – could render if they are analysed collectively. I argue that works in such a cluster may share the emplotment structure of inherent dynamics, verve and spontaneity, “movement and variety” – an emplotment which has metaphorically been described by William Hogarth himself in his *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753) (Hogarth 1969: 42, 43) as the “serpentine line”. I consider whether the vortex (and its metaphoric allusion to aleatory pursuit, transition, continuous transformation and denial of closure) as figure of the emplotment of histories of art (as depicted in artworks) possibly lends itself to subversion and festive critique of universalizing narratives of progress, and conceivably is fertile in its evocation of a myriad of alternative histories of art. Ultimately, I propose, the delineation of the vortex and related visual figures – as emplotment metaphors – constitute a form of ‘world-making’ (Mark J.P. Wolf, 2012) whereby we may investigate the anamorphic narratives created by complex histories of art.

Following the paths of the labyrinth: attribution of the “Mancoba textile”.

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In the art collection of the Jorn Museum (Silkeborg, Denmark) is a black-patterned white textile attributed to Ernest Mancoba (1904-2002, South Africa/France). Two long-time friends and professional associates of Mancoba and his artist wife Sonja Ferlov Mancoba (1911-1984, Denmark/France) disagree on the attribution. Whilst the previous Director of the Jorn Museum and curator of exhibitions on both artists attributes the textile to Ernest Mancoba, the Chair of the family estate is firm in his belief that the textile was by Sonja Ferlov Mancoba. In any case, the textile was an unusual medium for either artist, and formalistically the work did not resonate conclusively with the styles of one or the other. In this conference paper, the two researchers will present two separate accounts of how the textile could be Mancoba's or Ferlov Mancoba's. The same factual events will be presented twice but told from the perspectives of the two artists. For instance, in regards to their relationships with artistic associations in Denmark pre- and post-World War II, Ferlov Mancoba had a longer and more personal history with some of the key members whereas Mancoba mis-remembered the groups. The researchers acknowledge their role as non-neutral interpreters, particularly of information that could not be found, and that the closing of those gaps was shaped by their personal frames of reference which in turn were shaped by their research journeys. Thus the story of the textile is not a sequence leading to an undeniable conclusion but, like the pattern of the textile itself, a labyrinth of different intersecting “paths”.





The Photo-Biography of the Artist in the 20th Century: the Case of Pablo Picasso

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After the Second World War, as mass media experienced its first golden age, some artists chose various means, both written and visual, to stage themselves. It was a way of supporting their artistic discourse, basing it on a few biographical details – we can use the neologism "biographeme" by Roland Barthes – and a very personal attitude, both of which guarantee the authenticity of their work. Photography, a particularly mobile and adaptable medium with a great capacity for remediation, seems to be the perfect tool for this image-making project. At the crossroads of art and fame, Pablo Picasso (b.1881, Málaga; d.1973, Mougins) left us a large number of photographs – most of them made by well-known photographers and relatives – showing as much as his artistic activities as well as his private life. Both participate in the staging of the demiurgic male figure that he carefully built during his career and which precedes any analysis of his life and work. Decades after Picasso's death, these photographs continue to circulate, both printed or digitalised. A small number of very characteristic pictures are used and reused to depict the artist on any occasion: via traditional media such as exhibitions, catalogues and monographies, press articles, university classes, but also via more contemporary media such as blogs, websites, social networks, etc. This photographic network, built piece by piece by institutions and individuals, defines a new type of biography, in which photography and text combine to form a visual "biographeme". Using concepts from art history and semiology, the aim of this proposal is to question the significance of these photographs as a new way of looking and transmitting an artist's life and work, where facts and data become more explicit through the image. The complexity of Picasso's case will allow us to approach the concept of the visual narratives from different angles.

Abstract Expressionism and the Autobiographical Impulse: Forms of Presence and Absence

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The Abstract Expressionists, from the mythological force of their artistic intentions and the subsequent morphology of their paintings, are clearly represented through the lens of autobiographical impulse. Particularly generative in the study of Abstract Expressionism, the evidence of autobiographical intention informs a morphological interpretation of otherwise nonrepresentational forms. Through the expression of autobiography, the abstract becomes tangible. Using the negative light of comparison, the work of well-known artists Mark Rothko and Clyfford Still will ultimately shed light on the story of Weldon Kees, an artist who is most remembered as a poet. With a biographical impulse toward the universal, the iconic image of Mark Rothko are his paintings of a human scale, with a tripartite compositional division that witnesses his use of color as a way of expressing “basic human emotions—tragedy, ecstasy, doom.” Identified by Rothko in 1946 as being part of the same “small band of Myth Makers,” the work of Clyfford Still illustrates a more individual mytho-morphology of what he called “of the Earth, the Damned, and of the Recreated.” Evidencing the autobiographical impulse in reverse, Clyfford Still removed the title from a 1945 work composed of jagged white crags on a black background that extend from the nucleus of a delicate vertical red stripe. With the original title of ‘Self-Portrait,’ we can readily discover significance in the morphology of the painting; as ‘Untitled,’ the impasto is more likely nothing more than thick paint. In a final act of receding presence, the painting of Weldon Kees—as his practice in the medium was less developed than his Abstract Expressionist peers—will be shown as absent of autobiographical morphology, eerily echoing a stanza from one of his best known poems: “The mirror from Mexico, stuck to the wall, Reflects nothing at all. The glass is black. Robinson alone provides the image Robinsonian.”

Bertina Lopes: The Unspoken legacy

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In this paper, I take a single artwork by Mozambican modernist Bertina Lopes (Maputo 1924 – Rome 2012) and adopt it as a field of enquiry to lay bare the uneven terrain of art history and its production, to implode, in Geeta Kapur's words, "the metanarrative of Western modernism" to which Lopes has historically been positioned as subaltern. I thus expose the site, conditions, and means of art production which informed Lopes's *Omenagem a Amílcar Cabral* [Homage to Amílcar Cabral] painted in 1973, shortly after the PAIGC founding leader's assassination, placing my interlocutor and reader in a different vantage point, that of the anti-colonial movement and the attendant women's struggle.



Sigiya ngengoma: Ughubhu and African ontology

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Ugubhu the African spiritual drum is a technology that spans centuries and glides effortlessly across the globe. With the modern drum kit being an invention of former African slaves in the new world, the power of the drum appears to lie in its shape shifting potential. In the local context, the object has taken many forms and can be used in a number of activities including but not limited to imcimbi, ukuphahla, nokugida. It's centrality in healing practices shatters the myth of the drum as a frivolous object. Sangoma can literally mean 'person of the drum' or 'the drumming one' and drumming is an important part of summoning the ancestors. Divination can be translated as ukubhula which means to divine but can be directly translated as to beat. Ughubhu manifests its way into everything from popular songs like the classic thath' isgubhu, to the popular channel isgubhu and the iconic Drum magazine. Visual artist Pitika Ntuli who has once described himself as the 'owner of the drumsticks' commemorated its centrality through his recent exhibition Azibuyele Emasisweni which included a session with traditional healers and their drums that was streamed online. More recently jazz percussionist and thinker Tumi Mogorosi launched his book DeAesthetic: Writing with and from the Black Sonic. The work of various black thinkers has laid a ripe foundation for us to survey the implications. Alexander Weheliye's Phonographies enables a reading through the term Sonic Afro-Modernity which suggests that alienation from the mainstream is what leads to the production of black culture. Credo Mutwa's allegory of Marimba, the mother of music in his seminal book Indaba My Children allows us to think of this inherent ingenuity as necessarily intuitive and inadvertent. Kholeka Shange's text: "Zwakala: Umntwana umagogo nomsindo wogubhu" provides an understanding based on maternal manifestations of ugubhu. Hip hop and trap music are as exemplary of the benevolence of the drum as kwaito and gqom are in the local context. The technique of sonic reincarnation, sampling, mixing and remixing signifies a healing self replication which can be identified in the structure of the beat itself. And while ughubhu has all but disappeared in popular youth culture, it lives on through millions of iterations in the form of computerized sound bytes. In the hands of black practitioners, technological devices are activated as new forms of ugubhu. The hybridity of these methodologies is a generative way to think through the potential, purpose and power of the African drum.

Forgotten (her and his) stories. Decolonial practices in Latin American and non-Western art

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The importance of storytelling and oral history is highlighted by Latin American theoreticians and philosophers of the Modernity/ Coloniality/ Decoloniality network – a group of researchers from Latin America, that coined the key analytical categories serving to rethink power relations in the globalized World. Oral histories also became an inspiration for several Latin American artists who discussed in their art the colonial past, the Western (European) concept of modernism, and who provide a counter-definition in their own art that differed from that generated by Europe. This paper aims to analyse artistic production by Non-Western artists who not only refer to oral narrations told by subaltern subjects, but as well narrate in their art alternative histories, and give parallel perspectives of historical metanarratives, as well as local myths, and forgotten stories of micro-communities. The papers will examine clay sculptures and ceramics by the Argentine artist Ana Maldonado who reimagine and recreates stories of Latin American women. By reusing archaic forms of clay ceramics and by referring to pre-Columbian representations of the female body, Maldonado discuss the position of women in the past as well as in contemporary Latin American societies. Her work will be juxtaposed with scenes from everyday life and from the history of Guatemala represented thanks to the clay figurines by the Guatemalan artist and performer Aníbal López. In his series *Anthology of the violence in Guatemala*, from 2012, the artist depicts stories of contemporary Guatemala, but he as well often referred to obscured history of Latin America: that of Indigenous genocides, slavery and suppression of African-American heritage. López's series will be analysed in juxtaposition to the Angolan artist and filmmaker António Olé' series from 2001 titled *Hidden Pages, Stolen Bodies* – a set of found objects, sculptures, photographic images and documents evoking the history of the slave trade and colonialism, and metaphorically narrating the stories of individuals' suffering. The given examples will demonstrate how personal, often repressed stories could contribute to the reframing of metanarratives and to a break with monosperspectivist modes of narrating art history. The paper will reveal how the discourses presented by the above-mentioned artists on art and gender relations foster the normative perceptions of the geopolitics and the power relations in contemporary societies and in the modern World-System, but also constituted a break with (Western) European rationality.

“All Your Faves are Problematic” – Decolonizing Research at the Johannesburg Art Gallery

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What are the challenges and opportunities associated with curating “All Your Faves Are Problematic,” a daring yet nuanced exhibition of contemporary art at such a centrally-located museum in South Africa? What are the theoretical and cultural risks and rewards of a Canadian researcher visiting such a compelling exhibition as “All Your Faves,” which addressed histories of Apartheid-era violence and other traumatic subjects? Is it possible for a white non-African art researcher to critically engage in acclaimed South African art and its most prescient curatorial offerings without perpetuating a colonial gaze involving appropriative or exotifying glances, useless affect, or voyeurism from a safe distance? Do queer or feminist lenses, coupled with a mandate for decolonizing perspectives, help avoid the reification of Black suffering that may be seen on museum walls in gracefully-installed memorial images (such as, for example, that of Steven Biko), but also, during the era of Black Lives Matter, flashing continuously on screens around the world, reminding us that Black people continue to be killed in police custody. My questions, prompted by critical race theories, postcolonial art theories, and gender theories, arise from an inspiring visit to the Johannesburg Art Gallery in March of 2019. The exhibition on view was entitled “All Your Faves are Problematic,” and I would like to consider some of the works in the exhibition: by Steve Hilton-Barber, Pieter Hugo, Tracey Rose, and Paul Stepforth. I do this with interest and appreciation, but also to identify the potential for slipping into intellectual neo-colonialism, trauma tourism, exoticism, or prurience, all of which would problematize the cross-cultural alliances and exchanges I am seeking to nurture in decolonial, critical approaches to the art history of the contemporary Global South.

Interrogating the notion of ownership of the black female body

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Kuhlonipha is a complex social, linguistic, and behavioural code practiced by Nguni speaking societies. Though men also employ *hlonipha* it is not as nearly as restrictive and disempowering in its execution as it is to their female counterparts (Rudwick & Shange 2009:68).

This paper examines the complex paradoxes of the Nguni custom of *kuhlonipha*, through concepts of embodiment, self-representation, and cultural disobedience as strategies for interrogating patriarchal views of women within this particular practice. *Kuhlonipha* is a Nguni custom that requires women to display submissive behaviour of 'respect through avoidance' Robert Herbert (1990:455) and it is my contention in this study that this custom disempowers women and contributes to gender inequality. The underlying premise of this exploration is founded on the concepts of embodiment and the self-representation of black female identity within the Nguni cultural custom of *kuhlonipha* which incorporates notions of respect and respectability. The paper is thus situated within the context of African feminism as a component of a broader Black feminist framework. Focusing on concepts pertaining to Black feminism underpins the case for women's freedom within a patriarchal society and advocates gender equality. I further use these concepts to unpack selected works by Nandipha Mntambo and myself. I explore how both Mntambo and myself challenge *kuhlonipha* through our art practices. Mntambo investigates the binaries of male female, animal and human as well as masculine and feminine. I draw inspiration from personal lived experiences from which I consciously disobey cultural norm through self-representation of a gender ambiguous identity. I take into consideration Pumla Gqola's statement that "in a 'new South Africa' (post-1995), female representations are constantly debated and negotiated as black women interrogate and question societal norms". My cultural upbringing and exposure to traditional siSwati practices afford me unique lived insights into Nguni customs. I use my personal perspective and understanding of traditional norms to analyse and contextualise my work in terms of the custom of *kuhlonipha*.



Digital narratives of home during lockdown

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Place is produced through multi-layered interactions that take place in spaces. For Yi-Fu Tuan (1977:136), space is “transformed into place as it acquires definition and meaning.” Similarly, place atmospheres are produced through the dynamic comingling of bodies and environments (Edensor & Sumartojo 2015). Therefore, our attachment to place is produced through an embodied process that combines social memories and sensory experiences in specific environments (Degnen 2016:1646). As the anthropologist Steven Feld (1996:91) wrote, “as place is sensed, senses are placed; as places make sense, senses make place.” In 2020, the pandemic that swept across the globe threw Feld’s statement into sharp relief. While many people had never imagined going online to attend a funeral, a birthday party, an exhibition opening, or to take a game drive, these, and many other social activities, quickly became part of what is widely being referred to in the media as ‘the new normal.’ However, the digital screen fundamentally transforms our embodied experience of sociality and place. For instance, Edward Casey (2013:177) argues that in a wireless world, “I lose touch with what is essential to and a counterpart, of my lived body: place. For there is no body but in place.” How can we then make sense of place using digital communication technologies? Furthermore, how can we communicate narratives about our sense of place with others in a digital environment? This presentation describes and critically reflects on a learning experience that centered on the creation of digital narratives of home by graduate students at the University of Pretoria during lockdown in 2020. The students explored ways in which to tell the story of their multisensory, embodied and emplaced interactions in the private spaces of their homes using digital tools. Following Sarah Pink’s (2009) formulation of “sensory ethnography” the students worked as sensory autoethnographers in order to discover the sights, sounds, smells, temperatures and movements that combine to construct the particular atmospheres and narratives of their homes. Mobile technologies were used to gather data and digital tools were used to construct a digital archive comprising the audio-visual and multisensorial material. Thereafter, this data was analysed and the findings were presented in an interactive, multimedia, hypermedia online platform that conveyed multisensorial narratives of private domestic spaces. By taking an experimental approach, traditional research methods took a digital turn with the intersection of sensory autoethnography, remote digital communication technologies and virtual narratives of home.

A Story of Strange Comfort: On Hyper-Sincerity, and Online Video Reflexivity, in Kirsten Lepore's *Hi Stranger*.

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"Me: creeped out. Also me: strangely comforted." This statement, by user 'Fallen Angel', one of the top ranking comments posted under Kirsten Lepore's *Hi Stranger* (2017) on YouTube, encapsulates just about everything that viewers tend to think and feel about this widely-known stop-motion short. Scrolling through the comments both here and on Vimeo reveals what are simply variations on the same theme: "I can't tell if this is supposed to be therapeutic, motivational, erotic, or creepy"; "Why does this make me feel so loved"; and "I have never felt so uncomfortable and comforted at the same time". It is clear that this viral sensation struck a chord. Yet to what can we ultimately attribute its weirdly ambiguous potency? Or more to the point: why is it that this admittedly 'creepy' short film ultimately leaves viewers and commenters 'strangely comforted'? What is the deeper story that is unfolding here? In this paper presentation, we propose a broadly narrative-rhetorical view: that the endearing yet unsettling potency of *Hi Stranger* has to do with how the film manages to squash into less than three minutes an immense variety of rhetorical devices and affective embodied registers of appeal—most of which, not incidentally, are prominent topoi and tropes in online video culture too. Lepore's film is absolutely jam-packed with what we, borrowing from the likes of Ernst Van Alphen, Mieke Bal and others (2009), understand as a 'rhetoric of sincerity'. The affordances of this rhetoric have seen an increasing prevalence in the postpostmodern era of social media and screen-mediated intimacy (Vermeulen & Van den Akker 2017). On the one hand, the short is comforting for its sincere registers—its openness, vulnerability, transparency, sharing, intimacy, even love. On the other hand, it is creepy because it is all *too much*—too much openness, vulnerability, etc.—thus edging into *hyper-sincerity*, and even more so since we know that this intimacy is fabricated and performed. We thus argue that the power of *Hi Stranger* derives from its being both comforting and creepy at the same time; and that it is the appeal of the resultant ambiguity that calls viewers back for more. We unpack this ambiguity by considering how it draws on various devices and registers popular in amateur online videos and 'participatory culture' in general, such as its offers of low-stake, anonymous intimacy and no-strings gifting; its haptic/ASMR and Kawaii ('cute') appeal; and its self-professed care and appreciation for the viewer. As a condensed and highly reflexive online artefact, we conclude, *Hi Stranger* tells the story of just about every direct-address video that you're likely to encounter.



Gamified Grief: Video Games, Artmaking, and Digital Pilgrimage as Commemorative Narrative

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Digital sites have become increasingly popular places where the bereaved choose to enact grief and memorialise their deceased. Various online sites, including social media and video gaming sites, are frequently re-visited by bereaved individuals not only as an act of remembrance, but also a way of storytelling, given that certain representations of the deceased continue to live on in these digital/virtual realms. Considering this active turn and return to virtual environments to enact mourning and to digitally perform multi-layered narratives of loss - specifically in video games—I ask what the implications are for art and image making. Pilgrimage is an important and popularly used metaphor or trope in video game narratives, especially in Role-Playing Games (RPG's). The question that I therefore pose is: does the experience of immersing ourselves into video game narratives as a ritual of mourning allow individuals to experience greater agency in undergoing what is essentially a guided pilgrimage? Moreover: how may related engagements and interactions with works of art, informed by such imaginary worlds, shed more light on 'the art' of mourning in general? In the first part of the paper, I look at the common occurrence of in-game narrative memorialisation. Here I ask how the deceased can be memorialised within the virtual, imaginary worlds of video games and why this memorialisation is imagined to lie in a realm betwixt and between the living and the dead. Are the virtually memorialised deceased and in-between phases of the soul as described in particular religious narratives (Roman Catholic purgatory, Indonesian funerary practices, etc.) comparable? In the second part, I pivot these reflections towards the player-artist, and examine the effect of playing a video game in remembrance of the deceased, with emphasis on the narrative trope of pilgrimage as explored by Donald Howard (1980). The player-as-bereaved may enact her own virtual pilgrimage and perform her own story along with the characters in the game. And, by comparison, the artist in her studio may likewise design her own set of rules, her own applied mindful/mournful approach, motivated by video games, to enact a healing narrative of mourning.



Heterochronistic time-space: a queer world-making practice in Steven Cohen's Put Your Heart Under Your Feet... and Walk

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Elu's final wish expressed to me on his deathbed was "I want to be with you forever" And so it shall be. "I will always love you Elu, you are buried in me, I am your grave. And forever is so much shorter than we thought!"

I locate this essay within ongoing queer death discourses exploring how the contemporary, South African, visual artist Steven Cohen takes part in queer world-making by aestheticizing a heterochronistic space-time in the exhibition, *Put your heart under your feet... and walk*, as he mourns the passing of his life partner, Elu. Queer world-making, within the parameters of this study, refers to the symbolic, material, and collective artistic processes during which straight time (denoting both to heterosexual customs and westernised linear perceptions) is temporarily distorted. Drawing on a metamodernist conception of an a-chronological space-time that is both-neither ordered and disordered in conjunction with queerness' ongoing resignification I propose using the term, heterochronistic space-time, to explore the temporal plurality and ever deferred present in *Put your heart under your feet... and walk*. I then use the notion of queer heterochronistic space-time that I establish, as an interpretative instrument, to unravel the temporalities the exhibition's found objects might suggest. These found objects, including an array of ballet shoes many of which once belonged to Cohen's deceased lover, are bound to peculiar objects such as a mummified cat, vaginal-shaped ashtrays, and Jewish menorah candlesticks (to name just a few). I argue that the shoes, as funerary votives, transform the exhibition into a bereavement reliquary in which conventional time is (temporarily) disordered and performatively suspended, creating the possibility for numerous temporalities and ontological excess. I conclude that by aesthetically reontologising straight time with queer excessivity Cohen conflates the past, present, and future where he can take Elu's hand and dance upon the boulevard of broken dreams (their shared favourite song). In this way Cohen's queer world-making practices create a contained utopia, because what is a utopia if not a timeless and ever-receding horizon of (queer) potentiality? Ironically, a utopia might be timeless but is always time-bound and so like most queer worlds, this utopia is fleeting and will be stored away along with the rest of Elu's shoes, as Cohen exclaimed "... forever is so much shorter than we thought!"

Not By Bread Alone: a tale of a reckoning

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My paper will investigate an installation artwork *Not by Bread alone*; made from found objects, painted elements, and three-dimensional forms arrayed in a manner reminiscent of scroll paintings, the work was made as an autobiographical response to the death of my father. The work considers the terms by which an individual life might be judged, using a child's voice to explore ethical ambiguity. In pursuit of this investigation, I draw on various regeneration myths, highlighting the Egyptian concept of 'weighing the heart for truth' as well as Christian accounts of temptation and redemption. Bread – a quotidian item basic to many cultures throughout history – is used to question notions of value and sustenance in secular and spiritual realms. Referencing the ratios of part to whole defined by 'sacred geometry', *Not By Bread Alone* explores the symbolic and poetic meaning of concepts such as division, remainder and multiplication. The implication of these terms for the existential choices narrating an individual life are considered. Crumbled, shop-bought bread is reduced to its constituent elements. The subsequent addition of water results in a clay-like substance. Used to constitute various forms, including the 'original' slices of bread, bread-as-material explores the 'infra-thin', the liminal zone between one state and another, between text and texture, between one version of an event and another. The bread forms are exhibited in relation to a collection of found, hand-made signs bought at traffic intersections from indigent supplicants asking for 'bread' - referencing invisible life stories of systemic oppression, alterity and resilience.

Opening up Toward/Closing away from: Investigating a liminal identity through the construction of a fictionalised autobiography

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Experiences of globalised migrations of individuals and groups, either temporary or permanent, are prevalent and almost inevitable in contemporary culture. Feelings of displacement and estrangement – and the disorienting process it brings along with it – are becoming more universally relatable, and change our perspective of who we are and who we think we ought to be. In the artwork *Traces: an archive*, artists' books completed in 2013 as part of my master's project at KASK in Ghent, Belgium, I dealt with the complexities and difficulties of defining the self with regards to identity and place from a South African perspective while living in a foreign country. As a focal point, the ever-changing, ephemeral and ritual-like act of constructing a postmodern identity through the visual and textual documentation of remnants of family history, showing and (re)telling everyday acts by everyday people, strongly represents the loss of a sense of place by physically and mentally moving through phases of liminality. The work attempts to bring forth a subtle narrative resting on disillusionment, frustration, skewed cultural perspectives and the “transcendence” of the self by the submergence into a highly organised practice of creating a heightened alternate reality through the books. This paper is a critical investigation of how the work can possibly be viewed as reflective of different types of global diasporas in the way it applies visual storytelling techniques, graphic design and archiving methods in order to make sense of alienation, familiarity, belonging, memory and cultural heritage. It presents not only the two books created for public view, but also reflects on the internal processes represented by the searching, finding, collecting, and organising of particular objects and memories, family photographs and stories, as a carefully curated ‘fictionalised autobiography’. This is where the maker and the viewer are intimately connected and examined in terms of the relationship that is formed by the act of disclosing snapshots of the familiar, but also the inherent ambiguity arising from the space between the artist and the audience. This work puts emphasis on the power of coming to terms with a liminal state of being by creating and recreating stories by, for and of the self.

'Don't make me over': Mattering intergenerational selves through making

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In The Posterity Project: #2, entitled 'Don't Make me Over...' I pay homage to the presence of past selves as a manifestation of living and ancestral spectres. 'Don't Make me Over' is a video work set within an installation, where I perform the generating-making, reproduction-remaking, and deconstruction-undoing, of self, within sociopolitical and psychosocial domains of the past and the present. My work explores, how, hidden societal contexts such as quotidian patriarchy, is violently (re)inscribed and (re)enacted in the home and workplaces alike. Again, a hauntology of violence is implicated and interrogated. More specifically, I seek to highlight the still overlooked intersectional violence experienced by womxn of colour in this country and beyond. For womxn, performing labour(s), are entangled with sex and power. A further violence is the expectation (disguised as culture and religion) that we need to perform and deliver labour, excessively, constantly and to a certain standard (as set by the oppressive structures). From the home (as mothers and partners) and within our chosen occupations, we perform imposed labour at the cost of our health and mental well-being. Above all, when considering matters of race and class, exploitation, and abuse of power, the levels of violence experienced is exasperated. The above performative video and sculptural installation, was first shown at the Castle of Good Hope (Cape Town) in its Ammunition Room and The Forge Gallery (Johannesburg), as a public facing window display, on 9 April 2021. The work is intended as a provocation to evoke and invoke dialogue within and amongst audiences. The theoretical framing for my artistic research, falls within the ambit of Transformative Arts Practice, which underscores the acts, actions or activities involved during its practice. These adhere to the ethics of reciprocity, memory and social justice. I would like to present the aforementioned work at this year's SAVAH as a discussion point around which critical dialogue can develop. I intend to create a call-and-response styled article, that uses excerpts of the SAVAH dialogue. Below, please find a link to the online iteration of the video work described above. I have also provided images of the works on site at the Castle.

<https://youtu.be/kIBb0SYjRRg?list=TLGGuPbSf0g9wBAXNjA2MjAyMQ>

https://5db08903-2629-4959-a3cc-1969b67bad7f.filesusr.com/ugd/eafa5b_6ce21c3d7edc4a66a358abc312be4f4f.pdf

On the fence or building bridges?

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Yap and Man (1996) describe the Chinese community in South Africa as “one of the smallest yet most identifiable minority groups in arguably the most race-conscious country in the world.” Yet, or perhaps as a result, until the mid-1990’s, the Chinese have been largely underrepresented in South Africa’s historical record despite their presence in South Africa reaching back at least 300 years (Harris, 2019; Man & Yap, 1996). Little emphasis has been placed at the macro-level of society on making space for this minority group and its stories in the national effort to build a new post-Apartheid South Africa. As banana as I am, I have found that this lack of representation does not alter the predicament created by my appearance binding me to a culture that is not reflected in my surroundings beyond my childhood home. Arthur Song (1993) states that, “Chinese immigrants to South Africa had to adapt to changing circumstances to the extent that their offspring have inherited a culturo-identity problem.” Philosopher Paul Ricoeur posits that our identities are one-part physicality (idemity) and one-part intangible agent (ipseity) connected by the narratives we tell of ourselves, that others tell of us and that we think others tell of us. The anthropologists Clifford Geertz and Bruno Latour posit that the objects that we interact with and surround ourselves with tell stories about us too. But what happens when one’s idemity and ipseity do not fit neatly and the narratives that we tell are not able to effectively consolidate the two? What happens when the objects that are as much a part of those narratives as one’s idemity and ipseity come from two worlds that have not yet found a way to embrace one another? This paper proposes a conceptual framework for a PhD study consisting of a personal autoethnographic body of creative work that responds to these intertwined questions through the lens of material culture. I attempt to provide thick descriptions of the objects that might inform artworks in this body of work by exploring the stories that they represent and the stories that they begin to tell of my identity as a Chinese South African.



Stories (un)told ... narratological possibilities in Jan van der Merwe's It's cold outside

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This presentation investigates the South African artist Jan van der Merwe's installation piece *It's cold outside* (2003) from a narratological perspective. In particular, two Genettean concepts drive the interpretation: firstly, the notion of paratexts and, secondly, focalisation. Genette formulated paratexts in a literary context to refer to all the elements extraneous to the text itself. I purport that these elements can be transposed to the visual arts to include various phenomena such as artist's statements and information gleaned from sources such as walkabouts or interviews. Focalisation, in turn, refers to the selection, slant and emotional flavour of a text, and entails a distinction between speaking and seeing, or narration – and in the present study, focalised participation in the artwork. *It's cold outside* presents a life-size number of artefacts: a chair with a negligee, a high chair with a vanity case (in which a small screen shows an image of a woman's lips where one sees her repeatedly applying lipstick) and other household items. My interpretation starts with a consideration of paratextual elements, specifically the artist's sentiment that the work is about his mother's last trip to the hospital; she died briefly afterwards. However, she applied lipstick before leaving the house, and hence poignancy of the image of a woman applying lipstick. This paratext, as well as other elements, informs the narration and various narrativized aspects associated with the work. My argument is that the viewer, who is also an embodied participant once engaging with the work, focalises the paratextual information together with narrative signifiers in the work itself to co-construct a narrative that demonstrates an ontological overlap between absences and presences suggested in the work. These absence and presences include those imaginatively brought to bear by the viewer-participant. As such, paratextual elements and focalising activity by the viewer-participant allow for stories told and untold to suggest a rich interpretation of personal loss and memory in the artwork.



A Visual Narrative: The Aesthetic Manifestations of Nothingness

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This paper aims to report on a qualitative practice-based research study which explores the visual narrative of nothingness and how it [nothingness] is the conceptual and theoretical foundation for my artistic practice. The research problem was influenced by the absence of my mother from our home after being diagnosed with an ovarian tumour (2013). My mother's cancer diagnosis was followed by the presence of a physical and emotional absence of the matriarch of my family; this led to an emotional trauma that triggered a feeling of nothingness within me. The overarching problem in the study is therefore how this nothingness could be expressed in my art to visually narrate my process of emotional trauma and healing. Nothingness, is a notion which refers to where something used to be, should be or is not anymore, and attempts to grasp what is there by not being there. Within this study, I explain how my art uses my mother's battle with cancer and the subsequent void it created became source material for the artistic expression of nothingness. Rather than removing materiality and the act of making to express nothingness, my visual enquiry is to create something tangible that represents the concept of nothingness associated with a high art aesthetic. The primary mode of communication for my art-making is painting. However, through strengthening the messages and meaning of the hypothesis of nothingness within my art and research, the use of materials unconventional to painting became pivotal. The layering process of these materials push the boundaries between the material, surface and mode of application. As a result, this emancipated my art from the material bounds of traditional painting practices, enabling the visual narrative of Nothingness.

Challenging the stereotypical artistic depictions of madness by discussing the emerging counternarrative offered by mad artists

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For this presentation I would like to highlight the importance of mad individuals sharing their first-hand experiences of madness through artmaking. In the past and throughout art history the story of madness was predominantly told and represented by individuals that had not experienced madness first-hand. Furthermore, I assert that a stereotypical image of madness can be observed throughout art history due to the lack of personal first-hand experience of madness. 'Mad individuals' and 'madness' are the preferred expressions for this presentation in order to oppose words such as 'mentally ill', 'unstable' or 'insane' individuals. The term 'madness', as suggested by the Mad Pride paradigm, overturns the victim status associated with mental illness and enforces agency and empowerment. For the purpose of this presentation I will discuss two visual examples in order to demonstrate the stereotypical representations of madness prevalent within art history. These examples include Caius Gabriel Cibber's *Raving Madness* (c. 1676) and Paul Richer's *The Motor Phase of a Hysterical Attack* (1885). In each of these artistic representations I would argue that the mad individuals are represented as other, objectified, foreign, strange, not understandable and completely unrelatable. In other words, the humanity and identity of the individuals are completely overlooked and perhaps even seen as irrelevant. More recent artworks such as Yayoi Kusama's *All The Eternal Love I Have For The Pumpkins* (2016) and Arthur Bispo do Rosário's *Presentation Mantle* (Undated), on the other hand, represent a crucial emerging counternarrative, namely the first-hand experience of madness. I aim to demonstrate how these first-hand experiences expressed through visual art challenge the stereotypical representations associated with madness. Kusama's and do Rosário's artworks both present two different yet effective means of evoking compassion, curiosity and even wonder. I assert that the humanity and identity of the artists become crucial aspects in their representations. By creating art mad individuals are able to claim back and express their experience in a way that makes sense to them. To end off the presentation I would like to discuss an example of one of my own sculptures accompanied by short autobiographical stories that were inspired by my own experience of psychosis and which form part of my current PhD research. The purpose of the sculptures and stories is not only to express, make sense of and find meaning in the experience of madness but also to attempt to make the experience more understandable and accessible.

Wearing Your Clothes, Imprinting Your Name: Embodied Storytelling in the Work of Senzeni Marasela and Paul Emmanuel

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From 2013 to 2019 Senzeni Marasela almost exclusively wore dresses made in the style her mother used to wear: Shweshwe fabric in a cut most associated with older black, South African women from rural areas. In a durational performance artwork that sought to make visible the experiences of black South African women of her mother's generation journeying between rural areas, urban peripheries and city centres, Marasela conducted her daily life with all its professional, social and domestic commitments clothed in 'her mother's dresses' for this entire six year period. Since 2014 Paul Emmanuel has been creating what he terms 'anti-monuments' in dialogue with various war memorial sites: Monument Hill in Makhanda which remembers the frontier wars in the Eastern Cape, South Africa; the Mozambican civil war of 1964-1974, Maputo as memorial site; the commemoration of World War II's Somme battlefields in France. Emmanuel's works around these war monuments have sought processes for memorialising those not remembered in the official monuments, but have also engaged the tension between memorialising as fixing and concretising and the ephemerality and fragility of memory and human life. Through a process with moulds embossed with soldiers' names, Emmanuel imprinted these names onto his own skin. Like Marasela, Emmanuel sought to use his own lively body to make visible the past experiences and losses of people who have had little to no public recognition. As performance studies scholars Mark Fleishman (2012) and Rehane Abrahams (forthcoming) point: etymologically, to remember is to draw together the 'members', the parts of memory or history, but with 'member' carrying the potential significance of a corporeal body part with all its paradoxical characteristics – alive, robust, transient, vulnerable. In this paper I consider that to remember the past is not to restore it into the present but is to draw together the pieces (the members) that remain into a 're-story-ation' with the contemporary moment. I interpret Marasela's and Emmanuel's acts to remember as a 're-story-ation' where the remembrances of the past interact with the artists' own, contemporary embodied lives. This paper suggests that Emmanuel and Marasela offer embodied storytelling as a memorialisation process which strives for inclusive, sustained memorialisation through the body, through dialogue between people, times and spaces and which acknowledges the inevitable incompleteness and relationally mutable nature of memory.

In Order to Know, We Must Imagine for Ourselves: Artistic Responses to Historical Events that Evade Recorded Delineations.

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Historical records are compiled to engender collective knowing, however, there are historical events that resist representational intelligibility. My proposed paper will bring a collection of films by South African artist Penny Siopis into conversation with an installation of Polaroids by Belgium photographer Anton Kusters in order to negotiate the limitations of the evidentiary. The artist, I contend, can create a generative space within which we can encounter the affective dimensions of historical events, which is the ambiguous realm of subjective un-knowing that historical records preclude. Siopis and Kusters's artworks explore affective potentials by grappling with the relationality of incommensurables – the evidentiary and the imagination. Within these artworks, the past does not come into being, but remains an open question; open to future potentialities and even incommensurable futures. Time is released from the constraints of historical linearity and determinism. Siopis's films *Obscure White Messenger* (2010), *Communion* (2011) and *The Master is Drowning* (2012) are montages of found footage, accompanied by emotive soundscapes and first-person subtitles. Each film is a lyrical imagining of an absent image with subjects that address us from beyond the grave. Kusters's *The Blue Skies Project* (2012) is comprised of 1 078 Polaroids of blue skies, each taken at a WWII concentration camp with the GPS co-ordinates and the number of victims from each site blind-stamped into the image. The photographs are displayed with a sound piece composed by Ruben Samama, which is thirteen years in duration; the same length of time that the camps were operational. The infinite space of the sky is coupled with extensive data collection to contemplate an event too extreme to be rendered intelligible from historical records. I will explore both artists' methods of breaking away from the event, of going outside and bringing the outside in, evoking restless indeterminacy, thereby evincing that the import of these events exceeds their historical specificity. Exploring the contingency of vital materialism, the how of representation, is central to both Siopis and Kusters's creative process. Their artworks engender haptic encounters, disrupting and dismantling ocular certitude, which is intended towards the semiotic closure of knowledge. Rather, haptics arouses embodied awareness, which Siopis describes as a poetics of vulnerability, of being attune to the precarious contingency of relationality; jostling between acting and being acted upon. No longer viewers, but called upon as participants, Siopis and Kusters task us with George Didi-Huberman's dictum: in order to know, we must imagine for ourselves.

A story of love and migration emanating from the artworks of Senzeni Marasela (2003 – 2019)

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Prolific artist, curator, and scholar Senzeni Marasela, through her alter ego character Theodorah Mtetyane, takes an evocative stance investigating notions of waiting as a pathology stemming from migration in South Africa. Departing from a previously marginalised, often overlooked, and disregarded viewpoint, Marasela's alter modern practice focuses on the lived experience of those who were left behind. South Africa's demand for labour in the mining sector between 1946 – 1980 and increased economic challenges for black people under the apartheid rule led to the migration of many black men who left their homesteads in search for better economic opportunities in the cities and the mines. These men left their families to work as miners, securities, garden boys and other servitude roles that were available for them as black people. This led to migration becoming a common phenomenon in South Africa especially amongst black men. Placing emphasis on the complex perspective of the black woman from the homelands, Marasela generates a body of work titled "Theodorah comes to Johannesburg" (2003) which later evolves into "Waiting for Gebane" (2013 - 2019), that explores varied narratives of Theodorah Mtetyane's travels to Johannesburg in search of her husband Gebane Mtetyane. Gebane left home years ago in search of better economic pursuits and has since not returned home. Focusing on the concept of post- colonial performance, masquerading as well addressing gaps in epistemologies regarding lived experiences of black women, the study investigates and discusses Theodorah's travels through the qualitative analysis of Senzeni Marasela's work; comprised of performances, photographs, installations, and paintings. The study engages a post- colonial framework employing post- colonial literature collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Relating experiences of place and space or situatedness through Stories

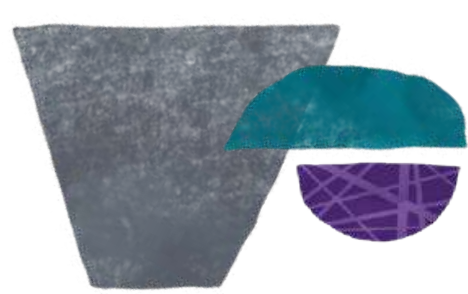
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Since 2010, I have spent time researching and photographing inside the South African Municipal Migrant hostels, namely Merafe, Diepkloof, Kwa Mai-Mai, Madala Hostels situated in Johannesburg and Madala and Mshay`zafe Hostels in the East Rand. Physically spending time in the hostel both leisurely and for scholarly reasons, I came to realise that these spaces are not only Violent as they have been portrayed. There are human beings living in them who have their own rich stories to share. Therefore making the hostel more than brick and mortar, but space which has a spiritual quality which allows it to breathe. As a professional photographer, photographing in the hostels I came to realise that photography is not just a tool to document but rather it has the ability to expose that which we cannot see, a third dimension. The Third Dimension makes reference to the spiritual, which I define as “the internal experience evoking a particular emotional state unique to the individual’s own experience – whether it is a belief system or a sense of humanity, or memory which may trigger the rediscovery of something. That, which can` t be seen, but is felt and experienced. Because of its emotive and subjective status.’ For the conference I would like to present my photographs made in the hostels and the stories associated with them and my research, this includes conversations with hostel residents, my observations and a reflection on my process of being an outsider in an environment, yet still being able to share my life with the residents and also take part in their lives.





Surfacing the hidden through Visual storytelling

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"It is out of stories that we make society. Out of stories an individual constructs a self." Kopano Ratele, *Life of Bone* (2011) The invisible SARS-COV2 virus has had the unexpected effect of making visible the wounds of structural violence as experienced by young people. As an educator, artist and academic, I find myself asking how we can begin to address the trauma of gender based violence that far too many young people face in their everyday lives? How can we create safe spaces and the opportunities for young artists to express the impact of violence and abuse in their lives?

This paper presents visual voices of some students artwork as part of a broader artists activist campaign that has awarded over 520 small grants to vulnerable artists left destitute during the lockdown in South Africa. The images by student voices express their instability, anguish, optimism, resilience, despair and anger. They provide a lens through which to see and manage a world undergoing unprecedented change. Their visions are not about rainbows towards a post-coronavirus future, but about the virus as an ongoing presence. They are visible representations of the hard questions their generation need to ask in finding opportunities for renewal, making adjustments and permanently adapting to change.

The series of artworks by students were created as part of The Lockdown Collection in 2020, an initiative engaging established and emerging artists to express their personal and the collective impacts of COVID-19. Subsequent visual campaigns on green renewal for climate change as well as a response to Gender-based violence for the 16 days of activism followed. (See: <https://artistproofstudio.co.za/pages/student-collection>; and <https://www.thelockdowncollection.com>).

The images and stories make manifest the wounds of this present time. They reflect how the virus has exacerbated structural, historical, racial, sexual, political and economic inequalities and injustices. The images hold up a mirror to our current failings, yet provide us with deeply moving portraits of strength and resilience, in which young women and young men are joined together in their insistence that a better world is possible, emerging out of the forge of the Lockdown era. These visual stories present us with a deeper way to listen and learn. The hope is that they can also galvanise us to act differently.

The untold stories of survivors

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This paper aims to analyse the interrelationships between the images and the stories. I focus on Jodi Bieber's photographic series, *Survivors*, that depicts a series of photographs of women, living spaces, and significant objects in a triptych format. Each woman narrates a story of harrowing abuse at the hands of her intimate partner. The stories are broadcast in their own voices, strangely devoid of affect. The images of the women, living spaces, and objects are the bare bones of the scourge of abuse, and the stories of the women, 'give flesh to the bare bones' in the words of Kopano Ratele. The stories provide context for the images of spaces and objects in juxtaposition of each portrait of the woman. The spoken narratives that accompany the images place the stories in a broader cultural context, where gender-based violence, specifically intimate partner violence, is the norm. The narratives are not only personal stories, but speak of systemic oppression informed by heteropatriarchal societies. I argue that the public narratives and statistics of gender-based violence and domestic abuse almost daily by the South African media, accompanied by empty political promises and failed public awareness campaigns, fail to represent the true horror of the lives of countless South African women by focusing the narratives recounted in *Survivors*. In addition, the invisibility of violence is premised in the way that the actual events of domestic violence are seldom, if ever represented in photography. This idea is linked to the manner in which the space of violence, as a conceptual space of intimate relations, is private. By emphasising untold stories and invisibility, I identify the strategies that Bieber employ to bring the untold stories of the women depicted in *Survivors* to the surface.

Encountering the unspeakable: curating self-narratives

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Survivors of sexual violence often feel pressurised into silence about their traumatic experiences, fearing to be shamed, scrutinised and disbelieved. Opportunities that allow survivors to recount and particularise their unique experiences as self-narratives and which additionally permit survivors to be heard and believed, are considered essential when healing from trauma. Yet, this form of violence is extremely difficult to narrate. Rape is a sexually specific assault in which one individual silences and asserts their will over another, appropriating the other's body and autonomy. Consequently, individuals who might seek to tell are often severely damaged and shattered by the violence inflicted upon them, frequently hindering their agency in acting as narrators of their own stories. The exhibitions I explore in this context create platforms for the collective display of anonymous self-narratives and other markers that evoke the presence and diversity of survivors and their distinctive experiences of rape. Moreover, these exhibitions depend on the participation of survivors to challenge misconceptions, raising greater awareness of issues surrounding sexual violence. Through my discussion I consider the role of curatorial judgement in exhibiting both self-narratives and other symbolic signifiers that evoke individualised experiences of rape. I consider how the curatorial initiative and design of these exhibitions, as well as the ways in which they draw on multiplicity and collectivity might work in establishing a sense of community and safety where survivors might be encouraged to share and make public self-narratives that are too often left unheard.





CALL FOR PAPERS: *SPECIAL THEMED ISSUE OF de arte JOURNAL*

Attention all 35th Annual SAVAH conference participants: Call for papers for a themed issue of de arte entitled Untold Stories

We are pleased to announce this call for papers for a themed issue of *de arte*, titled *Untold Stories*, that draws on the issues explored at the 35th Annual SAVAH CONFERENCE, hosted by the research entity Visual Narratives and Creative Outputs in the Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, 29 September – 2 October 2021. The themed issue will be guest edited by Dr Louisemarié Combrink, Dr Annemi Conradie and Dr Alison Kearney.

Untold stories

Stories give flesh to the bare bones. Out of stories, we make culture, not from the bones of the dead, though the bones are the rationale for stories being told.

Whereas in art, this impulse is clearer, science too is about telling certain stories. It is out of stories that we make society. Out of stories an individual constructs a self. *Kopano Ratele, Life of Bone (2011)*

All of which makes up a story I do not choose to tell. I choose not to tell it because to no one, not even to you, do I owe proof that I am a substantial being with a substantial history in the world. *J.M. Coetzee, Foe (1986)*

Stories capture the elusiveness of creating and imagining by linking the act of telling with being. Stories make us, and we make ourselves through the stories we hear and don't hear; tell, and don't tell. Over millennia and across cultures, stories about places, persons, materials, objects, or ideas have been told and retold in different ways and from different perspectives. In the process, some narratives have gone unheard, unseen or have even actively been silenced. The year 2020 marked the beginning of a new decade. How might we re-imagine our collective past and imagine the future through the creation of new stories or the un-telling of old stories? How do we go about uncovering, sharing, or recording previously untold or silenced stories – our own and those of others?

We propose that engagement with the work of artists, artworks, visual culture, and design, as practices of storytelling or narrative, may offer constructive ways of understanding, unravelling, and contributing to current discourse on the visual field. We invite papers that explore, inquire, and reflect on visual expression and ways of storytelling that work towards acknowledging, understanding, and (re-)visualizing narratives. This is an invitation to scholars to evaluate and re-evaluate positions taken in the field (conceptual and metaphorical frameworks and locations), or in relation to material objects and their existences or locations.

We invite papers of 5000- 8000 words that engage with the theme to be submitted for consideration for publication in *de arte*.

Possible topics can explore:

- Tensions between visibility, materiality, orality, and textuality in and through narrative
- Visual storytelling (such as artist's books, graphic novels, cartoons, illustration, animation, branding, and campaigns)
- Relating experiences of place and space or situatedness through stories
- Collaborative storytelling and ways of collectively engaging with or sharing stories
- Notions of truth and fiction, history, and myth in visual storytelling
- Memory, remembrance, visual narrative and re-story-ation
- Palimpsests, intertextuality, bricolage and (visual) layers of narrative
- Liminality and boundary crossing
- Surfacing the hidden through storytelling,
- Archives, archival material, and subaltern voices

PLEASE CONSULT THE INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS (BELOW) AND ENSURE THAT YOUR DOCUMENT ADHERES TO ALL THE REQUIREMENTS AND CONTAINS ALL NECESSARY INFORMATION.

SUBMIT ARTICLES, WITH ABSTRACTS OF 300 WORDS to the guest editors at untoldstories2022@gmail.com

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: 25 February 2022.

All submissions will be subject to double-blind peer review.

Any questions related to this call for papers can be sent to the guest editors of the themed issue:

Annemi Conradie (annemi.conradie@nwu.ac.za), Louisemarié Combrink

(louisemarieccc@gmail.com) and Alison Kearney (alison.kearney@wits.ac.za).



de arte

Aims and scope

de arte is an international peer-reviewed journal offering a distinctive, integrated forum for original research in the visual arts, art history, art criticism, visual culture, and related disciplines. The primary focus is on South Africa, Africa, and the Global South, where arts and culture have had an instrumental role in forging identities and post-colonial realities. The journal aims to be representative of a variety of viewpoints and emphasises an interdisciplinary approach, cognisant of the value of a dynamic interface between the visual arts and other fields including philosophy, politics, history, religion, and literature. It further seeks to provide a platform for under-represented African visual arts and art criticism on the global stage.

In addition to original scholarly research, *de arte* invites critical reviews of books focused on the above-mentioned scope. We welcome contributions from established and emerging scholars, and we are open to proposals for Themed Issues guest edited by leading scholars in relevant fields.

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Instructions for authors

Please read the complete guidelines for authors (attached) before making a submission.

Authors should confirm that their article is **original** work, does not violate any contractual agreement and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

The document should contain:

- A structured **abstract** of 250 words in length, covering the main factual points and statement of objective or problem, method, results, and conclusions
- A list of between six and ten **keywords** for abstracting and indexing services.
- A **title page** with short biographical details of each author as well as the name, affiliation, and country of each corresponding author at the time of the work.
- Articles for the themed edition should be between 5000 and 8000 words.

For further instructions, please visit:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?show=instructions&journalCode=rdat20&>

Style Guide: *de arte* uses the **Chicago Manual of Style, 17th ed., author-date**

(<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/>). The journal encourages the use of reference managers such as RefWorks, EndNote, Zotero and Mendeley.

Authors whose research does not engage with the above-mentioned theme are welcome to submit articles for consideration for publication in *de arte*, by following this link <https://journals.co.za/journal/dearte/submit>, or contacting the editor (mcdowe@unisa.ac.za)

