

the urban experience / south africa & elsewhere

# experimenting / experiencing the city

## ABSTRACTS

/ 16 & 18 MAY 2017

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real estate actors' strategies and urban stakes

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Through crossed perspectives, **Experimenting / Experiencing the City** will try to tackle both the risk and the interest of a multi-disciplinary approach to question the city. It aims to open the debate around the notions of "city" and "urban" in the complex relationship that unites them, to study the links between integration, exclusion and citizenship in an era of globalisation and complex urban identities.

Among other approaches, the notion of spatial justice can help to look at these issues. The use – and definition – of public space or public art needs to be questioned. The housing options offered to city-dwellers, particularly the middle classes, need to be viewed and interrogated: what forces drive the market and orient the shape of the city?

Experimentations and experiences from South Africa, Mozambique, Brazil, India, and elsewhere, will be presented and confronted. Debates will gather academics, who question and conceptualize the city, urban actors (from street vendors to developers), who make the city, and artists, who live and share their experience of the city. Artistic works and events – performances, photos and films – will be expanded to the workshops and echo and enrich the discussions.

*We would like to thank all the partners and coordinators that made this urban studies' event possible, and a special thanks to Mark Lewis, who kindly allowed us to use his photos from the project "Corridors of Freedom", supported by the AFD and the University of the Witwatersrand.*

16 may 2017

/ MuseumAfrica

## Public spaces and art

Coordinator: Pauline Guinard (LAVUE-Mosaïques, IHMC, École normale supérieure, Paris)

Session 1

### Who is doing art in public spaces and what for?

Discussant / **Cynthia Kros** (Historian of Public Culture)

**Eric Itzkin**

(Deputy director of the Department of Arts, Culture and Heritage, City of Johannesburg)

### New monuments in Johannesburg

Through the adoption by the City of Johannesburg of the Percent for Art policy in 2006, mechanism, funding was unlocked for many new public art commissions. Selection was done by specialist panels, and during the period 2006 -2011 political control was generally at arts length, with a large measure of creative freedom being experienced. During this time, artworks covering a variety of treatments and subject matter - most of it not overtly political. Under the ANC administration, increasing calls for honoring heroes then came to the fore, reflecting a proliferation nationally of realistic bronze statues honoring struggle leaders. New monuments were developed in Johannesburg moved however beyond conventional statuary, to embrace a wider range of expression. As examples of such unconventional treatments, the presentation will explore the Silverton Siege Monument, and the Weinberg Family Monument.

**Jay Pather**

(Curator of the Festival *Infecting the City* in Cape Town)

### A case for the temporal form: Curating *Infecting the City* and the making of place for elusive and indeterminate futures

Cape Town was the International Winner of Trip Advisor Travellers Choice Awards, the top of the New York Times' and the Guardian's lists of best cities. The city is also the site of abject poverty, racial clashes and civic strife. Caught in a range of notions

over its natural beauty and its unassailable truth as a divided city, Cape Town's contradictions and paradoxes are often richly explored in disruptive public art and performance. In this address, Pather will focus on the temporary unmaking and remaking of place as a recurrent theme of the public art festival *Infecting the City* to examine issues of representation, lack of ownership by citizenry, and temporal forms as political acts.

**Mariapaola McGurk**

(Director of the Coloured Cube)

### Is there a win/win scenario on the horizon?

The Coloured Cube was founded in 2014 out of sheer frustration from trying to find work within the creative sector. Jobs are hard to come by and making a living out of the creation of art is even more difficult. There is a missed opportunity as the artists need income and the city needs real engagement. A win/win situation is just on the horizon and by creating partnerships between government, private and the creative sector this may be possible. It is not in the huge, overpriced statue that the arts add value within a city but rather through the shared experience of community and artists. Through this interaction real problems can be researched, discussed and ideally resolved. The Coloured Cube ventured outside of the creative sector for clients and work and in this realised the skills that overflow within the creative sector are lacking in other sectors. Skills such as problem solving, 'out the box' thinking, collaborations, practical – low cost solutions, willingness to experiment and be process driven rather than outcomes driven. Public art, whether it be through painting, performance, exhibitions, music or poetry can offer insights into the realities faced within a specific context. In-line with the history of art in Africa the solutions for public art and engagement may be practical rather than monumental. Creating places that are comfortable in public and allow a poet or singer to perform, creating

practical art where the works can be used rather than just looked at. Through the collaboration and negotiation with the private and governmental sectors artists could find income and the city could find solutions to community engagement, safety and beautifying our public spaces.

Session 2

### Where are the publics of art?

Discussant / **Barbara Morovich** (ENSAS-AMUP, Strasbourg School of Architecture )

**Anthea Moys**

(Artist)

### Enacting play: public space activation

In 2006 I rode the 94.7 Cycle Challenge on a stationary exercise bike on Jan Smuts Avenue for an hour, going nowhere. It was a public performance, an intervention that spoke directly to the purposeful purposeless of play: it is useless in that I will never win, but it is also useful and necessary in that it invites publics to imagine alternative, arguably more ambiguous endings to this story as opposed to the norms of winner and loser, success and failure, start and finish. In publically changing the rules of the game, we invite and make room for difference. In response to winning the Standard Bank Young Artist award for Performance Art, I created the 'Vs.' series which reimagined winning as the act of learning instead of conquest over another. For three months I lived in Grahamstown and learnt six different skills: soccer, singing, ballroom dancing, bag-pipe playing, chess and karate. I then challenged each team single-handedly, so inevitably losing at all of the challenges. Even though we are living in the "rainbow nation", South African society is still very divided. This small town is no exception. This work not only challenged the rules of the game in sports – it asked participants and audiences to possibly imagine (pretend!) a different kind of game where learning from the other through playing, trumps beating them. The power of play here then becomes a kind of play that is more about humility and connection through learning from the other rather than winning the game. The project travelled to Geneva where I challenged four different teams in alpine-horn playing, velodrome cycling, swiss wrestling and ice hockey.

In this talk I will reflect on a selection of public performance art works that include various publics in the making of the work and share my experiences with regards to successes, failures and challenges.

**Ashley Whitfield**

(Curator)

### On the tendency to typologize: audience stratification and public art programming

Protagonists of the arts take as given the term 'program' to describe a series of events. The program is a performance, project, colloquium; it can be the exhibition program for the year or public art programs to engage new audiences. 'Program' here, is relieved of its association with instruction for behaviour as in behavioural psychology or computer programming. The arts use 'program' as a noun not a verb, the aim to activate, not instruct. And yet, reviewing the audiences that are called upon to participate in public programs reveals untold pedagogical mechanisms of cultural exclusivity in which every participant learns from the program, while only the so-called community is the object of teaching. This paper will explore the typology of 'community' in public art programs as means of unveiling these mechanisms.

**David Heitner, Senzo Bongwana, Siphe Bongwana, Siphamandla Bongwane** (aka Boy Boy)

(Participants from the *Eat My Dust* project)

### *Eat my Dust: projecting the self on the screen to build a collective in Kliptown*

We are pleased to introduce in this intervention a cinema project called EAT MY DUST that was developed 7 years ago, in Kliptown, a township in Soweto, near Johannesburg. We will see how this project has created some social link and collectiveness by organizing weekly cinema workshop for some teenagers of Kliptown, by shooting some short movies all together and by screening them outdoor in a monthly basis for the entire community. During these outdoor screening in Kliptown community, we used to have 2 distinct part. The first part was the screening of the movies shot by the teenagers of EAT MY DUST, and the second one, was the screening of classic of the cinema,

translated in Zulu or Suthu or Xhosa. We used to have more than 500 persons for each screening, young and old, from the community but also from Johannesburg city. To be able to project yourself in a screen or in a cinema dream, share a moment together and learn at the same time, that was some of the main purposes of Eat My Dust project ...

### Session 3

## What can art do to public (and) spaces?

Discussant / **Pauline Guinard** (LAVUE-Mosaïques, IHMC, Ecole normale supérieure, Paris)

### Alexander Opper

(Department of Architecture, Univ. of Johannesburg)

#### Public art is not for the public

The title of this paper expresses a summary of a quote by the famous American sculptor Richard Serra, uttered during the confrontational process which ultimately forced the removal of his monumental Tilted Arc (1981) from New York's Federal Plaza, in 1989. Serra said, rather heroically, in the context of the controversy that raged around and eventually led to the removal of Tilted Arc: "Art is not democratic. It is not for the people." This story, I believe, serves as an excellent lens to interrogate what public art can come to mean for contemporary Johannesburg. That is, if 'public' is carefully thought, and responsibly, participatively and inclusively defined. More specifically this paper concerns itself with an ongoing, critical re-reading and re-visiting of my working method of 'Undoing Architecture'.

### Rike Sitas

(ACC, Univ. of Cape Town)

#### Tactics of trespass and transgression

Public space and myriad publics have captured the interest of artists for some time, resulting in a wide range of artful interventions – some more subversive than others. This presentation comes from reflections playing in between public-facing art and urban studies, exploring the role of art in liberatory learning. The presentation starts by challenging assumptions that underpin much of urban research that is premised on rational criteria, arguing that

these may insufficient approaches to understanding the human and material entanglements typical in cities. The presentation ends by providing a series of examples that demonstrate that we fundamentally need to explore tactics of knowledge production and the trespass of knowledge, cultures and spaces in order to transgress the current, often stagnant and stultifying status quo. Although artful enquiry may not solve the myriad complexities and crises facing cities, they may be an alternative starting point for learning how to do so.

### Donna Kukama

(Univ. of the Witwatersrand)

#### Introduction here: we the people

*Introduction Here: We The People* forms part of an ongoing series of work that constitutes a "history book". The proposed book is not one that takes on the physical form of bound paper with markings in ink. It presents chapters that exist as staged site-specific public encounters and performances.

*Introduction Here: We The People* references the American Hip-Hop group's 2016 song titled "We The People" as a means to unpack and/or relive strategies existing within my personal and collective public art practice. These include, amongst others, historical reenactments and parodies of existing public structures that are imposed, yet remain questionable.

Each chapter of the book physically revisits sites of violence (physical/discursive, personal/public) directed at and experienced by marginalized bodies. The overall book uses real and imagined histories, defies chronology, and sits between performance, drawing, sculpture, video, text, sound, oral history, and real life. The intention of presenting staged public encounters as a "history book" is not to relive history, but rather to allow gaps for "comebacks" in the present day, and to begin to imagine other futures.

13 may 2017

/ Wits Club, Univ. of the Witwatersrand

## Housing of the middle classes: real estate actors' strategies and urban stakes

Coordinator: Karen Lévy (LAVUE, Univ. Paris Nanterre)

### Session 1

## Middle class housing stakes: demand, supply and the housing market

Chair / **Margot Rubin** (Univ. of the Witwatersrand)

Discussant / **Ivor Chipkin** (PARI)

### François Viruly

(Univ. of Cape Town)

#### Market dynamics in the South African affordable housing market

The Housing problem in South Africa is multidimensional and complex.

While much academic and professional attention has been given to addressing the social, political and planning causes of housing delivery in South Africa, less attention has been given to impact which financial feasibility and related business decisions have played in influencing housing outcomes. The relationship between value and costs is critical in understanding what type of development will take place, when it will occur and the form that it will take.

The costs of development include those relating to land, construction, professional fees, financing, marketing, contingencies and the developer's profit. On the other hand value is influenced by market conditions in the different segments of the market. Moreover appropriate design can play a role in altering the financial viability of projects through the value per m<sup>2</sup> of space supplied and larger developments tend to offer greater opportunities to raise funding from larger institutional investors.

The financial opportunities presented to developers, and therefore their ability to supply well located housing units has varied from one South African city to the other. For instance in Johannesburg and Pretoria developers have been able to redevelop highly financially depreciated existing stock that could be redeveloped and brought to the market on the basis of financially competitive highest and best.

Developers have found it much more difficult to find these sorts of opportunities in cities such as Cape Town where affordable housing has not been able to compete against commercial uses and the higher echelons of the residential property market.

Numerous opportunities exist to improve the financial feasibility and supply of housing units in South Africa. This includes the development of public sector policies which include the supply appropriately located and priced land, tax incentives (housing zones and the consolidation of sites), improving the availability of end-user financing and mitigating some of the risks associated with such developments.

Improving the supply of affordable housing will require interventions that go beyond the broad brush interventions tax incentives that presently exist. It will instead require more targeted interventions that directly affect the viability of projects. These would need to focus both on the supply side of the equation (the developer) and the demand side, namely the households who wish to either acquire or rent space. It requires public sector entities to play an active part in ensuring that market conditions favour the development of housing units by the private sector in the different segments of the South African housing market.

### Federica Duca

(PARI)

#### The promise of the post-apartheid city: from townhouse complexes to estates

The promise of the post-apartheid city: form townhouse complexes to estates. In 2014 the Gauteng Province has set out to promote a programme of Transformation, modernization, and re-industrialization (TMR) of the Gauteng City Region. The main objective is that of fostering the post-apartheid city. Spatial transformation accelerated social transformation and modernisation

of human settlement and human development are key features of this programme.

This paper attempts to read the landscape of townhouse complexes and estates in Johannesburg through the lens of this programme. Townhouse complexes across South Africa have become synonymous with the emergent middle class; more luxurious gated communities are seen as the symptom and manifestation of segregation patterns. The mushrooming of these forms of habitation has started in the early two thousands and it has strongly reconfigured the city. These have become comfort spaces and the norm in terms of residential choice for much of the population of Gauteng.

Townhouse complexes and gated estates are different urban artefacts, at times they cater for different social classes, they produce different internal spaces and are governed by distinct institutions and they have re-configured the city and the region. Existing research suggests that these spaces are not a mere reproduction of the apartheid geography, but locus of instantiation of new forms of communities. Academic literature refers to them mostly as sites of reproduction of old patterns of segregation.

Tackling and describing the differences between these spaces, as well as how they relate to each others, in spatial, political and social terms, but also how they relate to the city and the region overall, this paper seeks to surface how we then can read these spaces in relation to the idea of the post-apartheid city. It does so by addressing questions of social mobility, of spatial relationship between the elite and the middle class and its implications for the radical transformation of the city-region.

**Sian Butcher**

(Univ. of the Witwatersrand)

### **“Affordable suburbia” in southern Gauteng: sketching a supply-side ecology**

Remaking the edges and buffer zones of Gauteng's cities and their townships are tracts of low-density, privately provisioned houses for a growing black middle class. Called “new aspirational middle-class townships” by some (Harrison and Harrison 2014, 310), the 'market' calls these new-build 'affordable houses'. But 'affordable suburbia' as I name it is not a

new formation, nor necessarily an expression of residents' aspirations and preferences. My research on the supply-side of 'affordable suburbia' in the south of Johannesburg revealed a locally-embedded ecology who've been in the business of 'affordable housing' for almost three decades. With deep power over the land on the city's edges, close ties to the banks and limited public profiles, this increasingly concentrated and racialized ecology have been producing a limited supply of a similar product – “Res 1” (single stand, stand-alone) 40-70m<sup>2</sup> house on 300-400m<sup>2</sup> stands - just under different names and in changing parts of the city. Affordable suburbia's “form and content” then, as Keil and Hemel (2016) suggest about suburbanisation in general, is “heavily path-dependent” (p. 4).

In this presentation, I introduce the main kinds of actors I encountered within this ecology: land-owners, 'turn-key' developers, financial institutions, investors, buyers and their public sector unions, and the postapartheid state at various scales. Key strategies, old and new, deployed within this ecology are land banking, consortium projects on increasingly mega-sites, mass production through in-house and subcontracted construction, intensive marketing, subprime mortgages and instalment finance, and negotiating public subsidies in different forms. Yet there are sites of contestation and uncertainty which might change the face of 'affordable' suburbanisation in years to come. These include negotiations with the state over extending networked infrastructure and amenities within competing policy-political agendas of densification and growth; selling to a stratifying middle class with rising debt and rising interest rates; potential competition from new investors looking for different kinds of 'affordable assets' - higher density, transit-oriented, rental stock – to generate the right IRRs; and finally, contending with the ecological and geological limits of Gauteng land itself.

**Alexandra Appelbaum**

(SA&CP, Univ. of the Witwatersrand)

### **Methods of resistance: middle-class organizing power in Norwood and Orange Grove, Johannesburg**

High walls, security gates and insularity often hinder social cohesion and a sense of 'community' in middle class Johannesburg suburbs. However,

despite the frequent lack of public participation, middle class residents have immense organising power and effective strategies that are executed when there is a perceived threat. When middle class lifestyles are perceived to be threatened, middle class residents respond using a variety of powerful tactics that, if aimed against local government, can hinder planning initiatives.

This paper analyses the ways in which middle class residents of Norwood and Orange Grove have responded to a perceived attack on their lifestyle and vision for the area by the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) in the implementation of the Corridors of Freedom strategic densification and the Paterson Park social housing project. It relies on key stakeholder interviews, media analysis and observation over a one-year period.

The paper discusses the vision of the middle class for Norwood as 'the next Parkhurst'; what is vested in this vision; the perceived attack by the CoJ through targeted densification and the Paterson Park social housing project; and the mechanisms of resistance and methods of organising drawn upon by middle-class residents. It demonstrates the power of middle-class resistance tactics, including threatening or befriending the state; utilising formal objection processes; exploiting potential delays; recruiting expertise through networks; and vesting power in individual crusaders.

It is argued that understanding how middle class residents envision their neighbourhood, respond to perceived attacks and utilise their organising power is vital in orchestrating successful planning initiatives involving middle class areas.

As the case study of Norwood and Orange Grove demonstrates, underestimating the power of the middle class can lead to unforeseen delays and even derailment of strategic plans by local governments.

## Session 2

### **Local policies, the private sector and the middle class**

Chair / **Philippe Gervais-Lambony** (JSSJ, LAVUE, Univ. Paris Nanterre)

Discussant / **Agnès Deboulet** (LAVUE, Univ. Paris 8)

**Dylan Weakley**

(Urban Planning Department Johannesburg)

### **Regulations, mechanisms and incentives for inclusionary housing in Johannesburg**

The CoJ through collaboration between its Development Planning and Housing Departments intends to develop inclusionary housing regulations, mechanisms and incentives for the entire municipality. These would provide implementation detail to the SDF 2040's call for private developers to build a certain percentage of low cost affordable housing in their developments as a possible condition attached to land use rights. The mechanisms, regulations and incentives should promote and enable the delivery of well located, low income, affordable housing in the City of Johannesburg.

The regulations, mechanisms and incentives, if they are to be effective, must a) produce well located, integrated, affordable, low cost housing (for low income households) at scale b) be financially attractive and sustainable for private developers and financiers, and c) meet the policy goals of the City and other spheres of government. As such the process must be born out of broad participation and consensus.

Inclusionary housing is one of the many tools proposed to address the stark inequalities in Johannesburg. These inequalities are engrained in space and to a large extent still represent the apartheid spatial design of the city. There is a significant backlog of housing in the city for low income households, with this demand largely met in often inadequate informal housing. Many of the city's poor residents still live in mainly residential areas on the edges of the city (formerly segregated 'townships'), far from jobs, economic opportunities and social amenities. The post-apartheid era has seen very limited mixing of households across the city, both in terms of race and income. For example

while Johannesburg is the most racially integrated city in South Africa, it still less integrated than Detroit, America's least racially integrated city.

The proposed inclusionary housing regulations, mechanisms and incentives, while not able to address spatial inequality on their own, would contribute to future growth in the city that is more integrated and equitable. While various government plans (e.g. the SDF 2040 and the Inner-City Housing Implementation Plan) seek to address these challenges, it is recognised that they cannot be addressed by the public sector alone. Inclusionary housing thus prompts the private development sector to extend its role in addressing inequality in our city.

### **Julien Migozzi**

(Univ. Joseph Fourier, Grenoble)

#### **The filtering mechanisms of the property market and the making of the South African middle classes**

This presentation explores the residential property market in Cape Town, an emerging city of the Global South, with a mixed methodology articulating quantitative and qualitative approaches. Using large & original databases that combine housing prices with socioeconomic variables at the district level, I map the local dynamics of the real estate market and the distribution of mortgages across the metropolitan area, to identify affordable areas and the emergence of middle-class neighborhoods.

Multiple interviews conducted with estate agents, developers and financial institutions such as mortgage originators and banks, across different types of neighborhoods (townships, so-called affordable areas and post-apartheid suburbs). I argue then that the property market, especially through the rise of financial institutions and housing finance, operates in South Africa as a filtering mechanism which determines life opportunities and influences the residential mobility of households across the post-apartheid city.

Lending practices, market devices such as credit scoring and investment opportunities create indeed highly selective norms for accessing homeownership and housing. In a context of over-indebtedness and jobless growth, the private sector, through the property market, thus reshapes the South African

class structure. This presentation eventually seeks to offer new empirical and conceptual ways to locate the South African middle-class within the city, and to define what constitute the urban middle class in the Global South today.

### Session 3

#### **Housing the middle class: individual experiences**

Chair / **Thomas Vernet-Habasque** (IFAS-Research)

Discussant / **Kecia Rust** (Executive Director and Founder of the Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa)

### **Teodoro Vales**

(Univ. Eduardo Mondlane, ISCTEM)

#### **The tangle of land and property rights in Mozambique. How do we make housing and what practices?**

Following the adoption of the nationalization of land and property rights, Mozambique has been experimenting for three decades combining State full ownership of land and housing private property. How does this relationship guide the production of urban spaces, and dictates the practice of spaces or spaces of practice? On what measure do these legal instruments determine the production of housing?

Five centuries that end in 1975 bear witness to a Portuguese influence and occupation, which establishes full private property and real estate, while supplanting, in particular in the urban environment, customary property. With the advent of national independence in 1975, Mozambique is oriented towards a policy of radical reforms that breaks with the colonial system and establishes full state ownership of land and property, through nationalization of private heritage. These reforms aim at allowing the population access to land, making available to the population a housing stock that can accommodate the Mozambican population, whose massive presence in the urban environment derives mainly from the rural exodus.

The modality of housing creation by the State is not effected by the construction of housing (given the lack of resources) but by the transformation of private property into State property (housing State-owned), through nationalization.

This property is leased by the State to the population at a very low house rent (accessible to all), which is not cost-effective to ensure the maintenance of this heritage.

In 1987, the State introduced new reforms (concomitant with opening to the market) and reprivatized real estate assets. However, it maintains full state land ownership, and grants the Right to Use and Benefit from land in the manner of an emphyteusis, which does not allow under the law to serve as a guarantee for bank loans. Bank financing for real estate investment in particular of housing is therefore "inaccessible". In this context, how is housing actually produced? On what measure do these legal instruments determine the production of housing? What contemporary challenges do authorities face? How does this relationship guide the production of urban spaces, and dictates the practice of spaces or spaces of practice?

### **Hortense Rouanet**

(LATTS, Univ. Paris Est)

#### **The real estate developers and the making of the "World class city " in India. A focus on the Bangalore city-region**

Indian metropolitan areas are experiencing large-scale spatial transformations, marked in particular by the proliferation of medium and mega-projects designed for transnational firms and the upper middle classes. Our research focuses on the real estate development companies that initiate and coordinate this type of operations. By studying the real estate industry in the region of Bangalore, the so-called "Silicon Valley of India", we seek to understand by what processes some of these firms reinforce their place in the material, symbolic and political making of urban spaces.

First of all, we emphasize the central role played by the central State in its housing finance policies (the growth of housing finance), the gradual liberalization of land and the opening of the construction sector to capital from financial markets. Our research then shows how, in the mid-2000s, the explosion of investments, in particular foreign ones, benefited a limited number of real estate developers. The latter benefited from this context of abundant capital. Armed with the cognitive, social and political

resources that allow them to navigate through the "informal urban planning" practices, they have taken on risks that asset managers, unfamiliar to local actors and geographies of real estate markets, are reluctant to take.

While the recourse to the financial markets has led to organizational changes and precipitated a process of professionalization, their key role in the anchoring of investments has ensured that these companies have a relative autonomy. On the one hand, with strong capital gains, they accelerated their growth by industrializing their operations and extending their markets to other South Indian cities, and sometimes outside India. On the other hand, these major developers have been able to develop and disseminate a desired model of urbanization being generically referred as the "world class city ". Our presentation will then create the opportunity to address and analyze the speeches and iconographic materials that large real estate developers circulate in order to promote the "world class city" model and the pro-urban growth policies they desire.