

SPILT MILK NOTICES

SPILT MILK: A VISIONARY MESS!

Throwing away all institutional givens, Spilt Milk is a collective that aims to reach out and foster collaboration and inclusivity between architects and others in design fields. Spilt Milk is about having the courage to stick to our values and ideals, to try new things and be prepared to document, measure and share our findings in the spirit of progress.

Spilt Milk is about reaching out, interacting and enjoying the process, knowing that smooth sailing is a myth and chaos is a catalyst.

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Get Out!

Tatham Art Gallery · Factory Café



Sisonke District Offices

5-Green Star design



The Transient City

Immigrant spaces in the city



Collaborative Design

Alternate ways of design in a new global paradigm



Place-Marketing

Introducing an emerging profession



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Exploring European cities at deadline pace



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■ 2012 *Corobrik* Architectural Student of the Year

At a function held at the Sandton Convention Centre on 18th April, Ms

Nontokoza Mhlungu of the University of the Witwatersrand was declared the 26th recipient of this most prestigious annual Award now with purse of R50 000.

The topic of Ms Mhlungu's design thesis evolved from her empathy with the fate of refugees exposed to xenophobic attacks in 2008, and the realisation of a need for a dedicated facility for this group. Following her research, the design brief was for a curative relationship between spirituality, architecture and user developed for a site in Hillbrow, with spaces for transitional accommodation, emergency relief and rehabilitative programmes, which design the jury deemed "a mature spatial exploration of a difficult site resolved with a very clear concept".

Following a motivation by the jury comprising Heather Dodd, SAIA- President – Sandile Ngonyama and Peter Rich, the entries of Jarryd Murray and Norbert Koch of the Universities of Johannesburg and Pretoria respectively received certificates of commendation.

■ In Memoriam

KZ-NIA Journal has learned with regret of the death of the following colleagues:

Patrick John Kerwan (1951 – 2012); **Richard (Dick) Glanville Pettman** (2 May 1932 – 10 February 2013) aged 80, formerly partner in the practice

Paton Taylor Associates; and **Chris Cornford** (Crowborough, England, 1938 – Atlanta, USA, 2013), who studied at Natal where he met and married Magda Zakrzewski, and worked with Hallen, Theron & Partners before joining Thompson, Ventulett & Partners in Atlanta.



■ Obituary: Sonny Tomkin (1908 – 2013)

On 31st January Samuel (Sonny) Norton Tomkin died in Toronto aged 104. He was the last of the 'revolutionary' coterie around Rex Martienssen who, with Norman Hansen and 'Fink' Finkelstein, was responsible for pioneering International Style houses in Johannesburg such as

Saffer (1932) and Harris (1933).

Sonny Tomkin was born in London in 1908, emigrated to South Africa with his parents in 1919, and studied Architecture at Wits where he graduated in 1931. By 1938 he had relocated to Durban, re-established practice, and was first elected to the committee of the Natal Provincial Institute where his integrity and leadership became a source of inspiration to the profession. He served as NPIA-President 1945, '46 and '47 and again in 1949 when simultaneously he accepted the highest office of the Institute of SA Architects, President-in-Chief.

Among his Durban buildings are the NPA Building in Acutt Street (1952), the Synagogue corner Stephen Dlamini (Essenwood) and Silverton Roads (1963) with CR Fridjhon, what is now the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering on UKZN Howard College Campus, the government building opposite the Supreme (Magistrate's) Court on Margaret Mncadi Avenue (Esplanade) and as a collaborative appointment during the 1980s, the Steve Biko campus of Durban University of Technology (Technikon Natal).

As the recipient of a NPIA Scroll of Honour (1962), ISAA Gold Medal of Honour (1966), the ISAA Medal of Distinction (1982) and Life Membership of NPIA (KZ-NIA) (1986), Sonny Tomkin is perhaps the most honoured architect South Africa has ever produced. But beyond the profession and its representation on especially the Durban City Council's Town Planning Committee, 'SNT' involved himself in the community, with the needy, the afflicted and the handicapped (*SA Architectural Record*, Dec 1965 p70), both privately and as a Rotarian. It was in this context that 'Civic Honours' were bestowed upon him during the 1980s.

Tomkin emigrated to Canada in 1992 but during his visits to South Africa he would be in contact with colleagues at the Institute and the 'Natal School' (of Architecture, UKZN). While he had dispensed with his pipe by then, he never let down his guard on the suit, tie and hat. KZ-NIA is grateful for the dedicated service, inspiration and longevity of 'SNT'.

Walter Peters, Editor

■ Obituary: Alan Lipman (1925 – 2013)

On graduating from the University of the Witwatersrand Alan Lipman came to Durban in 1953 to open a branch office for Bernard Janks before establishing his own practice. Besides West Walk (1958), the houses of activists Ismail and Fathima Meer (Clare Hills, 1960) and Devi and Dennis Bughwan (Overport, 1960) carry his name.

Alan and his wife Beata were not only involved in the anti-apartheid struggle but were instrumental in the drafting of the Freedom Charter signed at Kliptown in 1955, with Beata responsible for the actual lettering thereof (*Sunday Independent*, 3 Feb 2013). Not surprisingly, in 1963

Alan found himself banned in his own country in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act (1950).

Together, the Lipmans went into political exile in the UK. Alan accepted a lectureship at the University of Wales and earned his Masters and Doctoral degrees, before being appointed to a personal chair and launching the ground-breaking course 'Human Studies in Architecture' resulting in no fewer than 35 higher degrees by research.

On returning to South Africa in 1990, Alan's first appointment was a visiting professorship at Natal (UKZN), at the apex of the 'Natal School'. The compliment he made at his farewell speech I firmly remember; at the many universities he had taught, he had heard knives being sharpened as he walked the corridor, but not once at Natal!



In 2003, appropriately, UKZN conferred upon Alan an honorary doctorate; and ISAA followed a year later with a Medal of Distinction. Although the Lipmans settled in Johannesburg, Alan maintained his links with KZ-N.

It is appropriate to conclude this obituary by quoting from the call to action ending the Freedom Charter: "These freedoms we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our victory". Alan, your colleagues in KZ-N salute your determination for a better South Africa for all.

Walter Peters, Editor

CONTRIBUTORS: The Spilt Milk coffee collective is Andile Ncapai, Cameron Finnie, David Louis, Jack Emerton, Kevin Boyd, Leon Conradie, Nadia Funke, Stefan Mostert, Tamsi Quazi, Georgie Chennells
 *See some of them overleaf

INTERACT: Doodle! : Write on your journal: Yes, it's paper. And you have a pen. Comment and share! <http://spiltmilkzniajournal.wordpress.com>
 #SMKZNIA

EDITORIAL SPILT MILK

HELLO AND WELCOME to the Spilt Milk edition of the *KZ-NIA Journal*!

About a year ago Andile Ncapai and I each found ourselves with similar big ideas but not sure where to put them. And so we pooled our efforts.

What evolved from our regular meetings was a campaign of sorts where we called in similar-minded friends and colleagues to join the fray. This loose group met around coffee every couple of months, developing the vision of inclusivity, collaboration and bravery which we hoped to somehow make tangible. We called the collective Spilt Milk.

'Don't cry over spilt milk' is an English saying referring to one's view of unfortunate and trivial events that cannot be remedied. Milk is an everyday foodstuff, useful and replaceable. Sure it makes a mess when you send a glass of it flying, but it's relatively easy to clean up.

To me, this simple little proverb is about being able to see beyond small obstacles to a greater vision. It's about a positive 'can do' approach where one has the courage to challenge the everyday norms and experiment. It's about embracing inevitable mistakes in pursuit of something greater. A little chaos can be healthy in the long run.

And so with the vision of Spilt Milk and the support of the *KZ-NIA Journal* committee and sponsors *Corobrik*, Andile Ncapai and I went about planning our own experimental issue of this publication. Content development was guided by three 'call to action' concepts which we hope will affect you:

1. Read it and think

Use this journal to stimulate sincere conversation.

We encourage you to share your thoughts, observations and ideas on the pages themselves (scribble space), online or through talks over coffee.

Speak up, hear others and be enriched.

2. Get out of your silo

Reaching out to other professions.

Be it exposure to seemingly obscure music videos or architecture-related professions, we aim to foster conversation, collaboration and inspiration. In the next few pages you'll find words from an NGO development worker, studies on immigrants in Durban, and insights from an expert place-marketer. On our website you'll find even more.

3. Enjoy play

Why not?

We think there should be more lighthearted play and experimentation in the profession. Chaos often leads to clarity. And importantly, it can be fun!

This issue owes a great deal to the vision and determination of Andile, who was unfortunately unable to continue due to other commitments. Another vital ingredient, our contributors, have been an inspiration in their willingness to participate and their enthusiasm for the Spilt Milk vision. A heartfelt thanks must also go to Wally Peters, whose mentorship taught me much and whose assistance was a great support. It has been a rewarding experiment indeed with messes, elbow grease, chaos and the odd shot of clarity. We are grateful for the free rein allowed us. And we are still learning...

And now to you, our reader – I hope you find something here to inspire, challenge and who knows what else. Let me know what you think!

Yours in architectural chaos,

Georgie

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Our content CONTRIBUTORS for this issue

Mary-Anne Bekker

Mary-Anne, a young architect, is one of the newest additions to the eThekweni Municipality Architecture Department. She believes that multi-disciplinary interaction needs to be fostered to create better design and public spaces that are truly showcases of communities and their cultures.



Georgie Chennells

Georgie took a career tangent from architecture into brand management, allowing her to follow her interest of using the power of communication to instigate change in cities. She spends her time developing and managing various brand communications projects and writing for local design publications.



Sphiwe Gumedede

Sphiwe is a recent graduate of UKZN School of Architecture with a Masters degree, which he now puts to use at Paton Taylor Architects, Durban. For him architecture, just like art, ought to have social relevance to society, so that when used responsibly it can liberate and inspire.



Andrew McGibbon

Born in Johannesburg, Andrew is fine art commercial photographer, now based in Durban. When not shooting for top brands he spends time doing pro-bono work for local NGOs addressing issues of social justice. He believes that is if you over-plan a photograph or try to achieve an exact image you have in your mind, you remove the space for magic and mystery.



Andile Ncapai

Andile, an architect, graduated from UKZN, travelled as much as he could, and worked for architectural firms both in Durban and Cape Town before taking up his current role at eThekweni City Architects. He wants to change the world, but merrily settles for the built environment – for now.



Siphehile C. Ngubane

Sphe is another recent graduate of UKZN having completed his Masters in Architecture in 2010 and is now employed at Mthulisi Msimang Architects, Pietermaritzburg. "I believe in the magic of architecture", he says. He hopes to one day make a meaningful contribution to the South African built environment.



Cara Reilly

Cara began her career in journalism writing for architectural and planning publications, which led her into marketing roles for both Sandton Central Management and Northern City Improvement Districts in Joburg. In 2010 she relocated to Durban where she now runs her business consulting and managing projects around place marketing, and still finds time to write.



Tasmi Quazi

Tas's career took a turn after a heated discussion about the perpetuated inequalities of the global economy. "Tas, just go do a master's in Development Studies if it peeves you off so much!" said her employer. She has since been working in development research with the pioneering NPO, Asiye eTafuleni, and contributing to think tanks such as this. www.aet.org.za



Wesley van Eeden

Wesley is a B-Tech graduate from Durban who, with the help of the internet, has worked for clients across the globe as well as exhibited in Cape Town, Kentucky, Helsinki, Berlin and London. He runs his own business, Hope Project, where he enjoys working with brands and companies that seek to make a positive change.



Poster artwork detail: 'New Paradigms' by Wesley van Eeden.

Front cover photograph by Andrew McGibbon from the *Supercolour* series.

!GET OUT!



Designed as the Supreme Court by Colonial Engineer Peter Paterson, 1864-75, the building was recycled as the Tatham Art Gallery by Small, Pettit & Associates, 1984-90, and honoured with an ISAA Natal Award of Merit in 1991.

Culture pulse: Tatham Art Gallery, Pietermaritzburg

Visiting the **Tatham Art Gallery**, one of South Africa's seven major art museums, is never dull. Firstly, the gallery is located in the centre of Pietermaritzburg, right opposite the landmark City Hall and adjacent to a new pedestrian precinct. It's humming with people and activity!

Check out

- their exceptional collection of South African landscape paintings, currently on display until the 21st July.
- the International Textile Challenge, coming up in May, where artists from Japan, France and South Africa have created over 90 textile works inspired by film directors.

You may need a coffee from the newly launched *Café Tatham* to assist in taking it all in! The café has the added advantage of a balcony overlooking the main street and City Hall. This is quite a spot for reflection on art and the contemporary African city.

Tatham is open from Tuesday to Sunday, 10:00 – 17:00.

Find it at Chief Albert Luthuli (Commercial) Rd. opposite the City Hall. Parking available on site.

Tel: 033 392-2800/1 • www.tatham.org.za

Meeting point: The Factory Café, Durban

The **Factory Café** is an industrial aestheticians' haven. Situated in a 1917 warehouse in the modernist heart of Umbilo the massive volume, bare-faced brickwork, exposed beams and elegantly geometric lettering will put any designer on an architectural high.

Caffeinated delights also abound: The award-winning coffees as well as the teas on offer are excellent; the *baristas* are friendly; the interiors are comfortable and the wifi is free. As a place to meet its got great ambience and tasty light meals. As a place to hang out, there is enough space to disappear into a book for a few hours.

The venue also hosts regular events such as exhibitions and music gigs, all of which can be found on their facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/thefactorycafe>

369 Magwaza Maphalala (Gale) Street cnr Umbilo Rd, Durban
Open weekdays 07:30 – 16:30 and Saturdays 8:30 till 14:00
Tel: 031 205-3283 • www.factorycafe.co.za



The Factory Café is in a working coffee warehouse in Umbilo.

ARCHITECTURE SISONKE DISTRICT OFFICES, IXOPO | STEVE KINSLER ARCHITECT

SISONKE DISTRICT OFFICES

ANDILE NCAPAI visited the recently completed Sisonke District Offices and reflects on the building as well as its users.

This Journal issue's theme is a personal challenge to each contributor and reader alike, namely to review their 'lot in life' in a changing context. To my mind, the COP17 / UIA Sustainability Conference of November – December 2011 and the KZ-NIA New Paradigms Conference of October 2012 culminated in an affirmation of the relationship between change and sustainability.

However, I need to start this article with a disclaimer, I am not an authority on sustainability, but a humble learner of appropriateness. So it is with a lunchbox of relevance that I went on a short trip to the Sisonke District Offices in Ixopo, southern KwaZulu-Natal, the first government building project to achieve a 5-Green Star design rating.

As I drove into Ixopo there was something oddly familiar about the missionary church on the outskirts, the long line leading into the Spar supermarket, and the off-street trading and queues for social grants. I had a warm feeling about visiting a building that will provide much needed services to this obviously spatially and economically stretched community. I stopped and asked where I could find the 'new government offices', and I was directed just off the Main Road, to the end of Margaret Street. As I parked outside this largely submerged, and inconspicuous public building I was beckoned by the entrance canopy and it became clear where I should head.

At reception the security guard, uBab' Ngwane – as he introduced himself to me – offered to give me a tour. Not wanting to be rude I accepted, apprehensively, thinking it might be a waste of time as it was already starting to look like rain. Ngwane proceeded to 'school me', as we walked, on how the rainwater collected from the entrance canopy is used to run the entrance fountain. I expressed legitimate awe, and he excitedly proceeded to take me to the expansive roof garden.

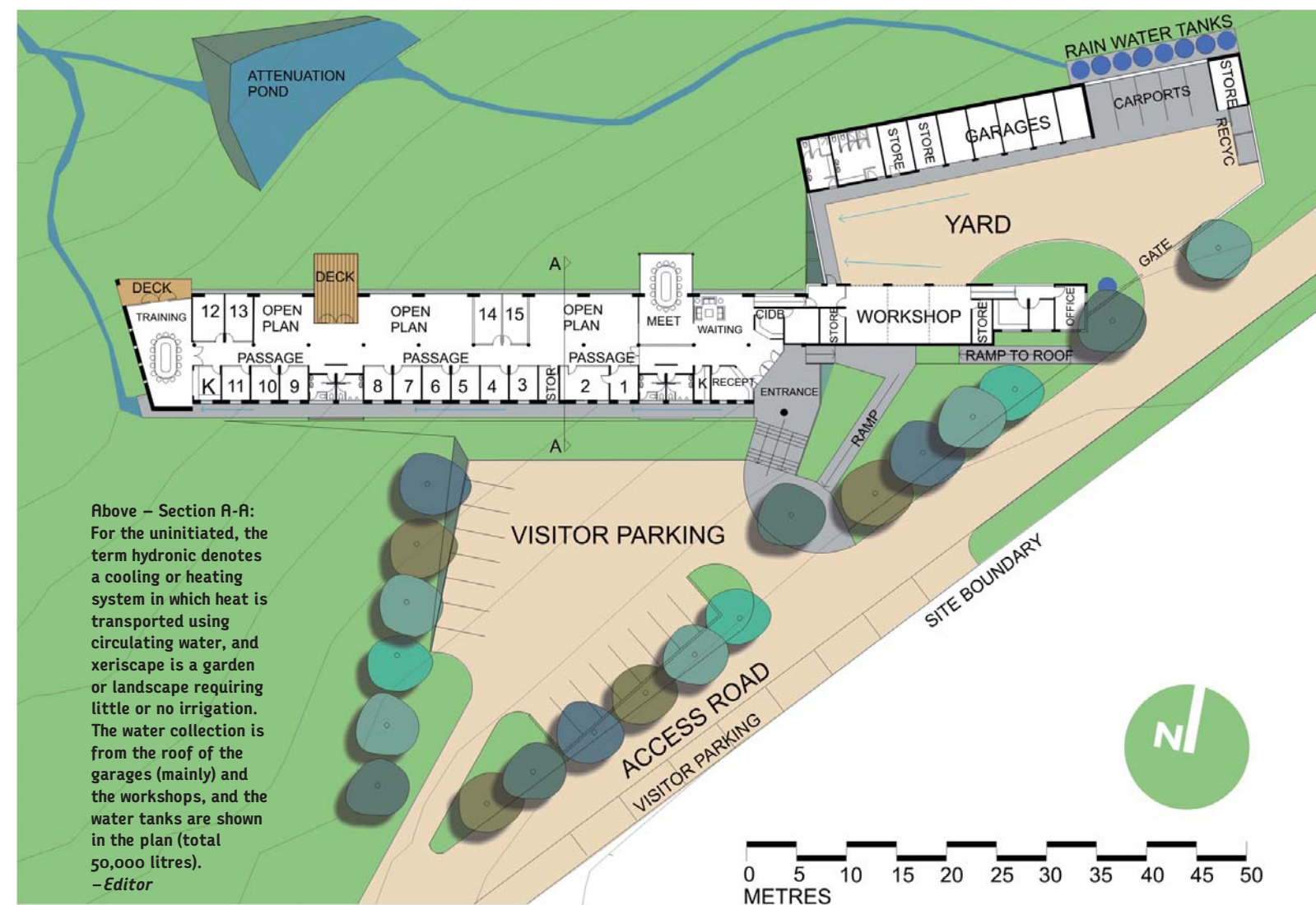
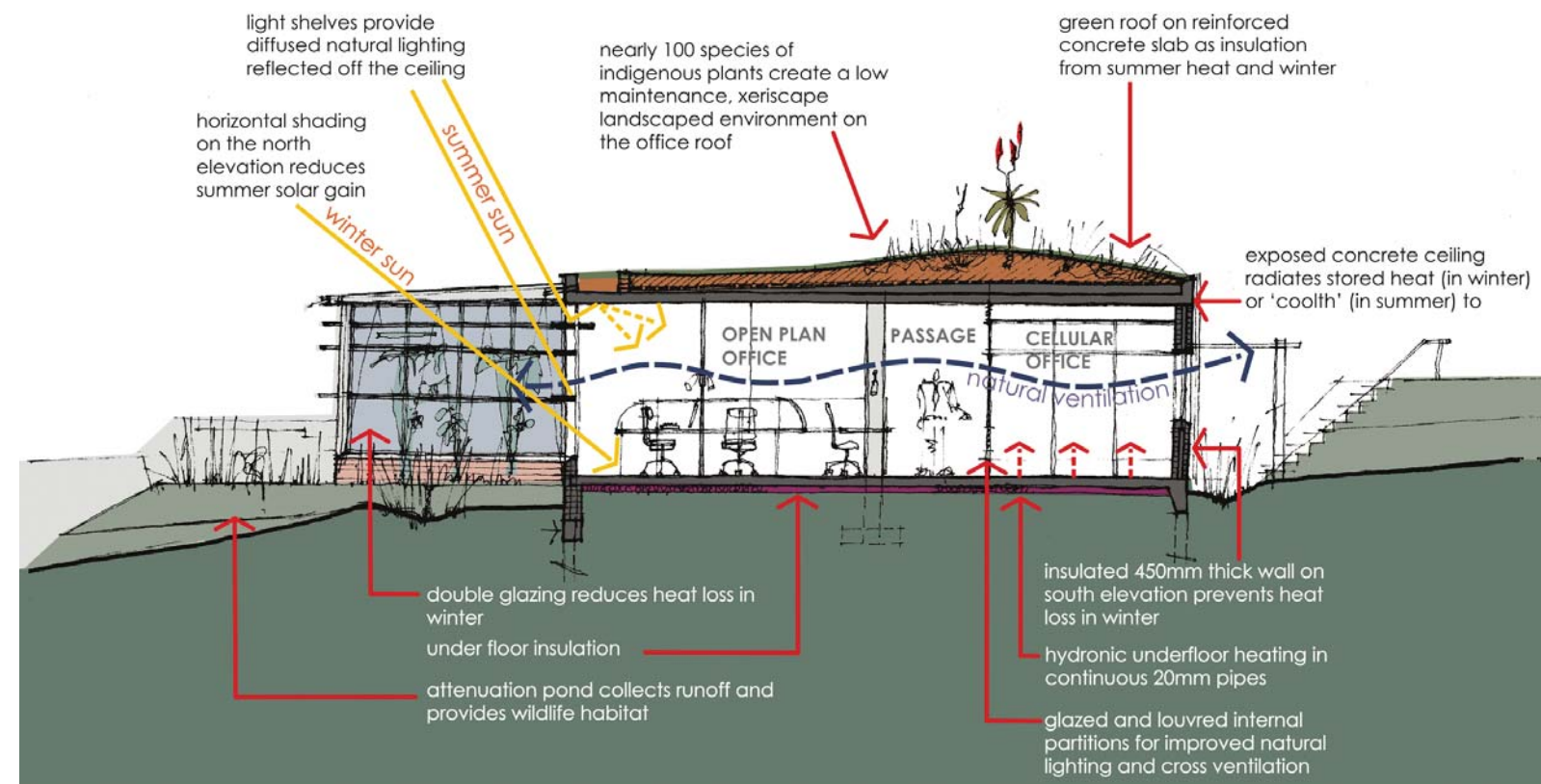
This roof garden was awarded an innovation point by the Green Building Council of South Africa for diversity of vegetation. This also has the resultant contribution of reducing the amount of heat build-up in the building to minimise reliance on artificial cooling. Before I had time to take in the roof's endlessness and how it seems to tie in visually with the expansive natural landscape of Ixopo and the bees seemingly pollinating for spring, we were off again.

Ngwane could not resist showing me his pride and joy of the project, the array of water collection tanks that flush the toilets in the building. As we walked around the largely linear building, taking advantage of its north-south facing elevation the materiality of the building seemed to almost emerge from the ground. I got the feeling that the building could be around for a long time, without the nurturing hand of maintenance.

The advantage of the narrow floor plates became more apparent as my trusted tour guide took me into the offices. The light and warmth were inescapable, with little or no impact from artificial light and heating. But Ngwane was very quick to correct my comment about natural warmth, and said it is probably the under floor heating, that is exposed for display in a common meeting area.

As we looked out from one of the meeting rooms having the final fit-outs, reflecting on our tour, he pointed out the ground swales handling the grey/rainwater overflow. I looked back on a proud short figure, hands in pockets, as he wrapped up by assuring me that he had given these tours to a few foreign tour groups in the past months, I could not help but think, 'in Ixopo?'

On the drive home I thought what change will sustainability contribute to our built environment future, and what changes we need to effect in sustainability. Instead of answers, I came back with questions. The Sisonke District Offices Project gave me an opportunity to evaluate sustainability at a macro level, to unapologetically question the purpose of the project and, moreover, its catchment or impact. I was also confronted by the





Clockwise:
North façade of the
building; Rainwater
harvesting; Entrance
canopy.

inescapable question of resources, either in skills or materials, their source, applicability and longevity.

The obvious absence of solar panels also made me question natural resources such as the sun, wind and light in the above context. The inconspicuous footprint due to exchange of 'green' imprint with the roof garden, low carbon presence with no air conditioning in the entire office building and terraced site almost mimicking the landscape seemed to tie the building to the place. This synchronicity was apparent to such an extent that even the bees could not dispute it, feeling at home on the roof.

Yet in all these revelations it is Ngwane who stood out for me in my inland quest. He was very proud of being employed in his home town. His pride in being able to facilitate the provision of services in his rural community shone through with his initiative.

The honour with which he took me around, validates both him and his place of birth. The principles of sustainability that now live in him and, if the tour was anything to go by, now live with his family and immediate community, are what is truly sustainable about the efforts at Sisonke.

Professional Team
Client/Developer: KZ-N Department of Public Works
Architect: Steve Kinsler Architect
Sustainability Consultant: PJ Carew Consulting
Quantity Surveyor: Schoombie Hartman
Structural Engineers: Jeffares and Green Engineers
Mechanical and Electrical Engineers: SSA Consulting Engineers
Ecologist: Wetland Consulting Services
Contractor: Cyclone Construction

STUDY
FORMALISING THE FRINGE: THE TRANSIENT CITY

THE TRAN- SIENT CITY



A migrant at Warwick
Junction.
Image courtesy of
Peter McKenzie



Clockwise:

Carlisle Street Shelter: 1.5 square metre area shared with other tenants without a kitchen, bathroom or toilet (Mohamed, 2011:12).

Container shelters at the Carlisle Street Shelter sleep 8 to 12 people each (Mohamed, 2011:12).

Migrants and locals assemble on left-over space at the southern end of Khuzwimpi Shezi (Market) Road, corner Che Guevara (Moore) Road, which then crosses over the railway line to Albert Park.

MARY-ANNE BEKKER shares her study on the 'fringe' places in Durban and those occupying them, undertaken as part of her Masters degree in Architecture at UKZN.

African cities have one of the highest rates of transience in the world with approximately 75% of the urban population fluctuating between towns, cities and countries. Often referred to as one of the fastest growing cities in the world, Durban has developed a reputation amongst migrants for being one of the more peaceful and less crime-ridden destinations in the country. However, with fast-paced development comes socio-economic problems in the city that are typical of South Africa, with the delivery of housing and the creation of employment being the most dire (Maharaj & Moodley, 2000: 151). Thus migrants or refugees who have no previous connections to the existing social systems in the city and are true "aliens" in that sense, struggle to adapt and orientate themselves upon arrival.

Due to their often illegal existence, many migrants find their only economic foothold into the city is through pavement trading. Warwick Junction, Durban's market place, is an ever-changing and highly adaptable space that expands and accommodates the needs of an evolving populace. It has introduced an element of instability and of active corrosion in the city resulting in the absence of limits and consequently, steady loss of form. Boundaries become blurred as growth and the development of new societies and cultural groups are accommodated. Migration has caused the physical distances between ethnic groups to erode allowing varying societies close contact with each other. How can designers start to promote unity within diversity and keep the city whole despite overlapping cultural and social boundaries? It becomes necessary to protect the linking spaces, define boundaries and facilitate transitions of marginalised people.

A migrant is in an in-between state: Geographically and physically he is no longer part of his home land, but he is also not yet a citizen of his host city. Socially, he no longer retains his

previous social status, but instead has to psychologically and physically adapt to his new surroundings. He is in a period of transition or liminality.

Charles Kurr van Gennep introduced the concept of liminality in his *Rites of Passage* (1909) describing the time in which people are on the threshold of entering a new phase in their lives having left the previous one behind. It is the undefined 'pause', space between defined periods or structures that prepare us to take the next step (Parades, 2010:2).

Traditionally speaking, our urban pattern is, on the whole, made up of independent architectural projects juxtaposed against each other. Liminal spaces are the often unrecognised borders between them. They are, however, necessary and as such the "superglue for the urban jigsaw puzzle" (Parades, 2010: 2).

Kisho Kurokawa notes: "coexistence in architecture is not the resolution of conflicts. It means the development of a third space which enables conflicts to exist side by side" (Mical, 2002). Migrants and other destitute people are ironically already adopting these 'third' spaces with which they share characteristics, a point that urban designers and architects could pick up on. How can a space that is previously undefined and transient be made into a meaningful space for undefined transient people?

Adoption of these 'fringe' spaces happens at various levels in the city. One of the most volatile and unpredictable gathering places of refugees and local migrants is the vacant corner site bounded by overhead freeways and busy transport routes on the boundary between Warwick Junction and Albert Park. There is a sense of antagonism and anticipation amongst these people, all from varying backgrounds, of all ages and genders, as they gather and wait on the site. While reluctant to divulge their personal details they have, however, claimed this 'fringe' space as their own. These are survivalists who have placed themselves on the threshold of the Market, well known migrant accommodation in Albert Park, and major transport routes. There is no form of shelter on site, so it is



Strollers' Overnight Accommodation, 55 Mansel Rd, Durban, in which the two parallel wings overlook a central indoor 'street'. Architects: Elphick Proome Architects Inc in association with Laren Beni Architect, 2002. (See KZ-NIA Journal 3/2001 & 1/2004, Mansel Road Bus Facility by architects Harber & Associates, 1997).

presumed that people cannot stay there long, and they most likely use it as a stepping stone space to another place that is more suitable for longer term shelter. This gathering is a stark reminder that a severe social problem is developing in the city and it is becoming evident in threshold spaces.

Sheltering: Carlisle Street Shelter

In reality there is very little choice to be made when seeking shelter as a migrant. The interplay between migrant tenants, their economic situation, vulnerability to rental exploitation and to being victims of xenophobia often impacts on their decision to rent cubicular or 'sweat-shop' type spaces at the next level of integration into the city. Individual space, security, health and peace of mind are compromised in such accommodation. These types of shelters are usually associated with slums and they are created by 'slumlords' who have taken the opportunity to create shelters for the desperate people where very little exists across the inner city and suburbs (Mohamed, 2011: 3).

One example of the cubicular style accommodation is the tightly packed Carlisle Street Shelter. With rentals for a 1.5 square meter area to sleep in as well as inadequate communal and ablution facilities, these tenants pay approximately 700% more per square meter than a tenant occupying an upmarket two-bedroom flat. Despite this, they would rather pay than end up homeless. Although such accommodation is supposedly temporary, 65% of the inhabitants were in occupation for longer than a year (Mohamed, 2011:4)

City officials have taken action against slumlords, but in South Africa's constitutional democracy, there is still a need to protect marginalised and vulnerable communities. The municipality has found the overnight 'Strollers' facility more suitable for those in search of temporary shelter.

Strollers' Overnight Shelter

The 'Strollers' Overnight Facility' was developed in 1998 as a stand-alone pilot project to provide transitional short-term

shelter by the Durban Metropolitan Council (Lund et al, 2004: 57). Well-located near Durban Station, long-distance taxi ranks and Mansel Road Market, it was intended to be used by traders from other provinces and other parts of Africa while they were in Durban to replenish their stock.

The building was purpose designed and built for short-term accommodation with two wings facing onto a central courtyard. Small cubicles for retail activity are located on the ground floor facing onto the central communal 'street' with accommodation above. The rooms sleep two in a tight space of 6 square meters. Bridges link the two wings and are fitted with galvanized steel cages that are lockable for tenants to dry washing. In total, 334 people can be accommodated at any one time at a very reasonable nightly rate (Lund et al, 2004: 59).

The building reflects its intended use and is well-considered in design. Although located near major transport nodes, it is hidden away from the main buzz of trade and movement, and is surrounded by rough unkempt areas. Use of the building also does not appear to be very successful and one questions how 'temporary' those who do stay there actually are. However, through good management, this model could be duplicated and developed as transitional and communal shelters for migrants, especially if taken a step further to include educational, social and trading facilities.

There is an opportunity to develop a new typology for the protection and aid of marginal groups of people. Not just a place to sleep, support facilities such as social and communal areas, educational, medical, and training facilities, as well as legal support groups should also be made available to help establish a sense of cultural belonging and a respect for diversity. Migrants are already adopting our lost urban spaces, and maybe this is our cue. Recovered 'fringe' spaces are the design opportunities that could provide the initial footholds into our city for those trying to claim a space for themselves.

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DESIGN CONCEPTS
COLLABORATIVE DESIGN: AN ALTERNATE WAY

COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

TASMI QUAZI, with the assistance of RICHARD DOBSON, shares learnings from work at aSiye eTafuleni.

The global future sometimes paints an overwhelming picture, clouded by several inconvenient truths. These include rampant urbanisation and socio-economic and political instability resulting from the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots. Instead of being defeated by what comedian Riyaad Moosa has coined 'apartheiditis', this is a ripe opportunity to redefine design as a process of collaboration to achieve transformation at the scale and urgency required.

But what does transformation look like? I see it every time I stand at the Herb Market in Warwick Junction. A culturally significant activity that is stitched into a modernist sprawl and symbolic of a hybrid urbanism accommodating the diverse realities of its citizens.

Thankfully, there is a growing global consciousness in making design more accessible to a wider society, as well as exploring alternative practices that stimulate reformation of the design process. Recent debates contend that the provision of design services within development should not be the usual 'top-down-we-know-best' approach but rather a process of collaboration. Hence the substitution of 'Design for the other 90%' to 'Design with the other 90%' meaning the majority of the world's population that cannot afford the professional services of designers. It is clear that the greatest design need is within the lower socio-economic levels of society, which, if embraced, would enhance the quality of life for society at large.

There is no denying though that the realm of development is a less familiar area for most designers, challenging the habitual

ways of dealing with the project context and 'client'. Moreover, there is a lack of precedent in good research, design and implementation within it. This presents an opportunity to set a new precedent. But how could this work on a practical level?

Embrace the 'chaos' of challenging environments

An underestimated starting point: This helps to enhance the inherent resilience within these contexts and unleash the positive energy needed for collaborative design work. After all, it can be argued that throughout history, it is instability and chaos that has been the catalyst for transformation.

Dig deeper than context

This new domain requires engaging with a broader set of influencing factors such as history, the socio-economic, political and environmental and urban frameworks. Different contexts present different challenges and a different set of opportunities and these need to be intimately understood.

Redefine the new 'client' as a co-developer

A major contributor of unresponsive design stems from an inability to effectively communicate with the new 'client'. Key to mitigating this is keen observation and empowering the role of the end users as co-developers. Unlike conventional clients, the end users in this case are not accustomed to giving their opinions. Thus more creative forms of communication are often required to allow for local language, time and patience in ensuring that the brief emanates from grounded realities and needs.

Key to this is the use of skilled social facilitators who can sensitively decode the technical aspects of design and feedback



Asiye eTafuleni's cardboard recycling project, a marriage of technical and social facilitation.



The Life Straw uses carbon credits to fund its distribution system, which also includes technological, health and economic aspects. Photograph supplied by Vestergaard Frandsen.

the inputs from the end users during the design development, implementation and maintenance processes. Design serves as a means to contribute to much needed social healing of the past injustices and reinvigorate dignity and community spirit.

Keep calm and trust the process

Within the less familiar context and 'client' base of developmental work, it is only sensible that the process is the most critical driver of responsive design. In theory this involves the ability to design without making it the exclusive preserve of the designer but rather letting the end users guide the outcome based on their needs. Glass ceilings also need to be taken into account. This involves being aware of and engaging with the subtle co-dependencies of other disciplines and the broader context.

In practice, the process-driven approach was best affirmed for Asiye eTafuleni through a city commission to implement a pilot project which enhances the livelihood prospects of inner-city informal cardboard recyclers. Through multiple communication strategies such as work experience sessions and continual exposure to two existing groups of recyclers, the design of custom-made trolleys was tailored to suit different contexts and addressed the major challenge of conveying waste recyclables. Just as we thought the simple intervention of trolleys would be done and dusted in a space of a few months, the process evolved into something much bigger.

Through progressive engagement with the project, other unavoidable needs were identified, which if ignored, would cause the project to hit a glass ceiling. These related to health and safety interventions in the form of work wear; increasing the marketability of the recyclers through the Friends of the Recyclers campaign in order to enhance cooperation with generators of waste; and psycho-social support to deal with substance abuse issues, retrieval of IDs and opening savings accounts. The integrated approach and multi-partnership collaboration with social workers and relevant local government departments has yielded more positive outcomes than otherwise

would not have happened if we had walked away having distributed trolleys alone. Results included significantly higher incomes, increased dignity within the community and improved public perception of the valuable contribution of informal recycling to the city. Most excitingly, it has stimulated thinking about the creative possibilities of integrating this livelihood activity into the city's urban plans.

The Life Straw is another example of design within a larger process and as a product of collaboration. Designed for communities without access to safe drinking water, this device filters enough water for one person to consume safely for a year. Technically it has been verified and praised for its effectiveness; however the intention to saturate the community with unrestricted access to the straw was limited by its cost. This challenge prompted a model to fund the roll-out of the straws linked to carbon credit funding. Consequently a very good design supported by a collaboration of technological, health and economic expertise led to the design of an entire system. Again multiple outcomes have been achieved in addressing health concerns, as an environmentally sensitive response and one that is a self-funding model.

Collaborate for transformation

What is clear is that designers have an increasingly amorphous role within the development domain with its layers of complexity. The need for broad knowledge and skills suggests that collegiality and unique partnerships are the most practical way to achieve transformation at the scale required. This is in light of the numerous examples of limited and unresponsive design interventions implemented by state agencies. Just as the state cannot manage the mammoth task of transformation alone, neither can the design community achieve results at the scale required without a supportive state. Also, collaboration within the design fraternity across co-dependent disciplines and the end user community will better result in contextually responsive interventions. It will in fact give the design community credibility as a whole.



NEW VIEWS INTRODUCING PLACE-MARKETING: AN EXCEPTIONAL SENSE OF PLACE

PLACE- MARKING

CARA REILLY talks about making exceptional places through the implementation of place-marketing projects that optimise a user's experience. She talks about making exceptional places.

Award winning designs, innovative engineering solutions and sustainable building methods may allude to successful physical structures, but it is the functionality of the open spaces around the bricks and mortar that creates a cohesive place that draws people, encouraging social and economic value.

The term place-making, as it refers to architectural practice, is most commonly associated with Norwegian architect and theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz and his theory on phenomenology. While phenomenology was part of the writings of German philosopher Martin Heidegger in his explorations of the 'question of being', Norberg-Schulz's book *GENIUS LOCI: TOWARDS A PHENOMENOLOGY OF ARCHITECTURE* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980) is said to have tangibly brought phenomenology to the field of architecture.

While Norberg-Schulz's theory is still used as a base for present-day architectural thinking, the scope has widened beyond the experience of the physical structure creating the *genius loci* and the term is now widely interchanged with 'sense of place'. In a 2003 commentary by Gunilla Jive'n and Peter J. Larkham entitled 'Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character: A Commentary', American landscape writer J.B. Jackson talks about the "awkward and ambiguous translation of *genius loci*" from its classical meaning of the "guardian divinity of that place.... to the current meaning describing the atmosphere of a place, and the quality of its environment". This said, Jackson recognises that certain locations have an attraction over and above their physical structure that gives one "a certain indefinable sense of well-being... we want to return to, time and again". Jive'n and Larkham's commentary concludes, among other things, that this attraction and the *genius loci* are mostly derived from the experiences of those using the place as opposed to deliberate 'place making' structures.

When it comes to place-making, as it refers to 'making exceptional places' and bringing places to life beyond bricks and mortar, the DNA, or distinctive characteristic of a place, becomes the tool for nurturing and promoting the location. It is an expression of this DNA and how one uses it to make and market the place that resonates with people, connecting them to it, instilling a sense of ownership in it, and ensuring they use it. With so many nodes vying for commercial, residential, tourism and

retail investment, and with so little separating them in terms of their 'unique selling points', places need to focus on that 'something special' that will tip the scale for the investor. This critical ingredient is most often the DNA of a place, the distinctive characteristic that resonates with people, connecting them to it and instilling a sense of ownership in it. It is this identity that becomes the tool for nurturing and promoting the location, creating a place that people choose to be in, a place that people use. This is the power of place-marketing.

Whether a location's geography, economy, heritage or people become its identifying feature, it must be translated into action, with place-making or place-marketing initiatives not only driving the promotion of that place, but underlying the way it operates. In modern-day South Africa, with so little separating key development nodes, competition for residential, tourism and retail attention is strong. Therefore places that look to harness their best assets and use them to physically enhance spaces and user experiences, can trigger economic turnaround, increasing employment opportunities by bringing in more businesses and retaining those already there.

Property and land values can be increased and this means a strong return on investments for commercial developers. A growth in tourism and related industries can be experienced, making the place a destination.

In short, says Chris Murray in his book *Making Sense of Place: New Approaches to Place Marketing* (2001), place-marketing

occupies a central position in place development, urban regeneration and renewal.

It is precisely this approach that has seen place-making manifest itself both locally and internationally through management structures such as City Improvement Districts (CIDs); Urban Improvement Precincts (UIPs); Business Improvement or Management Districts (BIDs or BMDs). Within these structures, the services needed to run them, are based on an international place-making hierarchy that looks at how cities move from an unpleasant to an exceptional experience of the public space. While the basic services of these structures focus on crime and grime, the hierarchy's reference to a higher aim talks to the need for places to enhance their potential and develop into distinctive destinations, thus encouraging the employment of place-making tools.

For Brian Wright, project leader of the uMhlanga UIP, place-making and related marketing projects have an important role to play in bringing his precinct to life. "Now that the basics of safe, clean and green have been achieved, the UIP has expanded its efforts and is looking at projects that give the precinct a unique edge and an enhanced positive experience for users," said Brian. These projects include a mobi-enabled website, www.umhlangauip.co.za, that provides a comprehensive business directory, property listing and feedback opportunities; a festive lighting programme, and the installation of plastic bag-dispensers for cleaning up dog mess along the promenade and beach.

This cross-section of projects illustrates the range of place-making opportunities and how, when combined, they can deliver memorable experiences of place, which underpins property investment. The scope and scale of place-making lends itself to the sharing of best practice and the pooling of opportunities, ideas and funding. Internationally, the non-profit organization Project for Public Spaces (PPS: www.pps.org), established in 1975, has an incredible track-record in partnering with public and private organizations, federal, state and municipal agencies, BIDs, neighbourhood associations and other civic groups, to foster successful public spaces.

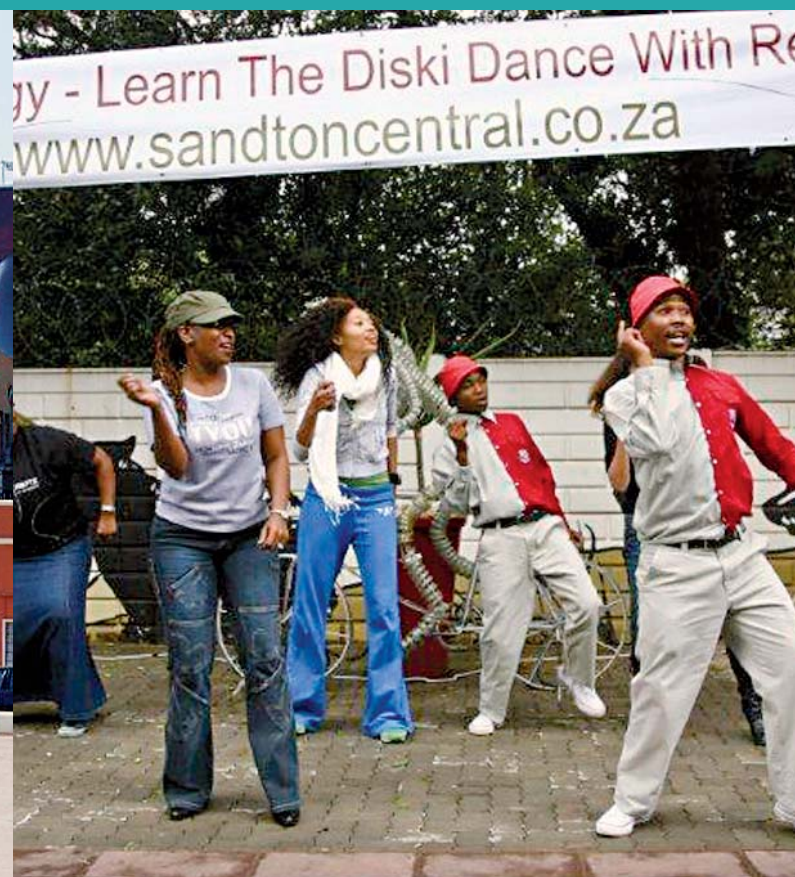
Locally, Anne Steffny and Associates is driving the formation of the Johannesburg Inner City CID Forum that aims, among other things, to maximise economies of scale and relationships, so the Johannesburg Inner City CIDs can more easily focus their limited budgets on place-making. "I really believe that CIDs need to work collectively on things like best practice and advocacy. From a place-making point of view, this will ensure sustainable urban management and community cohesion, and will create opportunities to set up place-making partnerships that can obtain a broad base of funding. From this we can share and understand best practice" explains Anne Steffny. The establishment of this forum could very well be the catalyst for a national place-making organisation.

Reference

Jive'n, G & Larkham, P. Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character. *Journal of Urban Design*, University of Arizona, Vol. 8, No. 1, 67–81.

Left: Dog mess disposal system in operation at uMhlanga.

Right: Newtown, Johannesburg.



Left: Sandton Central promoting the disk dance at the time of the World Cup 2010.

Right: The Sandton Central Illumination project.

TRAVEL SPEED TRAVELLING: EUROPE

SPEED TRAVELLING

A whirlwind tour of Europe seen through the eyes of two young architects. SPHIWE GUMEDE and SIPHESIHLE NGUBANE took 21 days to visit 12 cities in 8 countries.

Throughout our studies our lecturers, colleagues and mentors had emphasized the importance of travelling in order to step out of our comfort zones and explore the unknown. A year and a half after graduation, we had saved enough to pack our bags and kiss our beloved African continent a temporary goodbye.

Our mission was to personally experience European urban spaces with the aim of liberating our minds. In this article we will attempt to capture and share our experience of speed travelling through the urban spaces of European cities.

The journey began from London where we used bus tours and on one occasion a ferry across the English Channel to move between countries and cities.

LONDON was our point of entry into a very obviously first world country. The city's functionality was beyond our expectations: a legible city, a 24 hour city. We spent a full week in London, each night taking time out to locate our personal favourite, famous and iconic buildings and areas. We also had to find a means of getting to all these places with limited time. 95% of the time we walked, which proved beneficial from the start.

We felt that London understood that mankind ought to have superiority over vehicles, a big contrast when compared to any of our South African cities. In some instances the width of a pedestrian path equalled, if not exceeded, that of the street meaning more freedom for those on foot.

What initially seemed like an urban maze quickly became familiar. Nodes, landmarks and squares were mostly connected by detailed and highly active paths and roads. In fact most nodes and landmarks seemed as though they overlapped because of pedestrian activity.

Each place differed in character. To a certain extent the character of each place was related to its function and time, and seemed as though it would change with the season, because of the day and weather. The water edges were phenomenal; flowing and open, with pausing, dining, and circulation areas that enhanced the quality of space.

PARIS is one of the most visited cities in the world and we were excited to make the most of our time there with just two days to explore what, at a glance, seemed a distinctively characterised city.

Navigating in Paris was only hindered by the communication barrier as most people didn't speak English, thus we relied on the urban layout. Walking the narrow cobblestone streets, their continuous walls adorned with immaculate classical French façade treatment, brought about a never before imagined richness in texture to the edges of the paths.

The radiating tree-lined avenues that separate various modes of transport produced a spatial quality that astounded us. For someone who has walked the streets of South African cities, the concept of maintaining such hierarchical order between pedestrian paths, bicycle lanes and vehicles through defined channels without continuous physical barriers or law enforcement officers watching over you seemed so foreign.

The water's edge of the Canal de l'Ourcq was another thrill to our experience, a socio-cultural edge that truly reflected the city of romance through the urban fabric.

When we reached the Swiss Alps, with three days to explore, our excitement was at its peak. The thought of coming from the impoverished townships of KwaZulu-Natal to 3454m, the highest point of Europe, was one of many personal goals accomplished.

The Jungfrau train journey, which tunnels through and around the Alps to the 'top of Europe', was enough to leave us breathless – literally and figuratively – and the local scenery was spectacular. A 360° view of mountains and snow for as far as the eye could see is difficult to comprehend until experienced.

Switzerland offered a unique architectural experience in comparison to London and Paris. The Jungfrau region presented a critical regionalist approach in its layout and built fabric. The built environment made extensive use of the readily available timber and stone. Its spaces were intimate and personal and this resulted in a responsive environment, with multiple layers of personal genius.

We had four days to explore ROME, VENICE and FLORENCE. To be in the centre of Rome witnessing the well preserved history

of the Roman civilisation was a humbling experience.

Within the organic complexity of the urban fabric readily identifiable historic landmarks promised us way-finding as we dug ever deeper into the unknown, aspiring to soak in as much as we could. The Pantheon, Colosseum, Leaning Tower of Pisa and Campanile at San Marco's Square were all integrated within the urban fabric literally forming the backdrop to society's day-to-day living. We were left envious of how the Italians have managed to preserve and showcase their history and culture to the world through the built environment. We also enjoyed their social spots!

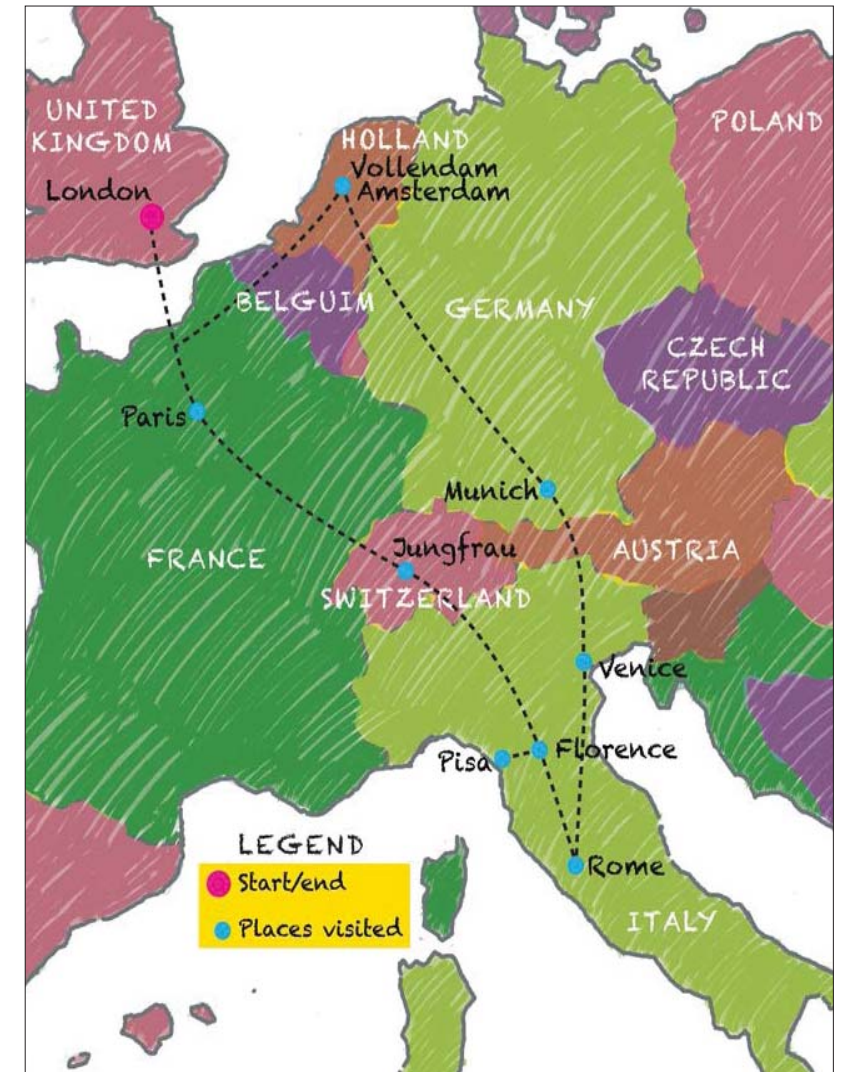
From a first time traveller's perspective, MUNICH resembled a few of the European cities we had visited, and also embraced the pedestrian. Its nodes and squares were effectively and efficiently connected by pedestrian and semi-pedestrian paths and roads. Munich's transport systems make exploring the city a joy! German engineering and architectural attention to detail was clearly identifiable at every turn.

Unique to our experience was the presence of beer halls which were publically positioned in main squares and on major pedestrian routes.

Our last two days were split between VOLENDAM and AMSTERDAM in the Netherlands. Volendam, a famous Dutch fishing village, has a strongly distinguishable urban fabric and sense of place, the village architecture consistently expressing a nautical theme.

We headed further inland to Amsterdam with the red light district. This was the most mind boggling experience of all! It was a place that promoted a culture that was not only foreign to us but to the world. This unique and liberated culture directly manifested itself in the urban fabric creating building typologies unique to this place. The streets and paths at pedestrian level are lined with shop-front doors with curtains from which the ladies advertise themselves: a literal translation of window shopping.

Experiencing how other cultures have effectively moulded their urban spaces has enabled us to critique and applaud our built environment here at home from a more informed point of



view. We as young architects should be in search of an architecture that is outside the politics that have always clouded us and move towards designing liberating built environments that add to the human experience.

Photos left to right:

London: Southwark, at left, London City Hall by Foster & Partners, 2000-2002, and right The Shard by Renzo Piano, 2009-2012.

Rome: Piazza di Spagna with Spanish Steps.

Rome: Colosseum.

Munich.

Amsterdam.

