THE DEMOCRATISATION OF ART: CAP AS AN ALTERNATIVE ART SPACE IN

SOUTH AFRICA

BY

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SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR MASTER OF ARTS AT
RHODES UNIVERSITY.

02 JUNE 2011

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Declaration of originality.

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by complete references. This thesis is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Art at Rhodes University. I declare that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at another university.

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Signature   Date

This thesis is dedicated to the late Dr. Michael Herbst who made me enthusiastic about Art History during my 1st year at university. He supported me with his time and his advice and his presence is sorely missed.

Abstract

While formal arts education was inaccessible to many during Apartheid, community-based centres played a significant role in the training of previously disadvantaged artists. By engaging in a socio-political critique of the history of South African art, this thesis argues that even though alternative art spaces are often marginalised, they remain essential to the diversification and democratisation of contemporary South African art today with its re-entry into the international art scene. According to Lize van Robbroeck (2004:52), "some of the fundamental ideals of community arts need to be revised to enrich, democratize and diversify [South Africa's] cultural practice." The aim of my Thesis is to investigate this statement in relation to the contribution the Community Arts Project (CAP) in Cape Town (1977-2003). CAP and other art centres have played an indispensable role in the establishment of black artists and in producing a locally reflective artistic practice in South Africa, even into the 21st century. Through researching the changes the organisation underwent between the 1980s and 1990s, the ways in which such art centres constantly need to respond to the changing socio-political landscape around them become clear. Within South Africa these centres were seen to play a significant part in the liberation struggle and then later in nation building. While these centres were well supported by foreign donors in the late 1980s, such funding was withdrawn in 1991 and the majority of art centres collapsed, illustrating to some degree that the training of artist was not valued outside the context of the struggle against apartheid. By interviewing key people and by reading documentation stored at the Manuscripts and Archives department of UCT I have discovered some of the different benefits and hindrances of working in community art centres both during and after Apartheid. This thesis argues that these centres still play a vital role in contributing to the development of South Africa's local art practice and should not be relegated to the sideline.

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INTRODUCTION: THE DEMOCRATISATION OF ART IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Democratisation in South African art can be understood as a continuous struggle for creative self-determination, and access to space and resources by a materially and educationally deprived sector of South Africans. This disparity originally occurred because colonialism and apartheid did not make resources available for black people to develop as equals.[1] In the politically turbulent year of 1976, lecturers affiliated with the University of Cape Town, South Africa, started two separate art projects: one in Mowbray and the other at the university campus. Even though students had to be bussed from the townships, there was an enthusiastic response and these short term projects were met with such a strong demand for more workshops that they would result in the decision to open the Community Arts Project (CAP) the following year. During the 1980's CAP served as a vital space for artists in the Cape Town area to receive training for professional careers in the arts, as well as providing a safe space for people to express themselves artistically in a time of great social and political turbulence. CAP was one of the few art centres which survived from the 1980s into the 21st century and continued to provide art education for numerous individuals despite the many obstacles and difficulties it faced over the years.

CAP represents an important attempt at democratisation in the arts, which I define as the artist's continuous struggle to assert control over all the aspects pertaining to their own creativity. This struggle includes countering limitations on who is able to practice art, the right to exhibition thereof, and the power to participate in policy formation regarding the arts. CAP became one of the most influential art centres in developing black South African art; and the role it has played in the South African art world forms the topic of this thesis. Rather than focusing on the artwork produced at the centre this

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[1] Throughout this thesis I make use of the term "black artist" when speaking about the work of artists who would not have been labelled by the apartheid government as white. My intention is not to essentialise or other the work of these artists as a fundamentally different category to the work of white artists. Rather, I use this term because the conditions faced by white and black artists were fundamentally different. Artists who were discriminated against based on the colour of their skin had to overcome problems, such as access to art education, that simply were not a concern for white artists. Consequently many community centres were established which addressed the different social and professional needs of these communities, either by black people themselves, or by whites who were engaged in, or sympathetic to, the struggle for democracy.

text critically examines the changing ideologies that informed the function of the art centre throughout its years.

According to Bester (2001:219), "The election victory of South Africa's National Party in 1948 saw a harsher codification of colonial segregation". This was in part accomplished through the Group Areas Act of 1950, by which different racial groups were allocated separate areas in which they were allowed to live. Black individuals who were found living in areas allocated to whites were moved to 'tribal' homelands, which were created in the 1960's within the borders of South Africa. The plan was that each homeland would eventually form a framework for citizenship so that black people would in time no longer be considered citizens of South Africa. These people were assigned to areas based on their socio-linguistic grouping, the records of which were often incorrect. The Group Areas Act led to the destruction of mixed resident areas such as District 6 and Sophiatown, and deprived communities of access to prime social and economic spaces (Bester 2001:219). Developed areas were reserved for white people; everyone else was assigned to the more rural outskirts of the major metropoles, far from work and essential facilities such as hospitals. The majority black were expected to work in the predominantly white cities and required pass books to travel as temporary sojourns. This contributed to the creation of urban townships for black people just outside the cities.

Sack (1989:200) writes that "after the mass removals of 'black' people from mixed suburbs of Johannesburg into the ethnically segregated townships, the first generation of children to grow up under these appalling conditions were the youth of the 1970s". This generation was subjected to a system of 'Bantu' education, which was significantly inferior to the education received by their white counterparts and focussed on preparing them for future roles as workers and servants. Furthermore, the Bantu education system fundamentally lacked the capacity to accommodated the large volume of black learners; by 1976 there were 257 505 pupils enrolled in Form 1 at high schools whereas the available schools could only accommodate 38 000 students.[2] The decision to introduce Afrikaans as the medium of instruction had a further negative effect on both the students and the teachers, few of whom were fluent in the language. This action on the

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2 http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/governance-projects/june16/june16.htm. First accessed on 14 Jan 2011

part of the government caused thousands of students to take to the streets in protest on 16 June 1976. The government retaliated by violently suppressing the protests and a number of schoolchildren were killed.

There was a sudden increase in the number of community art centres in South Africa following the 1976 Soweto riots, as art became an increasingly important means of self-determination. This was an attempt to redefine the values seen to be inherent in "apartheid culture" through the democratisation of art. The Black Consciousness movement, which developed in South Africa during the 1960's and 1970's, played an important role in these events by encouraging black South Africans to take control over all aspects of their lives for the purpose of emancipation. I consider Black Consciousness a powerful ideology for democratisation since it encouraged people to take control of their own lives by supporting programmes which sometimes substituted the inadequate state service provision. This resonated with efforts to create a culture which did not subscribe to the state's cultural values, often labelled as the 'alternative democratic culture', to emerge in the 1970s. Van Robbroeck (1991:11) writes that, "state art" is perceived to be art which "is practiced in, and promoted by, state institutions such as universities, galleries, museums and schools. The 'state' is perceived as a repressive and totalitarian force…furthering its power and authority" (Van Robbroeck 1991:11). The South African state was seen to perpetuate its own views on art as an elite, white privilege beyond the control of the ordinary individual.[3] Despite this, it should be acknowledged that some art centres that catered for blacks, such as Katlehong, were state funded; it can be argued, however, that these centres were perceived as co-opted by the state ideology rather than working towards a free society.[4]

Van Robbroeck (1991:2) writes that, "the striving for the democratization of the arts which forms the prime motivating force for the establishment of community arts worldwide, is conflated, in the South African context, with the broader political struggle for democracy". For example, CAP stated in its 1993/94 report that

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[3]   The implicit polar opposition of state art and community art can come across as somewhat simplistic and state institutions can have mutually beneficial alliances with community centres (Van Robbroeck 1991:24). Thus, according to Van Robbroeck (1991:25) art centres should be, "regarded as supplementing the existing cultural arena, rather than threatening or replacing it".

[4]   Many radical activists believed that art which did not directly oppose apartheid indirectly stated that the repressive life conditions were acceptable.

> CAP's beginnings in 1977 were embedded in the struggle for South Africa's freedom. Its birth was in the year after the Soweto uprising. Its aim to provide a space where artists of all races could come together to create a melting pot where a new aesthetic could develop, one that would reflect a multi-cultural vision for a unified democratic society where the rights of all individuals would be respected.[5]

Here the 'new aesthetic' does not refer to work that looks different from so called high art, but art which was based on the needs of the disenfranchised sector of the population (rather than being made for exclusive gallery spaces). Artwork produced by art centres did not look much different from those produced by state institutions and all art centres did not share the same aesthetic concerns. Van Robbroeck (1991:5) asserts that the "artistic products of community arts centres are, on the whole extremely varied – there is no such thing as a ''typical' centre artwork and, most centres' output contains a vast range of themes and subject matter". Furthermore, the art centres made use of a wide variety of media. Cheap processes such as drawing and printmaking were prolific in South African centres; however painting, sculpture, and photography were also taught. Hence art centres also countered the "parochialism of the government's 'own affairs' policy" by breaking away from the 'native artefacts' deemed appropriate for black creative expression (Van Robbroeck 1991:41). The 'new aesthetic' based on an emphasis of expanding the social relevance of art through mass participation. This adopted its most literal expression as a fight for a political democracy in the production of protest posters; however even the "melting pot" of different races and ideas created at CAP enacted a democratic community in opposition to state segregation.

Hagg (2001:165) argues that community art "provides for a cultural democratisation process, with specific aims to communicate and share through particular activities" in the arts. The focus on community arts is based on a "comprehensive socio-cultural enrichment, 'bringing back art to the people'" since centres were widely accessible due to the lack of entry requirements and very low membership fees. (Hagg 2001:165). Hagg (1989:n.p.) states that in South Africa,

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[5] Community Arts Project: Annual Report 1993/4. Page 2.

> Community Arts provides an outlet for self-expression, an opportunity to develop an alternative culture and to create new symbols as well as to provide educational and economic networks. Centres allow people to participate at grass-root level, with an emphasis on workshop process rather than end-products. Ordinary people can become participants in efforts to redefine culture.

This emphasis on process is not necessarily at the expense of standards and quality; on the contrary, a high quality of work often emerges from art centres. Rather, the focus on process enables participants to not only be consumers of art, but also to engage with the art world on their own terms without having to create in accordance with the requirements of commercial appeal or gallery space (Van Robbroeck 1001:20). With reference to my earlier definition of 'democratization', however, it is clear that art centres did more than just give "access to all", they also provided educational and economic networks which allowed the potential for an art scene which functioned independently from the state on its own terms. These networks also facilitated the *potential* for effective advocacy for artist's rights though solidarity.

Van Robbroeck (1991:8-9) proposes that the perception is that "in South Africa and abroad, [community arts] serve the needs of materially and culturally deprived sectors of the population (read 'the people'), while the state and state institutions cater to the needs and greed of the elite , privileged minority". This was particularly true in South Africa where the marginalised and the elite were primarily racially defined, and black people were prohibited access to certain state institutions. Consequently, the term 'community artist' has in some instances become conflated with the term 'black artist'.[6] Van Robbroeck (1991:50) writes that, "If one gains the impression…of community arts in

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[6] Bongi Dhlomo (1995:26) writes" Community art, art from the community, artists from the community, community artists, arts community, community arts; these are but a few of the recently-coined terms which are used to refer to particular forms of art and particular artists in South Africa. Not long ago, the same artists were referred to as anything from transitional artists, resistance artists, protest artists to cultural workers. The work they produced was similarly referred to as transitional art, traditional art, protest, art, art from the townships and so forth…For this reason, the terms 'community art' and 'community artist', as they are used in South Africa today…carry with them a considerable degree of ambiguity."

South Africa that centres cater only to black communities it is because the majority of centres are situated in the townships, which limits their accessibility to potential white participants". According to Van Robbroeck (1991) "Only two centres, notably the Johannesburg Art Foundation and CAP, are situated in white residential areas, and cater to multi-racial student bodies". Thus CAP opposed apartheid's restrictive racial laws by reclaiming a space wherein an imagined post-apartheid interaction could occur.[7]

According to Van Robbroeck (1991:8) the term 'community art' is difficult to define, "perhaps because the term on which it is based, 'community', is a catchword which refers to an abstract concept rather than a circumscribed physical structure". The term refers to anything from churches ("community of believers"), to towns ("community of Grahamstown"), to entire sectors of the population such as the poor ("community development"). Typically, in relation to community art, the practice is often perceived to be synonymous with forms of community development. Van Robbroeck (1991:43) writes that community art centres "often run projects to meet some of the social needs of the community. CAP for instance ran cultural programmes for children in Mitchell's Plain which deal with pressing social problems such as drug abuse and teenage pregnancies". Hagg (2001:165) suggests that, "Community artists are…distinguishable not by the techniques they use, but by their attitude towards the place of their activities in the life of society, the process of collective creativity". The definitions provided by Hagg and Van Robbroeck of community artists were both adopted by the figure of the cultural worker. The term located these artists as part of the workers' struggle for a free South Africa, thereby dismantling the hierarchical structures associated with the arts. Cultural workers sought to bring about social change through using the arts in a collective and participatory manner which was relevant to their local communities. Hence, they were interested in the immediate social relevance art had for creating a free society. This thesis uses this definition of a cultural worker to define a community artist since it seems the most productive in terms of democratisation.

That CAP represented a threat to the government is illustrated by the frequency with which it was raided by the police. Sophie Peters recalls how police came to arrest a

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[7] This multi-racialism was by no means free of conflict as many of the black artists often felt that white artists have had enough opportunities and despised being treated as "charity cases".

particular artist at CAP and that she had to lie about his whereabouts while others quietly hid political banners.[8] Furthermore, the *Cape Herald* reported that security police raided CAP four times in three months under emergency regulations, removing pamphlets, banners, photographs, diaries, and personal letters.[9] In 1987 the conference, *Towards a People's Culture*, which was organised by community structures, was banned by the government. This occurred even though the works contained in the conference were not really revolutionary in their content. According to Gavin Younge the banning of the conference "conceded an important political point. The struggle for a genuinely South African culture is dangerous to a political party which is founded on the principals of racial, religious and social separation" (Peffer 2009:93). The following year F.W. de Klerk pronounced that "If the concept of "people's education" and "people's art" is that which serves the revolution, then we cannot support it and must take steps in the interests of security, [and] in the interest of stability" (Peffer 2009: 95). It is the potential for art centres to act as a body that challenges state hegemony that gives them potency in bringing about the democratisation of art.

This thesis examines South African artist's struggle for self-determination. Black Consciousness was an important ideology which informed the emancipation and self-determination of black people through affirming cultural pride and self-reliance, and encouraging a collective self-image that was independent of the government. I believe that this ideology played a vital role in the establishment of many of the art centres in South Africa which worked towards democratisation in the arts. The Community Arts Project (CAP) is the main focus of this study. Since it was a centre run by liberal white individuals its founding was not directly related to Black Consciousness. CAP was, however, an important space for people to explore their abilities and to build self-confidence and many of CAP's efforts sought to multiply the work they were doing by equipping people to start something independent in their own communities. These efforts mirror many of the ideas put forward by the Black Consciousness movement. The multi-racial nature of the CAP (since a Black Conciousness ideology would have excluded

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8   Interview with Sophie Peters (8/10/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny.
9   Anonymous. 1985, 2 Nov. 'Pamphlets and banners seized in search'. *Cape Herald.* np

white participation) serves as a model for how some of the ideas of Black Consciousness could be implemented today.[10]

Van Robbroeck (1991:6) warns that, with regards to researching community art centres in South Africa, the

> issues that are at play in this field are often complex and this complexity is compounded by the fact that a great number of variables come into play. Political distrust, economic factors, personal vendettas and ambitions, practical and ideological considerations all have a role to play in the composite picture.

I have tried as far as possible to give an accurate account where possible; but I am aware of the inability of this thesis to accurately reflect the day to day realities of the people who participated in CAP. There was constant activity at the centre with complex power relations between the centre and the people they were trying to serve both in pre- and post-apartheid years. In this thesis I argue that the centre played a vital role in different transition periods during its time in South African history, rather than trying to record all the details of its activity. I have used both archival sources and personal interviews to construct this argument.

This thesis deviates from other research on CAP that has looked exclusively at its poster production, such as Judy Seidman's *Red on Black* and Jon Berndt's *From Weapon to Ornament: The CAP Media Project Posters*, by investigating the resistance offered by more nuanced engagement with the arts during apartheid. Two honours theses were written on CAP, namely Bolton, H. 1995. *Indications of a "New Aesthetic" in the black and white prints collection of the Community Arts Projects in Cape Town*[11] and Denny, R. 1996. *The Position of Women Within the Community Arts Project: A Focus on the Visual*

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[10] I want to stress that what Black Consciousness offered was a collective identity and a will to actively address the shortcomings of the government themselves. However, "blackness" alone no longer addresses the complex nature of South African power relationships today. According to Mario Pissarra (2004:184) skin colour is not the only determining factor in South Africa today, rather "class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and even that troublesome notion 'culture' are all significant markers of identity and power". However, structures are needed to question and address structures of power and privilege from a bottoms-up approach, and Black Consciousness provided a model for realising this within South Africa.

[11] Lodged in university of Cape Town's manuscripts & archives department. Archive no: BC1195 F17.1

Arts.[12] My work adds to the research done by Bolton by widening the understanding of the context and significance of the work was done at CAP. My thesis deviates from Denny's paper since I do not address the important issues of gender which were often sidelined in the democratic struggle. My work also deviates from Jacqueline Nolte's research on CAP, *'Ownership' of the Community Arts Project (CAP), 1976 – 1997)*[13], which investigated the administrative challenges faced by CAP, whereas my work investigates how the centre acted as a means for democratisation.

Chapter 1 begins with a brief discussion on African Modernism. This sets out my theoretical understanding of how to approach the work created by artists in Africa working in a Modern idiom. This informs my reading of all the artwork done by black South Africa artists, particularly in order to counter the narrow and restrictive expectations of authenticity which were placed on their work. In order to lay a foundation for the work done by CAP, this thesis will begin by examining the conditions faced by black artists in the 1940's and during apartheidwith reference to the work of artists such as Goerge Pemba, John Mohl, and Gerard Sekoto, who are considered to be some of the pioneers of black Modernism in South Africa. This is followed by a discussion on Polly Street and Rorke's Drift, which were the most well known and influential art centres in the years preceding CAP and made a significant contribution to countering the lack of access faced by the pioneers. The pigeonholing of black artists' work as "Township Art" is then discussed in order to understand the challenges faced by that generation of artists, and more importantly, to understand what the later generation of radical art centres such as CAP broke away from. This break was largely influenced by the Black Consciousness Movement which forms the final part of my first chapter. Black Consciousness asserted pride in black identity and the right for self governance. By 1976 numerous art centres began to emerge against the backdrop of the Soweto Student Uprising and the death of Black Consciousness leader, Steve Biko. These centres were mostly in the township areas and expressed the Black Consciousness ideals of creating structures for self-governance and independence. Artists who had been trained could pass on their skills to the next generation and actively begin to counter the circumstances imposed by apartheid.

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[12] Lodged in university of cape town's manuscripts & archives department. Archive no: BC1195. Not yet Archived
[13] Available online. http://www.asai.co.za/forum.php?id=1088

Chapter 2 discusses the contribution CAP made to South Africa from its inception in 1977 up until 1990. The discussion begins by considering the way CAP's education was structured and the significance it had in bringing people of diverse racial categories together, creating a broader understanding of community. This is followed by an examination of the role of the 1982 Culture and Resistance Symposium and its effects on the function of CAP as art began to take on a more literal political role. The chapter ends by exploring the ways in which CAP attempted to transform itself from a kind of liberal 'charity organisation' to an organization actively involved in opposing apartheid. Throughout this chapter the various forms of democratisation in the arts is discussed in the South African context. This ranges from the openness of the centre itself to ways of working collectively on murals, or reclaiming public visual space through training people in producing posters. The reclamation of space through the erection of People's Parks in the late 1980s is also considered. The main purpose of this chapter is to argue that CAP was involved in exciting cultural work which had local relevance beyond the rhetoric of resistance against apartheid.

Chapter 3 begins in 1991 when funding for art centres became very unstable, and resulted in CAP retrenching most of its staff and temporarily halting all of its classes. The chapter considers some of the reasons that community art centres faced a funding crisis at this time. It also examines the changing discourse that these centres had to adopt as South Africa moved towards a post-apartheid state. This included a move from a discourse of struggle to a discourse of development. The South African government invested over R50 million into developing new art centres for the democratisation of the arts, while largely ignoring the existence of established centres such as CAP. By 2002 most of the newly established government centres were disused due to mismanagement, while most of the centres that survived from the apartheid era had closed down due to lack of funds. In line with the developmental focus, art centres now had to create courses in accordance with an external accrediting body which proved to be slow and frustrating work and did not yield results until 2003. All of these factors had a bearing on the way students were

trained and, presumably, on the art that was produced.[14] This chapter ends by briefly examining the relationship between art and development in South Africa.

The fourth chapter examines the role of the art centres in a post-apartheid South Africa. It argues that art centres were working towards expressing South Africaness from the grassroots, and that this constituency has a lot to offer in terms of diversifying South Africa's art practice. The work of two contemporary artists trained at CAP, namely Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi and Ricky Dyaloyi is examined. These artists both demonstrate a continued interest for the relevance of Black Consciousness themes and aesthetics today.

CAP was not only concerned with visual art: it also taught theatre, dance, and music, as well as running weekly children's classes. These represented significant contributions in various areas which are not covered in my thesis. Firstly, there is a substantial amount of information on CAP's contribution to theatre and these sources could make a rich study. Secondly, my thesis only deals with CAP's poster production briefly, and there is a lot of documentation on the activities of CAP Media that I have not used in this thesis. Thirdly, due to time and space constraints I have not discussed CAP's children's classes in great detail, although these formed an important component of its activities from its inception. According to CAP's 93/94 report "Without CAP over 400 Capetonian children a year would not have had an opportunity to have any form of creative art education".[15] Finally, the Mayibuye Centre at the University of the Western Cape has obtained a large collection of boxed artworks left behind by CAP students throughout the years. The collection needs to be sorted and archived before it can be studied systematically. Once this has been done it will provide a rich opportunity for further research into the work created by students at CAP. Such future research could provide a broader understanding of the work produced by those in politicised community centres.

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[14] Mario Pissarra testifies to the fact that the work of the 1990's was far more conservative since most of it was an exercise in tone or creating special depth, etc. as opposed to the 1980's during which people could express themselves without working towards a qualification. I have not been able to examine any of the work myself.

[15] Anonymous. 1994. *Community Arts Project: Annual Report 1993/4.* p2.

CHAPTER 1: STRUGGLING TOWARDS SELF-DEFINTION IN BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN ART, 1940-1977.

The vital role played by the Community Arts Project (1977-2008) in Cape Town, South Africa, can only be fully understood within the contexts of the development of Modernism in Africa in general. The racist restrictions placed on art were not limited to South Africa alone and often the development of Modernism in Africa is synonymous with the struggle for self-determination. I will therefore discuss the ways in which Modernism's development can be understood generally, before making particular reference to the way it played out in South Africa.

The introduction of new forms of artistic expression to Africa, mainly from Europe, is a historically entangled affair.[16] Enwezor (2004:10) writes about the mechanisms of the "complex interrelationships of dependence and exploitation, violence and patronization, which bore upon the emergence of numerous non-European cultures and nations into modernity". Africans were often perceived by Europeans in the 19th century to be primitive and subject to ancient tradition and nature without the capacity for self-direction. In 1830, as part of lectures entitled *The History of Philosophy,* the Enlightenment philosopher Georg Hegel wrote the following with regards to Africa:

> The peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all *our* ideas - the category of Universality. In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence… We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality - all that we call feeling - if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character.[17]

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[16] One could take this history back to the spread of Islam into Africa long before Europe had any power in Africa.

[17] University of Massachusetts Amherst. http://www.umass.edu/afroam/aa254_hegel.html. Accessed on 08 February 2011.

Enwezor (2004:10) reminds us that during colonialism "the territorial violations and abject violence...of Africa sprang from a deeply held belief that simple issues of human decency and legal protection do not and cannot apply to subject peoples, especially those deemed in need of civilizing". With this view, African artistic production was also considered as the product of an unconscious subject, producing objects in accordance with a sterile tradition. Hassan (1999:215) explains that the way African art was treated gives the impression that "creativity in Africa had been frozen after some genesis when the known types of icons were crafted by the hands of some hero of a founding myth" and that no deviation from these forms was allowed. Kasfir (1999:94) writes that within this colonial mindset

> the 'primitive artist', in this Africa of the mind, is controlled by forces larger than himself and is consequently ignorant of the subjective feelings of aesthetic choice. In such an equation, the Western connoisseur is the essential missing factor that transforms the artefact into art.

Hence the Western critic had power over the definition of African art, and work that did not demonstrate clear links to "African tradition" was considered inauthentic. Hassan (1999:216) observed that due to this presumed a lack of agency of African artists there is a widespread misconception that "contemporary African culture is a distorted copy, a mere imitation, of Western culture" and that "contact with Western culture is seen as a source of decay and, indeed, the extinction, of Africa's great traditional arts". However, "African assimilation of Western techniques, materials, ideas, and forms" have not been an act of copying those forms, but rather, "have been creative, selective, meaningful, and highly original" (Hassan 1999:216).

Chika Okeke (2004:30) cautions that "African modernism cannot be broached merely by invoking European modernism, for it is not, as some historians have claimed, simply an African manifestation of twentieth-century European art". While elements of Western Modernism certainly apply to Africa, Kasfir (1999:10) cautions that the term 'Modern', describes a particular response by artists to artistic practice in the West and the subsequent rise of an avant-garde art in Europe and America. In Africa the development

of Modernism is "played out on very different stages with very different actors and audiences" (Kasfir 1999:10). Chika Okeke-Agulu (2006:14) writes that

> One thing is clear: the very fact that the challenges faced by African artists were not monolithic, but instead depended on the specific histories of their countries, as well as the intellectual, political, and artistic philosophies and ideologies to which they were exposed. As such, despite discernable, even obvious commonalties – such as the overwhelming disposition to inventing new forms expressive of the spirit of political and artistic freedom – it is reductive to speak about *an* African modernism; indeed we see diverse, contemporaneous modernisms in Africa.

According to Kasfir (1999:9) Modern African art is not simply, "a response to bombardment by alien cultural forms or as an outcome of colonialism". Rather she suggests that it is "built through a process of bricolage upon the already existing structures and scenarios on which the older, pre-colonial and colonial genres of African art were made". Hence, she argues that Modernism in Africa is the adoption of "the habits and attitudes of artists towards making art, rather than in any adherence to a particular style, medium, technique, or thematic range". Peffer (2009:5) suggests that the attitude of Modernism which was adopted "may be characterized at its most basic as a self-conscious break with the past, as an ongoing search for novel forms of expression, and…experimentation with non-traditional media".[18] African artists have long been struggling for equal right in defining their practice and South Africa is no exception with artists like Ernest Mancoba emigrating in order to find freedom of expression and the rise of Black Consciousness.

According to Hassan (1999:220), three factors have had significant impact on the development of modern expression in Africa. The first two factors are identified as follows:

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[18] However Peffer (2009:5) also notes how this has been subject to critics and market forces "intent on promoting the idea of novelty by foregrounding the artist as an ideal (and marketable) 'individual' in the contemporary world".

One is the rise of European and Western patronage and intervention. This was characterised by the establishment of art workshops by European expatriates, mostly colonial administrators, liberal educators, or missionaries. A second and related factor is the establishment of formal art schools and academies, often fashioned on the Western art-educational model, which can be traced to the 1940s or later.

Within South Africa there was a similar trend. However, even after colonial rule, there was – under apartheid - an attempt to control the access to art education for the majority of the population based on skin colour. Black students were not encouraged to pursue art with the exception of handcrafts, which were seen as being inferior to the fine arts such as painting or sculpture. When fine art created by black South African artists was acquired by commercial galleries, collectors encouraged a very limited thematic and stylistic range deemed appropriate for them: the depiction of township scenes. When fine art was taught it was considered as a recreational activity, rather than professional training. Furthermore, Younge (1988:21) writes that "the most lasting restraint on the development of creative and expressive skills was the fact that art was never emphasised at secondary school level". Hence liberal institutions such as Polly Street Art Centre, or missionary initiatives such as Rorke's Drift Arts and Crafts Centre, played an indisputably vital role in the establishment of black art practice within South Africa. Furthermore a few black artists managed to gain access to white university art training institutions such Rhodes University and the Michaels School of Art in the 1980's.[19]

Hassan (1999:220) writes that the third, and most important, factor contributing to the development of modern African art is,

the nationalistic cultural resurgence that swept many newly independent African countries, where government patronage and interest in the arts became part of building, and in some cases, inventing a 'national culture'. In the 1970s and 80s, new African art movements and initiatives emerged either in response to, or as a rejection of, Western schooling in art offered through workshops and art academies in Africa, or acquired by studying in the West. The

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[19] Garth Erasmus "Interview with Anthony Mhayi. Cape Town, 31 Aug 2009." in Voyiya, V and McGee, J. *The Luggage is Still Labelled.*

> basic quest of these new movements and initiatives has been to establish a more culturally rooted, self-conscious, and 'African' aesthetic expression. Rejecting the homogenising effect of Western cultural imperialism, especially its neo-primitivising and exoticising tendencies, African artists have repositioned themselves as creators of an autonomous, more global art.

Due to a racist government in South Africa, an idea of 'national culture' was limited to the celebration of 'Afrikaner culture'. Nevertheless, movements such as Black Consciousness emerged in the late 1960s which promoted pride in black cultural heritage and a rejection of white systems of control. This included the search for "African aesthetic expression" and a rejection of the exotisicing and primitivising themes of Township Art.[20]

Having located South African modernism within the wider scholarship of African art I begin my next section by tracing the specifics of the developments within South Africa that allowed this to occur and the drive towards self-definition which motivated it.

1.1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN MODERNISM

Conditions for black artists were not very encouraging in South Africa in the 20th century. Younge (1988:18) explains that "the first 'art' orientated school subject available to blacks made its appearance in 1916 when new regulations introduced 'drawing' into the primary school syllabus...only twenty-five minutes per week". Schooling also contained industrial work which included "modelling in clay, sewing, and basketwork up to the fourth year of school" (Younge 1988:18). According to Younge (1988:20), after the election victory of the National Party in 1948 there was a stated intent to revive traditional craft traditions through the school curriculum. This was not based, however, on a desire to heighten the artistic education of black individuals. Rather, it was part of Bantu Education's allocation

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[20] As will be discussed in the section on Township Art, white collectors had a particular aesthetic that they deemed appropriate for South African artist to pursue. This usually romanticised Africa in one way or another for the benefit of white consumption.

of subjects for black schools deemed appropriate for their 'place in life'.[21] Craft was seen as the 'native' form of expression, inferior to the practice of fine arts such as easel painting and sculpture.[22] The artist Ernest Mancoba recalls how his decision to leave South Africa was influenced by him being approached by the Native Affairs Commissioner to develop an "indigenous art trade by selling all sorts of pseudo-tribal figures for tourists" (Obrist 2010:375-6). This restriction on what expression was deemed appropriate for him made him understand that he "would not be able to become either a citizen or an artist in the land of [his] fathers" (Obrist 2010:375-6). The belief in the superior subjectivity of the white man led to a skewing of the perception of Modern art in South Africa. The art which was promoted as Modern was restricted to white artists such as Irma Stern and Maggie Laubser who made self-conscious breaks with tradition and experimented with new expressive forms. Any such experimentation on the part of black artists, beyond a set of prescribed themes and styles, was deemed as inauthentic and was viewed as mimicry of western expression.[23] Such presumptions have, however, been revisited and the work of these artists can be re-read as explorations of modern forms of expression.

Regarding the situation in South Africa in the 1940s Van Robbroeck (2008:214) writes that the colonials believed that the modern subject had "a more refined and progressive subjectivity" than that of the African people. Consequently this belief "formed the cornerstone of missionary education, and as such it was deeply internalized by the African petty bourgeoisie". Okeke (2004:29) notes that, "signs of Modern consciousness in the work of African artists have invariably been tethered to the civilizing mission and disciplinary procedures of the European colonial project". This was enacted though missionary schools, as is the case with artist Milwa Pemba, along with figures like Gerard Sekoto and Ernst Mancoba (Van Robbroeck 2008:231). Van Robbroeck (2008:218) states that Pemba "may be deemed representative of a moderate African Nationalist subjectivity in so far as he belonged to the emerging African Petty

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[21] While it is the goal of this thesis to argue for the value of non-racial spaces it is important to first lay out the history of segregation in order to explain the significance of orginisations like CAP.

[22] This was a perception which proliferated in Africa, as Chika Okeke (2001:29) writes, "wherever art did feature in the colonial curriculum, it was restricted to the notion of craft".

[23] Van Robbroeck (2008:214) states that "the exclusion of 'traditional' Africans from this 'universal' modern subjectivity was explicitly stated".

Bourgeoisie". Pemba, Sekoto, and Mancoba, due to their Modern upbringing felt a sense of estrangement from African tradition. Van Robbroeck (2008:223) explains that to try and redress this alienation they undertook field-trips to rural areas "to obtain insight into African ways of life". Examples of this can be seen in Pemba's 1944 watercolour *Girls in a hut* (Fig. 1) and his portraits of amaXhosa women such as his 1955 painting *Xhosa Woman* (Fig. 2). His portraits during this time often were often naturalistic portrayals of bare breasted amaXhosa women in traditional clothing. With regards to Pemba, this research was undertaken in view of his "self-proclaimed brief to act as representative of all 'black' South Africans...to 'be an artist of [his] own nation'" (Van Robbroeck 2008:223). This was complicated by his position as an outsider to the people he was representing due to his missionary upbringing. He seemed to subscribe to essentialist notions of the homogeneity of 'black' South African culture, which problematised his desire to paint as a representative of ' his people'. Van Robbroeck (2008:223) writes that "although Pemba's family were staunch Christians, they maintained some Xhosa traditions (such as consulting sangomas and sacrificing to the ancestors)". Furthermore, Van Robbroeck (2008:212) argues that

> For the bourgeois black Christian, tradition existed simultaneously as the bearer of lost sovereignty and cultural pride; and as a debased and shameful relic of a primitive past. Thus his approach to tradition is characterized by a profoundly ambivalent blend of pride, nostalgia and shame. While the Christian intellectual often encouraged his rural and urban brethren to ascend the 'ladder of civilization' to add weight to his own quest for respect and civility, his quintessential modernist alienation manifests in the simultaneous primitivist romanticization of African tradition.

This kind of negotiation of identity can be seen in Pemba's 1946 portrait *The Convert* (Fig. 3). Here the subject of the painting is again a bare-breasted Xhosa woman with traditional dress. However, in this instance she holds a cross in her left hand, implying an adoption of Christianity. The inclusion of a child in this painting might also be a commentary on the effects on future generations as conversion takes place and Christian practices are adapted and integrated into local culture, or as local traditions are rejected in favour of a new faith. The duality of tradition and Christianity reflects Pemba working

within the modern paradigm of easel painting to assert a "progressive" and "civilized" subjectivity while trying to hold on to tradition through his choice of traditional subjects. It was this approach which allowed Pemba to assert himself and his subjects as equals with the colonisers.

Oguibe (2002:244) notes that, "within colonial discourse art and aesthetic sensibility were crucial signifiers of the civilized station, and constituted the unbridgeable distance between savagery and culture". Van Robbroeck (2008:218) argues that Oguibe

> proposes that the emergence of African artistic Modernism should be read as a nationalist strategy to appropriate and 'hack into' the sacred spaces of European High culture. The fact that Pemba elected to work in a naturalistic mode, in the traditional Western medium of oil on canvas, certainly does suggest that he deliberately chose both a style and a medium that betokened, to most contemporary white South Africans, a high level of cultural attainment. Certainly the white press' response to the phenomenon of modern black art (which ranged from ridicule to patronizing amusement and even outright dismissal), suggests that this phenomenon significantly succeeded in threatening white cultural dominance.

However, as Van Robbroeck (2008:220) explains, despite the artistic achievement of these early pioneers "the place reserved for the 'black' artist in the 'universal space' of High Art remained marginal…the African artist's irredeemable blackness declared his uncultured savagery and rendered his mastery of Western culture mere mimicry". Artist, John Mohl[24], author of works such as *Magaliesberg in Mid Winter,* 1943, (Fig. 4) was discouraged to paint landscapes due to the fact that it was not considered a subject appropriate for natives, because "landscape, he was told, had become the field where Europeans had advanced far in perfecting its painting".[25] Hence any landscape produced by Mohl, it was felt, would be simply a poor copy of Western art, whereas depicting "his own people" was considered an appropriate subject. In response to these concerns for

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[24]According to an anonymous Author, "Mohl attended the Moeding Training Institute (later known as Tigerkloof Training School) where he attained a teacher's diploma. He subsequently accompanied a German artist to South West Africa (now Namibia) where he studied painting at the Windhoek School of Art. The Missionary Society and the Lutheran Church then sent him to Düsseldorf, West Germany, where he studied art at the Kunst-Akademie during the following five years". http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/bios/mohl-j.htm. First Accessed on 26 Feb 2011

[25] http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/bios/mohl-j.htm. First Accessed on 26 Feb 2011

authenticity Mohl responded, "But I am African, and when God made Africa, he also created beautiful landscapes for Africans to admire and paint".[26] Thus, he asserted the right of Africans to interpret and depict the landscape for themselves. According to Manaka (1987:13), the pioneers of African modernism such as Mohl, Sekoto, and Pemba painted "to bear witness and to celebrate the right to be born African" and to interpret "an African experience through their own eyes". Artist and art historian Rasheed Araeen (2010:279) calls this use of modernism Africa's "intellectual pursuits and struggle for self-determination".

Gerard Sekoto's 1940 painting *Yellow Houses* (Fig. 5) was the first painting of a black artist to be included in the permanent collection of an art gallery (Peffer 2009:4). It depicts a street in Sopiatown, a township area of where – having recently moved from his rural home – he was a new resident. The work speaks not only of the material deprivation found in these areas, but also of Sekoto's desire to observe and record the lives of people around him. Figlan (in Manaka 1987:14) writes that

> Sekoto realized his people were oppressed and had been denied the right to self-determination in the country of their birth, that his people's oppression and struggles against it were not regional, but national. Putting onto canvas his struggling people their energy for work and their domestic activities, their domestic activities, their determination, courage, hopes, and victories.

This is further exemplified in works such as *The Waiting Room*, 1940, (Fig. 6) and *Workers on a Saturday*, 1941, (Fig. 7) which depict the everyday realities of 'black' South Africans. *Workers on a Saturday* for example depicts the occupants of a single-sex men's hostel wherein they had to stay while working in the city, separated from their families for most of the year. Similarily, Mohl desired to paint what was known to him, therefore township scenes were often the theme of his works. In *Old and Rusty Houses,* 1942, (Fig. 8) he depicted the living conditions of the townships and, much like Sekoto, communicated the material deprivation they were subjected to. Drawing inspiration from the work of impressionists like Cezanne, Mohl was concerned with capturing the various

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[26]Ibid.

moods of the township landscape in different light.[27] Mine workers going to, or returning from, work were also a common theme for Mohl, whereby he expressed "the plight of the faceless, dehumanised worker" (Miles 2006:112). His painting *Only a Patch of Sunshine*, 1968, (Fig. 9) was painted when apartheid had already been in effect for twenty years, and acts of resistance and suppression, such as the Sharpville Massacre of 1960, had already taken place. The miners in this image possibly continue to represent the dehumanisation of Africans, whereas the ray of sunlight breaking though the clouds seems to represent a hope for change.

Apart from resistance to colonial authorities through the use of what was considered a highly cultured form of expression, the early pioneers also challenged European authority through their use of subject matter. Sekoto's painting *Song of the Pick*, 1946-7, (Fig. 10) depicts, "a line of muscular men who heave pickaxes in unison...a foreman stands to the side smoking his pipe". Despite the authority of the foreman, the workers are portrayed as powerful and capable of pushing the foreman out of the picture or obliterating him entirely (Peffer 2009:8). Sekoto himself describes the theme as follows: "the warden, with his hands in his pockets while smoking his pipe, thinking himself the power, yet being overpowered by the 'Song of the Pick' with strong rhythm which he can clearly hear so that it diminishes his thin legs into nothingness" (Sekoto in Peffer 2009:8). *Portrait of a Young Man Reading*, 1946-7, (Fig. 11) is less confrontational and depicts a black man at ease with a book learned education and reading, and the political dimension is left implicit. This work challenges colonial perceptions of Africans as barbaric and portrays a natural ease with literature. This is indicative of black South African Modernism's express desire not only to humanise black subjects, but also to elevate them to what was considered a more progressive subjectivity. According to Manaka (1987:13) the early pioneers "all believed in making art that would have meaning and culturally enrich their own people". This can be seen in Mohl's journal when he wrote:

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[27]Ibid.

I wanted the world to realise that black people are human beings and that among them good workers can be found, good artists, and in addition to that I wanted to lecture indirectly or directly to my people of the importance of this type of thing [art]... [Africans think] it shouldn't be terribly expensive, and if you say a painting is about one hundred rand they get shocked and say "What do you mean? What are you selling? Are you selling ten oxen or ten cows? (Stevenson 2008:17-19)

As Younge (1988:22) observes, the purchase of art by the proletariat never became as popular as buying theatre tickets, largely due to the price. [28] Consequently, the artists were largely supported by white patrons instead of the communities they wanted to reach. Nevertheless, the work by these artists can be read as asserting African identity. For example, Pemba's 1965 painting *ANC Funeral in the Red Location, Port Elizabeth* (Fig. 12) clearly showing the ANC flag, was painted five years after the banning of the ANC. Thus it establishes and recalls pride and the right for Africans to politically govern their own affairs.

Van Robbroeck (2008:221) writes that "educated Africans lived among and served mainly the 'black' urban proletariat. They were thus directly exposed, as the white bourgeoisie never were, to the deprivations and poverty of the townships". The belief that art is a universal language seems to have been held by figures like Pemba and Mohl who believed that art could "bridge the gap between colonizer and colonized".[29] Van Robbroeck (2008:219) reminds us that, "art was one of very few avenues of agency available to young members of an increasingly marginalized African bourgeoisie who regarded themselves as mediators between an indifferent and powerful white elite and an increasingly disempowered and angry black populace" (Van Robbroeck 2008:219). In works by Pemba such as *No Work*, 1948, (Fig 13) the image of a black youth is set against an urban background of high-rise buildings and white upper middle class women shopping for luxury goods. *Centenary* (Fig 14) deals with a similar theme. It was painted

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[28]Pemba said that "at this stage, my people may not be in a position to buy our art, but it is even more rewarding to find your own people appreciating your work. My dream is to see my people appreciate my work while I am still alive" (Mohl in Manaka 1987:14)

[29]For example Pemba wrote that "in the end black and white will discover that both are only men" (Van Robbroeck 2008:219).

in 1970, one hundred years after the South African diamond rush in which white people became wealthy by exploiting the riches of the African soil. The top third of the painting depicts a layer of white privileged individuals dancing and enjoying themselves seemingly unaware of the suffering of the blacks underneath them.

While it is evident that there were a few black South African artists who were able to pursue careers in art, Koloane (1989:212) explains that there was great geographical distance between the early pioneers with meant they hardly came into contact with one another. Sekoto explained regarding his self-imposed exile in 1947: "At that time I felt I had to leave South Africa because I was almost isolated as a 'black' artist. I felt like I was alone and therefore I decided that I had to go to some other part of the world where there were other artists whom I could communicate with" (Koloane 1989:213).   Furthermore Sekoto recalls the lack of facilities and materials for art making, he writes that he completed a painting with, "poster paints … on a brown paper…using the floor for a palette or the table – as I had to avoid messing up the furniture" (Koloane 1989:212). Michael Stevenson (2008:15) considers these conditions as a prime motivation for artists to go abroad, where they felt it would not only be possible for them to practice and develop as artists in relative freedom, but also to have a more established network of artists to exchange with.   This proved to be a dilemma for many black artists. While Sekoto went abroad to escape the restrictions he faced in South Africa, Mohl felt a responsibility to further the cause of the black South African. Stevenson (2008:29) writes that "Mohl's founding of an art school in Sophiatown, Johannesburg, in 1944 provided black artists with their first opportunity for art instruction, albeit in an informal manner", and that people like Helen Sebidi[30] were trained by him (Sack 1988:25). However conditions were soon to change in Johannesburg with the establishment of the Polly Street Art Centre.

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[30]She firsts received drawing lessons from Ezrom Leagge at Dorkay House in downtown Johannesburg (Peffer 2009:67). After contact with John Mohl she attended a Thupelo workshop and finally got art training from the Johannesburg Art Foundation run by Bill Ainslie (Peffer 2009:67).

1.2. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF POLLY STREET AND RORKE'S DRIFT ART CENTRES.

Two art centres that have been regarded as foundational to the emergence of later art centres such as CAP were the Polly Street Art Centre, which has been documented by Elza Miles (2004), and the Rorkes Drift Arts and Crafts school, which has been documented by Phillipa Hobbs and Elizabeth Rankin (2003). These centres worked outside the restrictive school system and gave artists the opportunity to experiment with different mediums and techniques by providing sufficient space and resources. In this section I will explain how these centres operated and outline what their contribution to South African art has been. These models have been followed by centres such as CAP which was a white-run, liberal institution with class structures similar to that of Polly Street, offering part-time training usually on a weekly basis. CAP however emerged at a time when there was a greater drive for self-determination among the black population, which often resisted the efforts of white-run art centres since they were seen as charity organisations furthering Apartheid ideology (especially if no firm resistance strategy was declared by the institution). The political intent and drive toward self-determination was already evident in the attitudes of the artists who trained at Polly Street and Rorke's Drift, and this provided an important backdrop to the emerging approaches to art making and democratisation of the arts in later centres.

In 1948 an autonomous body dealing with Non-European Adult Education was instituted, and rented a disused hostel on Polly Street in Johannesburg from the city council (Koloane 1989:214, Miles 2004:15).[31] The centre was formally established in July 1949, after the City Council renovated No.1 Polly Street to provide a "social and recreational centre for natives"(Miles 2004:15). It offered a number of recreational activities, including art classes[32], which were run on Wednesday evenings from 5-7pm and mostly provided training in watercolours, oil painting, and drawing (Miles

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[31]An annual grant of £200 was also received from the department.

[32] Koloane (1989:213-4) explains that the visual arts were seen as a means of recreation along with sporting activities such as boxing which could help keep the youth off the streets.

(2004:17,20).[33] Among the most successful artists of this early period was Alpeus Kubeka who exhibited in a commercial gallery and was able to teach other artist such as Durant Sihlali, Lucas Sithole, and Andrew Motjuodi at the Chiawela Art Centre in Moroka in the Eastern Cape (Miles 2004:30).[34] Miles (2004:18) writes that the decision to teach 'black' South Africans "European art" was criticized in the newspapers, wherein the authors held the position that Africans had their own sphere of creativity with craft. The government curtailed funding to all liberal education projects in 1951 as Bantu Education began to take shape wherein "African children students were to be educated in a way that was appropriate for their culture"[35]. The local committee of non-European education kept the centre operational through creating private interest (Miles 2004:18). Koloane (1989:213) writes that townships were under the administration of the Non-European Affairs Department of the Johannesburg City Council. From 1952-1969 this department was headed by W.J.P. Carr, who, in line with his liberal views, established recreation centres in a few townships and facilitated growth at Polly Street through his benevolent interests (Miles 2004:35).[36]

It was not until the appointment of Cecil Skotnes in 1952 that the facility showed any great impact on the artistic development of black artists (Koloane 1989:214; Sack 1988:15). Skotnes was appointed to the centre by the city council, with the decision by government to take total control of all education of blacks, and took over administration of the centre in 1953[37] (Koloane 1989:215). When Skotnes arrived the number of students in the visual arts had dwindled and he decided to advertise through media such as public radio and Drum Magazine (Miles 2004:33). Skotnes split the art training into a leisure-time class and a class of aspiring professionals in order to stimulate an atmosphere wherein aspiring black artists could work seriously towards the acquisition of

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[33]Mils (2004:17) writes that they had to be mindful of the fact that these individuals were often employed and they had to "consider the 10pm curfew which prohibited black people from being on the street in white areas".

[34]Both Sihlali and Sithole later joined Polly Street.

[35]http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/governence-projects/june16/bantu-eduaction-act-1953.htm.   First accessed on 14 Jan 2011

[36]According to Sack (1988:15), "this kind of activity can be traced back to the 1920s with the proliferation of 'a network of liberal institutions', eager to influence the leisure time of black urban dwellers". However, Sack (1988:15) implies that their intention might have been part of a means to keep black people in their disadvantaged position saying, "It has become a commonplace slogan in Western culture that whoever captures the leisure time of the people gets the people".

[37]The committee for Non-European Adult Education disbanded the same year (Koloane 1989:215).

skills (Miles 2004:42).[38] Classes were held only once a week, yet they allowed a space for artists to work and provided access to materials that were not normally available to township residents (Koloane 1989:215). Furthermore, the classes allowed for a much needed space for networking - which countered some of the isolation artists were experiencing - and gave the opportunity for professional input (Van Robbroeck 2004:42-3). Sack (1988:15) writes that "all the standard western art exercises, such as still-life painting, life drawing, landscape studies, and abstract design were taught". Many of the artists at Polly Street had fairly good exposure and managed to gain income from their work. According to Miles (2004:36), artists at the centre began inclining more and more towards a desire for income generation as "artworks were repeated indefinitely for the sake of quick sales". Sack (1988:15) writes that "once artists had established a particular individual style they were encouraged to become self-sufficient professional artists. Indeed they needed to sell in order to survive".

Skotnes had a big influence on the development of the style of the artists who studied at Polly Street. He believed in an inherent African creativity contained in his students, and as such a particularly expressive aesthetic was encouraged which would reflect 'Africaness' (Koloane 1989:217-219).[39] This kind of aesthetic is most evident in the later work of Sydney Kumalo who studied at Polly Street Art Centre from 1953. Kumalo's drawing *Reclining Figure,* n.d., (Fig. 15) where the subject of the drawing has been reduced to simplified shapes with a strong use of line to create expressive form, is an example of this. Kumalo was well known for his sculptures wherein he simplified form in the tradition of West African masks and the sculptures of European artists like Henry Moore. An example of this is his 1960 sculpture *Praying Woman* (Fig 16) where

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[38]Students who later became artists included John Hlatywayo, Sydney Kumalo, Ezrom Legae, Leonard Matsoso, Welcome Koboka, Solomon Maphiri, Godfrey Ndaba, Winston Saoli, Lucas Sithole, Durant Sihlali, Ephriam Ngatane, Ben Arnold, Morningstar Motaung, Couzin Walaza, Louis Maqhubela and Ben Macala. (Koloane 1989:217, Miles 2004: 39, 147)

[39]Koloane (1989:218-9) writes that Grossert convinced Skotnes of the "spontaneous expression which was developing among urban Black artists in Johannesburg" and that an indigenous aesthetic did not depend on teaching traditional forms. It is also significant to note that, according to Sack (1988:16), Skotnes 'discovered' African art when he was introduced to the work of two German artists, Rudolf Scharpf and Willie Baumeister, who had been strongly influenced by the art of Africa. This may account for his encouragement for his student to work expressively to reflect an 'African essence'. Further, Miles (2004:46) writes that Skotnes' Masters supervisor, Dr Maia Stein Lessing, was also the proprietor of L'Afrique where traditional African art objects were available.

the form is simplified as most of the body has been reduced to a single elongated shape. The head of the figure is also simplified and titled upwards with geometric shapes representing the facial features. Skotnes (in Miles 2004:79) wrote of Kumalo's work, *Praying Woman,* saying that

> he has been influenced both by European and Central African artists. But he has not been inhibited by his influences – he has taken what he wants from them and discarded the rest. He has developed a highly personal style of work – and like many European artists, is attempting to find an individual expression of essentially African forms.

Hence, artists like Kumalo were not mimicking African or European forms, but creating something new by drawing inspiration from a diverse set of sources. Araeen (2010:279) writes that in European Modernism, "Picasso engages with many traditions simultaneously, with his own primarily and that of Africa, out of which comes an entirely new thing in the form of a modern language of art". The critical engagement of African artists with these traditions should be viewed with as much validity. Another artist who has made use of this expressive form in sculpture is Ezrom Legae. His 1966 work *Embrace* (Fig. 17) shows two simplified figures locked in an embrace such that one cannot tell where the one figure begins and the other ends.

While the encouragement of an African aesthetic was problematic as it prescribed what African creativity should look like, students at Polly Street ended up receiving a wide range of influences which were not necessarily available at many universities which still questioned whether the works of artists such as Pisacco and Baumeister could be considered art (Miles 2004:47). However, not all artists at Polly Street were comfortable with using an expressive style. Miles (2004:42) writes that artist Durant Sihlali

> arrived at the centre with fixed ideas about art, which did not readily find Skotnes' approval. Instead of representational art, modernism deriving from expressionism, fauvism, cubism, and classical West and Central African expression were favoured. Sihlali on the other hand, firmly believed that it was most important to record faithfully the places he had lived as well as the neighbourhoods from which people had been removed.

Sihlali's works were commenting on the tyranny of place, representing the living conditions of the townships in works like *Washing Women at Communal Tap,* n.d., (Fig. 18) which is implicitly contrasted to the living conditions of the largely white middle class. Here women are shown washing clothes in a muddy street or waiting for access to the only source of water in the area. By 1973, well after his association with Polly Street (1953-1958), he continued to show the conditions of people in, for example, works like *Race Against Time* (Fig 19) where a bulldozer is shown demolishing a home. He was dealing with the politics of space as houses were cleared and removed to further white interests.[40]

According to Miles (2004:98), from the late 1960s onwards the artists at Polly Street, "became acutely conscious of the political situation [in South Africa], and closely followed the human rights movement in the United States of America. Their role models were Eldridge Cleaver, James Baldwin, and Angela Davis whose works they read and discussed". However these sentiments rarely came directly through their works and were often left as implicit. Miles (2004:129) records that Ngatane felt that it was "unnecessary for him to make overt social statements. When he paints people caught in a heavy rain, immobilized by the mud of the township street in *Night rain*[41]...the indictment is obvious". A similar street scene from late in his career can be seen in *The Approach,* 1964, (Fig. 21) where his treatment of the subject has become more abstract and the scene is a patchwork of colour suggesting the muddy streets and dilapidated houses. Like Sihlali, Ngatane documented places and implicitly contrasted them to the living conditions of White urban dwellers, even though his treatment of his subject varied greatly.

According to Miles (2004:136): "In 1957, the government passed legislation declaring the city centres and places of work 'white areas'", thus signalling the end of

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[40]According to Miles (2004:93-94) two styles are evident at Polly Street: "One style is modernism with classical African overtones as exemplified in the work of Sydney Kumalo, Ezrom Legae, Ben Arnold, and Nat Mokgosi…The other is a hands-on documentation of everyday life as seen in the paintings by Ephraim Ngatane, Durant Sihlali, Louis Maqhubela, David Mogano, and Enoch Tshabalala…These are not watertight categories. Depending on the inner need of the artist the expressions can either merge or the artist can move from mimesis to abstraction".

[41] N.d. Fig 20.

Polly Street Art Centre. The first stage of this phasing out was the move to Jublilee Centre in Eloff Street, where the vibrancy of the centre continued. However, "all venues for non-European art activities in the city were eventually closed. In 1969 the activities at Jubilee Art Centre had to move to Mofolo Park and [became the] Mofolo Art Centre". With the move to Mofolo Park the centre seemed to lose its vibrancy and little is published on its activities. These events took place shortly after a full time art course open to black students had begun at Rorke's Drift, which enabled the next generation of artist to gain the skills they needed.

According to Peder Gowenius who started the Rorke's Drift art school along with his wife Ulla, their initial goals when coming to South Africa were not politically informed, rather they "…came to South Africa to find out if any of the traditional crafts could be developed as a means to earn a living, and so help to improve the conditions for women in the homelands" (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:xi). The project started by giving hospital patients recreational activities at Ceza Mission Hospital in early 1962 in the Nongoma District of Zululand (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:18). The emphasis on teaching art was seen as a means of occupational therapy to help rehabilitate patients, rather than training professional artists. In the latter part of 1963 the centre relocated to a disused building at Rorke's Drift, but the emphasis initially remained on "training occupational therapists for the Lutheran Institutions" (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:53). The other emphasis of the project was to create marketable work which could be exported back to Sweden for profit. This found an outlet chiefly though tapestries and rugs made in Ulla Gowenius's weaving classes (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:20).[42]

According to Hobbs & Rankin (2003:47), Gowenius only considered the idea of a fine art course in 1965, and the fist intake for more formal art training only took place in 1968, after Gowenius's departure. However, the work of patients who showed talent were trained in Gowenius's years by staff who followed a non-interventionist approach with regards to subject matter, and rather focused on teaching technical expertise. They did not set fixed projects or attempt to provide formal guidance for the students' development of style and teaching was "closer to having a conversation than having a lesson" (Hobbs &

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[42]According to Peder Gowenius, "there was an initial resistance to the production of traditional crafts as this was encouraged by the apartheid policy and so was seen as a way to keep the Bantu people in their place" (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:xii).

Rankin 2003:77). An artist who is well known from this early period is Azaria Mbatha. Mbatha was a patient at Ceza hospital in 1962, he was suffering from severe depression and welcomed activities which would keep his mind busy (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:32). Soon after being introduced to the medium of linocut Mbatha began making a large number of prints, far more than any of the other students of that period[43] (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:33). Peder Gowenius recalls that one of Mbatha's early prints *David and Goliath,* 1962, impressed him and,

> was an important cornerstone in laying the foundation of what was to become ELC Art and Craft Centre. It pictures a black David holding the white Goliath's head while the white soldiers flee. It restored my faith in art and made it clear to me that a picture could convey messages forbidden in South Africa at the time (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:xii).

Peder Gowenius became very politicised and, according to Hobbs & Rankin (2003:163), he showed students "thought-provoking images of contemporary events, including a view of harsh labour in a mine shaft and a picture of a cleaner sweeping a South African beach". These images provided "material for group discussion…to make his students aware of their situation - to enable them to take ownership of it".

Formal art courses were only advertised in 1967, after the departure of Gowenius. According to Hobbs & Rankin (2003:75), the centre

> proposed an ambitious programme…The prospectus offered intended students printmaking in linocut, woodcut, and etching as well as screenprinting in textile design, and many other media as well – drawing; painting in watercolour, tempera, oil and fresco; sculpture in wood and clay; photography; pottery; spinning; dyeing and weaving; and art history. It is not possible to discover with any accuracy whether all these media were in fact offered to students at the outset, or at any time.

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[43] At the end of 1965 Mbatha left for Sweden to study abroad on a bursary until he returned to join the staff at Rorkes Drift in October 1967 (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:60).

Requirements were set for students who wished to apply such as a fair knowledge of the English language, a portfolio of works, and an annual fee of R20 and boarding fees of R26. The centre was, however, sympathetic to the lack of access of black South Africans to art training and students were therefore allowed a two month probationary period at the centre during which their commitment and ability could be judged in absence of a viable portfolio (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:80). By 1979 annual fees had risen to R250, which meant that the majority of students in attendance had to receive a bursary of some kind to attend (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:81).[44] However despite the high costs, relative to other community centres, Rorke's Drift was highly sought after by black artists who had very few opportunities for training and considered the high cost reasonable since the course was very professional when compared with other available training opportunities (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:81). Hobbs & Rankin (2003:81) write that

> Students who studied at the Centre were made aware of the realities of a career in the arts from the outset. Marketing the products of the Centre through sales from the shop at Rorke's Drift and the organisation on exhibitions was an accepted part of life. This was very different from art schools in the established white institutions of South Africa, which paid little attention to practical issues related to students' future careers.

According to Hobbs & Rankin (2003:60-61), the teachers at Rorke's Drift believed that "fine art should not be divorced from other skills that were usually excluded from conventional art schools in South Africa which tended to dismiss craft as an inferior pursuit". Consequently, the Fine Art students circulated through the craft workshop to learn what each discipline had to offer. However, "gradually fewer and fewer art students seem to have devoted time to crafts" until eventually the interaction ceased in any meaningful way (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:62). [45] According to Dan Rakgoate who attended the school from 1967-1969 the teaching at Rorke's Drift was unstructured since

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[44] Compared with the low fees of less than R10/year at CAP, and the free entrance at Polly Street, Rorke's Drift was less of a "community centre" in the sense that the ability for people to attend freely was restricted by the high costs.

[45] Lionel Davis recalls that by the time he got to the centre in 1978 the interaction between craft and art had ceased. Interview with Lionel Davis, Muizenberg, Feb 2010.

they wanted to discover what is of the spirit of Africa. They were much more interested in taking out of the student than putting in…they would put themselves in a position that they wanted to learn from you. All they would do was to demonstrate the techniques and they would be asking questions, trying to understand what you are doing (Rakgoate in Miles 2004:145).

As a result the centre, in some ways, perpetuated beliefs regarding the inherent creativity of African people, whereby the workshop was a means of discovering the "spirit of Africa".

The two artists who became icons of Rorke's Drift were Azaria Mbata and John Muafangejo who often worked in linocut and had a narrative style which usually included text. Examples of this are Mbatha's *Biblical Scene,* n.d., (Fig. 22) where the picture space is divided into three parallel narrative strips and the biblical themes are reinterpreted to tell the narrative in an Africanized way.[46] Muafangejo's work *Death of a Chief,* 1971, (Fig. 23) is a pictorial memorial to Chief Mandume who was decapitated by whites in 1916 (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:172). The work depicts the white soldiers emerging out of the top of the image while the chief is spread out, resiting, but helpless. The work is also accompanied by text to explain the content of the linocut. However, linocuts which represented biblical narratives or history were not the only subject matter to be pursued by students. Hobbs & Rankin (2003:79-80) write that "the fine art course did not concentrate on a single printmaking process…the students developed a range of approaches to printmaking, which belies the claim of South African art history that there was a single, typical 'Rorke's Drift style' based on linocuts". Other techniques and themes are evident in, for example, the naturalistic portrayal of a man exhausted by life in Thabo Lowani's woodcut *The Last Step of Life*, 1975, (Fig. 24) which depicts two people resting against a wall, unable to carry on. Diversity in subject matter is further illustrated by Tony Nkosi's expressionistic woodcut *The Cry,* 1974, (Fig. 25) which seems similar to Edvard Munch's famous painting *The Scream* and also recalls the expressionistic still lives of masks by Emil Nolde. The use of abstraction and simplification of form is also evident in Gordon Gabashane's print *Shaka and Warriors* ,1977, (Fig. 26) which recalls

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[46] For example he would make the biblical character black and set the stories in Africa.

the iconic Zulu leader with pride while experimenting with expressionism through simplification, much like some students at Polly Street had done. Other methods which were clearly taught at the centre were screen-printing and etching wherein students were able to express a variety of styles, including realistic ones, such as the screen-print by Nhlanhla Nsusha titled *Our Madala,* 1977, (Fig. 27) or Charles Nkosi's etching *Solitude,* 1976, (Fig. 28). Most of these works carry an implicit political message about the conditions faced by black South Africans through the expressive use of subject matter; such as *The Last Step of Life, The Cry,* or *Solitude* which, through a variety of approaches, speak about the emotional experiences of alienation and agony. Nineteen seventy-six, the year of the Soweto Uprisings, marked "the beginning of a period of increasing political consciousness for the students at Rorke's Drift (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:186). According to former Rorke's Drift student Bongi Dhlomo,

> many of my schoolmates were from Johannesburg and surrounding areas. They had just gone through the Soweto students' uprising, some having taken an active part in the events of June 16...They were naturally highly politicised and traumatised...There was an undercurrent of tension between those of us who came from very quiet, settled communities and these Johannesburg guys...We had constant conflict because we were doing art for art's sake... (Dhlomo in Hobbs & Rankin 2003:187).

An example of this is Pat Mautloa's work *Encouter at Rorke's Drift,* 1979, (Fig. 29) which refernces the victorious battle of the Zulus against the British forces. According to Bettina Schultz (2003:30), Mautloa's depiction of the battle of Rorke's Drift is "far from triumphant". Rather, "the foreground is dominated by a group of figures: some have fallen, while the wounded are in a process of crossing the drift under fire from a British regiment. A central figure drops his head and raises his hands in surrender" (Schultz 2003:30, 32). Schultz also suggests that the expressionistic treatment of the bodies suggests "the tortured movement of bodies subjugated to violence" and that the image resonates with the – at that point contemporary - killing of school children in the Soweto uprisings (Schultz 2003:32).

Hobbs & Rankin (2003:205) write that whether works were explicitly political is not of primary importance in understanding their contribution to South African art:

> ultimately the significance of Rorke's Drift was the facilitation of a visual language of confidence and critique. The skills and sense of self-belief that it promoted among black artists provided a starting point that made their art possible and ensured it a vital place in South Africa's visual culture, more particularly through its prints. This was Rorke's Drift's contribution to the next generation.

Mpathi Gocini, who studied at the centre, became a resident artist at the Community Arts Project where he was able to pass on his skills. Despite the fact that Rorke's Drift's fine art training was in high demand, the fine art school closed at the end of 1982 when the individuals who were appointed to run the centre in the following year failed to arrive and no-one else was appointed to take their place (Hobbs 2003:155). Fine art only raised R3500 of the total income of R105 698 which the centre was receiving, making it less desirable to maintain than weaving and pottery. The option of re-opening the fine art section in 1984 was investigated, but never materialised (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:158).

These early art centres made it possible for a whole generation to become equipped with a variety of skills to express themselves artistically. According to van Robboeck (2004:44) "the Polly Street and Rorke's Drift Centres determined the development of subsequent art centres". She argues that this was because of the commercial success achieved by their students. The market for 'authentic black art' began accommodating and seeking out paintings and cultures which were influenced by Modernism, but still retained an expression of 'Africaness'. This became known as "Township Art", a broad category which has come under significant criticism.

1.3. TOWNSHIP ART: A RESTRICTIVE DISCOURSE OF AUTHENTICITY

Township Art is a category created for the work of black artists working in 'Western mediums' such as painting, linocuts, etc. The artists were characterised by their expressive techniques in representing their particular urban experience in the township areas of South Africa. Under investigation, however, the label 'township art' begins to show many faults as it homogenises the diverse work of a generation of artists into a singular group created for black people. The term 'Township Art' is thus sometimes used as a blanket term when referring to the work black South African artists of the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s. The three main authors reflecting on the nature of black South African art during the critical years of 1988-1992 were Gavin Younge (1988), Frances Verstraete (1989), and E.J. de Jager (1992). I will reflect on the treatment of the 'township genre' by these authors primarily by engaging with critiques of the category in a text by Van Robbroeck (1998) and a discussion between David Koloane and Ivor Powell (1995). Van Robbroeck critiques the wave of writings on Township Art that followed De Jager's 1973 text *Contemporary African art in South Africa,* and the more recent texts by De Jager and Verstraete mentioned above.[47] This section examines the restrictive discourse that existed around the work of black South African artists in order to explain why movements such as Black Consciousness and the work done by radical art centres were so vitally needed.

Van Robbroeck (1998:3) argues that the term was used as a geographical, rather than a stylistic, signifier what makes the term particularly problematic, however, is its race-specificity, as it creates a separate category for 'black' artists. The 1985 *Tributaries* exhibition showcased what curators deemed to be three stages in the progression of black art, and introduced the term 'transitional art', to categorise work which was seen as an intermediate step between traditional art and township art. Hence a "linear progression of evolutionary artistic discourse, is suggested by the three dominant *categories* ('traditional', 'transitional', 'township') *created for black artists*" [my emphasis]. Hence 'black' artists were seen to be on a different artistic progression which was authentic for

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[47] She does not critique Younge's book, largely because his approach was very different.

them. These works are the ones that were sold and given exposure and, as Powell argues elsewhere, this "led to a radical skewing of the kind of art that was actually produced" (1997:53).[48]

Van Robbroeck (1998:3) explains that authors writing about township art tend to deny the existence of a single style common to the artists, but rather focus on prescribing a common subject matter to these artists. Verstraete (1989:152), for example, writes that "the label 'township' implies a specific political, social, and economic context, one which *determines all aspects* of its art, its aims, function and formal content" [my emphasis]. Van Robbroeck (1998:4-5) explains that the "apparent commonality of these artists in their depiction of the realities of 'township life' reduces all townships to a single uniform geography, and all artists' experiences to one communal life". Van Robbroeck (1998:4) explains that Township Art is perceived as a particularly urban phenomenon which is characterised by black artists using 'Western approaches' to art making, despite the fact that many of the artists labelled as 'township' come from a rural background. Such categorisation limits the meaning and themes that are appropriate for black artists and causes other influences or expressions to be down-played in favour of reflecting on township life or exploring a mystical 'African essence'. One notable exception to this approach to Township Art is the text by Gavin Younge. He stated that the townships "have now become important arenas in the struggle against apartheid structures. It is therefore appropriate that a study of contemporary 'black' art should examine, at least in outline, the history of [the townships]" (Younge 1988:13). Younge's text does not actually mention the term "Township Art" but rather, as the title of his book – *Art of the South African Townships* – suggests, he investigates some of the work that has emerged from this particular historically and socially informed context. His text provides a sound history of the townships and clearly links it to the work of certain artists, while not limiting their thematic range. This is in contrast to other texts, such as those authored by Vestraete and De Jager, which take all 'black' artists working in a modern paradigm and label them as a "Township artists".

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[48]Kasfir (1999:88, 91) argues that it has been primarily dealers and collectors who have created meaning for African art and determined what is, and is not, authentic, rather than African artists themselves.

Authors list different artists under the label 'Township Art' but the category typically includes Polly Street students such as David Mogano and Ephriam Ngatane, as well as more informally trained artists such as Andrew Motjuoadi, Dumile Feni, and Julain Motau. The fact that the elongated forms of David Mogano's work, 1976, (Fig. 30), the expressive abstractions of Ephriam Ngatane, 1964, (Fig. 21), the realist drawings of Andrew Motjuoadi, 1966, (Fig 31), and the expressive drawings of Julain Motau, 1967, (Fig. 32) and Dumile Feni, n.d., (Fig 33-34) are all lumped into one category demonstrates how broadly the term is applied. Verstraete (1989:157) places these diverse works in the same 'township' category, claiming that what they have in common is "their avoidance of pictorial naturalism through expressive distortion". Van Robbroeck (1998:3) writes that, through attributing numerous stylistic generalisations and a common subject matter, these authors "stereotype urban black artists' work into one homogenous and faceless category". The label robs artists of the richness and adventurousness of their work, "just as the townships from which the term derives deny the individuality and humanity of its inhabitants" (Van Robbroeck 1998:7). The result of this label is that the "iconography of individual artworks is simply swept away under the broad and presumably self-explanatory title of 'Township Art'" (Van Robbroeck 1998:5). For example in Mogano's *Ancestors Discussing Fashions* he makes use of elongated and simplified forms derived from traditional African sculpture. He places these surrealistic figures in imaginary spaces which do not depict township scenes. The work can be said to be rather playful as it imagines a discussion about the latest fashions available to the ancestors. Motjuoadi's work *Township Musicians* is completely the opposite as it depicts real events in the township in a fairly realistic manner. Another stylistic difference can be seen in Ngatane's work, *The Appraoch,* discussed earlier, which, while also dealing with township surroundings, approaches its subject matter in an expressive, almost abstract way. Indeed there is little commonality between many of the artists listed under the label, which illustrates just how unsound the category is.

The works of artists labelled as 'township' are also flattened by a specific emphasis on their 'Africaness'. Verstraete (1989:156) writes:

> Township Art asserts its Africaness as an indigenous art form...Township art which is also inextricably bound up with contemporary urban African life in all its aspects, should therefore, be seen as part of the mainstream of African art in general, *in spite of drastic differences* between traditional and urban life patterns [my emphasis].

Similairly, in *Images of Man*, E.J. de Jager (1992: 200) writes:

> A review of contemporary South African Black art reveals that close links are maintained with what can be called African essence and feeling. In most cases the art produced by our Black artists is of Africa, with deep roots in this continent. In a highly original and often individualistic manner, they draw from Africa, its peoples and experiences.…Their art is largely timeless, often reminiscent of the ancient traditions of Africa…Mysticism, inherent in traditional and tribal ritual, folklore and mythology, is…important in the contemporary Black artist's interpretation of these sources.[49]

The Western influences are at once both acknowledged and denied through the labelling of Township Art. The use of Western mediums of expression, such as easel painting, along with the particularly urban experience of these artists is seen as one of the prime requirements for Township Art.[50] Township Art is not, however, regarded as a category of Modern art along with the work of white artists, but is placed in a separate category which is in touch with and expresses 'Africaness'. The expressive qualities of some Township Art were seen to be a manifestation of 'innate Africaness', but "the African tradition that supposedly continues to infuse contemporary black artists' work is never

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[49] Simbao (2011:3) writes that, "Not only does de Jager mystify and essentialise references to 'ancient traditions of Africa', but he also nostalgically laments the fact that black South African artists who also portray contemporary urban scenes, don't dwell enough in the past. As he writes, '…one is sad and mourns the passing of the old, for example, classic African art' (de Jager 1992: 210)". This is a further indication of the essentialising narrative constructed around 'black African identity' and the resultant expectations placed on their work.

[50] Van Robbroeck (1998:4) writes that, "the notion that Township Art is a specifically urban phenomenon suggests a contemporary, modern, 'Western' approach to artmaking which distinguishes it from the perceived 'primitivism and traditionalism' of rural black artists' work. Thus a simplistic dualism is sketched, where 'rural' is equated with a primitive past, and 'urban' with a westernised present. The terms Township Art was used for years to designate any 'black art' that was not utilitarian or recognisably traditional – irrespective of whether the artist concerned was rural or urban based".

defined" (Van Robbroeck 1998:12-13). While some artists such as Sydney Kumalo did draw from African sources for inspiration, "those sources were primarily from West and Central Africa" and such artists "were drawn to African art no more or less than contemporary white artists such as Skotnes….This was motivated partly, if not largely, by an interest in Modernism and the liberation of art from naturalistic constraints" (Van Robbroeck 1998:12-13). Dumile Feni is considered a prime example of Township Art because of the innate "Africaness" his work seems to portray (Figure 37-38). Verstraete (1989:158) writes that his works "show that powerful expressive style...Dumile is a 'pure artist'...and *the true primitive* so envied by Gauguin and the Fauves: his art is the untrammelled outpouring of his deepest emotional response to the world around him" [emphasis mine]. This emphasis on the primitive and emotional nature of his art recalls some of the ideals regarding traditional African art as work arising naturally out of the sub-conscious. Verstraete (1989:166) further entrenches this view with relation to Feni when he writes that "the visionary quality of much of his work is unselfconscious and intuitive" and that his drawings show "freedom from the limitations of reason and the absence of any aesthetic pre-occupation...executed spontaneously in accordance with the artist's subconscious thought". Van Robbroeck (1998:13) explains that the predominance of words such as 'emotional', 'distortion', 'expressive', 'primitive', and 'unconscious' in texts about Township Art indicates "the degree to which white authors tend to prioritise the innate, the urgent, and the irrational, at the expense of the conscious, rational, and aesthetic dimensions of black artists' work".[51.] Further she argues that the use of "overemphasised hands and feet and emotionally contorted faces sketched in harsh black outlines...satisfied a need for a form of expression that was recognisably and demonstrably 'Other' and hence 'authentically African'" (Van Robbroeck 1998:11). Enwezor writes that

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[51]Koloane recalls how black artists "were always given the impression that somehow we didn's need education, in the creative sphere, because we were, in a sense born talented" (Peffer 2009:140). The perception by many white South Africans was that black artists did not need training, but rather were more capable of expressing the true 'Spirit of Africa" if they were left to experiment and discover on their own.

> Authenticity's primary structure is the fiction which reproduces it as the figure of a unitary, homogenous belief in the particularism of an African essence. Authenticity as an idea toward the standardization, hence banalization, of the complexity of contemporary identity appeals to certain romantic notions of African uniqueness which have been promoted for so long (Enwezor in Fitzgerald 2003:3).

Van Robbroeck (2006:106) argues this broad categorisation of Township Art as a continuation of Africaness was largely motivated by the search for new African art markets as a response to the dwindling of the supply of traditional African art. This in part also explains the continued emphasis on the 'authentic', 'African' nature that these artworks had to fictitiously maintain. Ivor Powell refers to this predominant reading of Township Art as the depiction of an 'authentic' and lost lifestyle, and imaginary past which is, "Africa invented for the consumption of whites" (Powel & Koloane 1995:261). Peterson (2006:178) writes that while artists like Sihlali and Ngatane "saw their works as capturing a constantly changing environment" of real places, "the formulaic nature of much 'township art' led to 'repetitious stylisation of picturesque 'shatytowns'…derived more from existing paintings than any real place or experience".

Township Art supposedly reflected the supposed spontaneity of the African who works in a 'primitive, untutored way' and for this reason artists were not encouraged to develop their artistic expression. Koloane (1997:34) further explains:

> Black African artists are not expected to venture beyond a certain threshold in their work, the primary reason being the fear from some dealers that they will lose their identity or roots. What is being advocated in this concern is that the artist should maintain the status quo by sentimentalising township existence for the benefit of market expectations. The ramifications for the art market are a network of dealers in so called "African Art". These dealers often prescribe renditions of township scenes with special emphasis on mother-child, musical, and shebeen scenes. It is not difficult therefore to realise that artists who fall victim to this cycle become programmed to the dictates of dealers and their work is often reduced to a "craft-like" thematic formula.[52]

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[52]Since the authenticity of these works depended on the repetition of certain forms and themes it created an authentic/inauthentic dichotomy where, as Kasfir (1999:94) argues, "one artist's work can stand in for a whole culture since the whole culture is assumed to be homogenous" and where an identifiable style becomes a major ingredient for defining its authenticity.

Many artists bought into such an apparent formula for quick sales, which, according to Powell, pigeon-holed artists into a set category of predictable expression which, while it worked with Western techniques, prevented Africans from "being heirs to the fullness of the Western civilisation" and forced them onto the periphery where their work was considered to be a second-rate form of expression (Koloane & Powell 1995:262). When Koloane took some of his collage work to a gallery in 1978 his work was rejected on the basis of it being 'un-African'. Similarly Mancoba, when exploring modernist abstraction, was "explicitly told that such explorations were not acceptable" (Powell & Koloane 1995:264). [53]

What was referred to as Township Art originated in the late 1950s with the success of art centres such as Polly Street and the informal training that was often passed on by individuals. As mentioned previously, Township Art was made popular by De Jager in 1973, but the term and production of Township Art fell into disrepute as a new politically minded generation began to emerge around the 1976 student revolt (Van Robbroeck 1998:3). Township Art was seen as 'self-pity' art which had surrendered to the demands of white art dealers, whereas the new generation wanted to create art in opposition to these apartheid structures and the 'tribal' and 'township' categories created for them (Van Robbroeck 1998:9). For example, Gavin Jantjes' paper presented at the 1982 Culture and Resistance Symposium

> …began by taking umbrage with European expectations about the authenticity of African art: the demand that is always be timeless, anonymous, and 'tribal' in order to be truly African. He then chided his fellow contemporary African artists about what he considered their timidity when it came to exploring novel stylistic terrain (Peffer 2009:85).

The introduction of the Thupelo workshops in 1985 presented a significant intervention in the stylistic development of South African art. These workshops were based on the

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[53]Similarly Kasfir (1999:95) explains that "No Kamba, carving, however brilliant or extraordinary, would get past the front door of any reputable New York gallery specialising in African art. It would be said to 'lack integrity', implying that somehow nontraditional artists have detached themselves from their cultures and their work is therefore inauthentic"

Triangle Arts Trust model of a two week workshop which actively encouraged experimental and nonfigurative approaches to art-making, and the use of techniques such as collage. These found their way into the work of students at community art centres through participants such as Lionel Davis who worked at the Community Arts Project (Peffer 2009:149). Examples of these abstract works can be seen in the work of David Koloane, 1985, (Fig. 35), Dumile Mabaso, 1986, (Fig. 36), and Lionel Davis, 1986 (Fig. 37). The controversies surrounding the promotion of abstract work illustrate again the limitations that were placed on the work of black artists in the name of authenticity. Barbra Ludman writes:

> Thupelo has been accused of "cultural imperialism" - because of the tendency of participants to create abstract works instead of the politically relevant etchings, township scenes and pastel character studies which are recognisably South African. This puzzles some of the participants...who points out that Ndebele designs are abstract; that abstraction is "at home in Africa" (Ludman in Peffer 2009:159).[54]

Peffer (2009:160) writes that "one Thupelo workshop was rudely disrupted by 'concerned individuals', including gallery owners, who had come to 'protect black artists and serve their interests' ". Kasfir (1999:93) argues that this was because, for black artists, "change is read as destruction of a way of life, rather than its transformation" by the Western hegemonic discourse. Black artists who did not limit themselves to expression deemed appropriate for their culture were lamented as lacking authenticity and simply mimicking Western art. It is therefore appropriate that Van Robbroeck (1998:14) states that "the artist is frozen in an 'ethnographic present' which leaves him...no escape from the category created for him".[55] Lionel Davis responded to such concerns by saying "We are not dummies. They must leave us to explore and reject and then we will develop and grow" (Davis in Peffer 2009:160).

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[54]It is ironic that, even though Ndelebe designs were developed as a result of the colonial encounter, these were treated as prime examples of authentic African expression.

[55]Kasfir (1999:97) argues that this "needs to be seen as one fragment of a larger picture in which all South African art in the 1950s existed on the far periphery of a late-colonial Europe where even white South African artists were largely preoccupied with conventional genres such as landscape, still-life, and the human figure".

A few months after the Soweto uprising Thami Mynele, Fikile Magadlele, and Themba Miya founded the Soweto Arts Association (Soarta) as a way of avoiding the white gallery world (Wylie 2008:103). Soarta was hostile to the galleries and tried to "protect black artists from exploitation by profit-making art merchants" who seemed to promote apolitical art meant for the interior decoration of white homes rather than the black community (Wylie 2008:103).[56] The exploration of new styles by artists such as David Koloane and Lious Maqubela, and the move away from what galleries prescribed, was part of the break whereby black artists asserted their right to explore art as equals. Peffer (2009:51) writes that that these artists strove to "find ways to escape the confines of the status quo through technical experimentation and rejection of imagery of black degradation". This reflected the ideals of Black Consciousness, as artists began to rethink the ways in which their art had been made and distributed.

1.4. BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS: RESISTANCE, SELF-DEFINITION, AND THE ROLE OF ART

By the late 1960s, after the Sharpville Massacre, the government had jailed, banned, or exiled the majority of the Liberation Movement's leaders for fear of an organized uprising. However new political movements and organizations, like the Black Conciousness Movement, emerged and resumed the political struggle (Mangcu 2004:115). Black Consciousness, as a philosophy, was concerned with the political and cultural emancipation of black people and was promoted on South African campuses during the late 1960s and early 1970s by radical intellectuals. According to Good (2011:314),

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[56]Wylie (2008:103) writes that the Goodman Gallery argued that "galleries were allowed an expressive latitude in the 1970s that was not possible in museums or publishing. The Security police tended to ignore galleries and, when they did ban or confiscate art, they actually stimulated broader interest in it than ever before. The members of Soarta, nevertheless, suffered from a pervasive sense of being cheated".

When Thabo Mbeki, senior leader of the ANC in exile, became aware in the early 1970s that Black Consciousness was beginning to radicalise young men and women, he did not welcome this as a creative development but as a potential challenge to the ANC's proclaimed vanguard position and strategy of armed struggle. He started to identify the leadership of the movement, working towards their incorporation into the established party and the dilution of their ideas.

Black Consciousness was perceived as a threat to the established liberation movements; because the ANC was not in favour of a culture of democratisation, but rather wanted to establish themselves as the new elites (Good 2011: 346). A politically mobilised population with the values of democratisation and non-elitism would, foreseeably, oppose the elitist values that the ANC practiced. The differences between these approaches are apparent in the tensions which arose regarding how art was to be used for the struggle, as well as in the fate of radical art centres under the post-apartheid ANC-lead government. These tensions are explored in chapter two and three of this thesis; in this section I argue in favour of the Black Consciousness as a productive approach to the democratisation of art and as an aesthetic form relevant to South Africa.

The ideas of Black Consciousness were spread by the South Africa Student Organisation (SASO) whose co-founder was Steve Biko. Black university students had tried for many years to create political change through the multiracial and liberal National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). However, at a NUSAS conference in Grahamstown, Rhodes University refused to provide mixed-race accommodation or eating facilities. Biko called for white students to sleep in the township accommodation that the 'black' students were expected to make use of; however, the white students refused. Following this incident, Biko grew disillusioned with NUSAS and formed the exclusively black organisation SASO. According to Peffer (2009:50), SASO was a 'black only' organisation since Biko felt that "mixed-race organisations too often sidelined black voices, and that black activists needed space to examine their own situation first, before joining a non-racial unity movement". According to Mangcu (2004:121), the Black Consciousness Movement created solidarity among coloureds, Indians, and Africans, as it

defined "black" as "all those who are by law and tradition, politically, economically, and socially discriminated against as a group, and identify themselves as a unit towards their emancipation". This challenged apartheid designs which were not only meant to separate whites from blacks, but also to foster black parochialism by segregating Blacks into ethnic and linguistic groups.

Biko was influenced by a number of authors such as Franz Fanon, whose banned book about the Algerian war against French settlers was widely read. Fanon stated that: "the native had become psychologically incapacitated, no longer capable of action. The native detested white society, but was envious of it. Realising that his own skin prevented him from ever attaining privilege, the native despised his own blackness".[57] Consequently, Biko developed an understanding that the problem of oppression in South Africa was primarily a problem of culture (whereby white culture was framed as being superior). According to an anonymous author this was because

> Whites described African culture in derogatory terms, and Black South Africans were ashamed of their history, and their 'primitive' religion and art...Biko realised that political revolution would have to be preceded by a revolution in how Blacks saw their past and culture – their very blackness…[58]

Biko believed that what was needed was "the realization by blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressors is the mind of the oppressed" (Hill 2005:16).[59] The perceptions which many black people held - of their blackness being inferior to whiteness - thus became one of the main targets of the Black Consciousness Movement. According to Hill (2005:16), "Black Consciousness had a wholly positive message. Personal dignity and unity among blacks were the first steps toward a society free of racial oppression, governed by Africans".

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[57] http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/governance-projects/black-consciousness/biko/history.htm. First accessed on 17 Mar 2011.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Simbao (2011:3) argues that the Black Consciousness Movement encouraged "the Black person...to reject all value systems that sought to make him a foreigner in his own land", and that this "Self-definition meant rejecting white stereotypes of Blacks".

SASO resolved that "the emancipation of the black people in this country depends entirely on the role black people themselves are prepared to play" (Hill 2005:16). Mangcu (2004:119) wrote that, "consistent with the philosophy of self-determination that was at the heart of the movement, the student leaders of the movement adopted a programme of self-reliant development". These programmes would "strive to elevate the level of consciousness of the black community by promoting awareness, pride, and capabilities" (Mangcu 2004:119). The Black Consciousness movement, through the Black Community Programmes (BCP), established schools in squatter communities, established a countrywide literacy campaign, and encouraged people to start home industries and co-operative farming schemes (Mangcu 2004:119). This thinking also found its way into art. In 1977 artist David Koloane approached the Black Community Programme (BCP) for funding to start an art gallery devoted to black artists in downtown Johannesburg (Hill 2005:24, 92). Koloane explained that he was interested in instilling "a sense of self-worth in the local artists" (Hill 2005:24).[60]   According to Peterson (2006:168), cultural resistance in Black Consciousness included "attempts to expand and consolidate black control and ownership over the means of cultural production by forming independent groups and initiatives in the spheres of performance, literature, the visual and plastic arts, music, and film".   This included initiates such as Vakalisa, Bayajula, Mtoli Black Theatre, and Soarta.[61] According to Peterson (2006:166)

> one of the main emphases of Black Consciousness in cultural matters was the implications and complications that stem from the need to engage in cultural reaffirmation, a 'return to the source' or the 'roots' of African culture…this necessitated that Africans

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[60] Funding was cut short with the banning of the Black Consciousness Movement in October 1977 and the gallery closed after police inspection and the confiscation of numerous documents including original manuscripts and permissions from the bank (Hill 2005:92).

[61] Ruth Simbao (2011:13) writes that "the artists' association *Bayajula*, which can be interpreted as 'hard workers' and was based in Kwa-Thema, was created by artists, musicians, dancers, and poets who wanted to circumvent the white-dominated art scene and white-endorsed art market by emphasising engagement with local communities and the production of art un-tampered by 'selling appeal'. Similarly, *Vakalisa*, which means 'wake up!' responded to the void left by banned political activities, parties and individuals". Erasmus explains that those involved in Vakalisa "were all working OUTSIDE the art establishment of galleries, curators, reviews etc.…The Vakalisa experience circumvented this gallery system by taking art directly 'to the people' and showing in community centres, library halls, etc…even cinema foyers! It was not art for art's sake, of course, the agenda was closely linked to the political necessities of the time, especially that of filling the void of, for example, the ANC being banned" (Erasmus in Simbao 2011:13).

engage, first, in the process of self-definition, self-reliance, and self-determination in all areas of the material, social and psychological aspects of their lives…Second, it necessitated that indigenous and foreign cultural form be re-assessed and appropriated in the light of the contemporary experiences and needs of the black population.

Peterson (2006:166) further explains that this thinking was not about the recovery of a lost aesthetic and social system, but a freeing from the control of white powers to define and set the course for black cultural definition and development. According to Manganyi,

> black consciousness in its temporality includes the consciousness of our cultural heritage…If black consciousness simply amounted to a mere recognition of this historicity, it would be nothing more than ancestor worship…It follows that for black consciousness to be an 'active presence' in the world, it has to deal with the present and the future (Manganyi in Peterson 2006:171).

These concerns found their way into the work of those black artists who admired the work of Sydney Kumalo and others who drew upon African themes for inspiration (Peffer 2009:50). Rather than regarding Kumalo's work (Fig. 15-16) as self-primitivising, Black Consciousness thinkers understood it as drawing upon a pride in African cultural expression while moving forward to something new.[62] Peffer (2009:50) argues that, in order to counter the negative perceptions of black culture, Black Consciousness worked to "struggle against defeatism and psychological oppression within the black community, and it aimed to counter emotional negativity with hope, pride, and self-determination". In short, it "inspired pride in one's heritage, community, and self". The themes of self-worth and pride worked against the self-pity imagery in the work of many black South African artists which they regarded as "products of colonised minds" (Peffer 2009:50).

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[62]Considering Kumalo's work as a means to valorise South African culture is, of course, problematic because it considers African culture as a blanket term. The African art Kumalo was drawing upon originated in West African and was foreign to him and his culture.

According to Peterson (2006:170), instead of art for art's sake, art was championed as being "directly concerned with exploring social and historical issues. Drawing on the example of the *imbongi,* emphasis was often placed on the links between the artist, life, and 'the people'". In September 1977 artists Thami Mnyele, Ben Arnold, and Fikile Magadlela held an exhibition in the Dube YWCA, Soweto, called *A New Day.* This exhibition was an attempt to make art more accessible and relevant to the township residents in terms of both location and themes. According to Diana Wylie (2004:59),

> "A New Day" was inspired by the 1976 student revolt and was held despite the murder of Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko only days before the opening. For these political reasons, and also because young Sowetans were hungry to see depictions of life as they actually lived it, the show was an electrifying success. …the artists took pains to show a reality counter to the billboard images of happy Africans drinking, for example, Castle beer; they wanted to thwart the government's effort to maintain the status quo by creating and seducing a black middle class.

Wylie (2004:59) writes that these artists "had often expressed their anger at "township art," a genre which made Africans into pitiable or adorable children for white consumers to use in decorating their homes. This show was their reply". This exhibition was a means to recast the image of black people found in the media and township art, and to portray them full of pride in their traditions and history. Peterson (2006:168) explains that in 'black' consciousness, cultural resistance took up the task of celebrating "the historical and cultural agency of black people, especially in recasting them from being seen as passive victims to being valorised as central actors in the events unfolding in the country". A new generation of artists arose during the years surrounding the 1976 Soweto uprising, this generation included artists such as Harry Moyaga, Dikobe Martins, Mothlabane Mashiangwako, and Fikile Magadlela who "espoused the beauty and mystical aspects of African aesthetic by drawing on African heroes found in African oral narratives" (Mdanda in Simbao 2011:9) For the exhibition, *A New Day*, Fikile Magadlela exhibited ten large scale drawings titled *Dance of a second creation,* 1977, (Fig. 38). According to Wylie (2008:103-104),

> The charcoal and graphite works show a new man being born. He is growing out of escarpments, arid plains, and clouds. A human foetus, emerges from the white of a broken egg. A planet breaks open to drop liquid and unfurl cloth…The figures are not situated in history, but in some ideal, extraterrestrial vision of Africa….the figures sport Afro hairstyles and wear flowing robes as well as expressions of surpassing calm and dignity. Despising pictures of Africans wearing 'torn trousers', Fikile chose to draw 'beautiful, handsome' black men and 'heavenly' black women. [63]

In an interview, Fikile explained his desire to make an art that celebrated pride when he said: "there's one thing I believe in; if you draw the black man, he must beautiful, handsome; the woman must be heavenly. Drape them with the most beautiful clothes - to wash away this whole shit of self-pity" (Sack 1988:16). The references to 'a new man being born' in Fikile's work resonated with other images of birth and pregnancy found in the works of Black Consciousness artists, such as Ezrom Legae's drawing *Pregnant Bitch* (Fig. 39) or Thami Mnyele's *Untitled,* 1977, (Fig. 40) work. *Pregnant Bitch* depicts a pregnant, abused, and malnourished dog possibly referencing the apartheid government's treatment of black South Africans, and the birth of a new generation of Africans who are ready to resist apartheid rule. Thami Mnyele's drawing depicts a baby who is hedged in by a female figure, almost as if it is still in the womb. According to Wylie (2008:104), in terms of subject matter "Mothers were perfect" since "Birth was loaded with the meaning of a free South Africa". In Mnyele's multimedia work, elements such as the barbed wire that runs along the width of the image, through the child, along with areas which have been worked in such a way that the paper has begun to wrinkle and tear, suggests the violence and resistance that is involved in the birth of this new identity of free black South Africans. There is a fair amount of effacement in this image, such as the smudges that blur the outline of the baby and the missing head of the mother

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[63] According Peterson (2006:166), "The politics of representation was even felt in the process of self-stylisation where, through the self-conscious use of the body as a textual sign, fashion styles such as the dashikis, t-shirts with slogans, the afro and uncombed hair were all sigs of a new found pride in blackness".

figure.[64] These elements are also present in an earlier work titled *Things fall apart,* 1976, (Fig 41). The image drew inspiration from the poem *The Second Coming* by W.B. Yeats, which is partially quoted in the bottom right of the image. Perhaps Mnyele saw parallels between what Yeats was describing and the situation in South Africa as the poem reads:

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;

The work, *Things Fall Apart*, consists of four panels. The chaotic marks and smudges in the bottom right panel into which the legs of a figure disappear seem to mirror the words of the poet: the "centre cannot hold". The viewer can see the anarchy which is loosed upon the world causing things to fall apart. Miles (2008:34) highlights the ways in which Mnyele's work also references Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*. In this novel, "the clay pot, either containing water or palm-oil, plays a central role in the village life" (Miles 2008:34). According to Miles (2008:34), troubles that come to the relationships in the colonised village of the novel are symbolised in part by the breaking of the clay pots. Furthermore, one of the characters in the book concludes that the foreigner "has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart" (Miles 2008:34). In Mnyele's work the clay pot in the bottom left panel is cracked, possibly representing the effects of colonialism and apartheid on the social fabric of black South Africans. In a later work by Mnyele, also titled *Things Fall Apart*, 1978, (Fig. 42), the clay pot again takes a central place. Here the pot is also cracked and chipped and seems to be stained with blood. The pot is rapidly plummeting to the ground from the heavenly African woman to whom it probably belongs. This work again seems to speak of the disruption of the 'African' way of life, which was a key concern for Mnyele as he sought ways to create artworks which would be more socially accountable in the same way that he understood art to have functioned in pre-colonial Africa.

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[64]This in one of the works included in the *New Day* exhibition. For a full list of works see Kellner, C. and González, S. (Eds.) *Thami Mnyele + Medu: Art Ensemble Retrospective.* p21.

Ezrom Legae was another artist who used Black Consciousness themes in his work. According to Peffer (2009:57), Legae was distressed by Biko's death and began a series of pencil and ink drawing in 1977 that

> dissected and made zoomorphic the tragedy of torture, murder, and confinement to which Biko and thousands of other South Africans were being subjected. His drawings were not heroic images of struggle. Rather they encoded the pathetic tragedy that befell hundreds of black schoolchildren, in the figure of the fragile domestic fowl, and were titled the *Chicken* series.

In a 1982 pencil drawing from the *Chicken* series (Fig. 43),a tortured chicken without feathers is depicted, whereas a much earlier work from the series portrays a chicken which has been crucified, 1977, (Fig. 44). According to Peffer (2009:57), in this image the gothic mood of the drawing invokes the passion of Christian martyrdom, but is rendered absurd by the subject: "Why would anyone crucify a chicken"? By recoding the death of the Soweto youth as sacrificial animals, "Legae recast the children of Soweto both as innocent victims and as an inextinguishable threat" (Peffer 2009:58). The killing of unarmed youth is portrayed as something absurd, but at the same time established as a threat to apartheid power. The work also references the practice of religious animal sacrifice. The chicken was chosen since, as Peffer (2009:57) writes, a "chicken is perhaps the most common, lowly form of animal sacrifice that may be offered on sacred occasions". While the youth may not have great status or power, like a chicken, it is their commonness, and hence great numbers, that still managed to pose a significant threat. In 1984 Legae stated, "You see I used the chicken as a symbol of the 'black' people of this country, because the chicken is a domestic bird. Now, one can maim a chicken by pulling out its feathers; one can crucify him, and even kill him. But beware...there will always be another chicken" (Peffer 2009:58). Legae extended his chicken metaphor in works from his *Jail*, 1981, (Fig 45) series. Here the figure of a man is portrayed with what appears to be the feathers of a wing on the left hand side. According to Peffer (2003:74), "images like this one are surrogates for the tortures inflicted upon human bodies, which for him are too terrible to illustrate literally". Peffer (2003:74) writes that

The left side of the figure is a large bird's wing, clipped and folded over the shoulder. A projection from the right side of the head turns out to be, upon close inspection, the sharp hook-ended beak of a raptor, a bird of prey… This confined human figure has taken on the attributes of an aggressive bird of prey – a hawk or eagle waiting restlessly for a break in its captivity, for a moment to strike and haul off its victim.

This image thus inscribes the body with the pain of torture whilst simultaneously repositioning the figure as a powerful incarnation of resistance full of pride and strength. In *The Death of Steve Biko,* 1983, (Fig. 46) Legae depicts the corpse of Steve Biko opposite the skeletal remains of a chicken. Biko's words just months before his death seem to mirror Legae's use of the chicken martyrdom as a means of ever increasing resistance. Biko said, "You are either alive and proud or you are dead, and when you are dead, you don't care anyway. And your method of death can be a politicising thing".[65] Peffer (2009:57) writes that the act of sacrificing animals is, broadly speaking, an act in an African traditionalist sacred worldview; and that "animal sacrifice binds and energizes a living community by strengthening the bond between the community of the living and the community of the deceased". Biko's death further spurred on revolution and added to the unjust casualties who became icons of resistance to those who would carry on opposing apartheid. The work of artists like Legae and Mnyele drew upon African practices such as the sacred slaughtering of chickens or the symbolism of clay vessels, and used the human figure to speak about the pride of the black South African and to anticipate or depict various forms of resistance to apartheid.

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[65] http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/library-resources/articles_papers/1984_biko_lives.html. First accessed on 17 Mar 2011.

1.5. CONCLUSION: A NEW WAVE OF ART CENTRES

Steve Biko's death affected a large number of black South African artists. According to Hobbs and Rankin (2003:188), Tony Nkosi at Rorke's Drift made the linocut *Portrait of a Man,* 1982, (Fig. 47) which

> captures the likeness of Biko, alert and alive, although having already sustained the fatal injury that marks his temple…Biko's exotic kaftan seems to reference a pan-African identity…His hands which form a secondary focal point to his head, are shown strongly foreshortened so that they seem almost to penetrate the picture plane to make direct contact with the viewer, emphasising the key that he holds. Engraved with the letters 'RSA', it suggests that Biko and the principles he stood for provide the key to unlock a better future.

There is a strong correlation between the establishment of these art centres and the principles of Black Consciousness. The impact of these centres seems to correlate to the suggestion made by Nkosi in his work that Biko's principles and death would be the fuel to unlock a politically free South Africa. The aftermath of Biko's death lead to increased resistance to apartheid in a number of different ways, including through art.[66] Nhlengethwa asserts, "The students' riots had not only brought schooling to a complete halt; but they had changed the whole fabric of the life of the 'black' child. We became more conscious of our blackness and wanted to express it in different art forms" (Smith in Simbao 2011:9). This gave rise to the conditions which made the establishment of many art centres viable, because there was a great hunger among the youth for artistic expression (Van Robbroeck 2004:45). Peterson (2006:167-168) argues that

> Cultural self-expression, in its own limited way, represented the first and crucial step in the process of liberation….the arts created the space for individuals to realise that self-emancipation, or cultural affirmation, is a necessary precondition to total freedom. Over and above its valorisation of the self, it signalled that individual

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[66] That Biko was interested in the potential of art. This was demonstrated by him granting Mpathi Gocini a bursary to study at Rorkes Drift in 1976 (Hobbs & Rankin 2003:81).

experiences were part of a larger, common experience amongst members of the oppressed.

It can be argued that art centres played a pivotal role in allowing the space for this self-emancipation to take place as they brought like-minded communities of artists together around shared experiences. New art centres included the Alexandra Arts Centre, the Nyanga Arts Centre, The Johannesburg Art Foundation, Katlehong, the Community Arts Project, the Community Arts Workshop, and Funda Centre (Van Robbroeck 1991:33). These centres continued to provide the opportunity for artists to engage in acts of self-definition against the prescriptive themes of Township Art. In the following chapter I investigate how these circumstances led up to and sustained the Community Arts Project in Cape Town.

CHAPTER 2: DEMOCRATISING ART UNDER APARTHEID: CAP 1977-1991

In the post-1976 period there was a spontaneous swell of interest in art. Thami Mnyele wrote the following about the *New Day* exhibition he organised in Alexandria Township in 1976:

> It happened at a crucial time, when we had to make a decision and take a stand to say: were we involved in the struggle and life around us, or were we merely producing 'pictures'? Our exhibition was attended by thousands of people....We had people standing at the door counting and there were more than a thousand people crammed into the place and more were waiting outside. We, the artists, were very excited because it meant we communicated, you know, something clicked (Seidman 2007:57).

It is evident that there was a huge interest in the arts and the role it could play in liberation. However, there was ideological disagreement regarding the most effective means of using art towards this purpose. Peffer (2009:xviii) writes that, after the 1976 Soweto uprising, "an internal struggle developed among those sympathetic to the resistance movement concerning the most efficacious definitions of community, culture, and politics" and "the work of aspiring artists was caught in the tangle of these terms". The Community Arts Project (CAP) in Mowbray, Cape Town, was formed in 1977 and was subject to these definitions and the struggles that surrounded them. This chapter will try to contextualise the educational work done by CAP and how it was caught in the definitions of community, culture, and politics as it searched for new forms of art which would be more socially and locally relevant.

CAP was an important training institution which allowed for resistance against apartheid, not only in producing posters, but also in providing a space where people could cross racial boundaries and create a new community which imagined a post-apartheid South Africa. This chapter examines the ways in which CAP responded to the need for art education in the Cape Town area, and explores their attempts to democratise artistic practice. I will begin by investigating the teaching strategies which allowed for art to be taught in a loose and open-ended structure. The significance of this structure is then considered in light of the multi-racial community that formed at CAP. The idea of

creating a community in opposition to apartheid was a key goal of the 1982 Gaborone Conference which was attended by a large number of South African artists, including people from CAP. This Conference had a significant effect on the struggle against apartheid through art. The popularisation of the cultural worker and 'people's culture' are two notable consequences, and these are examined in their different forms and interpretations. The 1982 Culture and Resistance Conference in Gabarone intensified the use of art in the struggle and argued that artists needed to use their artistic talents on behalf of the communities that they formed a part of as a means to heighten political and social awareness and resistance. This conference had an important impact on CAP and influenced the direction of their training as they began producing posters and became subject to external pressures to create 'committed art'. According to Williamson (2004:8), it was a crucial time in which the artist had to ask, "What can I do now, to work for freedom?" This manifested through various forms of 'community art' such as posters, murals, and People's Parks. However, there was also a heightened politicisation in the work of fine artists within and outside community art centres. Lastly, the ways in which CAP tried to position itself as an educational institution relevant to the struggle is discussed. It is here that I explore the tensions between more nuanced Black Consciousness influenced ideas of art's role in liberation versus a militant ANC strategy for mobilising the masses through posters.

2.1. EACH ONE TEACH ONE: THE DEMOCRATISATION OF ART AT CAP

By 1976 Black Consciousness had become popular among school-goers and Steve Biko had become a household name (Peffer 2009:xviii). According to an anonymous author, after the Soweto uprisings

> A new, more militant culture had emerged, that led to the formation of many civic, youth, student, worker, women and other organisations...In the immediate post-Soweto period, amid government suppression, growing curiosity among the urban black and growing political awareness, study groups began to develop in townships across the country. Some of these were very informal and were merely a group of young people gathering to discuss

> ideas...These groups spread ideas, got new people involved and spread into other circles.[67]

In addition to this, Peffer (2009:xvii) writes that in the period after 1976 "the desires of marginalized social groups seemed particularly poised to acquire political expression through cultural expression, and it was a time when the struggle for art was synonymous with the struggle for the end of apartheid".[68] Art became an important means of self-determination. Art centres, like CAP in Cape Town, became one of many critical spaces which gave people a sense of self-worth beyond the mundane horrors of apartheid. Through drawing and painting people were able to think and express themselves freely, and – as a result - attain a much stronger and more profound sense of self.

Peggy Delport, a lecturer at the University of Cape Town, recalls that in the aftermath of the Soweto uprisings of 1976 the townships and the schools in Cape Town were in a state of chaos, with boycotts, violence, and burnings.[69] Yet a small bus ventured into this chaos in Langa and Nyanga, and colllected children to be transported to the University of Cape Town Department of Extra Mural Studies for art classes from 7-9pm.[70] Delport, who ran these classes, explains that it was a struggle to get people there but "in spite of all the violence and the chaos in the townships at that time...those kids just came, that bus went in God-knows how and God-knows how it went back, but there was just such a need to come and work and create things". There seemed to be strong belief among participants that art education and creation can bring some form of internal liberty through expression (Nolte 1997). Many were given the opportunity to realise their

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[67] http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/governance-projects/organisations/udf/history.htm . First accessed 17 Mar 2011.
According to Good (2012: 312-313) "from the early 1970s, government made 'far more money available for urban black schools'. In greater Soweto, for instance, there were eight secondary schools in 1972; 20 by 1976, with a three-fold increase in their student intake, and 55 by the end of 1984…In consequence, secondary schooling was transformed from being the privileged resource of a black elite into a 'mass phenomenon' with an 'urban school-based culture and consciousness'. High school students in the conglomerate of Soweto were well placed to draw together literate youths on a large scale, utilising networks of extra-mural associations…"

[68] Similarly, Sack (1989:200) writes that "artistic activities by youth formed an important part of the process of mass-mobilisation and cultural and political awakening"

[69] Interview with Peggy Delport (25/09/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[70] Interview with Joyce Tshangela (9/10/1996) Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

gifts and talents for the first time. One of the early students, Joyce Tshangela, explains that she had always drawn as a child, and then "there was a woman who was going around in Langa and asking people if they were interested in joining art classes. I didn't even know the 'thing' of art then, so my sister explained and, pointing at me, said 'this is the one who is interested'".[71] Peggy Delport recalls how in these painting workshops,

> People really gave images describing what life was like where they were living, and of course images were of burning, looting, and police shootings and of violence *[sic.]*. In the middle of that all Tiny Matole painted a tiny little township skyline and up above it a huge bird flying and her sitting on the back of the bird. To me that was like the symbol of creativity.[72]

These classes were initially planned as a short term project; however, with the aid of other like-minded individuals, it soon became possible to have these classes on a more long term basis. The activities of the Organisation of South African Artists (OOSAA) also demonstrated a belief in the power of art for transformation. Gavin Younge, an art lecturer at the University of Cape Town who was part of OOSAA, explains how they met during 1975 to discuss Marxist readings.[73] There was soon a desire to do something practical and, in the December of 1975, Gavin Younge got permission to run art events for that December/January period in the old Starke Ayers building on 17 Main Road in Mowbray, Cape Town.[74] There was such a strong conviction among the facilitators of the importance of the work they were doing that they felt it should be happening on a more long term basis, and conversations about starting what would become known as the Community Arts Project began between Peggy Delport, Gavin Younge, and others. After a year of discussion between these individuals (1976-1977), the Community Arts Project

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[71]   Ibid.

[72]   Interview with Peggy Delport (25/09/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[73]   Interview with Gavin Younge (02/10/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[74]   Interview with Gavin Younge (02/10/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

was founded.[75] Delport explains that at the founding meetings they talked about how there was a need for a multi-racial centre to correspond to the multi-racial participants who had expressed a desire to continue making art.[76] She also recalls how they acquired an old warehouse on 17 Mowbray Road and got down on their hands and knees to scrub it clean before they could bring any equipment in.[77] Money was hard to come by and it came initially from the sale of artwork by the founders[78], from churches, proceeds from events, and donations such as a stove donated by the Women's Movement.[79] A few years later CAP acquired overseas funding, but it remained a financially unstable organisation throughout its years and had many financial crises.

Derek Joubert explains that the first director, Dimitri Fanourakis, ran the place as an open space for people to hold workshops based on their good will. Staff members were not paid, nor were they given a course structure to work within and what classes were available largely depended on what people were interested in teaching and learning.[80] According to Nolte (1997), "there was little continuity of staff and few incentives beyond a spirit of volunteerism". This resulted in irregular classes where, at times, a workshop facilitator would not come to a course or might discontinue it soon after starting, which frustrated participants. Christine Walters effectively took over from Fanourakis in 1978 and brought a greater sense of structure to the organisation. In January 1978 it was decided that teachers would be paid, bringing more regularity to

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Interview with Peggy Delport (25/09/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[77] Ibid.

[78] According to Delport, "There was an artists' cooperative … it was in Adderley Street. There were about 20 of us. It was a wonderful gallery space and we ran it ourselves. All of us were sick of dealers. Kevin (Atkinson) was part of that, Bruce Arnot ... and Stanley Pinker as well, and black artists from up country came and joined that as well. That ran for five years and then they tore the building down and it closed. Any rate, we were left with some money in the kitty ... and I persuaded those that were still around to use this to start CAP and that's what started CAP ... This was the first bit of money we had". (Ibid.)

[79] According to Nolte (1997), "CAP's budget for the first six months was covered by a R700 donation from the Artists Gallery, a R1 000 donation from the South African Council of Churches, proceeds of the "Sounds Black '77" concert totaling R225, and R400 from membership and associate membership subscriptions (Community Arts Project, April 1978). By August, a large grant had also been received from the United Churches of Canada. By late August, the Director was coordinating fundraising events such as the drama performance of "Thulani Ma'Afrika", regular film shows, an exhibition of Rorkes Drift prints and the facilitation of a range of activities".

[80] Interview with Derek Joubert (05/05/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

workshops (Nolte 1997). Classes would run in the evenings usually from 7-9pm, but the space was open from 9am - 9pm for anyone to use outside of the class times. There were about 15-20 students in the daily classes.[81] On Saturdays the space was also open all day with Children's art classes running from 10am - noon.[82] Walters explained at the time that, "The whole idea is that there is a relaxed atmosphere and no rules. Although the classes are structured we are not a school or an institution but a place where people can come and develop their creativity".[83] Artist Hamilton Buduza recalled that, "CAP was like an open workshop, we were just sharing ideas,"[84] and an anonymous individual who participated in the early workshops said, "We didn't actually have a structure which was heavy on top…at that time it was structured in a way that most people participated".[85] People of any skill level would be able to join a class and interact with one another and share skills.[86] Gaylard (2001) writes that

> The principles of 'learning by doing' and 'each one teach one' informed the character of these activities, and represent the first formulation of one of CAP's enduring concerns: the development of learning processes rooted in participatory democracy.

Sebastian Brown's approach to teaching in his ceramic class exemplifies this: "We basically helped people do things, people weren't told what to do. We gave them the basics and we said to them '...come back next week and tell me what you want to do and I will assist you technically to make that thing'".[87] Furthermore, there were students of

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[81] Interview with Anonymous (29/05/1997) and (21/06/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[82] Unknown Newspaper article written by Jim Matthews . University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, M1-8.
Interview with Hamilton Buduza (08/05/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[83] Blumenthal, S. 1978. 'Its Alive and Creative and living in Mowbray'. Unkown Newspaper. np.

[84] Interview with Hamilton Buduza (08/05/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[85] Interview with Mpathi Gocini (27/05/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[86] In a personal interview with Tony Mhayi he recalls how in the 1980s he was a beginner in the drawing class, but that he was surrounded by people who were already technically accomplished.

[87] Interview with Sebastian Brown (08/05/1997). Interview conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

varied skill levels in each class who would also teach one another. CAP served as a space for the democratisation of art by allowing any individual to join and create with the resources and space provided by the art centre. Jacqueline Nolte argues that CAP provided "opportunities for the MAKING of art, irrespective of 'qualifications'…offering the possibility of more inclusive definitions and practices of arts". It was hoped that this would lead to personal growth and eventually healing of the communities.[88]

Gaylard (2001) writes that an early call for membership in the '70s described the CAP as

> A resource centre where people may develop their abilities and skills in painting and printmaking, sculpture, creative writing, dance, music, drama etc., and where people interested in the arts may work together, meet informally for discussion and join workshops in the arts. *The Project will be run by its members* and the nature of the activities will depend largely on members' interests and degree of commitment. [my emphasis]

CAP's workshops grew out of the interests of individual members and staff. When the Community Arts Project started in 1977 it was described by newspapers as a rich community space where people could freely come and share their experiences and learn from one another.[89] This was partly because CAP's location in Mowbray allowed for easy access to a large cross-section of the wider Cape Town population due to a nearby bus route.

CAP played a largely facilitative role by responding to requests of its members. A request could be made and the director would try to facilitate a course in the area in which interest was expressed. Priority was given to art, but the centre also ran karate and yoga classes at one time. Hence, CAP developed in an ad-hoc fashion in accordance with the demand for services and training in the arts. This flexibility was one of its greatest strengths because it allowed the centre to remain relevant to those who used it. However, this same ethos resulted in CAP often trying to 'take on' too much and it often did not

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88 Interview with Jaquiline Nolte (03/06/1997). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[89] This agrees with the way it is remembered by the individuals I interviewed.

have very clear objectives.[90] Mike van Graan (1988:14) explains that, "As needs arose, so CAP responded. And as needs arose resources became available...Mostly these programmes and projects were left to run themselves with CAP basically providing the administrative and funding backup". In addition to classes being determined by community members, there was a low membership fee of R1 and a fee of R2 per month for tuition.[91] It was understood that the fee "entitle[d] members to the use of all the facilities available, in return for which members [were] expected to contribute of their time and talents" (Gaylard 2001). If this could not be paid, then CAP would provide a bursary – no one was turned away. CAP would even pay for your bus fare to get home.[92]

In the period after 1976 there was a greater desire among the black population for a democratisation of art and greater "equality in access to the means of cultural production and distribution" (Van Robbroeck 1991:18). Fine art was not a school subject in black schools since, as Bantu Education architect Hendrik Verwoerd stated, "there is no place for the Native in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour" (Peffer 2009:24). Art was not deemed an appropriate subject for black people beyond being a recreational pass time and black artists were seen to possess 'natural talent' which would be spoilt by 'western' education. According to Peffer (2009:25; 27),

> Young black artists were able to learn one technique and stuck to it without much development. Many were forced to develop a marketable style early on in order to make a living…black artists were expected by their white patrons to depict their own people and customs within a narrow iconographic range: either typical "township life" or "exotic Africa".

This limitation was opposed by the work of community art centres of the 1980s which encouraged experimentation with new styles, mediums, and techniques. This allowed for the emergence of a thematically nuanced and technically skilled art to emerge from the

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[90] Interview with Barbara Voss (30/04/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[91] Rose Korber. n.d. *Arts Project is Forging Ahead*. Newspaper clipping. By 1990 this fee had risen to a membership fee of R5 and R30/month for employed people and R15/Month for students. (Anonymous. 1990, Feb. 'CAP's nine month arts programme'. Newspaper clipping)

[92] Interview with Anonymous (29/05/1997) and (21/06/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

proletariat. CAP was one centre which made this possible. Its envisioned function was clearly laid out in a document written in 1978 by those involved in CAP which states that it

> acts as a resource centre where people may develop their abilities and skills in painting and printmaking, weaving, sculpture, creative writing, dance, music, drama, film, photography etc. and where people interested in the arts may work together, meet together informally for discussion and join workshops in the arts. However, the Project is also intended to encourage individual members and groups to take their newly acquired skills and establish their own workshops in their own neighbourhoods.[93]

While its function as a space for training and meeting was met with some success, bringing the second part of this vision to fruition proved to be a constant challenge for CAP. Students seemed content simply to acquire skills, and if teaching took place by students, it mostly remained localised at the main CAP building. One of CAP's enduring struggles was that it was town-based while the constituency it was serving was located in the townships on the outskirts of the city. When CAP had to move from its premises in Mowbray to an abandoned school building in Woodstock in 1982, its ability to be available to its constituency was further complicated since CAP was no longer on the bus route. Various strategies were employed to amend this shortcoming such as partnering with Nyanga Art Centre or starting workshops in local townships like Crossroads. These projects however were short lived or were never firmly established, and CAP remained primarily based in the urban centre.[94] Another attempt to achieve a multiplication effect came through the first full-time course which was started in 1985 and ran for two years. Classes ran for the whole day from Monday to Friday and students acquired skills in a range of disciplines during the first year of their training, while the focus of their second year was teaching skills.[95] It was hoped that this would encourage people to share the

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[93]   Van Graan, M. 1988. *CAP: Where From? Where to?*. Page 10-11.

[94]   CAP's Part-time Model remained largely the same, offering diverse classes at different times both at CAP and in township venues. For an example of this structure from 1987, see Appendix A.

[95]   Interview with Vuyile Cameron Voyiya (25/04/1997) Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

skills they had acquired – as was expressed in the founding documents. Cameron Voyiya, who attended one year of this course, explained that "We did drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture – using various materials clay, found materials, making masks".[96] Five students finished their second year of training; these were David Hlongwane, Robert Siwangaza, Billy Mandindi, Tshidi Sefako, and Sophie Peters (CAP Newsletter 1987:16). The 1987 Newsletter (1987:16) seems to demonstrate the success of the 1985-86 full-time class by explaining how they were actively involved in passing on their skills either at CAP or elsewhere and progressing in their own work.[97] While this had a valuable success in equipping a number of teachers there was no long term multiplication effect produced from this course.

Lionel Davis, now a well-known figure in the South African art world, first came into contact with CAP at the end of 1977 after a long period of imprisonment on Robben Island followed by house arrest. He was looking for something creative to do to help him deal with his trauma.[98] He found this at CAP through the creative sharing that took place between individuals. Lionel Davis says that, "Not everyone became an artist, but it opened up so many other doors for people. It touched on many people's lives and was a healing force. In the same way that my life was touched by getting involved with CAP, countless numbers of others had similar experiences".[99] The purpose of the workshops was not creating artworks *per-se*, but allowing people to express themselves and build community in opposition to the apartheid structures imposed on them. In a way people were working together to collective imagine what a post-apartheid South Africa might look like. According to Jacqueline Nolte (1997)

Interview with Lugile Bam (23/04/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[96] Interview with Vuyile Cameron Voyiya (25/04/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[97] David Hlongwane was teaching at Luyolo Centre along with former CAP student Hamilton Buduza. Hlongwane was also attempting to start training in Khayelitsha. Robert Sigwangaza taught children three times a week in Worscter. The other students from the full-time course taught at CAP (CAP Newsletter 1987:16).

[98] Interview with Lionel Davis (12/08/1997) conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[99] Interview with Lionel Davis (12/08/1997) conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

> People came together at CAP in an effort to change the circumstances of their lives and to share skills with those denied them, to change themselves through creative encounters fuelled by a belief that the creative process is a transformative process, and thus linked to the process of transformation and liberation. What was evident in the 1970s was a belief in the inherent power of individual creativity, associated with recognition of both intuition and political awareness.

Peffer (2009:35) explains that, in an apartheid world separated into black and white areas, the arts represented one significant 'grey area' where all races met and mixed. This brought a new community into being which both defied apartheid logic and anticipated a better future. The next section explores the significance CAP had upon building community.

2.2. THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF 'COMMUNITY' AT CAP

Despite the fact that the term community seems clearly defined and neutral is has been an especially contentious and political term. Community is often defined as a group which is differentiated from others and bound together by what they have in common (Day 2006:1). This concept of community is usually tied to a geographical location; that is, "a static, bounded, cultural space of being where personal meanings are produced, cohesive cultural values are articulated and traditional ways of life are enunciated and lived" (Day 2006:116). On face value such definitions seem neutral, however within South Africa the term "community" has been a political term for a long time (Hagg 2001:168). Hagg (2001:168-9) explains that the national apartheid government "emphasised the ethnic and cultural homogeneity of people, such as tribal communities or ethnic communities".[100] This was used to devastating effect to justify apartheid legislation of separate and inferior development, as well as the Group Areas Act, the destruction of areas of mixed race, and the establishment of homelands. Art spaces like CAP, which served 'the community', were an act of apartheid resistance in the way they defied the strict boundaries of colour. CAP had, as one of its express goals, the intermingling of different racial categories within a

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[100] Marshall (2002:17) explains that as a result of the vagueness and flexibility of the term it has been used by politicians and others to their own advantage.

system that tried to separate people of different colours. This was not only a feature of the adult classes but also of the child art which exposed people of different races to one another from an early age in a safe and fun environment.[101] Jacqueline Nolte (1997) writes that CAP

> was a training ground for understanding the meaning of artistic production in relation to struggles for political freedom and basic human rights. It was an attempt to understand the meaning that art has for building community in a country which had made it its task to intentionally destroy black community life and to make impossible a cross-flow between communities of different cultures and racial designations.

In this sense, the social life of art during the early 1980s became a crucial site for the struggle against apartheid.

According to Day (2006:2), community represents "one significant way of speaking about group-ness, and distinguishing it from conditions of isolation or individualism", and community involves "people doing things, and being, together, rather than separate and alone". Day (2006:16) writes that "traditional conceptions of community tend to emphasise primordial attachments to the family, and to ties of kinship and place". Hence, communities were seen as both stable and place-bound entities. Recent scholarship has, however, problematised the situation by drawing attention to the way many studies treated communities as if they were completely undifferentiated regardless of their age, gender, or economic position. Women's views were often neglected and people not in agreement with the opinions of the 'community leaders' were usually not consulted. Hence, a falsely unified picture of the 'true' wholeness of communities was presented (Day 2006:49,164).

The creation of community is about drawing boundaries, deciding on what basis someone is excluded and delineating who is included within a specific community by

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[101] One workshop run at CAP for children expressed its goal as working with children "to pursue creative expression and learn skills – and to do this in the company of different racial groups and cultures…[and] try and get the children to mix and learn something about each other's different language group" (Cape Times 18/12/81. Mike Van Niekerk)

their common bonds (Day 2006:xi). However, problems inevitably arise as soon as one tries to specify more firmly what these common bonds are, how they arise, and how they can be sustained (Day 2006:1). Marschall (2002:16) writes that the term "'community' is a fluid concept and it is neither homogenous nor a clearly circumscribed or static body". The fluidity of the concept makes it particularly problematic to say something is done for 'the community'. She continues by explaining that with any attempt to empower a community "there will always be some who dissent, others who do not care and perhaps a few who may actually be disempowered/disadvantaged by the venture" (Marschall 2002:17). Hagg (2001:169) writes that the definition of community in South Africa "brought with it a limited view of real communities, which are far more diverse than the monolithic term 'community' assumes". Hagg (2001:168-9) argues that, similarly, the resistance movement's view of community "had a rather homogenous slant" which "assumed that all black people belonged to the same interest group".

CAP worked at being a space open for all and free of boundaries of exclusion and inclusion in a city divided by apartheid group areas legislation. However, Peffer (2009:39) warns that one should be cautious "before stating too euphorically that ... [such] areas inverted all of the abuses and colonized mindsets of apartheid". It would therefore be incorrect to frame CAP as an idyllic, harmonious environment immune to political tensions and personal antagonisms. Further, Barbara Voss explains that despite the ideal of building or bringing together 'the community' through art

> There were a lot of ideological clashes, and the kinds of racial conflicts you find in the country, played themselves out there – there was often this 'us and them' attitude. The fact that most of the co-ordinators were usually white and the students were black - was an automatic scenario for conflict. So there was plenty of conflict, plenty of fights...weaknesses were also people's different visions.[102]

Here again the variety and differences that are often flattened out by the monolithic use of the word 'community' are highlighted. Day (2006:116) argues that "the interactions which take place within communities, between class positions, ethnic groupings, locals, migrants, and others" are filled with conflict and are a necessary part of understanding

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[102] Interview with Barbara Voss (30/04/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

how communities function. According to Day (2006:169), "variation and division are integral to the nature of community existence. The strength of community does not consist in universal agreement, but in the way in which different social meanings are played off against one another as people position themselves". Day (2006:116) points out that, "far from being a homogenous, unified entity... [community is] a focal point of social division, conflict and competition – not a thing, so much as a dynamic process". Communities can be understood as "having a common focus, yet not necessarily solidly in agreement with one another...Interests do not have to be identical to form a community, but they do have to converge with one another around matters of mutual concern" (Day 2006:117).[103] This was evident at CAP as community was created around the arts in resistance to apartheid, even though there were often different interpretations of what this should look like.

New understandings of community are open to "heterogeneity, process and change" and consider communities as "diverse symbolisations which exist by virtue of individuals' ongoing interpretations and interactions" (Day 2006:164). The 'new communities' are not entities into which one is born but they are created through choices and actions around shared interests (Day 2006:24). Owen Kelly, a participant in the British community art movement, argues that community is not

> …an entity, nor even an abstraction, but a set of shared social meanings which are constantly created and mutate through the actions and interactions of its members, and through their interaction with wider society….The community is not available for "development" by funders or "management" by externals. Rather it grows by member participation...One does not work "with" a community. One participates in bringing a community into being (Peffer 2009:169).

Shirley Walters (1986:10-11), who was a trustee at CAP, makes a similar observation regarding community at CAP. In relation to work done for 'the community' she asks,

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[103] Day (2006:25) proposes that one way that 'community' can be understood is as "something which people actively pursue, as a metaphor for people's longing for a better life and an imaginary framework for political mobilisation".

What does the word community mean?...we wanted to believe that [the] community is the 'oppressed' and 'exploited', but is that true? One organisation can't serve all the 'oppressed'....We decided that in reality [the organisation's] community is its members- the students, staff and all who use it.[104]

Hence, CAP *created* community by providing a space in which people could gather around common goals. An anonymous individual said, "CAP was my life, my home away from home...our social life was at CAP as well– on Saturday or Friday night, or whatever–CAP was it".[105] CAP was described by people as a space outside the heavy social barriers imposed by apartheid where people did not have to be worried about their racial designations.[106] Lionel Davis says that "when our whole community was polarised, CAP did a wonderful job by allowing artists and people interested in creativity to meet with one another from the white, black, [and] coloured communities, allowing people just to express themselves".[107] Peffer (2009: xi) further explains that, "from the 1930s and well into the 1990s, the art scene, particularly the black art scene, was one place where black and white, rich and poor could meet and together form the kernel of a different society". This was significant for the development of South African art since it was within such 'grey areas', outside apartheid ideas of racial segregation, where progressive art was often made (Peffer 2009: xxi).

Hagg (1989:n.p.) states that "participation in the arts breaks down barriers, thus making the art centre an important means of intercommunity communication". CAP provided this network not only to those within one particular community but across different communities with an emphasis on art-making. CAP was recognised as a place

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[104] Shirley Walters was very involved at CAP at a time when there was a push for democratising the organisation and there was no director. The quote is taken from an educational recourse she developed for community centres and tells the story of a fictional community centre. It seems however that CAP came to the same conclusions.

[105] Interview with Anonymous (29/05/1997) and (21/06/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[106] Interview with Sebastian Brown. (08/05/1997). Interview conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[107] Interview with Lionel Davis (12/08/1997). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

where people from different areas and racial designations could meet and share in a safe space, and it brought a lot of diverse people together.[108] Vuyile Voyiya, an artist who studied at CAP, says that it was important

> Not only in terms of giving people skills, but in a sense that one was informed about what was happening. We had to have workshops and discuss issues which perhaps we would not have been able to tackle outside CAP…in a way it was conscientizing people about the struggle.[109]

The centre facilitated communication between artists across racial lines on various important issues which caused a cross-fertilization of ideas and shared experience (Van Robbroeck 2004:50). CAP was an important intellectual space and allowed people to work through a lot of ideas about what African culture might be. As Peffer (2009:169) states, "A door was opened about thinking what else art could be" by the community created around it. In this sense the social life of art became an important site for resistance.

When CAP's was at its initial location in Mowbray it served a diverse community consisting of a broad cross-section of people who made use of bus routes and expressed an interest in art. One such person was Lionel Davis, who recalls that every time he would ride the bus to work he would see the banner for the Artist Workshop while waiting in Mowbray. [110] After being fired from his job at the end of 1977 he finally went to investigate and ended up being involved in CAP for the next 15 years, keeping company with artists like Randy Hartzenburg. However in 1982, CAP was forced to relocate when the building it was using in Mowbray was declared a fire hazard. Its new location in Chapel Street, Woodstock, was on the edge of what was formerly District Six.[111] This new location did not offer the same proximity to a bus stop and many less committed members stopped attending as a result. CAP continued to struggle with the

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[108]   Interview with Mpathi Gocini (27/05/1997). Interview conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[109]   Interview with Vuyile Cameron Voyiya (25/04/1997) Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[110]   Interview with Lionel Davis Muizenberg, 02 Feb 2010..

[111]   The move was into a school building which was now abandoned because of a lack of students in attendance as a result of the forced removals.

concept of being a community organisation because it was not primarily used by the local geographical community of Woodstock. On the other hand it's urban location allowed different racial groups to come together, since many white people participants would likely not have been comfortable going to the townships. The community at CAP consisted of a dynamic flow of people from across Cape Town including Mannenburg, Mitchell's Plain, Khayelitsha, Guguletu, Nyanga, and other township areas.[112] Furthermore, the ages of participants ranged from 12-72 and the participants were housewives, township youth, unemployed workers, nurses, etc., and included all 'races'.[113] Furthermore, "CAP [was] a community of artists, but that community extended beyond the art community – it encompassed other communities like the political community".[114] As such, CAP became the site of a constant flow of community, consisting not only of its student body, but also its staff who were often only there on a part time basis. Together this community challenged the communal identities which the apartheid system attempted to enforce.[115] According to Coombes (2003:118), areas with a diverse set of 'racial' inhabitants "conjure up the spectre of irreversible change and the dissolution of imagined 'fixed' and stable identities to those of a xenophobic cast of mind". It is in this sense that CAP began imagining and practicing a post-apartheid community long before this was possible on a national level.

In many ways CAP was held together as a community by a shared belief in the better life that a racially harmonious South Africa might offer, and by the shared political will to mobilise people towards that ideal. For Thami Mnyele, who was also a leading figure in the cultural resistance, artistic practice had the potential to create community in opposition to apartheid oppression. According to Peffer (2009:82), Thami Mnyele believed that the, "older communal way of life had been emasculated by the labour, land and ethnicity policies of the British and the National Party". Mnyele hoped to resist the

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[112]   Interview with Hamilton Buduza (08/05/1997) conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[113]   Interview with Hildur Amato. (09 /12/1996). Interview conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[114]   Interview with Vuyile Cameron Voyiya (25/04/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[115] Cresswell (2004:53) contends that place is "open and hybrid – a product of interconnecting flows – of routes rather than roots".

oppressive order by "returning to the spirit of the communal social responsibilities of old" in which community art "would be characterised by the sort of mutual nourishment of the people and their art he understood had once existed within traditional African cultures". Peffer (2009:82) writes that "the ideal community referred to by Mnyele was really that group that had been radically conscientized and had *created community* by taking to the streets in unison". Peffer (2009:82) argues that "this community would not be defined according to apartheid's strict ethnic geography, but rather through the practice of collective resistance". The political purpose of community is well stated by Serote (2008:194) who writes that "culture would unite South Africans if it was democratic and non-racial; that it was a weapon of struggle; that it should suffocate apartheid culture and that it should be entrenched in spaces opened by democracy". These ideals were popularised and spread by the historic 1982 Culture and Resistance Conference in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.3. THE 1982 GABARONE CONFERENCE: A NEW DISCOURSE FOR ART

In 1982 an organisation called Medu held an international conference in Botswana in order to address how art that would be relevant to the socio-political situation in South Africa could be made. The conference brought great energy back into activities of progressive grassroots arts organisations, such as the CAP, which produced innumerable posters, banners, and T-shirts. Jon Berndt and others at the CAP had already established a silkscreen workshop for the production of posters in 1978; however, by the end of that year there was conflict within the organisation over whether or not funding from the Urban Foundation should be accepted.[116] While the funding was never accepted, it still caused members such as Lionel Davis, who were strongly opposed to the idea, to leave CAP. It was only after the 1982 Gaborone Culture and Resistance Festival that some of the members who had left, such as Davis and Berndt, returned to CAP and resurrected the

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[116] Berndt (2007:3) explains that "the Urban Foundation had been established [in 1976] to manage social dissent at a time when the South African state's repressive methods were making it difficult for big business to function effectively". Part of this strategy was giving money for 'black development' as a way of placating the incitement of the wider society. In denunciation of apartheid, many grassroots organisations opted to reject Urban Foundation funding.

silkscreen workshop (Berndt 2007:2-3). Davis recalls that the conference "put a lot of heart and life into activities, especially cultural activities to start working with the marginalised communities. So that when the people came back they came back with this definite feel that something was happening" (Peffer 2009:87). Peffer (2009:80) writes that the "festival Medu organised in 1982 should be recognized as one of the most important flash points in the history of South African art". Seidman (2007:104) adds that the conference brought together "about 2000 people, mostly from South Africa" and took two years to organise. It allowed for old friends to be reunited and created a space where new connections could be made, brought people from across the country and abroad (including exiles). This presented a rare and significant opportunity to openly debate how to resist apartheid and motivate the arts to be used in a relevant way (Peffer 2009:79).

Botswana contained a large number of South African exiles, including many artists. Mongane Wally Serote arrived in Gaborone in 1977, soon after the Soweto uprisings, and, after discussions with Tim Williams, he founded Medu together with other like-minded individuals (Gonzalez 2009:79-81). Medu was an art training centre aimed at excellence in the arts, opposing apartheid and building a democratic culture (Serote 2009:193). Medu was comprised of five units – Photography, Film and Theatre, Music, Graphic Art, and Publications and Research. Each of these produced material such as newsletters or theatre productions and conducted training for South Africans (Serote 2009:193). One of its most well known achievements was the 1982 Culture and Resistance festival. Mnyele (2009:24)) wrote that "the South African Artist was said to lack social or political awareness. Hence the artists were always at loggerheads with one another, unorganised and ultimately reactionary". According to Serote the conference was concerned with

> The need to draw artists together in one big forum and expose them to each other … community-orientated institutions often work at cross purposes to each other. They need to discuss their differences to be able to work more effectively towards a common goal...[and forge] new directions based on understanding of the political environment and traditional cultures" (Serote in Berndt 2007:6).

One of the primary issues was the need to address this division and bring artists together under a shared vision of using the arts as a weapon to combat apartheid. An earlier

conference, held in 1979 in Cape Town and called *The State of Art in South Africa*, had tried to address these issues. However, according to Sue Williamson (1989:9), it failed to draw artists together across racial lines and the first day of the conference was spent debating why only one black poet was presenting. Younge said that the reason for this absence was because "there is the feeling that nothing important would change as a result of the conference" (Younge in Williamson 1989:9). An important resolution among these artists however was that their work would no longer be shown overseas, pre-empting the cultural boycott of 1983 which followed from the Culture and Resistance Symposium.

Mnyele headed the Graphic unit at Medu and later became chairman of the ensemble. His involvement with Mhloti Black Theatre was a key influence on his desire to find ways of making art that was more accountable to the people at large. This group started in Alexandra township in 1972 and aimed to explore what art and culture meant to them and their communities (Seidman 2007:50), as opposed to the values imposed upon them by the white owned art system which exploited black talent. Influenced by socialist figures such as Cabral, the group questioned the South African art scene where black artists rendered images of township life for the benefit of the white market. It seemed to Mnyele that township art's message was confused because it did not serve the community it was portraying, rather it was created by black artists for a white audience. Mnyele (2008:26) argued that

> Whereas whole members of the community have converged on immediate community issues, little or no participation has been noted of the artist. His products are meant for quiet corridors in foreign buildings, far away from home. What is to be done? Perhaps we should start by asking ourselves what are the current concerns of the community.

Mnyele believed that a new kind of artist was needed. He wrote,

> We must now create this new man and woman whose visuals and songs will be informed by the most pressing needs and demands of their time, place and circumstances: they ought to be articulate, but simple so as to be accountable to their work and with clear political insight, a skilled hand and firm revolutionary insight. (Peffer 2009:81)

Mnyele sought expression that did not distance itself from the working class majority. According to Peffer (2009:74), Mnyele "came to espouse the view that since the subtleties of fine art were often lost on the masses, what was needed in a time of popular resistance was an art that spoke directly to the people in a visual language they could understand".[117] He sought cultural expression that would not only oppose apartheid, but which would build a post-apartheid South Africa. Mnyele (2009:27) asks:

> What does political consciousness mean to the artist in my county?
> We need to clearly popularise and give dignity to the just thoughts
> and deeds of the people. With our brushes and paints we shall need
> to visualise the beauty of the county we would like our people to live
> in. We therefore need to humble ourselves as to heed the people's
> word.

These ideas were debated at the conference as people together sought to have a closer relationship between their work and the people they wanted to serve.

Jon Berndt (2007:6) writes that in 1982, with regards to the Gaborone Conference, the ANC "was keen to politicise culture in South Africa in order to broaden the struggle against the apartheid state. This was done by defining art in utilitarian terms as a weapon and in the process redefining the artist as a worker". In a review of the conference art exhibition written by Medu, they stated that "no one style holds a clear monopoly on progressive art" but also claimed that not enough of the work "actively calls for change" with little art dealing with mass resistance (Peffer 2009:96). The reviewer stated that it showed "the long way we have to go – in creating an alternative to the 'western' definition of art which we have been so steeped in" (Peffer 2009:97). However, the same review claimed that the Medu Posters were one clear break with the Western tradition of art-making, despite its clear international influences. This was probably due

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[117] Mnyele states that "Our people have taken to the streets in the greatest possible expression of hope and anger, of conscious understanding and unflinching commitment. This calls for what all progressive art should be – realist, incisive, and honest" "true political consciousness is the seed of collective spirit and democracy"(Mnyele in Peffer 2009:84).

to the fact that posters were a public form of art which was not shut away in galleries. The Medu Poster *Smash Bantu Education,* 1980, (Fig. 48) shows a very clearly communicated opinion of the inferiority of Bantu education, describing it with words such as 'oppression', 'humiliation', and 'exploitation'. In this image a fist, which is both a symbol of unity and resistance, comes down on education with the word 'smash' clearly written on the arm. There is no ambiguity as to what this means; it is a clear call for people to recognise the inferiority of Bantu education and to oppose it. Other Medu posters, such as *The Courage of the Youth ensures our Victory,* 1981, (Fig. 49) commemorates youth day and encourages the youth to resist apartheid. Unlike the first poster, this image does not literally call for mass action, but simply invokes the events of June 16 and honours and encourages the continuance of the resistance shown on that day. The role of art became a tool for consciousness-raising–to fight apartheid's cultural and political hegemony. According to Peffer (2009:97), "the event impressed upon all attendees the need for a new sense of community among artists, and for a more direct relation between the people, their struggle and art". Phrase such as: "political struggle is an unavoidable part of life in South Africa and it must therefore infuse our art and culture" and "art is a weapon of the struggle" were proclaimed by Medu at the conference (Peffer 2009:79). Trish De Villiers wrote that "the promise offered by the Botswana Festival was the promise of relevance", a way to use the belief in the transformative power of the arts towards creating a better world (Berndt 2007:54). The argument that existed at Medu was that "South African art needed to be relevant to the antiapartheid struggle if it was to be relevant at all" (Peffer 2009:77).

According to Peffer (2009:74), "Myele argued for popular relevance, for rejection of thematic mystification and excessive figural distortion, and for direct political commitments in the art of his South African peers". Seidman (2009:89) recalls how at the conference

> Debates inevitably raged over symbolism and iconography. How would 'our' audience – the community in the townships – react to seeing a clenched fist, the Hector Pieterson image, flying banners, even an AK47? At what stage would repetition of these images come across as 'cliched' and 'stereotyped'? Alternatively does a well known

image act as a cultural signifier (a marker which the audience identifies and 'reads' with specific meaning)?

Peffer (2009:84) writes that some artists felt that there was a "blatant pressure to conform". Fears were expressed by conference participants such as Nadine Gordimer about artistic production being reduced to forms of Agitprop, a word which is a contraction of 'agitation' and 'propaganda'. She warned that images that were deemed appropriate to the struggle such as the Hector Pieterson[118] image provides a 'ready-made' stock of images that can be re-used without reflection. According to her, Agitprop binds the artist to a set of formulas deemed appropriate for committed art, and "licences a phony sub art". (Gordimer in Peffer 2009:86). She argued that artists had the right to reject agitprop themes and search out their own artistic vocabulary (Peffer 2009:86). According to artist William Kentrige,

> the art of the clenched fist rings a bit hollow. The painters, who fear reducing the political input of their work, reduce their images to systematised diagrams of discontent….We are fooled only for a minute, but after that we can ignore the work quite safely (Kentrige in Seidman 2007:78)

Other artists argued that using popular imagery was more easily read by 'the people' and was therefore more relevant to them than complex works of fine art in galleries which were almost never visited by the majority. Musician Abdullah Ibrahim however said that, instead of just blindly using popular imagery, "it is necessary for each individual to re-orientate himself before society as a whole can be transformed…it's no good shooting if you shoot in the wrong direction" (Ibrahim in Peffer 2009:85). This was often a position taken by those who believed in the inherent power for artistic creation for internal transformation.

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[118] Hector Pieterson became the subject of an iconic image of the 1976 Soweto uprising in South Africa when a news photograph by Sam Nzima of the dying Hector being carried by another student while his sister ran next to them. This image was often reproduced as a symbol of resistance and commemoration.

Here is where different ideas of the role of art came into conflict. Good (2011:346) argues that instead of the nuanced approach for internal development and political democratisation that **the ANC,**

> accorded a deeply subordinate, highly abstract and contentious role to the people: those who were simply referred to as "the risen masses" would be turned by unstated means into "organised groups of combatants", while an externally based "core" elite would function as an "officer core"; it would culminate with the "seizure of state power".

This view is in direct opposition to democratisation, which is one reason why the ANC opposed Black Consciousness. In my opinion the abstract and faceless role assigned to 'the risen masses' was a key reason for the pressures experienced by community art centres to contribute in a very limited and narrow way to the struggle, primarily through posters. On the other hand, posters *did* have the potential for nuance and real democratisation.[119] Dikobe Martins argues that that posters held the "power to pose alternatives and to induce people to think; the power to combat the specific form that cultural apartheid takes within the sphere of artistic production" (Martins in Seidman 2007:73). Hence posters presented people with ways of engaging with the world around them, or communicating messages counter to the apartheid media. Unfortunately, however, the limited view of the role of the arts for simply mobilising people does not *promote* a space for people to *critically* engage with their socio-political reality. Peffer (2009:84; 92) writes that

> Medu created pamphlets and posters for distribution inside South Africa. The group's aim was to disseminate concrete examples of the kinds of art and collective practice it felt were appropriate for the intensification of the struggle...simple, direct and unambiguously critical of the regime...[which] often reproduced the clichés of the revolution.

In my opinion this intervention by Medu represented an attempt to control the art production from community art centres, rather than leaving people to explore different

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[119] See Section 2.4.

and creative means to oppose apartheid through art. Even within poster production, however, such hegemonic control was not possible and individuals worked in more nuanced ways.

According to Peffer (2009:80-81), the conference did not result in

> Unanimity about the proper aesthetic direction for art is a rebellious present, or in a future South Africa. The conference papers, and the debates that ensued during the months and years to follow, contained dramatically differing views about methods and aims for using 'art as a weapon for the struggle'. According to the artist Lionel Davis, participants at Gabarone amicably discussed a range of options for the role of art in the struggle, but afterward the debate became more polarized.

The polarisation of this debate after the conference had great bearing on CAP's structure and direction of training, and CAP continued to search for ways to make their work more 'relevant' to the struggle against apartheid.

2.4. THE CULTURAL WORKER: THE DIFFERENT STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING FREEDOM

Following the Gaborone Symposium there was dramatic growth in poster production and other forms of community mobilisation, led by organizations such as the United Democratic Front (UDF) which was established in 1983.[120]

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[120] According to Good (2012:315) "As previously with the BCM, the arrival of the UDF was not welcomed by the ANC. It "came as a shock to Thabo and the rest of the ANC leadership", note Hadland and Rantao, and they quote Mac Maharaj adding, "they didn't believe it would happen." The well-informed Shubin agrees, and recalls an ANC friend telling him soon after: "If some of our people say that the UDF was made by us, don't believe them." The distortion, however, was unquestioningly accepted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, with possible impact on its findings....It is part of the ideological obfuscation that surrounds the UDF that it is still confidently asserted that the UDF was "essentially a front for the outlawed liberation movement."

In the years that followed the conference, the fight against apartheid through the arts intensified. CAP established silkscreen printing facilities which were used to print numerous political posters and it became one of the primary outlets for this kind of work in South Africa. This was seen as the primary role of the artist as a fellow worker fighting for freedom from apartheid. Tensions arose between those wanting to produce art in a more liberal way that was free from political commitment and those who saw posters production as the only valuable way to make a contribution to the struggle for freedom. This tension played itself out in the various ways that the 'cultural worker' was defined.

A term used by those involved in the struggle against apartheid, in order to distinguish their work from the elitist term 'artist', was that of the 'cultural worker'. Artists were seen to be primarily concerned with their own success and isolated from the community, whereas cultural workers were actively involved in the community. Van Graan (1988:2), who became the co-ordinator of CAP from 1990-1991, explains further that the term 'cultural worker' functioned

> As a symbolic term used by progressive members of the privileged classes engaged in the arts to identify themselves with the struggle of the working class… [It also functions] as a demand by progressives engaged *in the arts for their work to be taken seriously as work*…From our own local experiences this demand may be *directed primarily at other forces within the progressive movement* as those engaged in cultural work, struggle to assert themselves within this movement. [My emphasis]

Medu defined the cultural worker as anyone who worked in the field of culture and was using his/her skills for 'the people'.[121] According to Seidman (2007: 72),

> Medu members preferred to call themselves 'cultural workers' rather than 'artists'. The term implied that art-makers should not see themselves as elite and isolated individuals, touched by creative

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[121] Van Graan (1988), at the end of his article, defines the cultural worker in the following way, "Anyone – irrespective of class, level of technical skill or function – who is engaged in artistic activity (including creation, performance, technical assistance, organisation and administration and teaching) in whatever form or capacity and who locates his/her work and/or him/herself on the side of those extra-governmental…forces struggling for a democratic unitary state"

madness or genius, but simply people doing their work, whether painting, music, or poetry. [122]

For example, Hamilton Buduza, an artist who trained at CAP, says, "I would consider myself a cultural worker because of the workshops we were running in the townships…Some other artists who were self-supportive, I don't think they were calling themselves cultural workers".[123] Peffer (2009:80) argues that, not only did the term make the artist equal in status to any other worker, but it made "the race of the maker less relevant to the act of creation – or of interpretation. No longer were there (white) 'artists' and (black) 'township artists'. From now on they were all 'cultural workers'". It was also a means to counter what was considered an elitist definition of artistic practice, and an attempt to redefine the role of art in society. Andrew Steyn (1989:5, 21), a visual arts organiser at CAP, wrote:

> The development of 'Art' in South Africa has been shaped largely by the markets and institutions of the white minority. It is through there structures that their ideas and assumptions about 'art' have become dominant, for example the idea that art is based on individual genius rather than being based on human and social needs, or that art is superior to crafts.[124]

Hence artists were resisting the dominant ideology of the arts and finding a more socially conscious way of practicing art which was not defined by gallery spaces. This was, no doubt, influenced by Black Consciousness where "emphasis was often placed on the links between the artist, life, and 'the people'" (Peterson 2006:170). Mike Van Graan (1990:1) writes that "it is very difficult to determine when, where, and by whom, the term 'cultural worker' was first used". It seems that the term was already in use before the Culture and

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[122] "Cultural worker" is a general term (yet it is specific to the arts) and "is consistent with other anti-division of labour, "socialist-speak" terms such as "intellectual worker" which refers to academics, researchers, scientists, librarians, etc, and "health worker" which includes doctors, nurses...and so on…. The generality of the term also works against specialisation and division of labour within the arts so that it would include those who create, who perform, those that administer and organise, those who work behind the scenes and so on" (Van Graan 1988).

[123] Interview with Hamilton Buduza (08/05/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[124] 1989 CAP Newsletter.

Resistance conference. However, Lionel Davis notes that after the conference the term 'cultural worker', "became like currency in Cape Town, everybody was talking about the cultural worker as a person who devotes his/her time in the promotion of art as a weapon of struggle…to promote art awareness of the struggle". This was promoted at Gaborone. The aim of the conference was expressed in the following way by Dikobe Ben Martins:

> It was hoped that this exposure, experience and effort will lead to greater co-operation and collective work among cultural workers in South Africa in the years ahead, with the aim of heightening the level of culture in South Africa and to encourage cultural workers to be part and parcel of the communities from which they come (Seidman 2007:104).

According to Peffer (2009:80), Medu proclaimed at the conference that "artists must learn to break out of the bourgeois trap of individualism, and must disciple themselves to place their talents and their perceptions at the disposal of the communities".[125] Likewise, Thami Mnyele proclaimed at the conference that "the fact that in South Africa the majority of the people are engaged in a struggle for liberation means that art and cultural workers cannot be divorced from this process" (Mnyele in Seidman 2007:105).[126]

The primary way in which this commitment was interpreted by the political organisations that opposed apartheid was through the creation of posters that communicated the struggles of the community. However, not all artists had the same interpretation of what it meant to work with and for 'the community' using art. Lionel Davis expresses his frustration with the narrow application the idea of the cultural worker took on:

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[125] Lionel Davis had the following to say in a personal interview:
"The call [at the conference] was that those people who have the skills should go back to their respective communities and then work with existing NGO's to impart these skills. Where there was no organisation they should make an effort to start up something so that they can give those people who had been marginalised an opportunity to learn skills so that they can take their own development further."

[126] According to Martins, the "Art towards Social Development" exhibition at the Gaborone conference reflected, "the constant battle among cultural workers to find a place for themselves in society which is not merely that of light entertainers, but one of making an important contribution to the development of society" (Martins in Seidman 2007:104).

Some people didn't do that [make posters], but it didn't mean that they were irrelevant. It was at a time when everyone was making political art, even if your heart and mind was not there, you made political art because it was the currency of the time... [the term] covers a broad spectrum of people, one of the problems that we had, which I always contested, in fact, if you were not flying a political flag, and making political art, then your contribution was seen as irrelevant. You could be painting pretty flowers, but that didn't mean that you were irrelevant to the development of young people, to the development of South African betterment. You would find that the guy would take his or her time to go and teach art in Langa, Khayalisha, or in Ocean view, making a valuable contribution....those people were just as relevant, as the one who shouts "Amandla!" and makes political artwork. So I would never be dismissive of those guys, but those with a "holier than thou" attitude would treat those guys as irrelevant and treat them as shit.[127]

Similarly, CAP activist Ishmael Moss commented that people had "to realise that the struggle for emancipation is bigger than shouting slogans" (Seidman 2007:112). The work done by artists not dedicated to poster production came under a lot of pressure during the intensification of the struggle for liberation in the 1980s. Lucy Alexander recalls that, "Whether art was worth supporting at all was a major debate while I was there [at CAP] or whether everything should be devoted towards media and political consciousness raising. It was quite difficult for anyone to flourish".[128] Not all artists saw posters as the only way to contribute to the struggle. According to Peffer (2009:96), many artists viewed "the consciousness-raising aspect of people's culture as a process internal to the artist's own development, as much as it was the creation of a sense of community against the grain of apartheid". Seidman (2007:72) reports that, at Medu, it was believed that the arts should build "self-awareness and self image...create new understandings of our lives, and pass on these understandings". From this should come a vision of "how to take our community and our people forward". While political groups saw the potential of art primarily in the end product, artists recognised that the process of making art or media was just as important. Berndt (2007:2) and others involved in CAP Media argue that poster production not only disseminated information but "made it possible for ordinary

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[127] Interview with Lionel Davis. Muizenberg, 02 Feb 2010.

[128] Interview with Lucy Alexander (21/10/1996). Conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

working class people, through the production of these graphics, to speak for themselves". To borrow Marxist terminology, it put the means of production back into the hands of 'the people' (Berndt 2007:22). Poster production was not only about the cultural product, but rather the process of creating the media was a way for people to begin setting themselves free. Trish de Villiers writes that

> The main reward for us lay in the surprised recognition by individuals that the previously closed world of the media was now open - they could, in some real way, speak for themselves. However small and messy the product (and they were often very messy), this was an important realisation in the context of that constricted, controlling, paternalistic world (De Villiers in Berndt 2007:55).

The act of creation thus helped to build "revolutionary self-awareness, in opposition to the ideology of apartheid" (Peffer 2009:83). Gaby Cheminais says, "I remember children conceptualising, visually, their dream of a future where their poverty would be a distant nightmare; and women and men deconstructing the apartheid media they were fed, and reconstructing their own" (Cheminais in Berndt 2007:62). The task of using art as a 'weapon of struggle' was diverse and many cultural workers saw the process of making art (or media) as more important than consciousness raising. Colleen Cupido, full-time CAP drama student in 1989, said that

> A cultural worker would be somebody who works [with] the resources from within the potential that each person has...It's not [about] your talent, but your availability....[It's] not educating people as hard-core activists, but understanding...[their] social conditions...and looking at the morale of people, and instilling the sense of dignity although we are disposed people...so, we looked at alternative values...like caring,[and] sharing.[129]

Despite such understandings of how art could contribute to the struggle many individuals felt pressured to produce more blatant forms of commitment through the production of

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[129] Interview with, Colleen Cupido (05/05/1997). Interview conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

posters.[130] For example Poppy Morris states that CAP artist Vuyile Voyia felt pressured by "a 'cultural debt', and advocated that black artists' work should become "the weapon of the struggle" meanwhile he "wanted to deal with issues in his own way and not be directed into the popular concept of poster art. He firmly believes that posters, whilst attracting an audience, allow the recipient to glance and understand therefore dealing with an issue only in a literal way".[131] More nuanced forms of art could help people come to critical understandings of their situation and surroundings.

2.5. DEMOCRATISATION OF THE ARTS AND 'PEOPLE'S CULTURE'

In the period following the 1982 Culture and Resistance conference, art became a means for greater political mobilisation. According to Serote (2008:193), "Medu was established on the basis of opposing apartheid culture and nurturing democratic culture, an alternative South African culture to replace the old". In searching for new cultural forms in the visual arts, Medu wrote that the exhibition present at the conference showed "the long way we have to go – in creating an alternative to the 'western' definition of art which we have been so steeped in" (Peffer 2009:97). Medu held the belief that, "true culture of the people would be one that was not exclusive to the elite world of art galleries, but was seen in the streets, on T-shirts and posters, and was voiced in political songs and poems performed at political rallies" (Peffer 2009:77). This represents a shift away from the strategies of early pioneers such as Pemba and Mohl who tried to use their paintings as a means of communicating to both the state and the black proletariat. Gavin Younge (1988:11) explains that the "promise of art as a form of human communication which is visually, emotionally and, at the very least, intellectually satisfying, has been side-lined by the urgency of a social and political situation where children are detained, parents shot

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[130]I do not mean to imply that those who committed to poster making only did so due to external pressure. The majority did so out of a strong belief in its potential for change. However, those who did not chose these forms often felt like their contribution was not relevant (as previously explained by Davis).

[131] http://crossingsproject.org/p1/art/poppy/index.html. Last accessed on 30 March 2011

and collaborators burned" and hence the role of art in the struggle was reappraised. This section examines the role posters, murals, and People's Parks played in creating democratised forms of art.

2.5.1. PEOPLE'S PARKS.

Peffer (2009:82) writes that, for Thami Mnyele, a leading figure in the arts and resistance movement, community art would be "characterised by the sort of mutual nourishment of the people and their art that he understood had once existed within traditional African cultures". He argues that "the actual act of creating the visual imagery is informed by the community and nourished by it, consciously or unconsciously, and that it is the community which will or must act as audience" (Mnyele in Peffer 2009:81). People's Parks were examples of spontaneous expression which allowed for "open ended popular participation from untrained artists" (Sack 1989:194, 201) whereby 'the community' itself engaged in acts of reclaiming space. Due to the nature of the parks, community art organisations like CAP did not have any involvement in their creation. However the parks form an important part of the aesthetic means whereby apartheid was resisted and the democratisation of art in South Africa.

Sack (1989:200) writes that "after the mass removals of black people from mixed suburbs of Johannesburg into the ethnically segregated townships, the first generation of children to grow up under these appalling conditions were the youth of the 1970s". This generation of youth became those who resisted and spoke out against the government in public protests such as the historic 1976 riots. The broader context of the creation of the peace parks was influenced by the atmosphere after these riots, including the formation of structures such as the UDF. According to an anonymous author,

> the formation [of the UDF] was actually the result of changes that had been taking place on a social, economic and political level since the Soweto Uprising. A new, more militant culture had emerged, that led to the formation of many civic, youth, student, worker, women and other organizations…In the immediate post-Soweto period, amid government suppression, growing curiosity among the urban black [population] and growing political awareness…

Sack (1989:200) writes that, "artistic activities by youth formed an important part of the process of mass-mobilisation and cultural and political awakening", which included the peace parks. Sack (1989:201) explains that in 1985 the UDF responded to the collapse, or abdication, of services provided by the state; for example, "in the event of a breakdown in municipal services, organise street cleaning". In addition to this "children would create 'people's parks' on waste ground, naming them after liberation heroes and decorating them with gaily-painted scrap metal sculptures". Sack (1989:203) writes that these parks acted as "play areas for children and meeting places for adults". Sack (1989:201,205) writes that,

> The creation on "people's parks" represents a major (though short-lived) historical event in the cultural history of the townships in the 1980s, an event in which art and social action met to attempt the transformation of urban squalor, as well as the symbolic consolidation of "people's power". It was a popular and participatory approach to cultural production...The building of the parks necessitated organised action from the youth. In Soweto youths went out into the streets with money boxes, requesting residents to contribute small amounts of money for the purchasing of paint, and plants. The support of local traders in Mamelodi was sought in obtaining truckloads of soil for the purposes of landscaping. The trucks were also used to remove rubbish, because at the height of the turmoil the municipal services had ceased to function. It was a call to collective action from the community

Sack (1989:203) explains that the making of the parks "always included the painting of signs, which gave name to the park, and often included short sayings or slogans. Some parks included found-object sculptures or painted murals". Sack (1989:201) writes that the parks represented not only an act of land reclamation and beautification, but "the painted images and slogans played an important didactic function, serving to popularise the historic black leadership". Parks such as *Only Poor Man Feels It* (Fig. 50) communicated social messages about common hardships faced by township residents regarding the effect of apartheid, making it highly political. The work consisted of a sign and found objects, such as a bicycle with a makeshift human figure riding it. Similarly parks like *Democratic Park* (Fig. 51) were highly political in promoting democratic spaces in opposition to the totalitarian rule of the apartheid state. This work is simpler, and consists of some plants and a sign, indicating a promise of growth within democracy. *The Garden of Peace* (Fig. 52) is an example of the way these parks were established as

spaces outside of the apartheid world of violence and oppression; it creates a space using a stained glass window with church iconography and a large sign to demarcate the space as peaceful. Sack (1989:204; 205) writes that people "took responsibility for a localised basis for the aesthetic dimension of their social environment" in order to "provide an alternative to the violence that permeated the townships during this traumatic historical period". Works like the *Tyre and Tree Sculpture* (Fig. 53) affected the space in a similar manner by establishing beauty to replace the ugliness of apartheid conditions by turning waste ground into communal space. Many of the parks included murals (Fig. 54-55) to communicate messages like "Hlanganani" (Fig. 55), which means to come together or to unite. This was significant since "Underlying all this activity...was a struggle on the part of the community towards self determination and the reinstatement of their own political and cultural values" (Sack 1989:210). As Sack (1989:192) argues, "Graffiti, murals and innovative artworks…have attempted to offer a visual culture, providing another view of reality". Consequently, when the apartheid forces occupied the townships theses expressions' of asserting democratic political rights were completely destroyed (Sack 1989:210).

The parks represented an important act of creating aesthetic means of resistance from individuals who had not received formal art training. Three years before the creation of the people's parks, artist Manfred Zylla experimented with incorporating the expressions of untrained people in his work at CAP. Zylla was an artist from Germany involved in teaching at CAP from 1981-1986. In 1982 he held an exhibition called *Inter-Action* (Fig. 56) where he invited members of the public to paint or draw onto his images of figures representing the apartheid state. This resulted in graffiti reminiscent of those found on public walls with phrases like "Remember Mandela" and "Detention won't silence us" and represents an attempt for a democratisation of fine art as a means of resistance.

2.5.2. MURALS

According to Marschall (2002:47), the painting of murals did not play a very big part in popular resistance art when compared to posters, t-shirts, and banners. It was not encouraged because "the repressive climate of the time was not conducive to the protracted and highly visible process of painting a mural, particularly on an exterior public wall" (Marschall 2002:47). Marschall (2002:51) explains that,

> much more common than large-scale murals both in townships and in the cities were more informal and spontaneous activities such as graffiti or political slogans, the display of banned symbols, such as the ANC flag, or the striking up of protest posters, which were usually very quickly removed

Marschall (2002:56) argues that in the 1980s the seemingly harmless images of "black people playing music...could be considered political art, offensive to the authorities...as it publically asserts African identity, celebrates African culture, and nurtures pride in black cultural heritage". According to Marshall (2002:47) even works with direct political content were acceptable within galleries, and so called Resistance Art, "was always firmly lodged in the fine art tradition, which never reached more than a selected few and hardly had true potential as a political agitator". Two of the conditions under which art products were banned under apartheid are identified by Mario Pissarra: "When a work or activity is removed from a high art context (e.g. not intended primarily as art)" or "When the art is made available on a mass scale" (Pissarra in Van Robbroeck 1991:39). Consequently such works in galleries were deemed acceptable by the apartheid government, whereas murals were not. This is because, as Marshall (2002:2) writes, murals "lay claim to public space" and in South Africa "the control of space has always been contested".

Williamson (1989:84-85) writes that in 1984 a media group from Rhodes University, Grahamstown, were inspired by the mural work being done in Mexico, Chile, and Mozambique to try to use murals in the township (Fig. 57). However, Marschall

(2002:57) states that the initial proposal for a mural on Raglan Road[132] was turned down "on the grounds that the mural would conflict with the settler aesthetic that the city of Grahamstown was concerned to preserved *[sic.]*".[133] Marschall (2002:58) argues that "political opposition is couched here in aesthetic terms, because what was really at stake was not the 'settler identity' of the town's appearance but the 'settler identity' of its inhabitants". It was feared that the mural would "visibly affirm the black township residents' identity and possibly reflect unpleasant aspects of their white domination".

Marschall (2002:51) writes that during the 70s and 80s in Nyanga, Cape Town, and other townships "there were many murals inside people's homes or on exterior walls facing side alleys not patrolled by police. Usually painted haphazardly at night most of these paintings were presumably relatively small and informal".[134] These expressions included various forms of graffiti such as those reproduced in Sue Williamson's book *Resistance Art* (Fig. 58). They could be easily and quickly applied to walls using stencils such as the banned image of Mandela's face or the image of a gun.[135] They challenged the apartheid dominance of space and contained agitating comments such as "Forward to people's power". Marschall (2002:47) writes, "In 1985 so-called poster murals, produced in sections and glued to the wall clandestinely, began to appear on billboards and public walls in Johannesburg and Cape Town". While containing political messages they were placed in more public spaces and had great visibility due to their size, but to avoid capture had to be painted beforehand and glued on (Fig. 59).

Lionel Davis recalls that one of the first things he noticed when he first went to CAP at the end of 1977 was the murals on the wall.[136] CAP was certainly aware of the potential for murals as a form of art that could assert a "people's aesthetic" in 1989 when

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[132] This is one of the main thoroughfares in Grahamstown, which it runs past the township.

[133] The mural was eventually painted on Rhodes University campus.

[134] Marschall (2002:51) explains the content of these murals as follows: "Some…represented overtly political imagery, such as Caspirs in townships, police with guns and the portrayal of local combatants or heroes of the struggle. Others were more educational in content – depicting, for instance, people reading books to address the persisting problem of illiteracy in the townships – but nevertheless directed towards the ultimate goals of the political struggle, which was fought on many fronts".

[135] According to Sean O' Toole (2004), in order to erase the memory of Mandela after 1964, the government, "amongst the many tactics they employed, were banning his early writings, and more pertinent to what follows, outlawing depictions of his physical image. For much of the 27 years Nelson Mandela was in jail, his image was banned and his impression removed from all media in South Africa. Not that this crisis of visibility deflated the power he evoked in the popular imagination".

[136] Interview with Lionel Davis. Muizenberg, 02 Feb 2010.

it was written about in the newsletter. However, according to Marschall (2002:10), "Annette Loubser's attempts at introducing mural painting at Community Arts Project (CAP) in Cape Town in the early 1980s were refuted because murals were perceived to be advertisements". Marschall (2002:52) writes that CAP "did not really become greatly involved in mural art at all before the early 1990s...it is significant to appreciate that organisations like CAP had to walk a tight-rope with regard to their relationship to the state...[they] could not risk being closed down for having [publically] stepped out of line". CAP did however engage in murals on their interior walls and also executed a mural with the children who attended CAP on Saturdays demonstrating its belief in the mural format (Fig. 60).[137]

CAP painted murals within Community House[138] the same year the structure was built in 1978 (Fig. 61). Marschall (2002:28) writes that they "are reminiscent of the 'grand tradition' of mural art, the socially committed wall paintings of Diego Riviera and others in Mexico with their dynamic composition and the stylistic techniques of social realism". The mural is painted in a figurative and realistic manner and depicts and identifies with the working class. The theme of workers uniting in a common struggle is evident. Other elements of the struggle such as literacy is emphasised by a boy trying to read, but needing to close his ears to the noise about him. Rural mother and child imagery is also evident. Finally military might and occupation linked to a lack of justice (a blindfolded judge) is depicted probably speaking about the effect of harsh emergency regulations on black people. Another example of a mural created by CAP is *Dont be a Ja Baas, Dont Vote* (Fig. 62.) which was part of a 1989 exhibition at CAP.[139] The image is a conglomeration of various resistance images, such as clenched fists and Caspirs[140], and notably the face of Nelson Mandela, whose image had been banned. In the background the ANC flag curves and folds from the left hand side of the image until it becomes a raised fist. However, the image also portrays images of people dancing and making

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[137] The date of this is unkown, but the presence of Tyrone Appollis and Manfred Zylla indicates that is was probably executed between 1982-87 which is when they were both in attendance at CAP

[138] Community House was built in 1987 and was presumably owned by CAP Media, and hence murals could be painted on the inside. I am not clear on the use of murals in CAP in Mowbray or later in Woodstock, however both spaces were rented and perhaps this limited the extent to which murals could be used. However Lionel Davis has commented on seeing a mural on his first visit to CAP in 1977.

[139] Kramer, N. 1989, 6 Dec. 'Overtly political exhibition is well worth a visit.' *The Argus.* np.

[140] The Casspir is a landmine-protected personnel carrier (APC). They were deployed in the townships.

music; thus, the work also affirms the strength and value of 'people's culture' in opposition to apartheid culture.

In the 1989 CAP newsletter, Andrew Steyn (1989:5), who explored the potential of murals, wrote that "the visual arts and crafts have been used as a means of social transformation and human development. In Chile, for example...the painting of murals has been used as a form of protest and a weapon of struggle". [141] The painting of murals here was set in opposition to art forms which are isolated from the community, and the potential for murals to represent a 'people's culture' was emphasised. Marschall (2002:52) explains that even though not many murals were painted under the repressive 1980s, that it was a time which "conceitised muralists and forged their convictions about mural art as a people's art and the assumed effectiveness of public murals to convey important messages and contribute to change in society". With this in mind the full-time CAP students of 1990-1991 experimented with the practice of mural painting (Fig. 63). Subject matter varied from celebration of African identity such as in Mpumelelo Melane's mural (Fig. 64) of stereotyped African society, including carving, and making music. Beth Mayekiso's mural (Fig. 65) on the other hand communicates a far more political message with its signification of slavery, death, and a beast. Thus the subject matter which students used to speak to the 'community' varied greatly. It is questionable how such murals would represent or transform the so called communities they were created for, in fact Marschall (1999:61) writes that some murals "are just as imposed on the community, much like billboards". Nevertheless, murals represented an important part of democratising art by making it more available to a public that would not visit galleries.

2.5.3. POSTERS

The role of posters has already been discussed elsewhere and is not the main topic of this thesis. This short section examines the practicalities of creating a 'people's culture' through posters and the successes and challenges they encountered. After the 1982 Gaborone conference CAP started with a silkscreen workshop. They had no equipment,

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[141]   In CAP 1989 September Newsletter.

but had to find old screens (which had to be cleaned) and cheap ink to use.[142] Their facilities quickly became used by a large number of political resistance organisations for creating media. There was a lot of activity at CAP, with a range of people with different political stances and agendas seeking to make use of such rare facilities.[143] Lionel Davis writes that they were inundated with requests soon after opening their doors. "Day and night we slogged," Davis recalls, "we felt it our political duty not to say no to requests. People flocked to our door from all over the Western Cape and even the Eastern Cape" (Davis in Berndt 2007:47). A lot of work went into consulting the individuals who came to CAP on behalf of organisations regarding the best means for producing the desired posters. Seidman (2007:112) explains that these activists, "came with little visual vocabulary for struggle" and "a large part of the workshopping therefore was around developing this vocabulary". Berndt provides a succinct explanation of how they went about training people with no artistic backgrounds to produce their own media, and how the political organisations responded. He writes the following:

> The technique involved very simple visual symbols that communicated information and could be easily taught to untrained political activists… People would learn by doing ... We hoped that this provided a lived experience of participatory democracy and would enable ways and would enable activists who had learnt to make their own posters, T-shirts and banners to establish media production facilities in their own organisations. We found however that: firstly, there was a constant stream of new activists that came in to make posters…because of detentions and the reshuffling of activists elected to be media producers by the organisations. Secondly, the organisations did not have the financial resources to set up the equipment and facilities for making posters…it was easier for them to use the existing facilities at CAP (Berndt 2007:18).

The artistically skilled people therefore carried a lot of responsibility in terms of equipping new people with the skills needed to produce media. As a result of these limitations, the training in skill and artistic vocabulary could only take place in limited and rudimentary ways. Seidman (2007:112) writes that, "people who came in as political activists felt comfortable with visual vocabulary that included images of barbed wire,

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[142] Interview with Lionel Davis. Muizenberg, 02 Feb 2010.

[143] While activity increased and streamed through CAP Media, Joubert states that the numbers of those doing art training remained consistent.

police vehicles, [and] clenched fists", whereas "those with more training felt that the 'language of struggle' was adhered to 'somewhat slavishly'". An anonymous individual from CAP recalls that:

> We all had to deal with those issues in our communities where people would come and knock on your door at five in the morning and you had to do twenty pamphlets or placards, or something like that- that is what the role of the artist was seen to be…[they were] not talking 'art', [but] talking 'people's culture'…It was join a youth group, join an organisation, and with that structure there's a little group perusing the cultural side of things…culture was the last thing on the agenda. The only time people seemed to realize culture, was when they [were] having some mass rally, and then someone would have to recite a poem, or they [would] need some media surrounding that function. A lot of artists got frustrated with that – it was kind of undermining.[144]

Hence, due to limited human and artistic resources, as well as the limited recognition of the role of culture, the development of a more sophisticated, yet accountable, engagement with posters was sidelined. This evidently frustrated some artists who were searching for more sophisticated ways of engaging with the struggle through art.

Despite the challenges faced by institutions like CAP, a large number of posters were made. Examples of these are two posters created by the United Democratic Front at CAP in 1985 (Figure 66 and 67). The one poster (Fig. 66) makes use of the well known extract from the freedom charter, "the people shall govern", while raised fists show a unity among every kind of worker, including artists as 'cultural workers' represented by the paintbrushes on the far left. This encourages unity among all workers fighting for a new South Africa. The other UDF poster (Fig. 67) makes clear demands for "fewer guns" and "higher wages". The image depicts guns discarded on a pile on the left and a family on the right holding wages with a mother raising her fist. Both images unambiguously call for support in the consumer boycott of 1985.[145] These posters served as a means to inform people about the boycott and to encourage them to unite against apartheid.

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[144] Interview with Anonymous (29/05/1997) and (26/06/1997). Interview conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[145] These were means of protest in which white-owned shops were boycotted. These boycotts sometimes excluded shops owned by progressive whites, and included those owned by black apartheid collaborators.

At CAP there was a growing tension with regards to the purpose of art, and a divide existed between those who wanted to create art for its own sake and those who believed that all art should serve the struggle in the form of media. This divide was further entrenched when the silkscreen unit at CAP, which was initially part of the Woodstock building, acquired funding to build their own space in Salt River in 1987 which would then be fully dedicated to poster-production. This became known as CAP Media and was responsible for the production of innumerable posters, T-shirts, and banners in the fight against apartheid. [146]

2.6. BETWEEN LIBERALISM AND RELEVANCE: CAP IN THE LATE 1980s

Van Robbroeck (2004:42) argues that "the liberal-paternalistic origins of South African community arts [as 'charity institutions'] later conflicted with the radical political aims of the independent community arts centres of the 70s and 80s". Many of the later centres adopted Neo-Marxist ideological aims to complement the militant aims of the struggle.[147] Art was seen as one way through which apartheid ideology was spread, and as explained earlier, it was seen as elitist. Van Robbroeck (2004:47) writes how "resentment had developed in the black art community regarding the exploitation and co-option of black art by white establishment structures". The sentiment behind this is well articulated in the 1987 edition of CAP's newsletter by Mi Hlatshwayo (1987:4):

> We have been culturally exploited time and time again: we have been singing, parading, boxing, acting and writing within a system we did not control. So far, black workers have been feeding all their creativity into a culture machine to make profits for others ...it is time to begin controlling our creativity: we must create space in our struggle through our own....artwork....we must also fight against the cultural profit machines...

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[146]   Interview with Lionel Davis. Muizenberg, 02 Feb 2010.
[147] This Militancy was a particular feature of the ANC ideology.

Van Robbroeck (2004:46) writes that "in 1983 the United Democratic Front was launched and with it, a campaign to promote 'people's culture' and a decision to boycott the dominant "apartheid culture".[148] Van Robboreck (2004:46) further explains:

> Increasingly community arts centres overtly declared their alliance with a people's culture in opposition to apartheid culture. Centres that did not declare their political affiliations, or declared themselves 'apolitical', were regarded as 'co-opted' by the government's propaganda campaign.[149]

Seidman (2007:200) writes: "If some works of art did not reflect that oppression, was the artist giving comfort to the enemy? Was the artist saying that life in South Africa could be normal or nice under apartheid"? This section examines how CAP responded to these tensions as it attempted to create work of a high standard, while remaining relevant to the struggle.

Mike van Graan (1988:10) explains that "the terrain in which CAP functions has come to be more and more influenced by the mass democratic movement...This fact has invariably influenced the direction, definition, leadership, constituency and functions of CAP". CAP was perceived as a liberal, charity organisation by those more radically committed to the struggle. These rising tensions resulted in numerous against CAP's white director, Derek Joubert, regarding accountability to the struggle and his position of leadership. Joubert eventually left CAP in 1986 and was replaced by a decision making body consisting of many individuals, which was supposed to ensure that no single

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[148] In response to this initiative the Department of National Education dissolved the National Cultural Council which had concerned itself with the "preservation, promotion and advancement of the culture of the Whites in the Republic of South Africa" (Department of National Education Annual Report, 1981:42). In its place they introduced the Cultural Promotion Act (Act 35 of 1983) which concerned itself, in effect, with actively promoting a 'national' South African culture abroad to counteract the effects of the cultural boycott. In the process the South African art world became increasingly polarised between a "democratic people's culture" on the one hand and a "dominant apartheid culture" on the other.

[149] Lucy Alexander recalls how Derek Joubert was 'edged out' of his position as director because he was perceived as a liberal. Joubert recalls trying to create a space wherein people could express themselves artistically and politically, maintaining that the apolitical expression was valid. He also explains how art was seen by some as a bourgeois indulgence, a kind of leisure activity which distracted them from the horrors of apartheid and had no relevance to the struggle (Interview with Lucy Alexander. Newlands, 26 Jan 2010; Interview with Derek Joubert. Barrydale, 26 Jan 2010).

viewpoint dominated.[150] Van Graan (1988:5) writes that the struggle for democracy within CAP was part of a wider resistance against undemocratic structures within the country. Shirley Walters notes that "the experience in CAP was not dissimilar to [that which] I was hearing in other organisations. At that time, what was a dominant notion [was] the theory and practice of participatory democracy…to not have anyone in charge"[151]. The idea was that every decision had to be made by everyone. Between 1986 and 1989 CAP had no director, but rather was run by a committee with elected representatives.[152] During these years CAP toiled to remain relevant to the struggle and 'the people' while being an effective body for delivering excellent service.[153] Lionel Davis recalls the democratic process created a great deal of inefficiency; he says that "to reconcile so many different voices, so many different interests and political agendas was a [mine field]. Decisions that would have taken one hour, took months, which led to a lot of acrimonious relationships".

During this time, CAP began undergoing a major assessment of the role it served and there were a lot of discussions regarding democratisation and the place of the organisation in society. Trish de Villiers, who was involved with the poster making from

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[150] This body was initially called the Management Committee (MANCOMM) which according to Van Graan (1988:15-16) "consisted of all staff employed for more than 20 hours per week and its task was to take over the overall planning and day to day running of CAP". In 1989 MANCOMM became the CAP Committee (CAPCOMM) which was comprised of the CAP chairperson, the co-ordinators of each project, a staff representative, the chair of the student representative council, all permanent staff, two part-time staff members, one student from each project, and two trustees (Bolton 1995). In October 1989, Mike van Graan was elected as the committee chairperson and in 1990 became director, ending the attempt at a democratic decision making process (Nolte 1997). It is worth noting that despite this, women's views were still often neglected.

[151] Interview with Shirley Walters. (06/06/1997). Interview conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[152] Several staff did however fill in key positions which were once handled by the director. In 1986 Trish De Villiers was appointed as overall co-ordinator, the position of administrator and public relations was filled by Liz Mckenzie. Later that year Anne Schuster became responsible for finance and fundraising. In 1988 Lionel Davis took over De Villiers' position as co-ordinator and Lynn Brown was appointed to the position of administrative co-ordinator. (Nolte 1997)

[153] Tony Morphet facilitated a workshop for CAP staff in 1987 to help it form an effective management strategy. He notes how CAP prioritised the quality of the internal culture above the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. Further he writes that "CAP staff were prepared to grant a higher value to the preservation of the internal culture of 'democratic participation' than they were to a self defined mission in the world" (Morphet 1987:18) Morphet (1987:19) also explains that there was "a constant counter theme...the need for CAP to 'deliver the goods' of art in the most effective way".

1982 and became co-ordinator in 1986-7, explains that it was the desire of organisations like CAP "to be seen as relevant" that motivated a lot of their training and actions.[154] Further, she states that

> if people wanted to beat us with a stick from outside they would say "well CAP is run by a bunch of middle class 'whities' what do they have to do with the community?" and so on...When I was Co-ordinating ...we weren't taken very seriously, because culture wasn't very serious stuff...the political leadership...saw us as a bit of a flea, "what is this cultural nonsense , and what's it got to do with the struggle," and then it took a turn when culture was given sanctions, but when it came out as an area of focus...it was very much a toy-toy culture.[155]

While CAP Media had a clear form of commitment to the struggle, those involved in fine art CAP struggled with how their work could be more accountable to the people. Seidman (2007:65-6) notes several artists, throughout the years of CAP's growth, "wrestled with the question of how to express themselves, as individuals and artists on the one hand, and in relation to, or in contrast with, the demands of the mass movement, on the other".[156] As explained in an earlier section, CAP ran full-time training for six individuals from 1985-6, training both art and teaching skills in an attempt to try and have a greater multiplication effect of its educational recourses. In 1987 CAP started a new three-year full-time course. This time students had to be mandated representatives of community organisations so as to assure they would have a context to return to once their training was complete. [157] This was one attempt to create artists who could actively contribute to

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[154] Interview with Trish de Villiers (27/09/1996) conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[155] Interview with Trish de Villiers (27/09/1996) conducted by Robyn Denny. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5.

[156] Seidman (2007:111) explains that" Tensions arose between the new CAP Production Unit and the existing CAP arts education project. Some of the artists saw themselves as training people within the community in arts skill – perhaps a step away from political involvement – while others saw their work as a part of the growing mass democratic movement.

[157] According to a full-time student of 1987, Lugile Bam, art history was taught in the course which looked at different art movements such as Impressionism, Cubism, and Egyptian art. She claims, however, it did not form a big part of the course and what we were really concerned about was "getting the skills and then going out and sharing the skills with the people". Bam explains further: "full-time students were mostly black. What was common [was their] coming from various organizations like UDF, trade

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the struggle using their artistic skills.[158] However, despite the overtly political aims of the course, and the anti-apartheid organisations these students were sourced from, the work did not greatly differ from those one would find in the part-time classes. Many artists in part-time classes dealt with political themes in a very literal way such as Xolile Mtakatya's *How Long*, n.d. (Fig. 68). It makes use of the Hector Peterson imagery and is set against images of the violence and military occupation of the Caspirs, with no room for ambiguity in its political intent. An untitled work published in CAP's 1988 June Newsletter depicts a more personal engagement by Mtakatya (Fig. 69). He was an active member of the Cape Youth Congress and was detained in 1986. He says, "I began scratching and drawing on the grey walls of the prison cell to relieve my frustration".[159] One wonders whether the figure on the floor is a representation of his own experiences in detention. The African mask in the background along with the two dancing figures seems to affirm a power in creativity and self-affirmation. This was a political statement about apartheid conditions drawn from personal experience. The work by part-time students often engaged with the oppression they experienced every day. Despite the fact that the 1987 full time program had overtly political goals, the work did not differ significantly from that produced by the part-time students.

A series of works created by the 1987 full-time students in 1988 can be seen in Figures 70-75. According to Phillipa Hobbs and Elizabeth Rankin (1997:46), it was the teacher Mario Sickle who "initiated work by drawing a meandering line of barbed wire across a group of six blocks as a starting point for the print" hence predetermining the

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unions and development organizations ... and the language was one of oppression .... Whatever theme we were given, we would link it with the struggle ... the cultural struggle ...but I don't think there was just propaganda made at all". (Interview with Lugile Bam (23/04/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5). However, according to the 1989 newsletter, *Captions*, the students of the 1987-89 course "came from Guguletu, Paarl, East London, and Transkei and their occupations before joining the course are equally varied. One was a 'milking herdboy', another mineworker and a third a 'designer for shops'. Some were unemployed". Students like Lugile Bam had a context to return to in East London at the South African Cultural and Community Development School. ". (Interview with Lugile Bam (23/04/1997). Conducted by Heidi Bolton. University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Department. BC1195, F5).

[158] Meanwhile, as is reported by Mike van Graan, and CAP students Ricky Dyaloyi and Tony Mhayi, the part-time classes carried on providing liberal art education. This was largely due to the part-time nature of the teachers for whom it was unrealistic to expect the adoption of a mission statement (Personal interviews).

[159] http://www.capegallery.co.za/xolile_mtakatya_cv.htm. First accessed on 10 May 2010.

work's engagement with ideas of restriction, demarcation, and violence often found in various forms of 'resistance art'. Works by Tom Sefako, Xolani Somana, Lugile Bam, and Solomon Siko are depictions of rural or township scenery. The use of these scenes in 'Township Art' were held in disrepute by the politicized generation of the late 1970's since it used picturesque township scenery to make profit on behalf of white gallery owners. In these works the idyllic township, or rural, scenery is disrupted by the wire, lending the work more strongly to readings of the plight of people living under these conditions. In Henry de Leeuw's work entitled *Artists in Isolation* (Fig. 72), the artist prefers an abstracting style with flattened, strongly demarcated sequences of bright colour in a composition crowded with African artefacts. The work appears to be a celebration of African culture, but the title and use of barbed wire seems to comment on restricting conditions which affect freedom.[160] Despite the political intention of these cultural workers, their art seems to avoid overtly political themes.[161] Mario Pissarra argues that this programme was not a particularly successful in sending skilled individuals back into their contexts due to the fact that organizations were often banned or closed down in which case students would no longer have a context to return to, and that these organizations would rather make use of CAP facilities.[162]

CAP's ideals, as expressed in newsletters and mission statements, clearly demonstrate its desire to find ways of working in a more politically relevant way. By 1988, however, Van Graan (1988:1) wrote that the "shift in emphasis [had] yet to be concretely manifested in programmes, courses, and public events". Van Graan believed that there was a lack of concrete engagement with the struggle from the arts in part, due to the fact that CAP was trying to 'take on' too much and was crippled by a democratic decision making process. By 1989 the democratic process had fallen out of favour, as is well illustrated by a cartoon from that year's newsletter in which one finds phrases like "democracy is a swear word" written on the walls (Fig. 76). Due to the fact that the

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[160] Hobbs & Rankin (1997:47) also write that the use of colour is uncommon in prints of that time and it was probably a result of Mario Sickle's own skills in colour printing for which he became well known.

[161] Similarly, according to Gavin Younge, the art submitted for the Cape Town arts festival, *Towards a People's Culture* in 1987, "was not really revolutionary" (Peffer 2009:93). Peffer (2009:94) argues that this "represented a cross section indicative of the true nature of 'people's art' as opposed to programmatic statements made about 'committed art'".

[162] Interview with Mario Pissarra, Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.

"endless cycles of debate" were seen by some as crippling, in 1990 the organisation again chose a director, Mike van Graan, who could carry final responsibility for decisions.[163] Van Graan (1988:17, 21) writes that, due to the demand for services, CAP was unable to do anything and everything as it had done before and, due to a number of other cultural organisations which had been established, it did not need to. As such CAP decided, after much debate, to define itself primarily as an educational institution which was counter-hegemonic and devoted itself to defining a 'people's culture' to combat "apartheid culture". Van Graan (1988: 23-24, 26) explains it in the following way:

> The minority...enjoys hegemony i.e. it is their values, ideological beliefs and ideas which dominate...it was clear that CAP being an arts/cultural institution was located within the sphere of hegemony … [The minority] control the art education and training institutions and it is predominantly they who have the economic means to be able to get training in the arts and to form the major consumers in the art markets. So it is their aesthetic tastes and values which dominate art training, which dominate the kinds of art that is seen and performed and which the current forms of art criticism submit to.

This idea was by no means new and was already articulated as early as the 1982 conference. However, CAP felt that very little had materialised in terms of realising this in the field of the visual arts. Andrew Steyn (1989:5) wrote, in the 1989 newsletter, that 'people's culture' had mushroomed and been able to spread its hegemony to galvanise resistance to apartheid. Yet, "the potential for developing arts and craft as a means of social transformation and development is being realised in only limited ways. This is because there is a lack of practical skills and theoretical knowledge...and a lack of resources to support this kind of work" (Steyn 1989:5). In view of this, CAP saw its primary mission as providing needed knowledge and resources as an educational institution to try and build a new aesthetic (van Graan 1988:27). The new aesthetic was

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[163] Mike Van Graan (2010) wrote that "The director could also act proactively in terms of its vision rather than limp along from week to week in a more reactive mode…staff meetings were held regularly to solicit views and inform staff as necessary… There was a hierarchy in that the director carried final responsibility but it was democratic in that all staff could participate in the decisions concerning the direction of their respective department and then of the organisation as a whole".

seen to be an embodiment of the principles of democracy, rather than the actual visual qualities of the artwork produced. Van Graan (1988: 25-26, 28) further explains:

> We needed to develop new aesthetic tastes and values. We needed to develop new critical models, new ways of critiquing and evaluating art. We needed to explore new forms of audience-performer/audience-artist relationships i.e. we needed to develop a whole a new aesthetic which was premised on the values of those struggling for the new order, values such as non-sexism, non-racism, democracy, human dignity, participatoriness and critical awareness.[164]

It was hoped that individuals trained with sufficient skills and political awareness, especially in the full-time class, would be able to respond to the local communities in critical ways to bring about reforms which would speak to the majority.[165] The content of work was never circumscribed, but it seems that the quality of the work was an important benchmark. Local relevance of the \work was seen as a consequence of artists who possessed the ideals of democracy, and it was hoped that these ideals would help build a new South Africa after liberation had been achieved.[166]

CAP had significant difficulties in implementing the ideals which they had put down on paper. In terms of CAP's goal to be counter hegemonic, Lynne Brown comments

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[164] One way of achieving this in the visual arts was through the promotion of more communal forms of art such as art collectives or murals. Andrew Steyn (1989: 5, 21) , the full-time visual arts co-ordinator at CAP, explained that "the potential of cooperative as a means of democratic control in production and distribution needs to be looked at ... In the new course we plan to explore cooperative and collective as alternative social and economic form for production and distribution of the *visual arts and crafts in a post-apartheid South Africa"*. [My emphasis]

[165] At the time, Van Graan (1988:25,26) wrote that, "An important principal of culture is resistance – either against change or against the status quo...We said that the arts were a significant cultural means which helped a particular community explore and interpret, to reflect and communicate and to challenge or reinforce their reality The arts can help develop consciousness, allow feelings to be expressed and empower people to act on their environment in a creative way. The arts are means for creating new meanings".

[166] CAP decided that the best way to realise this ideal of the new aesthetic through the cultural worker would be, firstly, to provide technical skills and theoretical knowledge to allow students "to experiment with, and contribute to the development of a new aesthetic through his/her own work" and, secondly, to give students "critical skills with respect to political theory and training" (Van Graan 1988:29). This was intended not to foster a propagandistic kind of art, but rather to allow students to understand the context in which they existed and how their art was not neutral but could either reinforce or challenge the ruling hegemony (Van Graan 1988:29). Thirdly, it was decided that students must be given educational skills to pass on their skills and knowledge to others and, finally, they must be given administration skills to be able to organise themselves and create a support base for their work (Van Graan 1988:31).

that she felt Mike van Graan just "put [the goal] on paper and made it look right" and that none of the intellectual discussions which were taking place between staff filtered down to a practical level in the teaching. In that sense, she felt that the distance between what was proclaimed and what actually happened made CAP "a fairly dishonest organisation".[167] While CAP's ideals may not have been realised, its attempts represent an effort to implement Medu's intention to create art that worked for and with the community in resistance to apartheid domination, without surrendering or simply reproducing clichés. Cameron Voyiya, a former CAP student, explains that he was

> Against, not in favour of, an art which tries to reach people through clichés…we have to create new forms. Those forms could reach people...We come from communities which do not appreciate art, and how do we reach that? Its through creating works that can be accessible to them both in terms of the message and the formal structure.[168]

Apart from the attempts of the 1991 full-time students' through the murals discussed earlier, there seem to have been no successful projects which emerged from CAP's efforts to address the need for new forms. However this does not mean that the students received no benefit. CAP's ability to train artists of a high quality who were engaging in relevant political and cultural issues should be given recognition. It provided an incredibly valuable space for people to explore their talents, build community, and learn more about the roles that art can serve even though their ideas on democratisation could not always be directly translated into practice.

2.7. CONCLUSION: CAP'S CONTIRBUTION UNDER APARTHEID

CAP served an incredibly important role in providing art education for a large number of people who would not have otherwise had an opportunity to receive training. While a number of professional artists have emerged from the 1980s - such as Vuyile Voyiya, Thembikosi Goniwe, Willie Bester, Ricky Dyaloyi, Xolile Mtakatya, Tyrone

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[167] Interview with Lynn Brown and Anne Schuster (25/11/1996) Conducted by Robyn Denny.
[168] Interview with Vuyile Cameron Voyiya (25/04/1997) Conducted by Heidi Bolton

Appollis, and Tony Mhayi - its contribution is not limited to this. It was also an important space for people to cross the racial boundaries imposed by apartheid and to imagine community in a free South Africa. This meant learning how to cross boundaries of privilege and culture; skills which were essential to the creation of a post-apartheid South Africa. CAP represents an attempt to democratise art by being responsive to the needs of its constituency in terms of what art training was offered, and by the art forms - such as murals and posters - which were produced. According to Dr. Jaquiline Nolte (1997) who was involved at CAP for a number of years:

> what triumphed in CAP was a form of creative sharing between artists of different cultures, constituencies and privileges. Written into these exchanges, however, were the inevitable power dynamics of South African society and internalized notions of privilege and inferiority. It is the extent to which these were counteracted, as well as the extent to which people's creativity was nurtured, that is a measure of CAP's successes and failures. Some people were disappointed, hurt, and exhausted by their experiences at CAP, some suffered the effects of the organisation's weak governance structures and some evinced a simple lack of consciousness, or even concern, for others' needs. Equally, there were individuals who emerged from CAP as creative, skilled and confident practitioners.

Empowerment was not considered as mere sloganeering, but rather as actively working with a community to empower them and to build their self-awareness. Seidman quotes Ismael Moss, a political activist working at CAP, as follows:

> Art was seen as one of the most important expressions in mobilising people further…It was as strong feeling that we should create a space for artists to come out – to participate, but in the process to bring forth individual creativity, artistic stuff which had relevance. It was not so much pressure on the art to "toe the line", rather we worked to give the people space (Moss in Seidman 2007:65).

Slogans played an important role in raising consciousness and bringing down apartheid, however more than this was needed to move into a post-apartheid state. The sentiment behind this is well articulated in the 1987 edition of CAP's newsletter, written by Mi

Hlatshwayo: "Our struggle is not there only to destroy institutions of oppression. It is there to build new ones embodying our principles of democracy, of unity and of our new world".

The release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the unbanning of political parties meant that there no longer a need for the struggle to be fought covertly. This had implications for a number of NGO structures which had to either adapt the role they were serving or disband. In 1990 CAP struggled with a major financial crisis which lead to the retrenchment of most of the staff and a discontinuation of the full time course. The struggles which CAP faced in the post-1990 period are the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3: FROM COUNTER-CULTURE TO DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: CAP, 1991-2003

Shirley Walters (1993:9) reports that the period between 1989 and 1991 saw one hundred and two community organisations either closed down or become defunct in the Cape Town area alone. This was largely because many of these organisations served a particular role within the anti-apartheid struggle which appeared to be redundant in the new state. With the unbanning of political parties such as the ANC and the freeing of political prisoners in February 1990, community-based organisations were forced to reassess the role they performed in South Africa. It is evident from CAP's March, 1990, newsletter that the organisation saw itself as continuing in the pursuit of the development of a cultural alternative to that of the apartheid culture, which it feared would still continue to be legitimised by the new state. It recognised the need to improve the quality of its work in order to help build a South African art scene which was democratised in that it was both relevant to the majority of people in the townships and was of a high quality. However, in 1991 CAP was affected by a major financial crisis which resulted in the retrenchment of most of its staff and the suspension of classes. This caused CAP to seriously re-evaluate the function it performed under the promise of a new dispensation. This crisis was largely due to pressure from funders who wanted the non-governmental sector to start working towards development. Mario Pissarra, a staff member and later a director of CAP, recalls, "It was very difficult when we used to meet with donors, because of this whole question of 'what is your role?'". [169] According to Pissarra the perception was that the new ANC government was going to address all the inequalities caused by apartheid.[170] Consequently, funders thought the role CAP was serving as an alternative art space was going to fall away and art centres had to motivate how they would contribute to development.[171] Art centres like CAP however did not initially see their role in democratising art becoming redundant. In a paper presented by Mike van Graan to a funding body called SIDA in 1991, the argument for the relevance of art for

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[169] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.

[170] Van Robbroeck (2004:50) writes that, "along with other non-governmental organisations of the struggle era, most of the…community centres folded as foreign donors and national corporations withdrew their funding to invest in government initiatives".

[171] Ibid.

development beyond a means for income generation in a post-apartheid South Africa was already evident. He argued that:

> Development priorities such as housing, health care, infrastructure, etc. which deny the importance of culture generally and art in particular...still regard people in two-thirds of the world as essentially physical entities with little, if any, emotional, intellectual, aesthetic or psychological needs.[172]

Van Graan thus understood the need for a democratised art practice which allowed people to take part in freely expressing themselves and artistically and critically shaping their environments outside "hegemonic state practice". However the changing funding environment and appointment of new staff with different visions greatly affected the direction the organisation took.   Hagg (2010:166-7) writes that many art centres held the belief that

> …The revolution would ultimately deliver a new state, in which they would become prime centres for cultural democratization. Ironically, the context and sustainability of these community arts centres was negatively affected after the arrival of the democratic South Africa in 1992-4…To understand how this paradoxical situation could develop, it is necessary to take note of the broader ideological shifts in South Africa since 1990.

CAP was one of the few art centres that survived the transition into the 1990s and thus makes for a valuable study in how these ideological transitions affected the work of art centres. The emphasis on development and job creation caused centres to align their courses with requirements set out in the planned National Qualifications Framework (NQF), allowing individuals to attain an accredited qualification which could be used in a working/business environment. However the process took years to implement and no formal accreditation could be given in the 1990s. Furthermore, despite the efforts of CAP to work with the ANC's developmental goals it was not funded by the government, along with the other community art projects from the struggle era (Hagg 2010:175). I argue that part of the reason for this was because the government was opposed to the

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[172] Mike van Graan. 1991. Culture Cooperation and its Relationship to Democracy and Human Rights. Page 2.

democratising efforts of NGOs during the struggle era as they actually opposed the formation of the Black Consciousness Movement and the UDF (Good 2011: 314-315). After 1994 they continued to view these NGOs suspiciously (Good 2011: 354). Rather than funding established art centres, the South African government spent over R50 million in the establishment of its own art centres. These centres did not fare well and within a few years almost none of them were operational.

One of the biggest difficulties art centres faced was the demand placed upon the arts to contribute to social and economic development if they wanted to share in state resources. This approach continues to have a negative effect on the funding relationship between independent arts bodies and funders as the arts continually need to pay lip service to 'development' and are not considered valuable in their own right. The new discourse CAP had to adopt in this regard is discussed in the fourth section of this chapter. Broadly speaking, this is a Neo-liberal approach, which argues that the solution to poverty is essentially job creation and economic growth. This will be explored and critiqued in the last section of this chapter as it is a highly problematic paradigm for the arts. Overall this chapter argues that the arts need to be valued for their own right and not merely by the number of jobs they can create. The history of CAP provides important insight into how crippling the new developmental focus was for art centres. This chapter is organised thematically rather than chronologically and each section examines a different aspect of the environment CAP found itself in after apartheid. The first section gives a background to the financial crises art centres found themselves in post-1991. The second section examines how the teaching structure was affected by the implementation of the NQF. The third section assesses some of the problems which moving away from a political discourse had for the democratisation of culture. The fourth section discusses the efforts the government made to make art centres more widely accessible and the reasons for its failure. The fifth and sixth sections explore the ways in which CAP tried to use art as development and critiques the neo-liberal economic ideology which continues to inform the role art has in development.

3.1. CAP's FINANCIAL CRISIS AT THE END OF APARTHEID

One of the primary shifts that affected funding was in the perceived role of arts and culture in society (Hagg 2010:167). Peffer (2009:88) explains that, during the 1980s,

> Political groups were banned under successive states of emergency, [and] cultural groups such as churches and art organizations became conduits for laundering money into the country from overseas donors. Cultural events also became a platform and a cover…for more directly political actions…at a time when there were few other avenues open for free expression.

With the freeing of political prisoners such as Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of political organisations in 1990, the purpose of the art centre as a cover for resistance was no longer needed. Mike van Graan illustrated this in a presentation he made to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in an appeal for funding in 1991. He explained that in 1986 the *Towards a People's Culture* festival was banned by the South African government because it was seen as a threat. However, the banning of the festival "legitimised the arts as a valid site and means of struggle and the next few years saw money become available for the arts" (Van Graan 1991:2-3). With the end of institutionalised oppression, art was taken off the funding agenda by many organisations and individuals who did not consider it a developmental priority. Van Graan explained how the situation was further complicated when the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 because funders prioritised Eastern Europe for development.[173] Furthermore, as Uma Kothari, *et al* (2002:16) write, "the funding relationships of development aid between western and non-western countries were largely deployed as cold war weapons". With the end of the cold war this funding relationship became even more complicated. These factors resulted in some funders withdrawing their support of art centres, which crippled the large majority of them.

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[173] Van Graan explains that this was due to the fear of a major influx of unemployed East Europeans into Western Europe, which could threaten the economies of Western European nations. As such, aiding the creation of employment opportunities in East Europe was seen as a more immediate priority (Interview with Mike van Graan, Grahamstown, 08 July 2009).

In 1990 CAP was still financially secure, but there were already signs indicating that it would not have the funding required for the following year. Van Graan built CAP into a large and ambitious project with high staff and student expenses such as its own full-time theatre group.[174] Zayd Minty explains that institutions with high running costs don't function well unless there are large amounts of guaranteed money over long period of time and that CAP did not have a clear enough source of funding to sustain its size.[175] According to Minty, CAP had become used to going to certain funders with a particular idea of what they were and what purpose they served within a liberation struggle; which was now coming to an end with the freeing of political prisoners.[176]

Due to exhaustion from restructuring CAP, Van Graan postponed a planned fundraising trip from October 1990 to May 1991[177] (Nolte 1997: 2). Nolte (1997:4) writes that according to the bookkeeper's report titled the *Origins of CAP's Financial Crisis,* CAP "started the new financial year with an actual deficit of R165 000 consisting of money for 1991/92 spent before April 1991 [but]….Trustees shared confidence (with staff) that Van Graan would raise funds on his May fundraising trip".[178] In May, while the director was away on his planned fundraising trip, a cash flow crisis occurred. The acting

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[174] In November 1990, CAPCOM had approved the introduction of a full-time media course and theatre company, thus pushing CAP's budget even higher and increasing monthly expenses from c.R75 000 to c.R100 000 (Notle 1997). This amount included accommodating the full-time students in Polo Road, Cape Town, and granting students substantial bursaries (Interview with Lucy Alexander. Newlands, 26 Jan 2010).

[175] Interview with Zayd Minty. Cape Town, 27 Jan 2010.

[176] Confidence in CAPs ability to continue drawing money from donors is illustrated by Van Graan's letter to the trustees in which he objected to rash financial decisions which had been made by the board without consulting him as director. In the letter he laid out his income calculations regarding confirmed and probable grants which pointed to confirmed monies of R403 000 and a probable additional amount of R200 000. Van Graan stated that he had assumed that monthly expenses of R100 000 were guaranteed until July and that if his funding trip was initially unsuccessful, monthly expenses could be cut to R70 000 (Nolte 1997). CAP survived 1991 on grants which allowed for a monthly expenditure of only approximately R50 000, R20 000 less than Van Graan's worst scenario projection (Nolte 1997).

[177] According to Nolte (1997) "Van Graan had long complained of pressure and exhaustion. He had submitted his resignation prior to the fundraising trip and had taken ill as a result of stress. He was clearly overburdened by his duties as CAP director, including being responsible for funding, planning fundraising documents, the tour and building CAP's theatre profile. The latter had entailed the formation of a new theatre company, the direction of the play 'The Dogs Must be Crazy' and his assumption of the position of Chair of the newly established Theatre Action Group (TAG)"

[178] According to Nolte (1997)"The Director's fundraising trip had been postponed a number of times. Reasons for the delay included the internal crisis in CAP at the end of 1990, the political context which seemed to promise CAP an important role in discussions in Lusaka with CUSO and the ANC Department of Arts and Culture, and also the Gulf War. The Executive had agreed to each postponement as the reasons seemed logical".

Chair of the Board was informed by administration of a shortfall of R1 000 000 for the year. According to bookkeeper Barbara Voss, the crisis was "the result of a combination of overspending during 90/91 together with soaring expenses during the first six months of 1991" (Nolte 1997:6). Furthermore, Voss explains that in 1991 CAP was waiting for R132 000 that Kagiso Trust[179] had promised and which it needed to pay a number of salaries. The money did not come through because Kasigo had not yet received monies that they were expecting from overseas. There were also no funds confirmed for the rest of the year and thus the short term crisis was seen to be indicative of a coming long term crisis (Nolte 1997:4). When CAP recognised that it could not afford to pay salaries it was obliged to pay by law, most of the staff were retrenched and the newly formed theatre project closed.

Robinson reports that with retrenchment of staff members at the end of June 1991 there was a "curtailment of fulltime art courses".[180] Students were told to return home a month early for the mid-year break since the July bursary could not be paid. They obliged, and continued "with fieldwork in their communities, using equipment given to them by CAP".[181] Robinson also reports that it was decided that classes would continue on the basis of available funding and the outcome of an evaluation. CAP staff began the process of restructuring under the leadership of Lucy Alexander and Janis Merand (Nolte 1997). CAP eventually received enough money to bring full-time students back for a two-week long evaluation, after which they were dismissed.[182] Van Graan also stayed on until mid-August to attempt some carry-over regarding funding and management, and to help restructure the organisation. Janis Merand recalls that this process

> Was sheer hell...a lot of work and we were struggling to re-find our direction...Should we be agitating to get arts on the agenda of the government? Should we be solely an arts institution?...At the same

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[179] According to Kagiso's official website "The Kagiso Trust (KT) was established in May 1985 and remains the oldest and most respected black-led development facilitation agency in South Africa. The organisation was established as a mechanism to channel funds which would promote the struggle as well as uplift and empower communities deprived by the system".
http://www.kagiso.com/?x=about_trust

[180] Newspaper article. *Southside*. June 6-12, 1991. np.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Students felt increasingly negative and demanded bursaries for at least the six month period of 1992 (Nolte 1997).

time we were trying to get money, we were arguing for our very existence.

By 1992 CAP was experiencing greater financial stability[183] but it had relatively few courses during this time. This situation was not isolated to CAP; Hagg (2010:173) writes that during in the 1990s art centres in South Africa "worked on shoestring budgets...[and] as a result staff turnover in the centres was high, programmes few and community support minimal". During this time CAP was faced with uncertainties with regards to the role it would play and how it could draw the support of funders. According to a 1993 report from CAP,

> The political, social and economic changes (and promises of change) in the country and city, coupled with a shifting of priorities by many funders, a worldwide recession, widespread social inequalities due to apartheid, and a massive crime and unemployment rate, have led to uncertainties for the continued support by donors and politicians towards art education..Many of our funders gave assurances that support would continue over the next 2-3 years particularly while currents had not settled in the country and would assess at a later stage whether to continue funding or to shift funding commitments elsewhere.[184]

As noted above, CAP was funded because it was seen as an important means for apartheid resistance. However, with the end of apartheid, other social issues within the country seemed more pressing than promoting art. Hence money was directed towards government so as to bring about the needed social change and development. Art centres who were key in the struggle era hoped for some finances from the new government, who seemed to promise their support.

According to Hagg (2010:166), "government viewed community art centres as prime instruments for redress and equality in black communities". An Outcomes Based Education (OBE) approach was implemented in CAP's courses which, it was hoped, would equip marginalised individuals with the needed skills for employment. According to Zayd Minty, who was the first CAP director of the new period in 1993/4, the

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[183] The organisation had projected an expenditure of R602 313, R514 388 of which had been secured. (1992 September Mid Year Report. p2)
[184] CAP April-September Mid-year Report. 1993. Page 1.

organisation adopted an OBE approach because the government had indicated that it would be financially supportive of institutions that followed this route. CAP later received mixed signals from government regarding this policy. By 1994 CAP wrote in its mid-year report that there was "little commitment to real support" from the government. [185] The report continues to lament the fact that institutions like CAPAB (a state sponsored performing arts production house) received over 33 million rand, and saw an increase of 7 million rand, while NGO's like CAP were told that there was no money for funding. [186] In 1995 CAP received a once off grant of R200 000 from the government but no long term commitment was made to support the project, resulting in an ambiguous relationship. [187] According to Minty, "there were signs from government that they would be supportive, but they never came to the table...Government led NGO's astray in a way...They were just not funding us". This also affected art centres other than CAP and Hagg (2010:173) writes that "the funding system for the arts centres took years to streamline", by which time many art centres had closed due to lack of financial support.

3.2. THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF) AS A MEANS OF REDRESS

South Africa has adopted the National Qualification Framework (NQF) as the educational component of the government's Redistribution and Development Programme (RDP), through which it has sought to redress the inequalities caused by apartheid. The NQF set out to define "carefully worked out standards, which [would] include outcomes and assessment guidelines" for each area of learning. [188] The NQF recognised experience gained from outside of the formal education system, and it therefore credited one's "experience and/or qualifications, whether it be five years working the textile industry or

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185 CAP April-September Mid-year Report. 1994. Page 2.
186 bid.
187 CAP April-September Mid-year Report. 1995. Page 2.
[188] Community Arts Project: Arts, Adult Education and the National Qualification Framework. October 1997. Page 5

a Std 7 certificate".[189] This was particularly important for people who were unable to complete their formal schooling due to adverse apartheid conditions. It was hoped that this system would give people the recognition they needed to enter higher levels of learning (even without formal schooling) or gain access to work opportunities that required some form of accreditation.[190] Standards and outcomes required for every level of training were set out, codifying what a candidate needed to be able to do, know, and understand in order to progress to the next level of training. This included assessing how well it needed to be done, within what parameters, and how it needed to be assessed.[191] As such, a task recognised as being equivalent to university education would be more complex than a task equivalent to a high school level qualification.

Since these standards did not yet exist within South Africa, CAP set out to begin defining how these assessment criteria could be applied to the arts. In the process of creating these outcomes CAP began asking questions like "what should a learner be able to know and understand to function competently in this occupation or learning area?" and "why do you think it is important for learners to have this skill or to work in this way?"[192] Mario Pissarra was in favour of these developments at the time and explained that they viewed the creation of these standards as a real challenge:

> Because now you need to really specifically say what am I actually teaching and what are people going to be able to do with this. So we started writing out courses up as OBE in our own way before there was even a template to follow...So I thought it was a challenge for arts to be able to say, 'Well, if we're developing a range of skills, what are those skills, actually? How do you actually recognise that this person is performing?'...Now we were working as a unit; before that [in the 1980s] part-time people did their own thing, because that was the environment then. Now part-time people would come in and be given learning outcomes...we said after three months, the student must be able to do A, B, C, D, and this is how we will know.[193]

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[189] Community Arts Project: Arts, Adult Education and the National Qualification Framework. October 1997. Page 6

[190] Community Arts Project: Arts, Adult Education and the National Qualification Framework. October 1997. Page 11

[191] Community Arts Project: Arts, Adult Education and the National Qualification Framework. October 1997. Page 10

[192] Community Arts Project: Arts, Adult Education and the National Qualification Framework. October 1997. Page 11

[193] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009

In the 1995 mid-year report CAP's new educational direction had been explained in terms of the adoption of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) as a model for curriculum development, in accordance with the requirements of the NQF. It stated: "This means that all curricula is learner-centred and makes explicit the skills, knowledge, and attitude that the learner is expected to have developed on completion of the course" and that "learner assessment is being introduced to ensure that all learners have met the requirements of courses".[194]

Jacqueline Nolte (1997:19) wrote that by October 1992 "the discourse of 1990/91 was no longer in evidence. There was neither mention of `cultural workers' nor of a `national cultural initiative', nor even of `new aesthetic form', let alone `counter-hegemonic forms'". CAP saw a restructuring in 1994 and so it became "a cost effective programme for a 'learning organisation' with a 'business practice orientation'" (Nolte 1997:28). Pissarra recalls that in the 1980s people could come and go, but in the 1990s there was a set course structure that people had to work through to completion which CAP hoped would eventually become accredited.[195] Consequently, there was a very conservative emphasis on how to achieve spatial depth, or how to mix paint. Mario Pissarra explains that the emphasis on training a set of laid out skills at CAP resulted in the subject matter of the 90s being dominated by things like portraits and still-lives.[196] While teachers of this later period did develop creativity there was a strong emphasis on achieving specific results. This is in contrast with a 1989 profile of CAP teacher Mike Rautenbach, which explains that he grappled "with difficulties such as knowing when to give direction and when to allow learners' creativity to emerge".[197]

This restructuring of CAP and its tighter educational focus was carried out in an attempt to deliver he needed skills and confidence to move into other educational paths and/or into jobs requiring art skills. CAP looked at career paths they could equip and

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[194] CAP April-September Mid year Report. 1995. Page 23.
[195] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.
[196] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009. There is room here for further research as the Mayibuye Centre at the University of the Western Cape which holds a large collection of CAP work.
[197] CAP Newsletter Captions. 1989. Page 7.

qualify people for. This was in response to both the government agenda for the arts and the request from people who had attended CAP over the years. Pissarra explained that in the history of CAP students had asked questions like "what kind of qualification can you give us?" and "what is this value of this training?"[198] An example of the emphasis on teaching art as a means for job creation in CAP was the teaching of drawing as a basic skill in 1995 in order to help with other professions such as design, welding, and carpentry in co-operation with Zenzele Enterprises in Khayelitsha, which provided courses accredited by the Department of Manpower. The 1995 Newsletter states that "the idea here has been to improve the quality of products produced by trainees by developing their drawing and design abilities".[199] This was part of CAP's new emphasis on qualification and employment.

Despite CAP's efforts, there were problems with implementation regarding qualifications. Mario Pissarra recalls how he and others at CAP read policy documents on the NQF and saw the arts falling through the cracks with regards to equipping people for labour in the arts.[200] While uncertainties regarding qualification continued, many students asked questions such as "What can I do with this certificate?" or "Will I get a job when I finish this course?"[201] CAP noted that, in the absence of an accreditation system, they were networking with other organisations that were in the similar position of trying to be accredited and keeping in touch with developments around accreditation while "contributing to shaping the new educational 'system".[202] Meanwhile, all courses were structured in accordance with their understanding of what the government needed for it to be considered for qualification. It was a slow process and CAP did not manage to have their courses accredited by the government until 2004, when the organisation merged with Mediaworks[203] and became the Arts and Media Access Centre (AMAC).[204] Pissarra recalls that trying to work with the government towards recognised qualification

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[198] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.

[199] CAP Newsletter. *ReCAP* 1995. Page 10.

[200] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.

[201] CAP Newsletter. *ReCAP* 1995. Page 7.

[202] Ibid.

[203] CAP and CAP Media officially split into two organisations in 1993. CAP Media became known as Mediaworks. The two organisations became one again due to the fact that they shared some trustees and

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> ...Took a huge amount of energy. When I left in '99 I had personally invested an unquantifiable number hours in that particular route with actually very little to show for it...It was very, very painful work, it was very difficult. Because at the end of the day they actually didn't really care about NGO's and they certainly didn't care about arts and culture, so you were really at the end of the queue. In theory, you were accommodated, but in 'practice' there was nobody batting for you.[205]

This frustration with attempted co-operation with the government was in part due to the way in which the ANC government viewed the structures working for democracy under apartheid. The ANC were largely suspicious of democratising bodies and saw them as potential threats. The following section investigates this in the context of Albie Sachs' intervention which called for the arts to be disarmed.

3.3. THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE NGO: FROM WATCHDOG TO PROP

Albie Sachs' paper *Preparing Ourselves for Freedom* was presented at an in-house ANC meeting in 1989 and later published in the *Weekly Mail* in 1990 which resulted in numerous responses from various cultural practitioners. The debate echoed sentiments that had been expressed at conferences such as the 1982 *Culture and Resistance* symposium in that it polarised the issue of using art as a weapon of struggle. Sachs (1990:19) stated his concern that artists did not have sufficient cultural imagination to depict a free South Africa after years of creating protest art. He proposed that ANC leaders be banned from saying that culture is a "weapon of struggle" for at least five years as a means of challenging what had become the dominant discourse for the arts. Sachs (1990:20) insisted that the use of culture as a weapon was "not only banal and

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it was hoped they could together argue for funding more effectively (Interview with Lucy Alexander Newlands, 26 Jan 2010; Interview with Graham Falken. Cape Town, 05 May 2010).

[204] Interview with Graham Falken. Cape Town, 05 May 2010.

[205] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.

devoid of real content, but actually wrong and potentially harmful". His concern was that "artists are not pushed to improve the quality of their work, it is enough to be politically correct" and therefore "ambiguity and contradiction [are] completely shut out" (Sachs 1990:20-21). At the core of Sachs' concern lies the idea that art needs to be freed from the "solemn formulas of commitment" (Sachs 1990:21). Sachs (1990:28) wanted artists to engage critically with their subject matter in a nuanced way so that they could "write better poems and make better films, and compose better music"[206] in order that they might truly capture the drama of the struggle for a new South Africa (Sachs 1990:20). According to Hagg (2010: 167-168),

> ANC constitutional expert and cultural leader Albie Sachs had argued for replacing the arts as a cultural weapon with the arts as an expression of cultural and ideological diversity. Although radical cultural workers contested this shift, it became the basis for subsequent ANC cultural policies, and it was strongly defended by a new generation of professional artists. As enshrined in the Constitution and detailed in the 1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, the arts would reflect the richness of the 'rainbow nation' and provide space for the cultural expression of all communities…Community arts centres would in future not focus on protest art but on the discovery of the rich diversity of cultural expressions in their specific locality.

This was a very different view from those expressed by Medu, and at ANC conferences during the 1980s, which argued for art's role as a weapon to fight apartheid. It is not surprising therefore that Sachs' comment attracted a lot of criticism from those who felt that apartheid had not yet been eradicated and that there was a continued need for the grassroots structures to use art in a manner which was accountable to the needs of 'the people'. I agree with Sachs that there was a need for more nuance in grassroots creativity and that it was important to move away from the oppressive insistence that only themes dealing directly with apartheid resistance were relevant. However, the ANC's perceived role of the arts during apartheid was quite different from the strategies of many cultural workers and a lot of critical exploration was already happening. According to Kenneth Good (2011:346) the ANC gave a, "highly abstract and contentious role to the people" who were "simply referred to as "the risen masses" [to] be turned by unstated means into

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[206] Presumably this extends to the visual arts as well.

'organised groups of combatants'". Posters had the potential to mobilise the masses and as such it is evident how it would play a part in this process; it was this approach that Sachs now opposed.

Sachs' paper seemed to legitimate an elitist model for post-apartheid art practice since it did not take account of the critically engaging art that was coming out of many grassroots organisations, thereby (perhaps unintentionally) dismissing these spaces as inferior sites of culture to established university spaces. Jon Berndt (2007:26, 34) argues that:

> Albie Sachs' concern that cultural workers such as the poster makers lacked 'sufficient cultural imagination' to represent a free South Africa says more about his own cultural bias than anything significant about the graphic poster techniques of the posters made at CAP Media Project. His critique is founded on precisely those elitist tenants and techniques of the 'Art' world that were rejected by the poster makers...As cultural products, the posters were part of 'culture' as a way of life, not products to be contemplated as object in themselves with an idealised concept of 'culture'.

This is an important critique since much of the grassroots activity with regards to the arts was not about creating works of 'fine art', but rather giving people an opportunity to express themselves. The aim of poster production was to embody the principles of democracy and give people the ability to voice their demands.[207] The very notion of the cultural worker was someone who rejected the idea that art was isolated from the majority of the people in galleries. Yet, under the new state, the arts were legitimised only by their ability to produce jobs and income rather than their ability to democratise. Jon Berndt (2007:26) writes:

> The first democratic elections in 1994 brought about fundamental social changes in South Africa...The new 'developmental state' colonised these localised sites of working class cultural revolution

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[207] It is important to realise that poster production venues like CAP Media were important during Apartheid because the printing businesses did not want to print protest posters (even though it was not illegal). However, with the unbanning of political prisoners, political parties could make use of professional printing units rather than grassroots structures like CAP Media.

and the 'people's voice' has been constrained and sanitised by neo
liberal politics.

Studying a similar situation with regard to the changing function of NGOs in Uganda, Susan Dicklitch (1998:6) identifies three different kinds of NGOs – namely Gap-fillers, Voluntary Organisations (VO), and People's Organisations (PO). She writes that both VOs and POs are important in building a democratically empowered society while Gap-fillers simply provide services to areas where the government has stepped out. CAP had elements of both VOs and POs in the 1980s, as VOs "promote education and awareness of rights and abuses to the general public" and POs typically engage in collective action and tend to focus on a specific constituency which it seeks to empower (Dicklitch 1998:8). She argues that both have a great potential for true democratisation of culture as they hold the government accountable and create an alternative grassroots structure which could be in opposition to government. In contrast, Gap-filler NGOs tend to prop up the government and assist it with its goals. They also "tend to be apolitical and narrowly focused on certain practical activities, such as the provision of education" (Dicklitch 1998:6-7). Dicklitch (1998:11) writes that NGOs are viewed as vehicles for empowerment and democratisation because of their potential to give "voice to popular [grassroots] demands which may subsequently empower like-minded members to articulate collective interest and take action". Malange *et al* (1990:100) elaborated on the role of grassroots art organisations and wrote that, "Cultural workers were used to *strengthen people's solidarity*, to make people think and also to entertain. We have used expression and creativity as an instrument by making it part and parcel of public political life" [my emphasis]. Cultural institutions did not therefore simply produce rhetorical slogans, but also worked with people to allow them to express themselves and voice their concerns and demands. However, with Sachs' call to cease using art as a weapon of struggle along with the changes in the funding environment, the role of NGOs as bodies to voice popular demands was severely hampered. Jon Berndt (2007:26) remarked that

Albie Sachs' intervention *Preparing Ourselves for Freedom*...was a call for the demobilisation of the grassroots working class activities who had since the early 1980s been active poster producers. After all the moment we have all been fighting for was about to arrive and the

ANC leadership would bargain for our freedom...the time for contestation was over...

According to Kenneth Good the ANC opposed any form of criticism and was against NGO structures that would keep them accountable. [208] Good (2011: 345-349) argues that the ANC took active steps to dismantle structures of democratisation such as the UDF, MDM, and COSATU through operations like Vula. He writes that,

Vula was a clandestine military-political operation..[which] "infiltrated the MDM" in order to "seduce MDM leaders", to "hijack their revolution-in-the-making", and allow the exiled ANC leaders to return with ease and simply appropriate the organisations of the mass democratic movement. Vula was intentionally "subversive" of domestic democratisation (Good, 2011, 345-6).

When the UDF disbanded in March, 1991, the ANC made it clear "that this was in fact more than an appropriation of the leadership and structures of the UDF, and that an erasure of its values and achievements, especially in democratisation and non-violence, was intended" (Good 2011: 350). It is therefore not surprising that art centres and other NGO structures which served a role in democratisation outside of the ANC's centralised control were neglected in the post-apartheid state.

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[208] 'The unacceptability of all criticism was comprehensively and vehemently expressed by party president Mandela in his report to the ANC's 50th national conference in Mafikeng in December 1997. To highlight only relevant aspects of his five-hour long address: he referred to sections of the non-governmental (NGO) sector which claimed that their distinguishing feature was to be "a critical 'watchdog' over our movement, both inside and outside of government." While pretending to represent an independent and popular view, these NGOs actually worked to "corrode the influence of the [ANC-led] movement." Some of the argument for this "watchdog" role, he said, "was advanced within the ranks of the broad democratic movement at the time when we all arrived at the decision… that it was necessary to close down the UDF." The situation then was that certain elements which were assumed to be part of our movement, had "set themselves up as critics of the same movement, precisely at the moment when we would have to confront the challenge of the fundamental transformation of our country… and the determined opposition of the forces of reaction."' (Good 2012:354)

Sachs (1990:23) wrote in his paper that "the people at large should engage in constructive and concrete debate about the foundations of government in a post-apartheid South Africa". The ANC government seemed to fulfil this recommendation when in 1995 the ANC put together the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG) to get the views of a major part of the arts and culture community, including practitioners, educators, and administrators. However, according to Van Graan (2004:251-252), despite an initially democratic and consultative process by government, organisations that formed a collective voice to represent artists' interests were viewed as threats to the ANC. Van Graan (2004:251-252) illustrated this with the government response to the formation of the NACSA:

> For the launch of NACSA, the new Director-General of the Department of Arts and Culture, Itumeleng Mosala, was invited to deliver the keynote address in order to establish a good working relationship between what would be the country's most representative arts body and the government department most responsible for the well-being of artists. After initially agreeing to participate, Mosala changed his mind and when he was asked by NACSA to reconsider, he replied in writing that he would not attend that occasion 'and not ever on any other you may be tempted to invite me to'. Despite a subsequent reluctant apology and a commitment to meet NACSA, the Director-General has failed to meet formally with NACSA's leadership.

Other examples mentioned by Van Graan (2004:252) include the exclusion of Marilyn Martin from the NAC board, despite her election, largely because she had been critical of the minister and the department in the past. He also mentions the altering of a report by the National Advisory Report to remove all criticisms it contained of the department. As such, "many of the organisations that artists form today are still largely dependent on international funding, and bodies such as the DAC and NAC are reluctant to provide them with funding precisely because they view them as threats" (Van Graan 2004:252).[209]

Sachs (1990:24) wrote that "apartheid has closed our society, stifled its voice, prevented people from speaking and it is the historic mission of our organisation [the ANC] to be

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[209] Examining a similar situation in Uganda, Dicklitch (1998:171) writes that, "NGO-state antagonism arose either from an NGO being too overtly political in its work …or where NGO success threatened established bureaucratic interests".

the harbingers of conscience, debate and opinion". However, in light of the examples mentioned, it seems as if critical voices are still being stifled. This is particularly demonstrated by the cancellation of "a conference to review cultural policy after five years and for which the Arts and Culture Trust had raised international funding…because of government's concern that such a conference would be critical of their performance" (Van Graan 2004:248). Hence, artists seem to be robbed of any meaningful voice or exchange with government departments on the cultural matters which concern them. Van Graan(2004:249) writes,

> Since the ACTAG process, consultation between the cultural sector and government, and between the arts community and its respective public funding agencies has just about ceased, at least in any meaningful manner. Rather than become more democratic and more consultative with regard to policy formation, the opposite has in fact happened over the last decade.

There is, arguably, still a need for strong, independently funded, grassroots structures to petition for cultural right. Galla (1995:31) writes that artistic policies are "informed by elitist politics and practices of a dominant minority. Change here is often driven by the electoral imperatives and the *effective advocacy of the disenfranchised*".[210] Art centres could provide a platform for effective advocacy. Indeed, Dicklitch (1998:11) wrote that a NGO's effectiveness at democratisation should be measured by, "its success at an educative role…and is ability to voice/address popular concerns/interests". Hence, people should have a greater political voice in affecting their destiny because of the presence of the NGO. Dicklitch (1998:17) writes that, "in many cases [however], the effects of economic liberalization have necessitated that NGOs focus on service provision or gap-filling rather than advocacy or empowerment issues".

The South African *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* released in 1996, again affirmed that the doors of learning and culture would be opened. The White Paper states: "Access to, participation in, and enjoyment of the arts, cultural expression, and the preservation of one's heritage are basic human rights; they are not luxuries, nor are they

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[210] My emphasis

privileges as we have generally been led to believe".[211] While government seemed to 'drag its feet' with regards to funding and accrediting art centres like CAP, it was busy with its own project for the actualisation for these rights.

3.4. GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS AT DEMOCRATISATION OF THE ARTS

Hagg (2004:54) writes that "the contribution of the independent art centres to the democratisation of culture was acknowledged during the process leading to the 1994 elections". He states further that most provincial MECs and their officials "were informed about the role of community arts due to the work of the cultural desks of the ANC" (Hagg 2004:55). Many of them had experience in community based art during the 1980s, attended conferences such as the Culture and Resistance Symposium, or were involved in cultural initiatives between 1991-1995 (Hagg 2004:56). Hence, "there was a common understanding that community arts centres were the key to a vibrant cultural life in previously marginalised communities" (Hagg 2004:56). Hagg (2010:167) writes that

> The democratization of the arts had always been a distinct component of ANC policy… [The] policy-making process was characterized by participation of civil society, although dominated by ANC activists. The National Arts Initiative conference of 1993 brought together hundreds of artists and cultural activists and resulted in a draft arts and culture policy, providing substantial input into the ANC's policies (NAC, 1993). The democratic government of national unity of 1994 established the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. In 1995 the DACST appointed the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG) to investigate the arts sector. The ACTAG report formed the basis for the 1996 White Paper for Arts, Culture and Heritage and subsequent arts and culture legislation.

Between 1996 and 1999, the Department of Arts, Culture, Science, and Technology established forty-two cultural centres in South Africa's nine provinces.[212] Twenty-two of

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[211] http://www.dac.gov.za/white_paper.htm. First Accessed 30 July 2009.

these were new art centres (Hagg 2004:55) which became known as RDP art centres, due to the fact that they were funded by the Redistribution and Development Programme (RDP).[213] The project received R50 million from the RDP fund in addition to funding from provinces and the land on which the centres were built was provided freely by municipalities (Hagg 2004:56). Finally, all provinces had full-time arts directors and local practitioners were eager to contribute to the centres while "senior politicians opened the centres with eloquent speeches about the importance of the centres for local cultural and economic development and promises of future support".[214] As explained in the previous section, despite these actions, democratisation was not a key concern for the government, and Good (2011: 352) argues that "closure, non-accountability, predominance, and elitism were the values actually upheld by the [ANC]". Rather, the new art centres were a means to give people access to facilities so they could contribute to the county's economic growth. This was because they helped "increase diversity of opportunity in society, a prerequisite for the success of market-orientated policies which stress competition and freedom of choice and action" (Dicklitch 1998:14).

Despite the promise this initiative held for bringing art education to marginalised communities, "none of the RDP centres became the vibrant effective and sustainable community facility that was anticipated" (Hagg 200 4:56). Oliphant (2004:12) writes that "inexperience in the management of autonomous bodies, a lack of leadership, and bureaucratic foot-dragging ensured that the institutional changes prescribed by policy and legislation were not made efficiently". By 2001 seven of these centres were non-functioning,[215] at least three were being used for non-artistic purposes, and less than a quarter of the centres were able to offer services for more than a few hours per day (Hagg

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[212] Of the forty-two centres, nine were upgrades of existing buildings and thirty-three were new buildings; fourteen centres were community libraries, and there were four multipurpose centres, two museum additions and one mobile theatre (Hagg 2010:178).

[213] Officially however they were known as the Culture in Community (CIC) Programme (Hagg 2010:163).

[214] The ANC-led government-in-waiting had set itself a programme for the cultural democratisation of society. The Freedom Charter, the Constitution, and a Bill of Rights protected the right of citizens to free expression and participation in the culture of their choice. The state accepted responsibility for the creation of an enabling environment through legislation, the establishment of democratic institutions, the provision of infrastructure and the resourcing of action programmes (Hagg 2010:167).

[215] Five had closed, one had been vandalised completely, and the other one had not been handed over by the contractors.

2004: 56). Hagg (2010:176) explains that "the top-down approach to policy-making since 1994 has led to a deterioration of the arts centres...NGO centres, which were ignored by government, appear to have performed better than the ones established under the [RDP funded] project".[216] This was, in part, because after 1995 there was a distinct change in the way government approached redress from the principals of participatory democracy to the centralisation of decision making by the state. Hagg (2010:169) writes:

> The new South Africa increasingly reflected a contradictory combination of postcolonial centralized practice within a modern democratic state. The shift towards centralized practice was the result of a strong belief among political leaders that the state is the lead actor in redress.

CAP believed that it would be supported by the RDP as it had years of experience in the field. A 1994 Report reads that the RDP:

> Has been a vindication for the progressive NGO sector who are seen as the prime movers in delivering the plan. Having worked in the field delivering essential services...it is the NGO sector who have the necessary knowledge of the conditions and the needs of grassroots communities, to enable effective delivery of the RDP.[217]

Ironically, according to Hagg (2010:169), despite the democratic principals that were followed by the ANC,

> None of [the NGO art centres] were consulted for their experience, despite the fact that they were often located in marginalized communities and were managed by community members. A vast

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[216] The organizational capacity of the NGO arts centres was much better due to years of self-sustainability and immense commitment of the leadership. Centres like the BAT Centre in Durban and Sibikwa Community Theatre near Johannesburg continued to deliver high-quality educational and performance programmes, despite the lack of state funding. However, these organizational strengths were severely hampered by lack of long-term funding and a high turnover of experienced staff (Hagg 2010:174).

[217] CAP Annual Report. 1993-1994. Page 2.

body of knowledge, years of experience and opportunities for real democratization of culture were ignored.

The lack of consultation also had bearing on the way in which the government attempted to establish the RDP centres. Gaylard (2004:71) argues that the RDP art centres suffered from the same weaknesses as many other RDP interventions which involved "a nationally driven investment in very concrete hardware deliverables" through the provision of the facilities, but relied "on the assumption that other levels of government would install and develop the 'soft-ware' (people) to make the programme vision operational". As Hagg (2010:169; 174) explains regarding the RDP centres:

> Consultation with the arts sector and communities was highly problematic. Although local arts organizations were supposed to be closely involved, in most cases only a few local artists were consulted[218], and, with some exceptions, all decisions were made by provincial ministers of sport, arts and culture and their officials.... In fact, very few communities had asked for a community arts centre, as other needs, such as clinics, schools, water and electricity, were a higher priority…This omission had a negative impact on the appropriateness of services in the centres and on community support. [219]

Furthermore, "most provinces left it largely to municipalities to decide whether and how to keep [art centres] functional, without providing any funding" (Hagg 2004:58). The integration of poor township areas within nearby municipalities' boundaries greatly stretched their budgets, limiting their ability to support art centres. Consequently, as Hagg (2010:172) writes, "local councils insisted that the art centres had to provide concrete evidence of their contribution to the objectives of municipalities if they wanted to share

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[218] Hagg (2010:174) writes that two of the art centres that were investigated "developed programmes in consultation with the community".

[219] It should be stressed however that this is not the case within South Africa at large. Reports from CAP's art courses throughout the years demonstrate an eager desire to learn about the arts. Furthermore, Hagg (2001:121) argues elsewhere that "poor people seem to have more interest in the arts than assumed by development policy makers and practitioners. A survey of people's attitude in six urban areas revealed that poor black respondents in South Africa expressed strong support for increased access to art activities for their children i.e. as an investment in cultural and human capital".

in the scarce municipal resources". However, without funding the art centres could not carry out the needed research to investigate how their functioning could contribute to municipal aims. According to Hagg (2010:172), "the 2002 HSRC audit found that in 2001 only two of the 27 arts centres under investigation had active municipal involvement".

As a result, steps were eventually taken by concerned members of parliament and the Department of Arts, Culture, Science, and Technology to investigate the reason for the failure of these centres (Hagg 2004:56). The Human Sciences Research Council's investigation found several hindering factors dealing with "policy, ownership, management capacity, service delivery, partnerships, and funding" which prevented the art centres from being effective. There have been many positive changes to the performance of these art centres as a result of this investigation. By 2002 the budget was also increased and the NGO art centres were included, but after a decade of not being funded many of these centres had already closed down.

By 2004 conditions which could facilitate the development of equal participation in the arts with those who were formally marginalised by apartheid were still severely hampered. Sharlene Khan wrote that,

> We may seem to have achieved some successes with democracy, but the crises with art education in schools and tertiary levels have not in any way improved with democracy. The closure of the arts departments of the previously black tertiary institutions in the late 1990s is a disaster that has slipped by quietly (Khan in Perryer 2004:8).

This is not to mention the closure of a number of community art centres which were vital stepping stones for artists into the South African art world.[220] Hence there is a serious lack of infrastructure to empower artistic development within a country where the majority still do not have access to scholastic art education at a primary or secondary level. As Pissarra (2006:48) argued:

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[220] It would be interesting to determine why those trained at institutions like CAP, FUBA, or even BAT - which remained in place during this time-, have not affected the circumstances these debates are hinged on.

> It is increasingly class, and not simply race, that is now determining access...With the stepping stones provided in the past by community arts centres now mostly washed away, where will the next generation of black South Africa artists come from? Or is it enough that some of yesterday's excluded artists have finally secured membership (if not necessarily leadership) of an elite club?[221]

I agree with Pisarra's frustration at the lack of vibrant alternative spaces for democratisation of the arts. The role that these centres can play, apart from adding to the county's economic growth, needs to be critically assessed. While it is too late for the art centres from the struggle era, most of which have subsequently closed their doors, new art centres might be able to operate effectively if their success is not measured by their potential for income generation. The weakness of this ideology is explored in the next two sections.

3.5. CAP's NEW DEVELOPMENTAL FOCUS

The shifts that took place in South Africa after 1990 and the funding crises CAP experienced in 1991 led the organisation to begin redefining the role it served. The 1993 April - September report explained that the organisation had gone though a "strenuous and exhausting restructuring the last few months" which included developing a new vision for the organisation,[222] including a shift in the purpose and the method of art training. In their Visual Arts and Crafts Programme (VACP), CAP sought ways to "develop consciousness of the developmental potential of arts/crafts, visual literacy, and cultural studies within marginalised communities".[223] With the appointment of Mario Pissarra as the VACP co-ordinator in February 1993, "emphasis was placed on assessing the effectiveness of existing programmes".[224] Following this, there was "a shift from the

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[221] Pissarra (2006:48) writes that the overall number, "of black writers, including veterans such as David Koloane, is insufficient to alter the perception that whites dominate published discourse. Certainly the chronic under-representation of black students, and particularly staff, in most higher learning institutions for the visual arts acts as a constant reminder of the shaky foundations underpinning the South African art world."

[222] CAP. April-September Mid year Report. 1993. Page 1.
[223] CAP. April-September Mid year Report. 1993. Page 12.
[224] CAP Annual Report. 1993-1994. Page 26.

'melting pot' ethos (which characterised the evening classes in particular) towards directing our programmes to the unemployed".[225] Pissarra explains that two goals were now prioritised within the visual arts: the attainment of recognised qualifications, and income generation. According to Pissarra, "CAP had always been a project that was concerned with who was being excluded from the system".[226] CAP believed that art would become available in schools, which would mean that unemployed youth and adults were not going to be catered for. Consequently, CAP investigated the potential for giving skills to the typical Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)[227] candidate, but from an arts perspective. [228] Evening classes, which accommodated the youth, were thus suspended in May 1993 in favour of art programmes which would have a 'developmental' impact on the unemployed.[229] Walters (1997:7) argues for this shift in emphasis:

> In South Africa adult education has traditionally been concerned more with social, political, personal and cultural development. It has been very closely tied in the last fifty years to the political struggle against apartheid... [T]his is a major limitation as, for many adults, the primary concern is economic survival.

In recognition of the poverty of their constituency, CAP served meals daily during lunch. Similarly, the need for individuals to do casual work to sustain themselves was recognised and courses were restructured so that different classes were run each day of the week from the morning until the afternoon. This was with the aim of creating a full-time educative structure where you could train in all the various disciplines or choose a

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[225] Ibid.

[226] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.

[227]   This was part of the government's redress of the apartheid conditions which resulted in a large number of illiterate or unskilled adults.

[228]   Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.

[229] According the CAP's 1991-3 report (Page 12) they continued to provide extensive part-time classes for youth and adults. They report on two part-time programmes run in 1992 and one part-time group in 1993: "The majority of students who attended these classes come from Guguletu, Nyanga East and Khayelitsha areas. The majority were in the under 30 age-group and were unemployed or completing their schooling....Students were also given regular opportunities to visit exhibitions and have contributed their skills to assist CAP in running demonstrations of various skills for youth living in the Noordhoek squatter community...Most of the courses have been run by contracted part-time teachers, many of whom are practising artists or teachers".

few modules and study part-time. Hence, if you wanted to learn to draw, but not to make prints you would come on Wednesdays and not on Thursdays. Classes were ideally held in centres near township areas. For example, CAP used Khayamnandi's facilities, in Langa. The ideal was for a decentralised model which would be more accessible to the constituency CAP was trying to reach. However, according to Mario Pissarra, after the assassination of Chris Hani and murder of Amy Biehl, the option of working in townships was seen to be risky, and the emphasis on training moved back to the main CAP building in the urban area Woodstock.[230]

Due to an emphasis on development, CAP also redefined the constituency they served as "the disabled, emotionally abused, and unemployed…in addition to our `traditional' constituencies in squatter and sub-economic communities".[231] The newsletter (ReCAP 1994:8) continued by stating:

> Community art is understood as arts contributing to empowering communities (geographic as well as communities of interest) through its educational, therapeutic, recreational, income generating, or aesthetic usages. Community Arts is seen as being produced by and/or for communities as to contribute to improving the quality of life of ordinary people.

What is suggested here is that art becomes a means of addressing social issues to effect change for improved physical or physiological conditions of CAP's constituencies. This evidences a shift towards an instrumentalist use of art for development where the arts have either economic or social benefits beyond the nurturing of creativity. This is further evidenced in CAP's report of 93/94; its goal was to "provide specialised training for community workers/facilitators to advance the arts as a tool for development and a means of effectively addressing social issues".[232] By 1996 CAP had developed its mission statement in the following terms: "Advancing and promoting the arts for community development and social change". This complemented the government's position which, according to Hagg (2010:170),

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[230] Interview with Mario Pissarra. Cape Town, 28 Apr 2009.
[231] CAP Newsletter. ReCAP 1994. Page 1.
[232] CAP Annual Report. 1993-1994. Page 3.

Was in line with international trends of viewing 'culture as a tool of development, urban regeneration, contribution to GDP, and employment creation'…Like overseas, South African cultural policies moved 'from transformative cultural development as part of human and social development to arts and culture as functional, subservient to general socioeconomic transformation and development…'From arts as need to arts as resource'. A parallel could be drawn here between the role of the arts at the end of apartheid and at the end of the Cold War, which … 'required a new legitimizing narrative, discernible in the cultural sector's current claim that it can solve … social problems: enhance education, solve racial strife, reverse urban blight through cultural tourism, create jobs, reduce crime and perhaps even make profit'.[233]

Hagg (2010:171) argues that this new narrative resulted in "setting impossible targets without clear criteria for measuring achievement" because "even if the centres succeed in their performative role, the provision of hard evidence of such contributions is highly problematic". As such, art centres found it increasingly difficult to prove their worth in addressing social issues to assist the government in building a new South Africa.

Apart from accreditation, CAP also attempted to create income-generating projects. From the aims of the visual arts course in 1994 it seems that financially self-reliant, democratically-based arts projects, such as murals and co-operates, were prioritised.[234] This was seen as the most effective means of being responsible to the community in terms of both development and income generation. According to Marschall (1999:60) the function of murals as a "people's art" which enriches the community has persistently recurred "in one form or another in virtually every publication on mural art, [and] are rarely based on verifiable data and methodologically sound assessments". Benefits of mural art which are often mentioned include the building of community and the creation of temporary employment. According to Marschall (2002:95-96), there was

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[233] Hagg (2010: 170) also writes that "the shift to market-relatedness required a new role for the arts in a society in transformation. The NAC (1993) and ACTAG (1995) reports already alluded to the socio-cultural value of the arts as mechanisms: 'to build a sense of community, aid multicultural understanding, provide recreation, entertainment and enjoyment, become a powerful educational tool, assist in civic improvement, stimulate expression, encourage tourism and bring people together'".

[234] CAP. April-September Mid-year Report. 1993. Page 12.

a big demand for murals in the 1990s and, despite the emergence of mural companies in both Durban and Johannesburg, in Cape Town

> no major independent community mural company emerged that lasted for long, but CAP began painting murals as part of their training. In 1993 a group of CAP-affiliated artists tried to establish a mural Co-operative with the intention of responding to the sudden demand for murals within the community and simultaneously generating funds.

Given the sudden demand for mural painting and the apparent gap in the Cape Town market, it is understandable why CAP would consider it a prime means of creating income generating employment. However, according to Marschall (2002:96), "[T]his enterprise eventually failed owing to personal differences and lack of financial management skills" Mario Pissarra, the director, recalls that the Mural collective[235] had limited success, and actually collapsed because of increased income that came in the form of commissions for banner painting. Mural painting continued at CAP as a course and two examples of murals painted by CAP students can be found in Marschall's book on community art (Fig. 77 and Fig. 78).

In addition to CAP's struggles with mural art, Marschall critiques the above mentioned benefits of murals. She explains that the community building aspect of murals seldom had any lasting affect (Marschall 1999:61). With regards to employment, some artists had the opportunity to work on a number of murals, however for many there was no further employment available (Marschall 1999:63). Hence, mural art failed to provide a primary source of income for artists (Marschall 1999:64). Marschall (1999:75) provides the example of a mural which was painted to educate people about their human rights which did not really appear to reach people in the manner intended, since people did not understand or relate to the subject matter. Murals can thus become an imposition in the same way as an advertising billboard often does.

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[235] As far as I can tell this collective consisted of Xolile Mtakatya, Sophie Peters, Mshabalala Mkhonto, and Trish De Villiers.

The 1993 goal to "assist in the development of self reliant, democratic community based art/cultural centres within these communities" was also not particularly successful.[236] CAP later stated that the establishment of these co-operatives had been

> hinged on the assumption that participating students and local community organisations [would] be drawn into the development and management of programmes. It [had] become evident that the constituency attending (unemployed with limited art training) [were] primarily concerned with self-development....indicating that our long term objective may [have needed] to be reassessed.[237]

In 1995, CAP offered a course in arts administration which taught "basic administrative management, financial management, marketing and organisational development" which could be attended once a student had shown competency with his or her art skills. This was a final attempt by CAP to provide the needed skills for artists to engage in artistic related careers. However, since I have found no evidence of CAP tracking their students' career success, it is difficult to assess how effective these courses were.

CAP managed to help a number of people move into careers during this time and also allowed certain students to study further at the Michealis School of Art at UCT, or at Ruth Prowse, if they met the entry requirements.[238] After the appointment of Graham Falken as Director in 1999, the target constituency of CAP changed from the unemployed to learners with a matric certificate. As such, CAP became an informal bridging institution into higher education institutions or certain jobs. Some students also managed to use the training to become full-time artists without bridging into higher education. Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi, whose work is discussed in Chapter 4, is one such example. CAP, which had now become AMAC, closed at the end of 2008 due to poor planning and mismanagement. The lack of art education in township schools is an issue which persists to this day, and the closure of such an institution is a tragic loss to the South African art world. The focus on income generation and employment reflected a neo-liberal approach to development. Within this scheme community art educators were obliged to argue for

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[236] CAP. April-September Mid-year Report. 1993. Page 12.
[237] CAP. April-September Mid-year Report. 1994. Page 12.
[238] These included still needing to complete the minimal legal amount of formal schooling since the NQF was not accredited as a substitute.

art's usefulness in terms of the economic growth of the country. The application of these principles and its problems is the subject of the next section.

3.6. A CRITIQUE OF NEO-LIBERAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARTS

According to Cammack (2002:161),

> It is not a great oversimplification to say that development theory was originally just a theory about the best way for colonial, and ex-colonial, states to accelerate national economic growth in this international environment. The goal of development was growth; the agent for development was the state and the means of development were these macroeconomic policy instruments. This was done to maximise growth and employment.

The centralisation of decision-making by the government for growth and development has already been discussed in relation to the RDP art centres. Another factor which negatively affected the performance of the centres was the principles of economic growth that they were compelled to adopt. Hagg (2010:169) writes that "the shift towards centralization in community arts development occurred at a time when state policies shifted ideologically from socialist to market-driven principles, as formulated in the Growth, Equity and Redistribution (GEAR) policy". Consequently, art centres were expected to function under market principles and create saleable work so as to become self-sustaining with an interest in cost recovery. This is, broadly speaking, in line with a neo-liberal approach to development in which market forces are considered to be the best means of bringing about development.[239] As Hagg (2010:169) writes, this was problematic due to both the target and placement of the RDP centres. The goal was to give create access to art institutions and centres for those who had previously been denied access to this type of learning, the centres therefore needed to be located within, or near to, the geographical communities they wished to serve. At the same time many of these centres needed a central location in order to effectively market their products and

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239   Shirley Walters (1993:6) explains that this was also attributed to the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR since socialism was being discredited in favour of a free market.

services. Hagg (2010:171) writes that the community art centres focused on the poor and the unskilled, thereby "pre-empting the quantifiability of markets due to their informal nature". As a result of this focus their products could not compete with the skilled labour force in the free market and so "cost recovery from communities that [were] served [was] virtually non-existent" (Hagg 2001:63). Further, competition for donor funding was enormous and the terms on which donor funding for the arts was acquired was also strained by interest in economic growth. Hassan (1996:37) argues that, while the terms 'culture' and 'development' have been reconciled through the recognition of 'the cultural dimensions of development', they are still far from being seriously considered by donors due to "predominant profit-seeking, market-orientated capitalist models of economic development, and the equally pervasive Eurocentric models and ideas of progress".

In 1995 the government-commissioned Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG) report argued that "…culture and the various forms of artistic representation require no external justification…[C]ulture and the arts arise from, and fulfil human needs as crucial as the needs for food, clothing, medical care and security" (Hagg 2001:120). Thus, it seemed as if South Africa would recognise the importance of art in its own right. However, according to Hagg (2010: 169), "in order to obtain state funding, the [art] centres had to back up their demands by increasingly arguing for their utility in terms of social and economic investment". Hence, despite recognition of the importance of the arts within themselves, the policy framework for the arts was one which was in line with neo-liberal economic growth. These changes are evidenced by a proclamation made in 1996 by the Department of Arts, Culture, and Science & Technology which stated that, "Culture is not only about song and dance. Culture is about economic growth, job creation, and nurturing the soul of the Nation" (Hagg 2010:170). In this way, "the value of the arts is determined primarily in terms of the number of jobs that can be generated and what their contribution to GDP is" (Hagg 2001:120). According to Cammack (2002:164), the foreword to the World Bank's *World Development Report 1990* proposed that "global poverty should be addressed by making the poor work. They were to be first equipped, then obliged, to sell their labour in competitive national and global markets" which are subject to supply and demand (Cammack 2002:165). Hagg (2001:33) argues that, "This approach is based on the belief that competitive market forces maximally

enable individuals to exert free choices in life. For example, any qualified person can enter a position in the labour market for which he or she qualifies". This met the needs of capitalism on a global scale and reinvented development as a programme that surrendered to capitalist logic, a school of thought which equates economic growth with development (Dicklitch 1998:21). As Hagg (2001:33) explained, the logic follows that "individuals should be left free to accumulate capital, as they will invest it invariably in new ventures that will deliver profits, economic growth and development" through creating more job opportunities, etc. However, Hagg (2001:56) also observed that "capital building within a socio-economic context is not necessarily beneficial. Capitalists remain the leaders in the private sector and marginalised communities often do not benefit from new capital investments". Furthermore, despite government's emphasis on job creation in the arts, Van Graan (2004:249) wrote that the sector experienced a shedding of full time jobs. He continued, saying that the South African *White Paper for Arts and Culture* states that "in the past [...] publically-funded institutions and practices allowed and at times encouraged the exploitation of artists. With …the salaries of practitioners, technicians and administrators in arts institutions are unacceptably low" (Van Graan 2004:249). However, as Van Graan (2004:249) points out, "This is still the case and with the even greater decline in subsidies and the increasing subjugation of artistic practice to 'Market forces', the exploitation of artists continues and has, in fact, worsened".

Cammack (2002:159) claimed that these neo-liberal development strategies were in sharp contrast to former assumptions which saw "working against market forces [as] essential to bringing about development", and that they abolished "the idea of development as a specific concern" in favour of creating labour for a global and national market. Mbembe writes that, in South Africa, within "the official, state sanctioned discourse, culture is completely subsumed under the gospel of 'development', 'poverty eradication', and 'racial redress'" (Mbembe in Mbembe and Paulissen 2010:72). He explains that both African governments and Western donor agencies

> Argue that art and culture should be 'relevant'. But their definition of 'relevance' is thin and functionalist. In their eyes, good and 'relevant' art and culture is art and culture that is colonised by the imperatives of 'development'. 'Development' itself is conceived of

in the narrowest of terms, in purely materialistic terms…We need to move away from this form of crass materialism and empiricism of wants and needs in order to rehabilitate cultural and artistic critique as a public good in and of itself. The value of art cannot solely be measured on the basis of its contribution to material development...We must resist this trivialisation. Artistic creativity, cultural, and theoretical critique are intrinsic parts of the material and immaterial assets produced by society. They form part of the wealth of our communities and nations (Mbembe in Mbembe and Paulissen 2010:72).

An art centre is "an important vehicle for reclaiming cultural values and advocating the post-colonial position of accepting non-western notions of cultural development" (Galla 1995:31). According to Mbembe, due to African countries' dependence of Western funding for economic development, Africans are in the position of always speaking as victims and beneficiaries (Mbembe and Paulissen 2010:74). In light of this, he claims that "the function of art in Africa is precisely to free us from the shackles of development both as an ideology and as a practice" (Mbembe and Paulissen 2010:74). Accordingly, art must "pave the way for a qualitative practice of the imagination – a practice without which we will have no name, no face, and no voice in history" (Mbembe and Paulissen 2010:74). Centres like CAP have served the role of giving a voice to the marginalised communities during apartheid. Such centres can still serve this purpose in a post-apartheid world. The ideal of the cultural worker to recognise and work with the potential inside each individual is still needed today.

While money is certainly important, Shamapande observes that poverty is not the same as poor income: "It is about the people's lost creativity and potential to contribute to society … more freedom, dignity and self-respect" (Shamapande in Hagg 2001:55). This same argument was set out in a paper presented by Mike van Graan (1991:2-3) to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in 1991, when financial crises hit the majority of art centres and saw many of them closing:

Development priorities such as housing, health care, infrastructure, etc. which deny the importance of culture generally and art in particular and which are not linked fundamentally to human rights and democracy, still regard people in two-thirds of the world as essentially physical entities with little, if any, emotional, intellectual,

aesthetic or psychological needs...The non-prioritisation of culture and the arts in development perpetuates....the lack of artistic skills and resources for the majority to find and maintain identity, to make meaning of their world and to articulate their aspirations, fears and ideas...if development is designed to overcome the legacies of colonialism and apartheid, then it must have its philosophical premise, not self-serving economic or political interests, but of human beings as holistic and equals...

CAP recognised the need for art in a post-apartheid society as something to be valued in and of itself. After the funding crises, however, it too became subject to an unfruitful pursuit of art as a tool of economic growth. Mbembe notes that there are some progressive funding bodies for the arts, however, "in these neo-liberal times, even these progressive and somewhat avant-garde organisations are under tremendous pressure. In order to justify their activities to the taxpayers some are forced to pay lip service to the fiction of 'development'" (Mbembe and Paulissen 2010:74). Dicklitch (1998:176) adds that NGOs are pressured to "conform to donor objectives that often focus more on economic liberalization than on democratization".

3.7. CONCLUSION: CAP'S SUCCESSES AT TRAINING

Despite CAP's difficulties in the 1990s, Hagg (2001) argues that CAP was a successful training institution for the arts which maintained a high degree of relevance. Hagg (2001:237) states that by 1997 CAP was running 23 OBE courses for 306 students and by 2000 it had "delivered approximately 40 full-time students, and over 100 part-time trained students per semester". Hagg further argues that "CAP's reputation enabled many students to find work, either directly or through further training". The success of many of CAP's students can be attributed to its teaching plans which were "based on solid market research, [were] regularly adjusted to increase employment opportunities for its students, and made provision for formal, informal and self-employment" (Hagg 2001:238). CAP thus adjusted well to the new environment it found itself in. With the continued lack of

artistic training in township schools, the closure of CAP (which had been renamed AMAC) in 2008 was a real loss for the development of South African art.

Funding remains scarce for the arts and often still constrained by an economic and developmental focus. This chapter has argued that the prioritisation of art as a means of economic development was stifling to its role as a body for democratisation. Problems with qualification further hindered its effectiveness for training formally employable individuals in the arts. The government's lack of consultation or funding to these arts bodies was also highly problematic as it set out to establish to RDP art centres. This made it very difficult to operate as a community arts organisation in South Africa during this time.

CAP also recognised the need to continue engaging with the foundations of the South African art world. Indeed even after ten years of democracy, Thembikosi Goniwe noted that there was still a need to

> Evaluate in context how those who control and are controlled by the institutions/infrastructure which determines visual art productions, exhibitions, marketing, dissemination , curating, writing, teaching and art dialogues continue to do so. Evaluating not for the sake of evaluating, ridiculing institutions, and individuals, but to understand problems that inform our continuing struggle to transform institutions (Goniwe in Perryer 2004:9).

While CAP could have served a role in evaluating and addressing these inequalities it seems as if there is resistance from government with regards to input and debate with art associations like NACSA. These associations have been viewed as threats rather than bodies to work with in order to bring about greater democratisation and equality. The ANC's decision to ignore these opportunities for democratisation is unfortunate since it seems that once again there is a need to work separately from the government in order for democratisation to be achieved.

Much more needs to be done to develop artistic practice in South Africa. Already in 1989 Albie Sachs argued in an ANC seminar that there was a great need for heightening the quality and the 'level of culture' of grassroots arts organisations. Considering that CAP initially viewed itself as contributing directly to this process, it is

ironic that it both lacked proper funding from the government, and was forced to redefine its role in terms of job creation. The role of art centres in bringing forth local creativity in South Africa is examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: SERCHING FOR SOUTH AFRICAN EXPRESSION

Albie Sachs' paper *Preparing Ourselves for Freedom* began with a concern that artists do not possess enough imagination to articulate the new South Africa. This chapter will investigate the potential for community art centres to realise Sachs' notion of exploring "South Africanness" in and through visual artistic practice. Extensive use will be made of CAP's 1990 newsletter which contains an article written in response to Sachs' paper. Here CAP articulated the role it hoped to continue serving. In many respects CAP was ready to engage in improving the quality and diversity of its artistic output and addressing the apartheid inequalities which hindered this. This chapter argues that spaces like CAP have incredible potential for enriching and diversifying South Africa's art as a democratising structure in the arts.

According to Elliot (1990:7), Sachs' view

> Does not deny the self-evident truth that culture is born out of social context but it affirms that the manifestations of culture many take many forms. Similar views are held also by a number of black artists who make both abstract and figurative work. They feel that the struggle against apartheid has been pressed into the fabric of their lives; they do not need to justify themselves or their work by constantly focusing on its literal expression.

As I have argued CAP fostered diverse artistic expressions during apartheid, this contasts nicely with the narrowness which Sachs was criticising. Rather it responded to the grassroots in a far more flexible and open manner, allowing work to emerge which was not programmatic. The first section of this chapter explores this further with a focus on how this openness had a potential for expressing "South Africaness" from the proletariat. The second examines the work of two artists who have benefitted from CAP, demonstrating how they contribute today to the kind of rich diversity which Sachs was already proposing in 1989.

4.1. CREATING "SOUTH AFRICANESS" IN THE VISUAL ARTS

CAP's newsletter of March 1990 (written in response to Albie Sachs' paper) reads, "We now need to be forging new forms, new critical traditions, new ways of creating and disseminating art, new ways of looking at and understanding our worlds which reflects *[sic.]* a growing South Africaness".[240] The emphasis of the arts reflecting the nation seems similar to post-colonial discourses in other African countries where, as Hassan (1996:42) has pointed out, "government patronage and interest in the arts became part of building – in some cases inventing – a 'national culture' and identity…to establish a more culturally rooted, self-conscious and 'African' aesthetic expression". Yet, Shirley Walters (1997:3-4) wrote that

> South Africa is having to 'build a nation' in a time when the nation-state has become less important in the world. The globalizing forces minimize differences and national borders at a time when South Africa is needing to build unity and recognise differences amongst its diverse population of 40 million people who speak eleven languages, who have been systematically organized along racial lines and who vary widely across divisions of culture, gender, social class, and region.[241]

Art centres, arguably, held the potential to work across these divides and bring forth local creativity. Unlike the initiatives mentioned by Hassan, the work done by community art centres were not government initiated, and attempted to work with the grassroots to equip people with the means to explore what they felt was appropriate expressions of life in South Africa. Malange *et al* (1990:100) explain that, at the *Culture and Working for Life Project*, "The work undertaken by us is democratic in nature; it insists on the participation of more and more people in the exploration of their talents; to open themselves up for and

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[240] March 1990 Newsetter, Page 3.
[241] Sachs (1990:24) said that there is a need for "building national unity and encouraging the development of a common patriotism, while fully recognising the cultural diversity of the country…the objective is not to create a model culture into which everyone has to assimilate, but to acknowledge and take pride in the cultural variety of our people".

through creativity…to encourage them *in* their creativity".[242] CAP, with its liberal and open space, provided a similar kind of input. Arguably then, these centres could facilitate an aesthetic which was determined by the participating individuals rather than trying to express a narrow, top-down definition of what it means to be South African.[243]

At the time when South Africa was beginning to transition into a post-apartheid state, alternative art spaces like CAP facilitated discussion around the nature of South African art and the role of 'people's culture' in informing its values and structures. While 'people's culture' was often reduced to posters-as-advertising in the visual art, the goal of 'people's culture' was in fact to simultaneously oppose apartheid culture and build a new culture with which to replace it. The concept of a national culture based on the expression of the proletariat was largely inspired by Medu, who often stated that, "You must fashion the revolution with the people. And if you fashion it with the people the songs will come by themselves and of themselves" (Peffer 2009:74). This discourse was still strong at the time of Sach's paper, as is evident by the response of the Transvaal Interim Cultural Desk (1990:107):

> Building an alternative, truly non-racial culture is, we believe, one of the best ways to fight apartheid. By this one does not mean a culture of mere agit-prop that is political in a very narrow sense, however. It should give expression to the whole range of human emotions and experience, it should capture the fullness and contribute the richness of the type of existence with which we wish to replace apartheid and enhance the quality of our life.

Kasfir (2008:10) suggests that in South Africa "the anti-elite idea of the artist as a 'cultural worker' helping to forge the newly ascendant identity of the nation has until recently provided a counter-position to avant-garde internationalism". However, as Peffer (2009:9)[244] writes, even with hardcore political activists who argued for creating a realist visual culture which was relevant to the people at large, the aesthetic "while aimed at the

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[242] They also note how the personal is political and how they wanted people to express their experiences in all their beauty and ugliness, whilst they equipped people to appreciate art. People caught in depressing factories or unemployment were also on quest to find a means of expression.

[243] Obviously, with regards to the look of the work, western techniques and styles were taught. However, this need not be seen as an imposition, but rather an opportunity for people to expand their creative vocabulary.

[244] My emphasis.

specific local issue of ending apartheid, *did* embrace international avant-garde concepts in both style and rhetoric".[245] Artist Gavin Younge was fairly sceptical of the nature of the 'new aesthetic' that apartheid culture was to be replaced with. According to Younge (1990:25), Mi Hlatswayo of COSATU said that "the South African proletariat...should lay the basis for a yet to be invented national culture". However, Younge (1990:25) wrote that

> This call has echoed....around community halls for the past few years, but not many have chosen to define the specific content...[Hlatswayo] pointed to the poetry and drama which have arisen spontaneously out of funerals, marches and meetings. When it comes to the visual arts he admits candidly that union structures have not yet been able to penetrate this aspect.

This concern was also explored at the community halls of CAP, but they regarded the 'new aesthetic' appropriate to South Africa as less of a set of visual and formal concerns, and more as the work of cultural workers who were committed to working at a grassroots level with values of non-elitism. Mike van Graan (1988:29) wrote about the need to equip students at CAP with necessary "critical skills with respect to political theory and training". This was intended not to foster a propagandistic kind of art, but rather to allow students to understand the context in which they existed and how their art was not neutral, but could either reinforce or challenge the ruling hegemony (Van Graan 1988:29). Van Graan (1988:30-31) explained that "the art of the ruling class does not reinforce their hegemony because it is overtly political: rather it does so through the values it espouses...art does not need to be overtly didactic in order for it to serve our interests". Hence CAP's idea of producing art which reflected "South Africaness" was to

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[245] Peffer (2009:9) explains that "The historical avant-gardes were not particular to any nation, sought radical political reform (often by advocating an experimental approach to form), and were organized around membership groups aligned to progressive social movements. South African artists during the 1980s revitalized the European Popular Front strategy from earlier in the century for use against the authoritarian imagery of the apartheid state, and their aesthetics were attuned to those of progressive movements and freedom struggles elsewhere in the "Third World" during the late cold war. That the commitment to social realism favoured by political activists was felt to be overly doctrinaire by others is a separate issue. Even staunch cultural worker advocates such as Thami Mnyele or Manfred Zylla, while actively engaged in revolutionary propaganda work, also experimented with then-current forms of "postmodern" pastiche, performance, and iconoclasm".

provide a non-didactic education which socio-politically concretised individuals and equipped people with the needed practical skills. However, CAP recognised that it still lacked

> The skills, the theory, and the vision to contribute significantly to a new South African art.... [This] means that a future government will have little option but to support what today are the dominant art forms, practices and structures because *there is no coherent, vibrant alternative in this context.*[246]

The absence of a well-defined visual practice from the proletariat as an alternative was due to the fact that art was legitimised primarily through its political engagement as part of the liberation struggle and the originality and quality of the work became less important.[247] As Malange *et al* (1990:101) explain,

> The insurrection of 1984-6 and the violence thereafter have had both negative and positive effects on grassroots creativity. Of serious negative impact has been the lack of self-criticism in grassroots creativity. But part of the problem *was* with the nature of many political leaders' understanding of the relationship between cultural work and politics…many leaders saw cultural workers as groupings that were to fill the gap of political activity or to become 'adverts' for the latest campaign.

In examining some of the work that emerged from CAP, we can begin to investigate how these concerns affected the work produced at art centres. The poster by the United Women's Congress in 1986 (Fig. 79) which was produced at CAP is an example of the kind of work Sachs was trying to move away from. Even though this work has a sophisticated use of technique compared to many other posters, it still lacks the nuanced engagement Sachs was arguing for. Posters like this appealed to the needs of 'the people' in the 'accountable' manner that Medu had envisioned because it directly addressed the

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[246] My emphasis. March 1990 Newsetter, Page 3.
[247] Orenna Krut (1990:114) from COSAW wrote that by 1990 "slogans have become fashionable. And as long as you've said the right slogans in your poem, everyone else approves of your work even if it's boring, badly written and completely unoriginal".

circumstances faced by people in the townships, it was not isolated in gallery spaces, and made use of simple visual symbols that everyone could understand. It is a list of demands for houses, security, and comfort. The foreground shows a family unit consisting of a mother, father, and child, all of whom are raising their fists in unity and defiance. The background shows a representation of the townships and caspirs, reflecting on the township conditions and the military occupation of the area due to the state of emergency. In order to have a popular appeal that could be understood by the majority of people, there is little interpretive engagement needed from the viewer. The reasons for this lack of diversity in subject matter are multiple. Political activists were building a recognisable vocabulary of images that that could be easily read and understood by the majority of people in order to mobilise them for resistance against apartheid. Furthermore, at printing units like CAP Media there was a constant stream of new activists in need of basic training. This was due to detentions and reshuffling within organisations. As a result of these limitations the training in skill and artistic vocabulary could only take place in limited and rudimentary ways. Seidman (2007:112) writes that "people who came in as political activists felt comfortable with visual vocabulary that included images of barbed wire, police vehicles, [and] clenched fists" whereas "those with more training felt that the 'language of struggle' was adhered to 'somewhat slavishly'". As such, the artistic output with regards to posters was often messy and rudimentary without much diversity in subject-matter.[248]

The art produced at CAP, however, was not limited to production of posters, but rather demonstrated an ability to train artists to approach their work with nuance and skill. Billy Mandindi studied at CAP as a full-time student from 1985-1986 after which he attended the Michaelis School of Art at the University of Cape Town from 1987. While still at CAP, he produced works such as his 1986 print, *Reproduction*, (Fig. 80) and his 1986 painting *African Madonna* (Fig. 81); these are both complicated engagements with the history of South Africa. Mario Pissarra (2006:258) has argued that the latter work is a

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[248] Examples of these were discussed in Chapter 2. See Fig. 48-51 and Fig. 68-69. It is significant to consider that the lack of diversity in subject matter is also evident in posters made in Russia. This is despite the fact that they were professionally produced. Hence it is not only a symptom of the difficult conditions community centres found themselves in, but part of the poster aesthetic.

Direct reference to Nonqawuse, the young girl whose prophesises led directly to the subjugation of the Xhosa by the British settlers. Seen in this context the painting is an eloquent testament to the link between Nonqawuse's prophesies and the beginning of labour contracts and migrant labour.

In both *African Madonna* and *Reproduction* the servitude of blacks for labour under colonialism and apartheid is depicted by the machinery in the background and the miner's helmet. Especially in *Reproduction*, it is implied, through the image of the helmet on the child, that future generations of children are already marked for their role as labourers due to their 'race' and the education they will receive. Mandindi, however, introduces a double reading: in *African Madonna* the pickaxe not only reads as a signifier for the role of black people as labourers, but also recalls the popular poster imagery of the strength of the labourer against oppression (Fig. 66) and Gerard Sekoto's use of the pickaxe as a symbol of resistance in *Song of the Pick* (Fig. 10). Furthermore, a leopard skin cloth, among other stereotypical African symbols, was often used by Mandindi to make a claim to African pride in their history and culture, reminiscent of philosophies such as Negritude and the Black Consciousness Movement. Thus, while the work deals with the political circumstances of the country, the use of its subject matter is nuanced and requires an investigation and understanding of South African history. Both these works were produced while Mandindi was still at CAP, before he progressed to study at Michealis, demonstrating the sophisticated engagement these centres offered. Art centres like CAP gave people space to develop as artists; to develop their talents and experiment with technique and medium beyond mere propaganda or Township Art. That many CAP students were able to engage with socio-political issues with sophistication in their art is evident in the review of a 1990 CAP exhibition by an anonymous reporter (1990, Nov: np):

instead of blatant politicking, I found gentleness, irony and humour; instead of sloppy technical skills I found incisive drawing, subtle use of colour and healthy experimentation...The art on exhibition is full of the contradictions, complexity and beauty of real lives lived by real people – not simply the boring work of artists who simply reproduce what they think is expected of them.

Furthermore, Both Ahmed (1990:122) and Stent (1990:78) referred to CAP by name, as an example of a progressive grassroots institution that does not produce art which is locked in clichés and can be used to impart greater artistic sophistication.

In response to Sachs, the CAP newsletter argued that community art centres were needed now more than ever to continue reversing the "effects of decades of gutter education" and "psychological and physical oppression".[249] It continued by stating that without proper access to art training the grassroots could not "be expected to compete on equal terms or contribute as equal partners" to enriching the diversity of expression in which all South Africans could take part.[250] The March Newsletter continued by arguing that, "It is our task to...facilitate the emergence of grassroots cultural structures, to encourage debate and the development of theory, to experiment with new aesthetic forms and to provide space for exciting cultural work". Arguably CAP, along with other community organisations, still had the potential to build a 'South African aesthetic' from the grassroots in a post-apartheid state if it was properly supported for this role.

Community art centres like CAP were not the only initiative that allowed people to explore artistic techniques to allow them to approach their subject matter with greater sophistication so as to explore "South Africaness". Another example of artists exploring new aesthetics is the Thupelo workshops held in Johannesburg. These workshops facilitated the exploration of new materials and techniques for artists to expand their creative vocabulary. In August 1985, during the violence of the state of emergency, a group of fifteen artists gathered at Hunter's Rest, an hour and a half outside Johannesburg (Peffer 2009:131). For two weeks these artist worked non-stop on large-scale, mixed-media and abstract work. This was during a time when pressure was mounting to make art which had a more direct impact on the struggle. According to Peffer (2009:132,133), these workshops were initiated by artists David Koloane and Bill Ainslie and by 1986 these workshops became known as "Thupelo" which is a South Sotho word meaning, "to

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[249] March 1990 Newsetter, Page 2. This was also argued in other responses to Sachs' paper. Ahmed wrote that "no amount of criticism levelled at cultural workers, liberals, academics, journalists and others will change weaknesses in progressive culture – education, exposure and exchange, and the eradication of apartheid will do so" (Ahmed in De Kok 1990:15). Similarly, Sitas wrote that "unless conditions for creativity are transformed there is no way aesthetic freedom can be attained" (Sitas in De Kok 1990:15).
[250] Ibid.

teach by example".[251] The model of a two week workshop was introduced to Koloane when he attended a Triangle Arts Trust workshop in the United States. The American model was meant as a means for artists to explore and push their creativity as mid-career artists. In South Africa however these two weeks would be the first solid period artists had to work on their art. According to Koloane, very few artists could actually venture into large scale work because of space limitations in their homes, and so Thupelo gave artists "room enough to explore scale, explore techniques and material". (Peffer 2009:148). Peffer writes that "these more experimental approaches to image making slowly found their way into student work from community centres…[helping] black artists expand beyond naturalistic drawing and printmaking techniques and formulaic depictions of township life". Exposure to new techniques was also provided by visiting international artists who would share their skills. Peffer (2009:169) writes that these workshops offered "the possibility of thinking beyond the immediate needs of the present, beyond producing art for a market (or a political program) that made demands on content of black artists' work. A door was opened to thinking about what else art could be". Peffer (2009:171) argues that "what Sachs was suggesting was the kind of openness in the arts that those associated with groups like Thupelo had already been working on for at least half a decade". For example, Durant Sihlali's works were created in an abstract fashion, but also bear witness to the influence of popular community expression found in the creation of People's Parks. *Peace Wall* (Fig. 82) and *Carnage Wall* (Fig. 83) were created in the turbulent year of 1993 wherein individuals like Chris Hani and Amy Bhiel were killed. He contrasts, through his titles the opposing poles of peace and carnage which South Africans were facing in the violence leading up to the 1994 elections. Sihlali writes that "inscriptions bear witness to the existence of those who lived during a specific periodic history. It has been my study for many years to microscopically scrutinise these...signatures of the past and present. I then reconstruct these on paper and canvas" (Sihlali in Kasfir 1999:98). Hence he did not create work that was merely abstract, but rather work that had a specific socio-political tie to the place of South Africa.

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[251] The Project was supported by United States-South Africa Leadership Exchange Program (USSALEP), the Federated Union of Black Artists (FUBA), and donations from local businesses (Peffer 2009:131).

Peffer (2009:153) writes that the last of the Thupelo workshops was held in Johannesburg in 1991. At that time Koloane and Ainslie saw the need for a more regular studio space. A vacant Speedy Bag Factory in Fordsburg was purchased and converted into studios. This became known as *The Bag Factory* artist studio. It did not offer training in the arts, but it allowed artists access to both studio space and opportunities for networking with other individuals. In 1990, Thupelo was held in Cape Town for the first time, and it has continued there to this day.[252] Since 1990 many more international artists have been able to attend, which has encouraged a greater degree of interaction between artists from different counties than would otherwise have occurred.[253] However, a similar need for more permanent studio space was identified, and in 1998 Greatmore Studios was established in Woodstock. It also granted studio space and created exposure for young developing artists, while inviting international artists to share the space. According to Garth Erasmus, "The idea was to be something like a vibrant hub of activity, creativity and energy...CAP (Community Arts Project) was a Cape Town phenomenon...we needed some of CAP, but in a more professional/mature working space...[in an attempt to] equalise a very unbalanced artistic environment in Cape Town".[254] The significance of such spaces is articulated by Kasfir, who writes that the key to creativity lies in "encounters with unfamiliar cultural models and artistic practice" and that workshops offer artist on the periphery the opportunity to "engage in both local and international networking" (Peffer 2009:152-3).

Other cultural groups in South Africa were also exploring the issue of local relevance in their work. Artists associations like *Vakalisa* (which means "wake up") and *Bayajula* (which can be interpreted as "hard workers") encouraged the exploration of alternative ways of making and distributing art which worked outside apartheid cultural structures such as galleries (Simbao 2011:13). By being black-only groups, they tried to explore different means of engaging with local communities and the production of art un-tampered by "selling appeal" without the interference of white people, whom they felt would inevitably dominate (Lionel Davis in Voyiya & Mcgee 2005). This could be

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[252] Thupelo workshops were held in Cape Town in 1990, 1995, 1996, 1998, annually from 2000-2008, and most recently in 2010. (http://www.greatmoreart.org/pastthupeloworkshops.html. First Accessed 12 November 2010).

[253] http://www.greatmoreart.org/pastthupeloworkshops.html. First Accessed 12 November 2010.

[254] Interview with Garth Erasumus by Jill Trappler. *10 Years at Greatmore Studios Cape Town* (2008:3).

argued to be an important attempt at creating a new artistic discourse which was specific to the conditions of South Africa. Hence, experimentation with new ways of engaging and reaching the grassroots in vibrant ways, relevant to South Africa's socio-political history, were taking place. It is unlikely that the aesthetic look of these works was drastically different or unique; however, it represented a starting point for exploring what the arts meant for communities marginalised by decades of apartheid. Such initiatives are still needed. As Goniwe (2004:36) explains,

> The official collapse of apartheid in 1994 oversimplified the supposed or desired integration between black and white – subjects historically differentiated on the dialectics of poor and rich, educated and uneducated. South Africa's new democracy does not change these disparities.

Pissarra argues for an approach that takes full recognition of these disparities which, while often synonymous with race, are not solely determined by colour. He wrote that "simplistically polarising black and white fails to capture the texture of South African cultural politics today" (Pissarra 2004:184). Skin colour is not the only determining factor; instead "class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and even that troublesome notion 'culture' are all significant markers of identity and power". Initiatives, such as Vakalisa, that were established during apartheid, were informed by the values of Black Consciousness which fought psychological oppression with pride through cultural work. While such initiatives would probably not need to be black-only groups, something like the values of Black Consciousness were needed in programs in order to give space to alternative values not based on elitism, and equipped with the capacity to question and confront dominant ideologies.

If South Africa is committed to redressing cultural inequalities, allowing for a true democratisation of culture, community art centres will continue playing a vital role in achieving this goal. This will allow people to begin exploring their circumstances artistically, giving expression to South Africa from different perspectives. Centres such as CAP have proven that they have a lot to offer in terms of developing and enriching South African art by equipping students with skills and exposing them to networks of artists and

different means of expression. The critical role CAP played is demonstrated the artists it trained, and its contribution will be sorely missed. The next section argues that the skills artists received at CAP continue to enable them to engage with issues pertinent to South Africa in a critically informed way.

4.5. ENGAGING SOUTH AFRICAN CULTURE AND POLITICS: THE WORK OF NGQINAMBI AND DYALOYI

The nature of post-apartheid artistic expression is considered here through the works of students who received their training at CAP. For the purposes of my argument I will restrict myself to work by two artists: Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi and Ricky Dyaloyi. The themes dealt with by CAP artists seem to be primarily concerned with what they observe around them, often making potent statement regarding the nature of South Africa.[255] Both the work of Dyaloyi and Ngqinambi resonate with Black Consciousness themes which were important towards the founding of many art centres, and vital for highlighting the rights and pride of an oppressed population. That these themes still find contemporary expression in the works of these artists is a powerful statement concerning the continued and vital need for these ideals and the art centres that came about to address these concerns.

Ricky Dyaloyi, who attended part time training at CAP from 1988-89, continues to address themes regarding the conditions faced by the majority of South Africans.[256] He explains that during the 1980s the work that artists created often carried political significance, as it was difficult to ignore the injustices that were happening around you every day.[257] Yet today many of those concerns still hold relevance for him, he comments that he poses "questions that may be unpalatable for some...to remind people that there is

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[255] Since Dyaloyi and Ngqinambi address these concerns it would be repetitive to analyse the work of each artist. For a list of artist who studied at CAP and information on where to view their work, please refer to Appendix B.

[256] Dyaloi was admitted into the children's classes at CAP at quite a young age, but he was soon participating in the adult drawing and printmaking classes due to his talent being recognised. He took part in the part-time classes from 1988-1989, when there was little or no schooling due to the state of emergency.

[257] Interview with Ricky Dyaloyi. Cape Town, 20 Aug 2010.

still a lot to be done in the course of justice".[258] This is illustrated in his 2006 work *Mzamo II* (Fig. 84) wherein a day labourer is portrayed on the right hand side (identified by his shovel) and contrasted with the tin mug and plate on the left hand side, representing the crockery given to black labourers who were addressed as 'boys' by their white masters. Dyaloyi considers the shovel as representing all of the work that still lies ahead.[259] This portrait seems to remind the viewer that the present socio-economic reality for many South Africans has not changed since the end of Apartheid, despite apparent political changes.

This concern continues within the works of Dyaloyi such as *Untitled* and *Khayelitsha Day Hospital* where he portrays the conditions faced by a large number of South Africans in the townships. Dyaloyi's *Untitled,* 2008 (Fig. 85) recalls the paintings of South African artists like Durant Sihlali. The painting is executed in an expressive style whereby the houses all seem to fuse into one indistinguishable whole. This engagement with daily reality among South African artists is what Koloane has called an "intrinsic socio-political statement about the tyranny of place" (Hassan 1999:227). The sky seems to mirror the lack of tranquillity below with scratchy and chaotic gestures which is amplified by mixing sand into his paint, connoting the continued tyranny experienced by many South Africans. Here, even the lack of a title in his township image speaks to the anonymity and the lack of individuality of the township residents. *Khayalitsha Day Hospital,* 2010 (Fig. 86) depicts a clinic in Khayalitsha which receives more than 8 000 patients every month to be treated for, among other things, gunshots, stab wounds, and also for being raped.[260] The expressive gestures blur the individuality of the people queuing at hospital, hence commenting on the widespread affects of violence and sickness on the township residents. It also seems to bear a resemblance in its theme to Gerard Sekoto's *The Waiting Room* (Fig. 8) which was implicitly commenting on the second-rate provision of amenities to black South Africans.

Dyaloyi draws his imagery from diverse sources to set up contrasts that speak about conditions in South Africa. This is also done through collage works like *The World*

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[258] Ibid.

[259] http://rickydyaloyi.everard-read-capetown.co.za/?m=1. First Accessed 22 April 2010.

[260] http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/khayelitsha-day-hospital-gets-a-face-lift-1.431070.   First accessed on 22 March 2011.

of Mud Slicks and Volcanic Rumbling, 2005 (Fig. 87). Line drawing of a plane and a factory seems to suggest promises of development which are yet to materialise, and Dyaloyi seems to contrast this uncomfortably with the position of a large number of South Africa's population. He comments that, "people would say our economy is going well, yet most 'black' people are poor, unemployed and sick. Our children are born into a culture of freedom but die horrible deaths of poor slaves".[261] The clothes of the central figure are ill fitting and seem out of place and the facial expression seems to suggest dissatisfaction and frustration, perhaps even anger. This mirrors the frustration at the slow pace of development for South African townships and the circumstances people face as they "migrate from rural life to the cities in search of work and better life".[262] In this image the newspaper pages contain an article about street children, in stark contrast to the model image of a white woman's body. These contrasting realities found within the country between the luxuries of the rich and the conditions of the poor are a potent source of subject matter viewed through the Dyaloyi's eyes.

Dyaloyi explains his subject matter in the following way: "I simply comment on life as I know it. I usually comment on society, poverty, the dilemma of industrialization, urbanization, irony of daily living and middle class values".[263] This is further explored in Dyaloyi's two untitled works from 2009 in the series *Sex, Power & Money* (Fig. 88-89) where he juxtaposes diverse elements to create social commentary regarding the priorities of the wealthy. In Figure 88, a black female figure is represented standing on top of a ladder raised above the masses of people below. The image seems to superimpose different elements to create a dreamlike setting. Pillars and arches are symbolic of power and also act as doorways. The ladder acts as a reference to working to attaining a high position of one kind or another. These are set against a faceless crowd of well dressed individuals. It is difficult to know what the relationship is between the crowd and the figure on top of the ladder, and Dyaloyi has left it open to interpretation. However, considering the context of Dyaloyi's other works and the title of this series, it seems to comment on the position attained by the black middle class, some of whom are primarily

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[261] Interview with Ricky Dyaloyi. Cape Town, 20 Aug 2010.
[262] http://rickydyaloyi.everard-read-capetown.co.za/?m=1. First Accessed 22 April 2010. First Accessed 22 April 2010.
[263] Ibid.

concerned with self-indulgence. This picks up on daily events that still resonate in South Africa such as the removal of people from their homes, without suitable relocation, so that a shopping mall could be built.[264]

In Figure 89, a black female in a bikini is seated on a pig under a stoplight. If read from the same perspective as the former image then the central figure becomes a model of black empowerment on display, yet simultaneously the whole scene is rendered as a circus, and the beauty of the woman is in contrast with the negative associations linked to, for example, being called a pig. The figures in the background seem reminiscent of an auction, but can also carry significance in terms of politicians who make speeches of progress filled with empty promises. Hence, the images seem to comment on the way power is not used for developing the poor, but for engaging in activities of self-interest. In his own words Dyaloyi uses images to "question the exercise of authority".[265] This is also picked up in works like *Promise is a Comfort to a Fool,* 2008 (Fig. 90). Painted the year before the 2009 national elections in South Africa, it seems to question the promises made by various parties to secure a vote. In this work many of the people's faces are hidden by an umbrella or a piece of paper, possibly speaking of restricted vision, and not seeing through the rhetorical proclamations of election candidates.

The affirmation of pride in 'black identity' was an important Black Consciousness strategy which I believe is still an influence for Dyaloyi. This forms part of his concern that there is still a lot to be done in the course of justice. According to Peffer (2009:50), "Black Consciousness was primarily a philosophy of struggle against defeatism and psychological oppression within the 'black' community, and it aimed to counter emotional negativity with hope, pride, and self-determination", furthermore it "inspired pride in one's heritage, community, and self". In speaking of the turbulent nature of the 1980s, Dyaloyi comments that, those circumstances caused artists to be politicised by being confronted by daily cruelty against black people. As he says,

> you begin to ask yourself questions about why such cruelty is being
> directed to black people. You ask a lot of questions and as you look

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[264] http://www.dispatch.co.za/news/article/993. First Accessed 30 March 2011.
[265] http://rickydyaloyi.everard-read-capetown.co.za/?m=1. First Accessed 22 April 2010.

into your history and past you get to realise also that your people had a magnificent history and I guess that's where you hold on. My work currently has also been focused on that.[266]

The work of Billy Mandindi acts as an important influence for Dyaloyi, as they both draw on these Black Consciousness themes. For example, Dyaloyi's 2006 work, *By Any Means Necessary* (Fig. 92), draws on the imagery of Mandindi's *Ritual,* 1989 (Fig. 91). Mandindi often seems to comment on the effects of colonialism and the resultant subjugation of the South African population. In dealing with these concerns, however, there is often an underlying theme of affirming African pride in their culture and history for example *African Madonna,* 1986 (Fig. 81). Dyaloyi's references to Mandindi's work might allude to the fact that, for him, these concerns are still relevant today. In Mandini's work, *Ritual,* there is an engagement with contact between the traditional and the domestic. The figure on the right is dressed in a costume resembling Zulu shields; these figures seem to affirm African history and culture as a powerful means of self-affirmation and resistance. This is contrasted by domestic workers, who represent the subjugation of blacks, but at the same time the patterning reminiscent of sterotypical 'African' designs like leopard skin (also used in *African Madonna)* seem to affirm an Africaness and strength in the face of oppression. These figures are holding up a basket, woven in the shape of a tray, filled with fish heads. The precise meaning of this imagery is uncertain, but it could be referring metaphorically to the scraps offered to black people through assigning them an inferior position through apartheid education and labour. Pissarra (2006:258) states that the faceless schoolgirl in the image seems to act as both protagonist and victim. The use of a schoolgirl centres inferior education at the heart of this subjugation. However the image also acts as a means of resistance, recalling acts such as the 1976 Soweto School Uprisings. In Dyaloyi's rendition of the central figure in *Ritual,* the face is no longer veiled and is rendered as a lonely figure, perhaps signifying a form of abandonment. The stick here could be read as a sign of potential violence. Hence the sense of abandonment in *Any Means Necessarry* suggests that the education in township schools still leave much to be desired and that the children are still both victims and

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[266] Interview with Ricky Dyaloyi. Cape Town, 20 Aug 2010.

potential agitators. The cooking pot is also a complex signifier.[267] It may represent the 'cooking pot' where a number of adverse circumstances are being stirred together and the situation is getting more volatile. However in Dyaloyi's image it could perhaps even be a reference to the domestic place that women are often relegated to despite their education. This reading of the schoolgirl is heightened when compared to *Making of a Servant II,* 2004 (Fig. 93). Works such as this one seem to suggest the marginal and unemployed state many people, particularly black South Africans, are caught in despite having attained a high school education.

The Black Consciousness idea of self-empowerment is still a concern for Dyaloyi, as is well illustrated by the work *Resonance*, 2005 (Fig. 94) where the figure of a domestic worker reading is the subject of the painting. This work recalls Mandindi's use of domestic workers, not as an image of self-pity, but as an individual, affirming strength, and beauty of the African. Black Consciousness was important for black people to reclaim their pride. The book in the image could be a reference to self-education or it could be a reference to spiritual upliftment. The reference to the crown of thorns just below the woman is particularly telling in this regard, but might also be a more general allusion to suffering in the path to fulfilment of one's goals. The zig-zag patterns used in *Resonance* possibly invoke and affirm 'Africaness', hence making similar contrast as in Mandindi's *Ritual,* between domesticity and pride.

In *Praying, Wishing, Hoping & Dreaming in Distress,* 2008 (Fig. 95) as in *Resonance,* the subjects seem focused on an object of possible spiritual fulfilment which, as the title suggests, is a long and sometimes painful process. Dyaloyi contrasts the hope that a new South Africa would bring development to the majority with the reality of a country wherein those dreams remain unfulfilled. Here the vanishing point is a cross at the far right of the image, and the subject of the work seems to be suggestive of people hoping for and moving towards fulfilment. Stereotypical 'African' patterns are also used in *Untitled,* 2005 (Fig. 96) and celebration is suggested by the balloon. However, the mood of the painting makes the balloon seem out of place with the lonely figure. Both these images seem to set the celebration of new nation against despondency and reality of

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[267] The cast iron pot is often used by rural black people to cook food over a fire, but it is also used to make traditional Afrikaner food, namely the 'poitjie'. This makes it interesting signifier in Mandindi's contrast between the traditional and the colonial.

conditions. These images can therefore be read as a concern for affirming their worth and identity internally in the face of oppression.

Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi is an artist who shares these concerns and explores the significance of amaXhosa culture and spirituality in his work. Ngqinambi is interested in examining the nature of post-colonial, post-apartheid culture for amaXhosa South Africans in Cape Town. He trained at CAP in 2001-2002 and has been practicing as an artist ever since. In his recent work *Halo of Manhood,* 2009, (Fig. 97) and *Indlu Yokukhanya[268],*2010 (Fig. 98) he began considering the significance behind amaXhosa ceremonies, like male initiation, the symbolism of which was never explained to him. He started asking "What does this circle of people mean in this tradition"?[269] He explains that, after initiation men surround you singing songs and stamping their feet as a symbol of the trouble men are going to face in going away from home.[270] He noted that many young people today miss the meaning of these things and consider them nonsense. This is evident in *Halo of Manhood* wherein two of the three figures seem asleep or otherwise unaware of the circle of men hovering above them. The clouds in the background create a sense of movement in the images, but it also locates the subjects in a spiritual no-place, suggesting that these are realities which are not physically visible. One of Nqqinambi's predominant stylistic themes is the use of light to signify this understanding, which for him is strongly linked to culture. He explains, in reference to *Indlu Yokukhanya*, that "the house of light is where you go, you learn new language and clothes, you go to the house of light and the water washes away the old ideas you had as a child".[271] Thus, light is often used in his paintings to represent a transition, or a process of enlightenment and understanding.

Ngqinambi asks, "What is the meaning of culture and what is its purpose for us"?[272] For him it is important to explore these questions to come to a greater understanding of life and of oneself. He says "We need to explore, but we are more focused on survival. Colonialism changed the focus of life from exploring life to just

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[268]   It means 'House of Light'.
[269]   Interview with Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi, Cape Town, 31 Jan 2010
[270]   Ibid.
[271]   Ibid.
[272]   Interview with Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi, Cape Town, 31 Jan 2010

surviving, just running in a circle and not understanding your life and its purpose".[273] It would be wrong to ascribe this as a desire to return to an idealised pre-colonial past. Rather he poses questions regarding the continued relevance of these traditional practices for modern Africans. Works such as *Iqwili,* 2009 (Fig. 99) revisit this theme in which the significance of culture is symbolised by cattle and their link to the ancestors. As Marguerite Poland (2004:10) writes, "where tradition still holds sway cattle are companions in every aspect of daily life; patient intermediaries between the world of the living and the dead". The figures on the benches have however lost the understanding of the significance of cattle and seem bored and not interested in the display before them. This is not a reactionary anti-modern escape into the past, but rather a commentary on the effects of modernism on the traditional beliefs of African people. [274]

In his work *Wrong Window,* 2010 (Fig. 100) the 'troubles you are going to face', which the male initiation prepares you for, are symbolised through references to scenes of street violence and protests with burning tyres, a well-known scene in South African history. The painting portrays people with suitcases being hurled from an opening in the sky who then all run after one another through this violence to dive into another opening, or window. There are a number of ambiguous signifiers at work in this image; suitcases can represent the busy and hurried lifestyle of a people desperately looking for work to survive, but it also represents migration. In referencing migrant life – whether it is a move from a rural to an urban lifestyle, or a migration over national borders – he raises questions about the effects of these transitions on cultural identity. Speaking in a post-apartheid South Africa his work does not call for a fixity of identity in the way apartheid did, but recalls how the migrations forced by apartheid into urban areas had profound and lasting effects on the culture of black South Africans as they adapted to new environments. Dyaloyi's work *Migration*, 2010 (Fig. 101) also uses suitcases to signify a transitory life. The background and foreground of the figures is non-descriptive, even abstract, placing these figures in a liminal no-place between two worlds. It is significant that Dyaloyi shares a concern for African tradition. He states: "In this modern day, values

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[273] Ibid.

[274] Ngqinambi does not deny modernism, as he himself has explained that, while he is dealing with African tradition in his current work, he does not feel he is confined to painting 'African artwork' for the rest of his life. (Interview with Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi. Cape Town on 31 Jan 2010).

that used to govern our society have deteriorated and somehow have lost their true meaning and substance".[275]

In South Africa, Black Consciousness was a means of culturally affirming Africa's past and traditions while also embracing modernism and borrowing from other cultures. This was a process whereby oppressed people could begin defining themselves from a position of pride rather than inferiority so that equal engagements could take place, rather than the oppressed always remaining subservient. At the 1st Johannesburg Biennale, shortly after the ANC election victory, Rasheed Araeen expressed concern for the need for a system of mutual exchange with the grassroots to address the problems in South African art. He wrote that

> The problems of art and culture in South Africa must be dealt with internally by South Africans themselves, as part of the political and socio-economic process *in which all peoples must be equal participants*…in order to participate in the development of a new discourse *specific to the unique historical condition of South Africa* (Araeen 1995:16).[276]

Both Ngqinambi and Dyaloyi engage with these questions in their work. Dyaloyi asks questions regarding continued inequalities and the place black people occupy within South Africa. Meanwhile, Ngqinambi engages with questions regarding the nature of culture in a post-colonial South Africa and explores how migration disrupts the significance of tradition. There seems to be a continued Black Consciousness aesthetic impulse in the work of these artists. They also share a concern that there is no space to contemplate and engage with issues in the way that art centres like CAP provided. Hence there seems to be a continued impulse towards using art as a means of critical refection on culture and politics in South Africa. This needs to be facilitated if we want to continue seeing artists with a critical understanding of South Africa emerging from grassroots contexts.

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[275] http://rickydyaloyi.everard-read-capetown.co.za/?m=1. First Accessed 22 April 2010.
[276] My emphasis

4.6. CONCLUSION: CREATING SPACES FOR CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT

CAP demonstrated that it was not an organisation locked in resistance clichés, but rather one that possessed a lot to offer in terms of enriching South African artistic practice. There was an emphasis on involving more and more people in the active definition of 'South Africaness' though the practice of art in a shared critical space. Art centres still have the potential to function as vital stepping stones so that people from marginalised communities can engage with the art world on their own terms, and can give people the possibility of collectively experiment with the nature of South African art.[277] Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi and Ricky Dyaloyi is a sampling of work currently being produced by artists who were trained at CAP. They demonstrate how art centres have given individuals the means to artistically engage with the realities of South Africa and to question them. This demonstrates that there is a model for self-determination and a local, nuanced aesthetic proposed by Black Consciousness which can be facilitated by art centres and which needs to be further investigated.

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[277] Art centres do not have to cater exclusively for marginalised communities; however the model the art centre would follow would differ depending on who it is catering for. Greatmore Studios and The Bag Factory are both types of art centres which cater to people who already have artistic skills. What is needed are more centres which also make room for people who have no other means to acquire those skills.

CONCLUSION: DIVERSIFYING AND DEMOCRATISING SOUTH AFRICAN ART.

Van Robbroek (2004:52) summarised the need for alternative artistic spaces and discourse within South Africa when she wrote:

> In the Neo-Liberal international economic climate, any cultural body that resists profitability is doomed to failure. Some of the more militant Neo-Marxist ideals of the community arts movement may be regarded as unattainable and dated, and might have to be reconsidered. Yet, one may argue, it is precisely because of the appropriative and totalizing scope of our global neo-colonial socio economic order that alternative cultural models are essential…. In addition, South Africa's re-incorporation into the international art scene means that our visual arts arena has become more cut-throat, specialist and elitist than ever. It can therefore be argued that now, more than ever, some of the fundamental ideals of community arts need to be revived to enrich, democratise and diversify our cultural praxis.

This quotation was the key drive behind my thesis as I attempted to discover some of the ways in which the democratisation of art is still a vital need in South Africa, and the role art centres can play in this regard. I have shown how during the 1980s the democratisation of art was largely linked to the socialist drive behind the liberation struggle for a free South Africa. This was, for example, done through creating the term 'cultural worker' to distinguish artists in the struggle as more socially responsible and as equal to other workers. What is valuable about this socialist model is the way in which it resisted profitability as a primary motivation for art. Cultural workers were concerned with working with people to bring forth local creativity rather than working for a market. Learning to market one's work is a vital skill that *should* be taught at community art centres. Selling work was an integral part of vibrant art centres under apartheid, and it would be unwise to suppose that artists do not need to make a profit from their work. However the primary focus of cultural workers was to work within a created community, explore their talents, and express them creatively. This open ended engagement encourages people who are not necessarily interested in artistic careers to participate recreationally, and it offers a more nuanced approach to development.

During apartheid art centres such as CAP had the goal of resisting apartheid culture by creating an alternative approach to making art, and by creating popular forms

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of art such as posters and murals to clearly communicate with the people at large who generally did not visit art galleries. Moreover, the goal of CAP was to equip people to respond critically to their environment through their art without prescribing the content. This allowed for socio-economically disadvantaged artists to respond in ways they felt appropriate and potentially create an alternative aesthetic. Furthermore, through its broad spectrum of participants and through networking, CAP allowed an artistic community to emerge which could function as a supportive body and a potential means of advocacy on behalf of the community created at the centre.

After the financial crises occurred in the early 1990s many art centres were in a difficult position. By 1994 the new ANC government was in power and there was a lot of hope that conditions for creative production would change. Art centres were recognised for their vital role, and an initially democratic process held promise that they would continue to be supported in their aspiration to bring forth exciting cultural work. Furthermore, during the 1995 Johannesburg Biennale a select number of art centres were chosen to be represented on the world stage. The catalogue, however, contained numerous papers with warnings regarding the reluctance of cultural institutions to change in order to accommodate or share with the marginalised. New York based artist Coco Fusco (1995:40) warned that "dominant institutions, public and private, can retain hegemonic control over the means even as they espouse the language of inclusion". There was recognition for the need to interrogate the structures which allowed a certain elite to dominate the arts in South Africa. Based on her research on Ugandan NGOs, Susan Dicklitch (1998:19) argued that "liberalization serves the interests of the elite while not making any fundamental changes to the existing power structure". This elitist government structure in South Africa is well observed by David Koloane (1997:35):

> The post 1990 period, following the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, as well as the unbanning of major liberation movements, is already being referred to as the Post-apartheid Era. As already mentioned, there is an almost obsessive imperative to embrace a supposedly "user-friendly" Post-apartheid Era. Surprisingly it is not the suppressed communities who are heralding the new era, but those who are the beneficiaries of apartheid…The immediate past no longer appears to be of any significance to the present, as if to declare "let bygones be bygones".

Koloane (1997:35) further explained how he presented a paper at a conference in London demonstrating the complexities resulting from the disparities between black and white in South Africa. He said, "My presentation was received negatively, described as depressing by some of the participants…and [it was] suggested that I was perhaps unwilling to make the necessary paradigm shift beyond the apartheid syndrome".[278] It seems, therefore, that there was an unwillingness to acknowledge the continued effects of apartheid through the dominant discourses and power structures that have been established around the arts. The model put into the practice by the government for the arts was primarily a business model which encouraged elitism by making people compete individually in a financial market. The community arts movement in South Africa was working towards a non-elitist practice in the arts, and it was hoped that more support would have been given to models that could experiment with alternative cultural models. However, over time the art scene has become even more elitist and exclusive with little space given for models that cannot demonstrate clear contributions towards development. While there are a number of black artists who are now succeeding in the contemporary art scene, the stepping stones for black artists to achieve this type of independence are minimal. As Pissarra has (2006:48) argued, it is not enough that "some of yesterday's excluded artists have finally secured membership (if not necessarily leadership) of an elite club".

Black Consciousness held an alternative model for the practice of art which encouraged self-sufficiency and self-determination in working with communities to bring forth exciting cultural work. This model is non-elitist as it encourages people in their respective talents. This kind of attitude was widely practiced during the 1980s, and without the struggle rhetoric putting pressure on the work of artists it has great potential for building pride and self-confidence among black artists. Bongiwe Dhlomo explains that during the 1980s black artists had to "carry the banner of the liberation struggle in the one hand while holding on to the goat-hide skin of their ancestors in the other...There

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[278] Fusco (1995:40, 41) further explains that "Real sharing of cultural resources involved unlearning one's privileges in ways few could accept without some protest or regret…suddenly we became ungrateful, angry young blacks who've crashed someone else's party and can therefore be ignored or removed…it is the overwhelming power of the entertainment industry and is 'feel good' notion of cultural value that makes any sort of art that questions the status quo seem invalid, annoying and unnecessary".

is a need for black artists to break out of the small, tight world apartheid has imposed on them" (Dhlomo in Peffer 2009:160). Art centres were vital in allowing the space for people to create and explore beyond these restrictions, and this exploration allowed exciting work to emerge. There is an aesthetic in South African art that is derived from the Black Consciousness impulse; examples of this can be seen in the work of Dyaloyi and Ndikhumbule which responds to local issues pertinent to South Africa in a nuanced and thoughtful way.

While the art spaces that are offered by, for instance, Greatmore Studios and The Bag Factory are vital for networking and developing local artistic discourse, they do not offer formal training in the arts. With art still not being offered in township schools, and with the closure of the majority of art centres, including CAP, where will we expect the next generation of artists to come from? The need for art centres to address the continued inequalities in the South African art world cannot be overstated. The Community Arts Project was able to train a number of engaging artists who are practicing in the country today and a few who are practicing overseas.[279] It also provided a platform for addressing matters of mutual concern among aspiring artists and played a role in advocacy on behalf of those disenfranchised by Apartheid. Such spaces are indispensible as they provide the skills and the critical awareness needed to engage with the South African art world and needed to diversify the field. Without art centres this kind of democratisation and equal participation will most likely not occur.[280]

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[279] Such as Thembinkosi Goniwe.

[280] Even if arts were made widely available at a school level, art centres would still serve the function of working outside of the government programmes to bring forth exciting cultural work from the grassroots. Art being widely available at schools would, however, greatly strengthen the position of art centres since it would make the candidates they work with much stronger to start with.

APPENDIX A

CAP Timetable — Township venues

ART	TIME	DAY	PLACE
Teenagers	3 - 6pm	Monday	Luyolo Centre
Teenagers	3 - 6pm	Tuesday	Ikwezi Centre
Teenagers	3 - 6pm	Wed	Luyolo
Teenagers	3 - 6pm	Thurs	Ikwezi
Children	10 - 12am	Sat	Elukhanyisweni
8 - 12 yrs	3.30-5.30pm	Tues	Eyabantu Creche

DANCE			
Beginners/8-11 yrs	2.45-3.30pm	Monday	St. Francis
Beginners/11 yrs	3.30-4.30pm	Monday	St. Francis
Advanced	5 - 6.30pm	Monday	St. Francis
Advanced	4.30 - 6pm	Tuesday	St. Francis
Beginners/6-11 yrs	3 - 3.45pm	Thurs	St. Francis
Beginners/11 yrs	4 - 5pm	Thurs	St. Francis
Advanced	9 - 10.15am	Sat	St. Francis
6 - 11 years	3.30-4.30pm	Tuesday	Uluntu Centre
11 years & older	4.30-5.30pm	Tuesday	Uluntu
6 - 11 years	3.30-4.30pm	Friday	Uluntu
11 years & older	4.30-5,30pm	Friday	Uluntu

DRAMA			
Adults	5 - 7 pm	Monday	St. Francis
Adults	5 - 7 pm	Wed	St. Francis

TOWNSHIP VENUES ARE :

Luyolo Community Centre
NY 126, Section 3
Guguletu

Ikwezi Community Centre
Cnr NY 2 & NY 36
Section 2, Guguletu

Elukhanyisweni Centre
NY 74, Section 2
Guguletu

Eyabantu Creche
Zone 4, No. 36
Langa

St. Francis Cultural Centre
Langa

Uluntu Community Centre
NY 108, Guguletu

CAP Timetable — Chapel St

ADULT CLASSES	TIME	DAY
Etching	5 - 7 pm	Tuesday
Drawing	6 - 8 pm	Thursday
Pottery	6 - 8 pm	Tues & Thurs
Yoga	6 - 8 pm	Tues & Wed
Ceramic sculpture	9am - 1pm	Saturday
Creative life drawing	6 - 8 pm	Wednesday
Photography	3 - 5 pm (flexible)	Saturday
	8 - 10 pm	Thursday
Drama (open workshops)	2.30 - 4.30 pm	Saturday
Children's drama	to be confirmed	Saturday
Creative writing	2.30 - 6 pm	1st Sat of month
Isixhosa	3 - 4 pm	Wednesday
Dance –		
advanced beginners	5.30 - 7 pm	Monday
	5.15 - 6.45 pm	Wednesday
beginners	6 - 7.30 pm	Tuesday
intermediate	5.30 - 7 pm	Thursday
teenagers	10 - 11.30 am	Saturday
Music –		
beginner's guitar	6 - 7 pm	Thursday
intermediate guitar	5.30 - 6.30 pm	Monday
flute	by arrangement	Saturday
piano	by arrangement	Saturday
saxophone	3.30 - 5.30 pm	Saturday
percussion	11 - 1	Saturday

CHILDREN'S CLASSES		
Drawing/painting	10.30 - 12.30	Saturday
Pottery	10 - 12 & 12 - 2	Saturday
Printmaking	10.30 - 12.30	Saturday

Note: Please phone to check times of classes before arriving to register as changes to the timetable may occur during the year.

From : Anonymous. 1987. *Community Arts Project: Information 1987*. p3- 4.

APPENDIX B: CAP Full-Time and Part-Time Students 1977-2003

Artist from CAP's Full-Time Courses 1985-1991

1985-1986 Full-Time Class.[281]

Hlongwane, David.[282]
Mandindi, Billy.
Peters, Sophie.[283]
Siwangaza, Robert.
Sefako, Tshidi.
Voyiya, Vuyile.[284]

1987-1989 Full-Time Class[285]

Bam, Lugile.
De Leeuw, Henry.
Hlati, Sipho.[286]
Sefako, Tom.
Siko, Solomon.[287]
Somana, Xolani.

1990-1991 Full- Time Class.[288]

Melane, Mpumelelo
Mkonto, Mashabalala
Mqoco, Benny
Sefako, Tshidi
Sixaxa, Micheal
Stevens, Martin

Artists from Part-Time Classes 1980s

[281] CAP Newsletter, *Cap News,* 1987   & Interview with Voyiya, C. 25 April 1997. Conducted by Heidi Bolton.

[282] http://www.capegallery.co.za/david_hlongwane_cv.htm

[283] http://www.asai.co.za/artstudio.php?artist=14

[284] Only completed 1st year, after which he studied at Michaelis School of Art.

[285] Hobbs, P. & Rankin, E.1997. *Printmaking in a transforming South Africa*. Cape Town:David Philip.p46.

[286]   Goniwe, T. 2004. 'Sipho Hlati' in Bedford, E. & Perryer, S. (eds). *10 Years 100 Artists: Art in a Democratic South Africa.* Cape Town: Bell-Roberts. pp146.

[287] http://www.capegallery.co.za/solomon_siko_cv.htm

[288] Slides in the CAP archives kept at the University of Cape Town's Manuscripts & Archives department.

Adams, Fuad. [289]

Appollis, Tyrone. In attendance from 1978-1987.[290]

Bester, Willie. In attendance 1982, 1986.[291]

Budaza, Alfred. [292]

Buduza, Hamilton. In attendance from 1978.[293]

Davis, Lionel In attendance as participant and staff 1978, 1982-1990.[294]

Dyaloyi, Ricky.[295]

Maqoqa, Bangikaya. In attendance during the early 1990s.[296]

Mgijima, Vuyisani. In attendance from 1988.[297]

Mhayi, Anthony. In attendance during the mid 1980s.[298]

Mtakata, Xolile In attendance from 1987-89.[299]

Thyssen, Ishmael. [300]

Vanyaza, Mandla In attendance from 1986-1989.[301]

Artists Trained Post-apartheid

[289] Gaylard, J. 2001. *The History of CAP.* Htt.p://www.museums.org.za/cap/about/history.html. First Accessed February 2009 [now defunct].

[290] http://www.asai.co.za/artstudio.php?artist=2

[291] Gaylard, J. 2001. *The History of CAP.* http://www.museums.org.za/cap/about/history.html. First Accessed February 2009 [now defunct].
Bester, Willie. 17 Jun 1997. Interview conducted by Heidi Bolton.

[292] Anonymous. 2009. *Cape09 Artists Bio's. p4*

[293] Interview with Hamilton Bududzua. University of the Western Cape, 02 Feb 2010

[294] Interview with Lionel Davis. Muizenberg, 02 Feb 2010

[295] http://rickydyaloyi.everard-read-capetown.co.za/?m=1. First Accessed 22 April 2010.

[296] Anonymous. 2009. *Cape09 Artists Bio'.* p53

[297] http://www.capegallery.co.za/vuyisani_mgijima_cv.htm
Hobbs, P. & Rankin, E.1997. *Printmaking in a transforming South Africa.* Cape Town:David Philip.

[298] Interview with Anthony Mhayi. Cape Town, 31 Aug 2009.

[299] http://www.capegallery.co.za/xolile_mtakatya_cv.htm.
http://www.asai.co.za/artstudio.php?artist=12

[300] Gaylard, J. 2001. *The History of CAP.* http://www.museums.org.za/cap/about/history.html. First Accessed February 2009 [now defunct].

[301] http://www.asai.co.za/artstudio.php?artist=20

Cupidon, Dion. In attendance from 2003.[302]

Kilani, Lonwabo In attendance from 1999 or 2000.[303]

Manyisane, Mzimkhulu. In attendance from 1994.[304]

Mhlongo, Ashar In attendance from 1996.[305]

Mzayiya, Dathini. In attendance from 2001.[306]

Shuku, Thulani. In attendance from 2001.[307]

[302] http://africaartworks.weebly.com/dion-cupido.html
[303] http://www.artshost.org/greatmore/residentartists/resartcurr/lonwabo.htm
[304] Anonymous. 2009. *Cape09 Artists Bio's. p7*
[305] http://www.capegallery.co.za/ashar_mhlongo_cv.htm
[306] http://www.asai.co.za/artstudio.php?artist=13
[307] http://www.asai.co.za/artstudio.php?arti=17

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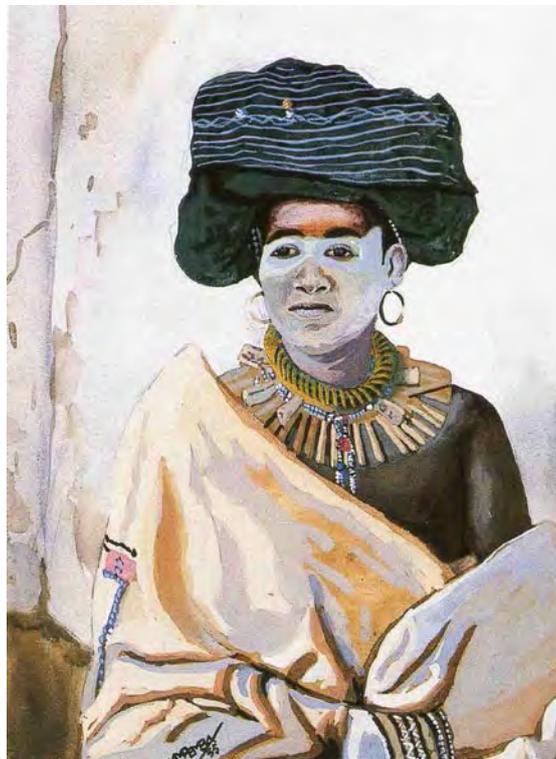
Figure 2. George Milwa Mnyaluza Pemba, *Xhosa Woman* (1955), watercolour and gouche on paper, 36.5x27cm.
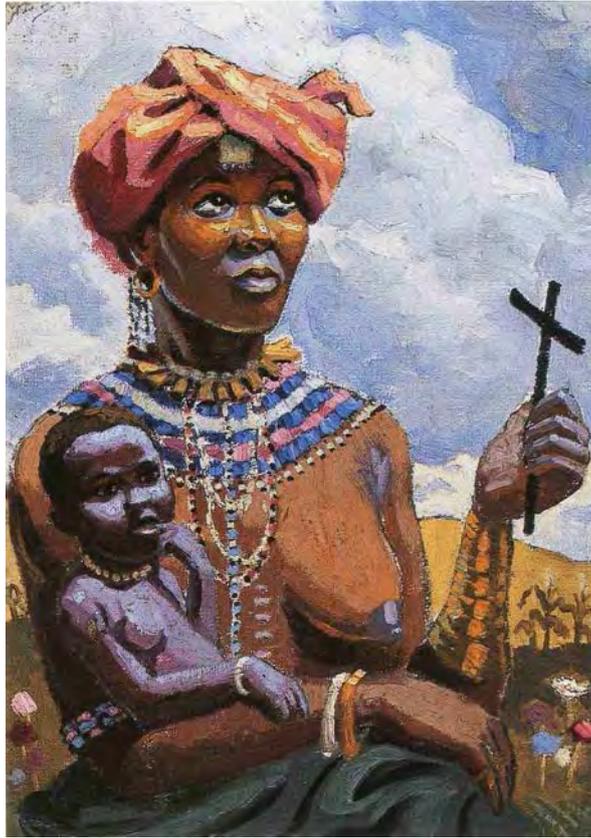
Figure 3. George Milwa Mnyaluza Pemba, *The Convert* (1946), oil on Canvas, 25x30cm.

Figure 4. John Koenakeefe Mohl, *Magaliesberg in Mid Winter* (1943), oil on canvas.
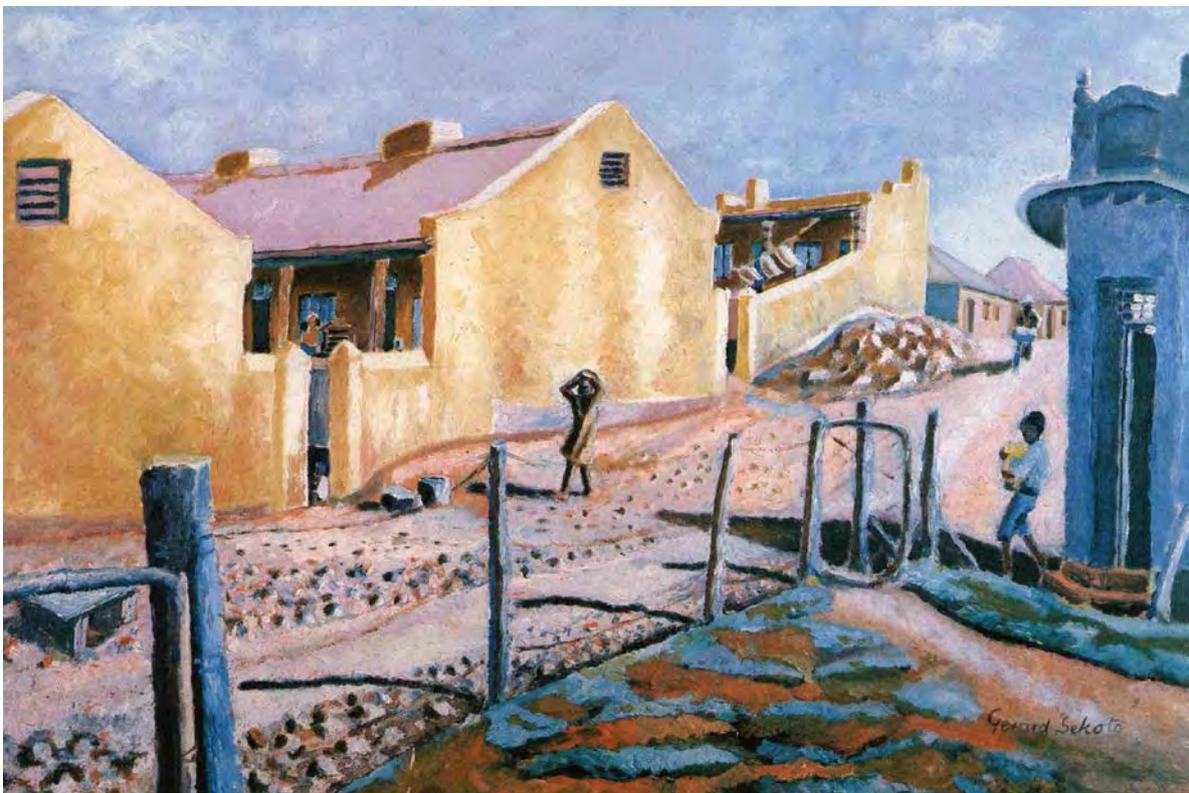
Figure 5. Gerard Sekoto, *Yellow Houses*. *A Street in Spohiatown* (1940), oil on board, 50.8x74.5cm.

Figure 6. Gerard Sekoto. *The Waiting Room* **(1940), watercolour and gouache on paper, 24.5x34.5cm.**

Figure 7. Gerard Sekoto, Workers on a Saturday (1941), oil on board, 41x51.5cm.

Figure 8. John Koenakeefe Mohl, *Old and rusty houses, Newclaire Johannesburg. Transvaal, south Africa* **(1942), oil on canvas, 35x49.5cm.**

Figure 9. John Koenakeefe Mohl, *Only a patch of sunshine* **(1968), oil on board, 61x88.5cm.**
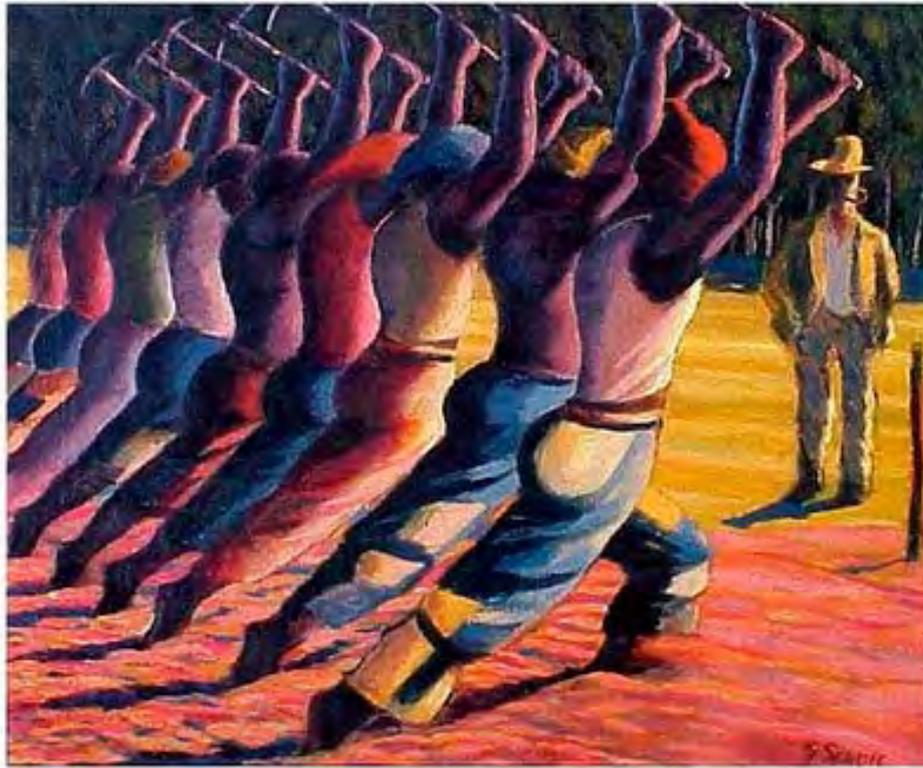
Figure 10. Gerard Sekoto, *Song of the pick* **(1946-47) Oil on canvas board,** *49x 59.9cm.*
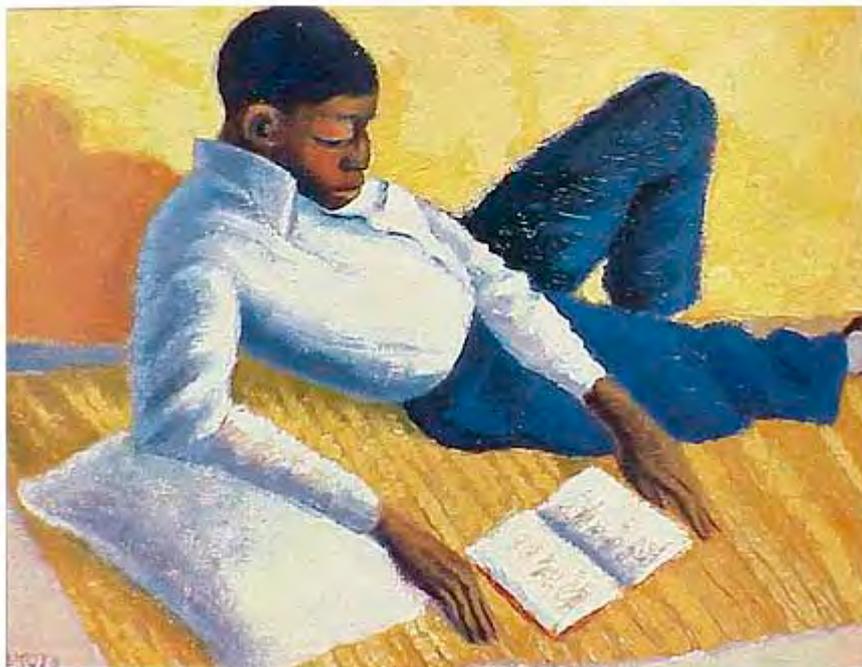
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Figure 12. George Milwa Mnyaluza Pemba, *ANC Funeral in the Red Location, Port Elizabeth* **(1965), oil on board, 49x66cm.**
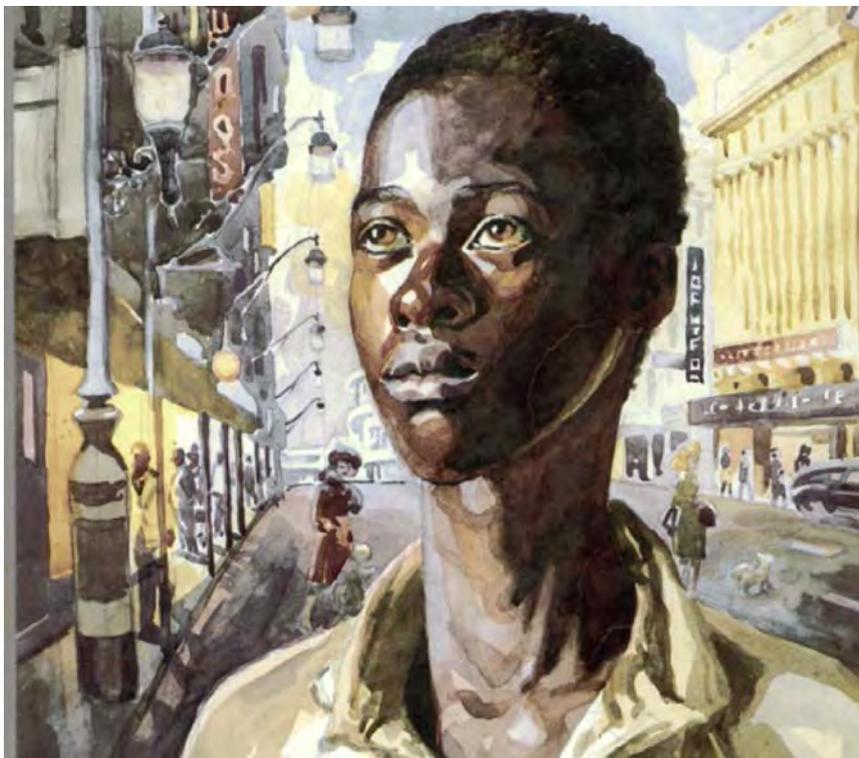
Figure 13. George Milwa Mnyaluza Pemba, *No Work* **(1948), watercolour, 33.4 cm24.8 cm.**
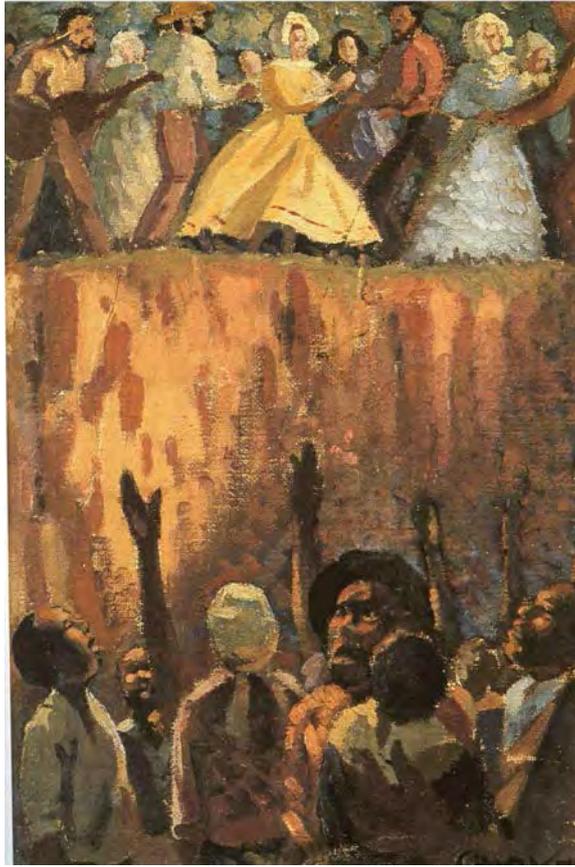
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Figure 19. Durant Sihlali. *Race against time* **(1973), watercolour on paper, 45x68cm.**

Figure 20. Ephriam Ngatane, *Night Rain* **(n.d.).**
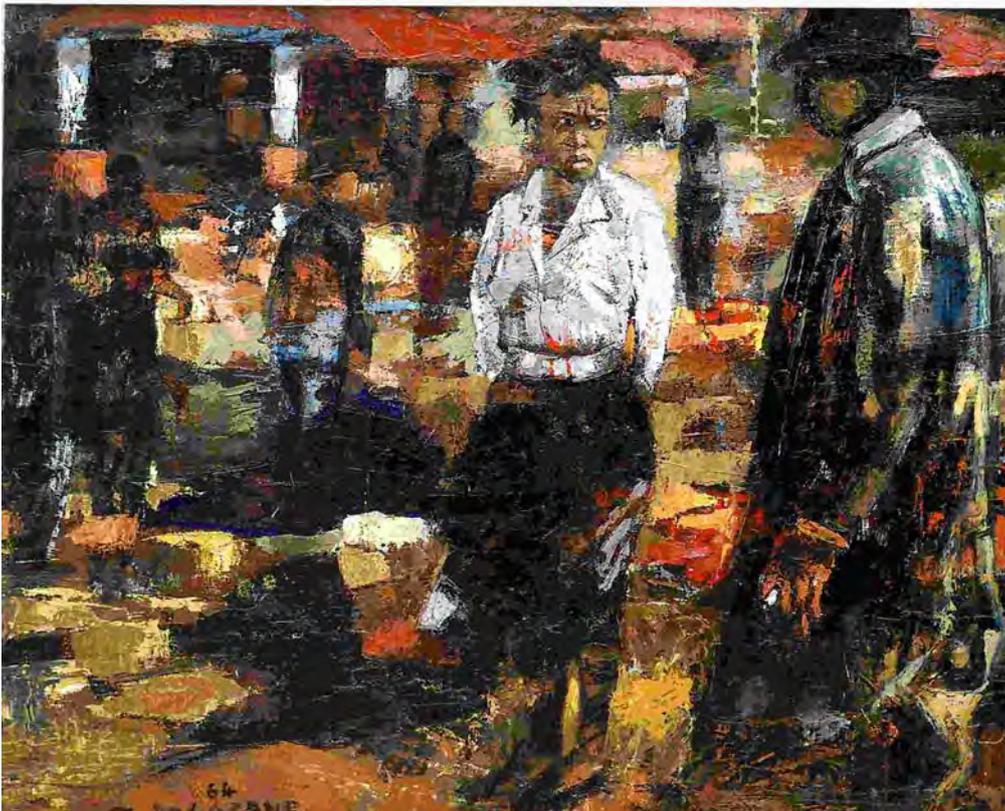
Figure 21. Ephraim Ngatane. *The Approach* **(1964).**

Figure 22. Azaria Mbatha. *Biblical Scene* (n.d.), 41x63cm.

Figure 23. John Muafangejo, *Death of a Chief* (1971), linocut, 370x332mm.

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Figure 24. Thabo Lowani, *The last step of life* (1975), woodcut, 295x381mm.

Figure 25 (Left). Charles Nkosi, *The Cry* (1974), woodcut, 460x269mm.

Figure 26 (Right). Gordon Gabashane, *Shaka and Warriors* (1977), linocut, 482x301mm.
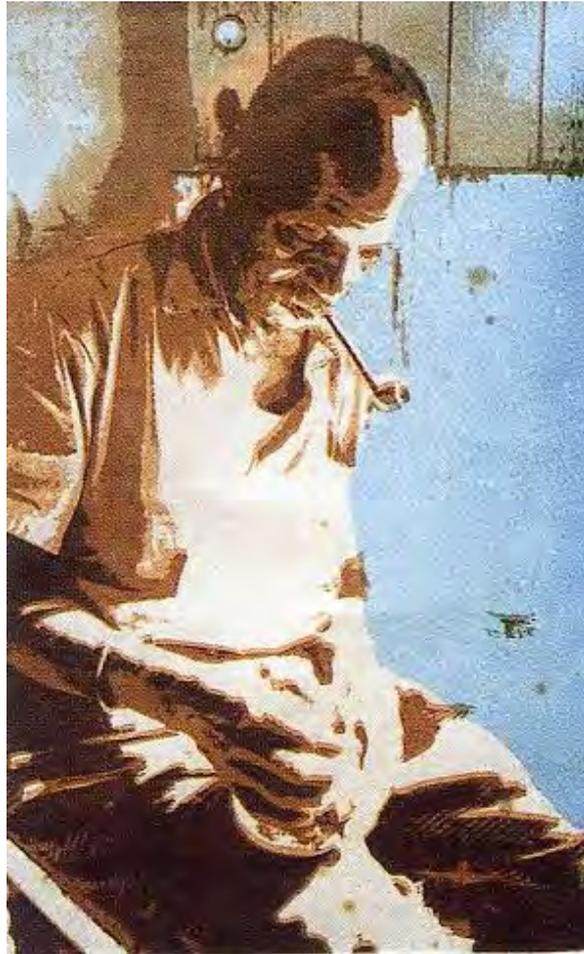
Figure 27. Nhlanhla Nsusha, *Our Madala* (1977), screenprint, 250x160mm.
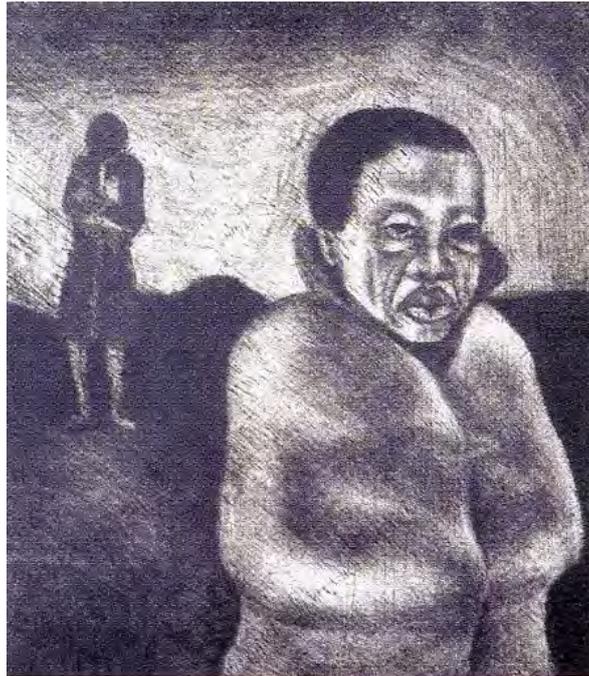
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Figure 35. David Koloane, *Transience* (1985).

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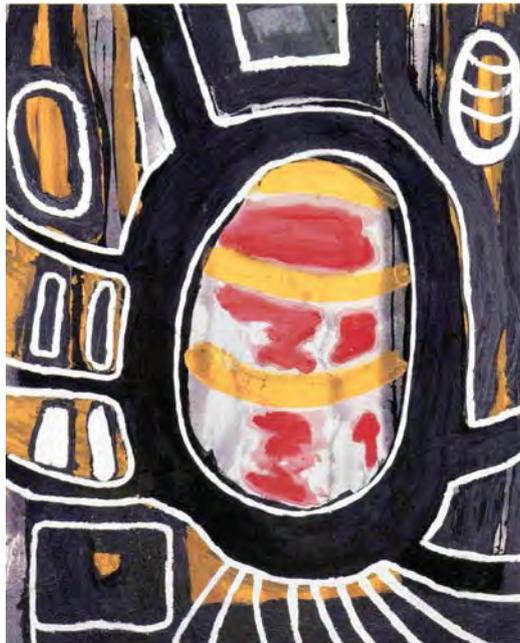
Figure 37. Lionel Davis, *African Sunset* (1986), acrylic.

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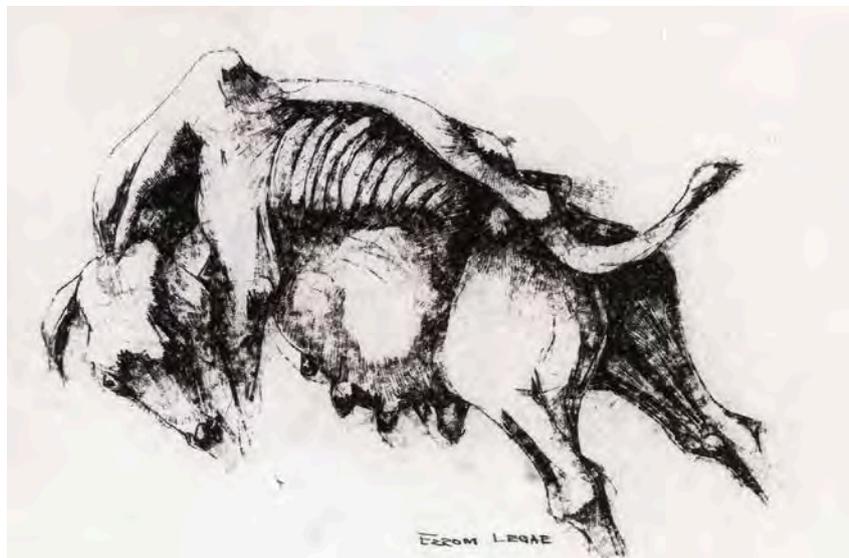
Figure 39. Ezrom Legae. Pregnant Bitch, charcoal on paper, 30x42cm

Figure 40. Thami Mnyele, *Untitled* (1977), mixed media on paper, 120x90cm.
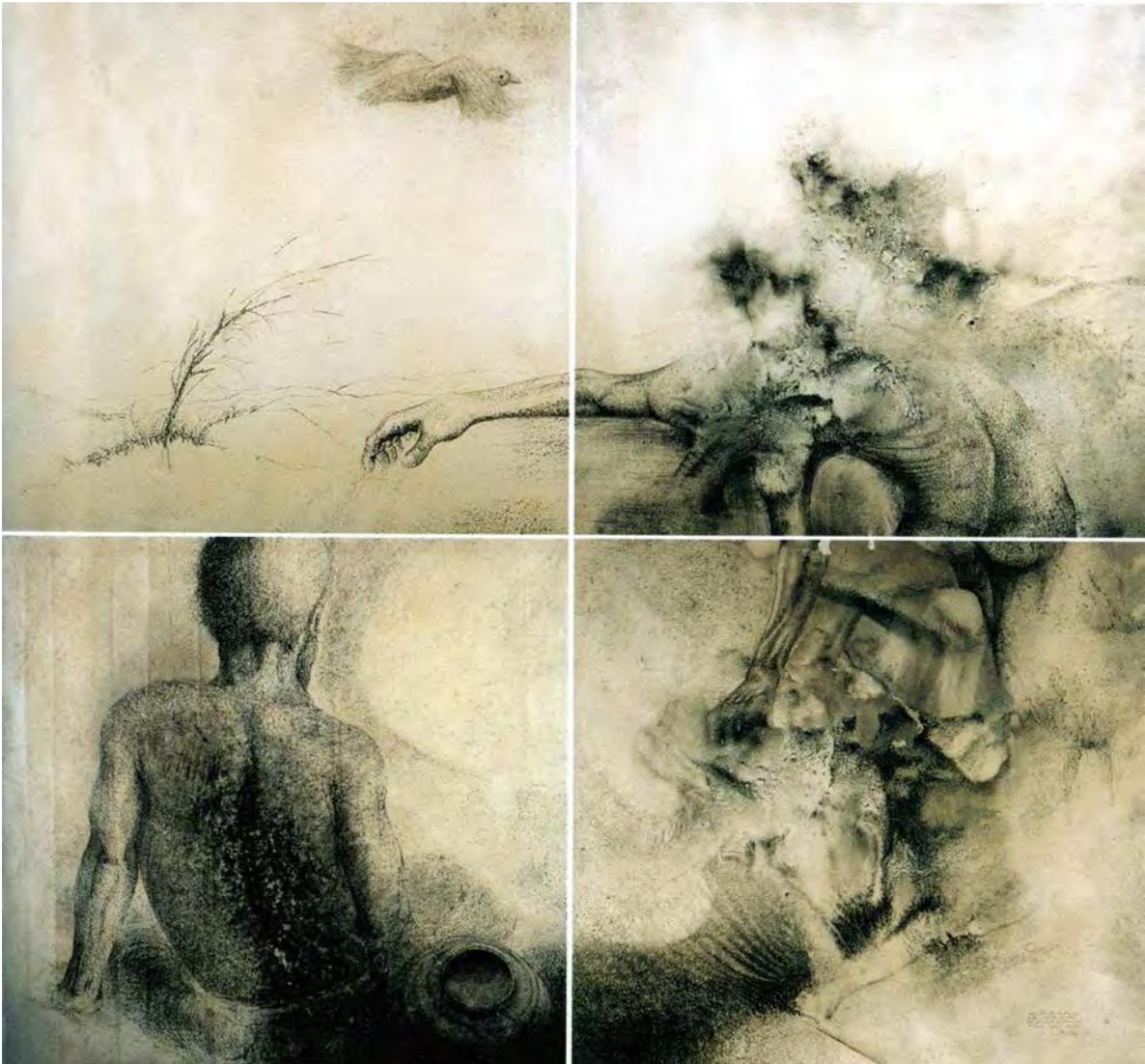
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Figure 44. Ezrom Legae, *Chicken* series (1977), pencil and oil wash on paper, 32 × 42 cm.

Figure 45. Ezrom Legae, *Jail Series II* **(1981), pencil and oil wash on paper, 40 × 30 cm.**
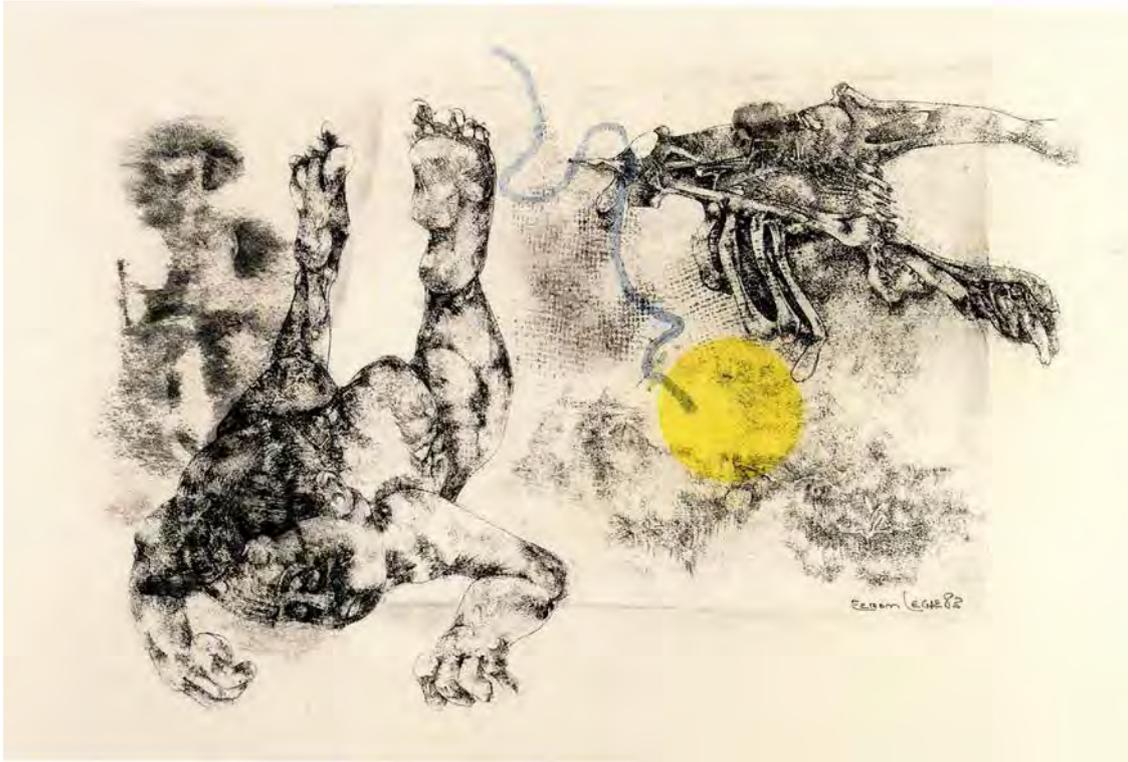
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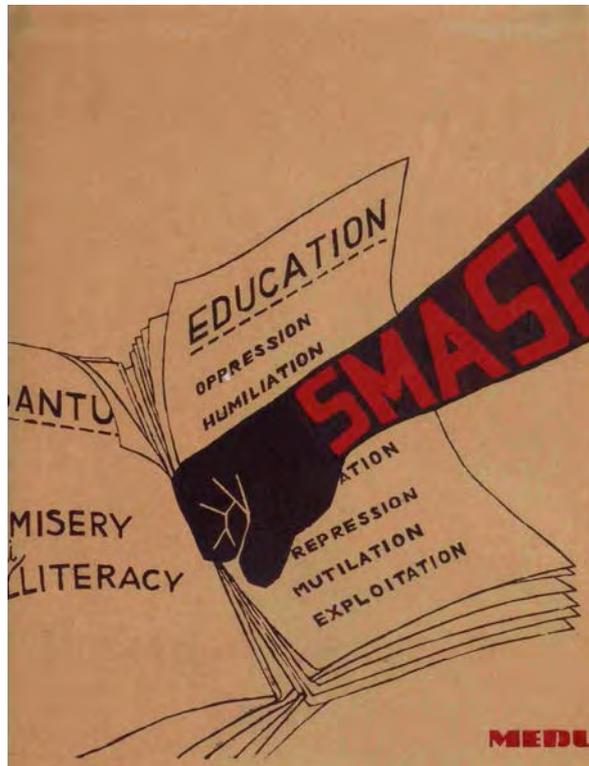
Figure 48. Medu, *Smash Bantu Education* **(1980), Screenprint**
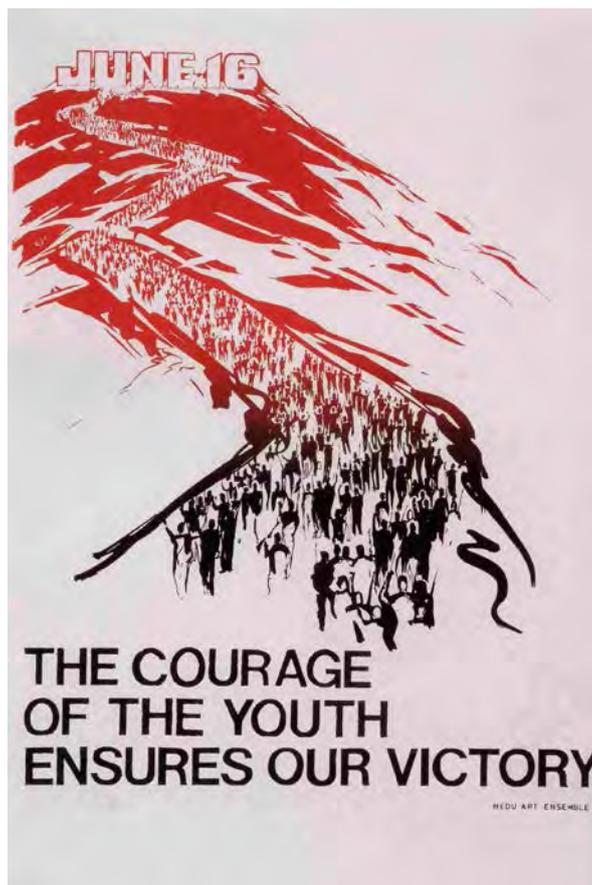
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Figure 50. Anonymous, *Only Poor Man Feel It*. 1985. Oukasie Township, Brits. Photograph. G. Mendel.

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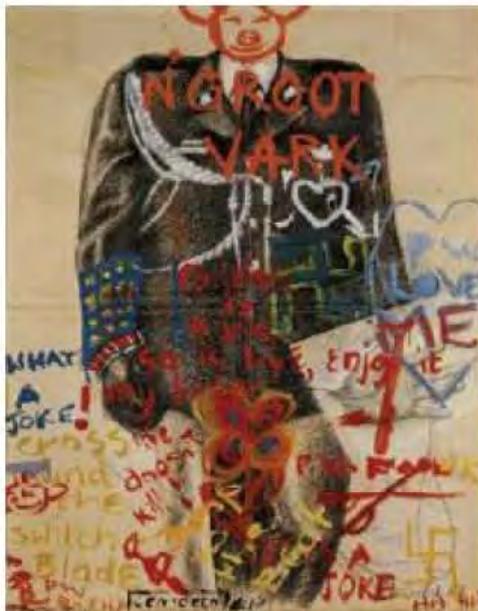
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Figure 60. CAP Children's mural. . Images now part of CAP archives lodged in University of Cape Town's Manuscripts & Archives department.
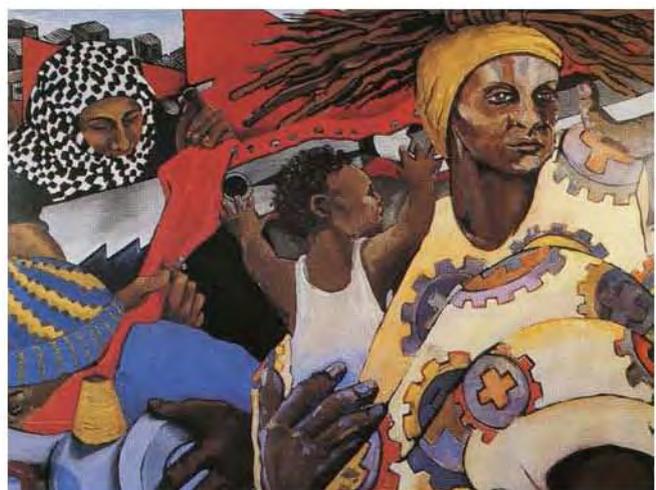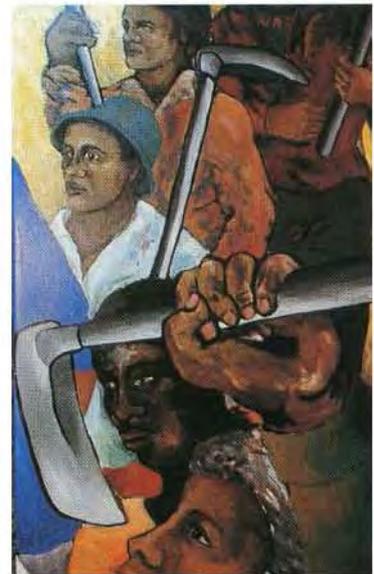
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Figure 63. Mpumelelo Melane. 1991. Untitled Mural. Image now part of CAP archives lodged in University of Cape Town's Manuscripts & Archives department.
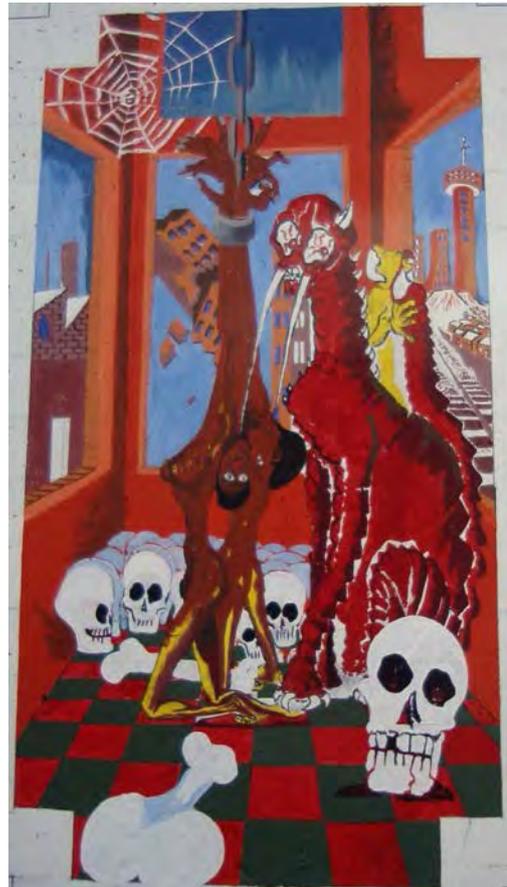
Figure 64. Beth Mayekiso. 1991. Untitled Mural. Image now part of CAP archives lodged in University of Cape Town's Manuscripts & Archives department.

Figure 65. Anonymous, *Dont be a Ja Baas, Dont Vote* **(1989), mural. Image now part of CAP archives lodged in University of Cape Town's Manuscripts & Archives department.**
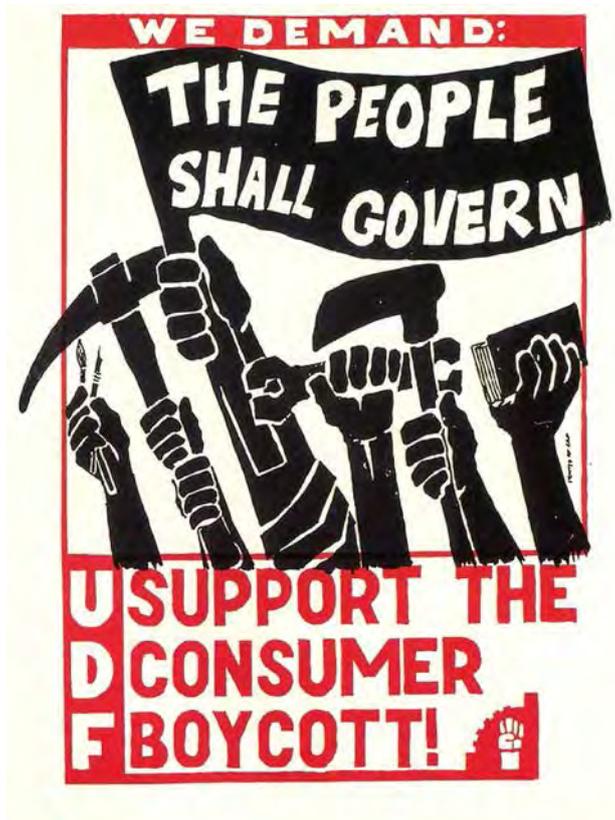
**Figure 66. United Democratic Front,** *Untiled* **(1985), Screenprint**
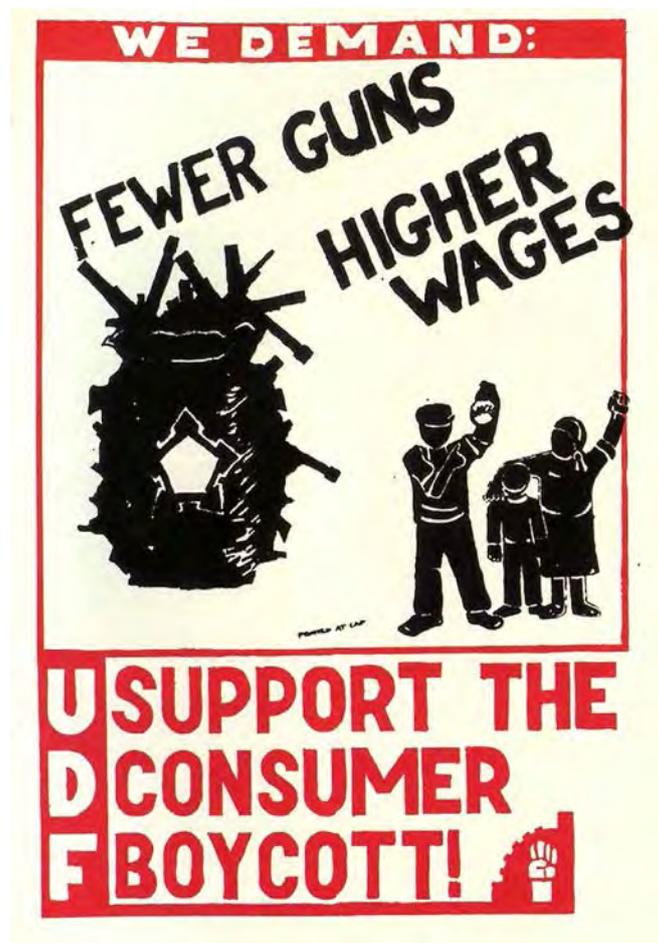
Figure 67. United Democratic Front. *Untiled* **(1985), Screenprint**

Figure 68. Xolile Mtakatya, *How Long* (n.d.), Image now part of CAP archives lodged in University of Cape Town's Manuscripts & Archives department.

Figure 69. Xolile Mtakatya, Untitled (n.d.), In *ReCAP* 1988 now part of CAP archives lodged in University of Cape Town's Manuscripts & Archives department.
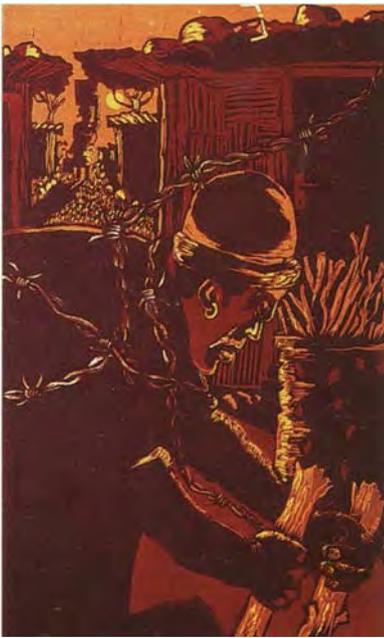
Figure 70 (Left). Tom Sefako, *Winter in the Squares* (1988), colour reduction linocut, 444.x272mm.
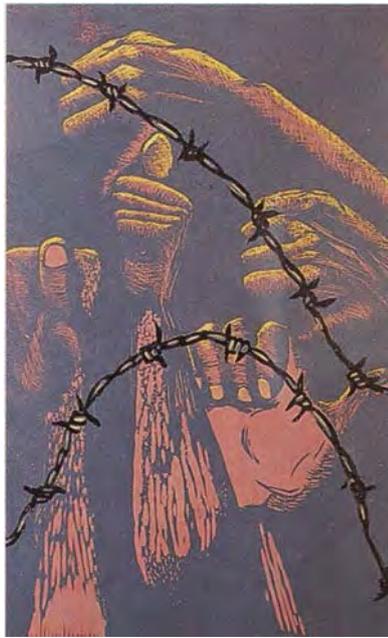
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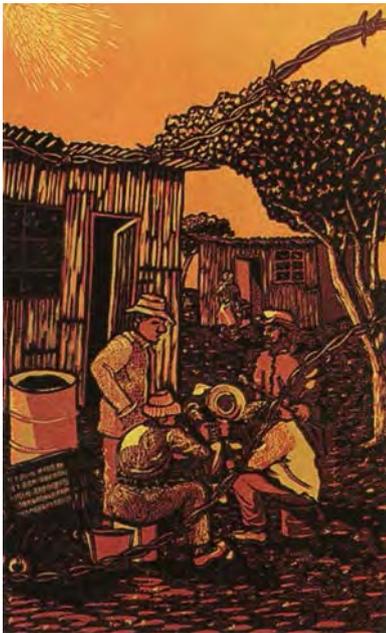
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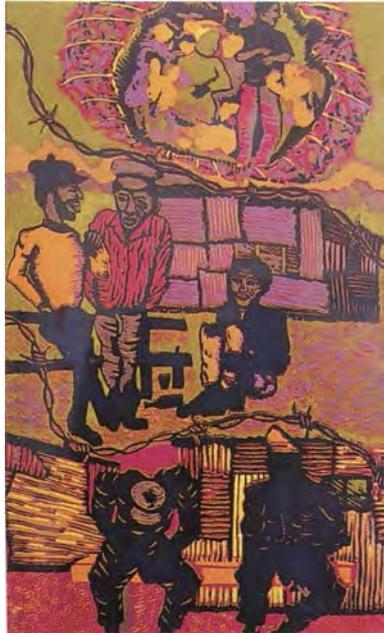
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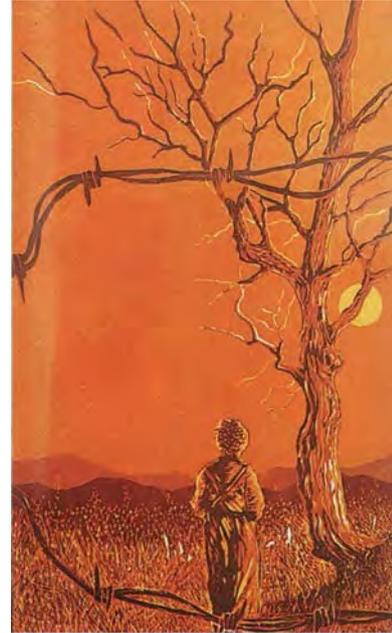
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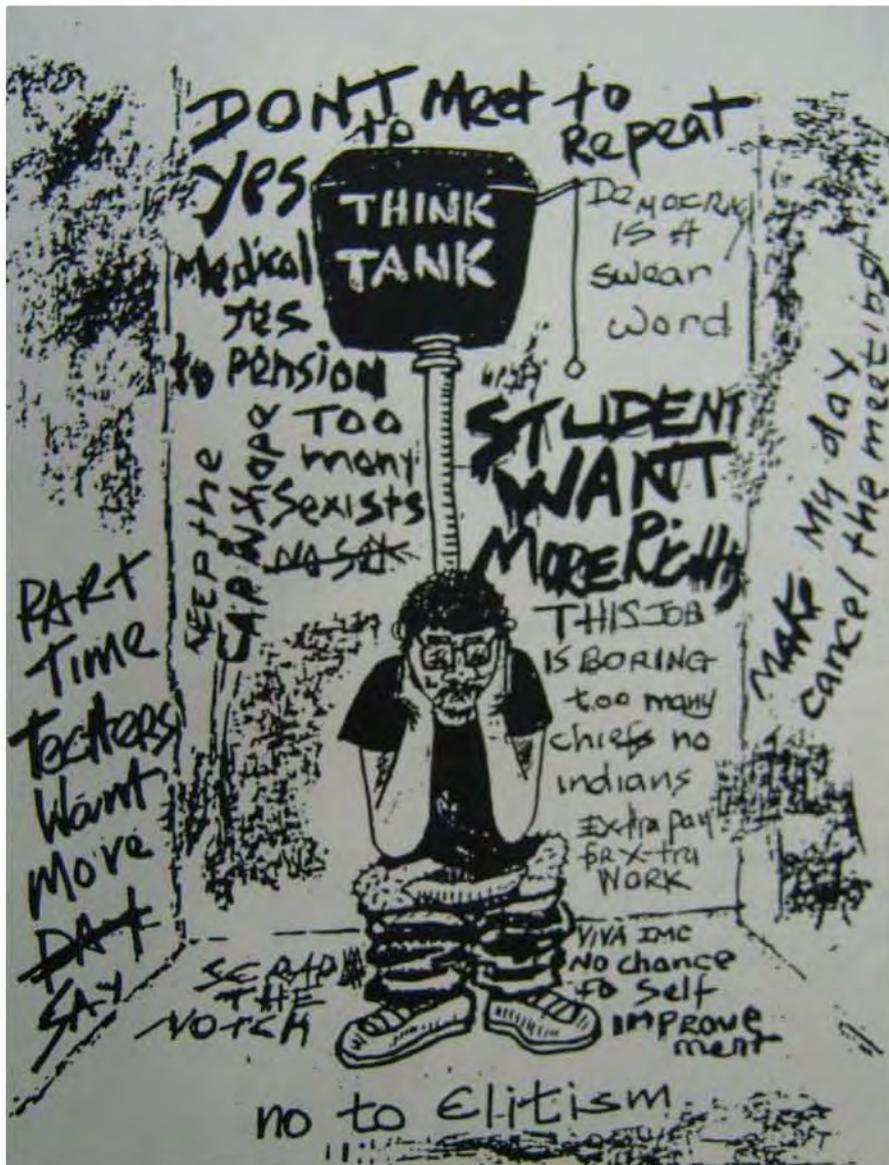
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Figure 77. CAP, *District Six commemorative mural* **(1996) CAP's wall. Woodstock, Cape Town.**
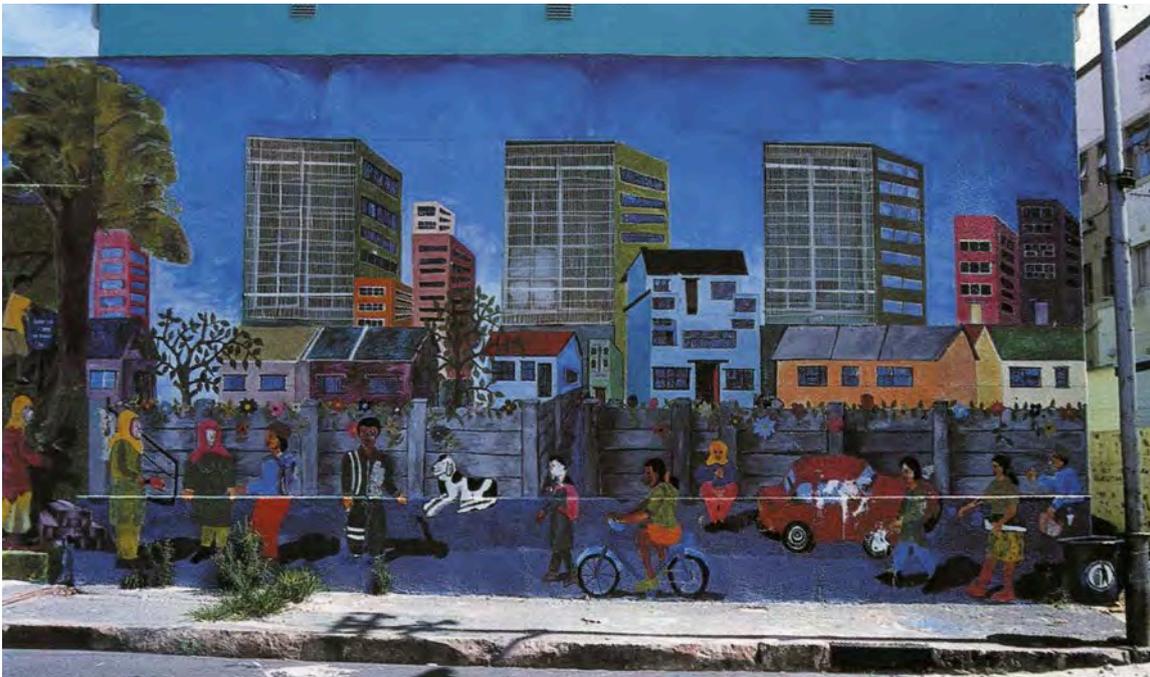
**Figure 78. CAP,** *Mural on facade of Rahmaniyeh Primary School* **(1998) Woodstock, Cape Town.**
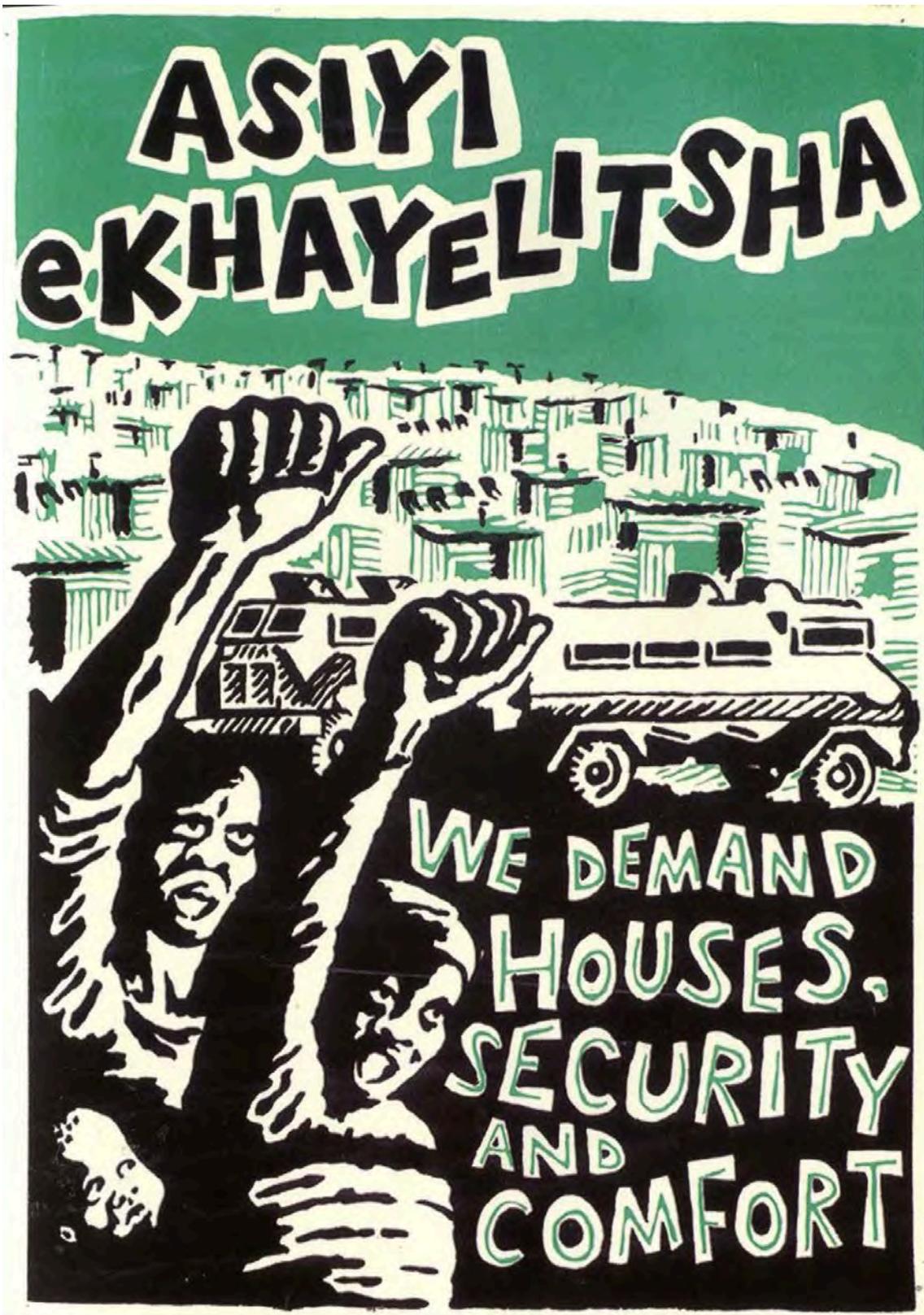
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Figure 80. Billy Mandindi, *Reproduction* **(1986), linocut on paper, 61.1x44.5cm. Artist's proof 5 of 10.**

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Figure 82 (Left).Durant Sihlali, *Peace Wall* **(1993), oil on canvas, 129x99cm.**

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Figure 97. Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi, *Halo of Manhood* (2009), oil on canvas.

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