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ImaginingOtherwise: A Glossary of Arts Education Practice on the Cape Flats

AYLWYN WALSH

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ALEXANDRA SUTHERLAND

TSHISIMANI CENTRE FOR ACTIVIST EDUCATION & UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

ASHLEY VISAGIE

BOTTOMUP & UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

PAUL ROUTLEDGE

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ABSTRACT

ImaginingOtherwise *is a cross disciplinary collaboration grounded in artistic practice, activism and youth-led social change. Located in Cape Town, South Africa, this is a year-long project of engagement with the arts for young people from the Cape Flats and from migrant backgrounds based in other areas of the city. The project asks how young people make sense of race and spatial inequalities. We aim to reflect on the role of creativity in the context of violence and economic*

and developmental dispossession, asking: How does using the arts for social change produce educational and activist alternatives? We consider how dialogic creative arts generates a theory and practice of social change by, with, and for peripheralized young people in the city.

In this collaborative text, we draw out the key social justice concerns faced by young people in South Africa, setting them against the learning from our arts-based project. Moving beyond the framing of the context of race, violence and dispossession, we explore how these critical ideas move towards a useful set of tools for arts education. We do this in the format of a glossary; which we see as building a methodology of participation in the arts as radical possibility—and invitation towards ImaginingOtherwise*.*

ImaginingOtherwise is a cross disciplinary collaboration grounded in artistic practice, activism and youth-led social change. Located in Cape Town, South Africa, this is a year-long project of engagement with the arts for young people from the Cape Flats and young people from migrant backgrounds in other areas in Cape Town. The project asks how young people make sense of race and spatial inequalities in Cape Town. We aim to reflect on the role of creativity in the context of violence and economic and developmental dispossession, asking: How does using the arts for social change produce educational and activist alternatives? We consider how dialogic creative arts generate a theory and practice of social change by, with, and for peripheralized young people in Cape Town.

PROJECT CONTEXT: CONTINUITITES OF VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICAN SPATIAL POLITICS

South Africa is notorious for both legislating racial segregation in policies under Apartheid (1948-1994). Between the 17th and the early 19th centuries it was colonized by both Dutch and British forces that laid claim to land, brutalized local populations and ruled by violence. The country is also widely lauded for a largely peaceful transition to democracy under Nelson Mandela. The dominant story that rests on a simplistic binary of years framed by hatred as opposed to a post-

democratic 'rainbow nation', does little to reveal the ongoing and pernicious conflict, poverty and government denial that characterizes much of the country.

European settlement in South Africa originated in the Cape in 1652. The city of Cape Town as the site of slavery in South Africa from 1650s until the 1830s led to segregation policies in the late 19th century. This inheritance demarcates it spatially, culturally, and socially as distinct with regards to how race and space can be investigated. For example, there is a persistent myth about Black Africans (as distinct from descendents of slaves, referred to as Coloured by white settlers) having no claims to roots in Cape Town.[1] Bickford-Smith (2001) maps the ways in which Africans have been systematically excluded as ever having a rightful claim to live in, and declare Cape Town a 'home'. From the turn of the 19th Century to today, Black Africans have been told that their only right to be in the city is as labourers. Segregation and forced removal policies of Africans can be traced back to the early 1900s forcing Africans further and further away from the city, long before the implementation of Apartheid in 1948.

This legacy persists, with South Africa's biggest growing township-Khayelitsha situated thirty kilometres from Cape Town's city centre (and thus, far from much urban labour). In 1955, the Coloured Labour Preference Policy established the 'Eiselen Line' (named after the Minister of Native Affairs at the time and lasting until 1984) which divided the province into regions that ensured that employers hired Coloured workers before African workers (Cole, 2012). The forced removal of Coloured people onto the Cape Flats from the late 1960s was also a spatial manipulation to ensure that Coloured labourers were closer to white employment than Black labourers. The legacy of these policies and the racial hierarchy engineered by segregationist policies that narrated Coloured people as having ostensibly more rights than African people persists. This results in stark divisions between white, Black and Coloured communities.

From a social justice perspective, there is no longer any political

[1] 'Coloured' as a term is deployed sociologically. Testament to the complex persistence of spatial and economic arrangements of Apartheid—Coloured continues to be used as a (heterogeneous) racialised identity. This does not speak to the ways in which people identify positively with the term Coloured, imbuing it with new meaning. It's also a constant conversation in work with young people in relation to Black Consciousness, and the political usage of the term 'Black'.

'preference' for Coloured communities who suffer from poverty, unemployment, and a lack of access to decent housing, health care and education that persists for so-called 'previously disadvantaged' communities across South Africa. The Cape Flats are largely mapped by gang rule and parts have the highest murder rate per capita in the world (Lindegaard, 2018). The legacy of Apartheid social engineering means that activism and politics continue to be racially divided between Coloured and Black communities who often regard each other with suspicion. This is exacerbated by a volatile political climate and the emergence of hyper-nationalist politics such as the group 'Gatvol Capetonian' (fed up Capetonian) which advocates Cape Town for Coloured people and not for Black Africans, riding on the myth that Xhosa people first came to Cape Town in the 1900s and therefore have no claim as 'original' people. The Apartheid strategy of creating a Coloured identity/race group as a buffer between the white minority and the black majority plays itself out in pernicious and divisive ways in the city (Jacobs, 2018).

SPATIAL SHIFTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPERATIVES

There are two critical moments or 'shifts' in the history of the Cape Flats that are helpful to understand the production of the (social-)space of the Cape Flats, and the related complex identities which are constructed in relation to this particular place. The particularities of the Cape Flats are intertwined with broader social, political and economic changes that took place in South Africa in the 1950s and in the 1990s. Contemporary conundrums such as why the ruling party fails to secure the Western Cape province (of which the Cape Flats is part) in elections, as well as witnessing the emergence of political groups who mobilize on the basis of narrow (and nationalist) identity in the Cape Flats or why memes about 'Coloured' identity or culture are trending on social media may also be explained in relation to the these shifts or changes, and how social actors construct identities in relation to these changes.

The first of these shifts is the changes that were instigated by the Group Areas Act. Through the Group Areas Act (the Bantustan Policy), a racialized division of space was implemented through the forced removal and relocation of families to areas like the Cape Flats (and

others such as Atlantis or Ocean View). This spatialization of race persists and is easily visually illustrated through the use of race-dot maps (such as those produced by Adrian Frith, n.d.). This shift has had multiple effects on people who live in the Cape Flats which are not adequately grasped by the limited amount of literature that has been produced. The 'Cape Flats' (which actually refers to a flat-land area) is forged out of a history of dispossession and dislocation (the psychic pain which led to some taking their own lives) and was embedded into the hierarchical race and class stratified design of the apartheid model city as a whole (which aimed to locate cheap labour close to industrial zones and away from whites-only zones). At the micro-level, many of the spaces of the Cape Flats are also characterized by high density living in multi-story tenement buildings (similar to 'the projects' in the US and high-rise council housing in the UK). Bright flood lights and road layouts are designed to be easily cordoned off and controlled by police, and they are marked by a particular aesthetic of absence (the absence of trees and foliage, the absence of designated recreational spaces, the absence of public services and amenities). In short, while individual actors and groups form subcultures and attempt to write new stories and identities, it is on and against this backdrop of a space produced through dispossession and dislocation, which actors construct identities for themselves. Identity is refracted in different ways in relation to these real losses both past and contemporary.

The second shift is brought about through the advent of the new democracy in 1994 and the changes which preceded the 1994 elections, such as the desegregation of schooling in the early 1990s. This period was characterized by a discourse of triumphalism, optimism and hope that the democratic government would enact political and economic changes that would transform lived realities of working-class people in ghettos and urban townships like those in the Cape Flats. Accompanying this, for a significant number of people, were hopes of restitution or reparations (including the many families who are still fighting to return to the land and homes from which they were displaced). While the changes brought about in the 1990s through elections, the government of national unity and the enactment of the constitution along with policy suites relating to key sectors were fundamental first order changes, to the effect that South Africans no longer live under the rule and law of Apartheid, now experience freedom of movement (albeit constrained by class dynamics) and are

able to participate in democratic processes, they have not been accompanied by similar economic changes (in fact, economic inequality has been exacerbated under the effects of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Plan and its successor the National Development Plan).

In the education sector for example, the effects of these changes have afforded a small fraction of people the chance to be integrated into the fortified/ former model-C schools, while urban township and ghetto schools which serve the majority of students, remain under-resourced and understaffed. As a result of such under-resourcing, one of the schools involved in this project had been involved in a picket action in which students marched to the department of education district office in Ottery to demand more teachers (Francke, 2020). Similarly, parent and activist groups in Mitchell's Plain (where some students reside), have been raising concern about the lack of space in schools, which results in the failure of the state to be able to accommodate all students within the public school system.

Ironically, a further negative consequence of the teacher rationalisation plan and other austerity-based measures adopted in the 1990s has resulted in the diminishing of aspects of school life (such as music, art and sport programmes) in Coloured (House of Assembly) schools. This resulting exodus of middle-class families following the de-racialization of schools and the effects of austerity-based budgets, have produced what might be described as poor schools for poor people. 1994 might therefore be described as a failed transition (from a Lefebvrean perspective), or a transition which has not resulted in the production of a new space for people who live in the Cape Flats. This second critical moment with its set of changes therefore entrenches feelings of loss in terms of dispossession and introduces a new accompanying sense of loss of hope in the ability of the new state to make good on its promises of liberation and freedom.

Beyond resourcing, all of the schools involved in *ImaginingOtherwise* exist in spaces that are beholden to the territorialisation of street gangs. Our young people testified that for those who walk to and from school, this implies navigating across the invisible yet tangible borders of street gangs and feeling vulnerable when doing so. For this reason, many students walk home in groups and avoid after-school activities that might require them to leave school in smaller numbers or on their own. Even during the strict lockdown

implemented because of COVID-19, students reported incidents of gang violence, and more than one incident in which a young person like themselves had been affected, this reflected also in the title of a local news article during the lockdown: 'Cape Flats families bury their children on Youth Day' (Geach, 2020). These realities render the organisation and sustainability of after-school programmes for youth a significant challenge, the success of which often depends on the availability of safe transport. Whilst community violence is not a direct school resourcing issue, it speaks to the lack of provisions all round which produce the attenuated space of the ghetto, and the ways in which the *conditions* for community violence are reproduced.

In this nexus, identities are constructed in different ways, and draw on different discursive frameworks. Identity constructions such as 'Coloured' are sometimes mobilized as defence mechanisms, as in the case of the recent satirical meme ('if Coloured culture doesn't exist then why…'?), drawing out the tacit experiences of culture and lived experience as tantamount to identity-formation. Some examples are:

> "If Coloured culture doesn't exist then why is "hello jy" [hello you] a threat instead of a greeting?"
>
> "If Coloured culture doesn't exist then why do we all know the difference between 'now now' and 'just now'?"
>
> "If Coloured culture didn't exist, where would we get koeksisters [a syrup doughnut, covered in desiccated coconut] on Sundays?"

At other times the identity constructions are rejected as assimilationist, in opposition to colonial or Apartheid arrangements and politics—and even then there are differences when some people claim non-racism and reject classification altogether while others who equally reject the term Coloured adopt quasi-nationalist frames such as Khoe-san (in an appeal to indigineity). At the very far right end, groups have emerged in which race and even separatist politics are re-inscribed. Most important to note however, is the manner in which all of these identities and political stances are formed in relation to experiences of genuine loss. Whether the categorisation and labelling is accepted or rejected, it must necessarily be read against the social, economic and political history of the Cape Flats (in the Western Cape and more generally in

South Africa). Some of the identity constructions reify race, locking young people into the constructions of others, while other constructions offer hope of imagining the self as freed from the trappings of a colonial logic. Others still attempt to subvert existing labels and imbue them with new meaning. The different constructions speak to the manner in which structure constrains like a force-field, yet never entirely determining how agents imagine themselves in relation to others.

IMAGININGOTHERWISE: COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Cape Town therefore exemplifies the violent story of nationhood: its geography retains stark divisions and remnants of 'forced removals' and 'separate development' (which were central policies of the Apartheid state). It is an environment of extremes and paradoxes with excessive wealth and privilege in some places with others characterized by deprivation, overcrowding and poor sanitation. As a result, many young people across poor communities live in fear and degrees of poverty in a city still dominated by Apartheid engineering. Today, young people in the city of Cape Town face questions of 'hope' and 'the future' as seemingly pre-determined narratives. For working class and poor children and young people of the Cape Flats, the quality of education, their access to resources to enable life-chances, and their home lives are often chaotic and framed by violence of local gangs, drugs and poverty. It can be difficult to imagine alternatives. However, as a fundamental tenet of activist education, we must be able to imagine alternatives to begin to manifest the future we desire.

The *ImaginingOtherwise* project aims to challenge youth disempowerment related to lack of resources as a consequence of systematic erasure and forgetting. The co-creator collective of young people seeks to establish a sense of place beyond the systemic identification of place with gangs, drugs and lives characterized by violence. In a context so fraught by the politics of language, dispossession and exclusion, our international collaboration—of UK-based academics and South African grassroots organisations—needed to work through, consciously, our understandings without unwittingly replicating assumptions that could be culturally loaded. This mutual sense of meaning-making is well known in arts processes, but

often overlooked in how projects are set up. We propose that it can be a generative and enlightening process to produce a set of shared terms that characterize the work (particularly around the interconnected issues of safeguarding, ethics and reflective praxis).

The project partners, Tshisimani Centre for Activist Education and BottomUp as well as researchers from the University of Leeds deliver arts-based activism and education, with an explicit focus on young people's participation in the community and mentorship programmes. Both partners in Cape Town are explicitly activist in intent: Tshisimani develops programmes for grassroots activist education, often using the arts, and mounts several youth arts projects across the year. BottomUp is a small NGO working on youth leadership and critical thinking to challenge the current status of education in under-resourced schools in the Cape Flats. The researchers based in the UK have backgrounds in arts education and scholar activism in several countries, with a focus on participatory arts-based methods. Our intention was to build capacity through intensive workshops led by local artists: with outcomes including film and performance, storyboards and visual arts. We hope that the cross-arts collaborative storying of experiences and dissemination enables a wide audience to engage with what young people identify in their communities for developing resilience.

PROJECT PEDAGOGY AND GLOSSARY FORMAT

ImaginingOtherwise is one of several projects funded by 'Changing the Story', a multi-national co-production project focused on post conflict settings and arts approaches to understanding youth engagement in civil society. 'Changing the Story' is funded by the UK's Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), distributed by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The project team had initially planned to run three intensive training camps in different art-forms as well as to bring young people to specific sites of historical importance and cultural heritage. Just as activities were beginning, the South African state instituted strict lockdown measures related to COVID-19. As a result, the team needed to pivot and work through the many challenges related to how to engage and keep young people motivated despite having had little time together to forge a sense of common goals. Instead of a main

focus on performance which was our initial plan, we developed a different shape to the *ImaginingOtherwise* endeavours—including building a group from the bottom up via a dedicated whatsapp group, hosting online workshops, sharing artistic collaborative activities. These included young people mapping out their relations to space and their neighbourhoods: moving beyond physical landmarks to incorporate hopes, fears and memories in order to better understand people's lived experience. Although we started in the here and now, the art-forms enabled us to build visions through fiction, imagination, and speculation that opened up rather than closed down how people 'read' and represent their attachments to place. Our chosen pedagogy had to do with strategic need to keep the project going despite the lockdown, and so was informed by (a) pandemic impacts and the format of online working and, (b) providing a set of spatial as well as racial and youth artistic 'lenses' through which the everyday experiences of being young, Black and marginalized are imagined.

Our project commissioned artist mentors to facilitate workshops in visual arts, creative writing, and digital film-making. This required a shift in emphasis on technical skills alongside the focus on race, space and injustice as thematic lenses of the project. The fact that we needed to learn on the go inspired the format of the glossary—in the hope that practitioners in other contexts would be able to recognise the approaches, and work towards new and other ways of working beyond pandemic times. The work we consider in the glossary relates to how we have needed to rely on shared and developing goals for social justice while delivering high quality participatory arts.

Drawing on the team's collective experience in working with marginalized young people and the arts as a method for critical engagement in public life, we approach contexts of violence and exclusion via arts pedagogies, under the tutelage of the professional artist mentors. The focus on techniques, skills development and drafting via feedback was a very different model to what we had envisaged. Their emphasis on care and crafting as well as editing was necessary because the participants were working and developing materials alone and then coming together online to share them. This required a different emphasis, where usually group devising and chorus activities would shape the outcomes. What we discovered, in our openness and capacity to adapt, is the value of collaborative arts education approaches to social justice.

To that end, working from the critical arts pedagogies of the project, and inspired by the format of ArtsAdmin's *A is for Action* (2010), we offer this glossary to promote some of the pressing issues of social justice and the arts, and how these have manifested in our project. As readers use the glossary, they'll note we have cross-referred between themes and terms, demonstrating our understanding of how social justice issues intersect and relate in sometimes unexpected ways. We do not offer a chronological understanding of the form and content of delivery: instead, the glossary format is a move towards building a methodology of participation in the arts as a radical possibility—and invitation towards *ImaginingOtherwise*.

GLOSSARY

Arts Activism (see Freedom & Unfreedom)

Arts Activism (or artivism) as a field of study and practice has been theorized and documented predominantly from the Global North (see Boyde & Mitchell, 2012; Duncombe, 2002; Duncombe, 2016) Arts Activism employs artistic processes for activist purposes (and vice-versa). Recognising that those in power manipulate spectacle, signs, and symbols as tools of persuasion, arts-activists reclaim how signs and symbols can be used as modes of resistance. Our project aims for young people to identify as arts-activists: creative citizens who are able to name and express their sense of social change and justice through artistic media that is then disseminated to diverse audiences.

For Duncombe '...the very *activity* of producing culture has political meaning. In a society built around the principle that we should consume what others have produced for us...creating your own culture…takes on a rebellious act. The first act of politics is simply to act' (2002, p.7).

Bridge (see Racism & Resistance)

The pursuit of understanding across difference needs to account for those differences rather than presume assimilation. This is especially significant in the context of South Africa, where legacies of the Apartheid Group Areas Act mean that racial segregation persists. Our project, located in a specific geographical area includes young people

with migrant backgrounds as well as 'Coloured' young people.

A social justice arts practice makes a virtue of different languages, forms and aesthetics. As Cherríe Moraga & Gloria Anzaldúa remind us in This Bridge Called My Back, (1981) the bridge builds understanding from one side to another—embracing the potential for uncertainty, difficulty and the need for translation (of different kinds). It places emphasis on the work of 'crossing' as a creative world-building potential.

This is a valuable intervention: the areas our mapping activities showed are routinely divided into territories by gang violence, where young people must navigate borders of safe and unsafe routes between home and school. A further outcome related to bridging and crossing involved the integration of youth from African migrant communities with young people from the Cape Flats. This was a result of decreased numbers of participants due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the decision to include a migrant youth arts group that Tshisimani had worked with previously. These youth would ordinarily not have interacted—yet got to know and enjoy each other, understand their own contexts of violence and exclusion, and create artistic work together.

Co-Creation (see Dialogue)

Co-creation is a trend in cross-disciplinary and development research contexts that seeks to generate research activity that is meaningful for those it serves. Working with activist-education partners, our pace needed to incorporate reflexivity, collective decision-making and lots of choices. Our young co-creators in the project were able to devise how they wanted to participate by choosing art-form specific workshops with mentoring from established artists, writers and film-makers. What characterizes co-creation is a promise of inclusive practice alongside its need for flexibility to accommodate the imaginations and desires of all stakeholders.

Dialogue (see Co-Creation)

Dialogue is a crucial element of any arts-based collaboration and is rooted in relational aesthetics and ethics. A relational aesthetics focuses artistic practice on human relations and their social context, with artists acting as facilitators, and art understood as information

produced and communicated by its makers—in this case Cape Flats youth (Bourriaud, 2002). A relational ethics extends this to include the notion of difference in relation, constituted in an intersubjective manner where difference is neither denied, essentialized, nor exoticized but rather engaged with in an enabling and potentially transformative way (Katz, 1992; Kitchin, 1999).

Given the project was driven by the lived experiences of Cape Flats youth, the relational ethics practiced was about decolonizing ourselves, getting used to not being the expert, through the process of mutual discovery and beginning to know one another. Such a dialogue is attentive to the social context of our collaboration and our situatedness with respect to that context. It was enacted in a material, embodied way, for example through attempts to fashion relations of friendship, solidarity, and empathy.

Exclusion (see Freedom & Unfreedom)

South Africa is often used as a case study of exemplary state violence in the form of exclusion and containment. The Apartheid state (under the aegis of 'social engineering') perpetrated atrocities for decades in the wake of colonial rule. Between the British and the Dutch settlers, their epic 'achievements' decimating the land, pillaging and extracting wealth resulted in a nation state of containment, oppression and biopolitical governance.

The country is still characterized by exclusion in terms of land, which means that black people continue to (working class children and young people in South Africa) grow up in racially segregated areas; that their experiences of education are differential because of legacies of funding; and that there is much grassroots work to be done to challenge and shift the ingrained exclusionary effects of the Apartheid state. The project participants come from poor and working class backgrounds which means that they are excluded from the city of Cape Town. The further one lives from the iconic Table Mountain, the more people are denied access to all the city has to offer: economically, culturally, environmentally and politically.

Freedom & Unfreedom (see Arts Activism, Exclusion, Hope)

When the arts are used as a means of engaging young people critically, we need to conceive of how access to the arts sits within the

context of social landscapes of hopelessness and futures that seem 'disposable' (Evans & Giroux, 2015).

One activity asked young people to create stories that give insight into how they feel youth are 'disposable', and to imagine what needs to change. In the project, we are determined to engage across the anger and frustration of political hopelessness and social exclusion that we might call 'unfreedom' to get young people to see freedom might look like in terms beyond merely capitalism's markers of success. Freedom, as articulated in Tshisimani's work with young people, is understood as being heard, being valued and being respected. It is also about engaging with the tools of critical pedagogy.

Gift

When participants are given a space, time and opportunity to engage in meaning-making, we imagine the encounter with one another to be a gift. Arts activism is seen as a gift—suggesting that aesthetic pursuits are not about pre-determined ends (as in many educational encounters in a test-driven and highly unequal schooling system). Rather, there is a question of an offering by artists that can be taken up by participants.

'The gift' must also be decolonized: it is not only about wealth and privilege bestowing 'gifts' upon poor and peripheralized young people. We recognize everyone's role in the exchange of time, imagination, stories, experiences and energy that goes into collaboration as a gift. This has become significant during South Africa's stringent lockdown, in which young people were not generally able to meet or see one another for social time.

Hope

[Critical] Hope is anchored in an understanding that history is made and that because systems of oppression have been built by human action, they can also be undone through human action. It's not a blind optimism but a belief that change is possible through the praxis cycle of action-reflection that is central to a Freirean approach (Freire, 1971). Like the saying by Antonio Gramsci to have pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will, hope is believing change is possible and the recognition that it won't be easy. This recognition of effortful pursuit and working through challenges also characterizes the theatre of the oppressed (Boal, 1992).

The reality of life of the Cape Flats is not going to change to tomorrow. The systems of oppression that bind these communities were built over a long time. Yet critical hope is the confidence that when young people learn to name the oppressive powers, they will be able to better confront them, and to engage in the creative act of re-making and re-naming the world. This happens in the process of workshops, in the individuals' arts outcomes, and in their moves towards curating an online repository for their work.

ImaginingOtherwise

Our project sets up different participatory arts practices for young people to come together to explore what is 'not yet' manifest in their world. The project creates a space to share experiences, and explore these spaces of 'not yet'—often beyond verbal forms, which was a highlight for participants.

When social and political conditions have meant that their life-stories are blighted by violence, and diminished by the churn of racial capitalism, then we see the need to build activist potential: not just in naming their circumstances, but in imagining differently and thereby, in seeking repertoires of possibility for their own future. As Jill Dolan has theorized about the performing arts:

> politics lie in the desire to feel the potential of elsewhere. The politics lie in our willingness to attend or to create performance at all, to come together in real places—whether theaters or dance clubs—to explore in imaginary spaces the potential of the "not yet" and the "not here." (Dolan, 2005, p. 20)

Thinking about this in relation to the Black radical project, Robin Kelley offers:

> the most powerful, visionary dreams of a new society don't come from little think tanks of smart people or out of the atomized, individualistic world of consumer capitalism where raging against the status quo is simply the hip thing to do. Revolutionary dreams erupt out of political engagement; collective social movements are incubators of new knowledge. (Kelley, 2002, p. 8)

Justice (see Neo-Colonial Liberalism)

Cornel West says "[N]ever forget that justice is what love looks like in public" (2011). Confronted by the numerous injustices perpetrated by neo-colonial Liberalism, arts-based projects have a responsibility to attempt to nurture the ground from which (social) justice can emerge. Taking justice seriously within arts-based projects consists of encouraging young people's participation on their own terms; recognising all participants' gendered, raced and classed positionalities; and attempting to effect the fair and equal distribution (e.g. of resources) (see Scholsberg, 2007). South African schools in these neighbourhoods rarely offer any arts engagement so this access to high quality resources and expert mentors is a different distribution that can enable participation.

What is crucial about such an engagement is that a practice rooted in justice brings to the fore debates over power relations and rights, and in particular (in)equalities and exclusions concerning participation, recognition and distribution. Such inequalities and exclusions can begin to be effectively transformed through the practices of collective arts-based education.

Kindness (see Hope, Justice, Pedagogy as Possibility)

Kindness requires explicit dwelling in how creativity and dialogue can nurture and embody sympathetic and empathetic forms of collaboration. Commencing through a slow uncovering of the personal lifeworlds of young people in the initial workshops, the project proceeded through discussion and a relational ethics, that enabled the shaping and crafting of a pedagogy grounded in arts-based praxis. We developed a co-created ethics of care and kindness that will inform future practices at the centre. In project monitoring, several participants reflect that they feel safe and honoured by the project set up.

The practice of kindness grounds and shapes the possibilities of justice operating in such an endeavour.

Labour (see Co-Creation, Dialogue)

Arts-based projects require multiple interrelated labours: emotional, intellectual, and material as well as reproductive labour. Emotional labour is required for participants to confront feelings of fear, stress, uncertainty and hope in their everyday lifeworlds and generously share

them with others. Intellectual labour is required to make sense of such experiences in order to communicate and reimagine them in artistic ways. Material labour is then required for the physical drawing of maps, the writing of stories and the crafting of films. Reproductive labour is required to nurture relationships of care, trust and mutual responsibility that enable a relational ethics to be fashioned (Hardt and Negri, 2006).

We recognize the psychological labour of being trapped at home under lockdown conditions. In reflections, young people said they have no privacy due to cramped living conditions while participating: in zoom meetings, some people had to join from outside in the street, or while looking after a toddler, or trying to set up a film set in small spaces.

Mapping (see Arts Activism)

Our project premise was based on how we might engage students in thinking about space and place. Participants were asked to develop maps that told a story of their neighbourhood, and share that amongst the group. Young people shared how they navigate places of fear and places of uncertainty but also spoke of places of hope in their stories.

Mapping in this way visualized how their everyday lives are sites of many different struggles: overcrowding; gangs and peers who have dropped out of schools; fears of sexual violence and abuse in addition to generational poverty. They also mapped close-knit communities; caring and creative friendship groups and hopes for the future. As we moved into this exercise, we saw mapping as a way of holding contradictions; and mapping of different eras to include histories of oppression and personal memories.

Activities that draw on different art-forms can encourage ways of thinking about how space and injustice come together. Mapping is both an opportunity to represent what is there and chart out hopes for the future, and as such, is a powerful shift towards mobilising arts activists to see, represent and question their locatedness.

Neo-Colonial Liberalism

This project and its participants operate under the global to local context of neo-colonial liberalism. The privileging of market forces to organize all aspects of life have led to increased inequalities of wealth and power within and between countries. Global and multilateral

institutions and transnational corporations combine with national elites to perpetuate colonial forms of exploitation configuring countries such as South Africa as sources of cheap raw materials and cheap labour. For the young people of Cape Flats this manifests locally as a landscape of widespread poverty, unemployment, marginalization and social exclusion. In such a context, arts-based pedagogies nurture the possibility for a 'poetry of the future' (Marx, 1972) to be imagined.

Max Haiven also signals the importance of the imagination in resisting the crisis of power that characterizes the hopelessness of neo-colonial liberalism (2014).

Online (see Justice, Quarantine Art, Tech or Digital Divide, WhatsApp-as-Arts-Education, Zoomism)

The primary means of communication and co-creation for this project was online due to the restrictions of the global pandemic. Webbed together through a key organising tool of the mobile phone, young people were subjected to bandwidth restrictions and overload; signal interruption; and finite data provision. While such disruptions could be viewed as symptomatic of their broader social and technological marginalisation, virtual space also enabled young people to map and share their lifeworlds, attend workshops, and craft their own stories.

As such, being online provided the means by which the primary constituents of social justice—distribution, recognition, and participation—could be enabled.

Pedagogy as Possibility

The students have a very good understanding of their own school and community situation but such understandings are frequently rooted in individual experiences. The challenge is in finding ways to begin with these experiences but to develop a 'sociological imagination' (Mills, 2000) that recognizes the linkages between personal experiences and public issues, as well as to develop the capacities for social analysis that leads to collective action.

Many participants—because they have 'received' what BottomUp calls 'antidialogical' education in under-resourced schools—have not had opportunities to exercise their creative and intellectual potential and have participated in an education system that has not expected or required very much from them. In the past in South Africa, it would

have been called ‘gutter education’.

In our approach ‘possibility’ includes the opportunity to ‘fail’, to experiment and to collaborate to discover new outcomes.

Quarantine Art

Bell and Desai (2011, p. 287) argue that the arts should play a central part in any social justice practice. This is because as much as social justice practices ask us to ‘use our critical faculties to grasp the complex and invidious ways that systems of oppression operate, we also need to engage aesthetic and sensory capacities so as to create and experiment with alternative possibilities—imagining what could otherwise be’.

Art making and social justice are collective activities—what happens in quarantine when we are isolated? For us, quarantine art meant creating via social platforms such as WhatsApp and Zoom: sharing stories, collectively creating poetry in response to quarantine. In a visual art workshop we viewed artistic responses to the Spanish flu, and connected it to the ways that this pandemic had shaped racial segregation in Cape Town. Quarantine art is art that names, images, and stories illness: physical and societal.

Racism & Resistance (see Exclusion)

Race is, as Kwame Appiah says, one of the ‘lies that bind’ (2018). South Africa’s origins are rested on stories about race and racism.

Ruth Wilson Gilmore examines how racism is a fatal coupling of power and difference (Gilmore, 2002). Racism manifests as state sanctioned differential treatment that results in ‘premature death’ (Gilmore, 2002). Post-Apartheid South Africa is still blighted by the structuring difference: underdevelopment, lack of infrastructure maintenance and political pursuits of ‘development’ that reach towards neo-colonial liberalism rather than equitable reconstruction and development and fair funding structures for basic needs, including schools, housing and access to work.

Yet, in the context of a country always already mapped out by systemic and everyday racism, how can young people generate their capacity for resistance? The alternative is to submit to the logic of neo-colonial liberalism, which governs and structures life. Our project’s aim to engage imagination, hope and resistance to prefigure another

world is of course a long term project of social justice. Racism cannot be ameliorated by one project, but our activities made space for resisting racism's enduring harms.

Stories

ImaginingOtherwise emerged from a funding stream for participatory arts projects that engage youth in post-conflict settings called 'Changing the Story'. We approached the understanding of stories across multiple art-forms in order to engage different young people.

South Africa's cultural practices build on oral histories. Cultural practices are a place for shared experiences through narrative, and a claim to collective meaning making in and through aesthetic engagement. Storying and storymaking are a part of everyday life, and our young people were quick to bring place, character, structure to story-making workshops.

In addition to these practical workshops, we invite young people to critique the prevalence of the single 'story': 'there is no alternative'. We work through the arts to conceive of the seeming inevitability of 'no future' that goes along with racialized deprivation, poverty and violence, and how that can be re-told. The results are stories (plural) that speak of courage, persistence, resistance and hope.

Tech or Digital Divide (see Online)

Data costs in South Africa are some of the highest in the world and network connectivity is inconsistent. The move to online learning during lock down has exacerbated South Africa's inequalities resulting in the majority of young people in school and higher education severely disadvantaged by the lack of resources to enable online access.

In order to keep people engaged and to challenge the potential that lockdown had to fracture any sense of community we had anticipated, we re-routed funds to enable people to access phones and provided data for joining online creative workshops. In later workshops, we provided further access to arts materials to create filmed stories and visual arts outcomes.

Ubuntu (see Bridge, Dialogue, Kindness)

Commonly translated into the principle 'I am because we are', Ubuntu is a philosophy of the Bantu speaking peoples in Africa, in which

motion is the principle of being, or as Madlingozi puts it, a disposition that no one is a person but 'always becoming a person' (2020, p. 51). Through motion all beings exist in an incessant flow of interactions and change. It embodies the ethical position of caring for oneself and others: to be human is to be in relation to and interdependent with others (Ramose, 2015). In many ways this philosophy underpins the relational ethics that this arts-based project has sought to nurture.

Voice

Our project follows a legacy of participatory arts: by engaging and extending young people's participation in arts activities, and by building a creative community that is characterized by collaboration, compromise and dialogue, we anticipate that co-creators will feel warmed up to exercise their voices in articulating their realities as well as utilize their capacity to voice their hopes for the future.

We nonetheless recognize the limitations of 'giving voice' that we hear in arts and social justice. Chalfen & Luttrell write critically of claims in participatory arts projects that seek to foreground their:

> ability to 'give voice' to marginalized less powerful people. The tacit assumption is that putting cameras into the hands of participants is a resource for having a 'say' in public discourse and decision-making. Yet, how is 'voice' being conceptualized, produced and analysed? … With what certainty can we attribute whose voice is whose? (2010, p. 198)

WhatsApp-as-Arts-Education (see Online, Tech or Digital Divide)

WhatsApp is widely used on the African content as a cost effective, immediate platform. The use of voice-notes, videos, emojis and text created an online experience whereby participants could creatively explore responses to facilitator prompts. Through WhatsApp we created collective poems around experiences of our neighbourhoods during lockdown, emoji stories, and responses to prompts such as what 'disposable youth' might mean.

In the lockdown, these activities facilitated a way to build the group remotely in ways that would ordinarily be achieved through the use of creative exercises in a workshop. These short tasks built trust, community, playfulness and intimacy.

X (see Mapping)

The mark that is made to indicate a point on a map. In this project, X represented the location in which each young person lived. From this starting point, the project encouraged young people to think about the places in which they lived and how they felt about these places. Cape Flats neighbourhoods were mapped—through personal neighbourhood street diagrams, videos, short written vignettes, and voices notes—as places of fear and uncertainty, or as places of caring and friendship. This mapping lays the seeds for a counter-mapping, for the reimagining of young people's lifeworlds through artistic media.

Youth (see Pedagogy as Possibility)

For the young people of Cape Flats, lifeworlds are frequently those of widespread poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion, their voices frequently unheard or ignored. Arts-based pedagogies have attempted to take seriously the desire of young people to be heard, valued and respected, not least by providing the conditions whereby young people can become co-creators in the project, with the space to devise the contours of their participation. We have found that the young people are characterized by sensitivity, energy and vision—speaking with a quiet power about their homeplaces, and with imagination concerning the potential for different ways of being and living. While we recognize that young peoples' immediate realities cannot be magically transformed, this project begins a call & response mode (Cohen-Cruz, 2010) as a process of opening up terrains of possibility for the future.

Zoomism (see Online, Tech or Digital Divide, Quarantine Art, WhatsApp-as-Arts-Education)

Zoom is a remote work (remote-control) platform that has invaded our homes, extending the reach of Empire. Some people have said we no longer 'work from home' but 'live from work'. Yet Zoom as a technology may also be co-opted for resistance as we have done with *ImaginingOtherwise*, and as many activists have done in the face of lockdown, when traditional modes of organising are much harder to do. It allows us to build relations across geographical boundaries and provides us with 'room' to think and build together.

However, in the context of South Africa's 'digital divide,' we must

remain vigilant about proclaiming a right to democractic space of possibility. Lack of privacy, proximity to others and the bad technical infrastructures mean that participant access to zoom is not guaranteed, and is not necessarily a 'safe space.'

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Aylwyn Walsh is Associate Professor of Performance and Social Change at the University of Leeds in the School of Performance and Cultural Industries. She is programme leader of the MA in Applied Theatre & Intervention and artistic director of Ministry of Untold Stories. Her book *Prison Cultures* maps performance, resistance and desire in women's prisons (Intellect, 2019). She co-edited *Remapping Crisis: A Guide to Athens* (Zero books, 2014). Much of her research has engaged with incarceration and the role of theatre and performance in carceral contexts. Grounded in feminist and decolonial approaches to practice, she has considered the relationship between performance and activism, protest and participation. Methodologically, recent work is informed by co-creation and participation, and she is currently working on youth, dispossession and arts activism in South Africa.

Alexandra Sutherland is a current arts-educator-activist with the Tshisimani Centre for Activist Education in Cape Town, former Associate Professor in Applied Theatre at Rhodes University, and current Research Associate at the University of Cape Town. Her work involves developing arts-based pedagogies for political education with grass roots movements and organisations as well as supporting these movements to incorporate the arts in campaigns, education and activism. Her published research has focused on gender and theatre in prisons and the political possibilities of theatre spaces in rigid

institutions.

Ashley Visagie is Canon Collins PhD candidate in education at the University of Cape Town. He is co-founder of BottomUp, the partner organisation that promotes critical thinking and social justice among high school youth. He has completed an MA: Strategic Foresight (Regent) and an M.Ed (Policy, Leadership & Change) at UCT focusing on the transmission of symbolic violence in an urban township school. He is also a member of the radical scholarship collective, Thinking Space, and a contributor to the *Daily Maverick*.

Paul Routledge is Professor in Contentious Politics and Social Change in the School of Geography, University of Leeds. His research interests include critical geopolitics, climate justice and social movements. He has long-standing research experience concerning protest and the practices of social movements in the Majority World (South and Southeast Asia), and in the Minority World, focusing on the spatiality of resistance practices and the practical, political and ethical challenges of scholar activism. He is author of *Space Invaders: Radical Geographies of Protest* (Pluto Press, 2017) and *Terrains of Resistance: Nonviolent Social Movements and the Contestation of Place in India* (Praeger, 1993), co-author (with Andrew Cumbers) of *Global Justice Networks: Geographies of Transnational Solidarity* (MUP, 2009) amongst others.