

About the South Project

We are embarking on a journey of epic proportions to take back ownership of what belongs to us – our identity – and to reconstruct it in our own image.
Mbulelo Mzamane, Melbourne 2004

The South Project is the major international arts project that brings together the distinct voices of the southern hemisphere through south-south dialogue and cross-cultural exchange.

Making its platform in the south, it supports contemporary dynamic cultural practice and promotes the experience and understanding of visual culture for global audiences.

- We are by nature a lateral organisation in our structure and philosophy: consultation is essential.
- We are dedicated to ongoing rigorous investigation of contemporary cultural life that challenges & inspires audiences & the art community.
- We believe artistic force has the ability to transform life, and is an integral component in developing south – south intercultural exchange.

The South Project presents a distinctive and dynamic engagement model. Not only is it based on a collaborative and participative approach, but employs an ongoing content-development program that, in turn, feeds into a major international triennial event. This model reinforces the South Project's long-term commitment to visual culture in the south for current and future audiences.

Guiding Principles of the South Project

- The South Project's platform is the southern hemisphere. From here south-south dialogue develops into a global conversation.
- The South Project is dynamic, multilateral, multicultural and acknowledges visual culture as cross disciplinary
- The South Project expects critical perspectives, cultural ownership, and principles of respect, generosity and integrity.
- The South Project relies on partnerships that enable the participation of distinct voices.
- The South Project considers access, dialogue, collaboration & education as key enablers for cultural exchange & experience in the south.
- The South Project embraces the idea of 'south' as a catalyst for artistic expression and audience encounters.

HOW TO ATTEND THESE EVENTS

With a range of free public events, such as workshops, debates, performances and forum, the South Project will draw the attention of a global audience to the African continent with what promises to be the first of many future exchanges in the region.

All workshops are free to attend, however places are limited & registration is essential!

To book for any of the workshops please contact:
email: joburg@southproject.org
Tel: (011) 373 7518 (Office) or 08 43100409 (Clifford Charles)
Between Monday-Friday normal business hours.

NOTE: No registration is required to attend the debates or Sunday's open forum. All welcome.

What is South?

By turning South into a question rather than accepting it as a location, the South Project becomes a catalyst aiming to stimulate debate, reflection and vibrancy in creative production and audience experience. South is not only a geographical region, a history, or a particular cultural identity but is also about ideas, provocation and aspiration: life. It acknowledges the southern hemisphere as the starting point but does not limit the concept of South exclusively to this region.

South is more about spaces for creativity than a physical place, or attitudes towards culture and identity. The South Project challenges existing hierarchies and explores diverse ways of collaborating and participating. It fosters networks of artists, intellectuals, cultural workers and audiences. It embraces disciplines and art practices in a stimulus of south-south exchange. The project aims to encourage a multilateral set of international relationships across the south.

The central aim of south-south cultural exchange is realised through an international exchange program comprising multiple streams:

- International Gatherings • Forums & Workshops • Education Programs
- Curated projects & exhibitions • International Exchange Program
- International Residency Program • Participating Institutional Programs
- Publications Program • Research

South Gatherings have provided international markers for the project by bringing together artists, curators and writers from across the south to a particular locale. They are designed to stimulate dialogue, explore new and diverse formats of south-south dialogue, engage active participation of audiences, generate online response post event and assist in sustaining arts networks.

Previous international Gatherings have been in Melbourne (2004), Wellington (2005), and Santiago (2006). The Johannesburg Gathering: South-south imbizo 2007, will complete the first international circuit of the south. It is the first time the South Project will co-host an event in Johannesburg.

The South Project

www.southproject.org / info@southproject.org

South Project Johannesburg Gathering team:

Clifford Charles - convener & local coordinator
Talya Chalef - assistant coordinator

South Project core team:

Andrea Bell - Project officer
Eamonn Kelly - Communications Officer
Nadia Maini Craig - South Kids Coordinator
Magdalena Moreno - South Project Interim Director



The South Project

JOHANNESBURG GATHERING

South-south Imbizo | FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER – SUNDAY 21 OCTOBER 2007

DAY ONE

TWO CURRENTS & TWO OCEANS

FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER 2007

Place: Uncle Tom's Centre

8288 Maseko Street, Orlando West (Soweto)

The south has never been immune to the human tendency towards the creation of hierarchies. Even outwardly inclusive political systems can easily become exclusive and hierarchic through institutionalization, bureaucracy, and nepotism. Hierarchies often lead to polarization, marginalization, and disempowerment. Where does this leave the creative voices of the south?

Across the south, creative currents often exist as opposing forces: official versus underground, institutional versus public, elite versus popular. Can parallels be found between such diverse models for engagement and ownership? Can creative currents converge, or do we benefit somehow from maintaining separate "oceans" in which particular artistic voices can reside?

2:30PM

WORKSHOP 1: REGENERATED MATERIAL & FOUND OBJECT - OBJECT OR WASTE?

This workshop considers the exploration of materials at hand to create new work, and rethink recycling and raw material. Whether working with materials in their found state or reducing it to its origin to start fresh, this workshop presents local and international perspective on the use of regenerated material in creative practice.

FACILITATORS:

From **South Africa:** Mbongeni Buthelezi

From **Australia:** Sara Thorn and Emma Davies

WORKSHOP 2: MODERN & TRADITIONAL WEAVING

A gathering of different local and international weaving techniques, including indigenous practices and new skills. Participants will explore new materials and tools for weaving.

FACILITATORS:

From **South Africa:** Connie Sedumedi and Khushu Dlamini;

from **Australia:** Nalda Searles, Thisbe Purich, Yangi Yangi Fox, Ivy Hopkins Laidlaw, Jo Foster

5:30PM

EVENING PROGRAMME - PUBLIC PLATFORM

VENUE: UNCLE TOM'S

One for the money, two for the show, three for the African Artist, but don't you step on my black ass... Khwezi Gule

An evening debate presenting two perspectives on international markets perceptions and interpretations of identity and creative practice in the south. Followed by public debate.

*South African curator **Khwezi Gule**, Johannesburg Art Gallery

*Indigenous Australian curator **Maree Clarke**, Koorie Heritage Trust

Initiated and managed by:



The South Project wishes to acknowledge the following for their support:

Department of Arts and Culture, South African Government; Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Arts, Gauteng Province; BHP Billiton Development Trust; Hector Pietersen Museum; Uncle Tom's Centre; Afrika Cultural Centre; Drill Hall; Joubert Park Project, City of Johannesburg; Belle Primary School; Australian High Commission, New Zealand High Commission, Monash University, ArtPlay, Craft Victoria, Kevin Murray, Khwezi Gule and Holly Carthew.

DAY TWO

EMERGING AFRICA

SATURDAY 20 OCTOBER 2007

Place: Afrika Cultural Centre

Newtown Cultural Precinct

Africa has long played a dual role in the European imagination, and these imaginings continue to shape global perceptions of Africa and its peoples. On the one hand, Africa has been portrayed as a utopia in which great riches are to be found, yet without this wealth corrupting the noble, pre-industrial population who exude tribal heroicism and physical beauty. On the other hand, Africa has been seen as a fearful place of unknowns, of human suffering, of harsh landscapes, of people whose rituals are foreign and whose art threatens western civilisation.

In some ways, this imagined Africa has more recently come under scrutiny and African voices have found their own international platform. Yet for many in the north, Africa remains a place of otherness, and therefore part of self-definition; Africa imagined becomes those things that the north is not. Mainstream American and European print media have taken to profiling Africa with evangelical zeal, imagining ways in which Africa can "move forward" or "be saved" by the north. At the same time, certain voices within Africa have been keen to capitalize on western exoticisation and preoccupation with traditional arts and crafts. Where does this leave the artist in South Africa, or the artist from outside Africa wanting to engage with the continent and its peoples? Will northern aspirations make Africa "content" or is the representation of Africa from outside and within something that artists and curators should be grappling with?

2:30PM

WORKSHOP 1: PERFORMANCE ARTS AND SPOKEN WORD

This workshop challenges/questions contemporary expressions & practices of art as it draws on inter-disciplinary fusions.

FACILITATORS: From **South Africa:** Tracy Rose

From **Australia:** Domenico de Clario and John Ashton

WORKSHOP 2: DANCE & CREATIVE MOVEMENT

The workshop explores how African Dance, given its traditional history, expresses itself in the contemporary diverse cultural setting with contending interests.

FACILITATORS: From **South Africa:** Gregory Makoma, Falcia Goodman and Gladys Agulhas

ANIMATION SCREENING

A series of screenings & debates illustrating: Contemporary Visual Africanity - the potentials and pitfalls.

FACILITATORS: Thabang Lehobye, Mocke Jansen van Veuren

5:30PM

EVENING PROGRAMME - PUBLIC LECTURES & DISCUSSION

VENUE: AFRIKA CULTURAL CENTRE

* Herbert Dhlomo Theatre Memorial Lecture

Culture and the Arts in a changing South Africa, presented by **Benjy Francis** (South Africa)

This is a critical paper that examines pertinent cultural directions, and the state of the arts in post-apartheid South Africa. It seeks to offer a dynamic and visionary role for arts and artists in development and transformation.

To be followed by open discussion.

The *Herbert Dhlomo Memorial Lecture* is Afrika Cultural Centre's acknowledgement of Herbert Dhlomo's creative genius and his seminal contribution to the ongoing debates on African arts in a developing society that is emerging from the haze of colonialism/apartheid.

DAY THREE

PLOTS, KNOTS & PARALLELS

SUNDAY 21 OCTOBER 2007

Place: Drill Hall

corner Plein & Twist Streets, Joubert Park

9.30AM

DAY THREE: MORNING SESSION

Chair: Clifford Charles

Collation of materials – groups of 4 participants come together to share their journals and the ideas from the two previous days. These will be captured in a workshop session that also considers negotiating meaning beyond idealism. Nine workshop leaders present reflections and ways forward from workshops.

10:30AM

MORNING TEA

The north has provided powerful models for artistic practice. Concepts of beauty and the sublime, the white cube, and the romance of the artist as hero have driven much development in modern art. But how relevant are these concepts for the south? What alternative models might we develop that are appropriate to the diverse mix of cultures in the south? This is an opportunity to share ideas about the ways of presenting art that is engaged with community and to explore pathways between

1:30PM

WHERE TO NOW?

As the Gathering winds to a close, a panel of speakers involved in the South Project will share their perspectives - offering ways forward for future projects in the South.

Chair: Talya Chalef

Speakers: Domenico de Clario, Megan Evans, Khwezi Gule, Kevin Murray, David Hansen and Clifford Charles.

Induku i'thungalwa e'bandla (zulu proverb)

(There is nothing you can do alone-you have to be a group of people to share ideas so that you can move forward)

In this age of Multi-national capitalism, Democratic institutions are under threat if not rendered inept.

The added growing logic of fear & the mayhem of consumption dulls us into a feeding frenzy. We become trapped in new forms of physical & mental violence. Thus we devour ourselves. Maybe un- attaching our own sense of importance might bring us closer to this world as it really is.

Clifford Charles, Johannesburg 07

From Melbourne to Soweto: *South Kids*

The South Kids emanated out of the idea that children should also have the opportunity to experience the creative energies of the south first hand. South Kids activities include workshops, exchanges and talks with international and local artists about what artists do and the influences that determine their own work practices. This long-term project enables primary school children to explore their sense of identity, creating their own conversations about place and space.

The South Kids has formed an integral part of each South Project Gathering but the Johannesburg Gathering introduces an exciting, new element: direct international exchange between children of the south. In September, children in Melbourne shared in a workshop led by local artist Vicky Shukuroglou. The children created small, easily transportable art works which combine personal ephemera with recycled materials, including textiles, beads, sequins, and polystyrene. These art works will be transported to Belle Primary School in Soweto for the Johannesburg Gathering, where they will provide the starting point for a workshop run by Australian artist, Sara Thorn. The children at Belle Primary School will be asked to respond to the artworks from the Melbourne children, reworking items and adding local materials and ephemera to create a sculptural work for local exhibition. The final work will serve as an expression of both groups of children and signify their exchange and creative bond.

HOW TO ATTEND THESE EVENTS - please refer to the reverse page