

https://dspace.org/

Narrative place-making : the narrative-spatial relationship in films made about Johannesburg

Szentesi, Anita Margaret

2018

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27206

Szentesi, Anita Margaret, (2018) Narrative place-making: the narrative-spatial relationship in films made about Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27206.

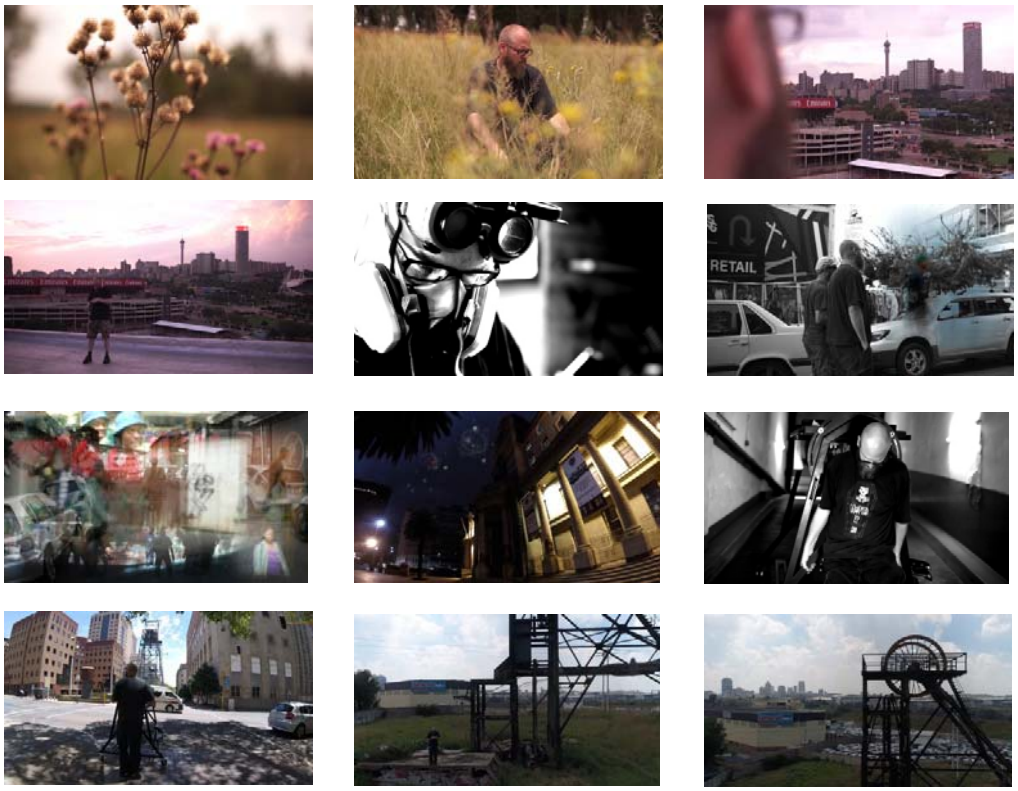
Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Narrative Place-Making: The Narrative-Spatial Relationship in Films Made About Johannesburg

by
Anita Szentesi

Master of Arts by Coursework and Research Report in Film and Television

With Thanks to Nduka Mntambo



Szentesi, A. (2018). Series of Stills from *Axis Johannesburg*. [Film]

Declaration of Originality

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this is my own original work. Any part of this study that does not reflect my own ideas has been fully acknowledged in the form of citations. No part of this thesis has been submitted in the past, or is being submitted, or is to be submitted for a degree at any other university.



Miss Anita M. Szentesi

26 October 2018

Signed on this Date

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

In this Place

Chapter Breakdown:

1. Introduction

1.1 Aim

1.2 Rationale

1.3 Theoretical Framework

1.4 Methodology

2. Place-Making Theories in Architecture

2.1 Place-Making: Christian Norberg-Schulz

2.2 Spatial Identity: Juhani Pallasmaa

3. Johannesburg, the Elusive Place

3.1 The Gap-Between: Lindsay Bremner

3.2 The Loss of the Racial City: Achille Mbembe

3.3 Arrival: Zahira Asmal

3.4 Regeneration: Thomas Coggin

4. Mise-En-Scene

4.1 Mise-En-Scene and Place-Making

4.2 Mise-En-Scene and the Narrative

5. Analysis of Case Studies

5.1 *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) Directed by Shannon Walsh and Arya Lalloo

5.2 *Africa Shafted* (2011) Directed by Ingrid Martens

5.3 *Berea* (2013) Directed by Vincent Moloi

6. Analysis of Short Documentary Film Produced

6.1 *Axis Johannesburg* (2018) Directed by Anita Szentesi

7. Conclusion

8. List of References

1. Introduction

1.1 Aim

My research aims to offer an analysis of the design of the *mise-en-scene* that functions with narrative screenwriting strategies in the selected filmic case studies *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) directed by Shannon Walsh and Arya Lalloo, *Africa Shafted* (2011) directed by Ingrid Martens and *Berea* (2013) directed by Vincent Moloi. This analysis will be offered in conversation with the discursive practices of place-making within the discourse of architecture. Place-making is the architectural consideration of the close connection that a human being has to a place. In architectural theory, the human-place relationship is achieved through the spatiality, locality and embodiment of that place. Places possess meaning when they are the location of human activity. Christian Norberg-Schulz (Wilken, 2013) argues that the spirit of place is communicated through the visual image; the essence of a place is interpreted through visual means. *Mise-en-scene* is that which appears within the film frame. David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004) state that setting, lighting, costume and the behaviour of the figures constitute the *mise-en-scene*. *Mise-en-scene* does not have to represent reality, but most importantly, it needs to convey the overall message of the filmic representation. The construction and reading of *mise-en-scene* is central in how films function discursively.

1.2 Rationale

My research explores the narrative-spatial relationship between the construction of *mise-en-scene* and narrative in film form and the architectural considerations of place-making, to offer conceptual insights into how the idea of the human-place connection can be explored in the reading of selected film texts about Johannesburg. Through exploration, my research probes the discursive elusiveness of Johannesburg as place. I explore the notion that, like most cities in the world, Johannesburg cannot be rendered in a singular conceptual register, but allows for multiplicities of readings. I investigate how the design of the *mise-en-scene* in the selected filmic case studies functions with the narrative structures, in an attempt to offer a coherent reading of a place that spawns multiple and at times diverged identities.

The research will be done through the critical analysis of selected film works that contain a strong sense of context, spatiality, locality and embodiment of characters within places inside the world of the story. The films are all based in Johannesburg and include the documentary *Jeppe on*

a Friday (2013) directed by Shannon Walsh and Arya Lalloo, the documentary *Africa Shafted* (2011) directed by Ingrid Martens, and the short narrative film *Berea* (2013) directed by Vincent Moloi. In both documentary films, I analyse the representations of the human connection with the places that they embody in the city of Johannesburg. In the short film, *Berea* (2013), I analyse the intrinsic human-place connection that the protagonist has to the inner world of his apartment and the transforming neighbourhood of Berea.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

My theoretical framework draws from the works of architectural theorists, Christian Norberg-Schulz and Juhani Pallasmaa, who explore the theories of place-making and the human connection to place. I then investigate how these theories of place-making relate to the representation of Johannesburg. I also consider Lindsey Bremner's book, Writing the City into Being: Essays on Johannesburg 1998-2008 (Bremner, 2010), which I suggest reveals Johannesburg's spatial elusiveness and multiplicity.

Zahira Asmal, in the article, Movement Johannesburg (Asmal and Trangos, 2015), describes Johannesburg as always being churned by movement, therefore giving the impression that it is always new, ambitious and aspirational. I suggest that Johannesburg offers an interesting and exciting place to be in as represented by the main character in my film. Asmal also describes Johannesburg as a place of arrival, there is always an influx of local and foreign people moving in and out of the city. I suggest this constant churn also adds to elusiveness of Johannesburg's identity.

Through the reading of the work of Achille Mbembe in Public Culture Volume 44 (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004), I consider the spatial layers of history that Johannesburg constitutes. These layers, including the gold rush and apartheid, form contradictory and conflicting foundations that the city is built on. These contribute to the feelings of placeless-ness that Johannesburg instils as well as a reckless abandon for the city's built forms.

I think that through Thomas Coggin's article concerning regeneration (Asmal and Trangos, 2015), the conundrum of improving an area whilst pushing out an existing demographic contributes to Johannesburg's elusive spatiality. Furthermore, I discuss Dirk Bahmann and Jason Frenkel's study (Bahmann and Frenkel, 2012) which I put in conversation with Coggin's

ideas regarding regeneration in the city of Johannesburg, specifically in Maboneng Precinct in Jeppestown. Bahmann and Frenkels' study reveals a fabricated foreign lifestyle constructed by property developers which I think adds to the confusion of Johannesburg's identity.

An analysis of the city regeneration as espoused by Coggin, Bahmann and Frenkel will be refracted through the exploration of the treatment of particular spaces represented in the filmic case studies. This is seen in the contradiction of the various locations in Jeppestown in *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), and the fate of the inhabitants inside the iconic Ponte building in *Africa Shafted* (2011). I also consider the depiction of the transforming neighbourhood in *Berea* (2013).

I investigate the narrative film form interacting with the stylistic considerations of the *mise-en-scene* in the filmic case studies about Johannesburg. I analyse the construction of scene design through the readings of Robert Mckee (Mckee, 1997) and Linda Seger (Seger, 2004) in order to establish how a *mise-en-scene* functions with the narrative. I explore the structures of non-linear narrative through the work of Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush (Dancyger and Rush, 2002) along with the stylistic design of the *mise-en scene* through the readings of David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004) in the filmic case studies *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) and *Africa Shafted* (2011). I explore the structures of a restorative three-act linear narrative functioning with the *mise-en-scene* in the short narrative case study film *Berea* (2013) through the readings of Syd Field (Field, 1982) and Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush (Dancyger and Rush, 2002).

1.4 Methodology

My short poetic reflexive documentary film, titled *Axis Johannesburg*, explores the formation of an artist's identity in Johannesburg as achieved through his embodied practice of place-making. The construction of this short film, both formally and conceptually, offers an entry point into how to approach the multiplicity of readings and writing the tale of Johannesburg.
The knowledge of place and identity translate into the film through the *mise-en-scene*. The character is held and framed by the places he embodies within the story; both character and place are then framed within the lens of the camera: these are the interwoven connections between human embodiment, place, narrative, frame and camera. These interwoven relationships are further expressed through the representations of the artwork that the character produces. The character has chosen to live in Johannesburg, capturing the notions of embodied place-making and the multiplicity of the city of Johannesburg.

I draw on Bill Nichols and his modes of documentary (Nichols, 2001), as well as Michael Rabiger's modalities of documentary films (Rabiger, 2004), to inform the production of my film. My poetic and reflexive documentary film follows the main character, Dirk Bahmann, who is an architect and artist, as he searches for rootedness in Johannesburg. The artwork he has produced, so far, as well as the place that he has chosen to live in, is a response to the questions that he has asked, as he continues his search for place in this elusive city.

2. Place-Making Theories in Architecture

This research mobilises the theories of place-making to explore the need of a human to create rootedness to a place. These theoretical notions focus on the idea of being-in-the-world and the human's relationship with spatiality, locality and embodiment. Furthermore, the theories suggest that architecture has meaning only when it is experienced and when it provides the settings in which daily acts and rituals take place; architecture has meaning when it is grounded in and shaped to human experience.

I argue that the idea of human experience is a form of narrative and that this narrative or event shapes the design of a place. Also, a meaningful place shapes the narrative of human experience. Therefore, I posit that human and place are intrinsically linked. I suggest and explore how the notions of human-place connection in architecture might be helpful in thinking through the conceptualisation of narrative structures and the design of *mise-en-scene.* These ideas will be further investigated in Chapter 4.

To explore human-place connection theories in architecture, I draw from the work of the Norwegian architect, author, educator and architectural theorist, Christian Norberg-Schulz. He derived his concepts about the phenomenology of architecture from Martin Heiddeger, a German philosopher known for his studies about ontology or the study of being. (Wilken, 2013) Through these readings, I mobilise the idea of the spirit of place. I question whether visual representations of place within the narrative structures and the *mise-en-scene* compositions in the filmic case studies enhance the advancement of the story, enrich the character trajectory, reinforce the exploration of an idea or theme and boost the design of the visual image in Chapter 5. I explore these notions through the treatment of particular spaces in the city which are represented in the filmic case studies; such as the streets of Jeppestown in *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013),

the iconic Ponte building in *Africa Shafted* (2011) and the inner world of the apartment in the transforming neighbourhood in *Berea* (2013).

Stemming from Norberg-Schulz's theories regarding the spirit of place, Juhani Pallasmaa comprehensively investigates the multi-sensory experience of embodiment in place. (Holl and Pallasmaa, 1991). I mobilise Palasmaa's studies, by discussing and analysing his notions of embodiment in place and identity; the domicile is the refuge of a human being's physicality, memory and identity. I facilitate an investigation where I explore the multiplicities of readings concerning the spatial identity of the city of Johannesburg. These ideas are investigated in the film case study, *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), where each place that each character inhabits is an extension of their identity; place establishes who the characters are as well as driving the narrative forward.

2.1 Place-Making: Christian Norberg-Schulz

Christian Norberg-Schulz's larger intellectual projects dealt with the engagement of place and phenomenological theory. In his book Genius Loci (1980), Norberg-Schulz developed a historical examination of place-making and the basic properties or characteristics that contributed to the "spirit" or "genius" of a place (Wilken, 2013). Norberg-Schulz believed that the role of architecture was to provide a means to visualise genius loci and the architect's task was to create meaningful places in which people could dwell. Dwelling, for Norberg-Schulz, implied that the spaces where life occurred became places. Places became "the concrete manifestation of man's dwelling" (Wilken, 2013, p. 343). They constituted material substance, shape, texture and colour giving them character and atmosphere. Norberg-Schulz's thinking suggested that by creating buildings that gather the properties of a place whilst helping people to dwell poetically within them, as well as letting them know how they belong to the place, lead to an understanding of genius loci. My reading of Norberg-Schulz's theories identifies a strategy that intrinsically connects human beings to meaningful places. My interpretation is that this strategy relates to the stylistic system of *mise-en-scene* design compositions in the field of filmmaking. This will be further explored in Chapter 4.

Norberg-Schulz's strategy identified four thematic levels within the treatment of the concept of genius loci. These were; "the topography of the earth's surface"; "the cosmological light conditions and the sky as natural conditions"; "buildings" and "symbolic and existential

meanings in the cultural landscape" (Wilken, 2013, p. 343). These concepts stemmed from Martin Heiddeger's concept of the "fourfold" which united earth, sky, mortals and divinities. Heiddeger believed that mortals dwelled on earth, under the sky and remained before the divinities, which united all into one. Dwelling, for Norberg-Schulz, unified the "fourfold" into a thing. So, whether a place was constructed or natural, its character or identity was determined by how the earth and the sky were concretised. The earth represented horizontality and the sky verticality. Norberg-Schulz saw "the skyline of the town and the horizontally expanded silhouette of the urban buildings as keys to the image of a place" (Wilken, 2013, p. 343). He argued that the spirit of place is communicated through this visual image.

In interrogating Norberg-Schulz's argument regarding the image of a place, I argue that the visual image does widely exist in identifying cities. I am referring to the image of the skyline. The skyline represents the horizon created by the structure of the city. The structure usually consists of a few iconic buildings which are usually vertical landmarks in the horizon. No two skylines are the same, which serves the city with its own visual fingerprint or identity. The skyline is a physical and visual representation of a city's life. Hillbrow Tower and Ponte City are the two vertical icons that most commonly represent the identity of Johannesburg.

In the case study film, *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), the skyline serves to establish and introduce the location and setting of the story from afar before it delves into the essence of the narratives of the characters, places and streets. In *Africa Shafted* (2011), the Johannesburg skyline is viewed from inside Ponte City itself, which creates a new point of view from within one of Johannesburg's iconic buildings. In my film, the artist represents his interactions with the city of Johannesburg through *Life Traces*, where he visually represents the essence of the city by being still in the city and tracing its people, buildings, vehicles and icons onto a mobile screen that he has invented. The culmination of his work, results in a visual representation of a new skyline which stems from the traced representations of how he has read the city.
In establishing that a skyline is a fingerprint, I think that Norberg-Schulz's representations of the spirit of place are relevant but perhaps on an abstracted level only. In order to really understand a city, it needs to be experienced through interaction with its people, its buildings and its streets. Film is a medium that can channel the verisimilitude of a city. The demonstration of the lives of the five characters in the case study film, *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) is an exploration of their real-life experiences in the neighbourhood of Jeppestown. Through this, the representation of a part of

Johannesburg's identity is made accessible and understood on an embodied level, rather than an abstracted one.

Norberg-Schulz believed that when the genius of a place is absent or forgotten, the result is a "loss of place" (Wilken, 2013, p.344). Norberg-Schulz theorised that an appropriate response to this apparent crisis of place, especially in a contemporary urban context, was to respect the spirit of place and work towards the creation of strong places. This involved the realisation that "cities have to be treated as individual places, rather than abstract spaces where blind forces of economy and politics have free play". (Wilken, 2013, p.344).

I agree with Norberg-Schulz's notion of "loss of place". This notion is particularly relevant to my exploration of the city of Johannesburg which has a fragmented spatial essence due to its racial history. The main character in my film, has read Johannesburg as a difficult place to navigate in. Through his artwork, he tries to find a sense of belonging in Johannesburg. He has made his place in the inner city so that he can find this centre from which he can navigate. This theme stems from his feelings of placeless-ness that Johannesburg instils within him; Johannesburg, to him, has no centre. His search for place explores Norberg-Schulz's theory of the human being who wants to root him or herself to a place to create a sense of belonging and identity.

2.2 Spatial Identity: Juhani Pallasmaa

Juhani Pallasmaa is a Finnish architect and former professor of Helsinki University of Technology. Pallasmaa has theorised extensively about the phenomenology of architecture and place-making. Pallasmaa sees the main task of architecture as being the defense of the authenticity of human experience and that an architectural experience is multi-sensory. "Every touching experience of architecture is multi-sensory qualities of matter, space, and scale which are measured equally by the eye, ear, nose, skin, tongue, skeleton and muscle. Architecture involves seven realms of sensory experience which interact and infuse each other." (Holl, Pallasmaa, 1991, p.30). My reading of this theory is that through this embodied sensory experience, an audience can read places in film. David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson state that humans develop an understanding of spatial depth in film from their experiences of space in the real world. (Bordwell and Thompson, p.212)

The main character in my film embodies various places that have been selected to represent some of the experiences that he has encountered in creating his art work. These places contain multi-sensory memories that are generally experienced in the real world by most people. Therefore, the places that he embodies become meaningful authentic human experiences as he gropes for a sense of rootedness in Johannesburg.

Pallasmaa believes that a human being's self-identity is intrinsically linked to a place through this multi-sensory spatial embodiment. "All experience implies the acts of recollecting, remembering and comparing. An embodied memory has an essential role as the basis of remembering a space or a place. Our home and domicile are integrated with our self-identity; they become part of our own body and being." (Holl, Pallasmaa, 1991, p.37).

I agree with Pallasmaa's notion which is represented in *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), where each place that each character inhabits is an extension of their identity which establishes who they are within the world of the story. For instance, we meet JJ the property developer, in his luxury apartment in the gentrified part of Maboneng Precinct. This embodied place immediately establishes JJ's identity as the rich, white, young, go-getter who is making changes in the neighbourhood of the Maboneng Precinct. This is contrasted by Vusi, the trolley pusher, whose identity is linked to the streets, his only possession is the trolley and its contents that he pushes around.

This link between self-identity and place is further established in *Berea* (2013), where the audience is introduced to the main character, the pensioner Mr Zuckerman, in his inner-city apartment. His identity is intrinsically linked to this place as well as the surrounding neighbourhood of Berea. The neighbourhood has changed drastically through South Africa's political history and Mister Zuckerman's world has grown smaller as he has aged. The only world that he still recognises is the interior of his flat.

The studio space that the main character embodies in my film is the centre from which he navigates. The place serves as the inner world behind the façade of his artworks. It is the place where he feels safe and protected so that he can concentrate on the work that he is producing. It is also the core into which he can withdraw. Through his processes of making, he has grown attached to the place; he has started to build a foundation which is the root of his identity in Johannesburg.

3. Johannesburg, the Elusive Place

In this chapter, my research explores spatial readings about the city of Johannesburg where place-making theories are tested. Lindsay Bremner's notions are that Johannesburg is a character that refuses to submit to reductive logic (Bremner, 2010). Furthermore, Bremner emphasises Johannesburg's elusiveness stating that "It spawns multiple centres, sends one in divergent directions, weaves multiple paths and reveals itself in its impurities." (Bremner, 2010, p.1). In my view, this makes the spatial identity of Johannesburg difficult to define. However, in Chapter 5, I explore that the medium of film, successfully captures these diverse identities.

Furthermore, I explore the consequences of the spatial history of Johannesburg; specifically, the consequences of how the architecture and urban planning of the city was used to separate the races during apartheid. Achille Mbembe states that post 1994, the aim of architecture has been to return to the archaic as a way of freezing rapid changes in the temporal and political structures of the surrounding world. (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004) Through the reading by Mbembe, I interrogate that some architecture in Johannesburg aims to resist the change caused by the loss of the racial city. Through this resistance, a fake lifestyle is constructed by the architecture, often mimicked from European and American examples, offering a cocoon of familiar, yet inter-racial, comfort. Mbembe is referring to places such as Montecasino and Melrose Arch. I analyse the representation of Maboneng Precinct in the film *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) exploring this notion of a fabricated post-apartheid lifestyle within the inner city.

In addition, the city of Johannesburg is described as a place of movement, change and arrival. Zahira Asmal, director of The City and founder of Designing South Africa, describes Johannesburg as always being churned by movement, therefore giving the impression that it is always new, ambitious and aspirational. (Asmal and Trangos, 2015). In mobilising the reading by Asmal, I explore the theme of arrival as well as investigate the exchanges between the movements of immigrants and inhabitants that contribute to the changing spatial identity. This further contributes to the elusiveness in defining a human-place connection. This notion will be further explored in the analysis of the film, *Africa Shafted* (2011) in Chapter 5.

Theories concerning regeneration contribute to Johannesburg's elusive spatiality. Thomas Coggin explains how the disinvestment in the city of Johannesburg coincided with the socio-political unrest in South Africa in 1994, when the previously disadvantaged population moved in

and became its infrastructure. (Asmal and Trangos, 2015) Today the notion of claiming back the city exists; regeneration. Dirk Bahmann and Jason Frenkel's research study compliments Coggin's study regarding regeneration in the city of Johannesburg, specifically in Maboneng in Jeppestown. (Bahmann and Frenkel, 2012). Through the analysis of the case study films, I intend to muse upon the effects of regeneration on meaningful place-making in Johannesburg.

3.1 The Gap-Between: Lindsay Bremner

Lindsay Bremner is an architect exploring architectural urban research. One of Lindsay Bremner's notions is that Johannesburg is elusive. In Writing the City into Being (2010), Bremner, describes Johannesburg as an extremely difficult city to live in but an addictive city to work in. She describes Johannesburg as a place that is reluctant to reveal itself. This investigation leads to my interpretation that through this elusiveness, Johannesburg is a difficult place to be in. In my opinion this difficult-ness affects a human being's sense of belonging to and forming an identity in a place. My film explores the representation of the artwork of the main character whose central theme is a groping in the dark for this sense of belonging in this difficult place that is Johannesburg.

Furthermore, Bremner describes Johannesburg as a character that refuses to submit to reductive logic. "It spawns multiple centres, sends one in divergent directions, weaves multiple paths and reveals itself in its impurities." (Bremner, 2010, p.1). My interpretation of this theory is that Johannesburg does not have one centre like other global cities do. Therefore, it is difficult to navigate this city. This search for the centre to navigate from is part of the central theme of the artist's work in my film. Sometimes, this search is portrayed through natural objects selected in the landscape, such as the grass and the sky that represent the centre of his world, and sometimes this search is represented through a psychological questioning represented by the skull.

To investigate my interpretation further, Lindsay Bremner states that "…no such concrete object as the city exists." (Bremner, 2010, p.60). Cities are multi-centred or de-centred with overlapping untidiness. This statement emerges through her exploration of Johannesburg where she unravels the city through the perceptions and experiences of the current urban culture from the street. The current operations of the cultures on the streets of Johannesburg are different from the intent of their original colonial designs. In my opinion, this point of view from the street is an authentic perception of the true nature of the city. Some of these points of views such as the

bustling and diverse street views in *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), are authentically represented through the medium of film.

Bremner further describes her study as writing Johannesburg into being through the gap-between the spatial representations of architects and planners and the spaces occupied and imagined by those who inhabit the city. (Bremner, 2010). In my view, the making of architecture creates the gap-between in an urban fabric. The intent of the gap-between may have been considered by the architect, but its embodied utilisation may give it a new function; an informal place. Once again, this point of view is taken from the street; from the human experience. This is the sensitive inter-relationship between human and the embodied place. Meaningful place-making can occur in the gap-between. Johannesburg is a city that has many a gap-between. This gap-between is represented in the case study film, *Berea* (2013), where abandoned entrance porches are radically transformed from their original design intent into meaningful places made for informal trading on street edges.

3.2 The Loss of the Racial City: Achille Mbembe

Achille Mbembe is a Cameroonian philosopher and political theorist. Mbembe's theories identify layers that constitute Johannesburg. (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004). The spatial history of Johannesburg began as a mining camp which then developed into a colonial town. Like all colonial towns, Johannesburg mimicked the English town creating pale reflections of forms born elsewhere. Mbembe states that "… this tradition of mimicry continues to determine if not the language of the city today, then at least part of its unconscious." (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004, p.375).

Johannesburg is a product of gold mining. It is also known as Egoli (city of gold). Some street names in Johannesburg are derived from its mining history; Gold Street, Quartz Street and Nugget Street. (Mbembe, 2004) Some "mine dumps", the man-made remnants of the gold mines, as well as the silhouettes of abandoned mining head gear over old mine shafts can still be seen as one travels along certain highways around Johannesburg. These historical icons form part of Johannesburg's skyline. However, most of these icons are not revered and are abandoned or are being erased. Currently, the "mine dumps" are being tailed for gold extracts and abandoned headgear behind barbed wire fences are rusting away while some of their steel parts are stolen for use elsewhere.

Some specific historical objects have been ripped out of their contexts as the state has tried to memorialise new monuments and landscapes to try and bring the fragments of the South African nation together post-apartheid. An example of this is the mining headgear in Marshalltown. Mining head gear features strongly in my film, firstly because it also features in the artist's work as an *Axis Mundi* for his representation of the centre of Johannesburg; this is how the city originated and this is where he feels that Johannesburg's centre is. Furthermore, the two head gears in the film represent icons of Johannesburg's spatial history; the erasure of the past and the misconceived representation of the present.

Johannesburg constitutes layers of spatial history as identified by Achille Mbembe. (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004). The apartheid state had another major impact on its spatial history. It attempted to establish a relationship between spatial patterns and their moral order "… race came to be inscribed in the space of the South African city." (Mbembe, 2004, p.386) Post 1994 marked the collapse of the racial city which led to the white population abandoning neighbourhoods in the inner city. The city opened up, leading to the occupation of places by black people, using the places in ways that were radically different from their original purpose. This rapid change, caused by the loss of the racist city, has given birth to an architecture that tries to resist change and create familiar comforts. The architecture aims to produce inter-racial synthetic places that produce lifestyles adopted from European and American examples. The architecture is theatrical and synthetic; like a constructed tableaux. Examples of these places are Montecasino and Melrose Arch. (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004). In the film case study, *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), Maboneng Precinct in Jeppestown is an example of a gentrified, constructed lifestyle.

Today Johannesburg considers itself to be "A World Class African City". In striving to be this place, Johannesburg, battles with its layers of history, modernity, poverty, and planned and informal places. It is an example of an African form of metropolitan modernity. In the wake of the collapse of apartheid, the city has opened-up a space for experiences of displacement and substitution. This African cosmopolitanism is shaped by mass poverty, the global logic of commodities and the formation of a consumer public. (Mbembe, 2004). Johannesburg is conflicted between its racist past and the metropolitan present. People pass from one image to another within the city creating shifts in focus and meaning. My interpretation of these fractured experiences is that they contribute to the sense of placeless-ness that Johannesburg instils, leaving its inhabitants confused and adrift. Because of this, black and white people have become wanderers within the city's urban fabric, searching for rootedness and identity.

3.3 Arrival: Zahira Asmal

Zahira Asmal is the director of The City and founder of Designing South Africa. In Movement Johannesburg (2015), Asmal describes Johannesburg as always being churned by movement, therefore giving the impression that it is always new, ambitious and aspirational. In 1994, when South Africa became a democracy, Johannesburg began its difficult process to rebuild and reconnect a socially and spatially fragmented society. Johannesburg has great allure in southern Africa and Africa. New arrivals tend to find a foothold in the city because of its multiple centres of opportunity. Johannesburg is described as an arrival city that is both populated with people in transition as well as being a place that is in transition itself.

In mobilising Asmal's theory, I interrogate how Johannesburg's identity is always changing. I agree that this attracts opportunity and arrival. At the same time, I believe, that this constant movement, adds to the elusiveness of the city, making it more difficult to define its identity and making it difficult to connect to it. This establishes the emotion behind the main character's art work in my film; his work represents his feelings of placeless-ness that stem from the difficulty to connect to this altering place.

"Johannesburg, South Africa's gold rush city, is a city of arrival. As part of the largest and fastest growing urban region in the country, it's a place that people continue to migrate to in search of gold, and for a better life than the one they left behind." (Asmal, 2015, p.14). I find that Asmal's quote rings true. I explored this through my main character who embodies this decision to live in the uncomfortable city of Johannesburg. His choice to relocate to the inner-city stems from his need to root himself close to the centre or origin of this city. Johannesburg also offers opportunity and excitement which allows him to keep a finger on the pulse of the city.
My further interpretation of Asmal's theory is that it also explores how the arrival of immigrants seeking opportunity adds to the contradictory elusiveness of the city's built-forms. There is a mix of feelings of fear and alienation towards a place as well as feelings of refuge towards that same place. This theory is represented in the analysis of the case study film, *Africa Shafted* (2011) where the iconic building, Ponte City instils a sense of fear in its inhabitants as well as a sense of refuge at the same time.

"Contemporary Johannesburg is the result of significant change." (Asmal, 2015, p.15) Despite expansion of a middle class, infrastructure and diversity, it remains significantly unequal. History

has shown that migration to Johannesburg is important, however social divides and stigmatisation of foreign nationals has led to xenophobic uprisings against cross-border migrants. Despite this, the city offers infrastructure, education, healthcare and other basic services to visitors that may far exceed those at their origins. In the case study film, *Africa Shafted* (2011), these social divides and inequalities between foreign nationals are revealed within the lifts of the building. The message that comes across is an underlying fear of the other. I think that the exchange between immigrants and inhabitants in Johannesburg contribute to its ever-changing spatial identity. This contributes to the elusiveness in defining Johannesburg's identity in a post-apartheid South Africa which may form part of this fear instilled by the other. Post-apartheid black people are starting to form their own identity within this city, and there is a fear that cross border immigrants will take this away.

3.4 Regeneration: Thomas Coggin, Dirk Bahmann and Jason Frenkel

Johannesburg-based lawyer and academic Thomas Coggin's research explains how the disinvestment in the city of Johannesburg coincided with the socio-political unrest in South Africa in 1994 and the moving in of a previously disadvantaged population became its infrastructure. (Asmal and Trangos, 2015) Regeneration is born out of trying to reclaim the inner city. It is a welcome idea because parts of the city are mistrusted due to perceived lack of safety. Regeneration is also criticised because it is perceived as a process for the middle class to exclude the poor. Regeneration is a contradictory notion without a solution. On the one hand, an area is gentrified, improved towards a middle class ideal. Yet on the other hand, regeneration pushes out the existing demographic. This is the conundrum that architects and planners are faced with.

Maboneng Precinct in Jeppestown is an example of an area in the city of Johannesburg where gentrification has occurred and is still occurring. Architects, Dirk Bahmann and Jason Frenkel liken Maboneng Precinct in Jeppestown to SoHo in New York City. (Bahmann and Frenkel, 2012). Whilst SoHo grew from an organic process driven by emerging artists, Maboneng Precinct was driven by a property developer as well as established artists such as William Kentridge; the place is fabricated, similar to the synthesis of Melrose Arch and Montecasino. I compare this with Achille Mbembe's notion where he states that the architecture aims to produce inter-racial synthetic places that produce lifestyles adopted from European and American examples. I challenge whether this American example of regeneration is the right solution for a South African city.

In March 2015, protests against inner city evictions reflected the anger felt towards exclusion as well as the desire to participate in the meaningful making of place in the city. (Asmal and Trangos, 2015) In the case study film *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), gentrification is represented in Johannesburg through the character JJ in the film. Tensions form as JJ tries to achieve his goals and aspirations within the neighbourhood. Also, the contradictions of regeneration are represented in my film through the work of the main character and his colleague Jason Frenkel, where they have captured, through stop motion photographs, a number of people who originally used Fox Street in Maboneng Precinct as a through-fare during its early stages of regeneration in 2012. Whilst walking along the same street today, they observe the considerable changes to the demographic and urban fabric in this precinct. This leaves one wandering about what happened to the people that they originally captured on film in 2012.

4 Mise-En-Scene

In this chapter, I explore the readings of David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004), and explore what the aspects of mise-en-scene are. Then, I discuss some of the relevant overlaps that relate to place-making theories in architecture.

Mise-en-scene functions with narrative structure to drive the story arc forward. It functions to convey the overall message of the film. "The overall design of setting can shape how we understand story action" (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004, p.181). Within a narrative, the setting can become a character in the world of the story to shape the story action. The setting can convey the emotion of the character as a backdrop, as well as hint, through action, at what is going to happen next in the story. I consider that a setting represents a multi-sensory experience that a human being can perceive because they have experienced it in a real-life place.

Mise-en-scene design is developed from a script. I refer to the writings of Robert Mckee (Mckee, 1997) and Linda Seger (Seger, 2004) about scene design. This develops my interrogation about how narrative structure and mise-en-scene function together to embody a character in a place whilst driving the story forward. Furthermore, my interpretation is that this function works with both linear and non-linear narrative structures, as outlined in the writings of Syd Field (Field, 1982) and revealed through the main character in the linear fiction film *Berea* (2013), as well as outlined by Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush (Dancyger and Rush, 2002), and represented by the

characters and places in the two documentary films *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) and *Africa Shafted* (2011).

4.1 Mise-En-Scene and Place-Making

Space and volume in film are perceived through lived experience. My analysis is that lived experience relates to human-place connection theories in architecture. Without this knowledge of space and place in real life, one cannot perceive space in film.

Mise-en-scene is that which appears within the film frame. This includes the setting, the lighting, the costume and the behaviour of the figures. The mise-en-scene does not need to be realistic but does need to convey the overall message of the film. (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004, p.177). Through experimenting with film, Georges Melies, a French filmmaker learned that planning and staging is required for the camera, so, he built the first film studio in the early 1900's. He also sketched shots beforehand as well as designing sets and costumes so that he could control every aspect of the mise-en-scene in order to drive his narrative forward. This was the origin of *mise-en-scene* design.

My perception of this relates directly to Juhani Pallasmaa's quote "A building is nor an end to itself; it frames, articulates, restructures, gives significance, relates, separates and unites, facilitates and prohibits." (Holl, Pallasmaa, 1991, p.35). The same sense of control and setting occurs in place-making where a building is designed to house a human event or activity. The architecture is a setting for the narrative of real-life.

Cinema is involved with different sorts of space. The image on the screen is flat and displays a composition which is the screen space within a frame. This composition is two-dimensional and consists of the organisation of shapes, textures and patterns of light and dark. In most films the composition also represents a three-dimensional space in which action takes place. The *mise-en-scene* must give the audience cues to experience the three-dimensionality of the scene. (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004, p.208).

Depth cues, which are provided by lighting, setting, costume and staging allow one to experience space as one would in the real world. (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004, p.212). Bordwell and Thompson (2004) state that one develops an understanding of depth cues in a film composition

from experiencing space in the real world. This statement establishes that place-making theories, such as spatial memory, overlap real-life experience of space into the world of film space. Designers of *mise-en-scene* compositions have an instinctual knowledge of the human-place connection.

In addition to depth cues, *mise-en-scene* compositions include planes, movement in depth, perspective, colours and motifs. Planes are layers of space occupied by persons or objects and are represented by how close and how far they are in the foreground, middle ground and background. (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004, p.212). This is represented in the case study film, *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) through the migrant character Arouna, who is praying in the background, while his wife is preparing the children for school in the foreground. This double action within the frame shows the layers of this family's identity in their place.

The *mise-en-scene* design composition decisions are made so that the elements within the story space interact with one another to emphasise the narrative elements and direct one's attention through the areas of the screen space. Through this, I draw a parallel to the place-making strategies of Norberg-Schulz, which suggest that architecture has meaning only when it is experienced and when it provides the settings in which daily acts and rituals take place. So, the design of a meaningful place is based on the event or activity that is experienced within that place; a real-life narrative. This is an overlap that defines the narrative-spatial relationship between film and the theories of place-making.

4.2 Mise-En-Scene and the Narrative

Mise-en-scene designs are developed through screenplays which are the plans for films. In a linear script, scene design focuses on components that flesh out the beats of the story; turning points, setups/payoffs, emotional dynamics and choice. Robert Mckee states that "A scene is a story in miniature – an action through conflict in a unity or continuity of time and space that turns the value-charged condition of a character's life" (Mckee, 1997, p.233). There is no limit to a scene's length or the number of locations in a scene; they may be infinitesimal or contain one shot which expresses great change. A scene is unified around desire, action, conflict and change. In each scene a character pursues a desire related to the immediate time and place.

Linda Seger likens scene design to "…the building blocks of the story." (Seger, 1994, p.74). Through the use of images and dialogue, a great scene does the following things; advance the story, reveal the character, explore an idea or theme and build a visual image. A great scene will do more than one. A scene can accomplish many purposes all at the same time. For instance, the actions may reveal character, dialogue may advance the story, the background might show an image and all of these combined can explore the theme.

My exploration regarding the readings of Mckee and Seger is that each scene is set in space and time. Each scene heading begins with a location which is either exterior or interior as well as set in a specific time of day: the place and time opens the scene and creates the set for the action to take place. Embodiment of the character occurs in the place within each scene. Place frames the character throughout the script. Place sets the visual image where the character development occurs which establishes the human-place connection within the design of a narrative.

Furthermore, in analysing a linear narrative structure functioning with the *mise-en-scene*, I refer to the reading by Syd Field, who likens a screenplay to a blueprint or a plan for a film; it is a linear structure that outlines a story told with pictures (Field, 1982). Also, Dancyger and Rush (2002), state that the basic structure of a storyline is derived from Aristotle's notion that all dramas contain a beginning, a middle and an end and that these parts are in some proportion to one another. A three-act linear restorative screenplay is character-driven. A character-driven story devises plot points that not only feed into the action, but also articulate character development. (Dancyger and Rush, 2002). In my research, the case study film, *Berea* (2013), is an example of a short character driven linear restorative screenplay. Here, the main character, Mr Zuckerman drives the story forward. My observation shows how the place that he embodies is intrinsically linked to his character development which expresses the human-place connection with obvious clarity.

A non-linear narrative structure functions with the *mise-en-scene* in the same manner as it does for a linear narrative. "The first noticeable quality of the structure of the non-linear film is its elusiveness." (Dancyger and Rush, 2002, p.158) An organising principle of non-linear narrative structure is place and common thread. The tone of the story may be unpredictable and changing from scene to scene. Character conflicts revealed in each scene, as opposed to the whole narrative, is a structuring device of the non-linear narrative. The voice of the writer or director is actively present in the non-linear narrative. (Dancyger and Rush, 2002)

I've already established that the spatial identity of Johannesburg is difficult to define from the writings in Chapter 3. *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) is a non-linear film that captures some of the complexities of these spatial identities through the lives and goals of five characters in a place. The structure of this documentary film gathers multiple characters together in a place with a common thread. The common thread is the day-in-the-life-of, taking place chronologically on a Friday, linking five characters who deeply embody a place which is Jeppestown. In addition, each character is filmed by a different female director, resulting in a different active presence of voice in each section of the film. Through this case study film, I muse on how this mode of narrative structure successfully captures the diversity of the characters and the neighbourhood. This is shown by framing each character in a place which is an extension of that character's identity. This is a clear representation of the theories of place-making and the human-place connection as defined in the narrative structure and *mise-en-scene* of this film.

My short non-linear narrative film uses scene sequences and *mise-en-scene* to convey my interrogation about place-making in Johannesburg. The scene sequences set the action of the main character in places as he searches for answers to root himself in Johannesburg. The places that he embodies and moves through represent the different questions that he asks about finding place in Johannesburg. Each question is answered by representations of his art work during a sequence of scenes.

5 Analysis of Case Studies

5.1 *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) Directed by Shannon Walsh and Arya Lalloo

My first case study film is *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013) directed by Shannon Walsh and Arya Lalloo. This is a documentary film about Jeppestown, a neighbourhood in inner city Johannesburg. I analyse this film through the structures of a non-linear narrative in order to explore how it may capture the multiplicity of this neighbourhood. An organising principle of non-linear narrative structure is place and common thread. (Dancyger and Rush, 2002) In *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), there are five characters and not one main character, who gather together in a place, Jeppestown, and have a common thread, a-day-in-the-life on a Friday, as opposed to one main character following a dramatic arc in a linear journey. The tone of the story is unpredictable; changing from scene to scene. In *Jeppe on a Friday* (2013), five different female directors film each character, creating five different tones that are brought together. Specific places are embodied by each character, demonstrating the deep emotional human-place connections as theorised by

Norberg-Schulz (Wilken, 2013). The effects of regeneration and gentrification (Bahmann and Frenkel, 2012) are explored in this case study, through the character JJ, the property developer.

The *mise-en-scene* treatments of particular spaces in the film are informed by the characters in the city. The places are selected as representations of each character's identity revealing the multiplicities of readings concerning the spatial identity of the city of Johannesburg. Each character is intrinsically linked to the places that they occupy which works with the narrative structure to successfully show the complexities of Jeppestown. In order to explore the multiplicities of identities in this neighbourhood, I analyse the treatment of the *mise-en-scene* designs of the selected characters who are introduced in the beginning of the film as they go about their morning rituals. I have selected the introduction sequence of Robert, from the men's hostel, Vusi, the trolley pusher and JJ, the property developer.

Each *mise-en-scene* is designed so that each character is introduced through the embodiment of their place. Robert is followed by a hand-held camera, carrying a toothbrush and a cup, as he moves through the spaces that he inhabits. As he walks out of his neat bedroom, the basic amenities of the room are revealed; which are a single bed, a shared metal cupboard and some basic appliances. Whilst following Robert down a passage, many closed doors are revealed. The sounds of only men's voices and music can be heard through the doors. The place feels full and crowded. Robert picks up boiled water from an old tin kettle on a dirty stove in a shared kitchen facility occupied by two men in conversation. He then goes to the shared bathroom facility to brush his teeth. He returns to his room which is now occupied by many men. The room contains bunkbeds and a television set that is turned on but has a bad signal. Robert checks himself in a broken piece of mirror that is stored atop a metal bunkbed frame.

In making the decision to follow Robert with the hand-held camera, one gets a true sense of the place that he inhabits. The *mise-en-scene* that Robert embodies, establishes that this place is a shared facility for men only. It contains only basic amenities. It is crowded and noisy. There is a hint that amenities do not work; there may be no running water and no satellite facilities for television signal; therefore, poor technology. The treatment of this *mise-en-scene* design establishes Robert's identity. He lives in the men's hostel. He is neat. He is most likely single. He does not earn a lot of money.

After establishing Robert's character in the neighbourhood, the edit shifts to cut-aways of the buildings and activities in Jeppestown. This establishes the atmosphere and the identity of the place utilising the movement of pedestrians and vehicles in the locality. Street views are filmed with a stationary camera around the location. Many of the views show informal street vendors, exploring the theoretical concept of the gap-between in the introduction of this neighbourhood. The edit tempo is quick which adds to the busy vibrancy of the neighbourhood. One gets a first look at what Jeppestown feels like from street level. Accompanying vibrant music adds to the atmosphere of the place.

A moment of quietness juxtaposes the *mise-en-scene* of the fast pace of Jeppestown as Vusi is introduced. The *mise-en-scene* is designed to establish Vusi in a wide shot of a quiet Johannesburg suburb after the bustling views of Jeppestown. A combination of stationary camera and hand-held camera shots introduces Vusi on the street in a suburb pushing a trolley. He is working alone, sorting through plastic rubbish items. Vusi loads the items into organized compartments in his trolley. He works neatly and efficiently. To establish his solitude, Vusi does not talk. The only sound is made by the music that Vusi is listening to, coming from the portable radio that he carries with him. The other sounds in the neighbourhood are made by the dogs barking at Vusi as he works outside the high walls and security fences. The *mise-en-scene* design establishes Vusi's identity as one who is transient and nomadic. His place is the street. The dogs barking at him establishes him as a vagrant or a person to fear as he moves through the suburbs.

The *mise-en-scene* returns to the Jeppe Men's Hostel establishing the crowded gaps-between and utilised spaces by the men. The hand-held camera follows two men carrying bread to where Robert and some other men are waiting for breakfast. Robert sits on the edge of a bunk-bed with newspapers laid out on the floor in front of him. The men place the loaves of bread on top of the newspapers. An array of mugs are placed on the newspapers for the men's coffee.

Robert's breakfast *mise-en-scene* is juxtaposed in the edit with a wide shot of a quiet, peaceful, white, stark and modern open plan kitchen, where a young, man is sitting at a breakfast island, on his cell phone, by himself. In the foreground of this establishing shot is a sleek glass table containing a laptop. The design of the planes in this *mise-en-scene* suggests an abundance of being surrounded by luxury and the latest technology. The fixtures and fittings in the space are clean, modern and crisp. Luxurious amenities are fitted. The man talks to someone off-screen, asking whether "Gracious" is coming today. A woman answers off-screen. The off-screen

communication in this *mise-en-scene* design establishes this place as being large and spacious. It also establishes a couple who employ a domestic worker who is expected to clean their place today. The man's girlfriend is introduced as a reflection seen on the clean and shiny glass of a painting hanging on the wall; an ironic message demonstrating that the place is already clean and shiny. As the man works on his cell phone and tablet, he searches for a glass, asking his girlfriend off-screen about where the glasses are. He opens and closes the kitchen cupboards and drawers, searching for what he eventually finds. He fills the glass with clear running water under the kitchen tap, after adjusting the temperature to his liking.

The *mise-en-scene* design introduces the identity of JJ, the property developer, as a white, privileged, wealthy, young male. He seems arrogant and full-of-himself as he micro-manages his girlfriend off-screen, while he is multi-tasking on is laptop, his cell phone and tablet, while searching for a glass to drink water which is freely available to him at the temperature that he desires. The edit decision to juxtapose this *mise-en-scene* to Robert's breakfast scene is designed as a deliberate jarring contrast, establishing the disparity between the two identities setting off the multiplicities in the neighbourhood of Jeppestown. The identity of Vusi, set up in the *mise-en-scene*, contrasts both Robert and JJ further. Vusi does not have any basic amenities. This further reveals the complexities of identities in this neighbourhood.

5.2 *Africa Shafted* (2011) Directed by Ingrid Martens

My second case study is the analysis of the film *Africa Shafted* (2011) directed by Ingrid Martens, a documentary set inside Ponte City in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. This is a documentary about Ponte building which is the first port of call that migrants inhabit when they first arrive in the city of Johannesburg. It was shot over five years within the confines of the building's lifts. The camera frames the inhabitants as they are framed within the limited spaces of the lifts. Asmal's theory about the arrival city (Asmal and Trangos, 2015) is reflected in the character's dialogues; they converse about how the building contributes to their feelings of fear and alienation in Johannesburg as well as Ponte offering refuge to those who are seeking opportunity. Character conflicts revealed in each scene as opposed to the whole narrative is a structuring device of the non-linear narrative. (Dancyger and Rush, 2002) In the non-linear *Africa Shafted* (2011), the conflicts between the characters are revealed in each scene, framed by the confined lift that the director has chosen to be the confessional in the film.

Establishing shots of Johannesburg connect the viewer to the city from inside the iconic Ponte building. The lift becomes the *mise-en-scene* where the character's narratives unfold. The lift reveals the identities of the characters moving the story forward. The design of the lift as *mise-en-scene* in the narrative works through the opening and closing of the doors. Many characters of interest are introduced, representing people from all over Africa, including South Africa. As the lift doors open and close in the face of the camera, different people walk in and out, travelling to and from their floors, regaling their stories. The characters describe Ponte as the place of arrival in Johannesburg. It is described as a place that is easy to find, it is the tallest building, it accommodates foreigners, and Ponte is part of one family. These introductions establish the world of this place; Johannesburg seems like an upbeat point of arrival. Ponte in Johannesburg seems like a safe arrival haven.

The ascension and descension of the lift, develops movement in the design of the *mise-en-scene*. These design details of movement are reinforced through the extreme close-ups of people's feet moving from the inside of the lift to the adjoining floor, wide shots of people going in and out of the lift, as well as close-ups of the lift display panel showing the changing floor numbers. The narrative progresses through the design of the *mise-en-scene*. As the lift travels up and down, the characters reveal a more sinister narrative. This narrative refers to the fear of the other, a mistrust; xenophobia. This reveals the theories that Ponte, as a place of arrival in Johannesburg, can both serve the conflicting emotions of fear as well as safety under one roof. Xenophobic sentiment as well as crime levels in Johannesburg are revealed as the narrative progresses. The lift acts as a confessional through the closing of the doors in the *mise-en-scene*. The characters are forced to reveal their stories trapped behind the moving closed doors. The *mise-en-scene* design aids in the extraction of the character's feelings towards each other and their feelings about being in Johannesburg. This case study film reveals the confusing identity that Johannesburg instils in its local and foreign inhabitants. The dangers of xenophobic attacks as well as crime makes it difficult for people to find rootedness in this place.

5.3 *Berea* (2013) Directed by Vincent Moloi

Berea (2013), the short linear restorative film, directed by Vincent Moloi, is about an aging man, who inhabits an established, yet, changing neighbourhood in Berea, in inner city Johannesburg. He is alone. He tries to hold onto his past by having Shabbat dinner every Friday with a regular sex worker.

The *mise-en-scene* design opens with establishing shots of Berea as an inner-city neighbourhood. Cut-aways establish the demographic of the neighbourhood including the buildings as well as the people on the streets. The edit then cuts to the *mise-en-scene* of an interior of an apartment which is dark because the curtains are closed. The door to a shower is seen from an establishing wide shot, and the sound of running water is heard coming from the shower. A close-up of an aging man in the shower reveals the main character, Mr. Zuckerman. His emotions regarding his age are designed around the reflection that he sees in the bathroom mirror. The aging, old fashioned crockery that forms the props in the *mise-en-scene* establish that Mr. Zuckerman has been in this apartment for many years. His fear of the outer world is established when a knock on the door, frightens him, and, yet, it is only his weekly shopping delivery. This establishes that Mr. Zuckerman does not venture outside of his small inner apartment world.

Mr. Zuckerman's traditional Jewish beliefs are revealed through the *mise-en-scene* design showing the table-setting of his regular Friday dinner. A clue to his wife, who has most likely passed on, is revealed by the silver framed photographs on the mantelpiece. Mr. Zuckerman is expecting company for Friday dinner, a sex worker whom he pays to have dinner with. Through the arrival of an African immigrant sex worker, who has replaced his usual guest, Mr. Zuckerman is forced to accept the change that has happened in his neighbourhood. This is the inciting incident that sets the character on his journey towards a new world in this linear narrative.

The *mise-en-scene* design of the film is intrinsically linked to the narrative and the emotional state of the character. As he steps outside of his building for the first time, he is blinded by the sun and frightened by the noise. He is forced to venture out of his flat and finally accept the change in his neighbourhood. In the action sequences following the character through the streets of Berea, the gap-between, is experienced, where abandoned places are radically transformed from their original purpose to create meaningful new places made through the occupation of new people. Being forced out of his apartment, changes his world, and when he re-enters his apartment, he takes the initiative to open the curtains, allowing himself to accept the change in his neighbourhood as well as his life.

The spatial-emotional relationship between the character and his embodied places are prevalent in the designs of the narrative structure and the *mise-en-scene* in this short film. Each *mise-en-scene* is designed to reflect the emotional state of the character and his progression in the narrative. This

case study reveals the emotional-spatial link between place-making theories and the design of *mise-en-scene* and narrative.

6 Short Documentary Film

6.1 *Axis Johannesburg* (2018) Directed by Anita Szentesi

Axis Johannesburg (2018) is a short complementary poetic reflexive documentary film, which I have produced to accompany this research. According to Bill Nichols, a poetic documentary mode is one that explores alternative themes of knowledge rather than straightforward knowledge. It also represents reality in a series of fragments, subjective impressions, incoherent acts and loose associations. (Nichols, 2001) The reflexive documentary mode is one that explores issues of representation and the engagement of the filmmaker with the viewer. (Nichols, 2001) Further to Nichol's modes of documentary, Michael Rabiger divides the production of documentary films into Four Modalities. These are: 1. Record, Reveal and Preserve; 2. Persuade or Promote; 3. Analyse or Interrogate; 4. Express. (Rabiger, 2004). My film analyses my research question through the main character's artistic philosophy and artwork. It interrogates the human-place connection through the main character who wanders about locations in Johannesburg, searching for rootedness. It expresses these notions through the visual image which merges the artist, his artwork and the place he embodies within the sequences that drive the narrative forward.

Axis Johannesburg (2018) features an architect and artist whose artistic philosophy is to find a sense of belonging in Johannesburg. Living in inner-city Johannesburg has aided him in the formation of his identity. His artwork is a result of his questioning and groping in the dark as he tries to belong to this difficult place that is Johannesburg. For this reason, I collaborate with him to represent and explore my research question. I translate his search for place and identity through the designs of the *mise-en-scenes* in my film. I structure the sequences of scenes in selected locations. The sequences represent questions that the artist has asked regarding his identity and search for rootedness in Johannesburg. In each sequence, the question he has asked is answered through the representation of the artwork that he has produced. The artwork is overlaid into the scenes to become fragments of the artist's thoughts as he wanders and searches through Johannesburg. The artist had a great amount of input into the selection of the locations. His concern was that the authenticity of his original search for place be captured through the filmic lens. This consideration evidenced the importance of Norberg-Schulz's human-place connection theories.

The narrative structure of my film has a beginning, a middle and an end, but the film is non-linear. The organising principles of the narrative structure of this film are the relevant locations selected by the artist and I, and the common thread is the artist and his artwork that move together through the locations. The tone of the story changes from scene to scene, yet, there is a question-and-answer rhythm to the sequences. The artworks represent the answers to the questions within the locations in the *mise-en-scene* compositions. I use various cameras to capture the artist's action and movement as he embodies the places that relate to his art work. The cameras are used as tools to observe the artist as well as represent the artist's point of view. My voice is actively present in the film. I represent the artwork as thoughts that appear in the artist's head as he is inspired by the places that he wanders through. I do this to show the artist's philosophy from his point of view, rather than showcase his art at an exhibition. This is intentionally crafted to allow the audience to get inside the artist's head.

I embody the character and the artwork in the *mise-en-scene* compositions. There is no dialogue or explanation as to what he is doing. The only time his voice is heard is through the real-time labour of his work, as he pushes his invention up the ramps of the basement parking lot. I chose to focus on the character and his connection to the selected places through the visual image, rather than interview for an explanation of his philosophy. I decided that the visual image as well as the action and sound within the *mise-en-scene* deliver my research question more coherently through the filmic lens. The soundtrack design is diegetic and contains no additional music to distract from the authenticity of the sequences. Sound enhancements are amplified in certain scenes to drive the visual image and the narrative forward. An example of this, is in the abandoned mine shaft scene, where I use the sounds of digging and sand being shovelled to represent a forgotten history inside of an abandoned artefact on the outskirts of Johannesburg.

The edit style and pace are varied in the film. There are meditative moments in the contemplative walk and repose in the field in the opening sequence, whilst the close-up of the artwork in the opening title is hypnotic. The quiet meditation continues as the artist draws the skyline of Johannesburg. This is quite suddenly juxtaposed against the next sequence. The sequence has a fast-pace and focuses on the artist in his studio as he makes and creates a series of artworks which are crafted from metal. The studio space, the making, the machinery to make the work and the artwork combine to create a heavy industrial visual which I decided to render as a heavily contrasted black and white sequence. The colour treatment in this sequence also represents the notion of hard work and black and white line drawings from the discipline of

architecture. The repetitive visuals and sounds enhance the notion of hard-work-over-time and make the viewing slightly uncomfortable. This is once again juxtaposed by the drone shot which takes a slow ascent over Maboneng. The black and white slowly fades into colour with the movement of the drone as the film continues its journey into the world of Johannesburg through the artist's mind.

7. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the narrative-spatial relationship between the construction of *mise-en-scene* and narrative in film form and the architectural considerations of place-making, to offer conceptual insights into how the idea of the human-place connection could be explored in the reading of selected film texts about Johannesburg. I established place-making theories in architecture by Christian Norberg-Schulz (Wilken, 2013) and Juhani Pallasmaa (Holl and Pallasmaa, 1991) in Chapter 2 which I represented through the selection of my main character for my film. My argument in Chapter 2 explored the human-place connection as a design tool for architects. I also mused upon the notion that this strategy is evident in the design consideration of *mise-en-scene* compositions. Early on in the process, I presented the conceptual idea of my film to my main character, which included places that I imagined could represent the philosophy behind his artwork. He, however, suggested other specific locations that he believed were better representations of his philosophy because of the authenticity and relevance that these places held for him and his artwork. His artwork represents his search for rootedness in Johannesburg, therefore, the locations in the film needed to offer a genuine depth of meaning representing this search. This collaboration concretised my argument regarding place-making theories and my reason for selecting him as the main character for my film.

I established that place-making theories exist in both the design of buildings and *mise-en-scene* compositions, and then argued that it is difficult to identify with and be in Johannesburg in Chapter 3. I explored Johannesburg's complexities and multiplicities through the readings of Lindsay Bremner (Bremner, 2010), Zahira Asmal (Asmal and Trangos, 2015), Achille Mbembe (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004), Thomas Coggin (Asmal and Trangos, 2015), Dirk Bahmann and Jason Frenkel (Bahmann and Frenkel, 2012). I represented the difficultness of Johannesburg in the sequence showing Dirk Bahmann and Jason Frenkel walking through Maboneng Precinct in my film. From the investigation in their research report from 2012, they produced an exhibition which included a series of stop-frame films that followed inhabitants of the Maboneng Precinct

just before the dawn of the major regeneration of the area. I designed this sequence as a reflection between the past and the present and a homage to the characters from Bahmann and Frenkel's exhibition. Whilst Bahmann and Frenkel walk and reflect the changes in the precinct, 'ghosts' from their research in 2012 appear and disappear. The two men seem out-of-place in the current-day precinct, while the representations of the 'ghosts' further emphasise the multiplicity, complexity and difficultness of being in Johannesburg.

In Chapter 4, I analysed the aspects of *mise-en-scene* through the readings of David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004) and identified links to place-making theories. In analysing the narrative structures of linear narrative through the readings of Syd Field (Field, 1982) and Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush (Dancyger and Rush, 2002) and non-linear narrative through the readings of Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush (Dancyger and Rush, 2002), I explored how the mise-en-scene and narrative structures function together to root a character in a place within the world of the story In my narrative structure, I gave equivalent importance to my main character, the places that he embodied and his artworks. The idea was to reveal the distinctiveness of each place through the embodiment of the character in that place, as well as through the artwork produced from being inspired by that place. My cinematography choices were born from my narrative structure. I used different cameras to capture the place as a character, the main character embodying the place and the place as seen through the character's point of view. Each of these angles deepened and enhanced the relevance of the character as he wandered through the places inside the world of the story. I depicted this notion in the night sequence in central Johannesburg in my film where the main character walks through the empty city square. The place is initially established using a wide shot. The main character claims the place by embodying it as he walks towards the camera. A hard cut to the GoPro camera attached to the main character gets the viewer inside the main character's head. He looks up at the buildings flanking the square and glimpses his future artworks as flickering stars in the sky.

My analysis of the case study films in Chapter 5 explored sequences and scenes focusing on my notion about how the *mise-en-scene* compositions are designed together with the narrative structure to show the human-place connection in the world of the story. Through the analysis, I revealed that this connection establishes and emphasises the identity of the characters in the story. I revealed the complexity of Johannesburg, through the many conflicting identities in one place. I explored the emotional connection to place where the *mise-en-scene* is designed to represent the emotion of the main character in the world of the story. The black and white *mise-*

en-scene studio sequence in my film represents the place behind the façade of the artwork as well as establishing, for the first time, the character as an artist or a maker. This place represents the inner world of the artist. It represents his making through an incomprehensible perception of time and repetitive hard work using a somewhat uncomfortable pace. The strong black and white contrast hints at his architectural background, referring to architectural sketch and line drawings, as well as enhancing the industrial atmosphere of making in this inner world.

In Chapter 6, I revealed that the design of *mise-en-scene* in my film, *Axis Johannesburg* (2018), was emphasised by my decision to focus on the visual image rather than dialogue or interview. The film is a visual treatment of the character, the places he moves through, and his artwork inspired by the places that he embodies. The need to create meaningful *mise-en-scene* compositions was an important decision made by myself and the main character. The selected locations in the film, were accepted by the main character because they were an authentic representation of his original real-life search for the content for his artwork. Our discussion regarding the selection of these appropriate locations enabled me to create meaningful and appropriate *mise-en-scene* designs. This collaboration allowed me to represent the human-place connection and the mobilisation of the spirit of place in my film. The relevance of the representation of place was central to the cooperation of the main character and resulted in the making of my film.

8. List of References

Asmal, Z. and Trangos, G. (2015). *Movement Johannesburg.* Cape Town: Tandym Print.

Bahmann, D. and Frenkel, J. (2012). *Renegotiating Space: Arts on Main, 44 Stanley + Johannesburg.* Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand School of Planning and Architecture. Available from: http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/handle/10539/12369 [Accessed 14 February 2017].

Bremner, L. (2010). *Writing the City into Being: Essays on Johannesburg 1998-2008*. Johannesburg: Fourthwall Books.
Dancyger, K. and Rush, J. (2002). *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules.* Boston: Focal Press.

Field, S. (1982). *The Foundations of Screenwriting.* New York: Publishing Co.

Holl S. and Pallasmaa J. (1991). *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture.* Tokyo: A+U Publishing.

Mbembe, A. and Nuttal, S. (eds) (2004) *Public Culture Volume* 44.

Mckee, R. (1997). *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting.* New York: Regan Books.

Nichols, B (2001). *Introduction to Documentary.* Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Norberg-Schulz, C. (1979). *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture.* New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc.

Rabiger, M. (2004). *Directing the Documentary.* Oxford: Elsevier Inc.

Seger L. (1994). *Making a Good Script Great.* New York: Samuel French Trade.

Wilken, R. (2013). *The Critical Reception of Christian Norberg-Schulz's Writings on Heidegger and Place. Architectural Theory Review.* Dec2013, Vol. 18 Issue 3, p340-355

Film List:

Africa Shafted (2011), Directed by Ingrid Martens [Film]. Johannesburg, South Africa: I'm Original.

Berea (2013), Directed by Vincent Moloi [Film]. Johannesburg, South Africa: Goethe Institute.

Jeppe on a Friday (2013), Directed by Shannon Walsh and Arya Lalloo [Film]. Montreal, Canada: Parabola Films.