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An exploration of theatre as activism as an anti-homophobia intervention amongst Zimbabweans living in South Africa : a practice led research project of The Trial of the Senior Citizen.

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2011-05-31
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/9970

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APPENDIX C. ACTOR'S REFLECTIONS

Reflections on playing the senior citizen

One never really thinks about the intricacies of a person unless they step a little into his or her shoes. I got a chance to do just that when I was asked to portray the Senior Citizen in the play *Trial of the Senior Citizen*.

With playing the character came(sic) a lot of growth both in my performance ability and as a person. I also realized that when it came to my knowledge of the state of the true state of affairs in my country of origin, I knew very little. This realization I owe to the research I did in order to bring a semblance of authenticity to the character at hand.

Youtube.com was a very good source of information and it is there that I observed the way that my Senior Citizen gets edgy to the point of being "cocky" when interviewed about choices he has made which have brought a whole nation to its knees.

The role opened me up to a lot of introspection on why I have spent most of my life with a chip on my shoulder about people of a dominant tribe in my country. The reason came out loud, simple and clear. It was because I did not understand them enough. Do not get me wrong, I have friends of all races and tribes; I just had not gotten rid of the deep seated anger of losing loved ones to genocide. I did not understand enough about my country's history to be angry about the past, and yet it has gnawed away at my heart all these years.

If there is one thing I struggle justifying, it is the fact that I am able to be objective when in character, but my conscience always beats me up afterwards. I wonder what it is like for him, who gets to spend time with himself 24/7?(sic) Playing this role made me realize at how easy, when one has the power to do anything they please, it is for them to impulsively act from a place of anger and ignorance. In a way we all are guilty of that. You and I on a small scale and the Senior Citizen on a larger one. You and I do not have

the means to deal with our insecurities in a way that destroys a whole people yet he does.

I am a gay man that comes from a background of ill empowerment and facelessness due to fears and self worthlessness that came from the powers that be in my country. I had no voice because I was gay. I had to live a sickeningly pretentious life because there was no room for me in society. That is not the case now as I am out of that situation and I know and accept myself as a man first of all, then as a gay man. There are a lot of people in my country that will never get that chance OR treatment for HIV/ AIDS because of a sexuality they did not choose.(sic)
Is it because the Senior Citizen is clueless when it comes to issues of sexuality or is it to do with a deep seated hatred? Only he can answer that question.

The questions that keep resounding in my head are:

-Is there really healing available for the people that the Senior Citizen has managed to destroy through his uninformed rage?
- Is there true healing for those left behind after thousands of their relatives were murdered in cold blood?
-Is he really going to sit in the “Accused’s chair one day to answer all the questions we have sought answers to?