

Another View:
an analysis of embodied interactions and
performative arts-based practices at
Driekopseiland.

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A close-up of a section of the engravings.

PHOTOGRAPH: Alex Knight.

ABSTRACT

At the very centre of the map of South Africa, just outside Kimberley in the Northern Cape, is a place now known as Driekopseiland. This rock art site is comprised of more than three and a half thousand images that have been pecked or engraved into the rock that forms the bed of the Riet River.

Research into the site has spanned hundreds of years, but has frequently focused attention on who the engravings were made by, as a result of their unusual style. Traditional archaeological methods are considered, detailed and rigorous, but they also have to be focused on answering certain questions and throughout the history of research of this site, these questions have frequently been limited to who created the engravings. After being introduced to the site by archaeologist Professor David Morris, I have extended Morris' call for a new interpretation, or a new way to view the site, by drawing on techniques from arts-based disciplines to suggest another way of interacting with the site for researchers and visitors.

As a student of Heritage Studies I explore how this site constitutes a South African heritage site and what implications this has for the way it is studied, protected and shared with the public. Following this, I argue that specific arts-based approaches offer another way to view heritage sites as experiential and embodied, and that this approach can deepen and enrich the visitor experience. And further, that particularly in a case like Driekopseiland, where aspects of the site's origin are still inconclusive from an archaeological point of view, arts-based approaches that place an emphasis on personal process, have the potential to open the site up to new possibilities of understanding for researchers and visitors.

I define an arts-based, embodied engagement as one that places an emphasis on how researchers interact with the site on a physical level and how this affects what they see, hear and learn. In this research report I investigate how researchers' physical interactions with heritage sites such as the rock art at Driekopseiland contribute to our understanding of it. Through my analysis of the interactions conducted by me and three other arts practitioners during my fieldwork, I illustrate the insights gained through an approach that makes use of techniques from theatre, visual arts and film. This research report considers how arts-based practices that place an emphasis on processes of interaction and embodiment at the site can help engender a sense of connection with and responsibility for the site, which may in turn impact how we experience other heritage sites in South Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

My first visit to the site of Driekopseiland was on a Friday afternoon in May 2016. I was with a group of students from the Wits History of Art department, as well as two staff members, and we had come to the site to meet and talk to Professor David Morris about it.

It was very hot and very dry in Kimberley. We met David Morris on the edge of a mielie field and he led us, as a group, through the dry grass to a place on the high river bank that overlooks the riverbed. Two vervet monkeys scattered as we approached the edge. I had no idea what I was about to see, I had in fact never even heard of the site. Looking down towards the water course, the shaded rocks and the weir, I found myself wondering about water snakes suddenly. I was probably considering finding some way to swim in the pool below the weir and going through all the reasons in my head why that might not be possible. But when, shortly afterwards, Professor Morris started telling us his theories on this extraordinary site, and how most of them were directly linked to the idea of a water snake myth and the rituals and beliefs related to that, I felt a shiver down my spine. How had that snake swum into my thoughts? And why was it there?



My first view of the site on 6 May 2016 from the top of the steep embankment overlooking the bed of the Riet River. The exposures where the engravings appear can clearly be seen as large, flat, blue-grey rocks. The weir, with river water rushing over it, is to the right.

PHOTOGRAPH: Kiyara Ananmalay

After offering us this macro-view of the space, Morris led us down to the riverbed itself and over the smooth rocks to a spot in the shade. “You’ll start to see them,” he said, “when you know what to look for”. I don’t think any of us had quite realised that we were already *on* the engravings, but as we looked down suddenly the rock beneath our feet seemed to change, to shift, to move, and rising out of the rock we could make out patterns, lines and shapes, handmade engravings that seemed to form before our very eyes and then start to spread. As we became accustomed to the shapes we were looking for, they seemed to multiply; more and more would become clear to us and would lead us off in different directions. There were so many of them; each new shape would lead from one to the next and the next. Morris said we could take our shoes off, and then we all made off in different directions, connecting through the soles of our feet to something which felt impossible to comprehend.



One small section of engravings.

PHOTOGRAPH: Alex Knight

And Morris told us a story - a story about the day he first saw ‘the snake’. After considering his theory on the connection of the site with rituals relating to the water snake (Morris, 2002: 154) for some time; he recalled how he was crossing the weir at the top of the site one day, when he looked back along the river bed over the two ‘exposures’ of rock on which the engravings appear and the site seemed to him like the back of a great patterned snake rising out of and then sinking back down into the earth (Morris, pers comm, 2016).

This was what really sparked my interest in this site, and it became the moment that framed what my research on the site would be about. My undergraduate studies were in Theatre and Performance and since then I have worked in the theatre industry for many years. Embarking on a degree in Heritage Studies I was looking for ways to bring theatre techniques into dialogue with ideas around how to understand and engage with heritage.

Listening to Morris' story I was struck by the thought that with a background in theatre (particularly directing) that affects the way I see places that have links to performance or ritual, I too would quickly have realised that the site itself resembled a snake. This led me to consider whether this particular site was a space where the disciplines of theatre and heritage could work together to develop research. I felt that bringing in other arts-based skills or ways of interacting with place would enrich and inform a scientific reading of sites like this one. The more I thought about it, the more convinced I became that there was an opportunity at this site, where the narrative or 'story' was so inconclusive (Morris, pers comm, 2016), to employ techniques from other disciplines and see where an overlap might reveal new knowledge or ways of understanding and experiencing the site.



A rock engraving on display at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, July 2017. Though it has been placed in a glass case and labelled in two languages, this method of display is very limited in its capacity to communicate information and establish connections for the viewer in terms of heritage. PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy

AIM & RATIONALE

The aim of this research report is to analyse how researchers and visitors physically interact with heritage sites such as Driekopseiland, and investigate how this contributes to their understanding of it. My intention is to bring embodied arts practices into dialogue with this heritage site through my research and fieldwork, and see what insights this reveals.

The size of the site and the sheer volume of engravings necessitates a journey through it in order to view them. This is a far more engaged physical interaction than one would expect from a rock painting site, where images can often be viewed standing in one place, at a slight distance. In light of this, my aim is to investigate possible other strategies for interaction with this heritage site that are drawn from arts disciplines, by examining different ways in which researchers can potentially understand and construct knowledge. And in so doing offering an additional set of research tools to augment other scientific approaches, such as archaeology, at the site.

This work is not a critique of archaeology but takes as its starting point the idea that the interaction of archaeologists with the spaces they study is just one way of producing knowledge around them. And that the methodologies of archaeology are frequently concerned with the researcher as a neutral, static collector and analyser of data whose interaction with the site is on a microscopic level (Morris, pers comm, 2016). I am arguing for an involvement with the site that sees the researcher as embodied, engaging physically with the site on a macro level. This type of interaction engages with the site as it is today, with all of its unanswered questions and using as many different disciplines as possible. I argue that an arts-based approach that emphasises participation and open-ness might offer a new way of looking at heritage sites as a whole, and the way visitors are invited to interact with them.

As a student of Heritage Studies I am conscious of how difficult it is to settle on a definition of what constitutes heritage (Shepherd, 2008: 2) and I am aware of the current move within the discipline to find ways to engage with objects of heritage that go beyond a summary on a text panel or a label in a selected language or languages that conclusively categorise what is being displayed, as in the image on the previous page; of a rock engraving specimen in a museum case. This is an example of a prescriptive, de-contextualised way of displaying a heritage artefact that does not encourage interaction, involvement or deep consideration on the part of the viewer. The site of Driekopseiland, with its lack of a definitive storyline (Morris, pers comm, 2016), but its profusion of inscriptions offers us the opportunity to consider another way to view heritage entirely.

METHODOLOGY

Following the aim of this report, I took an exploratory approach to the fieldwork. Having visited the site for the first time in May 2016 with the Wits History of Art department, my fieldwork took place in March 2017. For this second visit I planned a series of interactions and interview questions and invited three colleagues in the fields of theatre, film and visual art to accompany me during my fieldwork. I also arranged to interview Professor David Morris at the site once again. Over the course of four days we visited the site, spending time there, interacting with it in a variety of ways, borrowing artistic methods from our various disciplines and using these as ways to engage with the site.



Exploring the site during my fieldwork in 2017. From left to right: Blatcher sketches the engravings, Knight photographs them and in the distance, Halligey begins a physical improvisation, lying on the rocks.

PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy

For the purposes of this research report I define an arts-based interaction with the site as one that places an emphasis on an embodied engagement with it and considers how people interact with the site on a physical level and how this affects what they see, hear and learn. I define an embodied interaction as one that focuses on the experiential, sensory aspects of the process of discovery, taking into account that the engagement takes place over a period of time, and is mediated by the response of the human body to the objects under investigation.

The approaches I used all fall under a broad category of visual and performing arts, and include fine arts practices such as sketching, theatre-based techniques such as physical improvisation, as well as creating two short films. I also devoted a great deal of time to discussing these interactions with my colleagues and to self-reflection. These reflections and discussions were captured in interviews and field notes. This process of unpacking what we had experienced at the site was a major part of the research for me, and I go into greater detail on this in chapter three.

My argument is that an arts-based perspective offers another way to view heritage sites which is experiential, embodied and which opens up new possibilities for visitors and researchers in terms of their engagement with the site, and the insights they gain from this. This research report considers how bringing an arts-based approach to bear on a heritage site like this one can deepen and enrich a scientific reading and create a dialogue between disciplines that visitors with no formal training in either field can actively engage with. In the context of discussions around the definition and relevance of heritage (Shepherd, 2008: 2) as well as how best to communicate it to a broader audience, the insights gained through this research offer new approaches for engagement with heritage sites which place an emphasis on individual process. Understanding the importance of a focus on process when considering the site is something that Morris points to in his thesis *Driekopseiland and the 'rain's magic power'* (2002) where he refers to the site as having been a place where “processes constituted a making and remaking of individual and collective histories” (Morris, 2002: iii). My research considers how these processes of making and remaking histories still continue at this heritage site, and how they can be enriched and enlivened by drawing on arts-based techniques.

In illustrating this argument, this research report begins by locating the site within the country and with an analysis of the idea of heritage as it pertains to South Africa in 2017. It examines how this relates to the site of Driekopseiland, and in particular to the inconsistencies in how the site has been protected over the years (Morris, 2002: 273). I argue that the paradoxical nature of the concept of heritage itself, is reflected in the way Driekopseiland has been viewed, understood and protected by the public and by private stakeholders. While the engravings represent activities undertaken deep in the past, the landscape that surrounds them, the legislation that protects them and the attitudes of the people that view and study them have changed over the centuries. This chapter considers these factors and reads them and the site in terms of heritage studies.

In the next chapter, I outline the theories that informed my arts-based interaction with the site and why these were important considerations for me. I draw on the work of theatre practitioners from South Africa and elsewhere in the world, in order to find the points where their ways of working link

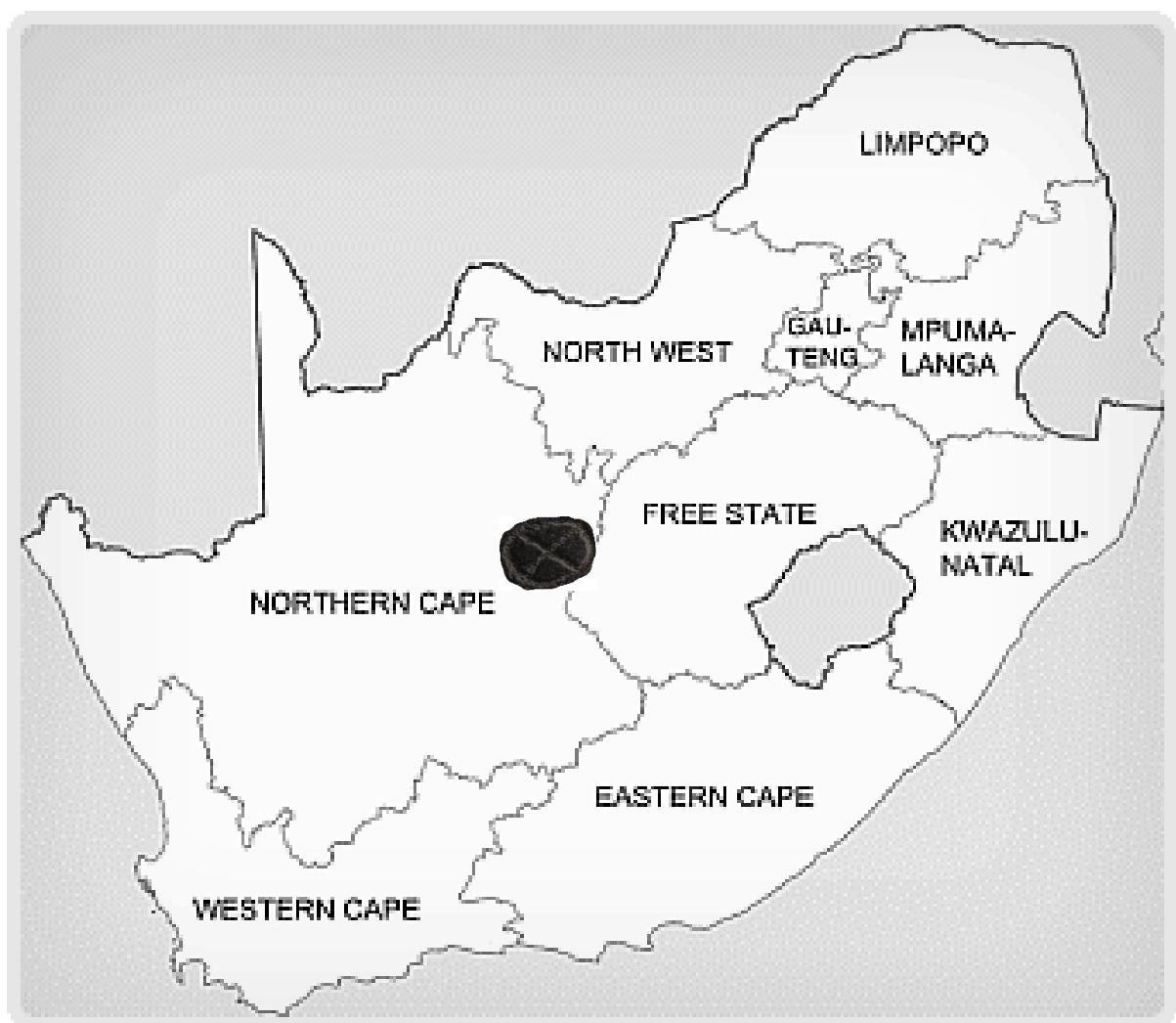
to an understanding of the past gained through embodiment and process as well as presence at a particular site (Taylor 2003: 20). My methodology, in terms of the exploratory interactions we conducted, was informed by the theoretical research I had done and drew on ideas of improvisation (Fleishman, 2012: 49) and embodiment (Taylor 2003: 20), while contributing to Shepherd's call to find new ways to consider heritage (Shepherd, 2008: 2) and to Morris' observation that the site is open to new interpretations (Morris, 2002: iii). With these concerns in mind I planned my trip to Driekopseiland in order to investigate the possibilities offered by an arts-based interaction. My fieldwork at the site took place with fellow theatre practitioner Alex Halligey, as well as filmmaker Alex Knight and designer and illustrator Thomas Blatcher. The exploratory interactions we conducted, which included sketching, filming, improvisatory exercises and interviews, as well as my findings during this time are detailed in the third chapter of this report.

Through these interactions we were able to consider the site as a whole, and to be aware of its responsiveness to the surrounding environment, and our impact on it as researchers. We discovered that an emphasis on individual process offered insights into how the site operated within the environment, as well as allowing us to analyse the unfolding of our own experiences of understanding at the site.

EXPOSURES

Driekopseiland – the site within the landscape

The site of Driekopseiland is nestled in a riverbed at the very centre of the map of South Africa, just outside Kimberley in the Northern Cape. This rock art site is comprised of more than three and a half thousand engraved images; more than 90% of which are geometric patterns such as circles, grids, crosses, starbursts and snake shapes, as well as some human and animal figures.



Driekopseiland's position on the map of South Africa marked with one of the engraving's frequently repeated symbols.

DESIGN: Frances Slabolepszy

These pictographs have been etched into rock known as glacial pavement, which was part of the South Pole millions of years ago (McCarthy & Rubidge, 2005: 196) and which now forms the bed of the Riet River. For this reason, the engravings are concealed and revealed with the river's ebb and flow. The rise and fall of sunlight, like water, also plays a role in the viewing of the site. Depending on the time of day, the images can appear to the observer quite subtly or with greater definition and clarity.

The quantity of engraved images suggests the site was a landmark of great significance in the past. But the original purpose of the site is still not known definitively. Although there is written evidence of Driekopseiland having been a place of research for more than a hundred years (Stow 1905; Wilman 1933; Battiss 1948; Van Riet Lowe 1952; Slack 1962; Butzer et al. 1979; Fock & Fock 1989; Morris 1990; Lewis-Williams & Blundell 1998) researchers are still unable to definitively say who made the engravings, when, how or why the engravings were made, although there have been many theories put forward over the years.



A portion of the engravings at Driekopseiland.

PHOTOGRAPH: Alex Knight

In this chapter I give a detailed description of this heritage site. I begin with an analysis of the ideas that have traditionally defined heritage and how these perspectives relate to the site. I then consider, drawing on the ideas of various theorists, how the concept of heritage has shifted and developed in recent years. For me, Driekopseiland provides the platform for an interaction with heritage that reflects current trends in the discipline. I suggest that the fact that the site does not fit neatly into a category either of tangible or intangible heritage reflects the complex and paradoxical nature of heritage itself, and that this alternative way to interact with the site is in keeping with current concerns within heritage studies about how heritage produces meaning for the public and how it should be communicated and shared.

This chapter also serves to locate the site, physically and historically, in order to further contextualise the relevance of the arts-based response to the site that I argue for. I describe the landscape that surrounds it, as well as providing a summary of the challenges that have accompanied its official demarcation and protection over the course of the last century.

Throughout the development of my research I had to keep in mind the uniqueness of the site – in terms of landscape, content and accessibility to the public – as well as the specific but also shifting guidelines of a heritage perspective, and how these elements weave together in a complex way at Driekopseiland. This chapter sheds light on this process and sets the scene for the interactions at the site that I conducted during my fieldwork.

HERITAGE

The concept of heritage is an ambiguous one, it is the kind of concept that seems to always be more than one thing at a time. This is partly because it is required to be constantly responsive to both the present and the past. It is also often forced to fulfil a role of social cohesion or reconciliation (Shepherd, 2008: 2). The term ‘heritage’ is often used as a catch-all that is understood as answering to two very different timeframes – then and now.

Nick Shepherd, Associate Professor at the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town, highlights the duality of heritage when he defines it in *New South African Keywords* (2008). Shepherd’s research fields, which include Postcolonial Archaeology, Public Archaeology, Indigenous Archaeology and Heritage Studies, make his input very relevant for my project. For Shepherd “heritage hovers uneasily between individual and collective conceptions of history” (Shepherd, 2008: 2). This is further complicated in a South African context where heritage is frequently called upon for its potential as a source of healing, affirmation, inclusivity and reconciliation. Shepherd refers to heritage as being: “*of the past in the present*” (Shepherd 2008: 1, emphasis in the original).

Sabine Marschall, Associate Professor in Cultural and Heritage Tourism at the University of KwaZulu-Natal echoes Shepherd in her description of heritage as: “a malleable, ambiguous concept, full of paradoxes” (Marschall, 2010:1). In her book *Landscape of Memory* (2010), focussing specifically on the monuments of the post-apartheid era, Marschall highlights the dichotomous role of heritage at these sites.

Shepherd goes on to question whether heritage acts as “a surfacing or imagining of the past in the present?” Or whether it operates “in the nature of a projection, from the standpoint of the present, of an idealized past?” (Shepherd 2008: 1) This idea of a ‘surfacing’ of the past takes on a very material quality at Driekopseiland where it is the surfaces of the rocks that bear the traces of the past. The rock itself, like the back of a great whale, as Walter Battiss put it (cited in Morris, 2002: 154) or the body of a huge snake (Morris, pers comm, 2016) seems to be rising up from under the ground, revealing these pasts at intervals in the bed of the river.

Drawing on these ideas and understanding them through my own perspective as a theatre practitioner, the idea of heritage is intrinsically linked to that of storytelling. The term heritage suggests that that which is inherited includes not only the historical object or site, but all the accumulated stories, interpretations and meanings that accompany it. For the purposes of this research, heritage refers to a framing of the past through the lens of the present in order to understand and connect with it, from a current context. It stands apart from history but still includes it, while being responsive to current agendas, intentions and concerns. And it indicates that an understanding of sites or objects from the past includes the stories we tell about them in the present, while acknowledging that their context is now distinct from the one in which they emerged. The stories that make up what we understand as the heritage of an object or a site can also be told in multiple ways.

Tangible and Intangible Heritage

It is the evidence of human interaction with the landscape on such a prolific scale that makes this site so compelling, and this is also why it seems to epitomise the traditional idea of material heritage, as something significant which is passed down from one generation to another. This understanding of heritage takes it as a marker, a symbol that stands for a sense of ownership or identity – and the site fits this description. The engravings seem to fulfil the requirements of a literal definition of what constitutes heritage: that which is inherited. Referred to by British geologist and ethnologist George Stow in the 1870s as “ancient title-deeds” (cited in Morris, 2002: 59) there are echoes here of ‘official’ notions of inheritance.

But at the same time, the lack of a definitive narrative in terms of by whom, when, why and how the engravings were created (Morris, pers comm, 2016), and the very strong sense that a huge portion of the site's meaning and purpose could only have been understood when it was inhabited by the people who designed it, shifts this concrete evidence of what remains of the human story in the landscape into the realm of intangible heritage.

In her article 'Intangible Heritage as Meta-cultural Production' (2004), performance studies theorist and museum professional Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett details the definitions of tangible and intangible heritage as provided by UNESCO. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett acknowledges the many decades it took to find working definitions for these ideas, and positions tangible heritage as referring to "a monument, group of buildings or site of historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological, or anthropological value" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 52). Intangible heritage, on the other hand, refers to all the ephemeral aspects of heritage that are passed down through generations (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 54). "These creations are transmitted orally or by gesture, and are modified over a period of time through a process of collective recreation" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 54). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett refers to the fact that over the years the definition of intangible heritage has shifted in order to include and protect the makers of intangible heritage, the "masters" as she calls them, as well as the "masterpieces" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 53). She also defines this type of heritage as being 'alive' as it is only through being expressed that it can be shared (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 53). There is a connection here with Diana Taylor's ideas of repertoire from a performance studies perspective (Taylor 2003: 20), which I will be discussing in more detail in the next chapter.

Driekopseiland then, is a prime example of a place that straddles these two categories. A lasting, permanent fixture in the landscape with a concrete presence, it seems to fit the definition of tangible heritage. Yet it can also be read as an artefact of intangible heritage. Driekopseiland is a place where, because of its placement within the landscape (Morris, 2004: 24), its proximity to a water source and the sense of collective making suggested by the quantity of engravings, the absence of the "masters" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 53) who created it is palpable. It is an example of an artefact of intangible heritage without the living participants present to express its purpose. And it is precisely this situation that I propose sets the stage for a rich and productive process of exploration through arts-based practices in order to reveal new insights. There is an opportunity at this site then to explore afresh the way visitors interact with sites of heritage, particularly ones that cannot be summed up neatly in a paragraph or two.

My intention as researcher was not to uncover the meaning of the engravings, but rather to investigate alternative ways for researchers and visitors to interact with the site that are informed by arts-based practices. I define alternative ways of interaction as engagements that encourage a physical, embodied response to the site. This places an emphasis on using the human body to relate to the site in a way that is physical and direct, cultivating an awareness in the sensory experience of being at the site, and the responses this engenders in the viewer. Rather than recording the site only through photographs, sketches or words, the invitation is to extend this record to include the feel of the engravings on the skin, the specifics of the process of discovering them, the sense of being in the site at a particular time of day or year. This is a process of personal, embodied response to the content that is informed by the senses, the environment and an interaction with the engravings, that goes beyond information in a selected language on a text panel or pamphlet. As anthropologist Tim Ingold suggests, thinking and discovery is inextricably linked to the process of embodied experience (Ingold, 2007: 16).

Shepherd, like Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, explains that in a South African context, under the banner of intangible heritage: “the National Heritage Resources Act specifically refers to a category of ‘living heritage’, which includes such phenomena as cultural tradition, oral history, performance, ritual, popular memory and ‘indigenous knowledge systems’” (Shepherd, 2008: 20) and this “living heritage” is where my research comes into play.

Living Heritage

Though the original makers of the site are no longer ‘living’, navigating the site as a visitor demands a physical engagement with it. Witnessing the engravings is an embodied experience because one cannot view them without moving through the site from one end to the other; and because the engravings are on the ground, moving through the site means interacting with them physically, walking over and between them in a way that is very different to observing rock paintings on a wall, for example, or reading text panels in a museum or plaques at a monument. The term ‘living heritage’ has the potential to operate on two levels at the site: not only as an example of intangible heritage, that was part of the lived experience of people in this area hundreds of years ago; but also through an interaction with it that takes the form of a living, breathing, embodied engagement on the part of the viewer. Today, the viewer becomes what is ‘living’ in this heritage site, and in so doing re-enlivens it.

My initial response to the site, as a theatre practitioner, was that it could only be partly understood when seen from an objective or scientific distance, empty of people. My sense was that the

interaction of people at the site with one another and with the engravings was a very important way to unlock its meaning and value in terms of heritage.

It is also interesting to consider this idea of 'living heritage' in terms of what Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett refers to as the process where heritage sites and objects start their "second-life" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 149) as heritage, where they cease to be something solely of the past and are produced as heritage that supposedly belongs to everyone. This idea offers us another layer through which to consider Driekopseiland, as the site is not only being given a 'second life' where it is produced as a heritage site for researchers and visitors, but is being inhabited, enlivened and lived-in for a second time by those who explore it.

Evolving Definitions of Heritage

The concept of heritage, particularly in South Africa, has been made to mean very different things over the years and has been used in different ways. Derek R. Peterson, one of the editors of *The Politics of Heritage in Africa* (2015) points to the negative aspects of heritage production in Africa historically, suggesting that these processes meant that objects or events were "lifted out of the dynamic real world, placed outside the reach of change and innovation, and rendered anachronistic at the moment of publication" (Peterson, 2015: 2).

This describes an approach to heritage that is now considered outdated, one that is connected to what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett refers to as "the museum effect" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 20), a desire to capture, categorise and contain heritage objects so that they and their meaning are fixed and preserved in perpetuity. Inspired by this idea, Shepherd suggests that: "the 'heritage effect' lies in edging us towards essentialised notions of culture and identity" (Shepherd, 2008: 5), which he believes we should be wary of in current times. These concerns are also voiced by Marschall in relation to monuments (although her thoughts are relevant to heritage sites, too). She suggests moreover that an awareness of this effect might start to challenge it: "Monuments are public 'institutions' through which selected narratives and associated groups can gain visibility, authority and legitimacy, but they are also sites of contestation where perhaps previously invisible differences can become evident" (Marschall, 2010: 2).

This openness to contestation is part of what Shepherd suggests is an alternative way to view heritage, that moves beyond the fixed terms of its traditional definition, I include this extended quote because of its relevance to my argument:

In contrast to a conception of heritage as stable and culturally rooted, recent academic approaches have been concerned to show its constructed, changeable and contingent nature. In this conception, heritage is always in motion (rather than fixed), tied to the

present (rather than to an imagined past), and coursed through by the currents of commercial exploitation and popular culture (rather than belonging to high culture). (Shepherd, 2008: 5)

The notion of heritage that Shepherd outlines above, as a departure from the traditional approach, was the springboard for my own research at the site. Shepherd's assertion that heritage in this context is "always in motion" connects to my call for an embodied, physical response to the site. My concerns that the visitors exploring the site be seen as a continuation of the living story of this heritage site links to the requirement that this view of heritage be "tied to the present". And the fact that these interactions place an emphasis on personal process challenges the notion of heritage as "stable" and fixed, and suggests that contributing to an understanding of heritage is an inclusive practice, not restricted to the realm of "high culture". This is an idea also relevant to Lavine and Karp in their book *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (1991), who contend that in a museum context: "we need experiments in exhibition design that try to present multiple perspectives or admit the highly contingent nature of the interpretations offered" (Lavine & Karp, 1991: 7). I will go into further detail on the idea of inclusivity later in this chapter.

The site of Driekopseiland, because it is a place where the presence of people from hundreds of years ago is so clearly marked, is experienced as a visceral example of heritage. But even though it seems to be a place that has remained unchanged for centuries, aspects of it have shifted enormously over the years. These shifts have happened on many levels. The way the site has been understood as heritage has shifted, and views on its significance and origins have altered in parallel with political changes in the country since it first entered the written record through its description by Stow in the late 1800s. The way it has been protected as a site of historical significance has also shifted, its legal extent and protection has been amended several times (which I will describe in detail later in the chapter) and there have also been shifts in the immediate environment surrounding the site, which I discuss in the next section.

LANDSCAPE

Professor David Morris has written extensively on the site and has offered what he positions as a new interpretation of it, in his thesis *Driekopseiland and the 'rain's magic power'* (2002). Here, he brings together ideas on history and the landscape as contributing factors to be considered when studying and interpreting Driekopseiland (Morris, 2002: iii). For Morris, the site's positioning within the landscape is significant. He compares it to the nearby site of Wildebeestkuil, also a rock engraving site, but one that is different in a number of ways; first, in terms of the content of the engravings, as it features a greater number of figurative and recognisable images of animals (Morris,

2012: 195) and, second, because Wildebeestkuil is perched on a hilltop that commands an expansive view of the surrounding area in all directions.



View of the site from the riverbed looking over the exposures with the embankment on the left and the *Eucalyptus* trees on the right.

PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy

Driekopseiland's riverbed setting makes for a very different type of site. Here, there is water and a sense of being lower than the surrounding landscape, nestled rather than on the lookout. Where the rocks that feature engravings at Wildebeestkuil are relatively small boulders scattered around a hilltop, at Driekopseiland the area where the engravings appear is made up of huge, smooth, rounded rocks called exposures, that seem to rise up out of the ground and offer a space to walk barefoot, out of reach of the thorns and sharp stones that surround them.

The site's position in a riverbed was probably significant for those who created it, and it has also had very real implications for the life and history of the site since then. As I have already mentioned the site seems to straddle the two categories of heritage: it is a permanent, concrete structure in the way of a monument or a museum, yet at the same time it is a place where the presence of human interaction (which researchers have struggled to decipher) suggests it falls under intangible heritage. The site's geographical position in the Riet River has also meant it straddles municipal districts as well as private farms, and this has made it a contested space that has been challenging to delineate and protect.

Boundaries

I was interested in exploring what the idea of 'heritage' does to the objects or sites labelled as such, and how an arts-based interaction could respond to this. My expectation was that heritage sites were made accessible to the public and protected from damage and alteration. My research showed, however, that the history of Driekopseiland as a heritage site was a complex one, where the safety of the site as a whole has often hung in the balance (Morris, 2002: 273). I argue that an added benefit of encouraging the active participation of visitors to the site, would be that it turns members of the public into stakeholders, engendering a sense of ownership and connection with this heritage site, that would mean more people had a stake in its ongoing protection and maintenance.

Up until the 1940s the river's course and the site itself were largely undisturbed and were surrounded by stock farming operations. With the introduction of several dam and water schemes after that time, though, the land surrounding the river began to be used for agricultural farming. This led to direct changes to the watercourse, which has gradually resulted in changes to vegetation, sediment deposit and flooding, and these have had a large impact on the site (Morris, 2002: 257). In old photographs the site appears as a low, flat exposure of rock in a flat landscape, but it is now hemmed in by tall *Eucalyptus* trees on one side, and by a high, sheer embankment on the other as a result of floodwater erosion. Changes to the landscape over time are a threat to the site, but what could be considered an even greater threat are changes to its protection under law.

The Riet River which runs through the site is a boundary line. In his analysis of lines in their many forms, Ingold asserts that it is important to recognise lines: "in a sense that is more visionary or metaphysical" (Ingold, 2007: 47). Here, he refers to the 'ghostly' nature of survey lines, lines of longitude and latitude and, importantly for this case study, borders. Ingold contends that invisible lines like these ones, though unseen, have the potential to restrict and control the movement of people (Ingold, 2007: 49). And they can also have very real consequences in terms of delineating what is private, what is public and what is protected (Ingold, 2007: 49). It is fascinating to compare the impact of these unseen border lines on this particular site, with the very visible, tangible lines of the engravings that cover the site, but that are now a ghostly presence left by the unseen makers. The fact is that it is the invisible, official demarcations that post-date the engravings, that have outlined the history of the site.

The influence of the people who have drawn up, changed and fortified these 'ghostly' lines of survey, protection and boundary form another layer of unseen presence at the site. One that I think it is important to consider when looking at this site in its entirety as an example of heritage. The

ramifications of their influence have at various times threatened the site's protected status or saved it from being destroyed or submerged forever. I contend that arts-based interactions at the site by visitors would add another unseen layer of presence to the story of human interaction here, acknowledging the multiple intangible histories that already exist at the site, and contributing current ones.

In the Appendix to his Master's thesis on Driekopseiland, Professor Morris details the various threats to its existence that have occurred over the last century. Morris states his intention in doing so as being to "place on record some of the major features of the history of the conservation" (Morris, 2022: 273) but this gesture goes one step further, by adding another important layer to our understanding of human interaction at the site.

Protection

George Stow provided some of the earliest records of the rock engravings at Driekopseiland in the 1870s. He sent news of the site to linguist Dr Wilhelm Bleek in Cape Town, who declared that they were "of the greatest possible significance" (cited in Morris, 2002: 78). Later, Professor C van Riet Lowe, Secretary of the Historical Monuments Commission in 1942, said of the site that: "we must do everything in our power to protect and preserve it" (cited in Morris, 2002: 261). But over the years it has never been satisfactorily defined and protected, Morris says: "the actual history has been one of carelessness, compounded by the compromises of the heritage authorities from the 1940s onwards" (Morris, 2002: 273).

A great many of these compromises have arisen from the site's riverbed position. Though this might seem like a relatively minor concern in comparison to the obvious historical significance of the site, this is an example of the site falling victim to its heritage status. Shepherd points out that the paradoxical definition of heritage extends to its operation on a practical and managerial level (Shepherd, 2008: 5). "In the self-mythology of heritage it arises from 'below', spontaneous and decentralised. In practice it more often comes from 'above'... In fact, it tends to be managed and controlled by highly bureaucratised and, I would add, largely unaccountable structures and agencies" (Shepherd, 2008: 5). In keeping with this idea, the history of protection at Driekopseiland seems to have been hamstrung by bureaucracy and compromise.

The site appears to have been largely undisturbed until the changes in farming methods in the surrounding areas during the 1940s. But in 1942, Dr Maria Wilman, director of the Kimberley Museum at the time, was alerted by a local farmer to the fact that there were plans to build a weir across the site at Driekopseiland that would have submerged it for good. Wilman wrote to Prof C van

Riet Lowe of the Historical Monuments Commission and as a result of his direct intervention the farmers concerned were persuaded to build the weir upstream of the original location so that most of the engravings were saved, although there are apparently more than 100 submerged engravings above the weir (Morris, 2002: 265). In a report by van Riet Lowe he remarks that it was precisely because of the site's position in the riverbed and on a boundary line that "the possibility of its proclamation' had never been 'seriously considered'" (cited in Morris, 2002: 263).

In the years that followed the situation was no less tenuous. The municipalities the river bisects transformed from the Kimberley and Herbert to the Pixley Ka Seme and Frances Baard. The legal extent of the site itself was defined and amended three times, yet it is still a space that defies classification, a no-man's land that keeps slipping out of the reach of an official definition. When the site was first declared a protected area or archaeological interest in the 1940s, the geographical definition stated it to be "2, 978 morgen 282 square roods" (Morris, 2002: 264). But this definition, which was only revisited in the 1970s, "provides protection to only the southern half of the riverbed, while by far the bulk of the engravings occur on the northern part" (Morris, 2002: 265). Though the site has been re-defined over the years, compromises have always been made between the heritage practitioners and the farmers in the area, so a true consensus on protection for the length and breadth of the site has never really been established. As a result, parts of the site have been permanently scarred by front-end loaders, or fed into cement mixers, and cars frequently drive over it. When I visited the site to conduct my fieldwork, there were large tyre tracks caked into the dried mud alongside the exposures.

This evidence of the way the site has been treated by the public and by farmers suggests that there is a disconnect between peoples' understanding that the site is significant and feeling directly responsible for its protection. I propose that this is exactly the gap that heritage needs to fill. Specifically, heritage as inclusive, fluid and contingent, and in this instance represented by arts-based interactions. The artefacts at this site are relevant to all who engage with them and need not be seen as belonging to the domains of science, archaeology or history. Arts-based interactions give us tools with which to engage with the site, place value on the contributions of individuals, and have the potential to bring heritage within the reach of the general public.

Inclusivity

Concerns about the site's protection are also connected to issues of access. I argue that it might be easier to protect a site like this one if more people knew about it and felt they had a stake in its existence and maintenance, although access to such a fragile site is, of course, fraught with risk. In *Heritage and Tourism: Place, encounter, engagement* (2013) Anna Spencely and Fred Nelson analyse

the effects of tourism on the nearby Richtersveld National Park where even in an official conservancy area with very low visitor numbers petroglyphs have been damaged by tourists (Spencely & Nelson, 2013: 257). They warn that: “with growth in tourism comes environmental impact that is more challenging to manage, particularly in the relatively weak regulatory and institutional setting that characterises most African nations” (Spencely & Nelson, 2010: 270).

This brings me back to Shepherd’s ideas on the landscape of heritage politics in South Africa, which is foregrounded by questions of inclusivity. Clearly the old, official, ‘top-down’ methods of dealing with heritage protection do not guarantee preservation of a site. It would be more effective to shift these old notions, open up access to the site, and encourage participation in its heritage story, giving the public a stake in its protection. The site’s vulnerability makes it a challenging space to navigate, but as Shepherd asserts, “the claim to be available and accessible to all is fundamental to the nature of heritage in post-apartheid South Africa” (Shepherd, 2008: 4).

As it stands, the site is open to the public, though it is situated between two private farms and visitors need to make an appointment to visit it through the Kimberley Museum. It is only accessible by car, and this involves some driving on dirt roads. Professor Morris informed me during one of our interviews that the decision was taken some years ago to turn the rock art site of Wildebeestkuil into a museum and visitors’ centre rather than Driekopseiland, as a result of the fragility of the latter, and the proximity of Wildebeestkuil to main roads and tourist routes (Morris, pers comm, 2017). But I argue that the very fact that it has not been turned into a museum or tourism space makes it a rich site for experimentation in terms of finding other ways to approach heritage sites that are not constrained by the traditional parameters of heritage sites and do not have a clear, easily summarised narrative.

Shepherd, Marschall and Morris are all concerned with the landscape of heritage politics in South Africa. And it is important to consider access to the site when viewed in light of the particular role heritage has been called on to play in this country. Shepherd describes this role as involving: “the explicit recognition of previously marginalised narratives and categories of heritage (like intangible and living heritage)” (Shepherd, 2008: 6). Morris’ remarks in his chapter from *Landscapes of Clearance* (2008) are in a similar vein; he points out the need for ‘mainstream archaeology’ to “pursue indigenous insights that would enhance an appreciation of the site and its contexts, and to acknowledge and provide means for descendants to reconnect with a heritage from which they have been excluded” (Morris, 2008: 90). Sabine Marschall’s ideas about the potential role of new monuments in South Africa – “to expose suppressed histories and preserve narratives of the past” as

well as “to counter biased interpretations disseminated through the existing symbolic landscape” (Marschall, 2010:3) – are all relevant at Driekopseiland.

For me, key to this reconsideration of heritage representation are the ideas of participation and access. The research I conducted at the site places an emphasis on doing, participating, accessing the potential for knowledge production through an arts-based approach. This would position heritage as an embodied experience and answer Shepherd’s call for heritage to be viewed: “not as a guide to a fossilised past, but as a sphere of practice in public life” (Shepherd, 2008: 6). And one that encourages an engagement with ideas of identity and inheritance that all South Africans can be involved in (Shepherd, 2008: 6). This would also honour the paradoxical nature of heritage and the fact that, as the editors of *Heritage and Tourism* point out: “the intersection of heritage, tourism, the tourist and place produces an ever-shifting field of representational practices” (Staiff, Watson & Bushell, 2013: 14).

My research approached the site of Driekopseiland with this sense of paradox and of openness in mind. This was in order to see the site as an invitation to participate, to find a point of access from my own personal perspective and then to explore that process and see what new knowledge it uncovered, or what previously established ideas it could extend or deepen. As Peterson says, “The practice of heritage creates natives” (Peterson, 2015: 36). But for that to be true it needs to be a practice, something that involves, includes and invites contributions. A process that acknowledges that “without place/people interaction, on whatever level and including tourists, there cannot be a practice or discourse we call ‘heritage’” (Staiff, Watson & Bushell, 2013: 12).

PATHWAYS

I conclude this chapter with a quote by Tim Ingold, whose ideas tie together my own thoughts on the importance of embodied interaction as a way of approaching the site, and the idea of heritage as a link between past and present. In this quote Ingold also makes reference to writing or inscription, which is relevant at Driekopseiland, even though we cannot know whether the engravings represent writing *per se*. Ingold claims that writing is not intended: “to close off the past by providing a complete and objective account of what was said and done, but rather to provide the pathways along which the voices of the past could be retrieved and brought back into the immediacy of the present experience” (Ingold, 2007: 15).

My intention with this research was to explore ways to do exactly that. To engage with the heritage site of Driekopseiland by following the ‘pathways’ it offers from an arts-based perspective, and by bringing different disciplines into dialogue with one another. Ingold asserts that “writing was read

not as a record, but as a means of recovery” (Ingold, 2007: 15). And where that writing can no longer be read in a traditional sense, there is value in engaging with it using arts-based practices. This offers the viewer the opportunity to engage with the lack of a clear narrative and to seek out a personal, embodied and thoughtful process of connection with the heritage artefact. I will be exploring examples of embodied interaction in more depth in the next chapter, which details the theories behind the arts-based practices that informed my work at the site.

TRACING LINES

Theoretical Framework

My initial response to the site, informed by my background in theatre, was what inspired me to make it the subject of my research report. The theoretical framework for this project brings the disciplines of heritage and theatre into dialogue with one another, in order to analyse what effect this type of reading would have at the site.

As I described in the previous chapter, the site itself can be seen as a metaphor for the idea of heritage as a container for aspects of both the present and the past. This contradictory impulse is summed up by Sabine Marschall where she refers to the requirement for post-apartheid South African monuments to “signal both rupture and continuity” (Marschall, 2010: 11). Driekopseiland, too, is a heritage object that forms part of public culture and that speaks to both the present and the past. The stone exposures that originate from a different part of the planet and bear the impact of glaciers from thousands of years ago encapsulate what is monumental and material in heritage; while the abundance of hand-crafted inscriptions that cannot be identified in terms of makers, meaning or method reflect what is intangible, ephemeral and ambiguous.

The concerns around the nature of heritage shared by Marschall and Shepherd (2008: 2), are also described by theorists from other disciplines. The archaeologists (Morris, 2008: 90), theatre practitioners (Fleishman, 2012: 136), performance studies experts (Taylor, 2003: 20) and heritage practitioners (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 53) whose work I consulted all endorsed a move away from staid, fixed definitions and explanations of heritage toward finding ways of engaging with it that were responsive, current and immediate. I found that overall there was a focus in the literature on the importance of participation and inclusivity, as well as a desire to engage with ambiguity. My exploration of arts-based interactions answers these calls for a re-visioning of approaches to this site and to heritage sites generally, and contributes to the methods of engagement available to researchers and visitors. In this chapter, I outline the development of the conceptual framework for my project and the considerations that guided me towards specific theorists and methodologies.

AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

My experience of visiting the site for the first time in 2016 and being introduced to it by Professor Morris inspired me to consider what an arts-based or performance perspective might offer. The insights that Morris mentioned, that had come from his viewing the site in its entirety as he stood looking over it from the weir one afternoon, were striking and showed the value of other

perspectives on the site. These new perspectives would expand the scope of research at the site and give alternatives to views that were strictly archaeological, scientific, minutely-focused, compartmentalising, or operating from an objective distance. My aim was to challenge the effect of more 'traditional' heritage practices where labelling, fixing and defining are core concerns – which is summed up by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett as “the museum effect” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 20) and by Shepherd as “the heritage effect” (Shepherd, 2008: 5). This is an idea supported by Denis Byrne in *Heritage and Tourism* (2013), where he introduces the concept of “critical proximity, rather than critical distance” (Morris in Byrne, 2013: 27) – placing an emphasis on the importance of personal, immediate, embodied responses to the site. It is suggested that this way of seeing takes the viewer of a heritage site on “a precarious personal journey in place that involves a re-imagining, an uncanny reading of places where embodiment is a kind of collision of deep feelings...” (Staiff, Bushell & Watson, 2013: 12).

With this in mind, I saw value in approaching the site as a theatremaker, paying attention to the way the elements of it come together as a whole, treating the contributions of water and sunlight as one would lighting effects and scenography and placing an emphasis on the interplay of human bodies in the space: how they relate to one another and how they relate to the exposures and engravings. I was excited by the prospect of what this approach might reveal.

PERFORMANCE AS ‘A WAY OF KNOWING’

During my first visit to the site, the presence of water, the proliferation of engravings and the repetition of certain symbols strongly suggested some sort of performed practice. Professor Morris' theories are congruent with this and indicate that it may have been the site of female puberty rites which he also links to myths of the water snake (Morris, 2022: 158). The already-present sense of performance at the site was another reason to believe arts-based practices had a place here in terms of research.

My desire to engage with performance as a method of knowledge production at the site was backed up by Morris, even though his sphere is archaeology. He concludes his PhD thesis on rock art in the Northern Cape saying: “our present is a durational present and one which is permeated by change and changeability. Knowledge itself takes place in a performative context” (Morris, 2012: 232). This seemed to be the invitation I needed to extend the new interpretation offered by his 2002 Master's thesis on Driekopseiland in a specifically performance-based direction.

From a theatre and performance perspective, I chose to draw on the work of Professor Mark Fleishman, a South African researcher and theatre practitioner who has created theatre productions, both on stage and in site-specific locations, which draw on material from the archive of South African rock art, and the stories transcribed from /Xam contributors that form the Bleek Lloyd collection. Fleishman has detailed the process of creating performance events from heritage stories in depth in his doctoral thesis *Remembering in the Postcolony* (2012). His assertion that “performance is also an epistemology, a way of knowing” (Fleishman 2009: 118) resonated strongly with my research.



Halligey explores the site through physical improvisation.

PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy

These ideas also linked to those of Diana Taylor, an American performance studies practitioner whose fine analysis of the importance of performance as a way to create, keep and re-enact memory and meaning is hugely relevant to my research. Taylor’s statement, “I believe it is imperative to keep reexamining the relationship between embodied performance and the production of knowledge” (Taylor 2003: xix), struck a chord with me as it pertained to the work I wanted to do at the site, particularly with its focus on embodiment. It was important to me that the interventions I undertook at the site would not be restricted to performances by trained actors, but be an invitation to everyone to participate in a process of discovery. Here Taylor’s focus on ‘cultural memory’ that extends to the general public was important and her ideas as well as Shepherd’s invitation to move heritage away from the theoretical and the static towards the experiential came together with Fleishman’s definition of heritage as ‘an event’:

Heritage is an event in two senses: it is something we *do* in the present, with the past for our present purposes. It is an active, participatory and performative process... it is something that has the capacity to change the situation; to bring something new into being, a new way of seeing the world (Fleishman, 2012: 136, emphasis in the original).

I wanted to *do* something at the site, and I wanted to offer an invitation for other people to *do* things too. This meant my focus was on participation and embodiment and what these might offer the visitor’s or researcher’s reading of the site.

EMBODIMENT

When I visited the site for the first time and watched my fellow students interact with it in different ways, I realised how their presence in and interaction with the site changed how I viewed it. I noticed how many different ways there were to engage with it, some more embodied than others, from making rubbings of the engravings to sitting and lying on them, tracing their patterns with a fingertip, moving through the space to see as many images as possible and of course photographing them. All of these different interactions made me wonder what the site might have looked like when it was being designed and created and they were an indication of just how many different processes could be used to unpack it. This idea of process would become more and more important as my research developed and particularly during the course of my fieldwork. I argue that a sense of participation gives people a stake in the protection of heritage sites for future generations.

For Diana Taylor, when it comes to accessing memory in a particular place, the presence of ‘actors’ (not necessarily trained actors, but participants) is of great importance. In her analysis of the relationship between “the archive and the repertoire”, Taylor’s theories run parallel with Shepherd’s thoughts on the paradoxical nature of heritage. Where Shepherd divides heritage into the material and the intangible, Taylor speaks of memory as being either archival or embodied. According to Taylor, objects in the archive are “supposedly resistant to change” (Taylor, 2003: 19), and her characterisation of the archive references its etymology: “a public building... a place where records are kept” (Taylor, 2003: 19). For Taylor, the archive is a container for the past that “sustains power” (Taylor, 2003: 19).

Taylor’s description of the archive bears a strong resemblance to traditional notions of tangible heritage. And where Shepherd contrasts this with intangible heritage (Shepherd, 2008: 2), Taylor refers to “the repertoire” which is made up of “embodied memory” and includes “performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing – in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge” (Taylor, 2003: 20). My aim was to incorporate the elements of the Taylor’s “repertoire” as a way to engage with what remained of the intangible heritage at Driekopseiland.



Three examples of physical interactions at the site during our class excursion in 2016: sitting on the rocks to make rubbings of the engravings, standing to pose for a photograph and lying on them to feel the warmth of the rocks and the patterns on your skin.

PHOTOS: Bev Butkow (left) and Kiyara Ananmalay (right top and bottom).

Particularly relevant for this process was Taylor's assertion that the repertoire "also allows for individual agency, referring also to 'the finder, the discoverer' and meaning 'to find out'" (Taylor, 2003: 20). Her theories form a strong basis for my argument for participation at the site, and also tie in to ideas of proximity and the personal journey.

Taylor asserts that: "The repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by 'being there', being a part of the transmission" (Taylor 2003: 20). This requirement of presence is what came across so strongly during my first visit to the site. And the notion of a "transmission" of knowledge through participation was a strong impetus for my research. The idea of transmitting knowledge, rather than presenting it, encapsulates the alternative offered by an embodied engagement. One is no longer passive in the act of receiving information, but active in the process of developing it. Embodied interaction suggests not only that the engagement happens through the body but that a primary way of generating knowledge relates to the physical experience of the site.

This is a dynamic and involved response to heritage that also resonates with Tim Ingold's theory that: "movement is the very essence of perception" (Ingold 1993: 166). For Ingold, landscape is experienced rather than observed. At Driekopseiland, discovering the engravings necessitates a journey through the space, a physical movement across the riverbed, whether it be walking, running, crawling or shuffling in a seated position from one to the next. The onus is on the viewer to move to and through the images which means that the idea of their being "felt" rather than "measured" (Ingold 1993: 166) by participants is hugely significant. The fact that so many of the engravings are made up of lines that are precisely the width of a fingertip also invites a tactile engagement with them, and makes one wonder whether they might have been designed to encourage this.

Through this tactile engagement with the engravings, the presence of the people who made them is "felt" in a way that is "directly incorporated into our bodily experience" (Ingold, 1993: 16). This is a powerful way to relate to a heritage site and one that has the potential to mobilise the viewer into a far deeper engagement than standing back and observing a monument or reading a text panel. The "kinaesthetic" (Ingold 1993: 166) input of the viewer shifts this site into another category altogether. And the value of this response is enhanced by the fact that researchers have no definitive answers as to how the pecked engravings were made, so this visceral invitation to interact also asks the viewer to engage with one of the site's major unanswered questions, placing the viewer in a unique role, which has implications for their sense of the importance of their participation.

Re-imagining the presence of the makers of the site through a physical interaction with it could be considered an "act of transfer", as described by Taylor in the following: "Performances function as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated, or what Richard Schechner has called 'twice-behaved behaviour'" (Taylor 2003: 3). This forms a direct link with Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's theory on the "second-life" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 149) of heritage objects that I referred to in the previous chapter, and how an embodied engagement with the site re-inhabits it in a way that has real value, as it encourages a dynamic, exploratory interaction with it, that surfaces questions and considerations that may not otherwise occur to the viewer. It also makes palpable the sense that every human interaction with the site adds a layer to its heritage story.

The quantity of engravings at the site suggests this was a place that was returned to and added to over years, which means that current interactions with it form a part of that chain of returning and interacting. This interaction is part of the practice of heritage Shepherd calls for (Shepherd, 2008: 6), and it is an example of what we can *do* in the present, which is so important to theorists like Fleishman (Fleishman, 2012: 136).

PALIMPSESTS

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, all the human interactions at the site, throughout its history, contribute to the story of heritage it tells. It is not only a story of who made the site and why, but of the debates that have raged over that very question since then, the people who have documented it, the farmers who have built weirs across it, the researchers who have spent years describing it. For this reason it is important that viewers approach the site in a way that makes them aware of, or that acknowledges that their process of discovery is a contribution to countless layers of heritage.

On the first day of my fieldwork I interviewed Morris at the site, sitting on the rocks in the afternoon sun, and he drew my attention to the palimpsests at the site. The rocks that moved here from the South Pole hundreds of thousands of years ago, the engravings which have proved so difficult to age, the banks of the river from which, at different depths, artefacts from a range of timescales have been extracted, the weir that crosses the river built by farmers in the 1940s, the power lines and electricity boxes that have sprung up over the twentieth century and the tall *Eucalyptus* trees that have taken root since he knew the site as a little boy (Morris, pers comm, 2017). These layers form a history of human as well as environmental influence on the site and it is important to bear that in mind when considering the site as a place of heritage. Active participation with this heritage site brings the multi-layered complexity of its history into sharp relief, makes it graspable for the viewer. It also emphasises the fact that although the archive is something that seems permanent, incorruptible and fixed, “what changes over time is the value, relevance or meaning of the archive, how the items it contains get interpreted, even embodied” (Taylor 2003: 19).

Where material heritage or the contents of the archive are intended to be fixed, contained, unchanging and unambiguous, the fact is that their value and relevance can change and so with time their meaning can become ambiguous. By contrast, an approach to heritage that “allows for individual agency” (Taylor, 2003: 20) may produce results that seem more nebulous, but it will have relevance, meaning and value for those concerned for far longer. At this point it is important to be more specific about what the term ‘ambiguity’ means in relation to this site.

AMBIGUITY

Both Morris (2012: 228) and Fleishman (2012: 18) are concerned with the idea of ambiguity. They both seek a way to acknowledge, work with and work through ambiguity as they analyse or stage objects of heritage. They both refer to the processes of anthropological research and archiving as having the potential to erase ambiguity, to write out or write over the vagueness of the past, in order to produce a simple, clear picture of what we call heritage. My experimentation with arts-

based practices resists this urge to explain away and instead finds new ways to interact with a site of heritage that do not offer final, unambiguous answers, but that open up possibilities for personal responses and affirm the value of these, acknowledging that heritage sites, their importance and representation are still able to shift and change.

Morris, in his research and writing, and Fleishman, in his staging of heritage stories, both resist this process of 'editing out' and seek ways for our understanding of these objects to include complexity and be open to vagueness. As Morris argues, citing Willerslev: "an unfortunate consequence of conceptions such as 'worldview' is that they imply that people's ideas are structured – whereas ambiguity (usually accounted for as "noise" – or blamed on outside influence) is the normal state of things" (Willerslev in Morris, 2012: 228).

One of the responses I identified through my analysis of colleagues' behaviour at the site, was an almost immediate and overwhelming impulse on the part of visitors to identify who had created these engravings and for what purpose. It is very difficult, but important to hold the ambiguity and lack of a definite narrative of the site, without jumping to conclusions that wipe out other ways of seeing it. In Fleishman's work, this seems to be exactly the gap that an arts-based perspective fills. With reference to the theatricalising of stories from the Bleek/Lloyd archive, he describes "using the inherent ambiguity or polyvalence of art to establish a dialogue with the material and to create a sense of the stories as labile, vital and complex" (Skotnes & Fleishman, 2002: 17). I contend that arts-based practices could inhibit this stimulus response to 'solve the mystery' of the site by involving the viewer in an exploration of the traces that remain from its past, rather than speculating about aspects they cannot see. It would also create space for there to be more than one answer to any question about the site by highlighting the multiple arts-based ways there are to interpret the site.

THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

For almost all of the theorists I studied, there is a strong emphasis on the personal experience. Fleishman highlights the ephemeral nature of performance as a medium that allows each spectator to leave with their own perspective. In the case of a piece of theatre, what each audience member has seen is the same. Everyone has witnessed the same dialogue, music, gestures and set pieces, and yet each interpretation, as audience members leave the performance, will be slightly different. This approach is important to Fleishman as it resists "transforming the past into a site of petrified signification... domesticated and purged of all ambiguity" (Fleishman, 2012: 18). And it also avoids what he refers to as "the museological illusion", which echoes Shepherd's "heritage effect"

(Shepherd, 2008: 5), that narratives can be captured, written down and presented as the final word on a piece of heritage.

Rather, what Fleishman aims for are performances that “are not re-enactments of the past, they are re-creations, refigurations of what remains from the past” (Fleishman, 2012: 51), which brings me back to the ideas of the “second life” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 149) of heritage and an investigation of the site as a place of return by human beings in the present relating to the traces of the past. Processes of return, re-figuration and re-imagining became very important during my fieldwork and these were words that featured frequently in the interviews with my colleagues. This reference to “refigurations” and “re-creations” is also very important, because my fieldwork at the site made me wonder how much of the site itself is also evidence of a process of returning, re-visiting and re-inscribing over many years. This suggests that using these processes of re-envisioning for unpacking the site might be consonant, to some degree, with the way it was originally designed.

Halligey and Knight make direct contact with the engravings in different ways, while Blatcher photographs the process, with the time-lapse camera in the foreground.

PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy



PARTICIPATION

A final aspect that makes the argument for participation so compelling is the way it operates inclusively. This is something I touched on in the previous chapter in terms of the protection of the site, but here I go into further detail on what it means in relation to an arts-based approach.

The politics of heritage in South Africa are particular, and the role that heritage sites are required to play is a complicated one (Marschall, 2010:11; Shepherd, 2008: 2). In this context Driekopseiland has the potential to be a site where no one language, perspective or history is privileged, and the contributions of all visitors as participants are encouraged and valued. Shepherd asserts that where heritage is concerned, “it is here that the nation remakes itself, that the new ceremonies of inclusion and exclusion are invented and enacted” (Shepherd 2008: 1). This is his response to the fact that heritage is often instrumentalised as a means to create social cohesion and for its capacity to be a symbol of reconciliation. I would argue that through being brought into dialogue with arts-based practices, heritage can be inclusive even as it is affirming of people’s separate identities – and I think participation is one way to do this. My aim with this project was not necessarily to outline specific recommendations as to how visitors should approach the site but to investigate the possibilities of different ways of doing so. My invitation to visitors and researchers would be to stay, sit and play at the site, holding in mind one’s own process of discovering it, and being aware of the specific ways in which we enliven it in a current context.

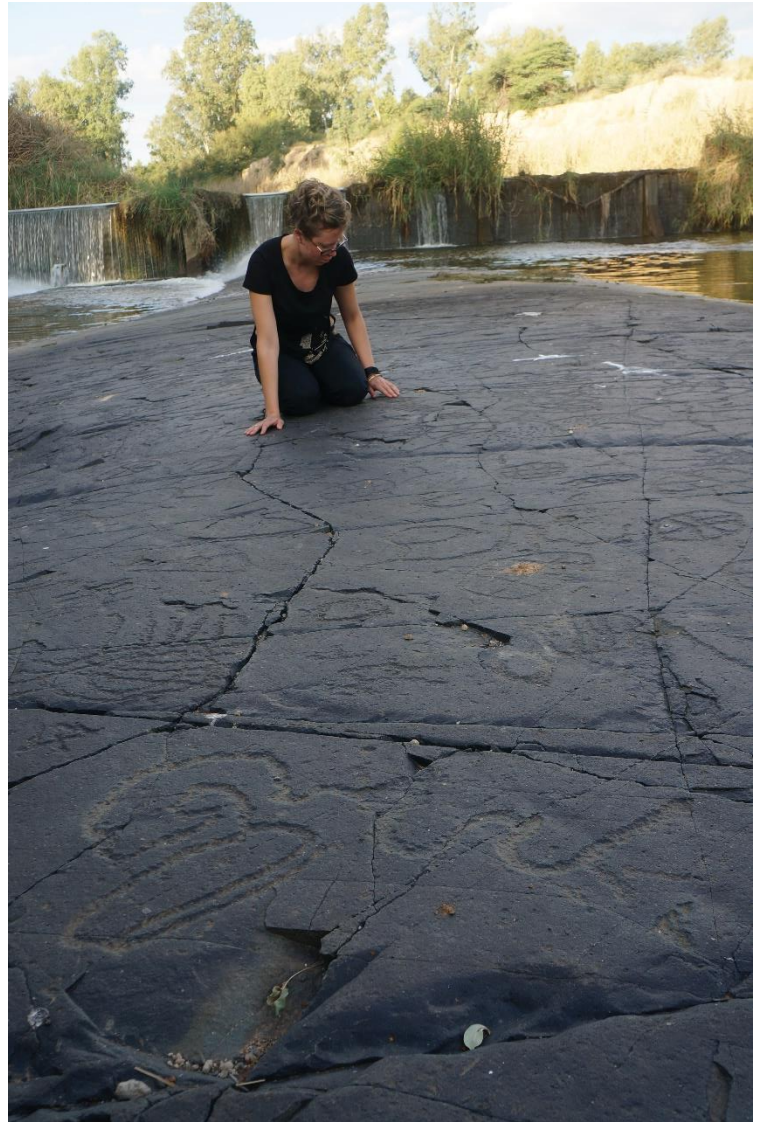
As I explained in the previous chapter, if a value is placed on the viewer’s personal process of engagement with a heritage site, it then becomes an important space to protect and share with others. It also has the potential to engender a sense of rootedness and belonging to everyone who interacts with it, thus operating as a space of inclusivity. Where a site like Driekopseiland is concerned, the lack of a clear narrative means it can be accessible and relatable to anyone who chooses, if they are given the tools to engage with it. The representation of heritage in South Africa needs to reflect the country’s diverse and shifting population; politics and readings of the site that validate a personal response to it are one way to do this.

Following page: Halligey traces the lines of the engravings as part of a physical improvisation.

PHOTO: Frances Slabolepszy

FOLLOWING THE LINE

In short, my research was framed by ideas of a new way to imagine heritage, one that resists approaches that seek to define the site absolutely, to wipe out ambiguity, to answer all questions with finality in a language supposedly available to all, but in reality tempered by history. My ideas were influenced by the theorists I have named in this chapter and the result was a plan to engage the space with openness and curiosity and, in a way, to let it speak for itself through the demands it made on and the movement it encouraged in the human body. Reflecting on a production Fleishman created entitled *Rain in a Dead Man's Footprints* (2004 – 2005) which drew on stories from the Bleek/Lloyd archive, he says:



All the bodies present/presented in the space, all the moving, dancing bodies, are simply outlines/traces formed around the absence of all the other bodies that are not present, that have been lost, exterminated, annihilated, destroyed by time and circumstance and by design. But just because they are outlines doesn't make them any less real or tangible in themselves or to those who watch (Fleishman, 2012: 130).

The above quote resonates strongly with the sense I have described of the presence of those who created and used the site of Driekopseiland in the past. This is particularly relevant when considering the interventions that Halligey and I undertook, about which I will go into in greater detail in the next chapter. Halligey's improvisations involved tracing the lines of the engravings – a literal 'outline' that also speaks to the invisible bodies of the makers in this space and how they may have used their bodies while making the engravings. This echoes what Fleishman describes in the paragraph above: palimpsests of human involvement at a particular site, a moment that seems to physically encapsulate the two paradoxical aspects of heritage – the material and the ephemeral, the visible and the invisible, the sensual and the sensed.

BEING THERE

Exploratory arts-based interactions at Driekopseiland

My fieldwork at the site of Driekopseiland took place over four days at the end of March 2017. My intention was to use arts-based practices to explore the value of process and how it helps us read or re-read issues of heritage, participation and access at this site.

BACKGROUND

I wanted to place particular emphasis on how the ideas of tangible and intangible heritage come together at the site of Driekopseiland, how it encapsulates this idea of the 'dual nature' of heritage, and how interacting with the site from an arts-based perspective can reveal new insights in terms of how it is interpreted and presented as heritage. The work I undertook there drew on ideas of how heritage is constructed, as defined by Nick Shepherd (Shepherd, 2008: 5).

It is the juxtaposition at Driekopseiland, of a weighty sense of permanence but also an ephemeral ambiguity, that makes it reflect the dual nature of heritage. My approach to the site was informed by the ideas of Diana Taylor, whose concepts of 'the archive and repertoire' (Taylor, 2003: 19) as they relate to memory, echo this idea of the dual nature of heritage. Her theories also supported my opinion that the process of spending time at the site is valuable in understanding an approach to heritage sites (Taylor, 2003: 20). Tim Ingold's theories on embodiment, for example "movement is the very essence of perception" (Ingold 1993: 166) were also key themes, as was the approach to staging heritage events offered by theatre practitioner Mark Fleishman (Fleishman, 2012: 21). I felt that using arts-based practices and focusing on the processes through which the site is revealed to visitors would go some way to addressing the issues that David Morris had highlighted of there being no clear narrative at the site and therefore a great deal of ambiguity (Morris, pers comm, 2017).

This chapter will outline the exploratory processes conducted at the site and what insights these revealed in terms of new ways to approach the site from a heritage perspective.

METHODS

I invited three colleagues to join me during my fieldwork. Their input from various arts-based backgrounds made a valuable contribution to my research. I chose them because they all brought different sets of arts-based skills to the project. Alex Halligey is a theatre practitioner and researcher whose own research work through the University of Cape Town brings together ideas on process, performance and the everyday environment. Alex Knight is a photographer and filmmaker whose

research as a postgraduate student in film at the University of the Witwatersrand focussed on the practice of art-making, with particular reference to South African outsider artist Helen Martins. And Thomas Blatcher is a graphic designer and illustrator whose input in the areas of visual design and illustration was very valuable. Our various approaches to the site included sketching, photographing and exploring an embodied interaction through the drama-based technique of improvisation (which I will define in greater depth shortly). Each of us approached our research at the site through a different process, and this notion of process became central to my ideas around interaction as the project developed.

A HERITAGE SITE THAT INVITES A NEW APPROACH

Self-reflection on research process

One of the major reasons that process became so important to me was as a result of how challenging and overwhelming the task of interacting with the site and analysing that research seemed. Having planned and thought about the site for so long, suddenly being faced with its size and silence, I felt daunted by the task of analysing and writing about it. This shifted when my colleagues arrived and I watched them engaging with it with great excitement, full of hypotheses as to what the engravings meant and what the site might signify. I told them the facts I knew about it by way of introduction but tried not to guide their experiences too much. I was aware that it was important not to intervene in their first impressions, as I wanted to be able to ask them about the experiences of their first visit to the site at a later stage. I also realised at this point that my own process of self-reflection would be a very important part of my research. This focus on the individual's process of interaction with the site was supported by my first interview with Professor Morris, my exploration of the site on my own, and through the group discussions I had with the other arts practitioners. And the more research I did into performance theory and other precolonial traditions of painting and oral history (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 193), the more I felt that this sort of approach acknowledged the different sides of heritage that I felt needed to be recognised at the site – both the tangible and the intangible.

At Driekopseiland, as Professor Morris asserted in our interview, there is an absence of storyline, a vagueness, an ambiguity, which can seem overwhelming and difficult to access. The engravings are very impressive and yet because of their abstract nature can be somewhat difficult to connect with (compared to the realistic representations of animals at engraving sites such as Wildebeestkuil). At the same time, the spectacular extent and intricacy of the engravings have a monumental aura to them. As a visitor, you can be in no doubt as to the significance of the site for the people who made it, and the authority of the place still comes across very strongly today. Sabine Marschall suggests

that public monuments “can be understood as articulated spaces, as signifying landmarks which inscribe the surrounding environment and its people with meaning” (Marschall, 2010: 6). This is undoubtedly the case at Driekopseiland, but there are no definitive answers as to by whom, when, why or how the engravings were made. And so, we respond to it with all we have at our disposal – ourselves. And these responses take the form of a process. One that shifts and changes with every visit.

I also realised, on reflection, that an acknowledgement of the conceptual inaccessibility of the site is an important part of our engagement with it. The sense of feeling overwhelmed by it is the invitation to engage with it in a new way, rather than through reading information or listening to a museum guide.

Changes in research process thinking

Before embarking on my fieldwork and realising how this idea of process would thread its way through all aspects of my research, I wanted to focus on how people experience the site for the first time. I reasoned that analysing first visits to the site would offer suggestions as to how to open up and include participation, personal process and exploration in the researcher’s or visitor’s experience. This might shift their view of heritage from the type of passive interaction one might have with a museum display case or text panel, to an active one with the site itself.

I had planned questions for my all participants about their first visit and their second and I asked Professor Morris about this in our first interview. But I realised that questions about the process of experiencing the site couldn’t be restricted to what happens when you visit the site the first time. The entirety of one’s engagement with the site is guided by process and those processes change over the course of one’s engagement.

For me, that suggested that there needed to be more than one way to approach the site, which was consonant with both Morris and my own calls for a new interpretation. It also made me think that Driekopseiland has the potential to offer a new way to read heritage sites, one that privileges the personal and the process. This sort of approach would guide visitors towards a reading of the site that is not definitive, but that represents their own personal interaction with something ancient, handmade and significant. I argue that a focus on personal process is consonant with the new understanding or re-envisioning of the nature of heritage that Shepherd describes as being “constructed, changeable and contingent” (Shepherd, 2008: 2). An approach like this would paint heritage in a new light, not in a textbook way, but in a way that brings interaction and individual response into the mix. In this way, the site would become a piece of heritage that has the potential

to include all visitors, first through its inaccessibility (because it is not in a 'language' anyone can understand), and then through the invitation for each person to work towards an understanding of it in their own way.

INTRODUCTION TO THEORY

Readings of the site arrived at through personal process would reflect Fleishman's aims when theatricalising archival stories: "— we seek no One Truth, no fixed or stable meaning, only 'truths', moments of revelation, innovation through action" (Fleishman, 2012: 21). This approach to heritage also links to ideas around remembering that Fleishman has arrived at through his work on the performance of history; namely, that performances have the capacity to keep "fragile contradictions and tentative adventures in play" (Fleishman, 2012: 18). This supports the idea that an arts-based approach to reading the site can hold space for all the paradoxical aspects of heritage. The mystery of Driekopseiland destabilises the concrete positioning one usually expects from a museum or heritage site. One is not situated as a viewer experiencing something that has been packaged and explained, which is why finding a way to interact with it that acknowledges its "fragile contradictions" is so important.

Since my fieldtrip and research, I contend that one's experience of this site as a heritage site should not be 'authored' by any one view of heritage, or by what we have come to understand as a 'museum' voice. It should be a site to be experienced by individuals with all of its vagueness, ambiguity and unanswered questions. This is also why the aim of this project was not to produce a recommendation for interaction with the site, but rather consider insights into what difference it might make to interact with the site in another way. The sort of response this would require from visitors to the site involves: "composition, construction, playing, performance, listening, watching and responding" (Fleishman, 2012: 156), a process Fleishman calls "storying" (Fleishman, 2012: 156) and which I think is relevant where heritage sites are concerned. This idea parallels that of "critical proximity, rather than critical distance" (Morris cited in Byrne, 2013: 12) that I have mentioned above. Staiff, Bushell and Watson, in the introduction to *Heritage and Tourism* (2013), claim that "these intense intimacies with place decentre manufactured and heterodox (heritage) communications with place, landscape, objects, buildings and so forth" (Staiff, Bushell and Watson 2013: 13).

At Driekopseiland, speculating about what the site did or what it was designed for only gets you so far. But an embodied interaction with it gives one direct, physical access to the parts of it which are so confounding. It gives one a way to grapple with the mystery and individually author a reading of it. This is not a traditional approach when it comes to heritage sites but, as I have argued, this is

where arts-based practices have a great deal to offer. It is becoming more and more acceptable for museums to draw on the techniques of theatre in order to “create spaces for a kind of participatory and communal playing” (Fleishman, 2012: 22). And this overlap between disciplines is even more appropriate at a heritage site like Driekopseiland, where the process of interaction with the site itself offers each visitor the opportunity to come to an understanding through direct engagement with the heritage material.

Fleishman also suggests that this approach acknowledges that visitors have “various levels of relationship to the past which is being commemorated” (Fleishman, 2012: 22). This emphasises the importance of using this approach at Driekopseiland because though there are people who feel a strong connection to the site, the lack of clarity on who made it means there is no one group with a direct link to the engravings. An arts-based interaction can acknowledge these “various levels of relationship to the past” (Fleishman, 2012: 22) and be relevant to all of them, because it is the experience of the viewer or participant that is central.

Improvisation

As I considered ways to start engaging with the site that constituted an individual process and encompassed the notion of ambiguity, I was reminded of the technique of improvisation in the context of theatre. The direct responsiveness of the design of the site to the environment, seems to call for a direct responsiveness when it comes to the involvement of the viewer, and improvisation offers exactly that.

I refer to improvisation as a tool for the creation of material for theatrical performance that focuses on spontaneity and immediate responsiveness by actors to their environment and fellow actors. It is a way of developing performance material that focusses on the idea of the actor being completely present to all prompts both internal and external, and in this way taps into the creativity and inspiration of the unknown and unplanned (Fleishman, 2012: 49). Viola Spolin, widely regarded as a pioneer of the technique of improvisation in America in the twentieth century suggests that improvisation necessitates a very deep level of involvement on the part of the actor. She says: “Experiencing is penetration into the environment, total organic involvement with it. This means involvement on all levels: intellectual, physical and intuitive. Of the three the intuitive, most vital to the learning situation, is often neglected” (Spolin, 1963: 3). In this regard it seemed like a useful means of working through the initial conceptual inaccessibility of the site.

Specifics of environment

Beyond the sphere of Western theatre in which Spolin and other practitioners such as theatre director Jerzy Grotowski (1976) developed their theories, improvisation plays a central role in oral traditions globally, and has been linked to precolonial performance traditions (Fleishman, 2012: 49), which I think are relevant sources to consider in relation to this site. Fleishman asserts that these improvisation techniques are not quite the same as those referred to by Spolin where actors respond in the moment in order to create completely new material from a place of authentic spontaneity, a blank canvas. But rather that improvisation in this context refers to processes of invention and playfulness within and around an established storyline, in the moment of performance (Fleishman, 2012: 49). This interplay between the story as the audience know it, and the creative impulse of the performer is informed by the precise context of performance, and this affects the way the story develops and shifts every single time it is performed (Fleishman, 2012: 49).

This reference to the importance of “the specifics of the environment” (Fleishman, 2012: 49) is an important point to draw out, as it brings a consideration of the site and its surroundings into a discussion on improvisation. It also links directly to the ideas of responsiveness that were the start of my thinking about improvisation techniques and will become even more relevant when I describe the interventions of Halligey at the site.

The concept of improvisation also came up during my interview with Professor Morris. As we sat on the rocks he mentioned how he had referred in both his Master’s and PhD theses on Driekopseiland to a description by Dorothea Bleek, scholar of /Xam language and culture, of a group of women singing a ‘trance dance song’. It was a moment that had stood out for me in his paper, because of its focus on performance. I quote it at length below, as Morris draws on the words of Bleek directly:

“The time is perfect” observed Bleek (1928: 22): “but no two in a chorus seem to hit the same note, though the general burden of the tune is kept up.” The singers “go up together, and all go down together, each hitting any note they please”. For Guenther, “the performance style of the women’s trance dance song expresses in crystalized form the nature of Bushman expressive culture” (1999: 82). Under-girded by a spirit of individual agency, the imperatives towards freedom of expression find a balance, he suggests, somewhere between harmony and dissonance, against the collective constraints that pertain in particular group contexts (Morris, 2012: 214).

This quote suggests an improvisatory approach by singers that is similar to that outlined by Fleishman, in that there are certain loose guidelines and the sense of an ensemble, but within that performers are free to express themselves individually. This is also reflected in a quote by renowned South African archaeologist and ethnographer J.D. Lewis-Williams, which refers to the performance of ‘The Song of the Broken String’, a song that was also of great significance to Bleek in her research.

After describing an approach in which free improvisation overlays a recognisable structure, thus making each performance unique and original, Lewis-Williams says: “there is no definitive version, and performers can vary the material to suit themselves and the occasion” (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 193).

An embodied, arts-based interaction with the site that encourages a focus on personal process honours this idea of there being “no definitive version” of interaction at this site. And it suggests that heritage sites where there is a lack of a clear narrative, have the potential to offer a meaningful experience to the visitor by suggesting certain constraints and then allowing them to author a personal reading through their own process. This is an idea supported by current heritage trends where: “there is no longer any discernible or defensible segregation of authorised encounters and engagements from those that are unauthorised. In this way, tourist experiences of heritage occur within ‘non-linear, dynamical and fluid spaces’” (Staiff, Watson & Bushell, 2013: 13).

In the context of Spolin’s techniques, the process of improvisation places strong emphasis on an embodied and immediate response, as actors or participants need to try as far as possible to respond spontaneously, rather than think about what to do. Spolin argued that improvisation and spontaneity: “creates an explosion that for the moment frees us from handed-down frames of reference, memory choked with old facts and information and undigested theories and techniques of other people’s findings” (Spolin, 1963: 4). Although Spolin is referring here to throwing off these constraints in order to create something entirely new, her ideas run parallel with those I have outlined above involving re-imagining established stories in a way that is different and specific to the moment of performance or discovery.

There is a strong link between Spolin’s thoughts on improvisation and Taylor’s ideas on an interplay between the archive and the repertoire. In both the focus is on sensory perception and embodied response, rather than planning and working things through in the mind (Taylor 2003: 20). There are echoes here too of Shepherd’s conceptions of heritage as being fluid and influenced by personal response (Shepherd, 2008: 2).

Spolin’s assertion that “the intuitive can only respond in immediacy – right now” (Spolin, 1963: 4) also connects to Ingold’s ideas around the past being understood through the “immediacy of the present experience” (Ingold, 2007: 15), which in turn links to the fact that the way we perceive the environment is through active, embodied attention and participation, from which thought arises; we don’t think our way into the environment. The following extended quote by Ingold could have been written about Driekopseiland, so applicable are his words to an experience of the site:

Though Medieval thinkers did imagine that the work of memory inscribes the surface of the mind much as the writer inscribes the surface of the paper with his pen and the traveller inscribes the surface of the earth with his feet, they thought of these surfaces not as spaces to be surveyed but as regions to be inhabited, and which one can get to know not through one single, totalizing gaze, but through the laborious process of moving around. In reading, as in storytelling and travelling, one remembers as one goes along. Thus the act of remembering *was itself conceived as a performance*: the text is remembered by reading it, the story by telling it, the journey by making it (Ingold, 2007: 16, emphasis in the original).

Led by Ingold's emphasis on process as a way to recover memory, and keeping in mind the techniques for developing understanding offered by embodied interaction and improvisation and an awareness of how these are informed by the specifics of the environment, I will now detail the exploratory processes we undertook at the site, and what insights came out of them.

INTERACTIONS AT THE SITE

Being at the site in situ

The interventions we conducted at the site were a way to explore and analyse the value of process and how it helps us read or re-read issues of accessibility, participation and heritage. The interactions of myself and my colleagues at the site drew on our various home disciplines. In planning an engagement with the site, I included activities and interview questions that I felt would reveal information that was relevant to the research, but I also wanted to keep our interactions experimental and organic, rather than being led by a desired outcome.

The activities we engaged in at the site included: sketching the site, drawing the engravings, making rubbings of the engravings, photographing them, as well as making two short films, and conducting theatre-based improvisatory exercises. We also spent a fair amount of time simply observing the site, "being there" (Taylor 2003: 20) as Diana Taylor would have it, and talking about what we saw and how things changed over the course of our time there. As researcher and observer, I documented our interactions at the site, as well as conducting interviews during and after the process and reflecting on what had taken place there. In this way I could highlight the insights gained from our interactions and pull them together into a cohesive reflection of our processes at the site.

An emphasis on process

The relevance of process when interacting with the site was something that was highlighted by Alex Halligey when we debriefed about our first visit to the site. Halligey explained in detail how her experience of the site was a "progression", an "unfolding". "My perception of the space as a whole was influenced by that process of taking it in bit by bit until I could look at the whole. Each consideration of the whole will change it" (Halligey, pers comm, 2017).

The idea that one's perception of the whole changes with every single visit to the site was something that Professor Morris also reflected on. He first visited the site as an eight-year-old boy and over the years has returned to it time and again as student, researcher, teacher and also as a guardian of this fragile space. He has watched the landscape and the seasons change and been concerned as the years passed, by things like the soaring growth of the encroaching alien *Eucalyptus* trees that threaten to overwhelm the site. Every single visit, he told me, is different. In my own experience I found this to be true; the time of day, the time of year – all of these aspects affected my experience of the site. This is because this particular heritage site is responsive to all the elements that surround it. And this shifting fluidity and responsiveness adds to the sense of ambiguity at the site, because although the engravings have been here for so long, there have been many changes around them, and there still could be.

TRACING THE ENGRAVINGS AND IMPROVISATION

I will begin my analysis of our various activities by looking at Alex Halligey's tracing of the engravings with her fingertips. I start with this interaction, because from what I observed during my very first visit to the site, this is one of first impulses people respond to when they notice the engravings.



Halligey begins her improvisation process lying on and being surrounded by the engravings.

PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy

Halligey designed her own intervention that began with a free-form physical improvisation inspired by external stimuli, which meant that she was being responsive to the specifics of the environment. The improvisation began with her lying on the rocks, over a set of engravings with her eyes closed and paying close attention to the prompts offered by her surroundings and mediated through her senses. This period of focussed attention led to a process of physically moving through the space with closed eyes, then responding directly to the engravings by tracing them first with her eyes closed and then open.

During the course of the improvisation her physical interaction with the markings changed from tracing to tapping. This was a result of her sense that where tracing seemed to place her in the role of observer, the process of tapping along them more closely simulated the process of making them. The engravings are officially described as being 'pecked' into the rock and they are not smooth, but rather made up of layers of hundreds of tiny marks. Tapping over the engravings with her fingers gave Halligey an insight into how the makers might have been positioned when they made the engravings, as well as how the patterns developed. This was an embodied way to follow what might have been their process and re-imagine through her own shifts in body position, the process of making the engravings. She described this as giving her an insight into: "the processual, not thinking of the image as a whole but the journey of the making of the thing" (Halligey, pers comm, 2017).

I would argue that this insight into how the engravings might have been made is enhanced when exploring them with one's eyes closed. This type of sensory interaction leads one to ask questions not from the perspective of thinking through, but rather from feeling, from a tactile engagement, as Ingold suggests. Halligey commented on how, tracing the engravings with eyes closed, one can feel what it is to follow the line without having your eyes resolve the picture (Halligey, pers comm, 2017). This links in a way to the need to acknowledge vagueness and a lack of storyline at the site, because with eyes closed there is visually a lack of line but there is the *feel* of the line and the final form is emergent. Considering the process of making also leads to questions about whether those sets of engravings that are linked to others were joined together as they were made, or if these linking lines were added afterwards. This development in the embodied engagement from tracing to tapping also emphasises the responsiveness of arts-based interactions to shifts in thinking.



Halligey traces the engravings with eyes open.

PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy

Repetition

As Halligey engaged with the relationships between and development from one pattern to another, questions surfaced around the possible processes of repetition at the site. In our discussions we speculated that individual artworks might have been returned to and added to over the years (Halligey, Knight & Blatcher, pers comm, 2017). This is a feature of many painted rock art sites and this idea of adding to previous paintings and the meaning of palimpsests like this, is something researchers such as Lewis-Williams have been considering for many years. He maintains that previous paintings would not have gone unnoticed and that paintings added afterwards may well have been responding to these, creating layers of meaning (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 171). He also draws a clear distinction between the intangibility of ritual or performance at these sites, and the tangibility of the traces that were left behind (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 171).

Lewis-Williams' description is of /Xam figurative rock paintings, but it adds to a possible understanding of the engravings at Driekopseiland, in that it explores this idea of adding to, and of repetition. It also highlights the importance of considering the material as well as the ephemeral when considering rock art of any kind, whether it be paintings or engravings – an important connection to this idea of both the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. The engravings are

the lasting marks that have stemmed from an ephemeral practice. And this is what makes Driekopseiland so compelling and gives it such gravity: the process of producing them seems to have placed an emphasis on this live-ness, and then on the continuity of its evidence, even though their original purpose is lost in time.

Lewis-Williams' quote also links to an idea of Morris', which it is important to mention here. Professor Morris emphasised, in our first interview, the importance of understanding these images as being made by individuals. He acknowledges that they are influenced by a sense of culture, and that there is an over-arching culture guiding their design and function; but in his opinion it is misleading to assume that all makers within a culture are inextricably tied to a narrow and uniform set of ideas (Morris, pers comm, 2017). Lewis-Williams' ideas support this and suggest that individual contributions were regarded as important and distinct by other artists and viewers at the time that they were made (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 171).

The sense of repetition and re-inscription at the site is something that my colleagues commented on as well. Halligey felt that this had implications in terms of how the site should be studied, and that it represents "an on-going process of repetition and of... re-visiting", so in terms of research at the site "to know it, to keep re-visiting, seems like a good approach" (Halligey, pers comm, 2017). The images of the engravings seem to bear out theories on the importance of repetition as many of them reflect patterns that are present in the landscape around the site, such as leaf shapes, water marks, snakes, insects and soil imprints.

Animism

Other aspects of Halligey's improvisation, which focused on embodiment and the sensory stimuli of the site, also offered important insights. Observing the effects of the wind, temperature, sunlight and sound on her body and on the site itself during the course of the improvisation, drew strong connections with Morris' ideas on animism. During my interview with him, Professor Morris referred to animism, describing it as a discredited anthropological idea, but saying that in his view it is important to understand that the people who created the engravings had a notion that the landscape was responding to them, as they were to it, that all the aspects of this site respond to one another in a complex way and that people are part of that system (Morris, pers comm 2017). In his thesis Morris describes the emphasis he believes the makers placed on the responsiveness of various environmental elements of the site as constituting a "relational conception of the world" (Morris, 2012: 51). And he goes on to suggest that "in this context elements of the environment may have been invested with an active animist role as social 'beings' implicated in the circumstances and situations where rock art came to be made" (Morris, 2012: 51).

When I explored the site alone, I agreed with this view and observed that the engravings also symbolise an instance where people chose to clearly mark their presence in this environmental system, in a way that was intended to be permanent and has proved to be so, remaining unchanged for many years.

The influence of the environment

Part of Halligey's improvisation involved intense observation and a heightening of her awareness of the effects of the elements on her body, in a way that gave them an "active role" (Morris, 2012: 51) as contributors to her activity. In my interview with her, she detailed how her improvisation was guided by "the feedback that [my] senses were giving me" (Halligey, pers comm 2017) and that throughout the improvisation she maintained a "heightened sensory awareness" (Halligey, pers comm 2017 for a full transcript of this interview see Appendices). The value of an embodied process of exploration is made very clear in Halligey's account, as she describes her interaction and thinking being influenced by things like the temperature of the rock on her skin or the changes in light coming through her closed eyelids. These are the fine details that a trained performer will notice and respond to, but they are also sensory experiences that could be highlighted as part of an embodied interaction with the site undertaken by any visitor. It is simply a case of becoming more aware of sensory stimuli, which I would argue has the potential to deepen and enrich the visitor's engagement with the site, allowing the visitor to access and author a reading of their own.

This particular engagement conducted by Halligey offered us insights in a number of different areas. Improvising around tracing and tapping the lines of the engravings enrolled her as maker rather than observer, and doing so with her eyes closed gave her the opportunity to think through feeling, placing an emphasis on embodiment and senses other than sight. We were also able to consider processes of repetition through looking at how the engravings related to one another, questioning which ones came first, and whether some referenced others. Thinking about repetition and about the development of the site as a whole, raised questions around how long it had taken to be created and how much time had passed between the first images and the last. Close looking and also touching of the engravings highlighted the slight differences between them in terms of technique used, which related to what Morris had said regarding always bearing in mind that the makers of these engravings were individuals, informed or guided by a culture, but still individual people.

SHOOTING A TIME-LAPSE FILM



Alex Knight created a time-lapse film in order to engage with the responsive environment of the site's surroundings. The film shows how we as a group moved through the space over the course of an afternoon and evening and also reveals the movements and presence of the natural world during that time: the clouds moving, birds entering and exiting the frame, the

river tumbling over the weir in the distance, water rippling at the edges of the exposures and the wind in the trees. Over the course of the film evening falls, the sun sets and it ends with Knight represented as a beam of torchlight making her way towards the camera to switch it off.



Night falls over Driekopseiland. This still from the time-lapse film shows Alex Knight approaching with a torch as a shaky streak of white near the left hand side of the image. PHOTOGRAPH: Alex Knight

Top: Alex Knight sets up the time-lapse camera at the site mid-afternoon. PHOTOGRAPH: Frances Slabolepszy

This film offers a macro-view of the site and the influences that act on it throughout the day and how we, for an afternoon, became part of that. The film gives the sense of the site as a living, moving space. It records the improvisation Halligey describes above and shows her lying on the rocks, the movements of her breathing visible while the wind, the clouds and the water also move

around her. It acts as a document of the processes that she was involved in during her improvisation, and is a visual reminder of how much a part of that environment one is when working at the site; how the environment, as Morris suggests, takes on an active and very significant role at sites like this one. In this way it reflects Morris' thoughts on animism being a factor to take into account when considering the circumstances in which the site was designed and made.

MAKING A GOPRO FILM

I also made a GoPro film on our last day at the site, of Halligey and I discovering the lower set of exposures. The GoPro camera is designed to capture the experience of the filmmaker as fully as possible. This relatively new camera is small and light enough to be attached to the body and produces high-definition footage shot on a wide-angle lens, so that the viewer's impression is crystal-clear, with a strong sense of periphery vision and directly from the filmmaker's perspective. This format has become a popular way to shoot adventure sports as it offers the viewer the feeling of being in the centre of the action.

In this instance, I was not suggesting that using the technique of creating a short film necessarily constituted an arts-based interaction, but rather I was interested in using it as a medium for communicating my interaction with the site as accurately as possible, attempting to give the viewer a sense of 'being there'. I decided to film the process of discovering and exploring the lower exposures of the site, further downstream. These exposures are not visible from the part of the site we had been working on, but Morris had told me about them and said they were not too far away. This meant that the film we created would show our perspective as we ventured downstream for the first time, not sure where to go or how to get to the exposures.

I chose to start this film from the car which was parked on the banks of the river, to include the journey from the top of the embankment, through a gully and down into the riverbed. This part of the process of accessing the site was an important one for me. Getting down to the site involves walking through a narrow gully in the embankment, a process that cuts off the sound of water from the weir for a while, and then spits you out into the riverbed, lower than the surrounding farmland and hemmed in by the steep embankment on one side and the tall *Eucalyptus* trees on the other, and with the sound of rushing water drawing you towards the weir and the exposures. As a way to enter the site, I thought this process was an important one to record and reflect on.

The GoPro footage of our explorations downstream shows how we had to pick our way over rocks and through thick grass to find a way to the exposures. Here, we were improvising in the more everyday sense, and everything we said, as well as every fumble and wrong turn we made was being

recorded. I thought this was very valuable in that it meant that our immediate responsiveness to the site – struggling through undergrowth or worrying about snakes – was documented. This spoke to the spontaneity and immediacy that are so important to Ingold and Spolin, and provided a way to capture these ephemeral aspects of our experience.



When we reached the downstream exposures, I tried to keep the movements and perspective of the camera as close to mine as I could, so that the footage reflects as accurately as possible the experience of arriving at and seeing an entirely new set of engravings for the first time. Interestingly, I think the GoPro camera offers the sort of wide-angle macro-view that I had initially been thinking of when first introduced to the site in 2016. I think it might also offer a whole new way to think about access and participation at the site. Given the decision to open a visitor's centre at Wildebeestkuil rather than Driekopseiland, accessibility to the site is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, but this type of film could give viewers access to the site and a very real sense of involvement and participation without their having to journey there. Perhaps this is one way to respond to questions around access in a way that still protects the site, while also making its content more widely known by drawing on developments in technology.

Stills from GoPro film by Frances Slabolepszy. Top to bottom: the view from the farmlands above the river; entering the gully to get down to the river bed; setting off into the unknown; seeing the lower set of exposures for the first time.

These two films offered us insights into how the engravings form part of the landscape and are influenced by it; the effects of water, light, wind and animals on the site as a whole; and also how we as visitors fitted into that site on that day. The GoPro film provided a sense of how we move, see and improvise through the space as visitors and researchers and offered possible ways to record and share that. These were all very useful insights in that they offered a way to access and engage with this heritage site that could be undertaken by any visitor.

SKETCHING THE ENGRAVINGS



Other arts-based interactions at the site included sketching it, which provided an insight into how the images might have been constructed. Like the tracing exercise, it brought up questions of what lines came first and last, and how the shape emerged. Was the final pattern improvised or planned ahead, and how were the images understood

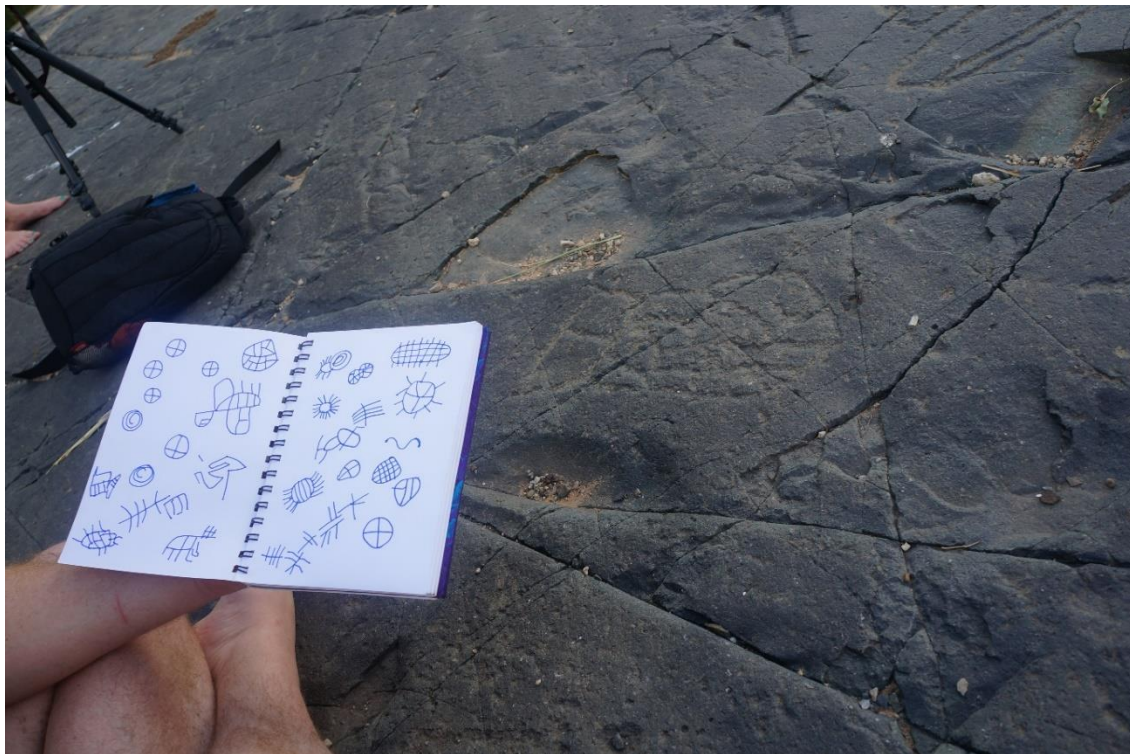
to respond to one another? Lewis-Williams, referring to the traditions of /Xam figurative rock art, mentions that there is an accepted order in which a creature is painted. In the case of an eland this process starts with the painting of the dewlap of the animal which is a symbolically significant part of it (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 168). Considering the order in which the lines, shapes and patterns of each pictograph were engraved or 'pecked' is something that one becomes very aware of when trying to re-create it in a sketchbook. Compared to photography, sketching is a good example of how an embodied process opens up knowledge and focuses one's investigation. Photography simply captures an entire image in one moment, yet sketching means one has to decide where to start the line and how to get to the next line, which gives one a sense of the process of development of each pattern. This is very different to the view provided by photography, where everything is captured from the perspective of "one, single totalizing gaze" (Ingold, 2007: 16). The viewer does not ask the same questions around the process and development of the engravings when they are captured in a photograph. Sketching offered insights into the finer details of the process of making and also encouraged us to consider how the engravings developed – whether they were planned or improvised and how they were intended to be read in relation to one another.

INTERVIEW DISCUSSIONS

During the interviews I conducted, my colleagues commented on various tactile aspects of the site, which an embodied interaction with it had highlighted. Halligey mentioned how exceptional it was

to be able to feel the engravings on her skin, as well as the realisation that you are standing exactly where the people who made the engravings would have been (Halligey, pers comm, 2017).

This brings to mind Taylor's emphasis on presence when it comes to the repertoire, on the importance of "'being there', being a part of the transmission" (Taylor 2003: 20). Blatcher also commented on the feeling of walking on the surface of the engravings, describing it as a visceral and intimate experience (Blatcher, pers comm 2017).



Some of Blatcher's sketches alongside the engravings as they appear on the exposures.

Previous page: Blatcher sketching at the site.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Frances Slabolepszy

The uniqueness of this experience is emphasised by the fact that the ground surrounding the exposures of rock on which the engravings appear is particularly sharp, stony and covered in thorns. So this sense of being elevated and protected, crossing a space that is pleasant to engage with barefoot, is quite remarkable. Knight also commented on the physical interaction with the engravings but she mentioned that she thought there should be some sort of demarcation, 'red tape' in her words, around the engravings. She said she felt that this would protect them, and also that it would enshrine the sacred nature of the site (Knight, pers comm, 2017). This was an interesting comment for me, in that it highlighted that the separation and constructedness that is often a product of 'traditional' museum practices involving glass cases, restricted access and text panels, can be a positive thing as well. Knight did say though, that she felt it was incredibly special

that we had had the opportunity to interact so closely with the engravings (Knight, pers comm, 2017).

After our group discussion on the rocks, from which these comments were drawn, my colleagues and I lay down on the engravings looking up at the sky. It was evening and as the stars began to appear Halligey remarked that the stars were similar to the engravings in that they are always there, always shining in the sky, but invisible by day. They appear as night falls in the same way that the engravings appear before your eyes as soon as you know what to look for (Halligey, pers comm, 2017). Like the stars, the way the engravings have been read over the centuries has changed, even though they themselves have just been there, appearing every day, shifting according to how much sunlight there is and remaining as indelible marks even as the world around them has changed.

INSIGHTS

The arts-based interactions that we conducted at Driekopseiland demonstrated, then, that these approaches offer a way to view heritage sites as experiential and embodied and therefore have the potential to make them more accessible to visitors. The interactions we undertook encouraged the visitor to experience the site from the position of the makers and to be aware of themselves as participants within the site. Our explorations raised questions and encouraged consideration about the environment that surrounds the site and the development of the processes of making that it represents.

The scope of this research report does not extend to specific recommendations as to how visitors should interact with the site, as it is not my intention to be prescriptive in this way. But our practical research at the site suggested that an invitation for visitors to spend time there, take their shoes off and interact physically with the site paying close attention to sensory stimuli, would produce new insights and perspectives. Rather than an attempt to produce a set of particular recommendations, my research was an exploration and consideration of multiple possibilities of interaction with the site and the insights these uncovered. My aim was to open up possible new ways to view the site and then invite other researchers and visitors to engage with these possibilities. If I had to make one suggestion, it would be that visitors start with the understanding that their own personal process of discovery at the site, in whatever form that takes, is where their research of the site begins. Their presence, questions, experience and insights are an integral part of the heritage of the site and contribute to our understanding of it.

There is value in this approach in that it opens up new ways of seeing and interacting with the site, and it does not rely on the skills of the visitor or participant. In the case of my fieldwork, the way the

participants used their training wasn't about specialist skill, it was about seeing the site through fresh, different approaches and being ready to inhabit it for a long time and see what insights arose from this observation. All of the interactions we experimented with invite an embodied response. Visitors need no specific training to become involved physically; they only need permission to explore in this way. This permission comes from an art-based approach and not from more traditional scientific or archaeological approaches. And it involves an invitation to simply be present in the space, be aware of what is around you, and be encouraged to play. I argue that approaches like this allow the visitor to think about the site differently, giving them permission to occupy the site and begin to create their own understanding. Arts-based approaches do not necessarily prescribe what people should do at the site, but offer possibilities that encourage visitors to linger, visit and re-visit the site.

As I have detailed in this chapter, each of the arts-based interactions we undertook at the site offered us specific insights that deepened and enriched our experience and understanding of the site as a whole. Halligey's improvisation that traced the lines of the engravings suggested how the makers might have been positioned when they were making them. It also surfaced questions about how they might have been created, in terms of which part came first, whether they were linked before or afterwards, and whether the engravings were created in response to one another, or as a pattern of repetition and return over many years. Sketching the engravings raised similar questions and considerations. And every single interaction we undertook emphasised the importance of the macro-view, highlighting the presence and significance of the environmental surroundings. Halligey's improvisations, as well as the two films we created, captured the expansive landscape that surrounds the site as well as the impact of light, wind, water and wildlife on this constantly shifting place. This desire to observe and engage with the site on a macro-level was the inspiration for my engagement with the site at the very beginning. It had stemmed from the story Morris told us on my first visit, about looking back down the length of the river bed and seeing it as a giant snake. I felt that an arts-based approach to this site would surface connections like this quickly and effectively and looking at the material gathered during the fieldwork I believe this has proved to be true.

RIVERBED FORUM

In conclusion: a beginning



A portion of the site near the weir.

PHOTOGRAPH: Alex Knight

The conclusion to this research report is an invitation to continue exploring multiple possibilities for knowledge production and engagement at the site, as a result of the insights gained through my fieldwork. Rather than wrapping up my findings and prescribing a tested methodology, I see this summary as an opportunity to inspire and open up ways to approach this site and others like it, that draw widely on different disciplines and ways of seeing. This is in keeping with Diana Taylor's belief that ways of producing knowledge should be frequently re-examined, assessed and added to (Taylor 2003: xix). This should be an opening up and a setting off on "pathways" (Ingold, 2007: 15), rather than a conclusive summary of the possibilities.

At the outset of this project I was interested in considering the potential for bringing an arts-based approach to bear on a reading of this site. This was in order to reveal new insights into how actively engaging with the site through arts-based interactions might enrich the researcher or visitor's experience of it. My research at the site was inspired by the prospect of drawing together different ways of seeing and developing understanding at this site. After visiting it for the first time, I wanted

to consider how the techniques and tools of theatre could be used to unpack and investigate the complex workings of heritage at this site. Driekopseiland is a site where countless layers of meaning, human interaction and history play off against each other. My aim was to explore ways of responding to these myriad cues in the moment, in a way that is embodied, values personal process and is accessible to people who are not trained performers.

This research report began with an in-depth description of the site itself, locating it geographically, historically and as a site of South African heritage. These were factors that formed the basis of my consideration of the site. Analysing the complex notion of heritage refined my sense of what the site has been called upon to stand for and mean over the centuries, as well as how those requirements are likely to continue to shift and change in the future. My investigation of the complex and currently much-used phrase 'heritage' surfaced the idea that the site itself can be seen as a symbol of this complicated notion, encompassing the ideas of tangible, intangible and 'living' heritage. As such it is a rich and relevant place from which to consider the methods researchers and visitors use to engage with the concept of heritage. It is also a place that has the potential to contribute to evolving definitions of heritage. An arts-based approach to the site offers new methods for understanding it and adds to the redefinition of heritage.

I also considered the landscape the site forms a part of, an important aspect of David Morris' work on Driekopseiland (2002). This involved a study of its status as a landmark and what that has meant for its protection as well as access to it by the public over the years. This process revealed how the impact of people forms another set of complex layers of influence at the site. All those who have come into contact with it – from the makers of the engravings, to the surveyors who drew up the boundary lines that strive to protect it, to the visitors and tourists of 2017 – have had an effect on the site, and my argument is that arts-based practices acknowledge these countless interactions, while continuing to add dynamic, embodied engagements to the mix. Encouraging people to relate to the site in this way also strengthens their sense of connection to the site – and has the potential to ensure its continued protection as a broader audience of participants are made aware of it.

The theorists whose writing related to the explorations I planned for the site were drawn from the established fields of theatre and performance and included Mark Fleishman (2012), Diana Taylor (2003), Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006) and Viola Spolin (1963). Adding their discipline-specific perspectives to the outline of the site that I had constructed was a process that reflected the addition of hand-drawn annotations to an already existing map. This is an idea that Tim Ingold sees as rich in symbolism, and I think his words are relevant here particularly in terms of embodiment and the sense that the work of understanding at the site will never be concluded. Ingold refers to this

sort of map as “the conversational product of many hands”, saying that “the map grows line by line as the conversation proceeds, and there is no point at which it can ever be said to be truly complete” (Ingold, 2007: 85). The engagements I planned at the site were a combination, like Ingold’s map, of the ideas of these theorists as well as my own ideas and personal experience. When put into practice at the site and combined with the process of embodiment of individual participants informed by their own backgrounds and disciplines, a space for conversation was created that was the “product of many hands”, and that shows no sign of ending.

This conceptual understanding of the continuous process of developing knowledge is reflected on the ground at the site. As one of the participants in the fieldwork, Thomas Blatcher, pointed out during our group discussion, there is no evidence of there being one particular point of entry at the site, no obvious part of the site suggests a beginning or an ending. Morris said he always takes visitors to the same place on the rocks before introducing it to them, but this is a spot he has chosen; there is no place where the site seems to ‘start’. He mentioned a previous plan to structure a walk through the site for visitors that had them starting at the downstream set of exposures that Halligey and I discovered in our GoPro video and finishing at the weir, but again this would have been a route chosen rather than suggested by the content of the site (Morris, pers comm, 2017). The engravings simply emerge in the river bed and disappear under the dust and grass at its edges. For me this supports an approach that is not prescriptive but that emphasises the personal process. Blatcher commented that the site can be seen as “one long thought” (Blatcher, pers comm, 2017). I think an arts-based approach to the site offers a physical way for viewers to enter the stream of that thought at any point in its unfolding and follow it for a while like a river. This also provides a way to respond to the ambiguity of the site and its many unanswered questions. And it constitutes an alternative way to interact with heritage that steers away from definitive summarised narratives that explain the origins, purpose and meaning of a site, but rather open it up to interpretation by all visitors.

The interactions that my colleagues and I undertook at the site offered insights into how visitors might experience knowledge production at the site through arts-based practices. Our embodied exploration opened up questions about how the engravings were made and how they related to one another, which were informed not only by close looking and a tactile engagement with them, but also by a consideration of all the sensory stimuli in action at the site.

The value of these interactions can be summed up in a comparison between the process of photographing an engraving versus tracing it with a fingertip. In the first instance, the details are captured all in one moment (Ingold, 2007: 16), from a distance. In the second, as Halligey discovered

through her meticulous exercise in tracing the lines, the shape and position of the visitor's own body reflects that of the makers of the engravings; the visitor, as participant, can follow the pathways of the engravings and the reflections this surfaces in terms of how they relate to one another, and the order in which they were pecked into the rock. In this way, visitors are involved in a durational process in which connections emerge and can be followed through physical gesture and movement, as opposed to the momentary, disembodied experience of taking a photograph. We did, however, make use of cameras at the site: to document our interactions; to create films that considered the site within the broader, living landscape (for example in the time-lapse film); or to illustrate the experiences of participants from their own point of view (with the GoPro video).

Taken as a whole, these interactions represented a way to approach the site that understands experience as a way to develop knowledge, and personal engagement with others at the site as a way to share insights. From my very first visit to the site I had been interested in seeing what it would mean to fill it up with people, rather than viewing it as an abandoned space that had once been the site of practices that may have involved many people. Seeing it inhabited during that first visit by the History of Art students and then by my invited colleagues completely changed the experience, compared to my exploration of it alone, during my fieldwork. I think there is scope here for further exploration in future with more visitors.

Lewis-Williams has a theory, which is referred to by Morris, with regards to the placement of rock paintings in relation to the particularities of the rock. He suggests that where features like natural cracks appear in the rock, there is an interaction between the images painted on them and the rock surface (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 166). The way the paintings are placed suggests that the rock face was not merely the surface for the paintings, but rather an intrinsic part of the understanding of the images themselves. At Driekopseiland one cannot help feeling that this is also true, that the great andesite exposures, criss-crossed with dead-straight cracks are: "not a meaningless tabula rasa" but rather "a distinct context – a mediator between realms" (Lewis-Williams, 2015: 166). Mobilising arts-based practices at the site takes cognisance of this fact, seeing the engravings as prompts rather than an end in themselves, and using this impetus to extend our understanding in multiple directions. The site becomes a map, not to read but to walk through. If we understand the surface of the rock as having once represented a borderline between realms, embodied arts-based practices allow us to re-imagine this surface as a skin that can be inhabited, offering a new perspective on the site.

I have argued that the site and the engravings that mark it offer a distinct context for considering heritage and its complexity. They are also tangible, robust examples of mediators between different

realms of time – the time during which they were created and the time in which they are viewed – that encourage a physical engagement which is embodied, participatory and personal. These processes of exploration surface questions about how heritage is defined, produced and protected in South Africa. With its inconclusive narrative and strong sense of ambiguity, this is the sort of place where visitors should be encouraged to consider questions around what heritage means and their relationship to it, rather than have the answers provided for them. The site has the potential to encourage visitors to engage not only with questions of the history of the site itself, but with questions around the nature of heritage in South Africa and what it means to them.

Questions about the site regarding what the engravings were for, what rituals they represent and what their story is, are driven by a very particular epistemology – a desire, as Halligey says, “to know the facts, to know the chronology, to be able to break it down” (Halligey, pers comm, 2017). But I have argued that another enormously valuable approach is to inhabit the site, experience it and engage with it, rather than to absorb facts about it. And this is something that is true of other heritage sites in South Africa, particularly at a time in our history when the relevance, meaning and purpose of heritage is frequently being brought into question. After her interactions with the site, during our interview, Halligey said that, imagining herself in the role of one of the makers, it seemed less important to understand the meaning or reasons behind the engravings and more important to pay close attention to the fact that they are there, that they have been made and made in a way that has meant they have been a permanent feature of this landscape for hundreds of years (Halligey, pers comm, 2017).

This comment links directly to one made by Professor Morris during my first interview with him at the site, where he said that he feels that this site represents a place where the doing, the making itself, are what is important. It is unlikely that these engravings were intended to be read alone; they are part of something else which we cannot know anymore, but it is the fact that they were made, the fact that they represent a doing of something, an “event” (Fleishman, 2012: 136), a coming together and a ritual marking, that is most important. And it is the fact that we as visitors or researchers are *doing* something with them that is significant. Engaging with them and making the broader public aware that they form part of our heritage as South Africans, is more important than the definitive narrative of their origin. To refer back to Bleek’s description of the women singing, “the burden of the tune” (Bleek, cited in Morris, 2012: 214) in this case is kept up by the people visiting and considering the site today.

The marking of the site contributes to its being seen as a site that mattered then, and still matters now. It matters now because it is covered in engravings, but it must have always have mattered as a

potential water source, as a border, or as a site of ritual. The many layers of significance of the site, as a border, as a water source, as a site considered important enough to mark with these engravings, and now as a site of heritage, should all be engaged with by the visitor. I propose that arts-based, embodied practices go a long way toward fulfilling these requirements. And that beyond that, they suggest that as a heritage site, this is a place for debate, for critical examinations of what heritage means for the individual as well as South Africans as a collective. This is a site for personal exploration and thinking around identity, history and our participation in the creation of these concepts. In this way, the site ultimately has the potential to become an outdoor forum for experiencing, understanding and sharing heritage.



'Being there': Halligey and Slabolepszy at the site in 2017.

PHOTOGRAPH: Alex Knight.

APPENDICES

Please see the accompanying flash drive for the Appendices which include:

- Driekopseiland Time lapse Film – by Alex Knight
- Driekopseiland GoPro Film – by Frances Slabolepszy
- Photographs – taken and edited to show variations in colour and clarity by Alex Knight
 - Fig. 1 – Fig. 30: details of the engravings at Driekopseiland.
 - Fig. 31: Alex Knight sketches the surroundings. (Photo taken by Thomas Blatcher).
 - Fig. 32: Frances Slabolepszy, Thomas Blatcher and Alex Halligey explore the exposures close to the weir.
 - Fig. 33: Alex Halligey and Frances Slabolepszy sit to study the exposures closely.
 - Fig. 34: Frances Slabolepszy with both hands touching the engravings.
 - Fig. 35: Alex Halligey studies the engravings.
 - Fig. 36: Frances Slabolepszy and Alex Halligey trace the engravings with fingertips.
 - Fig. 37: Alex Halligey lies on the exposures at the beginning of her improvisation.
 - Fig. 38: Thomas Blatcher sketches the patterns of the engravings.
 - Fig. 39: Alex Halligey and Frances Slabolepszy consider the engravings and the cracks that cover the exposures.
- Photographs of sketches made during fieldwork – drawn and then photographed by Frances Slabolepszy
 - Fig. 40 - 42: Sketches in black fineliner of engraving patterns.
 - Fig. 43 – 44: Rubbings of engravings made using red and blue Artline markers.
- Interview Notes from interviews during the fieldwork.

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