

Abstract

Statistics indicate that over the past 16 years (since the year 2000), there have been over 30 black lesbians in South Africa, who have been victims of rape (and in some cases, brutal murder as well) as a result of homophobic violence, which is aimed at “curing” lesbians of their homosexuality. The aim of this research report is to examine how activist methods, such as art exhibitions and public performances, are challenging homophobic violence. The report explores the effectiveness of activist artworks (which include public performances and works by South African artists Zanele Mutholi and Gabrielle Le Roux) in raising awareness and educating South Africans about homophobic violence, which is a daily reality for many members of the South African LGBTQ community. For the purpose of this report, the *Queer and Trans Art-iculations* exhibition, which was held at the Wits Art Museum (WAM) in 2014, is compared to the annual Johannesburg Pride parade of 2012. These events are analysed in terms of their effectiveness in creating awareness about homophobic violence and how they can improve on being more informative and effective in the future. The importance of this research is to add to the existing body of work around art activism as it explores the ways in which activist artists attempt to make social and political change regarding the South African LGBTQ community.