

**BIOGRAPHICAL AND CURATORIAL NARRATION OF A BLACK ARTIST FROM
THE VAAL REGION: 1980-1994 REFLECTION ON THE WORKS OF
GAMAKHULU DINISO**

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature 

Date 06/03/2018

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A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CURATORIAL NARRATION OF A BLACK ARTIST FROM THE VAAL REGION, 1980-1994

Abstract

The absence of black visual artists of the Vaal region from the literature of art in South Africa from 1980-1994 is of serious concern, especially in view of their participation and contribution to the artistic, cultural and socio-political developments that took place during this period. This absence has contributed towards the marginalisation of artists, whilst it also distorts a readers' knowledge and deprives them of access to the contribution that this black artist and other black artists made to the corpus of South African art and to the art world, in general. It is this absence that inspired me as a researcher to narrate the life and artistic journey of Diniso Gamakhulu, through a combination of biographical writing and curatorial practice. The study employs two essential methods, namely written theoretical reflection, and curatorial projects as a way of remembering the much contested slogan for liberation from the apartheid era: "culture as a weapon of the struggle" (Pissarra 2011:3). Both methods elucidate the way in which archives are significant in narrating the biography of an artist. The use of archival material provided ways to study analyse and frame Diniso's contribution critically within South African art practices, art discourses and curatorial practices.

Introduction

“Today, artists in the globalized art scene have been repeating diverse and politically correct discourse about the disappearance of borders and trans-cultural crossovers. Some have experienced voluntary or forced economic or political migration” (Carolee Thea 2009:13). Edward Said reveals that a number of artists have emigrated to other countries rather than remain in their country of origin, which creates a division between centre and periphery, primitive and contemporary. However, this has been the case with most artists on the African continent especially in South Africa due to the Apartheid regime. This is why the art from the political past still has a huge influence. There was also the economic factor that drew black artists abroad (Edward, 2009:13). *“After decades of cultural isolation followed by trans-cultural crossovers, the discourse of the development of post-colonialism and globalization theory in curatorial practice and in art itself can be dangerously homogenizing”* (Edward, 2009:14).

The 1980s in South Africa are remembered for the heightened political turmoil. It was a turning point in the evolution of the South African political landscape when the apartheid government began to weaken due to the increased pressure from political organisations, such as the United Democratic Front, and organised cultural activities that included festivals, conferences and exhibitions (Pissarra 2011:5). That was the decade when art was increasingly used as a *‘political tool’*, remembering the slogan, *Culture as a weapon of the struggle* against apartheid and for liberation (Pissarra 2011:3).

The Vaal Triangle is scattered with historical heritage sites. Apart from all the well-known Anglo-Boer War memorials and the sites of the signing of key treaties. The ground-breaking Constitution that governs South Africa’s legal system was signed in Sharpeville, Sedibeng, one of the districts within Gauteng Province, with three local municipalities located within its boundaries. Class divisions, separate and substandard education (so-called Bantu Education), and whites-only areas defined the space. Forced removals to specific locations such as Soweto, the Sharpeville uprising, Pass Law protests, the consequences of legislated race categories, and the conviction of Nelson Mandela at the Treason Trial in the 1960s, sowed the seeds of a new art form

in South African art history, which came to be known as '*protest art*' or '*resistance art*' (Jephson 1989). Under these circumstances, art became a cultural weapon, the visual 'voice' of the people, as it was an immediate and direct means of communicating the oppressive nature of apartheid.

The works of black artists embody specific themes embedded in shared personal experiences and memories from the apartheid era. Some of the issues mentioned by Joel SM, Modiri (2011:180) are various hierarchies of power and privilege that, through the perversions of the legal process, have come to threaten the higher values of our society, which, as black people, artists have to deal with every day and so produce artworks as a reflection of this experience.

Diverse artists and cultural workers were active and contributed immensely to this important decade in the history of South Africa. Their involvement in protest art, social activism, community work and political organisations played a crucial role in the struggle history, which led South Africa to democracy in 1994. These artist and cultural workers came from different backgrounds, and operated differently from within and beyond their communities or locations both within and outside South Africa.

However, the dominant or mainstream art literature on this rich and complex history does not cover certain artists. Those outside art centres such as Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban are either excluded or marginalised from the written history of South African art from the 1980s. It is therefore necessary to revisit 1980s literature in order not only to contribute to (re)writing it, but also to put on display a curatorial project with artworks and archival material of a black artist from the Vaal region, active in the South African visual arts during the period 1980-1994. This research focuses on the artist Gamakhulu Diniso (b.1956), by narrating his stories through biographical elements, performance and a curatorial project, towards establishing his importance and contribution to the history of South African art during the period 1980-1994.

This absence of the contribution of black visual artists of the Vaal region from the historical record of Fine Art in South Africa during the important period 1980-1994 is of serious concern, especially in view of their noteworthy participation and contribution to artistic, cultural and socio-political developments that took place during this period.

This absence has contributed towards their marginalisation, whilst it also distorts readers' knowledge and deprives them of access to the contribution of many black artists in South Africa and beyond. The handful of supposedly representative publications, mainly authored by white writers, has become a point of reference in theorising and historicising the status of contemporary South African art in the literature. There is paucity of black art literature amongst publications that form a model for the purposes of teaching and learning about arts and culture in schools, colleges and universities including broader readership, which includes, for example Steven Sack's *Neglected Tradition: Towards a New History in South African Art 1938-1988* (1988), Gavin Younge's *Art of the South African Townships* (1988) and Sue Williamson's *Resistance Art in South Africa* (1989). These authors also belong to institutions of higher learning like Gavin Younge at the University of Cape Town, and Steven Sacks at Wits University. Some of this noteworthy literature in visual arts emerged in the 1980s, as art scholars actively wrote about visual artists and their artworks.

However, all too often, contents of such literature is dominated by problematic labels like '*township art*', when referring to artworks by black artists, as can be observed in Gavin Younge's book, *Art of the South African Townships* (1988). This racial problem exists, despite Younge's claim that '*township art*' played an important role towards ending apartheid, when we consider Matsamela Manaka's argument about how this label focuses more on the negativity of social arts that portrayed the township life and the political struggles in South Africa. Artworks of black artists were seen primarily to be dealing with boycotts, forced removals, suffering and death, amongst other subjects that entrapped them within problematic labels or '*racial tagging*' (Goniwe 2003) such as '*township art*' (Younge 1988) and '*resistance art*' (Williamson 1989). In the book *Echoes of African Art* (1987), Manaka refers to '*township art*' as '*self-pity art*', even though it depicts black artists' daily lives in the township (Figure 1). This label of '*township art*', it has been convincingly argued, evinces the racist arrogance of white South African art historians, and Manaka rightly questioned why artworks by white artists living in the cities, towns and suburbs are not in turn given the moniker '*suburban art*' (Manaka 1987:15).

In focusing on Gamakhulu Diniso, this research has examined the artist's absence

from the history of South African art literature during the period 1980-1994. The research has established the extent to which this exclusion has affected the artist and his development in visual art production. It has also tackled discrepancies and negative labels indicative of misinterpretations and misunderstanding inherent in the manner in which black artists are written about in South African art literature.

This research shows that, in the period between 1980-1994, black artists from the Vaal region were extremely active in the arts. During this period, Diniso's artworks were dealing with ordinary, yet important daily activities pertaining to the struggle that South Africans were facing. Artworks of this artist (and many others from the Vaal region) were used for book covers, on invitation cards for exhibition openings and illustrations for newspaper articles [see Figures 1, 2, 9, 10 & 11].

Despite the evidence noted above, there is no serious literature written on this artist and his artworks. This neglect speaks to Ralph Ellison's commentary that, as a black man (or black woman) "*I am invisible... understand, simply because people refuse to see me*" (cited as an epigraph in Mills 1998:n.p). Writing about Diniso and his artworks has therefore unearthed and acknowledged his sense of self-worth and acknowledgement, as Laurie Adams (1993:109) argues, "*authors writing on the dignity of man [as in] the revival of Classical texts further contributed to the artist's emergence from the relative anonymity.*"

This research involves three inter-related (inextricable) components: writing the dissertation, a performance, and a curatorial project. In this regard, the research has mapped out a visual narrative that is historical and reflective of the practice of meaning and knowledge production, especially in the construction of individual and collective lives (Stevens, Duncan and Hook: 2013:33). The research therefore has developed an inventory that documents and contextualises the legacy of this artist and his works (see Figure 1-8).

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research was to document biographical, performance and curatorial narration on the visual artists. It investigates the extent of this absence of the black artist, Diniso from the history of South African visual art literature during the period 1980-1994. Although this artist from Sharpeville in the Vaal region was creatively active and productive during this period, he does not feature in mainstream literature on visual arts.

RATIONALE

“Curatorial practice and discourse are dialectically entwined, a consequence of a recording of practice as discourse during the last twenty-five years” (O'Neill 2012: 1). Part of the research was initially to document biographical and curatorial narration on this visual artist. However, as I embarked on the research I then realised that Diniso's entire life was dedicated to the performance arts and that performance was part of the curatorial project. This research started by investigating the extent of Diniso's absence from the history of South African visual art during the period 1980-1994, as reflected in the literature. Although this artist from Sharpeville in the Vaal region was creatively active and productive during this period, he does not feature in mainstream historical literature.

“Artist's Records as an Extension Artwork, is intended as a definitive statement on the unique and complex relationship between artists' records - the physical traces, the evidence remaining from the production of contemporary work, the artwork, and the artist” (Butler 2011:9). Ann Butler links the artists with their records and archival traces as part of the artworks. Writing is critical to visual artists, not only as a means of recording, documenting, preserving and articulating that has allowed easy navigation of facts, inferences and opinions, it also helps to add value to the history of marginalised communities and their heritage. As Linda Smith (2012:30) argues, *“writing has been viewed as the mark of a superior civilization [sic] and other societies have been judged, by this view, to be incapable of thinking critically and objectively, or having distance from ideas and emotions. Writing is part of theorizing and writing is part of history”*. This understanding is significant because in writing about Diniso, this

research contributes to the existing art literature and it has helped to bring to the fore neglected histories, of black artists and their art. This research thereby plays an important role in the representation of the visual arts and in re-writing black art history in the Vaal region.

In view of the fact that Diniso was actively producing artworks in the decade preceding the democratic dispensation in 1994, there is some learning and a sense of history telling in his artworks and knowledge to be gained thereby. Researching Diniso's biography has contributed to a more accurate representation of the biographies of artists of this time.

Writing about works in the curatorial project proposes a dialogue on artistic developments such as movements and trends or shifts in socio-politics at certain moments in society. The curatorial project is an important medium for indicating, reflecting and documenting such artistic developments, especially ideas and strategies of artists. It also functions as a way of acknowledging and commenting on or critiquing their existence and their work. This research instigates this dialogue.

The curatorial project and writing art literature has raised awareness of Diniso's artworks, its existence and the role it plays in advancing visual arts in the canon of art, which requires ever-greater global scope and complexity. Curatorial projects become an essential part of the research, initiating new debates while calling for reinterpretation or corrective representation of artists and artworks that have been neglected, or misrepresented in the past. Research and curatorial projects are important in constructing narratives that add meaning and value to artists and their artworks. By including curation as part of its mandate, this research has constructed new and refreshing narratives on a black artist, who remains marginalised and whose work suffers from inaccurate presentation and misrepresentation.

Theoretical Framework

This research will foreground the theoretical framework developed from biographical writings and monographs as core theoretical underpinnings, where curatorial practices and biographies direct their concern to the history or narration of the artists' lives,

written by another person, the researcher. It portrays a subject's ideas and experiences that are lived or performed through life events within a particular social context (Manganyi 1996, 2012). They also show how and why the artists and their works matter, through offering interpretations of their work. whilst in this way also interpreting their importance.

The biographical approach has two sets of components, "*those that emphasize [sic] the individual artist's genius ('the life of') and those that emphasize [sic] the artist's social context ('the life and times of')*" (Barnet 2003:198). The former focuses on the individual artist as the mysterious genius, whilst the latter emphasises the social context in which the artist is influenced by the social circumstances of his/her time. This biographical approach considers the life and times of the artists in ways that set the works of art in their original historical background, and in a way that is concerned with issues that affected the artists (Barnet 2003:198).

Borg (1963:19) remarks that "*historical research has been defined as the systematic and objective location, evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions about past events.*" This project includes historical research by focusing on the excluded history of the black artist, Diniso from the Vaal region as well as rewriting aspects of the history of South African visual art. It is an approach that evaluates and mines historical archives in which neglected subjects are found. It also retrieves them and makes these accessible to contemporary viewers and readers of (South African) visual arts.

This framework works with curatorial practices in a way similar to that explained by O'Neill, in Judith Rugg and Michele Sedgwick (2007:13); "*The ascendancy of the curatorial gesture in the 1990s also began to establish curation as a potential nexus for discussion, critique and debate [...] by extending the parameters of the curatorial project form to incorporate more discursive, conversational and geo-political discussion, centred within the ambit of the exhibition*". This has involved organising and arranging artworks to construct narratives about the artists' identity, history, experience and ideas. In this regard, the curator is an author, who constructs meaning through working with artists, artworks and context. As Karen Gaskill (2011) writes: "*a primary focus of the curatorial role is the public consumption of artworks and their associated contexts. The curator, in bringing a selection of works together by a solo*

artist or in a group format, situates the practices within a dynamic." It is by means of this dynamic, which is biographical in its narration, that this research undertook to explore artwork through methodological approaches belonging to practice-based research.

Research Methodology

The research is qualitative in its methodology, choosing a biographical approach, based on a narrative strategy in researching and writing about the selected artist and his artworks. This inquiry considers a biographical approach within the wider understanding of qualitative methods, wherein both theoretical and experiential investigations are combined in the research of artworks, in association with the life of the artist. A core question is asked: In what way has the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) impacted upon black artists' lives and creative spaces? This approach *"assumes a direct connection between artists, politics and their art, and it takes seriously the notion of authorship"* (Adams 1993:101) and it considers the studied artist and his artworks as part and product of the context in which he lives and works. Qualitative data has been gathered and used, such as words, pictures, artworks, videos of the interviews, etc. (Struwig & Stead 2001:13). The research has involved semi-structured and open-ended questions for the interviews, observation, newspaper articles, archival research, and analysis of photographic material as part of the qualitative enquiry.

Approach in narrative research, as explained by John Creswell (2009:13) is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher studies the lives of individuals and asks one or more individuals to provide stories about their lives and experiences. This information is then often retold or restored by the researcher and placed in a narrative chronology. This chronology will examine a sequence of events from 1980 to 1994 as the artist himself recalls them. In the end, the narrative combines views from the participant's life with those of the researcher's life in a collaborative narrative. The notion of collaborative narrative is also articulated by Garth Stevens, Norman Duncan and Christopher Hook: *"we should not think of the narrative as a story or the story, as narratives never have a single meaning for participants or their interlocutors"* (Stevens, Duncan & Hook, 2013: 33). They further explain that *"narratives are always sites in which the personal investments of speakers, listeners, the invisible interlocutors who may apprehend such*

stories, as well as the influence of the social context on our interpretations of the world converge to give rise to a constructed version of the event" (Stevens, Duncan & Hook 2010:17).

To construct narratives of the selected artist, I conducted interviews and conversations with Diniso and people related to or associated with him and his work. These interviews and conversations were limited, with some structured and others random; they should be seen in terms of, oral histories told by the artists and friends. These oral histories should have the same importance as the research done in written literature that includes articles in publications and "texts concerning the artist's life" (Adams 1993:101), texts such as "*autobiographical papers, letters, and accounts by the artist's contemporaries*" as well as "*journal entries and correspondence*" including "*visual diaries of notes, sketches*" (Tucker 2002:218).

This research considers curatorial practice as a methodological process of constructing narrative, as Paula Marincola (2006) suggests in the book: *Questions of practice: what makes a great exhibition?* For Ralph Rugoff (2006:46), curating is a procedure in which exhibitions are a form of "*packaging*" and "*reinventing*" the manner through which meaning is constructed and audiences perceive art. The curatorial act is equivalent to artistic practice, with a distinction being drawn between what and who constitutes the exhibition-as-medium and the exhibition-as-form being central to these debates (Paul O'Neill 2012:87). This research works with curatorial practice as a research method of the packaging and reinventing the history of neglected black artists from the Vaal area using Diniso as a prime example.

This aspect of fiction regarding the biographical approach is in line with the ethos of creative arts as a practice of the imagination or imaginative representation, or what Thembinkosi Goniwe (2013:23) refers to as "*[making] imagination possible or perform[ing] an imagination of the possible*". Emphasised in this approach is that, "*the imagination is precisely that which evades understanding, slips out of our grasp, is beyond our fingertips*" (Gaylard 2005:1). For this study, the collections, analysis, interpretation and presentation of data will involve processes that are located within practice-based research, explained by Jakob Doman and Anneke Laurie (2011) to be an integration of textual elements and the creation of artworks. Textual elements consider written documents whilst creation of artworks is the curation of the exhibition.

“Practice-based research”, according to Linda Candy (2006), “is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and outcomes of that practice.” Graeme Sullivan (2010:xi) explains that “art practice as research explores the capacity of visual research to create knowledge that can help us in understanding in a profound way the world we live in and how we learn to make sense of it.”

This research explores this practice-based methodology located within the field of the visual arts. It involves a combination of textual, oral and creative elements of reading, analysing, interpretation, representation and presentation of data in its biographical and curatorial narration of the works of Gamakhulu Diniso.

Qualitative data gathering has been used, such as words, pictures, artworks, and videos of the interviews (Struwig & Stead 2001:13). The study will involve semi-structured and open-ended questions for the interviewing, observation and photographs as part of the qualitative enquiry.

Ethical considerations

The researcher at all times strove to maintain objectivity and integrity in conducting research that is based on ethical responsibility and adherence to the highest possible standards of academic practice. The researcher also honoured the responsibility to foreseeing any potential harm which might befall the participants and thereafter established mechanisms that could remedy the situation should a need arise. These ethical responsibilities are imperatives, as Polonski strongly advises, which means that the research should not harm the participants in any way. Following Polonski’s advice, this research submitted itself to the Kantian precept that “persons should be treated as ends and never purely as means” (2002:56-57).

In order to facilitate ethical interaction with the artists, the researcher informed them about the purpose behind this research, and why this study is important and why it needed to be undertaken. The researcher explained the details of the study to solicit involvement. Consent forms were signed by the researched subjects and by those who were to be interviewed. The consent form established an ethical contract and mutual consolidation of the collaborative practice between the artists and the researcher.

Research Methodology, Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

As Zinn has noted, “biographical research is a wide field of different approaches and research strategies with blurred borders and overlapping areas. Therefore, it seems to be useful to orient oneself in this jungle of empirical strategies and conceptual ideas” (Zinn, 2004:3). This research on Gamakhulu Diniso focuses on the encountered narrative processes around biographical memory and history of archiving that reflects the structure of curatorial practice in a narrative as a kind of place-making.

In this study, I used four research methods, which included examination of old newspaper clippings, literature reviews, archival holdings and a curatorial project comprising an exhibition and video interviews that make up a documentary on the artist. Narrative research, as explained by John Creswell (2009:13), “*is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher studied the lives of individuals and asks one or more individuals to provide stories about their lives and experiences*”. The primary research method explored relevant theoretical material. This material included essays and Diniso’s short biographies found in published play scripts, journals, newspapers clippings, magazines and online. The above theoretical research was significant, because it provided an understanding of the contextual background and theoretical discourse concerning his work. Readings on theoretical material helped in the formulation of an argument, by looking at how different academic writers, newspaper journalists and artists view Diniso’s works of art.

Biographical research is part of the broader practice of qualitative methods, where “*qualitative research tends to espouse an approach in which theory and empirical investigation are interwoven ... during or at the end of fieldwork, rather than being a precursor to it*” (Bryman 1988:81). Newspaper articles on Diniso played a significant role in this study. The information obtained from newspaper clippings incorporated short biographies of Diniso, the way in which he started his art schools in Sharpeville, and it includes discourses on funding from the government, his art career (from being a fine artist to being a performance artist), his achievements and awards. It was discovered during the research that there is a significant number of newspaper articles available on Diniso. In fact, Diniso himself curated an exhibition in Sharpeville, to commemorate newspapers and journalists who have written about him and his work. The title of the exhibition was called *Hang on Diniso (2014)*, where the aim of the

exhibition was to pay tribute to the newspapers and journalists who captured the art that contributed to the achievement of the country's democratic dispensation (Serero 2014:6). Examining newspaper articles was therefore critical in order to understand the contextual background and theoretical debates concerning Diniso's works.

The second research method focused on archival material. For archival material I started with snowballing, where I approached different people who might have acquired Diniso's work. Firstly, I went to the National Library in Pretoria and then Cape Town, Wits Archive where I obtained information on Diniso, regarding his performances. The information included articles on Diniso's performances, his collaboration with other artists and books published on his performances. Secondly, I approached Gabi Ngcobo, who is a curator and a lecturer at Wits University, who found an image of Diniso and Sam Nhlengethwa while they were at Rorke's Drift in 1977. She was conducting a curatorial project on artists from Rorke's Drift titled *A Labour of Love* in collaboration with the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt. Thirdly, in a SABC *Morning Live* segment (2005), I found footage of Diniso's interview taped by one of his ex-students on VHS (Video Home System). The exhibition was titled *The Journey* (2005), where he exhibited 69 artworks, based on 69 people who died during the Sharpeville Massacre.

Next I conducted a video interview with people who have variously encountered Diniso. I interviewed Brent Record, who used to employ Diniso for performances while he was HoD of Community Engagement at Vaal Driehoek technikon, currently known as Vaal University of Technology. Record also mentioned that he bought greetings cards from Diniso featuring his artworks (Figure:9). He lent me one of Diniso's greeting's cards to peruse. I then decided to approach Diniso who has his own personal archive, where he stores his own work, newspaper clippings, book illustrations, greetings cards, etc. In this study, I went to different people and places for archival material, but most of the archival material used in this study was collected from Diniso himself.

The third research method was the production of original video interviews. Moriarty (2011: 8) posits that interviews remain the most common data collection method in qualitative research and are a familiar and flexible way of asking people about their

opinions and experiences. In this study, interviews on Diniso were conducted with Nico Ntema (former student of Diniso and colleague); the late Bongi Matsose (Diniso's mentor who helped him to enrol at Rorke's Drift); Rodney Hopley (a lecturer from Vaal Triangle Technikon now known as VUT, who had a working relationship with Diniso and his art school); Princess Ngcobo (one of the teachers at Rorke's Drift when Diniso was a student); Brent Record (who ran a community project under VUT and worked with Diniso); Kenneth Tekane (former student of Diniso, who worked with him to form a theatre); Sam Nhlengethwa (a schoolmate and friend when Diniso was a student at Rorke's Drift); Gloria Tshegofatso Mokgema (a former student of Diniso, who became a writer); Monte Morris Mahobe (a prominent artist who is also excluded from visual art literature in the same way as Diniso has been) and Charles Nkosi (a former artist from Rorke's Drift who worked with Diniso at Funda Art Centre), and lastly, Gamakhulu Diniso, the artist himself.

These interviews provided insight into the life of Diniso and his work as an artist. The video interviews focused on selected ideas, moments, activities and experiences that were concerned with his life and artworks. Thus, these interviews provided in-depth understanding of how those who know Diniso remember him today.

The fourth research method was a practical component. I developed this method as a strategy to analyse, read, examine and frame Diniso's curatorial project on his archives in an interactive manner, which was in the form of artworks, held at The Point of Order, Witwatersrand University on the 23rd March to 09th April 2016. The curatorial project was titled *Diniso in 3D* and was divided into three sections. The first section focused on the curatorial project of his archival artworks display, the artworks of Diniso (figures 12 to 31) from the period of 1978 to 2000. This also focused on the conversations with those who attended the opening. The performance involved relating the everyday lived stories of black people. These conversations were elicited from people who were related to Diniso one way or the other, mainly his close friends, colleagues from Funda Art Centre, former students, journalists who have written about him, classmates from Rorke's Drift, and the general passer-by. Everyone had a chance to tell interesting stories about Diniso. The artworks included Diniso's books and book covers, illustrations of his artworks in books, storytelling and in Staffrider magazines (figure 32). The curatorial project also brought attention to Diniso's earlier works before he gained interest in the performance arts. Lastly, observing Diniso's

artworks was significant, because it showed how he uses his art to fight.

The above-mentioned methods as different forms of enquiry provided alternative ways of looking at this complex history and offered a critical account of the artist's biography. In this way, Diniso's voice, historical background, context and position is scrutinised critically and his contribution to the South African art discourse is closely examined.

Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into four chapters.

Chapter 1 looks at how Gamakhulu Diniso's archive was preserved. This looks at the influence of media and literature and explores how value and context were created for Diniso's work by these structures. In turn, it demonstrates how media and patron influences were platforms of authority over Diniso's career, revealing why his work has remained relevant in the South African art scene. Based on evidence contained in the exhibition archive, this chapter examines some of the effects that these forms of authority had on his career.

Chapter 2 addresses the writing of Gamakhulu Diniso's biography. It looks at methods of writing biography and how these methods can impose certain views on the artist's life and achievements. This writing is based on video interviews with Diniso and acquaintances. This chapter scrutinises information given by him to other people and to archives. Through observation, this chapter also shows the inaccuracies in his biography and exposes the factors underlying these inaccuracies. Furthermore, it notably examines the places in which Diniso lived and worked, facilitating a deeper understanding of some of the difficulties of his biography.

Chapter 3 offers an alternative way of looking at Diniso's performance. Through performance readings, a different approach to Diniso's archive and biography is promoted and presented. Performance offers a different reading of Diniso's place by declaring the 'self' as another way of reading his public profile. This looks at the play performed on the opening night titled *Shoeville*, which was performed with the background of his old play entitled *Isizwe: the land* playing on a loop tape. This artist's public profile is examined from a self-defined position, which is often overridden by positions created for the artist by others. The performance draws on Diniso's own

voice, traced through various newspaper clippings, in which he is cited as speaking about his work. These extracts demonstrate how he presented himself in the public domain, particularly in the spaces he claimed as an artist.

The conclusion: By examining Diniso's archives, performance and biography in these groupings, the aim is to reveal that such accounts highlight complexities within methods of writing histories of art yet, at the same time, they enable a different reading of Diniso's position as an acclaimed artist. Through both the dissertation and the exhibition, this re-narration and re-interpretation of his exhibitions reflects critically on his creative and intellectual strategies, as well as his contribution to the South African art practices and discourse.

Chapter 1

BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATION AND ARCHIVING

Prince Dube points out that not all the stories that black South Africans could tell about their lives under the apartheid oppressive regime remain untold. In a catalogue essay written on the occasion of Dumile Feni's Retrospective (2006), Dube tries to capture Feni's life. Similar to Dube, I attempt to capture every significant moment of Diniso's artistic life. However, this research is written from the artist's memory and important events that the researched artist can remember or recall. The stories may vary from time to time. Certain events and moments help recall flashes of his life even though he has a very good memory of events.

This chapter deals with the biographical and archival information accessed directly from the artist and from his own personal records. Gamakhulu Diniso is a prominent black South African excluded and neglected in the visual arts history of South Africa. This exclusion and neglect is noteworthy in the canonical art historical literature of the country. Thembinkosi Goniwe (2011) has raised concerns about the artists' visibility in research, exhibition and writing of the visual arts in the Eastern Cape (and in Limpopo, Northern Cape, North West and Mpumalanga). Central to Goniwe's argument is the absence of noteworthy literature on the visual arts and artists living and working in the 'cultural margins' – areas outside of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Visual arts publications such as the journal *Art South Africa*, has described the cultural margins as "invisible presences", because of the art activities that exist but are unknown outside their immediate surroundings (Goniwe 2011:20).

The biographical approach *"would like to demarcate (linguistic, psychological) narrative research from other biographical research because of the limitation to the produced narrations and the verbal expressed self-identity"* (Zinn 2004:4). It is unfortunate that, even though we acknowledge that this biographical approach on Gamakhulu Diniso as part of life writing, that it has to be written in English instead of his native language. This also points out the invisibility of native languages in the institution and the colonised nature of language in relation to Diniso as a visual artist,

performer, script writer, director and producer within the Vaal region. The call is for visibility that will not only place Vaal artist's activities, but the artists in a broader cultural landscape in South Africa and beyond, but also offer them recognition and appreciation.

This exclusion is also glaring in historical texts of the last two decades that purport to cover South African visual arts. In this regard, literature on the South African visual arts has a huge gap in it. It is a gap that when considered in terms of politics of racial segregation brings to light the exclusion of black artists. Okwui Enwezor (1997) has pointed out that politics of racial segregation in raising the question: "*who is included or excluded from [the South African] body politic and on what terms is their admittance or exclusion rectified?*" Enwezor has also argued that South African museums have been paying the price for failing to include African artists' works in their collections, where they undertook a desperate enterprise "*of gobbling up any work made by 'black' artists*" (Enwezor 1997: 23). In this regard, Diniso's life writing and storytelling throughout his life is an alternative, yet another way of narrating and bringing inclusion within the biographical and curatorial space. This also points out how the apartheid system forced 'black artists' into the history of literature and curatorial practice in such a way that gave voice to some at the expense of others, which is apparent in the words of Manganyi quoted in Chabani, that

"behind every biography study lies another story: the story of the relationship between subject and biographer. In recent times, [there has been] substantial literature on the theory and craft of life writing". (Chabani 1996: viii).

Based on memory of the past episodes and a sense of personal identity. Most people use memory to think about personal identity and personal experience, how they recall various events that affect their lives. Klein has noted that "*memories of past actions go towards constituting personal identity*" (Klein 2012: 2).

Johannes Zenzile Diniso of the AmaGcina Clan of the AmaXhosa was Gamakhulu Diniso's father (Figure 34). He was a singer with a *Scathamiya* music group and was also a carpenter by trade. It was in this lively environment that Diniso junior acquired his performance art skills. His father who was a first born child out of 13 children; liked

to share jokes and was full of humour and was much loved by his children. Diniso's mother, Adelina Nodeathini Skosana was similarly the first born child of 11 children (Figure 35). She belonged to the Xhosa people, within the AmaTjhwane Clan. She was a designer-decorator of traditional wall painting and as she constructed her career, part of its development was to be commissioned to decorate the walls during weddings. Diniso came from a family of five children, three boys and two girls (see Annexure 1 on His Parents).

The researched artist is known to many by a variety of names, from Gamakhulu, Papi, July, Iga-Bra as many would say that behind every biography study lies another story: the story of the relationship between, Chama's, Bob Marley, and Diniso, as many of us know him, who was born in 1956, on a Sunday, during the apartheid era at Top Location Township in the Vaal Triangle, currently known as Sedibeng. Not long after his birth, forced removals at Top Location occurred at present day Teknorama around 1959 where his family experienced forced removals. The entire community was relocated to Sharpeville in 1959 and he experienced Sharpeville for the first time in 1960, with him and the other children playing in an old building when they saw three red aeroplanes flying close to the houses. As children, they were so excited to see them flying so close without knowing what was taking place. At the time, they did not know that they were headed to the police station where the Sharpeville Massacre had just taken place.

Forced removals, when the majority of the people are declared foreigners in the country of their birth, when people are crudely and ruthlessly suppressed through rushed pieces of legislation, detentions, the massacre of workers and students. Therefore, when communities resist this genocide through organising themselves into civic organisations trade unions, women's and student organisations, there has been disturbingly little visual arts output in the country and abroad which is organically related to these community efforts (Sue Williams 1989).

That memory is still fresh in his mind, as if it happened yesterday. The memory of the sharp smell of enamel paint and earthy wet sand or cement smell, the home's dog

called touch, when he arrived in Sharpeville, still remains fresh in his mind as if it all happened yesterday (Bodutu Art Gallery 2009:21). Much has transpired since then, where, due to the forced removals, he ended up losing almost everything, even his identity documents. As a result, he grew up without a birth certificate, until later in his life. The loss of these documents delayed him in various ways in his life. Mills rightly argues that *“within this social and historical framework, race becomes significant”* (Mills 1998: xx).

It is without doubt that no white child could even have imagined what a black child experienced at that age during the apartheid era. Diniso not having a birth certificate resulted in him going to school at a late stage of his life. He started school, grade one, in 1965, when he was nine years old, which inspired him to work harder than most children. He won an award from Sales House, one of the prestigious retail shops of the time. Diniso not being able to go to school at that time affected him greatly, as he was short in height, he was frequently told he needed to stay at home to grow, which made him miserable. All the children he used to play with had gone to school, and he had to wait for them to come back from school and learn what they had learned from them second-hand. That early experience influenced him to dedicate most of his life to a passion for education, to the extent that later, he opened up his own art school, which he named Busang Art School (Figure 12). The art school performed an extremely important role in the solidarity movement in the Vaal region. Apart from performing artists in Sharpeville, the art school was able to reach people around the entire Vaal Triangle and offer children various types of arts and sports instruction (Dube 2010:12).

Diniso went to school and started to draw, to the point where everyone started noticing his love for the arts. His older brother was highly supportive of his efforts, entreating his high school friend or acquaintance, an artist, to mentor his younger brother who loves the arts. This was the beginning of his art career. Bongi Matsose mentored both Shadrack Spenya Hlalele and Diniso, while they were studying at Lekoa Shandu High School in Sharpeville. They would both follow in Matsose's footsteps. Diniso completed a junior certificate in 1975 at the same school as Hlalele, who was an artist like both of them. He completed schooling, not knowing what he would do with his life. All that he knew was that he did not want traditional work, especially considering the

limited work options that the old apartheid government system had for black people at that time. When Matsose completed high school, he went to study at the now historically well-known Rorke's Drift Art Centre, and when he came back, he advised Diniso and Spenya to also consider going to study there. Rorke's Drift was the first art institution in South Africa that was developed for the arts by missionaries under the Lutheran church. The centre existed to expose black people to the arts. At the time, South Africa had no art schools that accommodated black people after they finished school. Due to lack of formal training for black artists in the entire country, Rorke's Drift became one of the few institutions that gave platforms and training to black artists (Elizabeth Rankin & Philippa Hobbs 2003:4-5). Matsose did not complete the entire three years at Rorke's Drift, a factor attributed to his remarkable talent. He was told that the instructors had nothing more to teach him. When he arrived back home, he met up with Spenya and Diniso to let them know that they ought to apply to further their studies in the Visual Arts at Rorke's Drift, and they subsequently did as he advised. Due to a lack of finances, it was hard for Diniso, as it was for many, to get out to the isolated Rorke's Drift. Matsose, Spenya, Gamakhulu and Sam Nhlengethwa were some of the other early students at Rorke's Drift from 1974 -1977.

"Biography can no longer be content with summarizing archives and calendar chronology; it has to understand the psychology of the human being and the myths by which we live. There is a constant struggle between a biographer and his subject—a struggle between the concealed self and the revealed self, the public and the private. The task of biographical narrative is to sort out themes and patterns; not dates and mundane calendar events. This task can be accomplished by use of those very devices which have given strength to fiction. In particular, the biographer should keep in mind four main principles: (1) He must understand man's ways of dreaming, thinking and using his fancy; (2) he must learn to be an objective "participant-observer"; (3) he must search assiduously for the deeper truths which motivate his subject; and (4) he must find the ideal literary form for his subject's life." (Anthony M. Friedson 1981: vii)

Rorke's Drift

Guerico notes that *"just as examining an artist's life and works tends to highlight the artist's uniqueness and his or her artworks, so the recognition of these qualities sustains the eclectic vocation of the monograph, inspiring diverse approaches to expressing who an artist is and the nature of his or her works"* (2009:5). As Diniso completed his junior certificate level, he went on to further his art education at the Rorke's Drift Art Centre in 1976. According to Diniso, after sending his application the school took a while to respond to him, which made him extremely anxious. Fortunately, before Christmas, he then received a letter from Rorke's Drift indicating that he had been accepted, which was a great relief for him. He then had to leave for KwaZulu-Natal to go and further his studies in the arts, at Rorke's Drift in Dundee in 1976. However, there was never a guarantee that space would be granted. After three months, they would have to go through a selection process, where some students would have to leave school if not meeting the institutional requirements. Many students whom he had already built such a good relationship with were let go. It was very hard for him to say goodbye to his newly found friends. He also felt that something should be done about it, but no one wanted to support him to fight the system. Diniso, however, was one of the few students who were artistically advanced. Rorke's Drift was far from home and town, so they would go home every three months or six months by train and to town, once a week by bus. If one missed the bus going to town or coming back from town they would be in trouble, because the next bus would only come the next day.

The year he started at Rorke's Drift was extremely challenging because it was his first time so far away from home. He also did not have money for registration, which cost R30, and transport to get to Rorke's Drift cost the same R30 for a six-month train pass. He then went to the general practitioner in Sharpeville, Dr. Mokhesi to sell his three drawings, which he sold for R75 at the time, so that he could have money to pay fees and for transport. The cheapest or maybe the only way to get to Rorke's Drift was by train, and one also needed their identity document to be stamped if going there for the first time (Figure 36).

During the course of the year, in the beginning of June the Soweto uprising occurred. Police started shooting students and the youth protesting the use of the Afrikaans

language as a medium of instruction in schools. That historical incident brought back memories in terms of Diniso's encounter with violent situations from the forced removals when he was a child. The student and youth protests of that time truly shook him. South Africa commemorates Youth Day every 16th of June and in the case of many this moment changed everything significantly.

Since 1976, his body of works changed and he started portraying human beings and the environment, with paint, inks, pencil, charcoal, woodcut, watercolour and other media. He started confronting what it meant for him to have experienced the killing of the youth, whilst he was far from home. Management of the mission school, he relates, could not understand the emotions that black people were going through. It was at this time when he started producing a series of artworks titled "*Crucifixion and Resurrection*." Religion at Rorke's Drift played a significant role in his artistic production. He spoke about how the township system was '*crucifying*' him, and when he came to Rorke's Drift he was '*resurrected*'. During 1976, he exhibited some of his artworks at the University of Fort Hare, and sold his works through the South African Institute of Race Relations. The Katlehong Annual Exhibitions that took place at the Katlehong Art Centre followed, where Diniso participated in exhibitions for three consecutive years.

Rorke's Drift played a huge role in his life and eventually influenced his outlook on the all-encompassing other art forms. Before he went to Rorke's Drift he had always thought that the arts were only about drawing and painting, until he realised that the arts are broader than this. He started with the visual arts then, when he had found his niche within the Rorke's Drift art community, he moved into the space of performance arts. As Diniso discovered his love for performance art, as a researcher, I also grew to know the artist best through this medium. I moved towards appreciating Diniso and that this was indeed a multi-dimensional personality, whose art referred to the intolerant present, an aspired-for future, but was also informed by a sense of a lost past (Dube 2010:12). Diniso and Sam Nhlengethwa started the drama and music components at Rorke's Drift. He realised that people enjoyed watching them perform theatrical and musical items. Even today, at the time of writing, Diniso still holds performance theatre shows and instead of only having music, he has added art exhibitions of his old archival artworks as part of the performances (Figure 37). This

was inspired by the space and the environment that Rorke's Drift provided that encouraged an openness to new experiments with other art forms. Diniso's decision to go and study at Rorke's Drift was the best decision he ever made.

Diniso formed a committee immediately when he found out that Sam Nhlengethwa had been let go, after the probation period of three months. He went and confronted the management of Rorke's Drift and he queried their judgement and choice of recruits. All the students started protesting, until management decided to bring Nhlengethwa back. Rorke's Drift management were scared that another riot will start since some of the students were from Soweto, and this incident took place not long after the Soweto uprisings.

Rorke's Drift nurtured his artistic ability further, where he produced a lot of artworks from painting, drawings, lino cut prints, lithography and also attempted to do sculpture, where this was meant to be a start of his visual arts career. That was cut short when Diniso came back from Rorke's Drift in 1977, after not seeing eye-to-eye with the management in charge at Rorke's Drift. He had only just received his certificate for that year when he started his own journey. The question worth posing is 'how were his staunch views on life formulated, particularly his unwillingness to compromise his point of view for anyone?' His career began as he ventured into numerous other creative activities.

This usually becomes a challenge for black people to pursue art as a career especially outside schools, colleges, university, and the formal structures of the art world. Prince Dube notes:

"The work of African sculptors was often patronisingly relegated to the status of 'curios'; the work of painters – in oils or watercolours – was regarded as suitable only for illustrating books. The racist laws of the time did not regard art as an occupation suitable for an African, that very right to reside in an urban area was reliant on being in the employ of a White [sic] person. The attitudes of galleries and art critics, coloured by those dominant among [the] ruling circle, changed very slowly as the quality of creative genius amongst Blacks won recognition internationally." (Dube 2010:10)

The art spaces were dominated by white people who did not consider artworks made by black people as art, but rather as craft. A majority of art dealers during that time were white people, which remains largely the case today. Dube writes that “Black artists, especially Africans, had to claw their way [up an] extremely steep gradient to receive recognition in the South Africa of that time” (Dube, 2010:10).

The exploitation of black artists was commonplace. Diniso recalls selling one of his artworks at the Carlton Centre for R30 rand at the time. Weeks later as he passed the same shop, the artwork was framed and being sold for R800. He then started wondering if the artworks were being priced R800 because of the artwork itself, or was it because of the frame. This became worrying for him as he realised that the money paid for his artwork was used to buy food for the day and a bit of paint at the time, but it was not even enough to cover this modest expenditure. The narratives of Diniso’s life ‘also helps to concentrate the mind on the possible meanings and significance of various events and situations’ (Mangayi 1996:xii).

After Rorke’s Drift 1978-1979

The geographical isolation didn’t prevent Diniso from absorbing certain selected influences and incorporating them into his own storytelling. Immediately after leaving Rorke’s Drift, he participated in numerous art events and won many awards. In 1977 at Marian hill College, Diniso won a Graphics Lino Print Merit Award that was later followed by the East Rand Administration Board Annual Art Exhibition: Certificate of Excellence and Special Certificate of Merit in 1979.

The arts played an extremely important role in the solidarity movement amongst South African artists. They worked as a unity from Rorke’s Drift while they were students through into their professional careers (Dube 2010:12). In 1978-1979 he participated in a two year’ art workshop ‘*Good Hope Art Seminar*’ at Regina Mundi Church in Soweto, in a community memorial service for the youth and students that were brutally murdered by the apartheid regime for defying the Bantu Education system.

Diniso exhibited in many group exhibitions at Fort Hare University, and his artworks were almost a sold out show. Marian hill sold his works through the Race Relations office both in Johannesburg and Durban. He also exhibited some of his works at the Mofolo Arts, Funda Centre and FUBA (Federation Union of Black Artists).

1980 -1994

In the early 1980s, Diniso had become involved in community cultural activities initiating programmes that were supplementary to the formal education syllabus. It was there that he discovered that he loved working with children, when in 1980, Diniso founded Busang Arts School which was located at the Sharpeville Hostel, (Figure 38). The school taught drawing, drama, dance to children of various ages who also learnt and participated in community cultural activities and formal school events. Diniso has a profound sense of responsibility for giving back to the community especially the one from which he came. Busang was named after his late girlfriend in 1984; Busang Arts School was transformed into Busang Thakaneng Theatre, presenting plays concerning the living conditions of that time, highlighting the socio-political issues in its content and messages. It later became Thakaneng Youth Club, whose main objective was to encourage youth creativeness and innovation as a way of combating crime by involving youth in positive activities. The school also enrolled some of its learners with FUBA in order to further their artistic skills. From 1980-1994, Busang Arts School enrolled 20 learners in the FUBA Academy. The learners attended from 1981-1983 under the Directorship of Mr. Sipho Sepamla. This collaboration helped the learners develop a relationship with other learners, to evaluate the type of artworks they produced, which added to their confidence. Within that year, they had achieved so many things. Students had won numerous awards in various fields. He also had people like Gcina Mhlophe coming to participate in his school and engaging with the Busang learners (Figure 39).

This was followed by the enrolment of 16 students at FUNDA Centre under the Council auspices for Black Education and Research under the Directorship of Prof. Es'kia Mphahlele from 1986-1989. Through such endeavours, the Busang Own Way Awards were initiated as a vehicle to recognise and honour young achievers and members of the community who were involved in creating their own businesses that further

served the community. Denzin has noted:

"A family of terms combines to shape the biographical method [...] method, life, self, experience, epiphany, case, autobiography, ethnography, auto-ethnography, biography, ethnography story, discourse, narrative, narrator, fiction, history, personal history, oral history, case history, case study, writing presence, difference, life history, life story, self-story, and personal experience story." (1989: 27).

As a further narration of Diniso's life and experiences, he recounts how he and his learners won the East Rand Administration Board Annual Art Exhibition's Certificate of Excellence and Special Certificate of Merit in 1980. They subsequently won another award in 1981 at the East Rand Administration Board Annual Art Exhibition, where Diniso won The Most Accomplished Young Artist of the Year. In 1989, Diniso won the Fedics Greetings Cards Competition's Runner up Prize (Annexure 11.). Thereafter he produced a series of greeting cards with various messages using his artworks (Figure 7) While Diniso was running his school, he was involved with various art exhibitions, where he was a participant and exhibited in-group art exhibitions nationally.

Diniso was employed at SACHED Trust Turret College, where he gained experience in book illustration (Figure 41). The desk he worked at while at SACHED had been occupied previously by the renowned township artist from Alexandra, Thami Mnyele, which was very inspiring for him. While he was there, he realised that he was not meant to be employed, and he used to find any excuse not to be at work in the office. He would go to the 'bioscope' (Cinema house) to watch a movie during work, while his boss would be looking for him. He then realised that he had lost interest in what he was hired for. In 1983 he resigned from SACHED Trust to pursue his theatrical career, but even then he still carried on producing drawings. As a member of the African Writers Association (AWA), he drew and -designed a calligraphy plaque that was given to President Nelson Mandela by the Sedibeng Metropolitan Council for the 'Freedom of The Vaal' in 1999.

From 1996-1999 he established the arts in the Vaal region through the Sharpeville Resource Centre, which included an Art Gallery named after Prof. Es'kia Mphahlele,

a Theatre named after Mr. Gibson Kente and an Auditorium named after Mr. D.K. Khunou. This was indeed the culmination of his life-long artistic journey that took off in 1977, collecting numerous awards along the way in the visual and performance arts. All these art galleries were associated with some of his ex-students, such as Kenneth (Majozi) Tekane, who formed his space and named it the Poze Theatre. The other partners were Michael and his gallery located at the Sharpeville Sports Centre, which focused on power poetry. Tiro was also one of the partners who had his gallery in his own backyard, which operated from 5-9pm. His theatre was focusing on breaching the educational gaps in art education. All four, namely Diniso, Kenneth, Tiro and Micheal, formed a group that came to be known as Vusa Tsosa Di Arts. Initially the group was formed to create a National Art Festival and Tourism Art Root in the Township. The festival, which ran from 2000-2005 invited many students from the Vaal Technikon. All these initiatives that Diniso started could have resulted in a very vibrant art scene, however, a lack of support from the local and national government hindered this vision. Reid notes that, "everything we remember has such a relation to ourselves as to imply necessarily our existence at the time remembered" (1785: 586).

In 1997, Gamakhulu mounted a solo exhibition under the title *Shattered and Scattered*, the same exhibition formed part of the 2005 Freedom Day celebration titled *The Journey*. This title was inspired by his revisiting the old site of Top Location as well as his resuming his journey into the visual arts. The Journey exhibition consisted of 69 artworks and commemorated the souls of the 69 people who lost their lives in the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960. This exhibition was important to him, since it was somehow close to his heart, because of his own personal history. All the artworks exhibited were produced by Diniso over the years. He also worked at the Vaal Technikon as the director of Drama, unfortunately that did not last for long before he ventured into broader fields of arts.

Publications and Exhibitions

"...as 'viewing events, action, norms, values etc. from the perspective of the people who are being studied'; 'to provide detailed descriptions of the social settings'; 'commitment to understanding events, behaviour, etc. in their

context'; 'to view social life in processual, rather than static terms'; 'a research strategy which is relatively open and unstructured'; and a rejection of 'the formulation of theories and concepts in advance' of fieldwork which may 'impose a potentially alien framework' on subjects (Bryman 1988: 61-8).

Diniso's illustrations were published in various art magazines such as *Staffrider*, *Classic* and *Wietie*. He has also illustrated for books and short stories such as in a book of poems by renowned authors and writers, including Rev. Frank Chikane, *No Life of My Own*, where one of Diniso's artwork was a book cover (Figure 2) and Chabani Mangayi's *Exile and Homecomings*. Diniso's work also appears in a *Biography of Es'kia Mphahlele* (Figure 3) and *Bury Me at the Market. Selected Letters of Es'kia Mphahlele 1943-1980*. Another book where his artwork is featured on the cover is *Unbroken Song* (Figure 1) by Es'kia Mphahlele. He also produced a watercolour painting for the cover of *Iso le Nkhono* (African Folktales for Children) by B.L. Leshoai. His paintings were used as covers of the books: Narain Aiyer's *the Cain Is Singing*, Letshaba Thubela's *Sethokgwa*, Christopher Charles' *White Lies*, Prof. Njabulo Ndebele's *The Prophetess*, John Samuel's *Darkness*, Thamsanqa's *Have You Seen Sticks*, and Lindiwe Mvemve's *the Crowd That Stands Half Naked and Singing* (Annexure 2 & 3). Many of his artworks were illustrations in books for various writers and publications including *Staffrider* (Figure 33).

In 1984, he closed his visual arts portfolio and concentrated on the dramatic and performing arts, his stage plays have received rave reviews over the years. In 1999 Diniso had a solo exhibition of installations titled *Shattered and Scattered* at the self-established Prof. Es'kia Art Gallery at the Sharpeville Resource Centre. On the 21st of March 2005 Diniso reopened his art portfolio with a Solo Exhibition at Teknorama entitled *The Journey*.

Archival Material

"Letters, manuscripts, and other materials in the archive offer a manner of intimacy with the authors who once possessed them and may still have authority over their use. At the same time archives they consolidate the formation of textual figures who become substitute objects of investigation,

apparently static and confined to the page.” (McGill 2009:129).

As Diniso travelled through his life's journey, he met people that he engaged with and communicated with beyond school and career. When he was at Rorke's Drift, he made a few friends like Goodman Mabote, William Zulu and Sam Nhlengethwa. Some he met along the way, like Charles Sokhaya Nkosi, Matsemela Manaka and Peter Clarke. He worked with Nkosi at the Funda Centre, as he brought his students to be part of the arts and he also ran workshops at the Centre (Figure 6). Diniso and Peter Clarke used to write each other letters on various occasions, having a dialogue of some kind. These letters became even more interesting as they would always be sent together with an artwork. Clarke would write a letter, then include a drawing as an addition, or as part of the greeting card. Diniso on the other hand would send an artwork tackling current affairs and his responses to them. This went on for a while, until Diniso made a plan to go to Cape Town to visit Peter Clarke. This was not the only friendship he had; he also became lifelong friends with Nhlengethwa. Diniso has collected many artists' artworks over the years, which became a huge part of his personal archive.

Diniso as an Archivist

An article on *Archive Principles and Practice*, as an introduction to archiving for non-archivists, was published by The National Archives in (2016: 4-5) to help them to identify, preserve and archive documentation and information. It noted:

“Archives are collections of documents or records which have been selected for permanent preservation because of their value as evidence or as a source for historical or other research. Records are created by the activities of organisations and people; they serve an active purpose while in current use and some of them are later selected and preserved as part of an archival collection. Archive collections are usually unique, which is why it is so important to take proper care of them. They need to be carefully stored and managed to protect and preserve them for current and future use” (The National Archives 2016: 4-5).

Diniso is known as a mobile archivist to many people who have engaged with him at a personal level, through both his life and his works. He has many lived historical moments etched in his memory. When narrating his life story, he often links it up with political, social and environmental issues of that particular time. For example, he would relate things he was engaged in the early 1990s with what was happening politically in the country. At that time, he was running the resource centre with students in the Vaal Triangle at Boipatong, where there were shootings around the hostels. Every story told has a historical event as a point of reference. As for his memory, his recall of incidents preserves and enriches the accounts. Another example is when Nduka did a video interview with Diniso on his achievements; he remembers the year because it was a year after his last child was born. Mbembe writes with regards to the archive that:

"The term 'archives' first refers to a building, a symbol of a public institution, which is one of the organs of a constituted state. However, 'archives' is also understood as a collection of documents – normally written documents – kept in this building. There cannot therefore be a definition of 'archives' that does not encompass both the building itself and the documents stored there" (2002:19).

As Mbembe points out speaking generally above, Diniso started collecting his own documentation especially newspaper articles of the events he would be hosting or in which he would be participating. Most of his collected newspaper articles date from 1978 up to when he closed his portfolio after the Carlton Centre incident. This was not his first collection of his own artworks; he started collecting while he was at Rorke's Drift. He began collecting his own school mates' work, through what became a ritual of exchanging artworks. At the time, he collected a number of artworks from other artists such as Bongi Matsose, Shadrack Spinya Hlalele, Ben Ntsusha, Maribe Mamabulo, Dumisani Mabaso, Charles Nkosi, Rochester Mafafo and Goodman Mabote. After leaving Rorke's Drift, he started collecting some of Peter Clarke's artworks through the letters they would write to each other.

Over the years, Diniso also preserved everything he owns, his drawings, prints and paintings. These preserved artworks are stored in various ways, but they remain

largely intact and in satisfactory condition, showing little if any effects of time. Some of the drawings and prints that have been stored have become stained by the tacking used to stick them to the wall. This for me personally forms part of other forms of art preservation. This is the same Prestik that was used to put up artworks. The drawings and prints are stored in-between newsprint, and the Masonite boards that were once used for political posters during elections. The paintings that he has preserved are also stored inside recycled bubble wrap and black refuse plastic bags to help to keep the dust away.

After the procedure of wrapping, he then puts them in a portfolio bag, where his newspaper articles and books are preserved. He has staged exhibitions of his newspapers clippings at the Bodutu Gallery at Vaal University (2010), at his own Diniso Arts Gallery (2014), and in 2016 at The Point of Order at Wits University in an exhibition titled: *Diniso in 3D* (Figure:12 to 31). This excludes artworks by other artists that he had collected over the years. He pasted all the images that played a significant role in his life onto A2 and A1 paper, with titles as sub-headings of various events. A good example of this storage method is shown in the way the documents connected with the start of his school are stored. He stores his clippings in the same format as he stores his drawings and prints. Due to new developments in technology, Diniso is gradually beginning to digitise what he owns, stored in archives of photography, and scanning his archived material.

Chapter 2

Iga-makhulu Diniso theatre performances

Brief Profile

Iga-Makhulu Diniso was born in 1956 at Top location currently known as Teknorama Museum. He is an accomplished fine artist and an acclaimed award winning playwright, producer, director and actor. Iga-Makhulu changed his name from Gamakhulu to "*Iga-Makhulu*" Diniso in support of his children's names Iza-Nkululeko (come freedom) and Iva Nyaniso (hear the truth). He felt the need to change from

Gamakhulu and now goes by the name of Iga-Makhulu. According to Gamakhulu, the root of his name actually remains the same, including the meaning, which is Iga- (Maelikhulu) and has changed the prefix to his name to Iga-Makhulu. With the new prefix to his name, he now shares this similarity with both his children, that is, Iza-Nkululeko (meaning '*come freedom*'), his eldest son & youngest son Iva-Nyaniso (meaning '*hear the truth*'). His name change and the naming of his children correlates with the different periods of his life as well.

In 1980, Iga-Makhulu Diniso founded Busang Arts School based in Sharpeville, offering children lessons in visual arts, drama and dance. The children participated in community cultural activities and formal school events. The Busang Arts School was in 1984 transformed into Busang Thakaneng Theatre, presenting plays that commented on the conditions of the time, highlighting the socio-political issues in their content and messages. This was followed by the enrolment of 16 of Diniso's students (who were from the Art School-Sharpeville) at FUNDA Centre, under the academic tuition by the Council for Black Education & Research and artistically under FUNDA Centre. The Council for Black Education and Research was under the Directorship of Prof. Es'kia Mphahlele from 1986-1989. In 1984, Diniso closed his art portfolio and concentrated on the performing arts, having received rave reviews for his stage plays. Among the reasons for closing his art portfolio, was to stop the exploitation of black artists and the need to preserve his artworks, to ensure that his children can access them and can generate income. Diniso also started various art projects, mainly in the performing arts, which he felt to be more dominant in terms of preference, than the visual arts, allowing for a presence into the current discourse of the time in a more energising manner.

In 1996, he established the arts in the Vaal region through the Sharpeville Resource Centre encompassing an Art Gallery named after Prof. Es'kia Mphahlele. The Sharpeville Resource Centre functioned from 1996-1999. Immediately after that, Diniso went to Wits Technikon, where he was appointed the director of drama from 2000 to 2001. Beyond his contract term, he donated his time, as he was equally inspired by the students. He then formed a group called Culture Reclamation Youth (CRYM) with students at Wits Technikon. They first held a programme at Wits

Technikon in September 2000 entitled *Observing Steve Biko*, which involved dance, performance, theatre and talks regarding the Black Consciousness Movement. This was followed by a visit to the Steve Biko home in Ginsberg on 16th of June 2001 by students from Vaal Technikon and Wits Technikon. Diniso facilitated and ran a workshop for young people attending the Biko Centre to commemorate 16 of June, in memory of the Soweto Uprising.

Opening Performance during *Diniso in 3D*

Amanda Coogan, artist and researcher, describes performance art in reference to artists and artworks in IMMA's Collection, as a means of relating and contextualising this part of contemporary arts practice. This not only draws attention to the body of artworks which was the main part of curatorial project, which is related to the artistic performance by Diniso on the opening night of the exhibition. This was one of his many plays he has performed as a one-man show. Coogan (2011:4) further explains what performance art is in her statement:

"Performance art is a form of arts practice that involves a person or persons undertaking an action or actions within a particular timeframe in a particular space or location for an audience. A defining characteristic of performance art is the body, considered the primary medium conceptual material on which performance art is based. Other key components are time, space and the relationship between performer and audience" (2011:4)

The opening performance was against the background of the curatorial art project of Diniso's archival visual arts, telling the journey of Diniso through newspaper articles and artefacts, with Diniso himself performing a one-man show on the night. Art works created over a period of time from late 1970s until mid-2000s and Diniso's unique performance on the opening night, partly to disrupt the traditional exhibition format, which brought warmth into the cold cemented walls covered in rims of artworks. Diniso's voice filled the room, just as the artworks were telling the story of his life, his one-man play told the story of his life and that of his town's people. Coogan notes:

"Central to the process and execution of Performance Art is the live presence of the artist and the real actions of his/her body, to create and present an ephemeral art experience to an audience" (2011:4).

Performance which was achieved as soon as he took to the stage:

Through the persona, he assumed on stage, that of a shoe repairer, complemented by minimal props, and a suitcase loaded with shoes to be mended, his tales were enthralling, sad and entertaining. Through the shoes, a story of untold hardship was shared, as the shoes had been mended multiple times, until the shoemaker was not sure how to plug the gaping holes in them. This was a story of long journeys made to work and back, and among the rugged shoes, a light moment presented itself in a stiletto or two, whose heels had gone missing in the midst of the good times or a midnight brawl. Diniso presented a range of emotions in about 30 minutes, a length of time that seemed too short, where his audience were glued to him, and his performance exuded the energy of the township, and the sudden changes in the mood against the cold and at times warm body of work, depending on what pieces were beside you during this performance. In the performance, the character of the shoemaker, in this one-man, play allowed Diniso to show what it is like to be at the heart of society. As stated by Coogan (2011:4), Diniso made use of 'an interdisciplinary practice, where, "*performance art*" employs strategies such as recitation and improvisation associated with concept of Brian Duggan Door, 2005. Theatre and drama, it rarely employs plot or narrative (Coogan 2011:4). Diniso's performance was fluid; it allowed the audience to share in its rhythm, its ebbs and flows, interactive at times with his audience not quite certain if it was entirely scripted or improvised. For audience members who had lived in the township, the author allowed them to walk down memory lane, reminiscing about the good times afforded by the few in the township, whose names would typically start with 'Bra so-and-so' as a title; which is a sign of respect that might mean one has earned their wealth through dubious or criminal avenues. This would mean that one is feared more than they are respected, or they are simply a plain old thug who can be elusive, but at times, under the right circumstances, a generous Robin Hood.

As part of the curatorial process, a decision was taken to screen one of Diniso's videos from his vast archive. It shows him performing with other people. This text provides a brief overview of the context in which performance art has evolved as a form of contemporary arts practice. The video acted as a backdrop to the performance, and located the performance as if in a time that can never be recovered nor resurrected, within a gallery space. This meant that when they performed it at that moment in time,

it had a different significance than the backdrop of the video in the background.

The video showcases a medley of his performances titled *Ilizwe* (this land, 2010) and the TV programme titled *Arts After 8* (1990). In this video cassette that was playing in the background, his role is that of a teacher with school children, as the play continues a question was asked by Diniso: “*Why are these children no more playing traditional children’s games?*” They are more familiar with playing with the corps of dead bodies than with rag dolls. In 1984, when people were being burnt and the young people ‘*toi-toi-ing*’ (marching) around someone dying, having been necklaced (car tyre were hung around their neck, doused with petrol and burned or set alight such that the person was burnt to death). Many authors wrote about how the apartheid system affected young people: ¹

The youth of that time were exposed to these violent deaths. Diniso not only looks at what is happening in the background but how space within the curatorial project is utilised. Most journalists and newspapers covered the stories on necklace murders and photographs were taken in the 1980s. South Africa was on fire during the apartheid era, as children stopped playing in the street out of fear to witness these necklacing murders and mostly from their peers.

Space

It also reflects what Brian O’Doherty in his book *Inside the White Cube* (1976), talks about “how we have come to a point where we see not only the art, but the space first” (Brian O’Doherty 1976: 14). In *Diniso in 3D*, the curatorial project that took place, most people come to view the archival curatorial project, yet within that, there were various video’s playing of Diniso’s past performances. Within the same space, he did a

¹ Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (1999), interviewed young people who were involved in the murders as they narrated their story and the trauma they face thereafter:

The so-called necklace murders were an extreme form of violence that was associated with the anti-apartheid struggle and that spread and throughout South African Black townships in the mid-1980s during the height of apartheid’s violent repression. Necklacing was a method of killing people suspected of collaborating with the apartheid government police. A tire doused with petrol was placed around the neck of a person suspected of being a police collaborator. The person was then set alight and circled by a group of people dancing around the burning body until the victim collapsed and died (Linden 2013:217)

performance, which changed the entire feel of the space and exhibition. In an interview with artists, Heiner Goebbels (2005:18) indicated how politics influences his performance. Diniso's plays would either criticise political issues or create awareness to display political issues as Goebbels says:

"I can't exclude politics, because it's in everything that we are facing. Of course, society and the perception of society is in the music, and in any art form. And I think it's harder to exclude it than to face it, to make use of it. On the other hand, I would never try to send messages. I never consider politics in any art form to be something that can be said or turned into a message, and then somebody understands it. I try to transfer and to transform politics – also in the structure of my productions and the way I treat the people I work with, and the way I have a space for the audience in my works. I'm very interested in a more democratic, decentralized [sic] perspective of the performing arts. And that's the way I try to express my politics and interests. My political interest may leave me with an empty stage. Because I love it so much that the audience has a space for its imagination (Goebbels 2005:18).

Goebbels might be worlds apart from Diniso and South Africa, yet so many similarities within the arts are influenced by politics. In the curatorial project, *Diniso in 3D* (2016) the backdrop of the found gazebo frame with no cloth on it, was to separate the wall and the performance space and the exhibition that was on the opening night, where Diniso set up his stage with a silver frame behind him. In front of that structure he had copper taps as part of the mise-en-scène. Diniso uses the space around him, and enhancing it with the different objects as he delivers his performance. In the article based on Thomas Lehmen's performance lecture written in 2005, which included physical movements and demonstrations together with theory, Lehmen indicates how spaces are used: *"space can exist only in relation to other weird elements such as movement, time, sound and, of course, the perception of all these phenomena – things we are not able to define clearly"* (2005:39). Diniso changed his costume to complement the change in scenes. As Coogan (2011:4) argues, *"performance art can employ any material or medium across any discipline, including music, dance, literature, poetry, architecture, fashion, design and film"* (Coogan 2011:4). Diniso uses

various materials to narrate his stories in his Shoeville performance, which ends up being part of the South African folktale way of storytelling.

As he was observing his audience and his props, he had a container filled with clothes which he imbued with personal, cultural or economical values at the start of his performance. The storyteller who is making sure he is comfortable before he embarks on the journey of his town, telling the story of the shoe, narrates and captures his audience while providing a backdrop. This ability is contextualised well by Helge Meyer's statement of how performance becomes part of culture:

"My only role in this kind of ritualistic story telling is the position of a moderator or medium to bring out the stories from the audiences. Also this work does try to find an alternative way of globalization [sic]: Cloth has got a deep meaning in every culture. Through the meeting of the different stories and relations that the clothing pieces have, the audience closes a gap between the different countries and ideas which are contained in the clothing" (Meyer 2009:1).

Diniso used objects that seem somewhat related and yet unrelated, and utilised them to tell people's everyday life story which created a different atmosphere than the one to be experienced in the usual theatre setup. He walked onto his stage with a song and his tattered suitcase. As he entered the room he started to sing, and the room became silent in curious anticipation. In the background, an old film of his performance was projected on the white walls, as he entered the room with this song:

Tsela Tsena dimatlapa, (These roads are rocky)

Kea dirata difetsa dieta, (I like them, they damage shoes, to erode quickly)

Batho tsamayang hotsona, (People walk on them)

Tsela Tsena dimatlapa, (These roads are rocky)

Tsela Tsena dimatlapa. (These roads are rocky)

After that musical introduction, he sighed, "ahhh, what a beautiful morning!", and began a tale.

"This is going to be a beautiful day in shoeville for business. Thank you almighty", he says, as if this is of significance to the audience or to him. He quickly argues with himself, *"not almighty Pirates!"* removing this famous soccer team out from the

equation, which gets the audience laughing. The way Diniso utilised the space and the actions taken to interpret his performance linked with the curatorial art project set up on the wall. According to Thomas Lehmen, *"space depends on the action, perception and the observation I make; it depends on the system through which I plan to see the world."* (2005:40).

The performance starts with the narration about his mobile shoe repair store's name: *Dr. Manete*. The shoe doctor's name is also Dr Manete who narrates the performance. The performance follows with an explanation as to why the store sign is written in the way it is written, and how people in the township perceive certain business within the community by the way, in which it appears. Therefore, he writes the signage in the most unglamorous manner, defying all rules of good branding so as to be a sorry sight. Moleboheng Chaha (2012:12) explains that *Shoeville* (2005) (Figure 43 to 44) *"depicts the struggle of black artists to maintain their status whilst in the industry, and the difficulties that come with having to make a sustainable living through the arts."* Gamakhulu narrates how people in the township do not support businesses that are neat and presentable, where they will rather go to town to get those same services. This is interesting because they assume that if the shop appears dubious, then it must be reasonable and cheap. At the same time when a business looks neat and presentable, most people come looking for donations, sponsors and money and it is expensive. The logic he reveals in this performance is that if you want to make money in the location, you need to look poor and in need of financial support from your prospective customers. He carries on singing and getting dressed into his working apron while also narrating the story. As he carries on, during the performance he speaks about how these township roads are rocky and the roads damage the shoes, which works for him, as it is more business, so they should carry on walking on rocky roads.

Diniso in 3D, a curatorial project on Gamakhulu Diniso's archival artworks, also included the performance. Diniso did a performance that worked hand in hand with the artworks shown as part of the curatorial project. As I analysed the conceptual and multidimensional aspects of performance arts in the space that is made into a gallery (The Point of Order) Wits, it helped me to classify the curatorial body of artworks within the performance into a coherent system. All artworks were chosen carefully to tell a story and they were an art form as well. It correlated with the performance which

consists of multiple disciplines, each of which has different modes of production and involves different types of organisation, from singing, to a theatre type of set-up, singing and dancing.

The tap is incorporated into the performance when he suggestively uses a prop tap and him pouring water while narrating about how the entire neighbourhood has to use this tap as the only public tap in the entire Phelindaba Section, in a township called Sharpeville. He bemoans the implications of having this as the only tap, and how you need to get to it early in the morning, because if you don't, you will get to hear all the township gossip and complaints from the women and girls who are queuing there for most of the day. Most of them complain about their husbands and men in general. The worst of all is that the tap water does not even come out properly, which means there are longer waiting periods, where an entire day can pass waiting for one's turn to get water. The same tap that these women stand and complain at, is the same tap that markets his business, which becomes free advertising, so he does not mind, and the fact that he likes the women, but not in the sense that Gabi is thinking of..., leaving the audience in suspense as to what this might be. Frandsen and Schou-Knudsen discuss how the audience becomes part of the entire body of work, from the performance, to the displayed works:

"The audience contextualises the observed action via memory and the actual process of perception. This takes place within the culturally pre-established agreement about what is likely to happen and how far it will be allowed to go. (These parameters of course include the expectation of the offence of being breached – that something will happen to extend the borders of that unspoken agreement." (Frandsen and Schou-Knudsen,2005:40).

He takes out the shoes, mentioning the name of the owner of each shoe, and starts by fixing the shoe of a loyal, paying customer. *"My name is Nyathela Manete but people call me Dr Manete, ahh ahh, not Dr Manete of The Tale of Two Cities, but Dr Manete of the stories of Shoeville. They call me Dr. Manete because I am doctoring their shoes"*. For me as personal experience, this was most fascinating as when I was growing up my mother would tell me: *"If you want to see a person's wealth or life story you need to look at his shoes."* One day when he woke up to go to work, he realised that his shoe shop shack had been stolen and everything was gone. Knuckles,

hammers, tongs and every tool had been completely cleared out and every one of his clients and the entire community came after him with a wide range of weapons: broomsticks, hose pipes, steel pipes, pangas, handle Kirri, funnels and stones of all sorts, to deal with him. He portrays the vicious attack in utilising language and body movement. In the action of the play, the community wants to hit him, burn him or hang him and a young girl even says they should castrate him, and he depicts himself trying to get away from the violent crowd. The whole group giggles as his mouth opens widely and he mimes protecting his private parts at the young girl's suggestion that they mutilate him, which functions admirably with the storyline. These are some of the body gestures that he uses, making them extremely difficult to interpret if you are not part of the audience. As he performs, he portrays in slow motion the actions of people hitting him. The youngsters in the audience giggling as they see him play out those slightly exaggerated movements. As he continues his performance, he introduces another character into the storyline, namely Zorro, a well-known television hero. The character is wearing a white shirt and gradually takes it off and puts it neatly to the side. Ironically, since it is a fight, a question arises as to the significance of the white shirt. The entire situation develops into another performance, yet it is still one play. The idea of oneself in front of one's own personality, one's individuality, that one acts to evaluate oneself, becomes more evident when a person is a performer, and then is performing. As Diniso he becomes incredibly aware of his voice, language, frame of mind and rhythms of narration in terms of storytelling (Sandstrom 2010). The white shirt was associated with going to town, going to church or being worn for a special occasion. The angry crowd wanted his blood, insulting him as Zorro stood with him for reassurance until the furious crowd dispersed. Zorro then took his shirt as he was dressing, smiled, shook his head and moved away, leaving him shaking in front of the gazing and giggling children. As Diniso comments, he is certain that he did not wet his pants on that day otherwise his knees would have been frozen. Coogan (2011:5), discussing performance art, writes about its interdisciplinary nature. He also mentions that, to get the true reflection is to respond, to the spontaneous and unrehearsed performance in the following terms:

"Performance Art can be spontaneous, one-off, durational, improvised or rehearsed and performed with or without scripts. Performances can range from a series of small-scale intimate gestures to public rallies, spectacles or parades

presented in solo or collaborative form. In contrast to conventional methods of theatre production, the visual artist is the performer, creator and director of the performance. Performance Art can be situated anywhere: in Art Museums, Galleries and alternative art spaces or in impromptu sites, such as cafés, bars or the street, where the site and often-unknowing audience become an integral part of the work's meaning." (2011:5).

Interestingly enough, Diniso starts talking about this Zorro as real and not the Zorro from the film, which gets the audience puzzled. Is there a true Zorro in Shoeville or is it that he and his children could relate to Zorro as a hero in the film? The character that Zorro plays in films, the role Zorro in *Shoeville* plays in his play?

Diniso's character, as the shoe repairer continues. He says that he likes the street shoe shop, because at the end of the day you leave nothing to be stolen, you just pack up and go. It is nice here, he relates, because you do not even give a receipt. When a customer brings the shoe, you look at the shoe and you listen to the customer telling you how the shoe got broken. Then, when the customer comes to collect the shoe, you look at the customer and you will know which shoe is the customer's. "*Haai*", he sighs. "*It is easy*" and then he takes off his shoe, turns it upside down and opens his mouth wide, eliciting much laughter, because he does look identical to his shoe (as he illustrates his statement). Most of the audience can relate to the story that he is telling: "*Show me your shoe and I will tell you who you are,*" because that is what we were taught growing up. "*Shoes look like their owners and have no life until you put your feet in them, then they live and they resemble you.*" He also emphasises that the shoe's life resembles yours, just like "*this kwai-kwai shoe (heels/stilettos) belongs to Snakau Ramakau.*"

The performance introduces two additional characters; he starts with the heels of the hot lady named Tandawu Ramakau. The performer begins to say: "Snakau Ramakau was a beautiful young girl in Shoeville: Snakau Ramakau, who could play football so well. Snakau Ramakau, once joined Sunshine Beauty Competition (strutting) and she won and became Sunshine Beauty Queen. One day Snakau Ramakau fought with the most famous monkey-jiver in Shoeville, Dagga, and became an instant star when Gallo Music promoters came to Shoeville. Their promotional music was so loud; you could even hear it four sections afar. Gallo Soweto Jivers took the floor with their

(singing and dancing) but when Dagga took the floor (singing and dancing) (“paah”) dust rose... Gallo vote Dagga, Gallo and Dagga on township tours; on the other side, Sunshine abused Snakau, Gallo used Dagga on the two Shoevillian stars” [sic].

What is ironic about this play, for most people who grew up in the location/township it is conventional that the story of local heroes never has a happy ending. If the hero was a female who was beautiful, something ends up happening to them, in terms of them being alcoholics, or having many children with different men, the lists goes on. If it is a man, like Appendices, he is either an alcoholic or his life is still stuck in the past, instead of moving on from who they used to be. The man became frustrated and drowned himself in liquor, Appendices met someone at a shebeen and fell in love, and became a famous fallen lover... *The Beauty and The Beast*, one day, when they were drunk... they fought again (re-enacting) when Snakau was sleeping, drunk, snoring, Dagga (sneaking up on her), slit her throat, with a broken bottle of beer and went to hang himself, on a peach tree behind the toilet, why is it so? Diniso continues to narrate his story by asking questions and providing answers, Yes, maybe our talented young people are born in the township, but their potential gets wasted in the dusty dirty streets of the township.

As more people start to understand performance art, even though most people who were born before 1994, used to do performance but they called it Drama, which every child had to participate in. By participating it helped students to gain confidence. As the author Meyer writes “*I see performance art as a chance to get into a real contact with other human beings, this performance does go one step further: The performer steps into the background and opens the space for the audience as the main character of the interaction*” (2009:1). In the curatorial project Diniso’s artworks and performances were a means of connecting and creating conversation amongst viewers which Meyer refer to as other “*human beings*”.

Shoeville has been performed in various places and it was favourably critiqued, but it is not the only stage performance that Diniso Gamakhulu is known for (Sichel 2009:11). Other theatre performances that he has written and produced include *Sharpeville- from tragedy to triumph* (2012) which is a theatrical production based on the era of the dom-pass harassment and arrests that led to the 1960 anti-pass campaign led by Robert Sobukwe and the tragic 21st March 1960 Sharpeville

massacre. It also highlights the September 3, 1984 Sharpeville rent boycott uprising (Loxion News, 2014: 6). *Kuyanuka*, is a stage performance that paints a less simplistic, intensely critical picture of freedom. Diniso has always said that he wanted his artworks to reach the masses and to be understood by all. His vision is rooted in radicalism and that is one of the reasons he wanted to reach a white audience, to make them understand the root cause of black people's anger and frustration (Sichel 1991:11).

Performances such as *Igazi* (1994) and *Ikasi* (1993) won the 1993 IGI award for the most outstanding production. *Orange sun* is a one-person performance staged by Diniso that portrays a naughty orange seller. The play relates to Diniso's personal experiences as a young orange seller. *Izitha*(1998), is a play that presents the hurdles artists are confronted with in their quest to pursue their career. *Dozo dodlo* (2004) -*dig the dream dip*, depicts a character by the name of Sponono, who changes her gender to that of a man in order to find her missing husband. *Cape-pie-town*, revolves around the character. *Udoti* (1992), It is a performance that premiered at the Dalro Pot-Pourri Festival, which contained harsh attacks on politicians and theatres.

Recent performances include a controversial piece of work titled *Waiting for tata* (2008), the performance takes the viewer on an interesting journey which covers the education system and its challenges, the religious sector and its different churches and financial disparity between black and white residents of South Africa (Sonqoba Kunene, 2011:10). *Father and son affair* (2005) is a play that Gamakhulu Diniso and his son Iza-Nkululeko Diniso, both perform together (Edward Tsume, 2011). *Apple boy and orange son* (2005) performed by Diniso and Iza Diniso, is a double-bill that takes the audience through the industry streets and from bus stop to bus stop in the township, as the apple seller and the orange seller tell a story of the challenges and characters they come across. It is a humorous and dramatic play.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed Diniso Gamakhulu in term of his theatre performance. The chapter gave a brief biography of who Diniso is in terms of his performances. This section focused mainly on the theatre performance called *Shoeville*. The play *Shoeville* was discussed, analysed and interpreted by the researcher. Relevant text was reviewed to support argument based on the play, from Newspaper articles, books,

previous archival videos and literature. Lastly this chapter briefly discussed other plays by Diniso that he wrote, produced and performed. These stage performances included *Igazi and ikasi*; *Izitha*; *Waiting for tata*; *Father and son affair*; *Apple boy and orange*; *etc.* These past great performances show, it is that Diniso is a noteworthy artist who deserves to be commemorated and appreciated.

THE CURATORIAL PROJECT: DINISO IN 3D

INTRODUCTION

“practice of curating is to reveal the ways in which art has been displayed, mediated and discussed as part of our histories of exhibition making. To write about any aspect of the curatorial is to think about how the exhibition of art has become part of a developmental process, of conceptualizing ways in which art and its contexts are understood” (O'Neill, 2012:1)

The key theories employed in writing this chapter include writing within a curatorial framework, biographical writing and curatorial theories. These theories consider the conceptual, visual and structural aesthetic of the content that is included. The chapter also references discourses that consider curating of exhibitions as a strategy to engage current debates on exhibition making. In the book *What Makes a Good Exhibition* (2006), Paula Marincola (2006:9) states:

“Exhibitions are strategically located at the nexus where artists, their work, the arts institutions, and many different publics intersect. Situated so critically, they function as the prime transmitters through which the continually shifting meaning of art and its relationship to the world is brought into temporary focus and offered to the viewer for contemplation, education, and, not the least, pleasure.”

In this chapter I directly interact with Diniso's work as it was shown and experienced in the curatorial project titled *Diniso in 3D* which took place at *The Point of Order Gallery*, at the University of Witwatersrand from the 23rd of March to 9th April 2016. Presently Gamakhulu Diniso is mostly known for his theatre performances; thus, the curatorial project was specifically interested in displaying his three-dimensional artworks dating from 1970 to 2010. The curatorial project was also aimed at commenting on the absence of curatorial and exhibition spaces that still render artists such as Diniso invisible at present. These 'invisible presences' in relation to the Vaal region, call for a visibility that will not only place Vaal art activities, artists and

institutions on a broader map of cultural creation in South Africa and beyond, but also offer them recognition and appreciation (*Art South Africa catalogue*, 2012). What motivates my undertaking is an argument by scholars Salah Hassan and Olu Oguibe that “if you do not exhibit, you do not exist.” They further note:

“Exhibitions remain exemplars of how art history is produced. They are the building blocks of art history and therefore crucial in moving art from the private to the public domain. In the cultural politics of the past two centuries, exhibitions and the curatorial practices behind them constitute the most enduring and perhaps most powerful means of selecting, staging, and ultimately canonizing art.” (Salan Hassan and Olu Oguibe 2001:7)

Black artists from the Vaal region suffer from curatorial non-existence and absence from art history. In other words, they are excluded from the history of South African art, which is mainly constructed through curated exhibitions and catalogues as well as academic essays in journals and books. What gets acknowledged about the Vaal region is its political history, which tends to privilege the struggle against apartheid. This research used a curatorial project *Diniso in 3D* to archive and document the works of Gamakhulu Diniso and also to recognise and draw attention to the artists from the Vaal region.

The research initially started when I was trying to reconstruct a neglected visual archive from the Vaal Region. The Sedibeng district previously known as the Vaal Triangle had and still suffers from a sore lack of archiving and documenting of the visual arts. The role of the arts in the Vaal region during the 1980’s has been categorised by resistance, has been constructed and reconstructed with society through youth development, addressing social and political issues.

The focus on the life and works of a single artist does not prevent a monograph from reinventing itself formally and conceptually (Guercio, 2009:5)

Nontobeko Ntombela (2013:5) argues that curating is another form of critical research, whereas Natalie Hope O’Donnell (2016:9) argues that the space of the exhibition is key to curatorial practice. However, according to Paul O’Niell (2012:95) curatorial practice is a critical part of the visual arts, not only as a means of recording and

documenting, but also for preserving and articulating inferences and opinions. It is also an act of building on and adding value to the history of marginalised communities and their heritage. In this study a curatorial project can be understood as a space for the overlapping of divergent practices.

CURATORIAL PROJECT RESEARCH METHOD

The curatorial project *Diniso in 3D* employed different hanging methods, starting from salon style method, symmetrical method to the white cube method.

Regarding this MA curatorial project, I have always wanted to explore the salon style for the twenty-first century. This is equivalent to the conversation project, the ongoing project which continues through the various stages of Diniso's life. In Hans Ulrich Obrist's book (2011:33) titled *Everything you always wanted to know about curating*, Ingo Niermann asks the question "What did art mean to you during the different phases of your life?" The curatorial project was asking exactly that, when it looked at the body of artworks produced by Diniso over the years. "*The term 'curating' is used as the technical modality of making art public*" (Lind 2012:11). Displaying the archival pictures and ideas from the journey of Diniso's life and works has created another form of artistic display.

Salon style method

Salon Style method of hanging refers to the way artwork fills the walls and often doesn't have much wall space surrounding it. (Cline, Anna C 2012:5)

Salon Style get its name from the *Salon de Paris*, the official exhibition held at *Ecole des Beaux arts* that dates from the seventh century in which paintings covered the walls (Suzzane Maria Horta Greene 2015: 33). This hanging method was used against a large white wall on the right side of the curatorial project space, where Diniso's drawings and paintings were placed next to each other in a scattered format. It also has the setup of old décor of homes, how families will have all the images on the wall in a random setup.

Symmetrical method

Symmetry in art is when the elements of a painting or drawing balance each other out. This could be the objects themselves, but it can also relate to colors [sic] and other compositional techniques (Pencil Kings 2017:1).

In this curatorial project, the symmetrical method was used to display the timeline of Diniso's works from the period of 1970 to 2010. The artworks included drawings, paintings, newspaper articles that were displayed between the wall and the outside glass window in a vertical line (figures 12 to 31).

White cube method

White cube is achieved by the removal of the frame as one of the three elements that comprise the so-called 'white cube'. The other two surround the concepts of Spectator and the eye and the context as content (Greene 2015: 33).

In the curatorial project, the white cube method was employed in the middle of the exhibition where the projector was facing the white wall of the back office. The film projected on the wall is an artwork on its own, presented in the cubic format for gallery visitors to look at and interpret. The performance by Diniso in the foreground was also part of the white cubic installation. Greene (2015: 33) asserts that white cube method helps to elucidate what is happening inside and on the gallery walls by boxing up the space.

LAYOUT OF THE CURATORIAL PROJECT

Exhibition offers another way of writing outside of formal conventions through the construction of space, grouping of artworks as well as the curatorial concept, therefore allowing for multiple interpretations of these artworks. Ntombela (2013:73).

The exhibition was titled *Diniso in 3D* in order to reflect on Diniso's multidisciplinary outputs as a visual artist, performance artist, a director, writer, poet, teacher, educator, a father, musician, etc. The *3D* in the title suggests that Diniso can be experienced from metaphorically rotating angles, perspectives and dimensions.

There is no golden rule for curatorial space layout (Anne Parmly Toxey and Patrick Cavett McMillan. 2009:15)

Outside the glass entrance wall I placed the vinyl lettering which gave basic details about the curatorial project that was taking place inside. The title of the project was placed on a glass panel on the left hand side inscribed thus: *DINISO in 3D is a curatorial project conceptualized by Nkululeko Khumalo as part of her fulfilment of her MA in Fine Arts at the Wits School of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand (figure:46).*

Given that exhibitions comprise efforts to construct order out of an incongruous sum of material things they describe acts that give rise to the production of new objects of knowledge, art historical (Kaniaru, 2014:447).

The brief curatorial description was placed on the glass panel located on the right hand side of the entrance and read thus:

“DINISO in 3D is a curatorial research project focusing on the life and work of Vaal Triangle based artist, director, playwright and cultural activist Gamakhulu Diniso. The project features work and documents dating from 1975, when Diniso was a fine art student at the ELC and Craft Center, in Rorke's Drift, KZN. These include drawings, prints, paintings, archival newspaper cuttings, plays and performances. In 1986 Diniso put an end to his visual art portfolio and ventured into theatre and performance art. He has since created a number of critically acclaimed plays, which have earned him 'triple-thread' accolade status and 'An Ace South African Satirist'.

The composition of spatial components creates an atmospheric environment in relation to the individual who visits a space. (Märil Simonsson 2014:1)

The prints placed in an archival display cabinet displayed Diniso's more fragile artworks, a fragility described in terms of the medium and surface. This was the section where I wanted viewers to engage with the artworks without being tempted to touch them. At the bottom of the extreme left hand side, a television set showing an old interview with Diniso was placed. The interview *Capturing Gamakhulu* was filmed by Nduka Ntamba, a former student of Gamakhulu who currently works at Wits University's Film and TV department.

Exhibitions may certainly be recast as objects of knowledge and indeed as art historical objects while their histories begin to be considered as part of the art historical discipline, and not simply of curatorial practice (Assimina Kaniari 2014: 451)

On the upper right hand side of the project space I placed a large archival glass cabinet. The glass cabinet included works by Diniso which were very sentimental to him. The display cabinet had different sections including published books on Diniso as well as his sketch books. The first section had Diniso's sketched book, that was neglected and found by his former student at a resource centre located in Sharpeville at the Vaal district. The other section included a 2009 book published by Bodutu Gallery (VUT) which I had worked on as a researcher. Within that display cabinet I also placed a notebook where Diniso had written his poems, books by Ezekiel Mphahlele where Diniso's artwork was used as a book cover, a book by Adrienne Sichel titled *Ikasi and other plays* (2009); a book by Darryl Accone titled *Exile and Homecoming* (a biography of Ezekiel Mphahlele) and *Unbroken Song* and *Bury me at the market place* both by Ezekiel Mphahlele (figure 5) and *Meet me at the market place* by Chabane Mangayi (figure 5).

The books that were exhibited were wrapped in plastic covers for presentation and preservation purposes. All the books mentioned in the archival glass cabinet had artworks of Diniso as book covers. Interestingly, most of the books were named after Diniso's artworks titles, thus all the books had sentimental value for him.

On the left hand side down the steps, artworks were displayed through a timeline setting. The timeline starts from the 1970's with an etching artwork of a man eating alone. A painting titled *Exile and Homecoming* featured as a critical work of the 80s timeframe, the painting was also used as a cover of Chabane Mangayi's book of the same title. The 1990's were represented by newspaper articles from the 90s. The articles included *The road less travelled*, which was a performance by Diniso and his former students. Under the 2000 timeframe, I placed a charcoal drawing from this time. The timeline ended with the play written and performed by Diniso titled *Ilizwe: This land* in 2010.

CONCLUSION

Memories of how we Speak by Sami Mdluli (2016: 32) writes about how “the apartheid system’s most disenfranchising and lasting [effect] on the lives of black people was the way it stripped them of the means to prioritise and conserve a sense of heritage and cultural identity. ...Due to the politically hostile and tense period in South Africa at the time, culture became increasingly important from the early 1980’s to the mid-1990s.” This has been the case with the researched artist Gamakhulu Diniso, who was not in the mainstream history of noteworthy literature and suffered from curatorial exclusion. Despite the evidence of his achievements, noted earlier, there is no serious literature written on Diniso and his artworks. This research has endeavoured to question the marginalisation of such uncelebrated heroes in the arts fraternity in South Africa. The research aimed to eradicate the notion of artists being unknown outside their immediate surroundings (Goniwe 2011:20). Hence, writing about Diniso and his work instilled a sense of self-worth and acknowledgement, as Laurie Adams (1993:109) argues that “authors writing on the dignity of man [as in] the revival of Classical texts further contributed to the artist’s emergence from the relative anonymity”.

Diniso’s biography was presented to give a detailed understanding of Diniso’s life and to dispel the misrepresentation and discrepancies. Chabani (1996:viii) maintains that behind every biographic study lies another story: “the story of the relationship between the subject and the biographer. This biographical chapter was written based on memory of the past episodes and a sense of personal identity. Memory is at the heart of what most people use to think about personal identity and personal experience, how they recall various events that affect their lives. Klein has noted that “memories of past actions go towards constituting personal identity” (Klein 2012:2).

Thus the biographical narration of Diniso captured certain aspects and moments of Diniso’s life. However, the research was conducted through the artist’s memory and important events that the researched artist can remember or recall. The stories he told in interviews over the years kept on changing, therefore they were inconsistent and clouded by the passing of time. Freeman (2007:158) acknowledges that the distance between the story, event and the telling-event can be problematic because of the

unreliability of memory. These inaccuracies made me wonder if Diniso was altering stories because of events that had happened a long time ago and he kept forgetting or because he wanted the stories to suit the situation at that moment? In response to my questions, Schacter, (1996) writes that autobiographical memory is notoriously unstable. Although people typically remember well the gist of important life events, as time passes, they often misremember the details.

The biographical chapter used the term 'Memories' in the context of Diniso's historical background that is divided into five sections. The first section focuses on his origin, where he was born, his family background, his childhood life, and how he changed names over the years. The second section concentrated on Diniso's educational background and memories of that time. This dealt with how his passion for art started at primary level and progressed to a higher level through his education at Rorke's Drift. The third section discussed how the institution called Rorke's Drift had an impact on Diniso's artistic growth; how Rorke's Drift nurtured his artistic ability; the friends that helped him grow as an individual/as an artist and the struggles of being a black artist in the apartheid era. The fourth section focused on the life of Diniso in the timeframe, 1980 -1994. This section discussed how Diniso took the initiative and opened his own school called Busang in Sharpeville. It discussed the number of students that enrolled when Busang started and it also mentioned people who had a major influence on Diniso starting the school like Prof. Es'kia Mphahlele, Diniso's late girlfriend etc., and this section discussed Busang's success in terms of awards, community engagement, expansion of the school's skills and students. The last section of the chapter focused on Gamakhulu Diniso and his body of work starting from when he was a fine artist to him transitioning to a performance artist.

Diniso's journey as an artist was well articulated in the performance chapter. Looking at his creative side, Diniso has always gone against the tide by using art as a conduit for fighting for the struggle for liberation in South Africa. His works challenged the values of the apartheid regime and those who were reluctant to raise their voices in solidarity with the struggle of the people. He used theatre to project his point of view as a freedom of expression. His visual art works have always sought to bring attention to life under segregation, separation and unequal development. Edvin Sandstrom (2010:1) asserts that artists use performance art as a mode of communication, which

constitutes a social structure within communities and similarly Diniso used his art to communicate socio-political discourses concerning black communities under apartheid colonial rule. Diniso used stage plays such as *Shoeville*, *Igazi and ikasi*, *Izitha*, *Waiting for tata*, *Father and son affair*, *Apple boy and orange* and other plays discussed in the performance chapter to express his frustration with the apartheid system, and to encourage black people to do something with their lives, and he used his plays to give black people hope that there will be a better tomorrow. Diniso's body of work was also inspired by his surroundings i.e. his Afrikaner upbringing and his Christian belief and related knowledge of Biblical stories, such as his *Visual narratives of Jonah and Noah*.

Diniso is a versatile artist, he uses multiple forms of art to communicate his thoughts and views. He is widely known for his enthusiastic involvement in performance art productions, but also known for the creation and enactment of different personas in both his life and static artworks, and the construction of sets and puppets for stop-motion animated films. Despite having won the struggle against the former regime, his character and role in creating continuity and the preservation of historical phenomenon is fundamental. The question to be asked, is: why is he still under recognised? The curatorial project in this study honoured the works of the legendary artist from the Vaal region. It was significant to curate this exhibition because Diniso is an artist with a sizeable collection of records in a self-preserved archive that includes artworks, newspaper clippings, greetings cards, book illustrations, and book covers. As a researcher and as a curator I felt the need to display his work for the public to view and thereby to enable conversations about his works.

Chapter three of the thesis discussed the curatorial project that took place at *The Point of Order Gallery*, University of Witwatersrand from the 23rd of March to 9th April 2016. The curatorial project was discussed in terms of the events that took place and the displaying methods of the exhibition. Similar to Ntombela's research of the late Gladys Mgudlandlu (2013:70), the method of examining my exhibition was not only about looking at Diniso's exhibition archive through the evidence provided, but it also looked at the context in which this archive became accumulated and where it is placed now within the history of exhibition practices. What I can say is this: the whole curatorial project has not only had to do with the exhibition, it has a lot to do with bringing people

together. This too is a large part of Diniso multidisciplinary work.

Julie Ault (2010:211) describes archives as a “*primary source for the potentially infinite production of history.*” In closing, Diniso’s collection of his own archives has proven that he is one of the most accomplished visual artists and an archivist of note of his era. He has preserved his own archives over three decades. The most fascinating of all in his collection are the newspaper clippings that he collected and preserved. The storing of those fragile newspaper clippings from 1977 to date has to be handled with such care. The majority of those newspaper clippings have been scanned and reprinted for exhibitions that took place at Bodutu Gallery in 2010, his studio in 2014 and at The point of Order in 2016 (Figure 16). Diniso brings oppositional discourse and critical thinking to the arts fraternity. He attempts to restore positive values that are currently evaporating. Despite not having studied in a formal institution of higher learning, he needs to be recognised as an ‘Organic intellectual’ to quote Antonio Gramsci. Diniso’s involvement in the struggle against colonial apartheid deserves to be celebrated and to form part of the discourse in either the formal pedagogy of learning or the andragogy of learning. He is an embodiment of the country's historical memory that is worth preserving and learning from.

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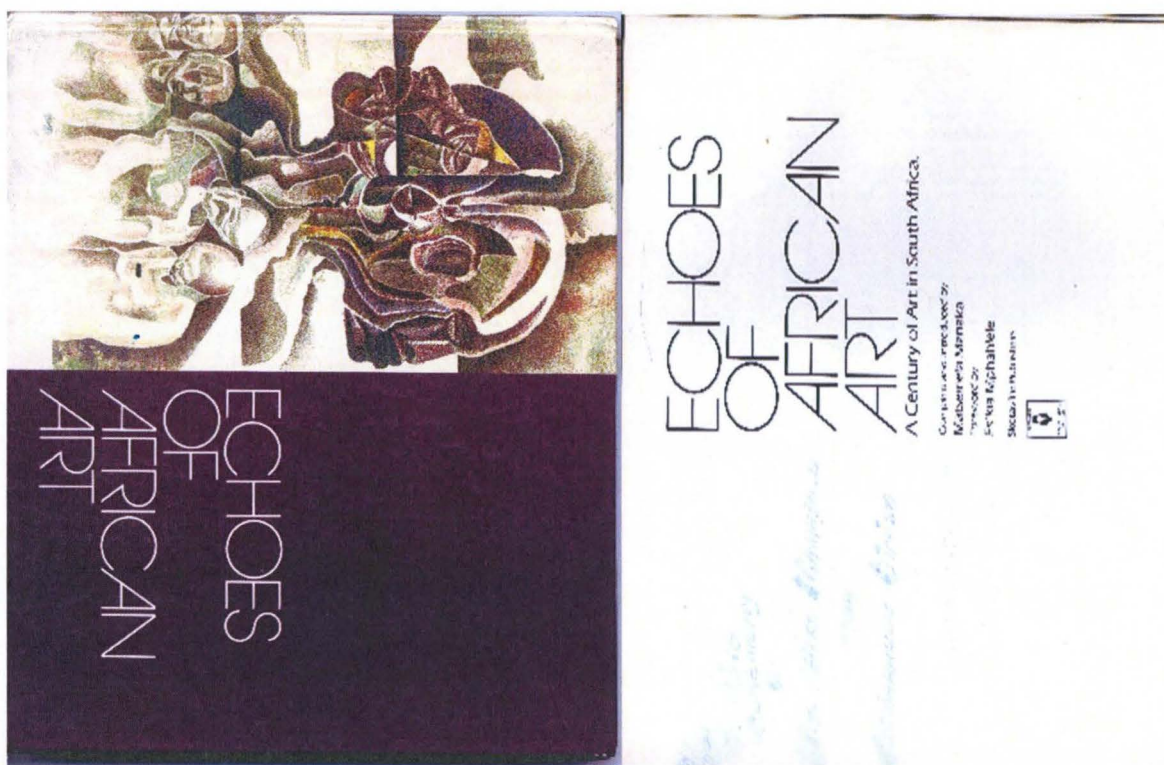
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Annexure



Gamakhulu Diniso, *Illustration of The Prophetess* – 1982 by N.S. Njabulo



G. Diniso *It doesn't leave me cold* – Ink Drawing 1982

Figure 1 Echoes of African art, by Es'kia Mphahlele, Diniso was one of the participating artist who had his artworks illustration drawings shown. The illustrations were produced in 1982



Figure 2. Diniso artwork, *The Unbroken Songs*, 1982, Dimension Unknown. The artwork features as a front cover of Es'kia Mphahlele's book of the same title. The book's title distinguishes from the paintings or the painting are titled after the book, which Diniso doesn't remember much on that process.

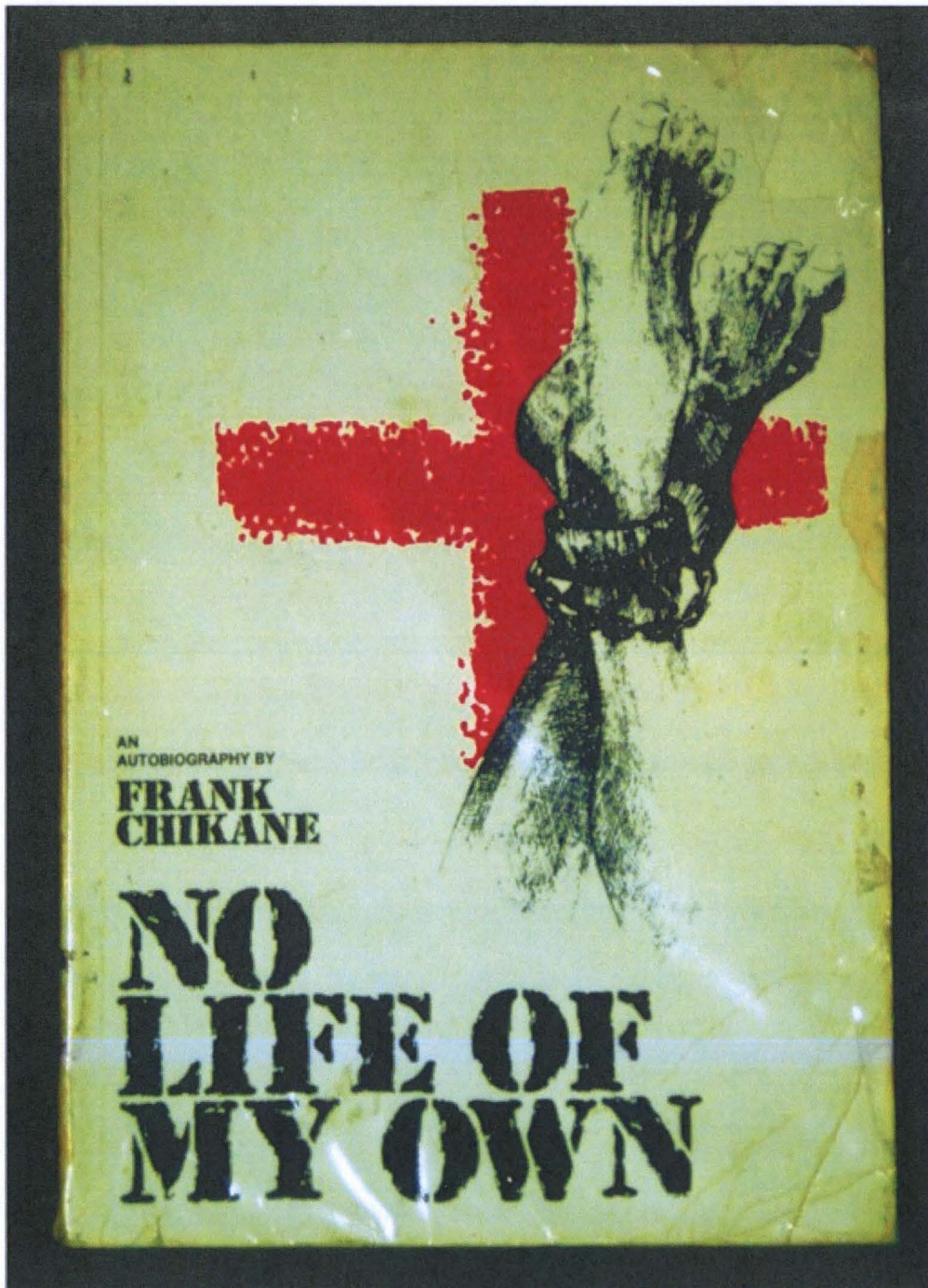


Figure 3. Diniso, *No Life of My Own*, Date and Dimension Unknown – The work features as front cover of Frank Chikane's book, of the same title as his illustrative drawing.

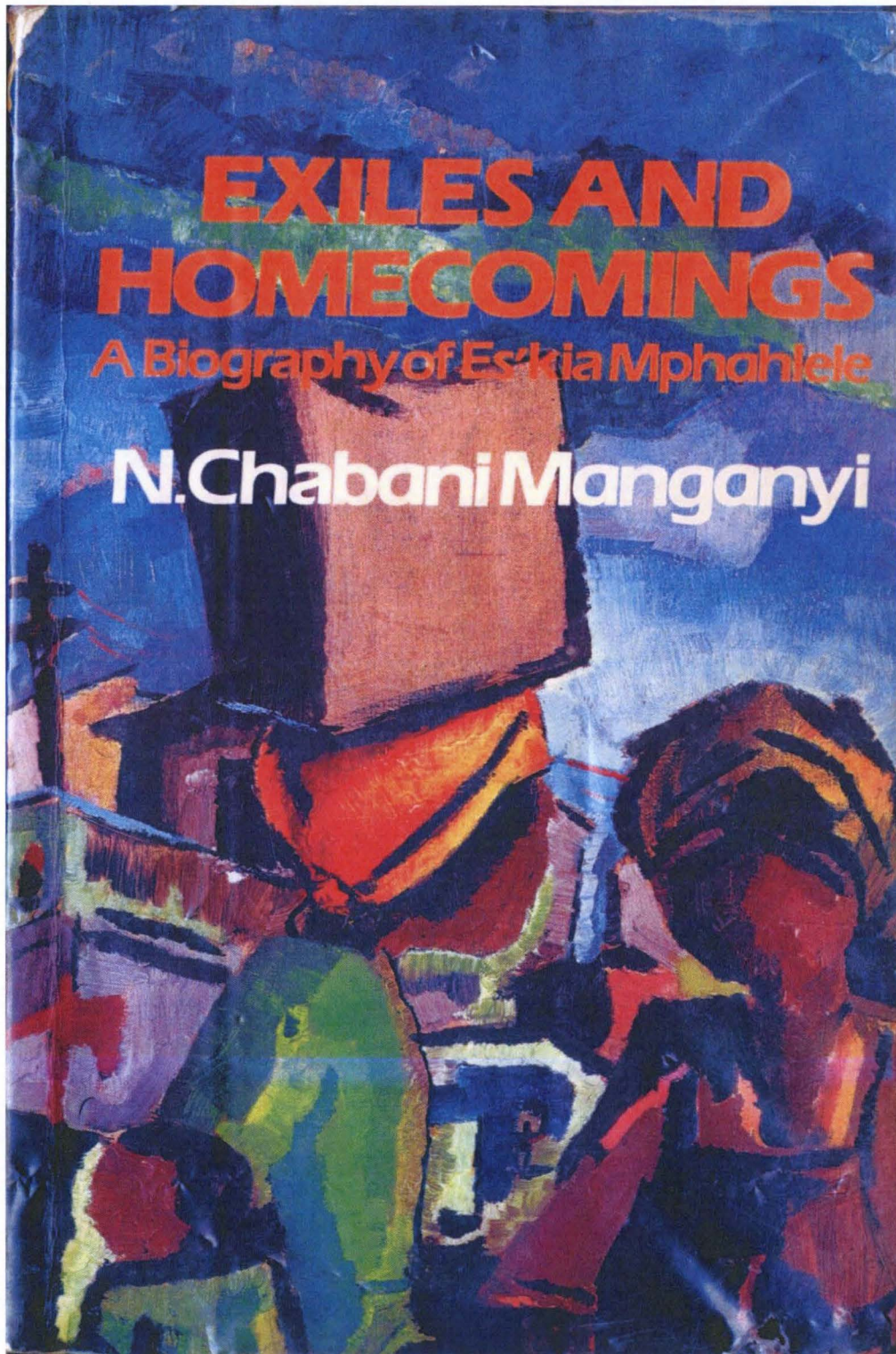


Figure 4. Gamakhulu Diniso, *Exile and Home*, 1980, Oil on Masonite, Dimensions Unknown

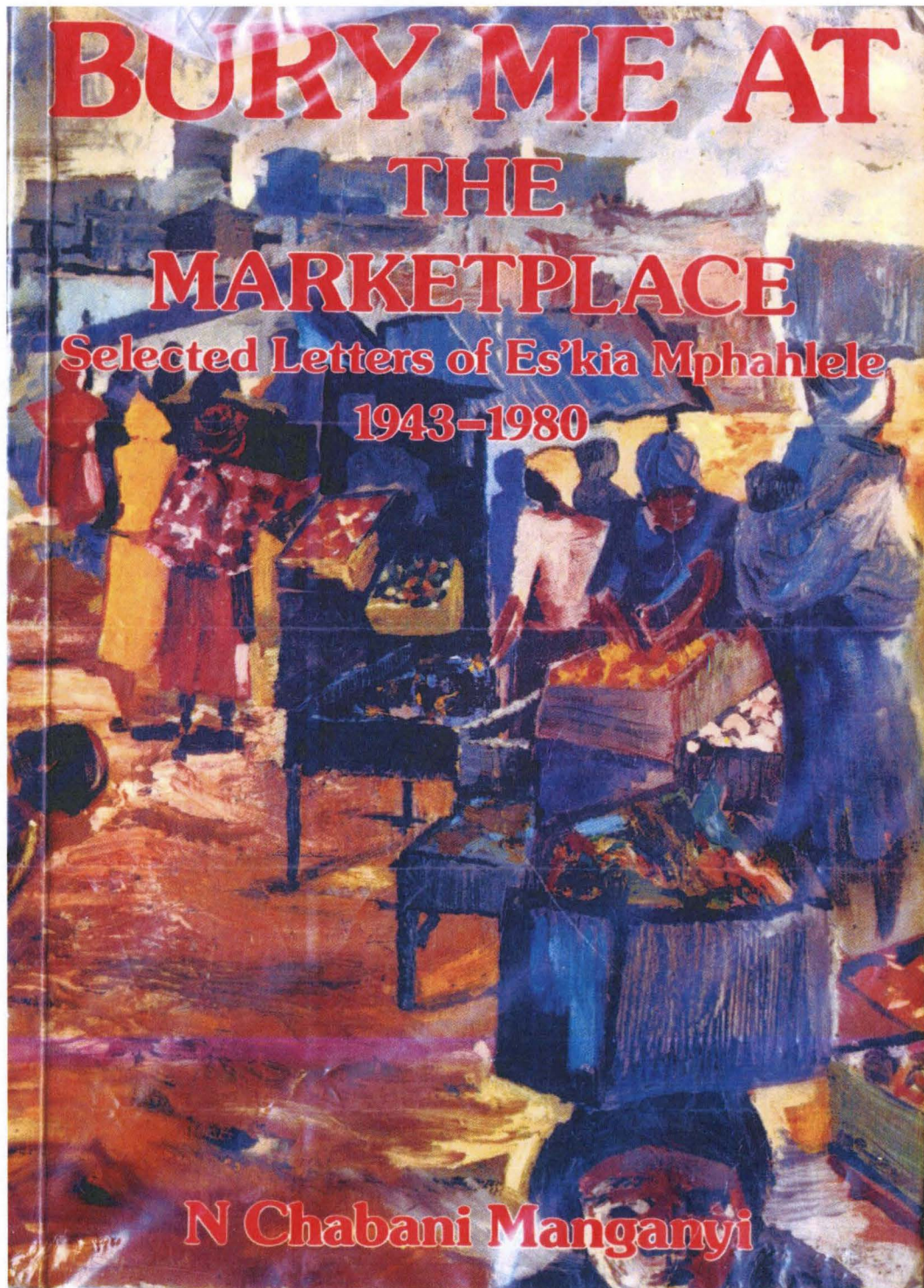


Figure 5. Diniso, *Meet Me at The Market Place*, 1983, Oil on Canvas, Dimensions Unknown. The painting is titled the same as the book cover.



Figure 6. Diniso, *Iso Le Nkhono*, *African Folktales for Children*, 1983, Watercolour illustrations specifically done for this particular children's book. Dimensions Unknown.

Uhuru Lily

Tseko Mafanya
Gamakhulu Diniso



BUSANG-Poems

Figure 7. Diniso, Tsheko Mafanya, *Uhuru Lily* book published in 1988, Drawing Sketches produced for these Busang Poems.

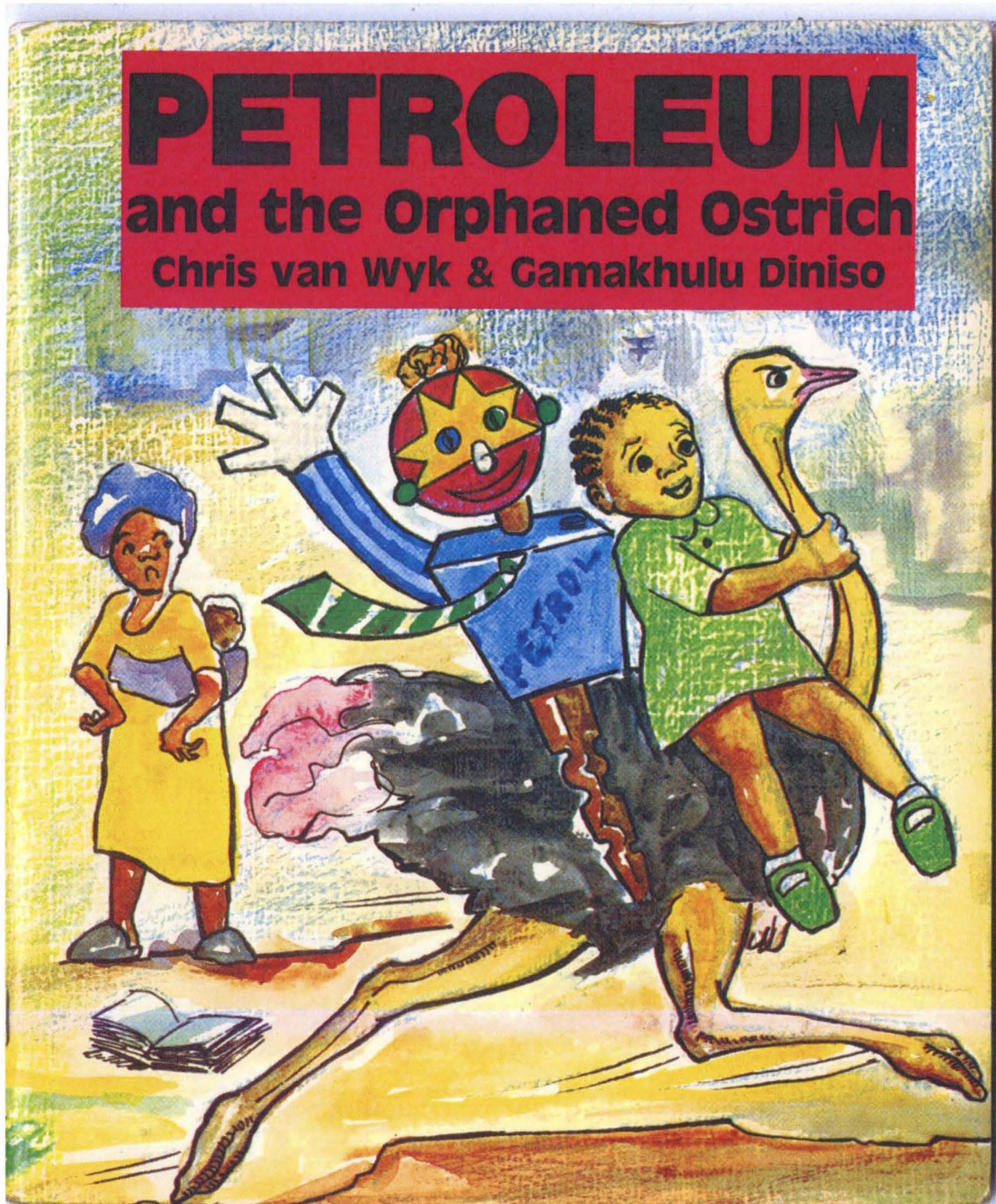


Figure 8. Diniso, *Petroleum and the Orphaned Ostrich* 1988, Drawing Sketches, Dimensions Unknown.

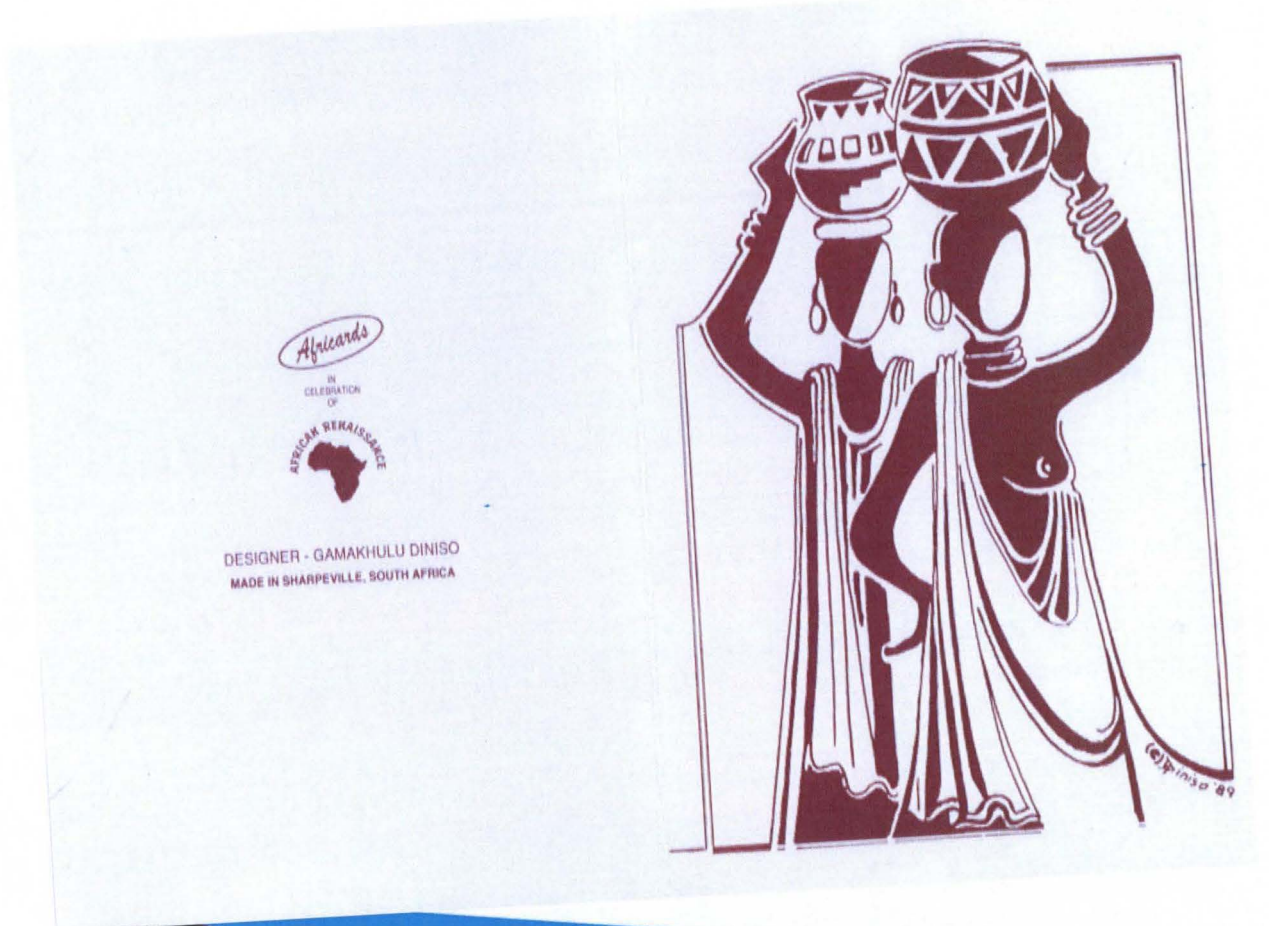


Figure 9. Diniso, *Various Types of Greeting Cards from over the years, Digital Printed Cards from his previous drawing and some he started to create to convey for different meanings.*

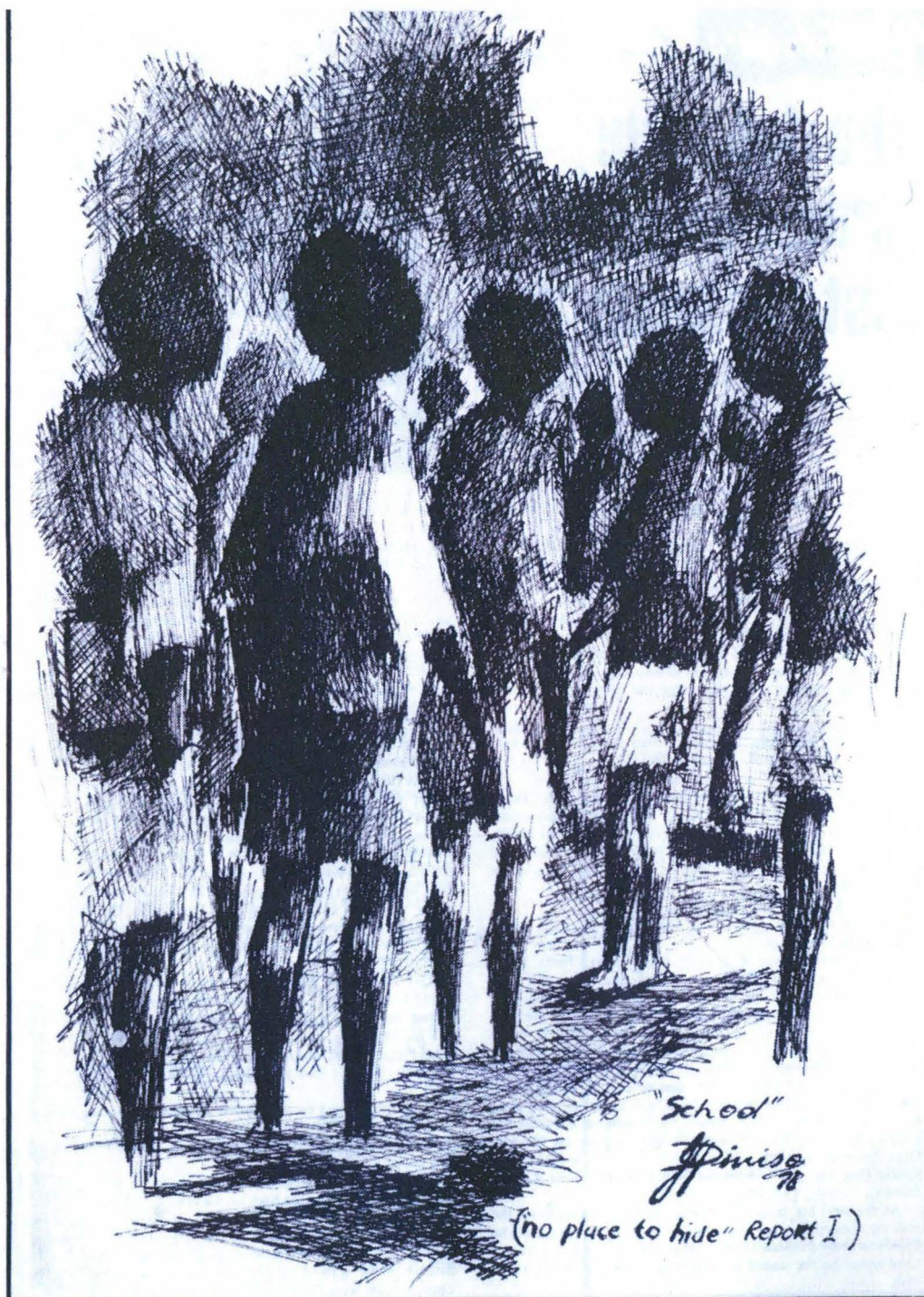


Figure 10. *Diniso* in 3D installation of book covers and illustrations



Figure 11. *Diniso in 3D* installation of book covers and illustrations

The Point of Order invites you to *DINISO in 3 D*

**Opening 23 March | 6pm | The Point of Order, cnr Bertha and Stiemans streets
Performance by Gamakhulu Diniso**

Walkabout | 2 April | 10:30am



DINISO in 3 D is a curatorial project conceptualized by Nkululeko Khumalo as part of her fulfilment of her MA in Fine Arts at the Wits School of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand.

DINISO in 3 D is a curatorial research project focusing on the life and work of Vaal Triangle based artist, director, playwright and cultural activist Gamakhulu Diniso. The project features work and documents dating from 1975, when Diniso was a fine art student at the ELC and Craft Center, in Rorkes Drift, KZN. These include drawing, prints, paintings, archival newspaper cuttings, plays and performances. In 1986 Diniso put an end to his visual art portfolio and ventured into theatre and performance art. He has since created a number of critically acclaimed plays, which have earned him 'triple-thread' accolade status and 'An Ace South African Satirist'.

For more info contact zamankuly@yahoo.com

Figure 12. Gamakhulu Invitation to Curatorial Project and Walkabout



Figure 13. Gamakhulu Diniso 3D Curatorial Exhibition (Fragile Artworks)

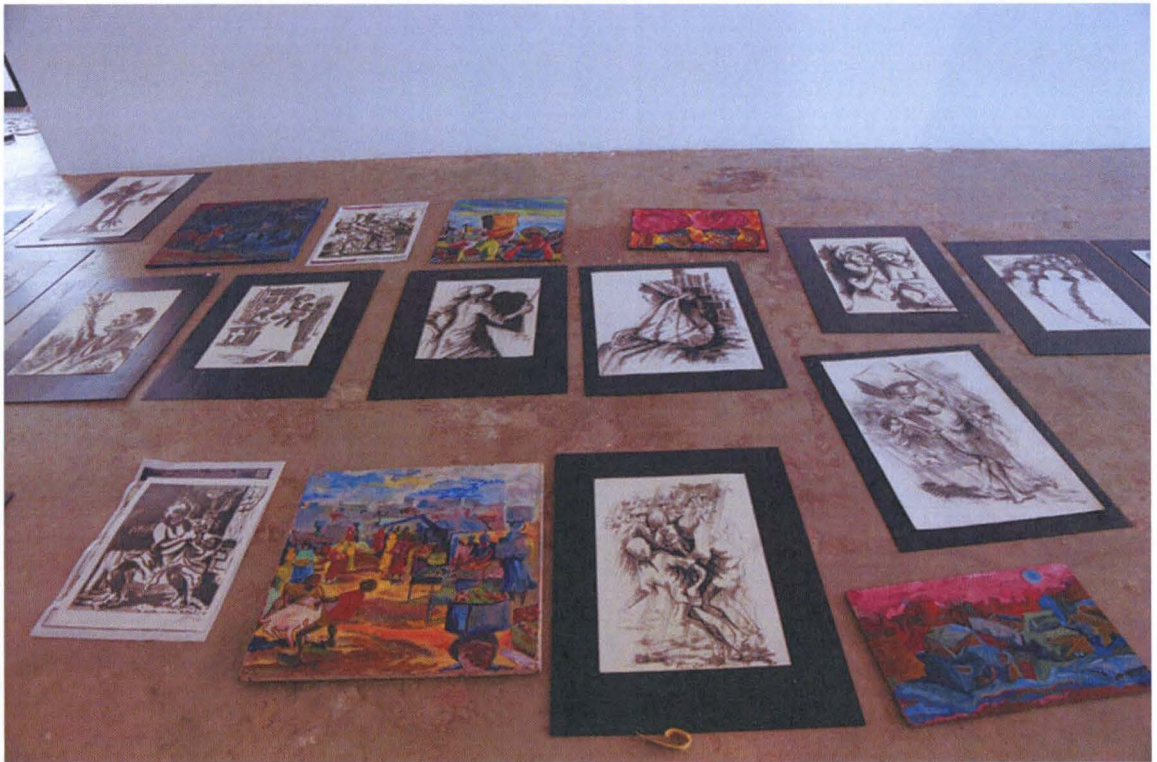


Figure 14. Gamakhulu Diniso 3D Curatorial Exhibition Setup



Figure 15. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Layout



Figure 16. Part of Curatorial Exhibition process



Figure 17. Part of Curatorial Exhibition



Figure 18. Part of Curatorial Exhibition layout



Figure 19. Part of Curatorial Exhibition process

Figure 20. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Fragile Display



Figure 22. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Opening Night



Figure 23. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Opening Night



Figure 24. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Opening



Figure 25. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Opening



Figure 26. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Opening

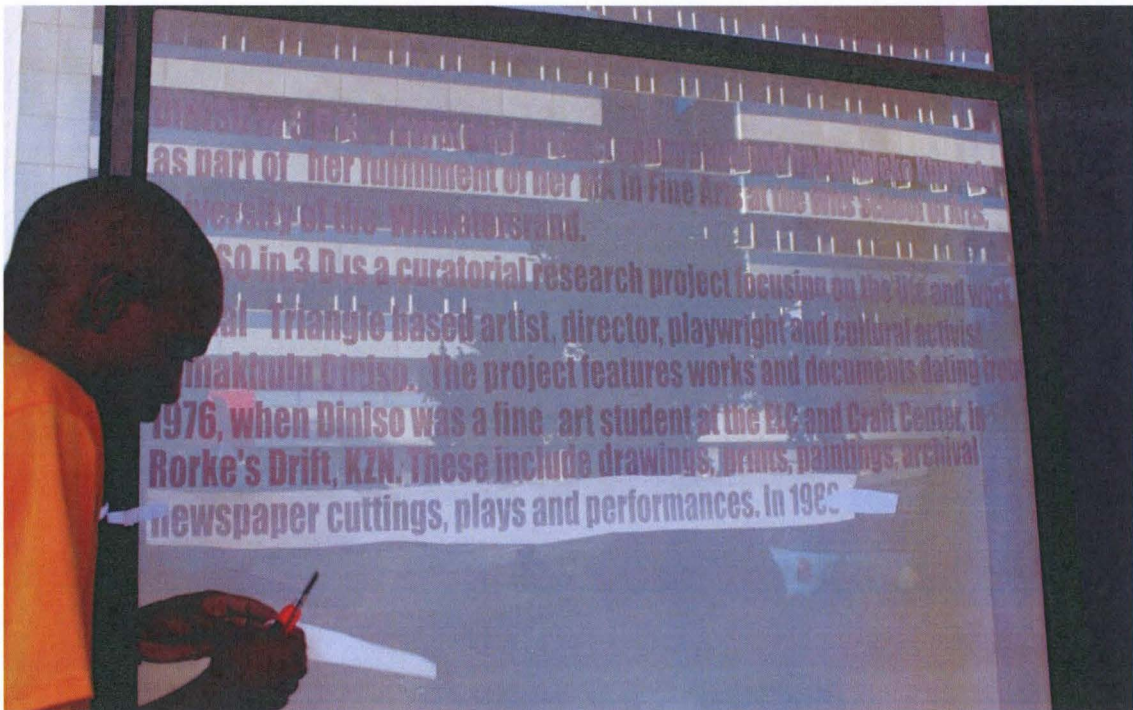


Figure 27. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Text



Figure 28. Part of Curatorial Exhibition



Figure 29. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Cabinet for Archival Artworks



Figure 30. Part of Curatorial Exhibition Preparations



Figure 31. Part of Curatorial Exhibition

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NATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN WRITERS

Staffrider

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 4 1982 R1.00(inclGST)

BY
TOD

MI

A POWERFUL
NEW STORY BY
ES'KIA MPHAHLELE

PHOTO
FEATURE:
WOMEN IN
AZANIA

BABY COME
DUZE
THE DAYS OF
MBAQANGA
NTEMI PILISO

SETHOKGWA

A Story by Letshaba Thubela. Illustration by Gamakhulu Diniso

Sethokgwa, so named because it is perched on a bushy koppie; a conglomerate of rundown ramshackles bordering on the southern tip of Katlehong, it was not a township to begin with. There had been a crippling house shortage in Katlehong and a few of those severely affected — by threats of banishment to the 'place of origin' — had ganged up shouting: 'Senzeni na? Amandla ngawethu!' and decided to do something about it.

Among those who had gathered, was Nnodana ka Mhlaba or Bra Terra as he was known, a strong leader of positive stature and a strong sense of commitment. There was nothing of the tycoon or the lumbering know-all-bully demagogue about him. In fact, it was his enduring dedication to the ideals of justice and fairness, and an immense inner power, deceptively belied by his small frame and his country bumpkin looks, that propelled him to the forefront of the leadership of the people.

Bra Terra had long been a resident of Katlehong. Born in the old township of Dukathole, he had grudgingly come with his parents to Katlehong after their forced removal under the notorious Group Areas Act. On arrival in Katlehong he was not married, or even betrothed and hence could not qualify for a house under some evil subsidiary law derived from the same Group Areas Act.

When Bra Terra eventually did marry, all the houses were occupied and the 'Waiting List' had become enormous. Being a township-bred boy, Bra Terra could also not envisage himself greasing the palms of the Administration Board or Community Council officials in pursuit of a house. He knew from experience that such actions of necessity entail a great deal of misery for countless destitute families: it is these families that are evicted to make way for the obliging palm greasers.

'Ubuntu' had been an abounding feature of life in Katlehong Township and many a rent payer had been tolerant towards his less fortunate brothers. Landlords allowed the homeless to build tin shacks, imikhukhu, for a nominal payment in their yards. Though the unscrupulous ones exacted wild profits from such schemes, it was nevertheless a sign of brotherhood and solidarity that they allowed imikhukhu at all. And so it came to pass that when the landlords started to receive official letters demanding the demolition of these shacks, a wave of panic struck right across the



bond that had held the landlords and the tenants together as a common people. A numbed sensation of hopelessness permeated the township. And all about people dragged themselves to and from their tasks in a drowsy stupor. While vexed minds tried to probe deeper into the recesses of the white mentality, the Community Council's half-hearted protests and vague and contradictory demented as to its collusion did nothing to enlighten the people about their future.

Bra Terra, being one of those affected and being the stoic and resilient spirit that he was, decided to come out of the fray clawing and punching to the death if need be. Skilfully, through the bush telegraph, he re-implanted into his fellow sufferers the purpose of their existence and their pride in being human beings without resorting to outrageous embellishments or egocentric demagoguery. Not long after he set out to do what he was convinced was right. Using the same line of communication, he called a meeting to deal with the

pending crisis.

I stood swaying amidst the surging mass of excited people. Placards of all sizes vied for space in the air, and, on all of them one theme ran through: THE HOUSING SHORTAGE. As my eye wandered over the faces all around me, some numbed with helplessness, others nonchalant and defiant in the face of a calamity, I beheld an array of young and old fellow sufferers imbued with a wish for an eleventh hour reprieve from doom. I could not help feeling that our position was analogous to Czechoslovakia in 1939.

I was about to ask when the meeting would start when the redoubtable Bra Terra mounted a table-shaped stone beneath the big old marula tree in the square to which we had been summoned and boomed in his gravelly baritone: 'Amandla!' The resounding, 'Ngawethu!' emitted by the people suffused my whole being with a warm and gratifying sense of accomplishment and my innate



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BHEKI MASEKO'S SCHOOL DAYS

• ESIQITHINI

MY BLOOD by Walt OyiSipho ka Mtetwa

The LiteMaster Story



Illustrated by Camakhulu Diniso



'My name is Johnny!'

He said it with such pride, such assurance that I didn't doubt it for a moment. I had at the time, other things on my mind and had resented the intrusion of the shrill doorbell on my privacy. I instantly regretted not having peeped down the hall through the glassed front door to see who it was. Had I looked, I wouldn't have answered it. Shit! Not another begging black man with the inevitable yellowed formal letter proclaiming the right to collect money with the small shabby black dog-eared donation book — Smith 50 cents, Mrs Malherbe 30 cents . . . all in pencil, all spidery, all resentful. All succumbing to either some taut conscience or obscure Christian catechism. I suppose I had taken pride in never having scrawled in that book — those supplicating black men or sometimes snotty nosed umfaans could do what they like with my 'donation'. But like a ringing phone. I was consumed with curiosity as to who was at my door. And then, seeing the same old ritual again, the listening to the half sob half truth, half untruth story of vital bus fares or the train or dead fathers or the church gentleman with the officially stamped see through

plastic folder — but all untruths. And if I didn't have money, then it was candles or old clothes. The countless times that after half listening to the requests or holding up my hand to signify their victory over my reticence to donate, I would leave the now silent figure, fingering his tatty black hat while I half closed the door — not shutting him out but not inviting him in — freezing it all for a moment in time and obeying the darkening of my fortunate white skin, searching through the small change; the little dilemma of how much to give knowing that Mrs Malherbe had given thirty cents. I didn't have that, perhaps I had a fifty or ten.

Fifty was out of the question — two fifties make a rand, so ten it was. Both weathered hands appeared gently to take my little offering — the little cheap pay off. He looked down at the shiny piece, no doubt disappointed, turned and left. I knew he would react like that — ten cents, not even worth the traditional gesture of those two unarmed hands. What did he expect? A rand? And so, after paying off my dues, I returned to my own comforts, momentarily atoned, discharged of my duty as one 'on the other side'. And then, sitting down, consumed with the doubt that I had not shut the door

firmly, that the Yale had not slotted staunchly into its female slot — it does that sometimes so again I got up and checked. It was shut, securely. Until, of course, the next prick arrived. The same ritual. The same reaction. The same hunched black figure shuffling away to be greeted by the hysterical barks of my neighbour's grubby poodles.

He gazed at me with hooded glazed tired eyes, cold with no emotion on his wrinkled shiny features.

But not Johnny, Johnny was different. My name is Johnny — joyfully slurred with so much aplomb and the same sinking feeling as his fetid breath forced me to step back, the feeling that I would have to listen to yet another tragedy which he appeared to resolve in drink. I half listened, bored with the incomprehensible slurs through a toothless mouth. Johnny was small, painfully thin — a little light brown face with almost Bushman features that seemed barely supported on a scrawny neck. He was dressed in filthy blue overalls and torn veldskoens — shiny and gaping with age . . . too big of course.

by Christopher
Charles

WHITE LIES

TAFFRIDER, VOL. 6 NO. 2, 1985

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Staffrider

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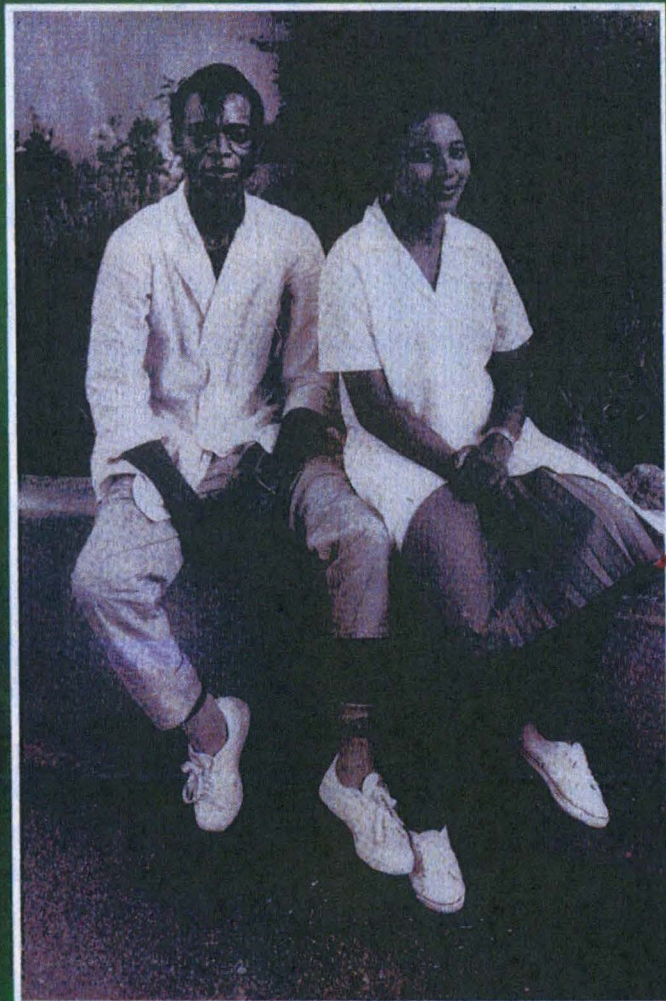
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THIRD WORLD WRITING Introducing Yashar Kemal

NDEBELE:
Some
thoughts on
South African
fiction

**Lawrence
Mshengu:**
The
Workers'
Struggle

CAROL MATHIANE
THERESA QUEIROS
P. J. PETERSEN



THE TENANTS

by Mpumie Cilibe

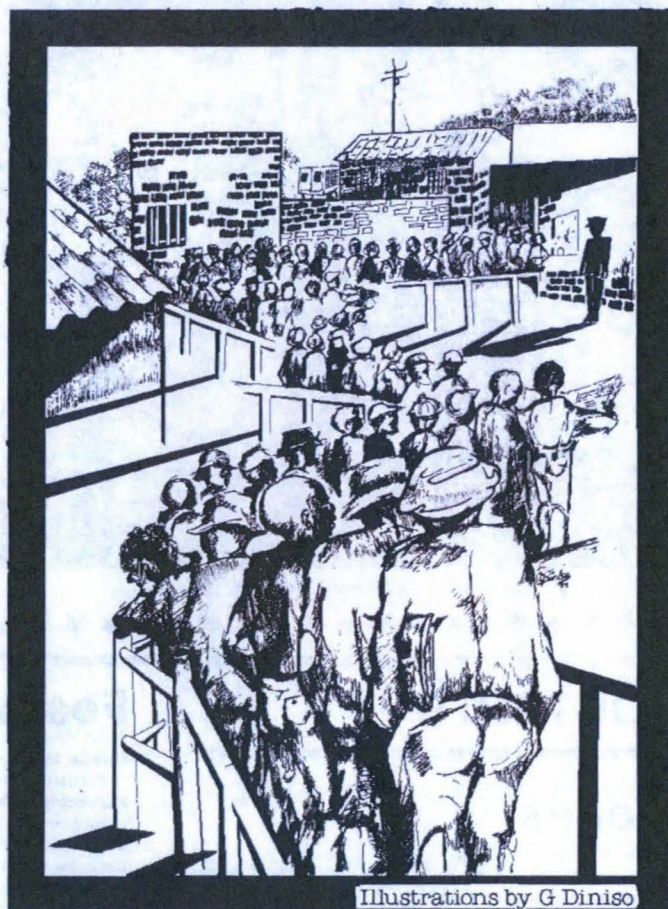
Mdange had just obtained his driver's licence. Because he desperately wanted to gain experience as a driver, he sought work at a car-transporting firm and got it. His job was to fetch cars from a local car-manufacturing firm and distribute them to dealerships all over the country. There would be a convoy of about sixty or more cars at a time with the pilot van bringing up the rear. The pilot van was the vehicle he and his work mates would be returning in after delivering the cars.

The travelling suited Mdange very well, for he was still a bachelor staying with his elderly parents, brothers and sisters. In the cities they visited they met and made love to a lot of women. The excitement and adventures seemed to be unending for Mdange. He wished he could work for this firm for the rest of his life although the wages they worked for were very low.

It was in Bloemfontein that he met and fell in love with a girl by the name of Tsepiso. She was a beautiful woman with dimpled cheeks and sparkling white teeth. Whenever she smiled, Mdange would hold his breath and move towards her, holding her in his arms. He would kiss both those dimpled cheeks, cupping them in his hands, looking into her sleepy eyes. On his way back home, in the pilot van, he would brood about her. And then, strangely, he found himself thinking seriously about marriage for the first time in his life.

When Mdange arrived home his parents noticed the change in his behaviour. Often he would fold his arms and stare vacantly into the distance, smiling to himself. The neighbours started gossiping that he was aloof. The reason was, they would pass and greet him but he would not respond, unbeknown to them that he was forever deep in thought. They thought he was aloof because of his new job as a convoy driver which took him over the land, to places they had never seen.

His father, urged on by his mother, approached him and inquired about the source of the new behaviour. He did it



Illustrations by G Diniso

in the fashion of elders.

'Son, only a fool seals his lips when a serious matter gnaws his brain. Your mother and I are perturbed by your silence and this keeps us awake night after night.'

Mdange was at a loss. He had not seen his father coming. He had been standing outside, leaning against the chimney, looking at the top branches of the fig-tree in the yard of the house next door. His father's words stunned him — to learn that they, his parents, had been studying him. He licked his lips scratched his head and hesitated. How was he going to tell his father he was in love? Since when had he ever discussed girls with his father? Anyway, he thought, this was a different matter, it involved marriage.

'Er . . . father, I was thinking to tell you. But I was not ready yet.'

'What is it? Tell me then?'

'As you know, I am constantly out of town. I have been to Bloemfontein twice already in the past month. That is where I have met a girl . . . er . . . I was thinking of settling down.'

Mdange had by now broken into a sweat, his eyes cast to the ground, unable to meet his father's gaze.

'What you are saying is, you want to take a wife?'

'Yes, father.'

'You see now, you would have gone on worrying yourself because of this matter. A man does not act like that — you must learn to speak up like a man!'

The old man turned and went back into the house, leaving his son standing

broke away from the queue and walked slowly in the direction of the 'Bantu Affairs Administration Board rent office. The weekend's encounter with the old man had removed the spring in his step.

He walked slowly, his jacket hung over his left arm, his lunch clutched firmly in his left hand, the right hand in his pants pocket.

When he arrived at the rent office, he found the place crowded with people standing in long queues. Queues! He hated queues. Whenever the black man has a problem he has to stand in a queue before it is attended to, he thought. Be it the pass office, that is the commissioner's office at Africa House - Kwa Ndaba - Zabantu, the Labour Bureau or even the hospital, it struck him, where had he ever seen white people standing in a queue except in the banks at month-ends? Never! He wondered, do they carry passes and if they do, what do those passes look like? Do they, maybe, have their own commissioner's office, Labour Bureaux or rent offices? He was shaking his head in wonderment when a voice called, apparently directed at him.

If you piss, I can make things a little easier and faster for you,

'Hey! Hey! Bhuti, stand in the queue!' The caller had on a headman's uniform. Mdange looked from side to side at all the queues to his utter confusion. He did not know which queue to join, so he went to the man in uniform and explained his predicament. The man had bloodshot eyes and yawned continuously, wine fumes escaping from his mouth. He scratched his bulging stomach, listening disinterestedly.

'You must stand in this queue, here,' the man pointed, 'there your name will be put on the location Superintendent's list. Let me see your passbook.' Mdange gave it to him. The man ran his thick fingers through the passbook, pausing in between pages. 'Ja, your pass has to get the Superintendent's stamp first; about your house problem,' he scratched his stomach and tugged at his moustache. 'You will have to get a lodger's card, for which you must pay a small fee every month.' He looked at Mdange searchingly as if watching for the impact of his words. and then, 'if you piss, I can make

things a little easier and faster for you.' He said these words in low tones, looking around for eavesdroppers, his red eyes moving like search-lights in the dark.

Mdange was prepared to 'piss' as the man in uniform had suggested. This was nothing new to him. For fast service at places like this, one had better 'piss'. Even to get his present job, he had to go to the black employment officer's house and 'piss'. So Mdange left the man and disappeared for a short while before he reappeared with a nip tucked under his belt. Red eyes saw him, nodded and moved clumsily and hurriedly to the toilet. Mdange followed him seconds later and handed him the bottle. The man held the nip between the thumb and the index finger of his right hand and uncapped it with the other hand. He stood with his legs astride, craned his neck and literally poured the liquor down his throat! He did not gulp or guzzle the stuff, he just poured it! To think Mdange had made the mistake of imagining that he would get some! He wiped his mouth dry with the cuff of his uniform coat, demanded Mdange's passbook and left the toilet, smiling broadly.

Mdange left the rent office the proud possessor of a yellow lodger's card and with the knowledge that his name was on the housing waiting list. At work he told his work mates about the confrontation with the old home-owner. He brandished his lodger's card for all to see and explained to his wide-eyed audience how he had got hold of it.

In his room that evening after work, he held his wife in his arms, kissed her and displayed the card.

'What is it?' Tsepiso inquired, frowning.

'A lodger's card!' he answered

triumphantly and sat on the bed. Seeing her puzzled look, he explained the meaning of the card and went on to narrate the happenings of that day. On hearing all that her husband had to say, she became jubilant and they cuddled and kissed. That night the bed went on creaking and creaking into the small hours, to the fury of the old man in the room next door!

The following morning Tsepiso was unwell by the time Mdange left for work. Their love-making of the previous night had been a little violent for a mother-to-be. Mdange was a worried man at work.

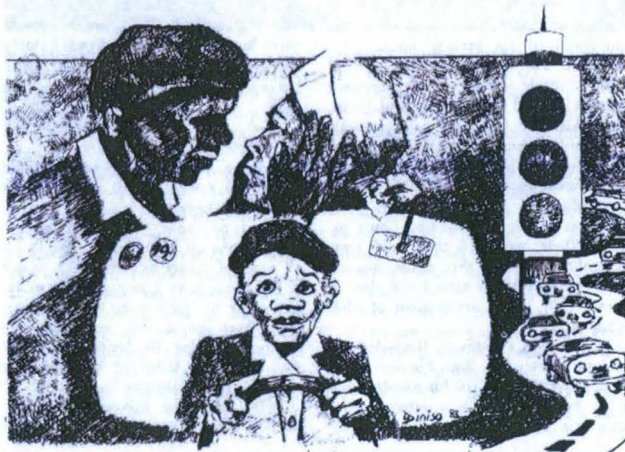
On arriving home late that afternoon Mdange learnt from Madala that his wife had left almost immediately after he had gone to work. She had suffered stomach cramps and decided to take a bus to hospital. He thanked the old man for the information and departed, heading for the hospital.

Having arrived at the maternity section of the hospital, he inquired from the sister in charge. A junior nurse was summoned to take Mdange to his young wife.

Mdange squinted and blinked. He stood there, completely numbed by the sight. She smiled at him and beckoned to him to come closer. Tsepiso lay on her side, the side of her head resting on her hand, her elbow sinking close to a bustling bundle. He was a father, and he had not even expected it, at least not so soon! When he came close to the bed, she took his hand into hers. 'It's a boy,' she told him smiling.

'A boy?' he asked, peeping behind his wife curiously.

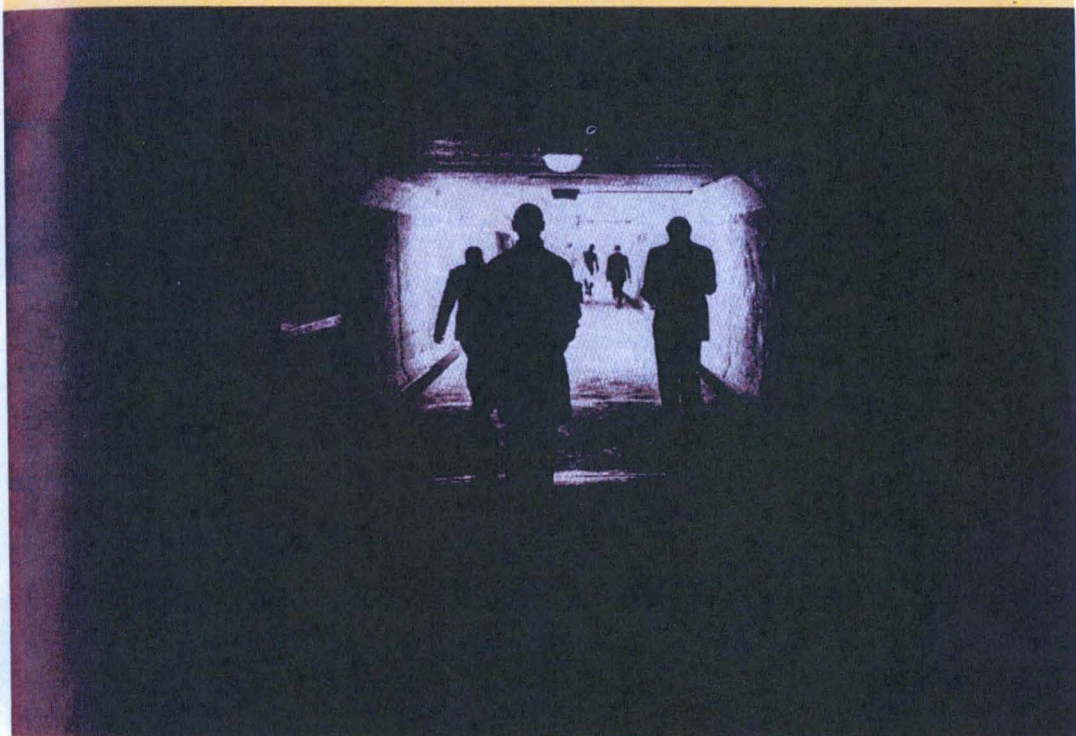
'Yes, our boy!' she explained possessively and went on telling him about what had happened after he had left for work. 'As soon as you had gone



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Story Special

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Njabulo Ndebele _____ The Music of the Violin

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Peter Wilhelm _____ JAZZ

Carol Hermer _____ The Diary of Maria Tholo

Duncan Foster _____ Societa Secreta Subversa

Staffrider Profile

Katlehong Artists

The Katlehong Art Centre is situated in the township of Katlehong and administered by the East Rand Administration Board. From shaky beginnings the centre has developed into a popular educational and recreational facility in the township.

Andy Mason and Elaine Mohamed visited the centre and spoke with the four artists who are employed there as student teachers. They run the centre, work on their own projects, and teach the younger members. Excerpts of the interview are presented here:

Do you think there is something specific that you would describe as 'black art'?

NAPO: I think art has got to be universal, not to be this art or that art, or that other art . . .

So how do you explain the fact that there does seem to be a very specific style that one associates with 'black art'?

NAPO: Well, I suppose that most of the time it's because of lack of training that we find this, and then it becomes identified as 'black art' . . . I think one should be well equipped with some kind of 'touch' that comes from within, but there have to be some good basic principles of Art itself.

Do you think that black artists have followed a specific tradition of 'black art'?

NAPO: Well it's hard to say at present because I suppose the artists who are doing this art are also trying to distinguish between one kind of art and another: they come into some sort of collision with Art itself.

When you say 'Art itself' what do you mean?

NAPO: I mean in the sense that Art has always been Art, and whatever names are put to it are just to try and 'prove' it. But if we get down to the basics of Art, we find it to be a thing you learn by viewing the work of other artists, it's not going to be 'this' or 'that' kind of art, it's got to be a universal kind of thing . . . I think, in perspective, we've got to look at it in its total view, on a very broad scope.

Sipho, do you see yourself as specifically a 'black artist'?

SIPHO: At the moment I'm just an artist, for Art's sake, since I feel that Art is universal.

Bhekisane, your work seems to suggest, to be very connected with traditional art forms.

BHEKISANE: Yes it is.

Where does your subject matter come from?

BHEKI: It comes from my spirit (demonstrates with hands, a movement outwards from within himself). And in our place (back home) we especially use tradition . . . In our place, there are things which people have believed in many years ago, which now we cannot see, but we are still getting stories about them and are still worried about how we can get them.

Speelman, your more recent sculptures are much less easily identifiable as being 'black art' than your earlier ones, the ones with big feet . . .

SPEELMAN: Before I was working too much from my inner self, rather from things I see . . . Now I can say that the things that I do are mostly the things that I see . . . every day scenes and the environment around the township.

This leads us into another area — the political aspect of your art. Most literary art by black writers at the moment seems to be explicitly political, but your visual art does not seem



Moss Petlo — drawing

Napn Makoena, lino-cut — The Crucifix



political in the same way. Why do you think this is the case?

SIPHO: Since we are still students I don't think we have the right to be political, but I think it is essential to improve ourselves in our studies rather than to concentrate on politics.

You mean the technical level of your art?

SIPHO: Ja, maybe afterwards when we have these tools, and we can express ourselves fully, we may be political or whatever, but at the moment we are working on projects, and

Figure 33. Staffrider, Gamakhulus's illustrations and articles on his art in various books



Figure 34. Gamakhulu Diniso, *Johannes Zenzile*, Diniso's father who was a musician of *Isicathamiya* music and played in a band



Figure 35. Diniso mother, *Adelina Nodeathini Skosana*, who was also artistic. She did interior decorative art for weddings and individual people

EMPLOYMENT INDIENSNEMING		EMPLOYMENT INDIENSNEMING	
LEKOA SHANDU HIGH SCHOOL P.O. Box 12, SHARPEVILLE Registration of employment Registrasie van indiensneming 1974 Postbus 12, SHARPEVILLE <i>Shelise</i>		Compulsory Endorsements by employer. Verpligte Inskrywings deur werkgever.	
Monthly signature of employer. Maandelikse handtekening van werkgever.	Month. Maand.	Date of discharge and signature of employer. Datum van ontslag en handtekening van werkgever.	
<i>Mallabale</i>	<i>Mar. 76</i>		
<i>Mallabale</i>	<i>July 76</i>		
<i>Mallabale</i>	<i>Jan. 75</i>		
<i>Mallabale</i>	<i>July 75</i>		
<i>Mallabale</i>	<i>Jan. 76</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>Feb. 76</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>April (B-2) Wednesday</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>May June 76</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>July Holiday 76</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>Aug 76</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>Sept 76</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>October 76</i>		
<i>C. Elustson</i>	<i>Nov 76</i>		

ELC ART AND CRAFT CENTRE
P.O. RORKE'S DRIFT VIA DUNDAS
3016 NATAL — S.AFRICA PHONE 2

LICENCES TO POSSESS ARMS.
On an application for and the issue of a licence to possess an arm this reference book must be handed to the authorised officer who will affix the appropriate licence on this page.

LISENSIES OM WAPENS TE BESIT.
By aansoek om en die uitreiking van 'n lisensie om 'n wapen te besit, moet hierdie bewysboek oorhandig word aan die gemagtigde beampte wat die toepaslike lisensie op hierdie bladsy sal aanbring.

PERSONAL PARTICULARS
PERSOONLIKE BESONDERHEDE

FIRST NAMES
VOORNAMES
DANI JULY
SURN
VAN
CITIZENSHIP
BURGER
PINTSO
English Group
XHOSA
No. 1-5849052-1
-ADF-
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA
20-2-1973
H

MALE
(ANLIK)
No. 1-5849052-1
DIRECTOR
DIRECTOR
REFERENCE
BUREAU
BANTO-
BEVINSBURO

Figure 36. Diniso, Identity Document and Travel Pass that was used during the apartheid e.



Figure 37. Diniso and Sam Nhlengethwa at Rorke's Drift (Year unknown), found in Gabi Ngcobo research materials



Figure 38. Diniso, first art school established after leaving Rorke's Drift. Busang Arts School which was created for the children of Sharpeville to develop artistic talent. The school was located at the Sharpeville Hostel and named after his girlfriend who had passed away as a result of a car accident.

WITH GCINA
MHLOPE AT
"FIND HER"
BUSANG 1982/3



Figure 39. Gcina Mhlophe. Participated in numerous event that were held by Busang School together with Diniso



Figure 40. Diniso Busang School which was opened in 1980's and during the year Diniso devised the award ceremony.



Figure 41. Diniso illustrations for Trust Turret College



Figure 42. Newspaper exhibition called *Hang on Diniso* 2014



Figure 43. Diniso's *Shoeville* performance, The Star, 20 April 2005. This is part of the Newspaper archives from which I had to select from as part of the Curatorial Project

CITY PRESS 6 APRIL 2003



JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY . . . Sarafina Mholakoane and Thope Diniso (pictured) appear in the production *Shoeville* which premieres tomorrow at the Vereeniging Civic Theatre.

Driven by the everyday struggle for **survival**

By WELCOME SKOSANA

SET in South Africa and steeped in politics, *Shoeville*, a riveting play written and directed by playwright Gamakhulu Diniso, centres around the realities affecting ordinary people in typical black townships.

The play centres around the daily economic experiences of a young orange-seller and an old shoe repairman as well as general issues affecting graduates.

However, the politics does not affect the insight and the spirit of the people who are determined to make a positive difference.

Diniso says he decided to produce the show because it is motivated by the struggle for survival and the willingness of people to make the best of things, from nothing.

"Students, small businesses and men selling at street corners - they are all trying to make a living. Life is not right. People are suffering. I want to motivate them not to rely on the government but to provide opportunities for themselves as Kaizer Motaung, Herman Mashaba and Thami Mazwai have done," said Diniso.

The play is a journey of discovery of how everyday people affect our lives and explores various art forms like music, dance and drama.

Shoeville premieres tomorrow and continues until April 12 at the Vereeniging Civic Theatre.

Performances will take place on weekdays at 7 pm and the play is expected to be taken on tour to schools across the country. For bookings, call 016 450 3024/5.

Shoeville promises to rock audiences and may just help end the arts drought in Vereeniging.

Figure 44. Diniso's *Shoeville* performance in City Press newspaper 6 April 2003 This is part of the Newspaper archives from which I had to select items as part of the Curatorial Project

14 Alpha Way
Ocean View, CP 7977
Tuesday: 3 March 1991

Dear Gamakhulu

Many thanks for your card (& message) which arrived here yesterday.

It was a nice thought of yours to send me the beautifully drawn picture of the hand pressing against the wall, making the obstacle disappear in the process! I really appreciate it & am happy to add it to my art collection.

With this letter I am sending you two drawings done way back in 1952 & 1955 when I was much younger!!! Were you born then already? Since that time I've gone a long way & been around a bit. It amazes me when I think about it — even though I'm still as poor as a churchmouse (& probably will always be). But money isn't everything.

I'm always interested in the progress of younger artists because art is SOUL & an on-going process. Stay well.

Yours sincerely
Peter Clarke

14 Alpha Way, Ocean View
7975 (tel: 021/831-340)
Thursday: 13 Dec. 1984

Dear Gamakhulu

I was looking again through an old issue of STAFFRIDER at your linocut "WHAT ABOUT US?" Does one of these prints still exist? If so, can I have a print? I always liked it. I'll let you have something of mine in exchange. What's new graphic-wise? I still treasure the pen-&-ink drawings of the hand you once sent me. Any more drawings available?

Last month I returned from a visit to Israel. I had been invited to exhibit a collection of graphics in Jerusalem. An artist-friend there had recommended that they invite me to exhibit my work as he is very enthusiastic about my graphics. The response was beautiful.

I've received an Honorary Doctorate of Literature from the World Academy of Arts & Culture in Taipei, Taiwan. So now I can be called "Doctor Clarke"! My friends & acquaintances still call me Peter as usual, thank heaven for that.

Let me hear from you. Silence says nothing. You transvalers are just like Americans — you don't like writing letters.

Best wishes. To my other silent friends too.

Yours sincerely
Peter

Figure 45. Letter exchange from Peter Clark letters to Gamakhulu the 80's



Figure 46. Entrance of *Diniso in 3D* curatorial project 2016



Figure 49. Invitation to Diniso in 3D MA Curatorial Project

Appendices

Appendix 1

Books and Exhibitions (1979-2009)

1979.....Staffrider, Volume Two, Number One, March 1979

Staffrider, Volume Two, Number Three, July/August, 1979

1980 Staffrider, Volume Three, Number Three, September/October, 1980 (pg. 25)

Staffrider, Volume Three, Number Four, December/January, 1980-1 (pg. 5)

Staffrider, Volume Three, Number Four, December/January, 1980-1

Staffrider, Volume Three, Number One, June, 1980

Rocker's Drift, Empowering Prints, by Philippa Hobbs and Elizabeth Ranking, 1980

1981 Staffrider, Volume Two, Number Two, July/August, 1981

1982 Staffrider, Volume five, Number Two, 1982, (16 18)

Staffrider, Volume Four, Number Four, 1982

1983 The Classic, Volume two, Number One, 1983

1983 Phinda, Busang Sharpeville Art, (pg. 4)

1984 The Classic, Volume Three, Number One, 1984

Letter, by Peter, Thursday 13, December, 1984

1985 Staffrider, Volume Six, Number Two, 1985, (2)

1986 Staffrider, Volume Six, Number Three, 1986

1987 Staffrider, Volume Six, Number Four, 1987

1987 Echoes of African Art, by The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Published by Skotaville Publishers, 1987

1988 Blits, Volume Two, Number One, July 1988

Uhuru Lily, Busang Thakaneng Poems, Tseko(Poet) and Gamakhulu (Artist),

Petroleum and the Orphaned Ostrich, by Chris van Wyk and Gamakhulu Diniso,
Published by Raven press (Pty) Ltd,1988

1992 Staffrider, Volume 10, Number One, 1992

2002 Es'kia Mphahlele, edited by Sam Raditlhalo and Taban Lo Liyong,2002,
(pg.xii)

2006 Sam Nhlengethwa, edited by Kathryn Smith, Published by The Goodman
Gallery, 2006

2009 Kuyanuka and other plays, by Darryl Accone, Botsotso Publishing.2009

IKasi and other plays, by Adrienne Sichel, Botsotso Publishing,2009

Iso Le Nkhono, African Folktales for Children, by B.L Leshoai, Children's Book
Series No.1

Appendix 2

Newspaper clipping

Vereeniging News, 1974, *Local Artist Opens Gallery*, Vereeniging News, 21 June

Post, 1978, *The Real Meaning of Black Art*, Post, 6 December

Sowetan, 1982, *Busang Hosts Poetry Session*, City Press, 15 June

The Star, 1982, *Pay Up Oder Treat to Vaal Arts Centre*, 9th Dec

The Star, 1983, *Board Flushes Art Centre Aware the Star*, 3 December

Sunday TIMES, 1985, *Play with A Difference by Diniso*, Sunday Times, 10 February

Sowetan, 1988, *Book Club and Poets Host a Workshop*, Sowetan, 1 December

Sowetan, 1989, *Thakaneng*, Sowetan, 6 June

Sowetan, 1989, *Poetry Reading*, Sowetan, 13 July Sowetan 1989, *Enjoy, Plays Art Exhibition This Weekend*, 9 June, Sowetan

City Press, 1989, *Busang Thakaneng Host Culture Day*, City Press, 18 June

Sowetan, 1989, *Busang, Drama, Music*, Sowetan, 19 July

History Workshop, 1990, *Fast food and Freedom at dynamic Workshop*, History Workshop, 13 February

Vaalweekblad, 1990, *Top Class Art Work IN Promenade Gallery*, Vaalweekblad, 23 November

Sowetan, 1990, *Vaal Teenagers Promote Their Own Beauty Shows* (Mrs sunshine winners), Sowetan, 21 Dec

The Citizen, 1991, *Creative Dynamo Gamakhulu Lives Up to His Name*, The Citizen, Oosterlig, 1991, *Kuyanuka Skok Tot Nuwe Inligting*, Oosterlig, 5 July

Sunday Times Extra, 1991, *Actor Takes a Swipe at Stinking System*, Sunday Times

The Star, 1992, *"Diniso Vitriol Discomforting*, The Star, 31 march

The Citizen, 1992, *Skirting The Issues the Citizen*, The Citizen, 2 April

Sowetan, 1992, *Solo Success Diniso*, Sowetan, 13 April

The Star, 1993, *Vivaldi in Africa, "kofifi" revived*, The Star, 1 march

7June

The Star Tonight, 1994, *Birth Pangs... "Nkosi Nathi"*, by Gamakulu Diniso, The Star, 10 March

The Star Tonight, 1994, *Diniso's Ticket to Heaven*, The Star Tonight, 22 March

The Star Tonight, 1994, *A Sure Sense of Theatre*, The Star Tonight, 23 March

Vaal Vision, 1996, *Sharpeville's Young Achievers Honoured at Ceremony*, 12 January

Art Entertainment, 1997, *Art-Obsessed Golden Dramatist Display His Talents in Sharpeville*, Art Entertainment, 19-23 May

Tonight, 1997, *Sharpeville Honours Kente*, Tonight, 5 December

Sowetan, 1997, *New Faces at the Market Theatre*, Sowetan, 10 December

Vaal Weekly, 1998, *New Resource Centre Will Challenge the Youth in Sharpeville*, Vaal Weekly, 30 January

Cue Sunday, 1998, *The Road Less Travelled*, Cue Sunday, 5 July

Cue Sunday, 1998, *What Happens When Children Play*, Cue Sunday, 5 July

Cue Sunday, 1998, *The Road Less Travelled*, Cue Sunday, 5 July

Vaalweekblad, 1998, *Kritici Loof Gamakhulu Se Uitstaande Talent*, Vaalweekblad, 8 May

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *The Artist with A Mission Get Recognition*, Vaal Weekly, 21 May

Vaalweekblad, 1999, *Plaslike Projek*, Vaalweekblad, 9 July

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *Sundays Are Afridays at Sharpeville Resource Centre*, Vaal Weekly, 11 -13 August

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *From Beer Tavern to Home for Art Lovers*, Vaal Weekly, 25-27 August 23 July

Vaal Vision, 1998, *Lift Your Load, Share Your Joy, And Tell the World*, Vaal Vision, 26 August

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *Theatre Figures Come Together*, Vaal Weekly, 25-27 August

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *Many Attend Opening of Art Gallery*, Vaal Weekly, 25-27 August

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *Theatre Figures Come Together*, Vaal Weekly, 25-27 August

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *Many Attend Opening of Art Gallery*, Vaal Weekly, 25-27 August

Vaal Weekly, 1998, *Art, And Not Politics Should Be New Order*, Vaal Weekly, 11 September

Vaal Weekly, 1999, *What Is Happening at The Theatre*, Vaal Weekly, 3-5 November

Sowetan 1999, *Disgruntled Artists Form Body*, Sowetan, 22 November

Sowetan, 1998, *Diniso's Thought-provoking Debut*, Sowetan, 15 December

Sowetan 1999, *Audiences Still Stayed Away from Theatre*, Sowetan, 28 December

Tonight, 2000, *Theatre Cultural Pilgrimage*, Tonight, 6 September

The Citizen, 2001, *Gamakhulu Diniso: Born to Paint*, The Citizen, 30 January

Sowetan, 2001, *Play Write to Help Artist Hone Acting Skills*, Sowetan, 16 May

Sowetan, 2001, *Plenty to Inspire Fans of Dance*, Sowetan, 4 June

Vaal Weekly, 2002, *A Festive Season of Cultural Activities with Diniso. 13 -19 Nov.*

Sowetan, 2002, *Vita Dance Turns 14 In Style*, Sowetan, 7 February

Vaal Weekly, 2002, *An African Afternoon Titled "Sundays Are Afridays"*, Vaal Weekly, 17-23 July

City Press, 2003, *driven by the everyday struggle for everyday struggle*, City press, 6 April

Tonight, 2003, *Fringe Doodles Taken to The Max*, Tonight, 11 February

Vaal Weekly, 2004, *...the other Sheoville*, Vaal Weekly, February 18-24

Vaal Weekly, 2004, *...the other Sheoville*, Vaal Weekly, February 18-24

Sowetan, 2004, *Volunteer Exploited to Secure Leadership*, Sowetan, April 28 till May 4

Vaal Vision, 2004, The Nkalimeng Leutsoa Library Awards Good Samaritans, Vaal Vision, 29 April

Sowetan, 2004, *Play Write Keep Voice of the People Alive*, Sowetan, 9 July

Sowetan, 2004, *Diniso Arts On Plan to Revive Athletic*, Sowetan, 20 October

The star, 2005, Sharpeville Carry Scares-45 Years, The star, 13 March

Sunday Times, 2009, *The Fred Khumalo Reminding the Empire That His Slip Is Showing*, 2 Aug

The star, 2005, Sharpeville Carry Scares-45 Years, The star, 13 March

Pretoria News, 2005, *The Curtains Are Coming Down*, Pretoria New, 19 April

Pretoria News, 2005, *The Curtains Are Coming Down*, Pretoria New, 19 April

DailySun, 2005, Get Your Shoe On, DailySun, 20 April

Tonight, 2005, Government Is Fully Behind Our Artists? Tonight, 26 April

Tonight, 2005, Government Is Fully Behind Our Artists? Tonight, 26 April

Vaal Weekly, 2005, Sharpeville Resource Centre Is Falling Apart, Vaal Weekly, 30 November – 6 December

DailySun, 2006, *Master Loves Job*, DailySun, 23 February

Sowetan, 2006, Artists Honoured, Sowetan, 28 February

Sunday, 2006, World Art of Exile, Sunday, 12 march

Vaal Weekly, 2006, *Sharpeville Theatre Comes Alive*, Vaal Weekly, 5 -11 July

Vaal Weekly, 2005, Sharpeville Resource Centre Is Falling Apart, Vaal Weekly, 30 November – 6 December

City Press, 2007, *Picture of Gamakhulu*, City Press, 11 November

Sebokeng Vision, 2009, Theatre Legends Get Grace Expo, Sebokeng Vision, 24 sept

DailySun, 2011, Feast of One-Man Shows, DailySun, 30 September

Sowetan, Scrutinising The Soul of Our Nation, Sowetan, 18 March

The Star, *from Sharpeville to Soweto*, The Star, 21 April

The Star, 2013, The Police Must Change-Zuma, The Star, 22 March

Loxion News, 2013, Gamakhulu Launches The VAAL ARTS FESTIVAL, Loxion News, 12-18 September

Loxion News, 2014, Sharpeville-From Tragedy to Triumph, Loxion News, 14-21 August