



**Towards Effective Communication Strategies:
Opening the Barriers of Representation and Introducing the
Arts as a Cultural Process to Mutual understanding in
Planning**

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Research Report

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Science in Development Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before or any degree for examination in any other university.

.....

Signature of Candidate

.....day of **November** (Year) **2006**

Master of Science in Development Planning

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Before I can acknowledge any person, I would like to acknowledge the fact that God is able to turn impossibilities into possibilities. He is beyond explanations and He surpasses all understanding

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Abstract

Planners and other government agencies often research ways in which to improve service delivery. However, ordinary South Africans complain about poor service delivery on a daily basis. Finance does not seem to be a major problem given the fact that a number of government departments and municipalities return chunks of money at the end of their financial year due to lack of capacity to use it. In this research, I will argue that poor communication strategies contribute to poor service delivery. The government struggles to satisfy the democratic needs of its constituencies and community members often ignore the services delivered because they were not consulted in the delivery process. As a result the services if not vandalised, they become white elephants (unused facilities).

The research argues that the arts can be used to communicate effectively, community interests in relation to the government's capacity to deliver. It advocates for planner/artist collaboration. It argues furthermore that effective communication is the first step to planning with the community to ensure that both the government and the community are in accord concerning available resources against the priority needs.

The research identifies the arts as an effective tool to facilitate mutual learning and understanding in planning. Conservative planners may ask; why the arts? As a training planner with a background in the arts, I use this research to argue that the arts have a role to play in democratic planning. Community arts have a potential of being able to dissect all cross-cultural and cross-sectoral issues without being too subjective. As far as participation and communication are concerned, the arts can function as a window, a dialogue and a doorway to the state of society.

Patrick K Motsa

Table of Content

1. Introduction and Overview	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Background to the Topic 2 1.2. The Arts Meet Planning 3 1.3. The need for mutual learning and understanding 7 1.4. Methodology 9 1.5. Limitations of the Study 10 1.6. Justification 10 1.7.1. Why the Arts? 11 1.7.2. The arts as a window 12 1.7.3. The arts as a dialogue 13 1.7.4. The arts as a doorway 14 	
2. Conceptual Chapter / Arts and Planning	17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Planning as social action 17 2.2. Planning as form of critical Listening to the words of others 18 2.3. Planning as form of Mediation and Change 21 2.4. Planning as Communicative Action 23 2.5. The Arts in Role Playing and Consensus Building 25 2.6. The Arts in Scenario Setting 26 2.7. The Arts in Conscientisation and Advocacy 28 2.8. The Arts in Community Development 29 	
3. South African Context. The Arts and the Public Sphere	33
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Introduction 33 3.2. Pre-1994 Politics 33 3.3. Modern/Post modern Influence 34 3.4. The Arts and the Struggle 38 3.5. Theatre for Development 43 3.6. Limitations of the Arts 48 	
4. the Communication Challenge in South African Planning: Case Studies	52
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Introduction 52 4.2. Municipal Systems Act NO. 32 of 2000 54 4.3. Creative South Africa Strategy 56 4.4. The case studies 59 4.5. Case Study 1: Tswelopele Performing Artists (TSWEPA) 61 4.6. Case Study 2: Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project (Hlalanathi) 63 4.7. The arts as civil movement 70 4.8. Case studies and beyond 73 	
5. Way Forward	77
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. Introduction 77 5.2. The next step 79 5.3. In defence of the arts 80 5.4. Recommendations 85 5.5. Conclusive Summary 87 	
6. References	89
7. Appendix	93

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Overview

1.1. Background to the Topic

The main question in this research is: Can the arts be used to facilitate mutual learning and understanding in planning? Can planners and artists find a way of working together to ensure the deepening of democracy in South Africa? My interest in this topic started in 1997 when I was still a high school student. At the time, the only policy document I knew of was the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, although I had not even read it. I had no knowledge of policy in fields like the arts, and planning and urban development and I had no awareness of the implications of planning towards me as an individual and towards the community at large. I was, however, a high school student who enjoyed art as a hobby. My dreams and fantasies were those of making it big as an actor, or a dancer, or a poet. One day a government official came into our rehearsal space and did not mind the smell of the sweat from our perspiration. She had an important document that needed to be communicated to the communities of the Kempton Park/Tembisa local council. She knew that it would be difficult for the people in the township to understand what she was talking about, and yet knew that the document was to affect them.

This officer was given a mandate to make sure that communities were informed about the Land Development Objectives (LDO) as part of the Development Facilitation Act (DFA). As part of her vision to collaborate with performing artists, she opted to work with our group. She came with a document, took her time to

explain it to us, and requested us to find a way to communicate it to the community. After about two weeks, we had summarised and translated the document into the languages spoken in Tembisa, including the township lingo. Then the journey began - every Sunday morning the government official, the artists and some councillors would visit each ward to inform the community and help in answering their questions.

By the end of that project, I had developed an understanding of what planning could be. By the year 2000, I was already a drama student at the University of Witwatersrand, when I happened to be part of collaboration between business and performing arts. This was a De Beers-sponsored conference on the 'impact of HIV and AIDS in the workplace'. One researcher prepared a surprise for all the guests. At a signal, protestors with placards who wanted to stop the meeting disrupted the conference and they put forward their grievances, with the security guards trying in vain to prevent them. There were national and international journalists who recorded the situation. It turned out that this protest was a performance, but its organiser managed to drive the point across that, while managers sit comfortably and plan for profits, there is another more important matter that needs attention. Once again, I saw how art could be used in the public sphere. Later that year, the Department of Communications commissioned a group of drama students to write a performance piece on the importance of women in business. Even though it seemed to me that government officials always scheduled a performance when the audience needed a break, the presentation managed to capture the attention of Minister Alec Erwin who made many references to it through the conference.

1.2. The Arts Meet Planning

Even before I completed my Dramatic Art degree, I already had decided to complement it with a degree in urban planning, which I began in 2004. In the

meanwhile, I did try to make practical connection between planning (and rather, community development) and the arts. As an intern at the National Department of Social Development, I was disturbed when the organisers of the International Day for Older Persons returned a portion of their R600 000 budget, despite the fact that they didn't pay the artists, and they failed to the community the way they wish they could. Although I was in the organising committee, and was involved in developing the communication strategy, I suggested the use of performing artists in order to reach the community, but my seniors opted for use of 'plain' volunteers rather than artists. Surprising enough, the volunteers were not free as they came at a price. Moreover, they failed to understand the concept of community conscientisation during the build up programme, and the communication effort was poor. As a result, the target was not fully met, but I had learned a lesson that informs this research.

This research report provided me with the opportunity to explore my interest in planner/artist collaboration in the fields of community involvement and planning. My hope is that this work will inspire further research and action in this area.

Planning is an opportunity for people to recreate the world out there but it is not always clear how ordinary people can participate in this creative act. As Shakespeare noted, 'all the world is a stage' (from *As You Like It* II, vii, 139-143) planning seeks to ensure that, as we finally bow out, our stage does not fade out with us, but continues to function effectively for other actors. Shakespeare's world was governed by a stage where kings, saints and nobles could shape change but where clowns, servants and outcasts were largely at the mercy of the authorities. My concern is to use the arts to bring the ordinary people into the process so that the clowns, servants, and outcasts, can also shape change.

There has been a debate on the legitimacy of planning where planners either have been accused of helping the government deliver services that are not

relevant to the needs of the community or are not of the expected quality. Despite the so-called community participation frameworks, there has always been a problem when it comes to delivering on outputs that meet community expectations. This report argues that the arts can assist in making the match between expectations and delivery closer than it is at present.

This chapter seeks to revisit theories that take us back to one of the oldest, but often ignored or taken for granted fields, the arts. One poet said that the reason why every king or chief has a praise singer, particularly in Africa, is to set the mood for serious matters to be discussed. The praise singer would spend his time with the people and listen to their views in informal settings, but would also sit in with the chief's advisers. All this, and the history of the community, would be reflected in the poems and praise songs. He would thank the chief for every good thing he has done and then articulate the feelings of the people through performance. There is a lot that can be learned from what some might regard as a primitive form of representation. The role performed by the praise-singer might be replicated in other forms of theatre that be used as a tool for mutual understanding.

A number of planners and academics have visited the theory of public participation from different angles. The focus of this paper will be on planning and communication that enhances mutual learning within the socio-political sphere. The performing arts (theatre-drama, dance, poetry, and music) especially are identified as the tool to facilitate that vital understanding.

Personally, I have taken part in the world of performing arts before forging an academic career in development planning. This gives me a starting point into the investigation of the potential that performing arts possess towards development planning. Performing arts, therefore, should not be dismissed as just a means for entertainment and relaxation for the passing of time, but as a vehicle for social

justice that is brought about by the elements of social learning and mutual understanding that underpin it. Although my work is driven by a personal passion, and so there is a degree of emotion in my writing, this report also looks at the work of academic theorists who might help in understanding the relationship between the arts and development planning.

This research seeks to find ways in which communities can, finally, have a say in what goes into planning. It acknowledges that development planning goes beyond planning spaces for people, towards developing and empowering the people who occupy the spaces. People have never been homogenous in terms of what they want except that, for centuries, they have been homogenised only under authority. This means that the emphasis was more on control than it was on meeting their needs. As a result, spaces were used to control and development meant growth at the expense or collapse of the social into the spatial (Todes 1993). Now, the question is whether or not the two (the spatial and the social) can develop and complement each other to the benefit of real people.

This research is not an attack on planning, neither is it advocating for anti-planning. It starts by acknowledging the value of planning and then goes on to suggest ways in which planning can be made more effective. If planning was a perfect remedy, the world could have stopped planning by now. However, Planning assist in improving people's quality of life but is not the final answer, and that forces change agent to look at other aspects of life such as the arts. In this report, I am especially critical of types of planning that take the form of the grand narrative. Rather than finding the big solution, which is elusive, we should be searching for the many small ways to make people's lives better. The modernist grand narrative assumes that the world can be properly mapped and understood, but the reality is that the world is enormously complex and always changing, and so solutions that assume an understanding of the world are often

likely to be off the mark or only very partial. Rather than making big mistakes in the name of modernist planning, it is better to find small solutions through democratic planning processes.

I will be looking at communication as an important part of participation and the democratic process, and I will be arguing that the arts provide an affordable and interesting way of communicating ideas, issues and interests, and of building mutual learning and understanding in planning.

1.3. The Need for mutual learning and understanding

There is a need to find creative ways of communicating effectively in the South African context. This is due to the diverseness of the population in terms of language, culture, belief, and ability. According to the 2001 census data, South Africa is home to some 43 million people - a colourful population as diverse in makeup as the country's geography is varied. Almost 77% are black or African from different cultural contexts, 11% white of European descent generally English or Afrikaans speaking and 9% "coloured", the local label for people of mixed African, Asian and white descent. About half the population of the people of South Africa live in cities, making South Africa an urbanising country. Three-quarters are Christian and this country represents most of the other major world religions. Therefore, planning for such a population requires creativity that will bring unity in diversity through mutual learning understanding.

According to Friedman, mutual learning is "a process of re-education that involves not only cognitive but also affective behavioural reconstruction" (Friedman 1987:18). A lot of effort must be put towards changing the mindset of both the community members and their trained experts. Therefore, in mutual learning, planning becomes a two-way street, a double-loop learning process that turns planning into a form of strategic action happening in real time. Mutual learning emphasises less on what planners know and more on how they use and

distribute their knowledge; less on their ability to solve problems, more on opening debates about them.

Kuhn (2005) acknowledges that planners have tried to include community members in planning. He recalls planners like Paul Davidoff who proposed advocacy in 1965, The Skeffington Commission report of 1969 as well as John Friedman's transactive planning of 1973. Kuhn argues that these planners attempted to bring public values into the planning process. However, he notices that it is planners like Melvin Webbes who developed a theory that established the planner as a fosterer of mutual understanding between different interest groups

Kuhn maintains that mutual understanding is premised on the simple insight that "I am because of others". What I know, feel, want and think is all the result of endless engagement with others (P.5). What Kuhn is saying is that as a planner I terminate my own further development if I silence, dominate or eliminate others. Furthermore, I must recognise and maintain the difference between others, and myself boasting my wellbeing by protecting the others from coming to harm (P6).

Kuhn tells of the importance of mutual understanding in multi-cultural planning in order to explore appropriate meaning. This understanding will help planners to watch out and not fall into the trap of treating members of the public as the exotic other, like a work of art that must be conserved. To understand the other requires more than hearing the words and concepts used by that other. It implies appreciating their meaning and their relevance for that person and the level of importance attached to them. (P6) Kuhn warns of possible misunderstanding that is caused by the planner (listener) who hears the words and situates them in his own set of network signs, thereby bending the meaning.

The speaker on the other hand sources his meaning from his culture-bound network of signs.

This research therefore proposed that the arts be used, not only as a form of entertainment but also as a tool that will open communication lines and facilitate mutual understanding between planners and communities. The research seeks to establish collaboration between the planner and the artist as a way of realising the ideal of 'planning with' as opposed to 'planning for' the community. Even in the model where the State is the service provider and the community is the receiver, more participatory processes are possible. By ensuring effective communication processes a culture of informed provider/informed receiver can emerge which will ensure that services are properly linked to the real needs of communities. In this process, the planner will not be the 'expert' but rather, an effective communicator, facilitator, mediator and coordinator who is sensitive to those mediums that promote mutual understanding between diverse groups and personalities.

1.4. Methodology

This was a qualitative research that sought to explore the gaps that exist between the people and development initiatives. After engagements with various role players in the field of arts and government planning, the research proved to be ground-breaking. The relevant stakeholders in this research seemed unaware that planners and artists can collaborate at such a higher level as service delivery.

In this research, I targeted government planners in various government institutions as well as cultural officers within the government and artists from different communities. I selected three groups initially to be used as case studies, but I ended up with two. Tswelopele Performing Artists and Hlalanathi

Community Theatre Project were used as case studies. These groups were not case studies in a conventional sense because they were not directly or consciously involved in a process of planner/artist collaboration. They were chosen because of their experience as community organisation and because of the number of times they have worked on projects that have reference to planning. I would sit in during each of the group rehearsals and I would engage in a discussion with group leaders. The aim was to get them talking around issues of development and their art as a way of making them aware of their past collaborations with government planning agencies as well as to inspire them to think of more possibilities of working together with the government towards community development and improved service delivery. This was not a one-on-one interview method but it was more of a workshop, especially on the side of the artists. The research takes off from the results of constant discussions and knowledge sharing with artists and government officials whose names come up during the discussions after having worked with the artists.

1.5. Limitations of the study

The study was difficult for both the researcher and the correspondents because of lack of latest information. It was also very difficult to explain to the groups what the participatory expectations from their side would be. As a result, the third group withdrew from the study. It was also not easy to get top government officials for an interview, especially the MEC of Arts, Culture and Recreation in Gauteng, who could have made an important contribution this research.

1.6. Justification

This research is important for a number of reasons. It contributes to new knowledge for the field of planning. It identifies and uses the arts as a cultural tool that can be used to solve the communication problem in planning. Art is a cultural process in a sense that it is one of the olden practices in society

especially in Africa. Praise singers have always acted as a link between the people and the authorities. In post-apartheid South Africa, creative solutions are being sought to bring people to the planning table and to make communities assume ownership for programmes and projects that are aimed at developing their livelihood. This research argues that the first step is effective communication and the arts can facilitate that process.

1.7.1 Why the Arts?

The research will use the arts as a cultural process to promote mutual learning and understanding in planning. Conservative planners may ask, why the arts? Think of a research report that was conducted to influence policy and imagine its potential effect and the number of people it will reach if it was produced into film. Film is a visual essay and a research report that can be seen. I am a planner who has an arts background and I will use this research to argue that the arts have a role to play in democratic planning. The arts are not just a cooking pot of fantasies where youngsters rehearse and hone their performance skills with the hope that one day they will be big names on international platforms like Hollywood and Broadway. They also provide a unique collection of talented people from diverse backgrounds who come from and are permanent residents of the communities, and whose work can speak to the needs of these communities. Community arts, in particular, have a potential of being able to dissect and address a whole set of cross-cultural and cross-sectoral issues. Writing in the planning journal, Steven Dang sees the arts as a window, a dialogue and a doorway as far as participation and communication are concerned (Dang S 2006).

1.7.2 The arts as a Window

The arts are important to planning because they are a window into community life and into people's emotional states. They are ready to collaborate in investigating and communicating community stories. They also provide a sensitivity of insight that technical analysis and planning reports can never achieve. The arts "can provide a planner not only deep insight into a community, but ready made and powerful means of communicating them... [they] also help communities examine complex issues..." (Dang 2005:124)

Tools like the drum have been used to enter into people's emotional states, especially in African and Caribbean societies. The drum is an artistic instrument of communication. The drum is part of these cultures as a tool to convey messages between the people as well as for rituals when communicating with the ancestors. I am bringing this point to suggest that planning can learn from the field of advertising; it can approach people effectively if it 'speaks their language'. Many African societies still respect certain rituals and the best people to know the modes of communication of these communities would be the artists who are members.

Artists would set the mood during meeting bearing in mind that they have learned how the drum has been used over the years with specific sounding to announce specific events and moods like important birth, death, an approaching war, a meeting as well as rituals. The artists still use the drum today as a back-up instrument during performances to help in setting the mood and to evoke emotions of both the audience and performers. It works as a binding charm for people on and off the stage, connecting as one in the heart. The reason why I touch on this is to acknowledge the fact that the arts are still connected to the history and practices of society, while on the other hand it is easier for the planner to connect to theories across the globe and struggle to connect locally.

One of the most popular magazines in Southern Africa is *Drum Magazine*. Its choice of a trading name cement the idea that some ornaments make us what we are as a people and this is where we need to start as we engage with the rest of the globe. *Drum Magazine* used artistic literature to confront the conditions that were faced during apartheid. It became synonymous with the struggle. Its journalists became popular in the community on one hand and targets of the security forces on the other. Without paying tribute to this magazine, I got interested in its name, looked at the other houses in the field of media and journalism have contributed to the fight against apartheid, and agreed that post apartheid South Africa need ensure that such contribution continues to shape the future of this country.

1.7.3 The arts as a dialogue

Working for the Canadian Municipality of Squamish, Steven Dang realised that dialogue was important when documenting the values, aspirations and concerns of the community. The events where planners and artists collaborated made Dang to conclude that Planners and artists can be powerful allies in facilitating public dialogue on important and sensitive issues because of the artists' connectedness to the communities. If planners can take advantage of the artists' creativity and collaborate with them, their message would be more effectively communicated to members of the community in their own spaces than the conventional use of the less accessible town hall, which has always acted a preaching platform for Government agencies.

Using other non-verbal mediums, artists are skilled in helping the voiceless find their voices. They speak for individuals who are less skilled in verbal debate through the representation of their fears, questions, emotions, dreams for which there are no adequate words. While planners remain reluctant to engage in

community cultural work, artists let their lips and brushes do the spadework in issues of community planning. Any art from music and poetry to drawing and wall painting can contribute to dialogue and the broader discourse of the community. For example, Graffiti is a public discourse in images. It is a means for personal and political expression for the often ignored and indeed often silenced, community urban youth (Dang 2005)

1.7.4 Arts as a doorway

It is common that in diverse communities, some people have an attitude towards interacting with others who are different from them. This creates a barrier to development as most people end up not participating in community activities. They give up their say and ability to contribute as they reduce themselves to mere consumers of services. Dang notes that the arts can be an entry point for residents to learn to work together on shared projects. He also notes that the collaboration between artists and cultural practitioners can help Community Development Workers in reaching out to the multicultural, multi-linguistic communities because the arts offer a less intimidating, more appealing, invitation for many citizens to deeper long-term involvement in community and community planning processes. He argues further that a breakthrough in planning and governance depends on the relationship between the 'professionals' and the residents. We are looking for both local knowledge as well as the already existing and relevant professional skills

The arts is a broad term that refers to the human imaginative skills applied to works such as paintings, design, music, drama, poetry, architecture and others. Here the arts refer mostly to performing arts. In order to have an idea of a way of life of a community, one needs to study its cultural practices as they are often represented through the arts. This may justify why anthropologists have often referred to culture as a performance. Arts and culture have always been a part of

the people, a backbone to every community. Culture cannot be ignored when we talk about development. As a result, the culture and history of a people is always reflected in the arts, monuments and architecture. It is not a mistake then to talk about the arts as a cultural process to development.

Art is one of those tying elements of society that have a phenomenal power to bring people together and make them forget their differences. To some people art is purely for escapism, helping them to escape the, often harsh, realities of life. It is true that the arts can make one forget about the undesired reality and present them with a constructed world that may often resemble a fantasy, but it does not end there. The arts may also take a spectator through a journey of discovery and agitate or inspire them to make a positive difference in society. Some of the worlds that the arts may project are possible to realise and actualise if people would be a little creative and adventurous.

Conclusion

To conclude this overview, the research argues that the arts can create a model of how to plan for a desired future without the real risk of destabilising economies. Planners can use the arts to stimulate their thinking and improve on the art models for actual implementation.

The arts have been treated generally as a means for entertainment. Politicians, scientists, business people and intellectuals have always, not dismissed but somehow, forgot that artists are also architects for development in the country. There have been a number of conferences where the private and public sectors would meet to discuss the future of the country and the artists would only be paid to entertain. This approach to the arts makes artists to be outsiders in the affairs of the country. After all, the artists become the others who are not

necessarily expected to have an interest in the conference. The conference to them is one of those 'gigs' that help them with cash flow. As for the organisers, they can get any group for entertainment, whether from London, Liberia or anywhere in the world, as long as they can afford. The only reason why local artists may be used would be economical. Firstly, the organisers want to be seen to be investing money to local NGOs and CBOs. Secondly, it is cheaper to have a local group that will understand when told that the organisers are working on limited budgets.

Chapter 2

Planning and the Arts

The chapter will synthesize theories and concepts on the arts and development Planning. It will lay a foundation for the arguments and discussions that will emerge later in the report. First to be discussed is Planning and, secondly, the Arts. Both will be dealt with in this one chapter.

A) Planning

2.1. Planning as Social Action

The well known planning theorist, John Friedmann, has argued that we must move away from the elitist notions that planning is for qualified individuals. For him, every person is a planner. In his book *Planning in the Public Domain*, 1987, he states that planning is a social action which means that planning is an approach that uses task-oriented action groups for what he calls 'interactive totality'. He believes that the norms governing that very action process must be adjusted to achieve "far-reaching practical consequences for self image, human relations, formal authority and the ultimate distribution of the cost and benefits of action" (P186)

Friedmann describes planning as a social action in the following words;

Actions in the public domain usually involve many collaborators acting through small display psychological dynamics that are not reducible to the characteristics of individual participants. Continuously forming and reforming

action groups are temporary social systems (Friedmann 1987:186).

What makes planning a form of social action is simply the fact that it happens in society from whence it derives value and significance. It affects social lives and depends on collaborations. There is a strong need for the collaborators (planners, community and others) to socialise and learn from each other because "social learning in small groups takes place primarily through face-to-face relations or dialogue [but] dialogue interpersonal skills, such as the art of listening, the ability to trust others and make oneself vulnerable to them, a willingness to suspend rank and material power, and a responsiveness to other's needs. These and related skills of dialogue can be acquired at least in rudimentary form, through appropriate training." (Friedmann 1987:187).

From a social action perspective therefore, learning must take centre stage in planning, and planning must go beyond the technical to include processes of collaborative engagement that allow this learning to happen. The arts have a major part to play here – they can be used beyond entertainment as the way in which they ease tension and enable people to warm up to each other, can assist greatly in the mutual learning processes. Performing arts, in particular, can be used to enact a scenario of an intended action, its reaction, and the suggested third way between action and reaction so that collaborative engagement lead to different players reviewing their attitudes, prejudices, and misconceptions.

2.2. Planning as a form of critically listening to the words of others

Leonie Sandercock, one of the best known contemporary planning theorists, came to planning theory after she had enrolled in a film school where she discovered the communicative power and epistemological joys of story-telling and the difference it could make to academic teaching and writing

(Throgmorton, 2003). In her book *Towards Cosmopolis* – Chapter 4, Sandercock contends that planning is about talk, argument, and shaping attention: planning becomes a “primary form of critical listening to the words of others...questioning and learning how, through dialogue, to shape attention” (p8)

One of the most difficult things in life is listening. It is not easy to listen to somebody rambling, worse still when you are racing against time and patience is the last thing on your mind. Planners find themselves having to deal with a difficult situation where they have to complete their tasks within schedule, while on the other hand it is important to plan in accordance with the dynamic elements of the community. In order to know what the community wants, the planner needs to be patient and listen, not just listen but also critically listen to the words of various actors in the community, especially the marginalized, illiterate and disadvantaged in various ways.

Furthermore, Townsend argues that even when people speak, they will mean more than what they say. Therefore, there is a need to dig, to probe, to listen in order to recognise what is at stake (Townsend in Forester 2004). Sandercock then turns towards storytelling and argues that planning is performed through story, stories are central to the planning practice and that stories are used in the planning process as catalysts for change, as a foundation in policy, in explaining and critique, as justification of the status quo and as moral exemplars (Sandercock 2003:12). Looking at the argument above, it will not be easy for planners to critically listen to the words of the others if they do not recognise that stories, though pervasive, have a potential to be a force in planning practice.

However, there is a need to look at how the stories are created and delivered. If stories are a persuasive way of encouraging listening, then there is a chance that these stories could be hijacked to project something that is not true, something

invented for a particular gain. In terms of mediation, negotiation, and conflict resolution, Sandercock argues that using various techniques and procedures for facilitation, stories have to be told for reconciliation to happen. In South Africa, we can remember that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was designed to give a platform for stories to be told so that motives behind violent political actions could be understood and a way forward forged. This commission was one of the many ways in which planning functions as well as the use of stories to inform the planning process.

Sandercock (2003) argues further that many planners use stories but they are not always conscious about it. She notes that "in community or public participation processes, planners orchestrate an event in such a way as to allow everybody, or as many people as possible, to tell their story about their community, neighbourhood... tend to refer to this as drawing on local knowledge" (p.15). This means that common threads can be found through story gathering and critically listening to the words of others, their views and their opinions.

To create or compose a proverb of my own, I would say, 'A good listener makes a story teller'. If planning can be used effectively as a form of critically listening to others, it can perhaps be a form of storytelling. The outcome of planning can be a story to which members of the community can relate. Planners need to be good story-makers and story-tellers in the performing sense as Sandercock (2003) argues that not a lot of research produced on poverty has affected policy because "academics are powerful critics but weak storytellers... they fail to communicate their findings in a form that is not only plausible but persuasive" (Sandercock 2003:19). She argues further that the stories we tell can only be persuasive when they fit the need as well as the situation. Furthermore, she points out that policy researchers capture the attention of the public through their observation, understanding and interpretation of their data. The only down

side is that this truthfulness is not as persuasive as good stories with qualities such as dramatic timing, humour, irony, evocativeness and suspense, because social researchers are not trained in this craft. This means that the presentation of their data and findings can only be more effective these researchers could be work shopped in the art of story telling. Listening, critical listening is important in planning and so, a lot of effort must go to the communicative aspect of planning.

2.3. Planning as a form of Mediation and Change

As people, we desire planning to meet our interests. These interests are, however, often not clearly articulated or defined, and it is in this area that planners can assist the public (Forester, 2004). The planner can serve as a mediator of ideas (according to Forester) or as a change agent (according to Friedman, 1987) who assists in minimizing the risk of problem solving.

There is, however, another sense in which planning is the mediator. Planning often takes place in the midst of public disputes. As a result, planners “work in between diverse and conflicting, often suspicious and impatient stakeholders – old residents, new residents, developers, environmental groups, industrial interests, agency representatives and others... [they] work to craft practical agreements that will satisfy these stakeholders’ interests and so, perhaps too, provide basis for sound plans and public policies” (Forester 2004:1). Here, Forester argues that planners need to work in the same way as public dispute mediators do in order for them to help communities separate between issue and interest and to, in the end, have their interests represented and addressed.

Proper mediation has the potential to facilitate the kind of change that will, in a way, benefit most of the interests of the diverse people in communities and promote democracy. If planners do not come face to face with the citizens in a continuous cooperative venture, planning will find itself far from reaching its

potential to educate both the planners and the communities (Godschalk D 1967 in Fainstein and Fainstein 1983: P268). Planning as mediation can lead to agreed-upon change and validate democratic planning where “planners rely on the public as the ultimate authority in the formulation of plans and take a populist view that differentiates between interests can only be fair if there has been proper mediation that explores all possible means of negotiation and discussion. This way that planners can not always be seen or thought to be siding with those who are least well off at the expense of those in the middle” (Fainstein 1983: 267).

Planning as mediation will help in the communication and articulation of issues into interests without being biased to class. Interests are likely to be the determinants of class and material circumstances. Therefore, mediation will help all stakeholders reach mutual agreement, contrary to the argument that “interests are class-based [and] what is generally called ‘the public interest’ must not be such... [but] merely a reflection of the values and programs of the politically and economically dominant groups” (Fainstein and Fainstein 1983: P279).

Forester (2004) expresses interest “in the ways that planners can respond to challenging and messy situations – or to be more blunt about it, to politicised, emotional, and painful public conflicts” (Forester 2004:2). Looking at ethical and practical challenges that are faced by mediators in democratic participation, Forester turns towards Jon Townsend, a mediator who has experience of working outside America. It is through this interaction with Jon Townsend that we become aware that people may state their issues before really thinking about their interests. Communication is a critical factor in planning. As I think of planners as mediators, Townsend takes it further to perceive a mediator as a negotiator:

A mediator needs to think like a negotiator because that's what the parties are. The parties are negotiating, or their negotiation-communications have broken down. But they are negotiators nonetheless. I mean, they may be poor negotiators, i.e. poor communicators: they may not know their best interest. They may not know what their interests are – most people don't [because] most people are positionally-based, right? Be it in formal negotiations, or, if you go to mediation, you usually take a position if you are a party. You usually don't think about what your interests are (Townsend in Forester 2004:2).

Planners need to, at some point, at least, use their position to mediate for negotiated desired change if they dream of ever 'solving problems' in society. As demonstrated by the experience (of Townsend) above, planning, if it is not a tool of control, goes beyond conception and design of what places should be, but also involves a complicated discussion – a communication process with people who often confuse their interests and negotiate with insufficient understanding.

In this conception, the role of the planner is to be a professional mediator in assisting individuals and groups in clarifying their interests and negotiating positions.

In this process, art can play a positive role. Role-playing and other devices can greatly assist in the articulation of positions.

2.4. Planning as Communicative Action

Habermas's theory of communicative action will help in the understanding that justice can be an outcome of reasoned agreement among participants in practical discourse. Habermas argues that our basic moral intuitions spring from something deeper and more universal than contingent features of our tradition,

namely from normative presuppositions of social interaction that belong to the repertoire of competent agents in any society (Bifulco M 2002).

Many people find Habermas "difficult to read, to understand...difficult – if not impossible - to synthesise... good for quotations, but terrible to read" (Bifulco M 19? P37). This is partly because Habermas draws on psychoanalytic philosophy. However, Habermas' message about communicative action, has been taken up by planning theorists like Patsy Healey, Judith Innes, and John Forester, and has been used to develop a strong argument that planning can be used to integrate the interests of diverse communities of interest through processes of consensus building.

All the approaches to planning indicated above show how central communication is to the role of the planner. Planning is about understanding meaning, shaping meaning, communicating meaning, and translating meaning.. When communication lines are down, planning ceases to exist, people are scattered and plans lie idle. There is a story or legend that illustrates that communication is important to planning and development, the tower of Babel. This legend claims that in order to stop the people from building an unnecessary tower, God made them speak different languages. As a result of poor communication and misunderstanding, they abandoned the project and migrated (The Bible, Genesis Chapter 11). Planning, therefore, can be effective not only through language, but also through the use of other communication strategies so that, even when languages seem to be the barrier, messages manage to transcend language through other means. It is in this area that the arts can play a critical role.

B) The Arts in planning

2.5. The Arts in Role Playing and Consensus Building

Role playing is a form of art that is used in planning. According to Judith Innes, the games played there are cooperative rather than competitive, with players not only trying to achieve their goals but helping others to do so. There are no winners or losers and the games have no ending points.

Livingstone (1999) argues that role playing is a form of public enquiry as part of the normal planning process. He says that these enquiries occur where there is a difference of opinion. He argues further that the flexibility of the format allows the participants to see the issue through the eyes of others. This is a step towards consensus building, which encompasses many types of collaborative efforts.

In my view role-playing is a simulation of what people are doing or expected to do. Role playing games give real people a chance to sit back and look and listen to how they and others are expected to act and interact. They also allow them to see what the perceived consequences of their action would look like. When acting or speaking in real life, people do not see the reaction and facial expressions of the people sitting behind them. Role playing games would give them a chance to see how others reacted in their silence. This reminds me of former Professor at the Wits School of Arts who said, "Drama happens in the silence". Many important reactions feelings are not expressed through verbal language and role playing games can be used to portray all that happens or happened. Performing arts or the art of acting and synthesis of issues and reactions there of is a strong point for planning.

The world is a complicated arena and the actors or players in the role playing game are "typically young people conscious of growing up in the post modern

context where nothing is certain, where people are disconnected from one another, where values are in question, and where the complexity of the world is all too evident and all too intimidating... role playing is learning through simulation, which lets them safely try out different personality traits or actions to see what the consequences are" (Innes and Booher 1999). At least, role playing gives the community a chance to predict the future of their actions with options of making adjustments.

Consensus should not always be about majority votes but it is a way of considering other ways of listening to the minority voices (Innes and Booher 1999). Consensus Building then becomes "a way to search for feasible strategies to deal with uncertain, complex, and controversial planning and policy tasks... [it is] a version of a wide range of collaborative, communicative forms of planning with which government and private players have been experiencing since the early 1970" (Innes and Booher 1999: p1). The arts can be used to help communities reach consensus. Ideally, a consensus building exercise would not be a one-day meeting like the presidential imbizo in South Africa¹. It must be an ongoing interaction between stakeholders on a common concern over a policy issue. In this set-up, the planner would be a facilitator with some artists as part of the technical team to help in role-playing games.

2.6. The Arts in Scenario Setting

Scenario setting is a way of dealing with problems before they happen. A brainstorming session is aimed at minimizing risks. It is the phase where the 'script' of the project is written from the development of new conceptions of the services to be delivered by the project. It takes place before any project can begin. The managers, executives and all the stakeholders involved, need to sit around a table and discuss the proposed project. They have to raise all

¹ This is a process where the President visits sampled local communities and have a direct conversation with them regarding services. The President spends only a few hours with each community.

assumptions and consider a variety of techniques as well as think about the consequences of the project. They are expected to “attempt to describe or write the ‘history of the future’” (Hirschhorn 1980.172). Further from sitting and discussing, Performing arts can give life to that history of the future and allow stakeholders to actually see the emotions that that are likely to rise in the future. In terms of the arts, role-playing and scenario setting can be able to merge because the ultimate goal is to perform future scenarios in front of the people for them to choose what they desire. Role-playing can only differ in a sense that it is able to play back what has happened earlier so that mistakes can be seen and addressed before going forward.

Most realist performances are forms of scenario setting. Artists must have a high level of awareness and be able to transform ideas into visual action. Working closely with the facilitator (planner) to ensure that they are not biased in their representation of facts, they must be able to enact a common ground between opposing faction/parties. They must not conclude but they must reflect through the representation of more than one possible scenario. They must take notes during meetings and be able to represent all sides of discussions.

The arts are able to stimulate people and enforce change in attitude. A realist theatre performance or film based on real life can be used to represent a possible scenario. In the film *Dangerous Minds*, Poetry is used to motivate a class of delinquents to start learning and believe in their self worth. Also in *Take the Lead*, Antonio Banderas is a retired ballroom dance instructor who offers to take a group of detained students for ballroom dance training. Some of them already had been involved in criminal activities and got themselves in trouble. He had seen that these scholars need the arts to keep them a platform to invest their energy. Both movies are art pieces that appraise art within them as a tool to shape communities. They are examples or possible scenarios of human development.

2.7. The Arts in Conscientisation and Advocacy

Planning will remain an academic exercise if the people are not aware of the issues planned for and the intended interventions. Julie Clarke (1984) argues that there is a need for planners in conscientisation to address ethical and normative issues in a more systematic manner, but this concern for ethics will lose all its meaning if it is imposed on other people. "...the standards of judgment must be rooted in the whys and wherefores of life as it is lived, the world as it is, not our wishful fantasy of the world as it should be. (Kalinsky 1983:200 in Clarke 1984:25).

Julie Clarke (1984) notes that the conscientisation theory is taken from a Marxist way of thinking that:

- a) reality is a totality of internally related parts,
- b) the fullness of each one of the parts can represent the totality,
- c) The totality shapes the parts to preserve the existence and general structure of the whole.

This means that conscientisation is about ensuring that every sector and every part or element of each sector is on the same wavelength in terms of knowledge. This can be done using tools and strategies seeking not to homogenise but to unify society. A homogenised society suggests that all people become the same. A unified society on the other hand, will accept that people are different but it is possible to function through mutual understanding. In order for planning to be effective, community members need to be aware of the processes that are taking place for them to get involved in a constructive manner and 'own' the projects and programmes in that community.

Clarke (1984) explains that conscientisation fuses abstract theory and concrete practice. This research seeks to use the arts as an abstract tool to maximise the ability of planners to plan with the people, not for them and not on behalf of the

powerful. I also wish to take the term conscientisation further to mean an act to make conscious, to provoke awareness. This needs a lot of information dissemination to educate across the members of society. This is where advocacy come in to ensure that citizens are not excluded from participating in the planning process. Davidoff argues that "inclusion means not only permitting the citizen to be heard... [but also], to become well informed about the underlying reasons for planning proposals, and be able to respond to them in the technical language of professional planners" (Davidoff 1965:426). This is meant to do away with the idea that only one particular agency prepares a comprehensive plan. Other organisations in the community can come up with plans or at least help in the preparation of the plans by adding views and insight. This research argues that the arts can be used as a communicative tool in advocacy and in conscientisation.

2.8. The Arts in Community Development

If media analysis and demand for community development workers is anything to go by, community development is a major concern for the government of South Africa today. Community development will always find community arts already organized and ready to participate in community development programmes. Community arts have a unique collection of people from diverse backgrounds. They have a potential of being able to dissect all cross-cultural and cross-sectoral issues without being too subjective. Writing in the planning journal, Steven Dang sees the arts as a window, a dialogue and a doorway as far as participation and communication are concerned (Dang S, 2006).

Community Development is, or at least can be, an integral part of post apartheid planning. It is however, an unstable concept or idea in a sense that there are many points of view with regards to community development. It is a concept that "has no firm, precise and generally agreed upon meaning, it can be used

arbitrarily to indicate a number of policies or programmes” (Cornwell 1986:219 translated in De Beer and Swanepoel 1998). This nature of the ideas makes it dependant on mutual learning and understanding within various players within the community. Mutual understanding is needed when dealing with democratic concepts such as coordination and participation. The idea itself is broad to an extent that intended participants might miss out due to lack of understanding or failure to identify entry points.

Community and development are both complex concepts in their right. Targeted participants need to know whether ‘community’ applies to them, because community comprises of different people in terms of class, social standing, and affiliation. Also, ‘development’ could mean anything that has to be improved, be it hard or soft infrastructure, hard and soft skills or any other initiative that is aimed at the lives of individuals and groups. There is a need for a mechanism that will help in explaining the aims and scope of community programmes. The articulation of the scope and aims is highly dependent on change agents who guide, encourage and assist in the process of changing reality (Friedmann 1987) and the resultant change is the product of the learning process. Change agents, according to Friedmann, are professionals and paraprofessionals like trainers, facilitators, process consultants or organisers. These agents bring various kinds of formal knowledge to community programmes. Friedman further argues that “For them to be effective, change agents must develop a transitive relationship with their client [community] conducive to mutual learning (Friedmann 1987:185). Mutual learning helps to change or adjust theories of what reality is about in the real context of each community and clear misconceptions which might lead to the imposition of abstracted programmes to the community.

If community development aims to transfer knowledge and to promote self-help projects (Cornwell 1986), there must be a double-loop programme. Self-help projects depend on knowledge transfer for their success. Change agents cannot

know everything that the community needs and the community must help the change agents to learn ways to better facilitate the projects. The arts can play a role in articulating knowledge, fantasies and debates around programmes to paint a picture of the state of the community at any given stage of the community development process. Again, if community development emphasises the use of local resources and the need for an integrated approach towards development (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998), self-sufficiency and attitude change become issues of great concern. Despite their dependence on social agents, community-based organisations need to integrate knowledge to reach mutual understanding and a higher level of self-sufficiency and sustainability. This requires a lot of attitude change to eliminate total dependency and hostility towards 'outsiders'. (These include change agents who are not members of the community in terms of race, gender, religious or political affiliation.

The arts have a potential to stimulate attitude change and boost the human element of growth. The arts here are treated as other unifying modes of moral policing as Dewey noted that:

Government, business, art, religion, all social institutions have a meaning, a purpose. That purpose is to set free and to develop the capacities of human individuals without respect to race, sex, class or economic status ...their value is the extent to which they educate every individual into the full stature of his responsibility. Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral meaning, it is... [the contribution to] the all-around growth of every member of society (Dewey 1950:147 in Friedman 1987:189).

The arts are no longer suppressed in democratic South Africa and community development is enjoying greater support in all spheres of government. The two practices implement their projects at local level and, as a result, they will always share the same geographical area of impact. If the two cannot work together in

a coordinated fashion, they will become foes and not allies. Change agents can best involve art groups because they are always organised with flexible agenda's, given the fact that all that artists want is to perform for an audience. I would argue that there is an arts organisation in each community, whether registered or not. These can include few boys doing dance routines in a garage or back yard; it can be a group of women practising songs for their church; it can be some youths who do art for the fun of it to imitate their idols. Whether or not it is an established group with a constitution and profile, a group of artists can be tools that change agents, can use effectively to kick-start and maintain the process of community development.

2.9. Conclusion

In conclusion, planning is not an exclusive ritual for qualified individuals. It involves many collaborators in society where it must derive its values. Planning shapes attention through argument, talk and active listening to what others say. Sandercock argues that planning is performed through a story and that planners need to be good story-tellers. If planning could be treated as a form of mediation it could, through effective communication strategies, be able to critic planning so that the end product is not just efficiency, but effectiveness as well. Planning depends on a universally identified collectiveness in terms of communication and not haphazard communication modes. It is possible that one language could be understood by all parties but there are deep underlying meanings that have to be picked up by the planner and perhaps re-enacted by artists to people to have a second chance to read hidden meanings and connotations. All the approaches to planning indicated show how central communication is to be role of the planner. Planning is about understanding meaning, shaping meaning, communicating meaning, and translating meaning.

CHAPTER 3

The Arts and the Public Sphere: South African Context

3.1. Introduction

The public sphere is politically charged. The South African context in particular is very unstable with the new democratic principles opening opportunities for exploration of concepts and ideas, while on the other hand there is always the temptation to dwell on physical determinism and other modern ideas of control. This chapter looks at how the arts have resisted the status quo and enabled people to use creative means to communicate their feelings.

3.2. Post 1994 politics

The South African context needs to be viewed from its political setting first in order to understand the planning perspective that exists. Planning in the South African context must seek a way of understanding the structural political set up that dominated the early 1990s. Before the first democratic elections in 1994, there were two distinguishable camps of political thought that characterised the popular party at the time, which later became the ruling party. The ANC was run both by former exiles who were taught mainly on the socialist theories of the Russian Revolution and the local civic organisations. The former group believed that interventions should be centrally controlled by the state at national level, while the latter believed in local grassroots interventions. These two camps of planning from the same ruling party is an important South African contemporary planning theory that needs special tools to ensure that it is effective for servicing the majority through the exploration of the possibilities of integration.

Although there are three spheres of government that are supposed to be interlocking as with autonomous legislative powers, the day-to-day operation suggest that there is a hierarchy and the national government acts as a controlling body. Most on the former exiles within the ruling party believe in central control of the country as well as sensitivity to global trends. The other group of the ruling party members with experience in civic believe that development should start from the bottom up. The establishment of the Provincial government is perhaps was attempt to acknowledge the political setup and integrate it to speed up service delivery while dealing with the two thinking camps that existed within the ruling party. It is not surprising that there are rumours that the provinces will be reduced from nine. This might me because over a decade in power has helped to ease the philosophical tension making it easier for local and national government to cooperate. This research aims to find ways of keeping in touch with human emotions no matter the political setup.

3.3. Modern/ post-modern influence

Most planners and theorists who have influenced planning theory and practice might have not been formally employed by a body that deals directly with public planning matters. However, they have written to theorise and critically analyse, on public planning matters. Their essays have shaped the development of planning. Some of them worked as consultants, evaluators, researchers and advisors to planning bodies. In a way, planning is an informed view of society. Information is, however, a mixture of points of view, opinions and suggestion. This is the reason why planning has evolves so much, there is no single and static way of approaching a problem and the problem is non-static. Planning, therefore, needs to take the form of a critical essay that looks at all possibilities and options, instead of the narrative form that is consumed in it structure of beginning, middle and ending. Finally, there are similarities between planning and other forms of art.

Performing arts form part of the public domain. Their treatment has also not been static. The idea of a grand narrative has also dominated the arts in the modern era, where structure was the most important factor of society. From Shakespeare and Aristotle to the Hollywood Cinema, there has been the notion of the hero's journey through the narrative. The hero is introduced when there is a problem in a community and we will be obliged to fight the evil until the end, to restore peace and stability. In the same fashion, modernist planning used planners as experts on the basis that there is an internal logic within social relations that can be uncovered and used through planning to shape and perfect the world (Harrison 1995:31). The classic narrative used the hero (train him if there is a need) to shape and perfect the world. Typically, the classic narratives structure the structure of a classic narrative:

1. Linearity of cause and effect within an overall trajectory of enigma and resolution.
2. A high degree of narrative closure.
3. A fictional world governed by spatial and temporal verisimilitude.
4. Centrality of the narrative agency of psychologically-rounded characters (Cook P 1997).

Performing arts and planning are seen in this research both as essays. The later as active and practically enforced on society, while the former is visual with the aim to show and persuade. Both reflect dominant ideology. Modern planning depends on the planners as expert, while the classic narrative values the hero whose journey stabilises the status quo. The story is organised around the idea of enigma (problem) and resolution. Everything proceeds step-by-step from the initial disruption to the final resolution. Each event is linked to the next in a relationship of cause and effect towards an inevitable resolution.

Does life depend on heroes? In the latest production of Superman, the villain hints the answer:

The world does not need Superman. He is good at catching the big bad guys but not good with the little things (Superman Returns, 2006).

The villain goes on to make claims that:

Whoever controls technology controls the world, Rome built the roads. Britain manufactured the ships. America commands information, the internet and other mediums (Superman Returns, 2006 free transcription).

The lesson learnt from the above quotes on Superman is that the grand narrative does not apply in contemporary communities because it focuses on the bigger problem and ignore the little things that matter the most. This idea subjects all members of society to being either ignorant or not capable of thinking as supermen in themselves. There is not such thing as such thing as superman in reality and grand planning, we need to, like Friedman, believe in the moral relevance of planning that no longer relies on the absolutes, but on the idea that "human beings can create consensus as to 'the truth' through communication and dialogue" (Harrison 1995:33).

The arts can play an important role in facilitating the communication and dialogue process, which is a consensus platform for the people. The argument that community involvement and participation consumes time is one of the modernist attitudes of designing a time-bound solution that will be handed down to the people. This research argues that "speed kills" and planners and government officials do not need to avoid the people because:

Globally, there is a trend towards democratisation facilitated by new information and communication technologies which makes it increasingly difficult for authoritarian rulers to control their subjects... the power of national government regulate their economies has declined, with initiative

for development shifting to regional and local level... power has also diffused from state structures to a multiplicity of institutions within civil society... the importance of the locality is enhanced and local distinctiveness becomes increasingly significant... state planners can therefore no longer command, impose and control... [but their effectiveness] depends on their skills in the arts of communication, negotiation, mediation, and strategising (Harrison 1995:29).

The democratisation of planning will always challenge the modernist ideas of grand planning. Like wise, the avant-garde movement in theatre challenges the grand narrative. It emphasises that life is not logical. Avant-garde theatre explores the concepts of 'change and spontaneity' that highlights the disorderly nature of life. The movement is not just a movement in theatre or art and literature, but it is a spirit of resistance that exists in people. A spirit is famous for challenging the popularly accepted ideology and belief systems that structure our society.

The significance of avant-garde theatre is its ability to provoke social tensions and stimulate public debates. Unlike the classical cuts that are all beautiful and 'nice' to watch, cutting-edge arts provoke modernists who are always quick to resort to censure and suppress productions that do not present the illusionary beauty of modern life. For example, Yizo-yizo, the South African ground breaking television series. Shot on location, this production did not use professional actors and it opted for the raw representation of township life through. The shooting as well did not draw unnecessary attention to the actors, in most instances keeping them and one edge of the frame so that the story or social condition in the background could be come a crucial part of the scene

3.4. The Arts and the struggle

The purpose of this research is not to argue whether or not the arts have contributed in the struggle, but to briefly, acknowledge the participation of artists and their work at various levels of the struggle. There has always been collaboration between politics and the arts. When critically reviewing some work of art, one may only try to establish whether that piece supports or negates the status quo. By acknowledging the role played by the arts during the trying times in South Africa, this research argues that the arts still has a role in shaping attention to current issues. Planners, artists and politicians can work together to find new ways in which art can find its way back to public debate, not just for art's sake, but as an effective tool to communicate cross-sectoral issues and lay a foundation for mutual understanding.

Mutual understanding and consensus are the most sought out pillars of our democracy. If democracy was an end in itself or a point of arrival, then everything would have been settled in April 1994. However, as they say; Aluta Continua – the struggle continues. There is no way that the struggle can continue without the arts. The struggle is different in contemporary South Africa. Before 1994, the struggle was generally against the policies of apartheid South Africa, now it is against a number of local and international economic, social, political, religious, environmental or other issues that impact directly or indirectly on the individuals ordinary member of society. The struggle is against issues that impact on the individual at policy or attitude level. If the arts cannot change anything physically in one day, artists can research and re-present the situation to raise awareness and focus attention.

Historically, the arts have been at the centre of the struggle against injustice. Judging by the treatment that the artists received from, more especially, Verwoerd's administration, the artists or their art was a serious threat to the

architects of apartheid. As a result, artists were arrested, passed to or exiled and in 1962, the Sabotage Act had a specific clause that was specifically attached to ensure society of "Silent poets [and] strangled writers" (Sustar L and Karim A 2006:46). If the apartheid government took an action to do something about the role of the arts, the present system of governance can find a way of not just acknowledging the arts as entertainment, but a tool to promote and strengthen that very governance.

As noted earlier, art has participated on both sides of the politics coin, those artist and artworks that promoted the dominant ideology were funded and promoted, while the defiant ones were suppressed and silenced. To slightly, go back in history, one cannot finish the study of Russian Revolution without mentioning the role of the arts:

The years between the 1917 revolution and Lenin's death in 1925 were a period of experimentation and innovation in Russian art. Artists of the left-painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, dramatists, poets, and designers in all the industrial arts – became actively involved in the transformation of society and the creation of a new social order... [that is] how close the integration of art and politics produced revolutionary forms and principles in the whole range of artistic activities (Art in Revolution 1972: VHS synopsis)

Lenin use the arts as a propaganda machine to mobilise, agitate and conscientise the Russian masses. Special trains were used as mobile information centres decorated with special slogans. The film, Art in Revolution reveals that by 1921 over 3000 poster designs with graphic art were produced and photo montage became a common sign with the aim of popularising the revolution. The arts seem to have worked in assembling the audience in the cities like Moscow and Petrograd (Leningrand). Perhaps with the aim of reminding the massed of their recent past, as a form of agitation, there was a re-enactment of the storming of

the winter palace in Petrograd in 1920. This art activity drew over six thousand participants in front of a crowd of audience of over a hundred thousand people.

Popular artist of the time included Mayerhold who directed *Struggle and Victory* in 1921 and later Eisenstein who, I learnt at drama school that he was the father of montage editing in *Battleship Potemkin* in 1925. Watching this film, I realised that history was the hero in the film and not individuals and how meaning could be constructed using montage editing. This a form of manipulation in film that uses various materials and events in front of the camera as materials of film making. Any decision would then be guided by how the film will affect the spectator. On this representation of the 1905 Revolution, Eisenstein argues that:

The spectator [is] putting up material resistance that must be overcome by violence. The audience must be attacked; the work of art is a tractor plowing the spectator's psyche; the artist administers a series of shocks (Bordwell D 1993: 115-6).

In this passage, Eisenstein maintains that the production of artworks must manipulate the physical states of the spectators by giving them various seemingly unrelated images (montage) that eventually gives a shock conclusion about their connectedness. The film repeats some performers' actions so that the spectator becomes 'infected' with emotion. Defending his style against others, he says, "surrealists try to expose 'subconscious emotions' whereas we seek to use them and play with them to provoke emotion" (Bordwell D 1993:119). From this quote, one may pick up two ways of using the art to either expose or use emotion to make people realise the connectedness of their actions in society.

Artists like Eisenstein were deployed by the Bolsheviks party to promote their new government. Lenin used every opportunity and every development to ensure that the arts were able to explore all avenues of agitation. With the

arrival of electricity at that time Lenin ensured that the “art of the film [was] above all others in political importance” (Art in Revolution 1972). In 1919, he decreed the nationalisation of the Russian film. There was total freedom of artistic creativity in general. The world truly became a stage with artists using improvised stages, open air, clubs and factory floors to display their creativity and support of the government of the masses. The main idea was to use the arts to spread the revolution to all corners and remote areas of the country as huge as it was. The spread and influence of the revolution, which started mainly in Moscow, happened in a nucleus fashion as illustrated in the diagram below. The arrows represent the source and direction of the Bolshevik influence with the help of the arts as information vehicles.

Illustration 1.



The government in power holds the future of the arts. The government can use arts to promote its programs and policies or kill it completely. Despite the mobilising role that the arts played during the struggle, there are no attempts to form a partnership between the post-apartheid government and the arts regarding the new role of the arts. The arts should help to deepen democracy and effective delivery on the developmental principles of the country. In Russia, Stalin became the next leader in 1925 and put a stop to artistic creativity. His focus was on productivity and saw art as entertainment than anything or maybe he concluded that its period of importance had passed.

The apartheid government on the other hand used the arts to establish the Afrikaans culture and tradition. Afrikaner nationalism was to ensure single mindedness to the National Party ideals which were centred on Afrikaner identity. As a result:

The drive towards Afrikaner identity has meant that all artists, including dramatists, have been invited – or more specifically urged – to create works in an effort to establish a body of Afrikaans literature and, because of the belief in the ultimate goal, the response was gratifying. This was particularly so in the first period, a stage when the cry was for quantity rather than quality... important here is the elemental fact that it was cultural nationalism – in its positive and negative influence – which set Afrikaans drama far ahead of any other form in terms of quantity and quality of creative production (Steadman I and Hauptfleisch T 1983:9).

It can be argued that art relies on politics for its shape, relevance and creativity. This research seeks to redeem the arts from the sidelines of contemporary politics, form collaboration with planning for creative developmental interventions and become a human substance of communication strategies.

3.5. Theatre for Development

Democratic planning needs a vehicle or tool to ensure that all parties are involved in development matters from conception. Involvement can easily be misunderstood by government agencies to mean that they may research and design plans first, and then invite members of the community to participate in the process of realising the already designed programme. Involvement means a lot more than that. It means all-round participation through consultation, design, implementation and all other decision-making processes as well as monitoring and evaluation of the programme. In democratic terms, participation or community involvement is a way of promoting the direct ownership of programmes by the community.

Theatre can be used in post-apartheid South Africa as that tool to realise democratic principles like community involvement and participation as well as promote community ownership of projects. There is a need for an alternative form of theatre with post-modern principles. That is, a theatre that is not a reflection of modern ideas, like the grand narrative that alienates the audience. This will be the appropriate 'theatre for development' that concerns itself, not so much about how beautiful the artists can write or design the stage but, with ending up with a performance that recognises local means of communication, meaning-making and audience involvement as effective as possible. According to Zakes Mda, a well known South African writer and artist, there is a difference between drama and theatre is used here as a key inclusive term. He wrote:

I think it is important for us to clarify the distinction from the onset. 'Theatre' here refers to the production and communication of meaning in the performance itself, in other words a transaction or negotiation of meaning in a performer-spectator situation. 'Drama' on the other hand refers to the literature on which performances are sometimes based, the

mode of fiction designed along certain dramatic conventions for stage representation (Mda, 1990:6).

Theatre as a democratising tool does not need to be tied down conventions. It must be able to break down the barriers between the actors and performers. The concept of framing must be reviewed in order for this theatre to be inclusive. Framing means:

“An arrangement that place a circumscribed sequence of activity before persons in an ‘audience’ role, whose duty is to observe at length the activities of the ‘performers’ without directly participating in those activities (Carlson 1996:39).”

This concept is a modern way of ensuring that theatre is a display of skills, which must not be disturbed by the audience. Modern planning has operated in this manner, with the planners expected to design and deliver, while the communities assumed the role of spectators whose benefit is to receive. A receiver can only wish that they are given whatever the desire. If not, then it is unfortunate for them.

Theatre for development, like democratic planning, must deal with mental attitudes so that spectators learn to value their new role. It would help to destroy the conventional frames when audience is aware that the frames are purposefully destroyed, otherwise the audience may ignore your attempts and erect their own imaginary frames. If planning is inclusive, it must do away with grand plans, as they existed during apartheid. Encourage ordinary people to contribute in the planning for their communities. An example of a grand plan where the masses are invited to support only as spectator is the soccer field and the whole soccer activity. This is a grand plan that is restrictive. See diagram

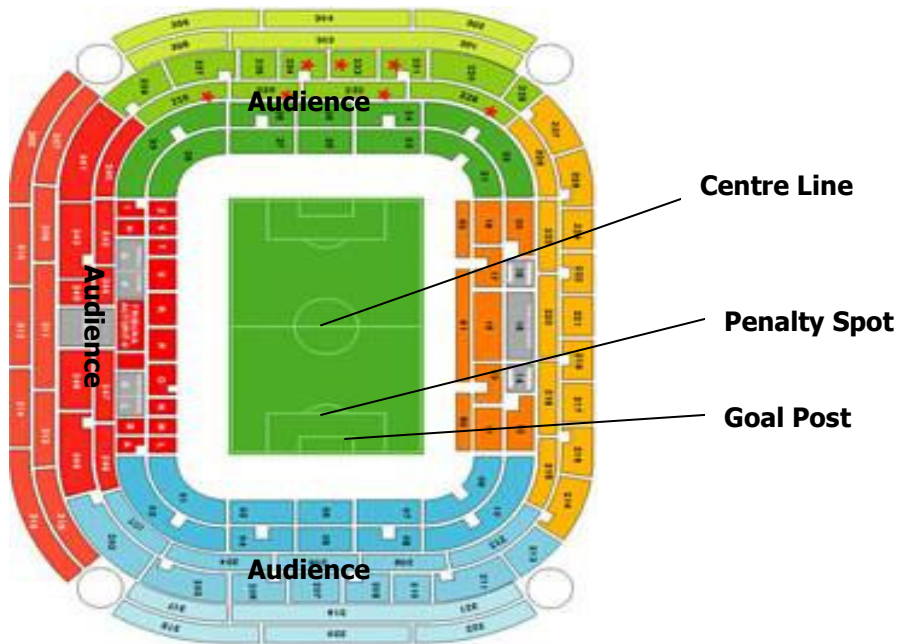
Illustration 2 (a)

The Grand Plan – A soccer stadium



This is a picture of a soccer stadium. It is used in this research to represent the idea of participation in the context of grand planning. See the ground plan below of this picture below. The audience/spectators represent the community or public.

Illustration 2 (b) Soccer stadium ground plan



The illustration above exemplifies total framing and grand planning. It is an opposite of what community involvement entails. In the case of soccer, the audience is needed to come and cheer up the players. The audience are only involved at the last stage of the soccer process and their voice is not so critical when it comes to monitoring and evaluation. The audience represent the masses in the community. Journalists and analysts can only comment on the game with no direct effect to it. They represent academics. The game is expert responsibility. The team practices alone, the coach has the final say on what should be done on the pitch and during the game, the audience is kept at a distance off the field. Soccer is different to the planning practice but the lesson learned from it is that when the masses are only treated as spectators, they cannot contribute to the shape of the game no matter what they know. Planning on the other hand is an activity that does not spectator but active participants who are all beneficiaries of the final product.

Borrowing terms from the arts in planning, the public domain needs to be treated as a sociopetal space rather than sociofugal space. A sociofugal space is formed with clear division between observers in their frame and performers on the stage clearly in front. The soccer field is also an example of a sociofugal space. Planning becomes modernist within a sociofugal setting. On the other hand, democratic planning as well as the theatre for development can thrive in a sociopetal setting. In the arts, a sociopetal space is informal and it brings performers and observers together. It is communal with shared values rather than individualism.

The theatre for development already existed in the 1980s. Mda uses Marotholi Travelling Theatre, established in 1982 as case study. Mda reveals that this group was a project of the University of Lesotho's English Department and the Institute of Extra-Mural Studies. The English Department contributed personnel with theatre skills and the Institute of Extra-Mural Studies added its expertise in rural development, non-formal education and adult education. The aim was to "use theatre as a medium of development communication, and secondly to use theatre for motivating communities into initiating and/or participating in development activities" (Mda, 1980:2). Mda also records that the group produced plays dealing with such themes as reforestation, co-operative societies and the rehabilitation of prisoners between 1982 and 1985.

Theatre for development is participatory. It develops from agitprop theatre, which was widely used in South Africa and other countries in the 1980s. Agitprop is the theatre that involves research into problems within target communities, analyses and prioritisation of the information which is later developed into a script. Mda argues that prioritisation is biased to the creators of the script and not the community. This kind of theatre however involved post-performance

discussions between community members, the actors and development agencies would give practical advice whenever they were available.

3.6. Limitations of the Arts

With regards to politics, a thinker finds himself in conflict with the world, people do not understand him. What ever he says will be polemic and not philosophy (Bentley 1967:119). Does this mean that all most thinking is polemical? If so, that act is most likely to be understood because it is a product of its creator who thinks. Bentley argues that art is over-estimated by its proponents and critics. He goes on to note that "in a world that doesn't believe in art at all, art is nearly always represented, in print, as having far more importance than it really possesses" (Bentley 1967:119). This means that writers in the mainstream print play a promotional role by writing highly about pieces of work and praising very polemic thinker, whom the world do not understand.

A writer of literature, for example, can be famous not because of what they have written, but because of what is written about what this writer has written. Bentley talks of Pasternak, a writer whose fate made millions of Americans to weep when they read about him in the paper. However, the very people who wept snored before they got to page ten of Pasternak's book (Bentley 1967). This shows that there is a difference between the hype around a piece of art and what it actually means to ordinary people. The recent release of the ***Davinci Code*** movie illustrates that the political hype around a piece of art is often hyperbolic when compared with the real political impact of the piece.

I once heard a slogan: Art is a weapon. In addition, people have said that art is propaganda. If art is a weapon, then it depends on whose hands that weapon is in and how well it is used. As South Africans, or any other people, we need art as

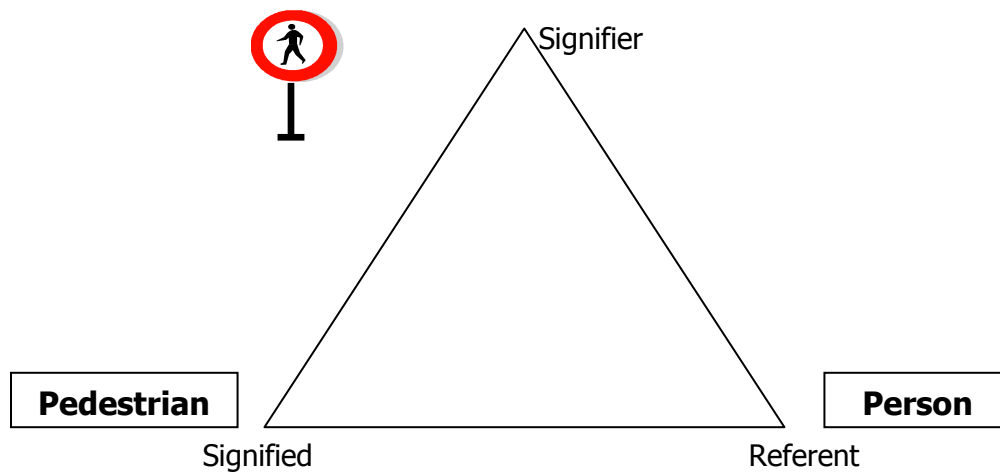
our weapon and propaganda in order to fight social pathologies as well as rally and conscientise communities around the possibilities that exist around us. Planning is also a weapon that was used during the apartheid era to control and separate. It was a weapon to strengthen the ideas of the powers of that time. It can also be used as a weapon to deepen democracy. In fact, the current government is looking for ways to deepen democracy and this research argues that the arts can be used as a 'bullet' in the planning weapon as well as propaganda mechanism. Propaganda in a democratic society should be about awareness raising than anything else. Propaganda often seeks to convert people to something, whether a religion or a political body. As a result, propaganda must be able to change people's negative attitudes the realisation of the South African dream.

According to Bertol Brecht, a well-known modern political dramatist, "the drama was to be nothing if not social" (Brecht in Bentley 1967:121). So, the arts, instead of being polemic works that only delights critics, must contribute to social and revolutionary change. The arts can achieve this through the proper use of propaganda to cope with the change is society and not necessary created to in the interest of the status quo. The arts must always search and imagine alternatives for social change.

The question to ask then is, do people get the message that a piece of art puts across? It must be noted that any piece of art or "performance embodies codes which can be deconstructed, the reader or spectator receives meanings different to what authors 'put into' their works" (Steadman, I, 1985:55). This means that it is not guaranteed that the audience will see whatever the author wants them to see. Art then becomes a collection of signs based on the truth. The truth here refers to what the author sees as truthful. Usually, signs comprise of three things (codes) that can be joined together on each end to form a triangle in terms of importance. The three as the signifier, the signified and the referent (see

diagram). "What is presented as evidence remains evidence whether the observing eye qualities itself as being subjective or objective" (Renov 1993:2). This means that different individuals in the audience will view any piece of art differently. As well, particular performance or presentation of art will be received differently by different sections of the population because beyond mere objectivity and subjectivity, there are differing levels of understanding within society. The is, therefore, a possibility that what the author aims to tell his/her audience, some people might get the point (truth), while others settle for something else as the truth. This is because the audience is involved in meaning making than they are in meaning receiving.

Illustration 3: THE SIGN



The diagram above represents the function of a sign in meaning making. In the case of road signs, the sign e.g. with drawings of human beings that you see on the roadside is the signifier that there are pedestrians ahead. The pedestrian is the signified, which is naturally a person (the referent).

Let us take a brief look at *Tsotsi* the South African winner of an Oscar for Best Director: Foreign Language Film. It would be interesting to find whether people do get the point of what this film is all about? Many South Africans are still asking how this film conquered the world despite it not being the best local film ever produced. Now 'best' becomes a contested terrain as well. The fact that this film is actually an AIDS story is probably an academic one. Oscar adjudicators, film critics and the makers probably delight in the fact that at least there is a film that, through signs, codes and clues, managed to show the effects of AIDS in society without actually uttering a single word like AIDS, HIV, SEX, SUPPORT or CONDOMS. Many ordinary South African went to see the film expecting an action packed gangster story only to be confronted with something below the standards of *Yizo-Yizo* and other local gangster productions. The point I am making here is that what is considered excellent in artistic terms may be elitist, excluding the majoring of people who fail to read the signs and clues that form part of the creativity.

Conclusion

The arts are not new in the public sphere of South Africa. They have only not been used effectively. The arts have undergone a lot of transformation locally as well as internationally. This research argues that there is an aspect of the arts that can negate conventional aesthetic in order to ensure that the arts do not only reflect on social conditions but also play a major role in the shaping of the future. Through the arts, people can be helped to understand their environment (see Appendix A) and be helped (as agitprop theatre seeks to prove) to access necessary channels. Theatre has the potential, as shall be seen in Chapter 4, to maximise the participation and make effective the communication of ideas.

Chapter 4

The communication Challenge in South African Planning: Case Studies

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will focus more specifically on the performing arts. It discusses the potential that the performing arts have in dealing with the communication challenge. Key government documents will be briefly reviewed as well as two case studies to look into the attempts that have been made by both the government and the artists on the ground. The first document to be focused on here is *Creative South Africa*, a strategy for realizing the potential of the Cultural Industries, and the other is chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000, which deals with participation in municipal governance. The two case studies are of a performing arts group in the Ekurhuleni township of Tembisa, and of a similar group in the densely populated, run down suburb of Hillbrow in inner-city Johannesburg.

Performing arts and theatre in particular, has been strategically sidelined from mainstream plans of the government. Theatre struggles to survive because its role in the broader government strategy is not clearly defined. However, it is through theatre that other cultural industries survive. Theatre provides lucrative cultural industry sectors like music, advertising, film and television with human resources skills. Theatre, unfortunately, does not have high status in many communities - it is often reduced to a hobby or to a no-income extra-mural activity. It does not usually appeal to adults and is seen as an activity for young children, and some adults withdraw their children from theatre as it is seen as time wasting and a disturbance to studies. Artists always encouraged youngsters

to take part in theatre for their personal growth and contribution to the moral regeneration of their communities but the value of theatre is not properly understood within communities, and the government does not seem to fully understand the psychological potential that theatre has and the social role it plays in community development.

Theatre relies on very tiny grants with strict conditions. Even getting a few thousand rand grant is something that may happen once in five years or so for a community based theatre organization. Despite all the talk that art will be taught at schools, it remains unpopular in many schools. These problems come to the fore when critically analyzing art competitions in the township. Drawing from Independent theatre groups in Tembisa, Ivory Park and Hilbrow, all the schools' competition they organize will see *individual* student entrances, with school-based theatre groups usually getting very little support from their own institutions, especially when compared to the sports. Only a few teachers support the general development of school based theatre. This problem is more than a lack of co-operation from the schools per se; it is a reflection of the poor level of understanding when it comes to the importance of theatre in our society. Because of the lack of general social support, education departments are not under pressure to ensure that, from school level, art is developed in line with the country's governance and growth strategy.

If the performing arts are viewed only in terms of their direct impact, there is a strong possibility that government planners may conclude that theatre does not contribute to economic growth as the other arts do. As a result, it will be neglected at community level and it will have no significance to the unemployed. However, if government agencies use community theatre deliberately as an information vehicle, the importance of theatre in the eyes of both government and the public could improve. The link between theatre and service delivery could be more strongly established, and currently unemployed theatre

practitioners would benefit from the stipends. The argument here is that there are numerous benefits, economic and other that could flow from collaboration between artists and planners (or government agencies). Before illustrating the possibilities by using the two case-studies, this chapters explores more closely government's obligations for participation and communication.

4.2. Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000

Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 (MSA 2000) outlines obligations for community participation. This needs to be understood within the context of 'developmental local government', which is about working "with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives" (White Paper on Local Government, 1998:28). The concept of working together here is about maximum inclusivity in the participation process. The excluded and marginalized people like the youth, women, disabled, very poor and illiterate people, are the primary target. Following from the requirements of this chapter of the Act, finding a way of involving marginalised groups should be a main priority of municipal councillors and officials and, without the use of tools like community theatre, councillors and officials will struggle to fulfil their obligations.

The MSA 2000 provides in section 16 that municipalities must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance. The municipality must encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality. Further sections emphasise that mechanisms and processes of participation must take into account the special needs of:

- people who cannot read or write;
- people with disabilities;
- women; and

- other disadvantaged groups (Section 17 (3))

Section 18 provides that when those mechanisms are in order, the municipality must communicate to its community information outlining the operational grounds. This communication of information must also take into account language preferences and usage in the municipality and the special needs of people who cannot read or write. Clearly, community theatre has a major role to play in the implementation of arts and could be used as one of the mediums of communication. Community theatre can be that communication tool that could effectively ensure physical contact with community members. This could be an effective way of democratizing information and deal with the communication challenge.

Most of the failures of local government could be associated with lack of consultation and poor community involvement that result from poor participation. Looking at the recent local government elections, especially in cases such as Kgutsong and Matatiele - where new administrative demarcations caused a great fury - there is still a lot that needs to be done in the sphere of participation and consultation. After many months, officials now admit that there was no proper consultation with the community of Matatiele. What these councillors and planners need to understand is that involvement matters most in the initial stages of any programme to ensure that the community feels the ownership of all the projects thereof. The current trend is that government officials apply their own way of gathering and synthesizing information and then come up with an almost completed frame for the community to participate from an already advanced level of the programme. In many instances communities are likely to disown these plans. This kind of planning creates a problem that leads to community members either vandalizing infrastructure or neglecting them altogether. This research seeks to remind planners and government agents that there is a tool that can be useful at grassroots level when it comes to

communication, participation, involvement and mutual understanding. This tool is performing arts and it can only be fully explored if the national government sets a framework. It seems as if it will take sometime because since the first democratic election there is no policy document that establishes performing arts as a developmental tool that could be used in intergovernmental planning. A few strategies here slightly touch, though to effect on performing arts, one of these is the Creative South Africa strategy.

4.3. Creative South Africa strategy

One of the most important of the documents that were designed to uplift the arts and show how crucial they are for the country is the *Creative South Africa* strategy which is aimed at realizing the potential of the cultural industries. This is a national strategy based on a research commissioned by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology to be used to inform future policy formulation. It took the Gauteng Provincial government over five years to come up with its own Creative Industries Development Framework (GCIDF) that is aligned with the Growth and Development Strategy of the province.

The Department of Social Development has a database of most of the Non-Profit Organisations under the Non-Profit Organisations Act No. 71 of 1997. This Act recognises that NPOs played a significant role in challenging the injustices of apartheid and addressing the needs of vulnerable communities (NPO Act 1997). The government needs to ensure that this Act is amended so that it also includes a framework on how these NPOs, most of whom are theatre organisations, can work as partners. As it stands, this Act is an administrative framework for voluntary registration of NPOs.

Since the first democratic elections the national department of arts has not produced a specific act that outlines the role and treatment of the arts in terms

of government planning. The only policy that exists is the Draft White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage which establishes the National Arts Council as a funding body for the arts and literature. It also sets up a framework for heritage institutions, National monuments and national geographical names. The Draft White Paper touches on a number of important issues like the role that the arts may play in reconciliation. Citing paragraph 16 and 30 of the Constitution of South Africa, the draft White Paper maintains that the government must facilitate the optimum conditions in which the right to freedom of expression and artistic creativity, as well as the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, may be enjoyed and practiced.

This research argues that the gaps that can be identified in the *Creative South Africa* strategy and its provincial off-springs could be addressed better if the draft White Paper is amended and passed into law by parliament. A major weakness identified in the Creative South Africa strategy is that the arts are only recognized for direct economic reasons. Despite admitting that cultural activities are linked to innovation and creativity because of “the capacity to think problems afresh; or from first principles; to be reflexive; to experiment; to be unconventional; to visualize future scenarios; to look at situations in an integrated way, laterally and with flexibility” (Creative SA 1998: 13). However, this strategy leaves the visual and performing arts out of the plan. According to this research visual and performing arts contribute immensely to the above, even though the strategy concentrates on music, film and television and by extension, craft sectors, because of their immediate contribution to the South African economy.

Section 1.11 of the strategy states that the cultural industries can facilitate the process of transformation. However, it fails to explore further how this transformation may be facilitated at community level without the prospect of income. It only lays a foundation on which to boost the economy enhancing the

quality of the working environment for what I call 'cultural cash cows'. It is good to recognize that South Africa has produced internationally acclaimed artists, crafters like Jamie Uys, Abdullah Ibrahim, Jabu Nene, Hugh Masekela, Miriam Makeba, William Kenridge, John Kani, Alan Paston, Bongo Maffin, Johathan Butler, Sbongile Khumalo, Charlize Theron, Johny Clegg, Mimi Coetzee, Ladysmith Black Mambazo and many more. Nevertheless, is it all about the commercialization of the arts? The research argues that the performing arts play a major role in creating a stable society, especially among the youth and marginalized poor people who should participate in the economy. An ideal stable society is a society where citizens are informed about developments around them. This means that individuals can have a positive input during consultation processes. Performing arts can act as a bridge transferring new information from government and planning agencies and convey them to the community in a three dimensional form by designing representations of real life situations (see Appendix C on Heartlines). Stable societies transform to economically sound communities because there will be less neglect and vandalism when people are informed, involved from early stages of development and when they own the projects and programmes.

As the strategy is for cultural 'industries', it means that there has not been any strategy for the performing arts and other educative aspects of the arts. Instead of complaining about a strategy that recognizes the arts only in terms of the information or knowledge economy, another development strategy must be established to deal with information within the socio-political sphere at community level. It should be recognised that arts such as theatre may not have a huge direct economic benefit, but they do have important indirect and long-term benefits, and could contribute in many other ways to the development of society as well as the advancement and sustenance of the cultural industries strategy

4.4. The Case Studies

The cases studies that contribute to the argument of this research are the Tswelopele Performing Artists and the Hlalanathi Theatre Project. These case studies are analysed against the backdrop of their interaction with government planners.

The major problem in this research was that it does not have clear case studies. While the research seeks to use these two case studies to maintain or illustrate that the arts can be used as a communication tool and particularly as a partner to planning agents, both the planners and the artist maintain their aesthetic differences. The two parties are parallel in terms of their ideas of communication and, as part of the recommendations, the research encourages that there should be ways in which the two can conceptualise communication strategies together. The case studies in this chapter reflect that a number of issues have been communicated by artists but there is a need for official endorsement and backing that is based on both intellectual and political will. This means that those who have the technical or rather, the academic training, as well as those with powerful political standing, should leave room to work directly as partners with the artists in respective communities. The research reveals that there is low level of consciousness to the possibility of enabling mutual cooperation but where some collaboration has occurred, there has been an exciting vitality.

In most cases, the artists spend a lot of time in their rehearsal spaces writing and rehearsing scripts. The planners from academic institutions spend most of their time consuming volumes of theory, while on the other hand, national government planners are concerned with strategies and policy formulation. The local councillors and political appointees are always locked in meetings. All of these activities are good but this research argues that substantial amount of time must be set aside for collaboration in order to ensure that the community

benefits from the outcomes of all these activities. As it stands, everyone is cooking his own pot. The artists would produce scripts that do not reach the target audience. This is because there is a money issue that separates the audience from the production. Most of the artists are unemployed and this has an impact on the costs of running the organisations, resulting in fees charged for audience who come to see these semi-professional productions. The question to ask is why produce performance productions if chances of them being seen are slim. It is the same as spending a lot of time on a research that will not be read by intended recipients. Researchers and planners use conferences and workshops as platforms to dialogue and learn from each other. Artists on the other hand use festivals and workshops as a strategy to share skills and pass their messages and comments on societal issues. Now, do all these efforts reach the intended final recipients or do they often remain academic material?

What this research gathered was that the ultimate beneficiaries of the conferences and festivals are supposed to be the members of local communities who are hardly ever present at these 'talk shops' and 'places of fun'. The research discovered that planners, politicians and artists produce a lot but due to poor collaboration, little is communicated effectively to the communities. Artists cite lack of financial support as the main reason why their message fails to reach a greater audience. Other community art groups usually attend the festivals. Just like the conferences, the workshops end up being a place where artists, like the researchers and planners, talk to each other while the rest of the community life goes on as usual. Therefore, the research argues that firstly there must be a conscious engagement between the change agents, planners, politicians and artists. Secondly, there must be a way of conscientising the community and seducing it to be involved in matters that involve them. The arts have not been used as a communication tool that can be used to penetrate geographical areas of impact. Artists argue that with financial backing, they can perform anywhere for free and their message can reach and maybe impact the majority of people in

the communities. The research argues further that the government needs to sponsor artists for specific government projects that require community involvement. This could be a win-win situation for artists who could receive financial support, for the government whose programmes could get to reach the people on the ground and the community that could receive that vital information in an easy, accessible and entertaining fashion.

4.5. Case study 1: Tswelopele Performing Artists (TSWEPA)

This Tembisa based theatre group is registered under the Non-Profit Organisation Act of 1997. According to their documents, their mission is 'to educate, entertain, uplift, develop and serve the community as well as to network with other community theatre structures, Community Based Organisations, Non-Government Organisation and the government'. They also have a fluctuating membership, which now stands at 25, comprising of youth between the ages of 13 and 30. These members include school going youth and school leavers. In terms of community building, the organisation acts as an empowerment platform for the youth, giving them a hope for the future.

The group was formed on 7 November 1994 and, to-date, they have produced 13 major projects. Some of these projects would run for 4 years. For example a play called *Resign from Hell* that was first performed in 1996 and its last performance was in the year 2000. This play was written around the idea of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It encourages people to settle their differences for the sake of peace in our country. The director feels that the play is still relevant today and with a financial backing can be performed to people around the country. Its message could be altered so that it is relevant to the communities targeted, whether in urban or rural areas. This play is an example of art in scenario setting, a history of the future (Hirschhorn, 1980). It suggests

that for people to be able to participate effectively in the new democracy, they need to deal with the personal front, reconcile with the past and 'let bygones be bygones'. It is only then that planning the future can be smooth.

One production that only ran for a few months is a production called *Role Models*. It is about HIV awareness and it encourages people to get tested for HIV. It highlights issues of stigma as well as the advantages of knowing your status. This play was funded by the Department of Health. The funding was insufficient and the play lasted for the duration of the funding. Also the group was visiting centres alone with no officials from the Department of Health. This is an example of lack of support between the artist and the government. Officials need to oversee the implementation of the projects that they fund to ensure that public funds are not wasted. There are a number of other productions like *Arise*, which encourage people to come out and showcase their talents after being deprived by the apartheid regime. *This Man* is another important production that teaches about the benefits of Adult Basic Education. *Abahlanyi Labantu* (Meaning, these people are not mad) is about the awareness of the socio-economic issues that have led to homelessness in the city of Johannesburg. *Endless War* is a graphic representation of HIV infection. *Why Vele* is about domestic violence and rape. All these issues that are being addressed in the productions form part of the government's broader strategy of that is centred around conscientising the people to create a better life for all. Until the government exploits other avenues and platforms like the arts, most of its programmes will remain academic materials or elections' hype.

Plays that raise interest for this research are *Thuthukani* (1995) and *Kodumela* (1996). *Thuthukani* is a voter educational play about the 1995 first Local Government Elections. It taught people about the importance of voting for local government elections and giving also a background to these elections which

were new to South Africans. *Kodumela* on the other hand, is a production that was produced almost accidentally to teach communities about Land Development Objectives (a form of planning which partially preceded Integrated Development Plans). This play was based on the LDO document which was aimed at ensuring that communities have a say in the developments within their area. The play was commissioned by the Department of Provincial and Local Government for 13 performances, one performance for each ward in Tembisa. The play would be performed during a community meeting that would be addressed by the LDO officer. *Kodumela* goes down as one example of a successful planner/artist collaboration. It helped to conscientise communities of thirteen wards in Tembisa. Even though the play and the official presentation would take place at the same time, it managed to give people a summarised background to the important planning document.

4.6. Case study 2: Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project

Hlalanathi



Community Theater Project

In its constitution, the Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project (HCTP) aims to address community issues through the performing arts medium to encourage community cohesion through the promotion of the good values of African culture. Their objective is to entertain while educating as a way of developing positive attitude and behavior among the youth and the community at large.

Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project (HCTP) is one group whose individuals understand that they can form a partnership with local authorities as well with the South African Police Services. When I met them for the first time, they were performing for a second year Town Planning class. Dr. Tanya Winkler, a lecturer in the School of Architecture and Planning, invited them. One may urge that the level of understanding that this group has concerning planning is due to their interactions with Dr. Winkler. The group played a major role in many of Dr. Winkler's research projects on the social issues in Hillbrow. She has also used them as part of her lecturing material at the University of Witwatersrand. This is an example of planner/artist collaboration as argued by Dang (2006) and experienced by Tswelopele Performing Artists earlier in the chapter

When planners and artists collaborate, there will be considerable growth for both parties. Planners and academics are usually outsiders within communities, while artists are insiders. The success of Dr. Winkler's research in Hillbrow is credited to this insider/outsider collaboration. Hlalanathi has always been involved in community projects, often ready to help outsiders like tourists with information. Their performances would give these outsiders a slice of the culture and trends of the communities they are visiting. Councillors and government officials at large who want to access this Hillbrow community to find out about their problems and to reach out to them in terms of information and remodelling of the mind set, can use community theatre groups like Hlalanathi. Unfortunately, there has been minimum collaboration between the group and other stakeholders.

As Cornwell (1986) argued that community development includes knowledge transfer, Hlalanathi has acted to bridge the knowledge gap within the community. They hold street performances and they run workshops for various sectors and interest groups in the areas. They run projects for rehabilitated

former sex workers and abused women. Once such organisation that Hlalanathi has worked with, is Sexual Harassment Education Project. This organisation deals with cases of counselling in the area of sexual abuse and sex education in general. The owner of the organisation has worked with Hlalanathi in a number of projects. She recalled Hlalanathi when she needed a tool for communicating the message during her project that was supported by the Department of Arts and Culture. The director of Hlalanathi recalls that they prepared a powerful interactive performance tackling the issues of sexual harassment, which was sited as a problem amongst the staff of the Department. He remembers one instance when two colleagues were speaking to each other and one asked, "What do you think of the play?" The answer was, "Don't talk about it." That is just how directly effective the performance was.

The director of Hlalanathi says that money is a problem in terms of the running of the organisation. It makes it difficult to maintain the cast and sustain the standard of performance. However, he mentions that, he has always managed to pay for his shared rent through the little that they get. Finance is a determining factor when it comes to the numeric growth as well as the sustainability of community theatre groups. If businesses and the government in particular, ensures that within their strategy they involve the arts in terms of communication, the result would be a win-win situation, where the business sector would be guaranteed that their message would reach even the remotest of areas. On the other hand, the unemployed artists could at least make a living out of the arts. For the creative industries to flourish, the government needs to legislate and ensure that the arts move from the periphery where they are and take centre in matters of development and planning, especially at local level.

Survival will always be a barrier to effective social change because social agents are often misunderstood and their vision not clearly seen by the power that be. The promotion of the arts at government level has always been financially

oriented. Since the 1960s during the leadership of BJ Vorster, "censorship legislation crystallised in the Publications and Entertainment Acts of 1963:9 and its administrative body the Publications Control Body. The government promotion of the arts included an attempt to dislocate cultural practices from social straggles and to market them instead as universal and trans-historical 'civilising forces'. Patronage of the arts became the barometer within which to measure South Africa's level of 'civilisation', and the states and capitals commitment to 'social responsibility programmes". (Peterson 1990:3). The government attempted to regulate cultural practices. Peterson further records in 1990 that there was no single theatre in any South African Township while there were 49 theatres nationally, all of which were located in white areas, and controlled by white managers. The only theatre that had blacks as patrons and in administrative positions was the Market Theatre and by extension Windybrow Theatre in Hillbrow

Hlalanathi Activities

The Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project (HCTP) was founded in 1999 with the objective of creating a community-based theatre project that would focus on key issues facing communities in the greater Johannesburg metropolitan area.

The project was established under the guidance of Michelle Barrow, a visiting lecture at Wits University. It originated out of community theatre workshops that were hosted by the Lutheran Church of Peace (Friedenskirche) outreach project based in the Hillbrow theatre.

First established as the Hillbrow Community Theatre, the project was renamed the Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project in 2000. Since its founding, the

project's growth has been fluctuating and it currently has 11 full-time actors and actresses. It has received continued support from the Lutheran Church of Peace.

Theatre and community

The development and success of Hlalanathi is related to the strong relationships that the project members have formed with organizations and businesses operating in the Hillbrow neighbourhood. In turn, Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project is committed to community building utilizing its members' varied skills to create peace and stability in the surrounding communities. As argued earlier, community theatre represents individuals who belong to the community as insiders. Their advantage is that they are actively involved in social action. A collaboration between other organisations, government and business could bring a better understanding of the socio-economic dynamics of the area which is a good starting point for planning. Community development starts with early child development and keeping the youth involved in societal issues and creativity.

SAVSA

Hlalanathi conducts weekly workshops at inner city schools under Steps Against Violence South Africa (SAVSA). The group is held in high esteem with I.H Harris primary school, St Endas Secondary, Barnato high, Jules high & other schools. Hlalanathi helped these schools in the creation of theatre productions of high quality using the learners. The productions reflected efforts by the learners to deal with the root causes of their social problems as well as ways of dealing with both the violent and non violent responses to these causes.

FRIDAY NIGHT SHOWS

On Friday evenings, HCTP also invites different theatre groups from around Gauteng to come and perform in the theatre giving them experience of

performing in a large, well-equipped performance environment. This gesture does not only benefit the invited groups. It serves as an incubator for the talent needed for the GCIDF (2006) and ensures that the individuals involved continues to be critical about their surroundings. Planning agencies need to take advantage of a platform like this one and open possibilities for further exploration.

Community Development

Hlalanathi runs collaborated workshops with other organizations dealing with abused women, some of whom are rehabilitated former sex-workers who are building a new life for themselves. The group uses information that they get from engaging with professional health workers around the city. Artists are keen to research, find more information and present it in a three-dimensional form. Planning can use these artists to put life to the ideas that exist already.

The Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project was part of the Hillbrow/Berea Regeneration Initiative in 2001 & 2002. The group's role was mainly in the creating of street performances to raise awareness about pressing issues affecting the lives of individuals living in the area. The group continues to work with local community-based organizations and the local Ward Committees in the Environmental Health Awareness Campaign. This project is a collaboration between the group, Councillor M Tyobeka (Ward 63) and the Gauteng Department of Health.

The group is also is part of a Tourism and Heritage project that provides regular tour guide service to foreign visitors interested in the history of the Friedenskirche and its surrounding neighbourhood.



Hlalanathi has a number of productions to their credit, in fact, too many to mention here. In 1999 they started off with the predictable “Jim comes to Joburg” kind of stories. Theirs was *Lost Hope*, a play about a young man from rural Natal who comes to the city with the hope that he will realize his dream of becoming a doctor. Things do not go according to plan. He becomes a cobbler mending shoes on the streets of the city. Unfortunately he dies from a stray bullet during a shootout. There is also *Run Power* which was written in the backdrop of the 2000/2001 state of emergency styled police raids in the innercity, Hillbrow and Youville. The play highlights police corruption. Instead of combating crime, individuals within perpetrates it. The raids were targeting criminal but in the end more illegal immigrant were arrested that the targeted criminals.

Hlalanathi is also passionate about the aesthetics of performance. They use their play Talking Drums to entertain during conferences and tourism promotion projects. The group is dedicated in what it does. As a result, Sponsors from Germany took the group overseas for a cultural exchange programme in 2005. Group member conducted a number of workshops in Germany and they also performed *Finder Finder* their play about a young who was active in the struggle. He is framed a drug dealer and is tragically killed by his comrades

In fulfilling its role as a community-based organization, Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project has participated in the Yeoville Youth Cultural Festival as well as the SIMOTA African Cultural Festival in Braamfontein, which featured different

African countries. Here the group represented the county of South Africa. perform an HIV/AIDS Awareness play, the group also participated in the World AIDS Day in Witbank in front of Jacob Zuma, then Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa.

Hlalanathi also did international tours, where Siyaya Arts Organisation invited them in Zimbabwe in 2002. In 2005, the Evangelical Lutheran Mission invited the group to Germany for two months doing performances and workshops. In 2002, Hlalanathi successfully organized the Peace Festival, which received enormous support from the community. Because of the response, the once off festival turned into an annual event, which normally runs for about a week with performances and workshops, which include drama, dance and music.

4.7. The arts as civil movement

There are two major reasons why the role of the arts is not clearly defined in post-apartheid South Africa. These two will be discussed briefly below. Firstly, the ruling party is, possibly, sceptical and suspicious of movements that operate on the same local government terrain with its political electorates. Secondly, leaders of various community arts have not come together to establish a structure that protects the political direction of art organisations. Leaders of community theatre have met to discuss how to make the arts more appealing to their larger audience as well as to attract donors at departmental level to sponsor projects that were particularly relevant to that particular government department, for example, *Role Models* by Tswelopele Performing Artists was produced specifically for the HIV section of the Department of Health. This means that Tswelopele had to conceptualise the play, script it and rehearse first it in order to make a presentation to the department. Despite the effort that had been put in the production, it would take one government official to decide whether or not to write a submission for the sponsorship of the project.

The finding of the research was that if government departments and community arts were working together as partners, the department would simply commission the artists to come up with productions designed according to the Terms of Reference, the same way in which the research is commissioned. The advantage of theatre is that it is a form of research that is likely to be taken to the people where they are; at community level, giving them a chance to participate if necessary. In this case, government programmes will become part of social action. They will be performed through a story that attacks the audience to force a comment. As a result there will be a high level of interaction between the research that informed the government programme, the programmes themselves and the community. Community arts in this instance would have played a mediator role and a vehicle that links government planning to its constituency.

On the other hand, community arts can play a critical role in the process of clarifying issues between government agencies and the community at large. In the mean time, community arts are that missing creative element between planners and the planned-for. Until this creative element is acknowledged and explored, it will be difficult for the government to reach or realise its ideal of planning with the community. There will always be a gap between government programmes and their implementation because people want only to be responsible for something that is theirs. So, using the arts in communication action, consensus building as well as in conscientisation and advocacy would help eliminate the general idea that the government is simply rolling out programmes without proper consultation, giving the people an excuse not to participate.

There might be a political or theoretical reason why the government is reluctant when it comes to supporting the arts. Both Tswelopele Performing Artists and

Hlalanathi Community Theatre Project have worked on projects for the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and National Association of People With Aids (NAPWA) more than they have worked on government-sponsored programmes. The TAC and NAPWA programmes and projects were sponsored by international donor agencies. Given the battle and debate between the government and, especially, the TAC over the roll-out of Anti-Retroviral treatment and the role that the arts played in this debate, the government is likely to think of community arts in the same way that it views civil movement and other social organisations.

There has been a clear tension between government (especially local government) and civil movements in post-apartheid South Africa. Mayekiso 2003 notes that "neither the ANC nor the civics had developed a clear appreciation of each others' strengths... [and] that the traditional civic movement, as it emerged in the 1980s, had a specific insurrectionary role to play and now it had no role in post-apartheid South Africa" (Mayekiso 2003:60). The most particular civic movement in South Africa has been the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO). Despite the role that SANCO played against apartheid, it suffers due to lack of support in post-apartheid South Africa because it shares the same political terrain with local government. As a result, it is impossible for local government to use its resources to support and sustain an 'oppositional' organisation.

Social movements are expected to last as long as they are relevant because they are developed to address specific social issues. One major mistake could be to preconceive community theatre as another civil or social movement. It should be thought of as a creative way of dealing with communication gaps that hinder development progress. The government and its agencies seem to have concluded that community theatre was only relevant during apartheid. However, the research argues that community arts could act "as an interface between community and state... to keep the state responsive to delivery processes and

accountable to citizenry" (Mayekiso 2003:61). All that is needed is a development revolution from the arts side that will make arts relevant to planning when needed. In this particular way, the community arts can participate in planning as a shared exercise. As it stands, the artists and the government officials interviewed in this research subliminally agreed that it is possible to work together to stimulate community participation and improve service delivery. However, at practical level, government agencies have not treated the arts as planning partners. There has also been a criticism from within the arts that writing for theatre is weak in post-apartheid South Africa and this is often credited to the fact that artists have lost inspiration to write because they lost sight of the enemy that gave them the inspiration to write. Apartheid was the enemy.

Government planners and its agencies need to be oriented to the idea that community arts could assume a redefined role in civil society. The artists themselves need to understand and be work-shopped on the task of acting as an interface of development.

4.8. Case studies and beyond

Both TSWEPA and Hlalanathi are well-established groups in terms of community involvement. Despite being registered, their functions are voluntary. What is lacking is the political will and eagerness from the government planners to accept credible community theatre as active partners for development. There is also the problem of lack of awareness from the side of the artists when it comes to the potential the arts have towards partnerships for development. There is complete silence between planners and artists, as they have not been under pressure or obligation to work together. Both groups have continued to do their day to day activities as per the will of the directors of each group. The groups

have continued to write scripts as and when they are inspired. The problem is that no market or client is readily available to consume these scripts. The leaders of both groups spend time soliciting for funds.

Finances have affected the survival of the groups. Some members of Hlalanathi have admitted that they depend on their art for a living. This is perhaps the reason why the group has fewer members. TSWEPAs on the other hand has attracted as many members as they have lost. It is hard to keep all unemployed school leavers by just convincing them that they are doing art for the love of it. The director of the group points out that some of the talented members have been lost to the local taxi industry, manufacturing firms of Isando and Midrand, others are working in retail outlets and others are sadly back into their old habits which include 'petty' crime and substance abuse.

For a group to survive and maintain its consistency there must be a financial boost no matter how meagre it may be. For an example one group that I could not access for the purposes of this research, is operating more as a business entity with sponsors. This group is consistent and advanced in interactive theatre but it is removed from the community trends and culture. Groups like this one and any other group that manages to get sponsorship can be used to communicate an idea of national significance because it becomes easier through some form of grant to implement projects. Groups like Soweto Youth Drama Society are operating on two levels:

- a) as a community group with unlimited cast members including school going youth
- b) as a commercial theatre group with a limited cast of non scholars, administrative staff and equipment like computers and pool cars

The later (limited cast) has been used to communicate messages on HIV/AIDS within the provinces of Gauteng and the North West. However, the support from

government has been limited because all community groups in South Africa depend on the funding that comes from the National Arts Council. TSWEPA has been applying for this funding ever since they were formed but they have received about fifteen months worth of funding in their 12 years (about 144 months) of existence.

If all groups will be forced by circumstances to operate as business entity, community theatre would soon be lost and the creative industries will lose its skills incubator. It must be understood that Community theatre is not for profit but the stipends that could come from the partnership with government can change the face of South Africa forever in terms of planning communication.

Conclusion

The government and its planning partners are in constant search for ways in which communities can come on board to help the government deliver effectively. On the other hand, artists are always hard at training to improve ways in which they can effectively communicate their message and ideas. The government needs a vehicle to communicate its ideas and the artists need the incentive to do focussed productions and keep group members interested and active. The two can form a partnership.

A group like TSWEPA, which is as old as democratic South Africa, should be playing an important role in community development instead of fighting for the same grants as newly formed groups that are still trying to find their footing. Most of its members should be trained on the skills of communicating at all government levels. The group may choose a focus area from among government programmes until it specialises in that area of focus i.e. Integrated Development Planning. When government departments plan their capacity building programmes, they should invite community-based organisations because they

are the link when it comes to implementation. There is a need to develop a criterion that will be used to evaluate the potential of an arts organisation or community group in order to maintain the standard of output and quality as well as to ensure clarity in the tendering process. The criteria should not only look at the artistic side of performance, but also on the group's ability to engage and participate within a politically charged environment.

Chapter 5

Way Forward

5.1. Introduction

No plan, no strategy, no policy or tool can stand out as a panacea or remedy that heals all societal problems. This research does not attempt to convince readers that the arts can fill all planning gaps, and heal all social, economic and political ills. It does not even suggest that artists should be planners, or even that artists should lose their focus on aesthetics. Neither is it attempting to produce theatre critics out of planners. However, the research emphasizes the role of both the planner and the artist in the public sphere, and especially in the area of human development and upliftment. It also suggests that the planner and the artist can find common ground. Planners may look to the arts for a tool in the meaning-making process, and for instrument to promote understanding and lines of communication.

Although all the arts in South Africa have made an important contribution to struggle and debates within the public sphere, this report has focused mainly on theatre. Theatre has been used by both the oppressor as an indoctrination tool and the oppressed as a liberation tool. In South Africa, theatre moved beyond just commenting on what was happening at the time, to being a form of resistance, an action for change. It may be regarded as being what Friedmann (1987) referred to as a 'change agent'. This means an individual or even an ideology or belief that aims to conscientise people and rally them behind local initiative aimed at improving their own living conditions. Change agents are opposed to the status quo. South Africa has had change agents in the arts. There was, for example, Father Trevor Huddleston who, despite being a white man, and not an artist himself, was a change agent who played an important

role in supporting the emergence of a new wave of black musicians. He defied the policy of apartheid and contributed in the training of these artists whose artworks would become synonymous with the struggle for liberation. These artists included artists like Hugh Masikela, Kippie Moeketsi, Miriam Makeba, Letta Mbulu, and Dudu Pukwana. Jazz in itself was a change agent, with Dorkay House, and King Kong the musical, for example, working to produce a new self-confidence amongst black South Africans.

Other change agents were people like Stephen Bantubonke Biko who was the brain behind the Black Consciousness Movement. Biko inspired a Black Consciousness theatre which challenged the relatively mild productions of Gibson Kente, for example (e.g. *How Long, Ipi Ntombi*) which focused more on song and dance as well as simple lines with hidden meaning, in order to avoid trouble. Black Consciousness Theatre became an option for radicals to confront the state. This theatre, which could be seen in the works of people like Maishe Maponya, was dependant on "the collaborative process of workshop theatre" (Steadman 1990:9). There has been a debate on whether it is important for theatre to be directly political in orientation or whether popularity was what mainly mattered. The Black Consciousness Movement criticised King Kong and Kente's Musicals, but Kente, in particular, grew in popularity and it could be argued that his careful criticism had greater impact than the more radical but less known Black Consciousness productions (Steadman 1990). However, Steadman also records that "When the cast of King Kong had their professional dreams shattered in London by criticism that asked 'why don't you do something African, something of your own?', the shock was felt deeply in different ways throughout Johannesburg's African community... a struggle began to regain control of African performing arts for the urban community: to promote self-awareness, cooperative unity, and the positive self-identity of 'Black Consciousness.'" (Steadman 1990:9). The influence of Black Consciousness reminds planners of the importance of uniqueness in the globalising world.

There will always be a tension between the need for the arts to be financially viable and the concern the arts might have to speak to concerns in the public sphere, and to educate and conscientise. It is a tension that needs to be managed. In South Africa's theatre history, a production such as *Ipi Ntombi* was almost entirely concerned with financial returns and made little contribution to struggle history, whilst many of the Black Consciousness productions had an overriding focus on making a political statement but were weak in terms of financial viability. Some productions – for example, those of Athol Fugard – seemed to have found good middle ground, and have made a strong impact. Theatre must provide entertainment, and must be viable, but if it is to have a greater social value, it should also be used as a tool to educate and conscientise.

5.2. The Next Step

In order to break the barriers of representation and bridge to communication divide in the new South Africa, we need human tools that will assist in the planner/artist collaboration. As identified in this research, theatre has always been a story of human engagement with his environment. As Fredmann (1987) seeks for interactive totality this can be achieved in the artist/planner collaboration. However, as indicated, the challenge is to develop a form of theatre that can be used to engage with the type of local issues and experiences that connect with planning, but that is also entertaining, financially viable, and sustainable. One such theatre is termed here as commuters theatre. It has a potential of getting people to debate verbally and in the mind about issues as brought forward in the performances.

Commuters Theatre

Theatre is an organisation of information and message in a particular way to produce immediate, reactionary and emotive response. Through theatre, it is

easier to observe the emotional state of the audience (the community). Therefore, this performed research report (theatre) has an advantage of making immediate impact on its intended recipients on the ground. On the other hand, the conventional research report, as it is found in conferences and library shelves, takes time to cease from being academic material and to begin to penetrate society. This research recommends that a new 'commuter's theatre' be introduced for both the rural and urban commuter communities.

Commuter's theatre refers to a concept of theatre performance that would target commuters in their buses and trains to and from work or town. In particular, the weekend is generally a commuter day in rural areas, where most of people go to town. In the afternoon, they gather at the bus terminal and wait for their friends and families. Generally, they wait for up to two hours and most of them would travel in the same bus. This is where they become vulnerable to the 'attack' of theatre (Bordwell, 1993). Members of a theatre would sit at strategic places in the bus and then strategically start a prepared conversation with the aim of involving the audience from departure to destination. The argument here is that commuters theatre will be a platform where ordinary people will engage in important planning matters

5.3. In defence of the arts

The slogan that says "South Africa, Alive with possibilities" needs to linger as a backdrop to this conclusion. Planning in South Africa does not have a specific department or office within the cabinet because it is viewed as a shared activity. There are many possibilities within a shared activity. A shared activity requires mutual understanding and cooperation. Mutual understanding will help to ensure that everyone has a respected opinion within a multi-disciplinary set-up. This

research concludes that the current situation in South Africa suggests that the arts have not been given a platform to participate within this shared activity partly because there is a lack of active advocates with a strong belief in the possibility of using the arts in planning.

The Municipal Systems Act of 2000 is a planning legislation that aims to bring the community to the planning table. The artists interviewed were not aware of this legislation and the local authorities only confined themselves to public meetings and newspaper publications when passing information. It is not enough to simply disseminate information without thinking about the psychological behavioural patterns on the people. Instead of complaining that people ignore available information, the arts can creatively confront them with that information and force them to actively participate in informal debates. The conclusion to that is that if planning is a form of social action, all avenues of social action must be explored. The arts have not been given a chance to bring the creative implementation of chapter 4 of the MSA 2000 (community participation). As a result, there is a division between the government planners and the larger community. Both the government planners and the artists who participated in this study agree to the possibility of striving to reach the elusive 'interactive totality' as Friedmann (1987) calls it.

There is a need to work towards an environment that will enable the community and government agencies to be able to listen critically to one another. Given the history of the theatre in South Africa, community theatre groups can be workshopped for them to be able to play a role in ensuring that both parties are ready to listen to one another. This can be done by using the theatre groups to resume mediator role.

It can be concluded that the arts remain in the periphery of development in the country. If things continue this way, the department of arts and culture will be

dismantled and crucial sections will be incorporated into other national departments. The reason why artists are not getting a breakthrough in development is that the Department that is responsible for their survival has been receiving around 1% on the national annual budget. Perhaps most of this budget has been consumed by the restructuring that has always marred this department since the beginning of post apartheid South Africa. At national level, the department has been moving from Arts, Culture and Heritage, Art, Culture Science & Technology, now Arts and Culture. It is difficult to locate the arts and culture office at Provincial and Local level, where Arts are overshadowed by sports and recreation. This is a general problem because sports also destabilize the aims of the Creative South Africa strategy. The SABC for example, talks about local content in terms of production when over 80% of its budget for local content is consumed by sports. While the arts as a whole have been marginalised, within the arts, theatre (and especially community theatre) has been particularly marginalised as its broader social value has not been properly recognised, despite a history in which theatre has contributed significantly to political struggle.

It is not a new thing that the arts attempt to take the centre stage of social change in the country. The use of the term 'attempt' does not imply that the arts have failed. It is meant to bring to attention the fact that the arts have been used to impassion the masses positively and sometimes as a tool to enforce an ideology. For an example, the apartheid government used literature and theatre to enforce the dominant use of the Afrikaner culture and language. On the other hand the Black Consciousness Movement exploited the same as a tool to challenge the status quo and conscientize the racially oppressed masses, towards "a new way of looking at the world... a new sense of pride in millions of Africans: Blackness became something to be proud of, to be defiant about and worth fighting for" (Oakes 1994: 445)

As planners operate in an environment that comprises of all social, political, economic, and other aspects of life and living, their work will not be effective if there is no proper analysis of the tools that have always been used to confront situations. These tools need to be revisited, explored and packaged for contemporary times. The arts operated under pressure in the past and it is imperative that their current liberation goes beyond aesthetics and economics, as the Gauteng Creative Industries Development Framework suggests. The arts can be used further as an official development tool to support the national programme of action. The arts have a track record that could still come handy in this new era of governance as Hauptfleisch wrote that:

One of the most effective tools originally used against apartheid had in fact been the arts and the theatre most powerfully so. During the time of what came to be known as the 'cultural struggle', from 1971 to 1986, the eventifying power of the arts was consciously used to shift perceptions, highlight injustices, and confront realities; and this proved to be one of the more celebrated successes of the dark period. In the face of the enormous task of reconstruction, reconciliation and self-realization now facing the country, the arts (in the very broadest sense) have once more been mobilized in a more remarkable fashion in a new 'cultural struggle' in which not only the theatrical event but the theatric system as a whole is once more becoming important not only in understanding and reinterpreting the past, but also in coming to grips with the present and in shaping the future, thus shifting perceptions across a wide spectrum and the many chasms that divide people and communities. (Hauptfleisch 2006: 181)

The argument made by Hauptfleisch here is an interesting one if the current South African perception is anything to go by. The attitude of the general public towards the arts and artists does not currently support the later points made by Hauptfleisch, what this paper seeks. Coming to grips with the present depends on the way one wants to look at it. If it is about merely commenting and reflecting on current issues, then Hauptfleisch is right. However, a comment and a reflection will take time to impact the community and the nation because of three reasons:

- a) the elitist nature of the art patrons and their percentage representation of the general population
- b) the fact that there is no clear direction as to how the artists, community members, planners and government agencies can work together in development matters (beyond mere commentary)
- c) the shallow understanding of the potential of the arts and artists, as reflected in all the policy frameworks of the National Department of Arts and Culture from its previous status as the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology

If the 1% campaign is anything to go by, then, by 'mobilized', Hauptfleisch means that the arts are coming together for a different struggle. This time they are fighting for the inequity of national budgeting. By repeatedly allocating only 1% of the budget to the arts, the government is saying that there are more priority things than arts and culture. As a result, the department of Arts and Culture will always be pivotal in issues like name changes. It is about time that the Department of Arts and Culture contest the national budget on behalf of the artist. The department needs to table a strong proposal that highlights how the arts will play a pivotal role in the broader developmental objectives of the country.

5.4. Recommendations

My recommendations are that:

- In cases of planner/artist collaboration, the artist should be given time to perform planning ideas to the community as preludes to actual presentations by government and planning agencies. This will give people time to get their conscience in line with the ideas and discuss amongst themselves so that they can make valuable contribution during consultations.
- It is about time that research gets underway to investigate the potential that community arts can collaborate with planners to deepen democracy and human rights in the country. A planner/artist indaba or a conference on this potential field of exploration could help to kick-start a debate that could lead to official roll out of this programme.
- The national government revisit the Regulatory Framework of the Cultural Industries Cabinet Memorandum of the 1998 Creative South Africa Strategy. This will ensure that the arts are recognised within an interdepartmental advisory group that comprises of senior officials from the:
 - Office of the President
 - Department of Trade and Industry
 - Department of Communication
 - Department of Foreign Affairs
 - Department of Labour

This will ensure that there is a creative flair to the manner in which the government reaches out to people. With arts knowledge, qualification and/or experience have a creative role to play as part of the human resources of the Departments more especially in the communication strategies.

- Careful consideration is given to the design of Community Halls in the Townships so that they meet the requirement for both theatre and community meetings. It is recommended that in areas that are already established, at least one theatre with the potential for intimate interaction be constructed and used for both community meetings and theatre performances. Currently many halls, and the so-called Multi-Purpose Centres, are alienating and not friendly to conversation.
- That municipal and other authorities make contact with local artists and persuade them to accept a social responsibility – to link their theatre where possible to development programmes, and also to use their theatre to stir public debate.
- That local authorities give direct support to the arts, and that area councillors work with artists in their area of their operation, searching for ways to use art (including local theatre) to help with communication strategies.
- The Department of Education's idea of teaching art at high school level should be implemented not just talked about. Schools that have not taken it upon themselves to implement art programmes within their curriculum should start doing so, in order to help increase the viability of theatre in education and community development at a very tender age.
- In their junior degree, town planning students should at least take a performance module from the School of Arts. Likewise, performing arts students should take a planning theory module and both these groups should work on a project that reflects both theory and practice.
- There must be an arts development indaba (multi-discipline/ multi-sectoral) conference that will be aimed at redefining the role of the arts within the contexts of democracy and sustainable development. This will ensure that the arts and culture departments continue to be relevant in the country when the day of geographical name changing are over. The

communications directorate can link with planning sections from other department in terms of intergovernmental relations and partnerships.

5.5. Conclusive Summary

In order for the positive effects of democracy to be felt by the ordinary person, there is a need to formulate creative ways of communicating ideas and issues around the projects that are aimed at ensuring that South Africa is a developmental state. Local government is legislated as a 'developmental local government' whose municipal systems are designed to accommodate community involvement and participation. However, public participation has remained a little more than a technical term and the people have often expressed that they were not consulted in development initiatives. Academics have explored the area of public participation but progress has been slow to satisfy public commentators and community ownership of programmes and projects remain low. This has resulted in services that are at least unused, and at worst vandalized.

The research is of a proposition for creativity in communication strategies. The expected result is mutual learning that will lead to better understanding and tolerance among all stakeholders in development and planning matters. The arts are identified as the creative and practical tool for effective communication of ideas. Judging by the ability to entertain and attract the younger population as well as on the bases of operating from deep in the locale, the arts are also better positioned to be able to entice young people to participate in planning as well as to test the practicability of programmes.

Planning with the arts will help in ensuring that planning is effective as social action, in mediation and change, in communicative action as well as in finding ways to critically listen to all diverse voices in society. The arts are able to boost planning in terms of role-playing and consensus building. The arts are creative enough to write the 'history of the future' in scenario setting, through community

development, community conscientization and advocacy. Planning should be less about what planners know but more about what they do with what they know in order to make effective what others know. Planning should not be an exclusive ritual for qualified individuals. It must be about argument, talk and active listening to what others say. The arts seek to deal with the problem of passive participation.

South Africa must explain her developmental objective towards the arts. There must be a clearly defined working relationship between the arts and government initiatives. Given the role that the arts played in the struggle, a contemporary role must be established where the arts will be seen as a tool to deepen democracy and not as a challenge to local governance. Community theatre groups need to be capacitated and work-shopped to meet the challenge of working as an information cable between people and projects towards a collective achievement of people-driven development. The government and its planning agencies will then use the arts to validate the idea of community involvement.

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Appendix

A. Mural painting as communication tool

Below is an example of another way of using art to communicate and involve the community especially the youth. This research dwells more on theatre and the example below illustrate that other specialities can be explored in the future. The sample comes from the following website on art for social change:

<http://www.comminit.com/socialchange/pds2005/experiences-3476.html>

Travelling Painter: The Mamelodi Art Project - South Africa

Summary

The Mamelodi Project is an arts for social change programme designed to provide community members with an opportunity to express their ideas about township development in a manner that captures their creative abilities and invites other community members to participate. The blueprint for the project was designed by “The Travelling Painter”, who has implemented the programme in various other rural locations worldwide, including villages in Kenya and Nigeria. Each day during the Mamelodi Project, which lasted for the month of December 1997, the artist collaborated with interested community members to paint a billboard which satirises a common myth or a stereotype. The goal was to deliver a message of hope while informing and generating dialogue and activism amongst community members.

Main Communication Strategies

This project used the medium of painting to engage community members in a creative process to challenge myths and stereotypes about township life. Art was a tool for inviting community members to voice their ideas and opinions about certain issues central to black, economically disadvantaged South Africans. The billboard functioned as a “message-board” for community members, who were provided with an opportunity to be recognised and celebrated for their positive messages and artistic contribution. In this way, the programme sought to empower community members to use their voice productively and share their ideas collectively.

By painting a new image/message on the billboard every day, the painter offered community members multiple opportunities to voice their concerns, so that the programme was not restricted to a certain group of people, but open to the entire community. In this way, the painter hoped to compile and present a number of different ideas, and not be restricted to one central theme. In addition, the lack of permanency of the billboard provided an incentive for community members to express themselves freely, and not be shy about showcasing their artistic talents - since the painting would only be viewed for one day.

The design for the programme also helped to build an understanding of teamwork in the community, since members of the community had to work together each day to design a new painting. In this way, members had to negotiate and compromise their ideas to come up with one way of expressing their opinions for that day’s painting. The billboard also served as a tool for commenting on events that recently occurred in the township. For instance, when the painter was confronted at gunpoint one evening, the next day the community members decided to create a painting that advocated against the use of guns, and even invited the local police department to participate in its creation. The project thus aimed to provide a means for communication about prevalent issues that characterise township life in a manner that empowers participants by

opening previously unavailable lines of communication.

Development Issues

Rights.

Key Points

According to organisers, the project enabled community members to voice their ideas and opinions about issues such as racism, sexual abuse, and education in a creative manner, building teamwork skills amongst participants as well as communicating in a creative manner with fellow community members.

Partners

The Royal Netherlands Embassy, Mamelodi Theatre Organisation (MATO), Mamelodi Hospital.

For more information, contact:

The Travelling Painter

PO Box 25766

HT Den Haag

2502

Holland

mail@painter.nl

[The Travelling Painter website](#)



B. The communication Directorate: National Department of Art & Culture

The clip below is taken from the website of the department of Arts & Culture. The communication directorate is seen as the contact point for further research at this point.

	Mr Andile Xaba
	Chief Director: Communications Tel: +27 (12) 441 3031 Email: Andile.Xaba@dac.gov.za

Purpose

Since communication is a strategic function, the Chief Directorate: Communications interacts with all programmes in the Department. Whenever communications campaigns are planned, the diverse nature of South African society is taken into account. The Chief Directorate aims to communicate in such a way that its message reaches and is understood by all the intended audiences, and it strives to present relevant information in an attractive and interesting manner. Through letsema activities, conferences, indabas and izimbizo that include all sectors of society, the Department interacts directly with stakeholders.

Functions and Activities

- To create a heightened awareness of the role of arts and culture
- To highlight the role of arts and culture in economic development and social cohesion
- To profile arts and culture as one of the employment-generating sectors/industries which the youth could follow as career
- To create solid communication programmes with the Department's stakeholders
- To correct inconsistencies and imbalances that affect access to arts, culture and heritage by providing information to the public
- To focus on the Department's role in job creation within the Cultural Industries Growth Strategy (for example

promoting, publishing in all official languages, film, craft and music)

- To implement outreach communication programmes
- To promote linguistic and cultural diversity as important thrusts of the Department



C. Heartlines TV series

This TV series was aired on TV as a prelude to *The Big Question* a talk show that deals with debates around burning issues. Each of the heartlines stories would be the background for discussion. The clip below is taken from the Heartlines website

ACCEPTANCE

“Today, I will accept you, not because we are the same, but because God made us different.”

HEARTLINES
TV SERIES BEGINNING
16 JULY 2006

OVERVIEW

Emanating from the Mass Media Project, South Africa will soon have at its disposal an extremely powerful set of tools. It is believed that these can be used to great advantage to respond not only to Government’s consistent call for a transformed society, but also to the longing of every ordinary South African for a stable and peaceful life.

Based on the premise that South Africans - no matter what their race, colour or creed, share many of the same core values, the MMP aims to use multi media to create debate about, and reinforce these core values, through a variety of projects.

Capturing the minds of people through story telling is not new to the African Continent and has proved to be a highly effective way to get a message across. To this end, **HEARTLINES**, a series of seven self-contained, one-hour TV drama films plus one 96-minute feature film, will be flighted this year on SABC 2 at prime time, starting on 16 July 2006. For the first time in broadcast history, the same film will also be flighted on SABC 1 and SABC 3 in the same week. All the films are in a combination of South African languages with English sub-titles.

The films deal with eight core values which aim to take the viewer to the heart of the matter. These values are [Accepting Difference](#); [Responsibility](#); [Forgiveness](#); [Perseverance](#); [Self-Control](#); [Honesty](#); [Compassion](#) and [Second Chances](#);

Eight weeks, eight values, one national conversation is the rallying cry of a campaign that will create national awareness of the eight values. Utilising a multi-media platform of print media and radio and television talkshows, **VALUES** will capture the talk of the nation over an eight week period.



HEARTLINES - A story book

Available concurrently with the films will be an interactive read-aloud story-book for 3-8 year olds. Parents and caregivers can use this book to talk about these values with their children.

HEARTLINES - the CD

A music CD which compiles the songs from the films, performed by popular local recording artists, will be available commercially.

HEARTLINES - radio dramas

Later phases of the project will include radio dramas dealing with the same values in the eleven official languages.

HEARTLINES - school materials

Life orientation materials for schools and other support material will incorporate the same themes as the films, and enable values education in the classroom.

HEARTLINES - the impact

The tremendous impact that the "Soul City" television series has had on the lives of South Africans, is common knowledge. The award winning series has been shown in 38 countries. It is believed that **HEARTLINES**, which is modelled on the Soul City experience, has the potential to become one of the most talked about and life-changing projects in South Africa and eventually, on the entire African Continent.

HEARTLINES - the patron

The Rev Dr Mvume Dandala who heads up the All Africa Conference of Churches in Nairobi, is the Patron of the project.

"I am convinced that HEARTLINES will contribute significantly to nation building and transformation in South Africa. I am proud to be associated with what I believe will become a household name in South Africa."

Rev Dr Mvume Dandala



HEARTLINES is about:

Building on the important, God-based values, that so many South African share, and choose to build their lives on, no matter what their religious beliefs.

- Using multi media to capture the heart of South Africa through stories that emphasise the core values that we all share. Values such as honesty, respect and tolerance.
- Stories that speak of hope for the future, but warn against the consequences of ignoring our values, consequences such as poverty, corruption and unemployment.
- Preserving and continuing the legacy of Nelson Mandela who, in embracing and living out such positive values, helped prevent SA from descending into chaos.
- Understanding how the success or failure to live out our values directly affects those around us. "Ubuntu" – I am because you are.
- Helping the nation move from a logical understanding of our core values, to heartfelt action, which is reflected in the way we live our lives.
- Engaging in robust debate that links HEARTLINES values to issues of the day – getting to the heart of matters
- Contributing to the transformation of the nation, in line with the call for moral regeneration.

WHY VALUES?

South Africa's new democracy and the progress of the region are threatened by the world's biggest AIDS epidemic. This

epidemic is fuelled by high levels of violence, corruption, drug abuse, family breakdown and pervasive poverty and unemployment. In response, many important initiatives have been undertaken at all levels of society. However, most parties would agree that new, innovative initiatives are needed to deal effectively with these problems.

The Mass Media Project is such an initiative. It aims to get to the heart of these problems - people's **value system**. Values are core beliefs or desires that guide or motivate attitudes and actions. They also define the things we prize and value and therefore provide the basis for ranking the things we want in a way that elevates some values over others. Thus our values determine how we behave, or in other words, they are the drivers of behaviour.

The Mass Media Project approach is based on the following:

Firstly, in order to impact on both the positive and the negative behaviours that influence South Africa's major social problems, there is a need to impact on the drivers of this behaviour.

In recent years, a similar approach has been adopted in the field of public health, where the focus has been to deal with the underlying determinants of disease, rather than the diseases themselves. For instance, it has been found that for every year of a woman's education, there is a 10% drop in infant mortality. Thus, while still dealing directly with issues such as measles, polio and diarrhoea, major efforts are being made to ensure that the girl child is in school.

Similarly, when dealing with social problems including HIV&AIDS, we believe that as well as focusing on positive behaviours, we should also deal with the underlying determinants of behaviour. These we would identify as values.

Positive values such as self control, respect, trust, perseverance, integrity and selflessness all contribute to the decision to abstain from or delay sex. If, when we deal with HIV&AIDS prevention, we explicitly promote these values and create debate around them, we may then also impact on other social issues that require a similar values base - like violent crime.

Secondly, since 83% of South Africans align themselves with one of the country's four major religions, HEARTLINES uses God as the authority base for the values. According to the 2001 census, 79.8% of South Africans described themselves as Christian, 1.5% as Muslim, 1.2% as Hindu and 0.2% as Jewish.

Thirdly, while a positive value system may not necessarily give rise to positive behaviours, it is an important starting point for these behaviours. International and local behaviour change research bears testimony to this fact.

Fourthly, an intervention that is catalysed by the mass-media is a highly effective way to promote positive values. It can also move people from belief in a positive value system to implementing positive behaviours. Local and international research shows that connection is not always direct, but that it correlates with the efficacy of the mass media to stimulate debate, impact on social norms and promote community mobilisation. These are important precursors to behaviour change.

In South Africa TV is the most powerful and pervasive medium, with at least 85% of the population having access to television.

Fifthly, in order to capitalise on a the public discourse stimulated by the mass media and its supporting materials, communities and individuals need to be mobilised.

8 VALUES

Of the many positive values that South Africans share, why did HEARTLINES choose these EIGHT for the first national intervention?

HEARTLINES is based on the assumption that the promotion of values is the most effective way to deal with major social problems. Therefore, by looking at the issues that face South Africa today, HEARTLINES chose the values that would best address these.

South Africa's current reality includes high levels of HIV&AIDS, violence, corruption, drug abuse, family breakdown and unemployment. At the same time, the vast majority of South Africans (84%) affiliate themselves with faiths which embrace a belief in values such as compassion, forgiveness and honesty. However, problems arise where there is a gap between people believing in these values, and their actions. **HEARTLINES'** research with focus groups and key stakeholders showed that people felt that an intervention that encourages people to live out their positive values, could help transform society. In the future other values may be tackled, but the following **EIGHT** values will be featured in the first series:

ACCEPTING DIFFERENCE

Stemming to a large extent from its history of racial prejudice, South Africa today faces problems of xenophobia, gender discrimination, HIV&AIDS stigmatisation and the marginalisation of the disabled. This despite the belief system espousing that all are created equal before God.

HEARTLINES has chosen Accepting difference as a value which goes beyond mere tolerance. If South Africans could learn to accept and embrace the differences within this multi-cultural society, each individual could be encouraged to realise their full potential and give their best back to the nation

RESPONSIBILITY

Family breakdown, high divorce rates and the abandoning of children are problems that face many South African families. There is also a crisis of absent fathers - men who don't take responsibility for their children, leaving mothers to shoulder the entire responsibility for raising children. This feeds into a myriad of social problems, such as a lack of discipline, early school drop-out and lack of positive role models. Although it is especially hard to take responsibility in difficult circumstances - like unemployment, unwanted pregnancy, and untimely death, due to AIDS or other illnesses.

HEARTLINES will try to show that taking responsibility for one's children, is a value that will help solve a number of societal problems. Taking responsibility in one area of one's life also teaches one to take responsibility in other areas.

FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is a value that is particularly relevant in South Africa. Icons such as former-President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu have led the way in encouraging South Africans to forgive and be forgiven. The power of this value is that it can have a two-way benefit. Both for the person who is forgiven, and for the person who is forgiving. Ultimately, forgiveness sets both free. In some cases, it leads to reconciliation and restored relationships. Even though we are well into our new democracy, South Africans need to be encouraged to live out the value of forgiveness every day, whether it is related to a racial issue, bereavement through violent circumstances or through other injustices.

PERSEVERANCE

Unemployment is one of the most pressing problems facing South Africa today, because unemployment often leads to other issues, including poverty and crime. People try for jobs and eventually give up when they are repeatedly turned down. It takes great perseverance not to give up when faced with continual rejection. Perseverance is also needed in many other areas of life - in studying, in sporting activities, in remaining HIV-negative and especially in our relationships with others. If one has goals and a hope for the future, one is more likely to persevere than if one does not feel there is anything to hope for or work towards.

CONTROL

Today's generation is one of "instant gratification". Many South Africans live for today, and want it all now with no regard for the future. This is particularly a problem in the prevention of HIV&AIDS. Because young people live for the present and those things that give them instant pleasure, they see no point in remaining HIV-negative. A lack of self-control affects many aspects of life. Getting into debt to gratify immediate desires is another major problem that affects economic development. An important part of self-control is saving that which is worth waiting for, for later. This results in a greater enjoyment of and appreciation for that particular thing (delayed gratification).

HONESTY

Theft, corruption, fraud and family breakdown are all issues that can be traced back to a lack of honesty. Telling the truth is a value shared - in theory - by all South Africans. But which, when circumstances are difficult, falls by the wayside. Honesty is the value that underpins the decision not to take things that don't belong to one, along with respect for other people and their possessions. A life of integrity can be described as in when what is said and what is done is "one". This is a challenge in every sphere of daily living.

COMPASSION

Most people find it easy to care for and show compassion to those who are close to them, or those who are similar to them. It is more difficult when the person is different, or outside one's immediate

circle. The HIV&AIDS epidemic has presented South Africans with the challenge of compassion, and how to care for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Compassion was chosen for the **HEARTLINES** series in the belief that the problem of stigma could also be tackled if South Africans were truly compassionate. With compassion, there is a two-way benefit – both for the giver and the receiver. One finds that in giving of oneself, one receives more than one expected.

SECOND CHANCES

Partly as a result of South Africa's history, life circumstances are difficult for many people. Because of this, young people are easily drawn into crime, drug abuse and early (often violent) sexual experience. The workplace offers the temptation of fraud and corruption. In the home, families suffer when infidelity causes a breakdown of trust. For people who have fallen into these traps, it is extremely difficult to start again - unless other people value the power of giving a person a second chance. **HEARTLINES** will show that if individuals reached out with selfless love to those who have made mistakes, many lives could be transformed.

END