



REFLECTIONS

9



Conclusion

The Community

At the moment the people of Marabastad define the space more dynamically than the buildings in the area. It is the goal of the design of the Community Art Centre to achieve the same dynamism.

The vibrant community of Marabastad will be involved in the design process. They will be consulted, they will build and they will be responsible for most of the aesthetics of the building. Local artists and community members will for example be given the responsibility of designing the furniture in and around the building. With the involvement of the community in the design of the building, the spaces that will be designed will have meaning to the community and therefore there will be a sense of ownership. With ownership the people are more willing to take responsibility of things.

In order to meet the needs of the users, educational and public programmes offered at the centre will focus on the following activities: (these activities were lessons learned from other community art centres with the same challenges both in South Africa and internationally.)

School programmes: Teachers and pupils/learners will be given access to the centre's facilities. This will be aimed at enhancing the schools curricula and encouraging people to accept, embrace and **access** art.

Youth programmes: with the levels of crime and unemployment facing our country, the centre will aim to provide the youth of the area with free activities outside the school environment. The youth will participate in hands on workshops, internship programmes and all other programmes related to the arts.

Family programmes: most people blame the wrong behaviour of children on their parents. They say parents do not spend enough time with their children. The centre will offer families an opportunity to spend time together. The programmes will be designed for children and their parents/guardians to experience the pleasures of exploring art.

Artists programmes: this programme will offer a few local artists an opportunity to use the studios for free for a short period (e.g. 6 months) and thereafter the artists will exhibit all their work in the centre. This will offer the artists **access** to facilities and a wide audience.

Adult programmes: Adult programmes will mainly be providing activities in conjunction with exhibitions.

Scholarships will also be offered through the DAC.

The above programmes are seen as catalysts in making art **accessible** to a wider audience, especially targeting the people who viewed art as being elitist. In conjunction with the programmes, public tours, wall text (community responsibility), and brochures will be available to the users of the centre.

The Nature of Community Involvement

Where concrete floors are specified, the community will be involved in the laying of tiles in patterns that they will design and in the process skills will be developed. The community will be involved in the design of all public space floor finishes for example the lobby area.



From the above discussions and design process, the author is able to reflect on the goals that were set at the beginning and evaluate if they were achieved. The designer throughout strived for a design that would be in context, appropriate and **accessible**, and one that would be responsive and positively contributing to the environment.

At the heart of the design discourse was how the designer could make art accessible to the majority of the 'ordinary' people both physically and abstractly. To achieve this goal the designer strived to follow a design process of integrity and relevance.

The process was a learning curve worth every sacrifice made by all involved, directly or indirectly.





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