Transformative Arts Practices in the Criminal Justice System: The impact of human rights violations on identity amongst those previously incarcerated

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Statement of Originality

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation from the work, or works of any other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract

This research discusses the impact that human rights violations have on the identity of parolees and ex-offenders. It makes use of the Applied Theatre form, Theatre of the Oppressed (TO), and its practices of Image Theatre and Newspaper Theatre. These practices draw on lived experiences in the form of storytelling and poetry, based on metaphor and its links with reality. The writing in the research is defined as autobiographical fiction or autofiction and becomes performative using TO. The core aim of this research and its process is to rewrite, redefine, or reclaim identity through performative autofiction. It unpacks the human rights violations experienced by the incarcerated, using evidence from various resources including case studies and fieldwork with members of the Second Chance Theatre Project (Cape Town). The research process explored individual identity, relational identity, collective identity, and material identity. This research opens a discussion on the current South African criminal justice system and its failure to uphold ratified policies and programmes. It suggests a discourse that could be delivered through the vocal and physical body.

Keywords: human rights; identity; image theatre; newspaper theatre; metaphor in autofiction

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Chapter One: Introduction

This research argues for the use of performative autobiographical fiction produced through creative writing to explore the impact of human rights violations on identity within the prison system. Autobiographical fiction or autofiction is a literary genre that merges the author's real-life experiences with fictional elements (MasterClass, 2022). These elements are used to conceal identity and to explore lived experiences through metaphor. It is the integration of the practices of Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009:69), and metaphor produced in story and poetry, which defines this research as performative autofiction. The hypothesis for this research is that regular subjection to human rights violations, may have an enduring impact on an individual's sense of self and identity, even beyond their incarceration. It argues for a physical demonstration, through performative writing, of the injustices within the prison system and the possible impact on the sense of identity of parolees and ex-offenders.

The term identity as used in this thesis, refers to the individual's sense of identity rather than its definition as determined by the South African government, which presents a set of facts about individuals that disregards their values, beliefs, goals, and character traits. An example of governmental identification is the identification (ID) card, which lists the name, surname, sex, nationality, identity number, date of birth, country of birth, and citizenship status of the individual. The sense of identity as defined in this research, is derived by exploring the four components which underpins identity, a concept that suggests that identity is multifaceted. These components are individual, relational, collective, and material (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011). Individual identity refers to the personal beliefs of the self, relational identity refers to the varying roles one assumes, collective identity refers to membership in social groups, and material identity refers to the objects that individuals regard as integral to their personal identity. It is the combination of these four components that make up the whole identity, but the whole, however, is in a state of constant change. The thesis uses the preferred gender pronouns of the fieldwork participants as gender forms part of their identity.

The thesis researches the human rights laws of prisoners within the South African penal system and the violations of some of these rights. The South African prison system, known as the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), reports to the Ministry of Justice and is required by law, to uphold all human rights pertaining to prisoners. This research, however, specifically

focuses on the rights to human dignity, safety and security, adequate accommodation and nutrition, and satisfactory medical treatment. It examines violations that impact the emotional wellbeing of prisoners, such as the effects of being locked in overcrowded communal cells for 23 hours a day and having the remaining one hour of exercise time, inexplicably reduced (Lindegaard & Gear, 2014:39; Participant C). The reduction of exercise time simultaneously violates prisoners' rights to exercise as well as their rights to human dignity. These violations are not restricted to male prisons as both male and female prisons are faced with overcrowding, unhygienic and inadequate living conditions, rotten food, inadequate healthcare, and violence (Agboola, 2016).

The value of theatre is examined during this research, using Applied Theatre's Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) and creative writing processes. Applied Theatre is an umbrella term for theatre informed by social justice, social change, community development, and often occurs in unconventional theatre spaces (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009:6). Prison theatre, a form of Applied Theatre, offers an alternative method to address stigmatisation and to communicate and implement social integration amongst communities and offenders. The value of prison theatre practices lies within the process of theatre-making, as this is where the impulse to express and create is produced (Balfour, 2004). This research analysis therefore focuses on the process of the conducted fieldwork as opposed to its outcome.

Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) techniques is a methodology developed by Brazilian director Augusto Boal and the TO practices discussed in this research are Image Theatre and Newspaper Theatre. These practices are about conceptualising and using theatre as a "method for communities to generate discussion and rehearse action toward real social change" (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009:69). The core aim of this practice is to empower its participants. Oppressors can be individuals as well as institutional systems, and in this research the prison system is the suggested oppressor. The audience of TO, known as the spect-actors, transform from spectator to actor through games that encourage self-expression, which is subsequently included in the theatre practice as process and language (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009:69).

This study and its practices of Image Theatre are based on a "theatrical language that lets participants use their bodies to take on the role of subject within the aesthetic space and to discuss oppressions that affect them" (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:156). The physiological expressions derived from images of oppression, human rights violations and identity, are discussed in this research. The body is used to "talk back" to oppression and

systems of oppression and to physically articulate lived experiences in oppressive environments and relationships, thereby exposing the injustices to which it has been subjected. In this research, Image Theatre allows the individual to engage with the physical and the emotional body.

The practice of Newspaper Theatre in this research is used to discuss the advantages of the method and its "potential for escaping censorship and continuing to resist the dictatorship" (Speranza, 2019:152). This method introduces the forgotten stories of those in the criminal justice system, which helps to enlighten the public by informing them of the reality of South African prisons.

The term autofiction is used in this research due to the links between metaphor and lived experience. Gersie argues that stories are metaphors for someone's life in that "we indicate that the story-characters, the events, the mood are representative of the story-maker's experience of their life at that moment, which in turn may represent their feelings for many, many years" (1983:10). Storytelling and poetry can provide a safe space to explore memory and lived experience and these presentations also offer the opportunity to analyse glimmers - produced in polyvagal theory's social engagement system (McCarty, 2016; Wagner, 2016; Kozlowska, Walker, Mclean & Carrive 2015). Glimmers are linked to the self and refers to objects, memories or emotions that produce emotional wellbeing and counters stress (Murphy, 2020; Dana, 2018). In this research, glimmers are only closely analysed in relation to poetry, but the notion of glimmers is present throughout the research, based on the concept of generating a story that represents history and the self.

My interest in human rights developed when I became involved with the Second Chance Theatre Project. I had two opportunities to work inside prison. In 2022 the company hosted theatre workshops inside Pollsmoor Correctional Centre, using theatre to build self-esteem, agency, and social skills. The objective of the workshops was to assist participants whilst they completed their sentences and after their release. Despite the planning of a six-week programme, only two sessions were completed due to logistical difficulties. The responses from the participants who attended these two sessions was that they experienced teamwork, communication using the body, and believed that they have the capacity to contribute to life outside of prison. My personal work that I developed alongside the project, is located outside of South African prisons.

In 2021 I wrote and performed alongside the project members in a production called *Life Decisions*. The production, designed for schools, included stories that depicted life inside prison, the effects of substance abuse and highlighted the difficulties of finding employment with a criminal record. These stories were fictionalised, but included extracts of the lived experiences of the members and the production included a brief workshop where learners could question the formerly incarcerated members about life stories.

My fieldwork with the company in 2021, was called *Writing Resilience* and was centred on performative creative writing as a tool to build and develop the individual's sense of resilience. The aim of the workshop was to expand the participants' role repertoire through acknowledging and performatively exploring the various roles they believe they play in their own lives. This project inspired the idea for my current fieldwork on performing identity through autobiographical fiction.

1.1. South African prison system and history

Injustices within South Africa's prison system have been perpetuated as a result of the poor implementation of established programmes and policies in the post- apartheid era. In 1993 the Correctional Services Act was amended to eliminate corporal punishment, solitary confinement, and the restriction of food rations. The consolidation of prisoner rights also placed prison reform on the agenda during the drafting of the new, post-apartheid constitution (Dissel, 2001:9). After segregation and the death penalty was abolished in 1995, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) consequently demilitarised in 1996, as it was "considered counterproductive to the goals of prisoner rehabilitation" (Dissel, 2001:14). A gradual reduction in the crime rate was expected after the eradication of apartheid but crime increased by an alarming 30% between 1994 and 2004 and this triggered a new minimum sentencing Act in 1997 (Cameron, 2020:2). It was mandated that minimum sentences could not be suspended, nor could time spent in prison whilst awaiting trial be used to reduce that sentence. The Act was established as a temporary solution to curtail crime but was still enforced after amendments were made in 1997 (Cameron, 2020:4). Minimum sentencing contributed to overcrowding in South African prisons. A new Correctional Services Act (*Correctional Service Act No. 111 of 1998*) was then introduced, which sought to "incorporate the values enunciated in the Bill of Rights and prescribes a new approach to imprisonment" (Dissel, 2001:9). It stated that prisoners had to be provided with adequate living conditions and treated with human dignity,

but in 2001 only certain sections of the Act were executed, and the policies regarding the treatment of prisoners, discipline, and release, were not enforced (Dissel 2001:9). This omission refuted the promises made by the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services (JICS) in 1998, which was established as an independent entity to monitor South African prisons, and report maladministration and inhumane treatment. Inadequate living conditions remain prevalent in prisons, as overcrowding is approximately 38% and there are regular reports of the ill-treatment of prisoners (Coyle, 2022:169). In 2020, Cameron stated that "there were about 164 129 prisoners in South Africa – 46 260 remand detainees and 117 869 sentenced offenders" (2020:4).

1.2. Bill of Rights

Section 35, under the Bill of Rights presented in the Constitution (*Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, No. 108 of 1996*, 1996:s35) sets out the rights of all persons arrested, detained, and accused. There are five subsections under section 35, but subsections 1, 3, 4, and 5 are not relevant to the specific human rights that are examined in this research.

Subsection 2 of the Bill of Rights (1996:s35), pertains to all detained persons including sentenced prisoners. It specifies the rights given to prisoners, which allows for a critique regarding the implementation of these rights as experienced by project participants and case studies. Subsection 2(e) is the most relevant to this research as it stipulates the prisoner's right to adequate prison conditions: exercise, suitable accommodation, nutrition, reading material, and medical treatment, at the state's expense. (Bill of Rights, 1996:s35). These rights are instrumental in maintaining the human dignity of prisoners.

Section 37(5) provides a table of rights that are protected and cannot be negotiated, highlighting the significance of upholding human rights. This research focuses on the right to human dignity and the freedom and security of the person. The right to human dignity, under section 10, states that every person has the right to have their dignity respected and protected (1996:s10). Freedom and security under section 12 (1996:s12(1)) states that:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom and security, which includes the right –

a. not to be deprived of freedom arbitrarily or without just cause.

b. not to be detained without trial.

c. to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources.

d. not to be tortured in any way.

e. not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhumane or degrading way.

Not all rights in the table of non-derogable rights are entirely protected. The right not to be tortured, or treated in a cruel, inhumane and undignified manner (Bill of Rights, 1996:s12(d)(e)) means that the inhumane and torturous treatment of prisoners is an infringement of the law.

1.3. Human rights violations

The common human rights abuses experienced in South African prisons are the lack of safety and security, human dignity and healthcare, and poor living conditions. Overcrowding is a feature of most South African prisons, and it has been noted that this causes tension and emotional distress. Testimonies from women who have served sentences in prisons in Pretoria, have provided evidence to substantiate this claim. One woman expressed her feelings of discontent and emotional vulnerability, when she commented on the small cubicle that she occupied with five others: “that’s the most difficult thing, the lack of privacy” (Agboola, 2016:21). The lack of resources for proper hygiene and sanitation, contributed to the poor living conditions as the women reported the “inadequate provision of water and cleaning material, the insufficient number of toilets and bathrooms, and the location of toilets and bathrooms inside some cells" (Agboola, 2016:22). The women testified to feeling helpless when it came to improving the hygiene of their cells (Agboola, 2016:22). This helplessness is indicative of the way in which poor living conditions violate the right to human dignity and consequently affects the emotional wellbeing and sense of identity of the affected individual.

Violence and abuse in prison, infringes on the prisoners' right to safety and security, especially in male prisons in South Africa, where gang violence is rampant. Membership in gangs and the ensuing violence, is regarded as an “adaptation strategy to incarceration” (Lindegaard & Gear, 2014:370), suggesting that membership is a survival strategy. Gang membership can be understood to be a means of maintaining agency and avoiding random exposure to violence in a coercive and oppressive environment. The irony is that gang membership immerses the person into a different kind of oppressive and coercive environment. People who join gangs to gain protection against authorities who abuse their power, often perpetuate the same behaviour

and attitudes. Advocates for human rights, however, suggest that the fact that many people are joining gangs voluntarily, is an indication of the system's inability to protect their right to safety and security. The abuse of power by authorities and the lack of safety and security, is explained as "victims fear retaliation should they report, and because the authorities are not adequately equipped to effectively respond to such reports" (Lindegaard & Gear, 2014:40). The inadequate training or capabilities of prison authorities, and the lack of initiative to submit reports to higher authorities, suggests a disregard for prisoners' rights to safety. This reveals a weakness in the chain of communication within the system, despite DCS's commitment to fostering communication networks between authorities and inmates. It also provides evidence that DCS is aware of the abuse of authority (DCS, 2005:45).

Healthcare issues in prisons across South Africa are evident due to the large number of tuberculosis (TB) and HIV cases. TB, the most common cause of death amongst prisoners, flourishes in prisons because of the multi-drug resistant strain (MDR) (Benatar, 2014). Despite concerted efforts to provide more medication for prisoners suffering from TB and HIV/AIDS, progress has been limited. In 2014 there were 21, 000 HIV-positive inmates, of whom less than 50% received ARV medication. According to Benatar, this is due to defective policies within the department as "only nurses with primary healthcare experience are permitted to give antiretroviral treatment" (2014:613). Currently, only 25% of the total of 800 professional nurses employed by DCS, are qualified to administer HIV treatments. This suggests that the root cause of these human rights violations can be traced to policymakers.

1.4. Department of Correctional Services

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) provides a policy framework for departmental legislation in the most recent White Paper on Corrections (Department of Correctional Services [DCS], 2005:22). The White Paper on Corrections instructs correctional services on operations, the implementation of rehabilitation programmes, and the treatment of offenders. The guidelines for the organisation of prisons are centred around rehabilitation and reintegration. The White Paper significantly mentions the responsibility that the department has, as mandated by the Bill of Rights, to prioritize the safety of inmates, staff and visitors (DCS, 2005:45). The motivation for this directive is the assumption that in treating each other with human dignity and equality, "the State and its partners are able to make structured interventions into the lives of members of society who have fallen foul of the law" (DCS, 2005:45). DCS states that there

are instances that necessitates force but acknowledges that it must be used as a final recourse, that must be "guided by set procedures that are clear and transparent" (DCS, 2005:45). The inference is that the system uses policy to vindicate DCS violations against offenders. This suggestion is supported by the White Paper which states that "Correctional centres are closed systems in which abuse of authority can occur" (DCS, 2005:45). It further suggests that the abuse of prisoners is known to DCS officials.

DCS's policy focuses on rehabilitation and the expectation is that communities continue the process after offenders are released. DCS is the primary role player in making the system work and is responsible for creating a system that includes society: they have a responsibility to contribute to rehabilitation and reintegration that will improve the lives of the incarcerated and society. Rehabilitation, being central to the system, is based on the notion that the family unit is the "basic building block of any healthy and prosperous community and nation" (DCS, 2005:35). The DCS states that the family should be the primary level at which corrections take place, whilst the community is at the secondary level. DCS acknowledges that criminal behaviour is not endemic to weaker family units as offenders coming from affluent families have shown. But despite crime spreading across demographics, the majority of South Africa's offenders come from poverty-stricken communities faced with unemployment and hunger (DCS, 2005:35). These are contributing factors that lead to a deterioration of family units and communities. Many of these circumstances can be attributed to apartheid and its socio-economic, political and structural inequalities which are still manifesting throughout our communities.

Restorative justice

The constitution states that all South Africans have the responsibility to be active citizens and to contribute towards maintaining a just, peaceful and safe society (DCS, 2005:35). DCS aims to facilitate restoration between offenders, their victims, and their communities, by encouraging offenders to take responsibility for their actions. The department facilitates restoration through their in-house rehabilitation and development programmes to "enable the offender to competently serve society in a socially responsible manner" (DCS, 2005:42). This encourages active citizenship as both parties must be willing to participate in the restorative process. The department also recognises that restoration between offenders and victims is instrumental in preventing recidivism (DCS, 2005:42). Accordingly, DCS must create a prison environment that fosters rehabilitation and reintegration, and this becomes possible through its

restorative justice programmes, facilitated by independent organisations such as churches, NPO's, and community organisations. The impact and approach of restorative justice programmes was discussed with Participant A, who has first-hand experience of the process over a period of four years. She stated that the organization facilitating the programme was irrelevant, whether faith-based or secular, as the process seemed to be most effective when victim-offender-dialogue (VOD) was a part of that process. Healing is then initiated for the victim or victim's family and for the offender who, for the first time, has to face the impact of their crime on the victim or victim's family (Participant A, personal communication, 2023, January 18).

The White Paper offers an idealistic perspective of the criminal justice system and expects it to uphold human rights by actualising successful rehabilitation, restoration and reintegration. Evidence of the White Paper's unrealistic perspective is based on the human rights violations examined in this research, and on the relevant statistics indicating that South Africa held "140,948 prisoners in facilities with a capacity of 110,836 persons" (Department of State, 2021:5). JICS also received 694 complaints between April 2020 and March 2021, regarding the use of force on inmates by correctional officials, indicating an increase of approximately 94% compared to the previous year (Department of State, 2021:5). It contradicts the stipulation that DCS is the driving force for corrections.

1.5. Functional prisons

Despite evidence suggesting the mismanagement of most South African prisons, there are some institutions with functional systems that meet DCS guidelines and are in line with human rights policies. These are often the smaller institutions which are easier to manage. A prison in Worcester falls into this category and evidence of this was given by Participant A, when discussing her experiences in the South African prison system. She recalled that a maximum of 37 people were allowed in a room and that bed sharing was a chargeable offense. This is very different from the living conditions in Pollsmoor prison, where as many as 76 inmates were crammed into a room designed for 30 persons (Participant A, personal communication 2022, October 11). This was Participant A's experience in Pollsmoor prison before being transferred to Worcester. With the small prison population in Worcester came a higher warden-to-inmate ratio, which made managing the prison and enforcing the DCS and White Paper policies easier. Participant A explained that this helped with rehabilitation and reintegration as

inmates were able to develop a good rapport with the wardens (Participant A, personal communication 2022, October 11). Good relationships and understanding between the wardens and prisoners meant that inmates' voices were heard, and their complaints were mostly acknowledged. The differences between Pollsmoor and Worcester became evident when Participant A discussed the different manner in which faulty telephones were dealt with in the two prisons. In Pollsmoor the telephones were often broken for up to 3 months whereas in Worcester, despite only having two phones, everyone had a turn to use the phone weekly (Participant A, personal communication 2022, October 11). There were also differences in the enforcement of human rights between the two prisons. In Pollsmoor, wardens got away with beating women with batons under their feet if they were caught smoking, whereas men were allowed to smoke openly (Participant A, personal communication 2022, October 11). This situation has been in place since 2004, when a correctional services employee petitioned for designated smoking areas due to prisoners verbally and physically attacking them, when they were asked to stop smoking ("Court smokes out…", 2004). These smoking laws, experienced by an ex-offender, have been implemented in Pollsmoor. Participant B said that the male prisoners in Pollsmoor, fought against the system so that they could be allowed to smoke. In alignment with this research, the violence towards women caught smoking is both a violation to their right to safety and security and their right to human dignity. However, Worcester presents their own flaws through their inadequate healthcare system. As an example, Participant A discussed the attempts at dental health in the prison. A state appointed dentist was available once a month, at the cost of the state and could only perform extractions. Any other dental work required an inmate to have a minimum of R4000 in their prison accounts (Participant A, personal communication 2022, October 11). Despite this institutional flaw, the difference between the enforcement and respect of human rights is an indication of the differences in the operational structures of prisons.

1.6. South African parole system

The parole system in South Africa is also centred on rehabilitation and reducing recidivism. DCS, assisted by social workers and other relevant experts, assess whether an offender serving a sentence has been rehabilitated and should be released on parole (Mujuzi, 2011:206). There are set requirements for parole eligibility, mandated in the Correctional Services Act headed by the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board (CSPB). Section 73(6)(a) decrees that any offender serving a determinate sentence, except for those with life sentences, may be paroled

before or after serving half of their sentence (Mujuzi, 2011:213). Sentences governed by section 73(6)(v) indicate that offenders do not qualify for parole until they have served at least four fifths of their sentence or 25 years, whichever is the shorter term (Mujuzi, 2011:214). Both indicate that 25 years as the maximum time served before being considered for parole.

1.7. Recidivism and life outside of prison

Recidivism and desistance are influenced by the success or failure of rehabilitation and reintegration procedures, which is impacted by overcrowding and the ill-treatment of prisoners. Public authorities sometimes view offenders as incorrigible and chronic, and treat them accordingly (Guam, Hoffman, & Venter, 2006:409), which affects their emotional wellbeing. It further stigmatizes offenders and potentially makes them feel as though they are nothing more than their crime.

Socio-economic factors in communities contribute to overcrowding in prisons as well as the levels of recidivism, due to the lack of resources and opportunities available, once offenders are released. Anti-social behaviour modelled by anti-social influence groups leads to criminal behaviour and perpetuates the cycle of crime, as these groups govern the rewards and costs of such behaviour. The lack of access to social workers and support groups, leads to the isolation of those who struggle to live according to the letter of the law (Gaum, Hoffman & Venter, 2006:412). Criminal activities become more appealing, as it provides a form of social and financial stability - even if it means that the social stability comes from being a member of a stigmatised community of “recidivists”. They are able to earn money, though unlawfully, to support themselves and their families, thereby creating financial stability. If rehabilitation and reintegration programmes were properly implemented, it is probable that upon release, ex-offenders would not have to return to crime, as there would be support and employment opportunities available from relevant community-based groups.

1.8. Fieldwork Outline

This research uses the fieldwork conducted, to draw from for its core data and body of evidence. The fieldwork project titled *Rewriting, Redefining, Reclaiming Identity*, collaborated with parolees and those previously incarcerated, who were all members of the Second Chance Theatre Project. The project gives these members an opportunity to use theatre in social justice contexts and its focus is on social reintegration and skills development amongst those with experience in the prison system. The fieldwork project consisted of two workshops per week

between April 2022 and June 2022, and focused on exploring behaviour that infringed on the rights to adequate living conditions, healthcare, and safety and security, in order to explore the impact that this had on the identity of the participants. The right to human dignity served as an overarching right in the workshop series and the intent was to produce stories and poetry based on the lived experiences of ex-offenders. It was done through performative autofiction to rewrite, redefine, or reclaim a sense of identity. The storytelling and theatre aimed to embody a new narrative of the self: a narrative beyond a system of coercion to harm or be harmed to survive. The study's objective was to create a space to navigate dreams, memories, and experiences.

1.9 Chapter Summaries

Chapter one provides an outline of the research including its core themes, practices, and aims. It briefly mentions the concept of identity and the performative writing practices used in the research, which provides a background for the fieldwork practice.

Chapter two discusses literature used to support and analyse the research, which includes constitutional and correctional scholarly works. It breaks down the components of identity, how its theories inform the research and goes on to review TO practices and creative writing as autofiction.

Chapter three discusses the qualitative research design and methodology, including the fieldwork design. It briefly discusses the preliminary research informing the study but were not used in its analysis. The research methodology provides an outline for the workshop study. This includes the relevant theories and practices used and explores the restrictions of research including the perimeters of the fieldwork.

Chapter four discusses the workshop analysis in five sections: the performative activities, human rights experiences, theatre impact, creative writing impact and finally the interpretations of performative writing practices on identity and its relationship with co-regulation.

Chapter five provides recommendations for future research, and culminates in the conclusion that performative creative writing, as autofiction, produces explorations of personal and relational identity.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature supporting and informing this research is based on three core concepts; human rights, identity, and metaphor in autofiction, and two core theatre strategies; Image Theatre, and Newspaper Theatre. This review aims to express the significance of the literature in exploring identity through performative writing amongst parolees and ex-offenders. It will show the context in which these specific texts will be used in the research in relation to the subject.

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution (*Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, No. 108 of 1996,* 1996:chapt2(s35)) details the rights afforded to all those who are sentenced and detained. The human rights related to this research are listed under three sections. Section 35(2)(*e*) lists the rights to proper living conditions, exercise, adequate accommodation, nutrition, reading material, and medical treatment. Section 12 lists the right to be free from violence, torture, and inhumane treatment. Section 37 states that human dignity is a non-derogable right that cannot be dismissed or negotiated and must be afforded to all people, regardless of their criminal record. But case studies have shown otherwise.

Agboola (2016), Lindegaard and Gear (2014), and Benatar (2014), provide evidence of direct violations to the rights of all those detained and sentenced. These studies have contributed to this study of human rights abuses having a lasting effect on identity. These case studies detail the abuses of males and females across prisons in South Africa and suggest that overcrowding affects resources such as food, toiletries, blankets, and medical treatment. Cells are overcrowded, poorly ventilated, and people are "each in a space smaller than a single mattress, with limited toilet and ablution facilities and in generally unhygienic conditions" (Benatar, 2014:613). Other acts of violence occur when a gang initiate is required to stab someone chosen by senior gang members. Targets could include a misbehaving or rival gang member in violation of gang rules, a *frans* (a non-gang member) disobeying commands or an unpopular warden (Lindegaard & Gear, 2014:42). Acts of violence violate the right to safety and security, and the overarching right to human dignity. These texts contribute to this research as they help to identify human rights violations in prisons. The texts also provide an opportunity to compare the violations present in the case studies, to those of the participants in the fieldwork study.

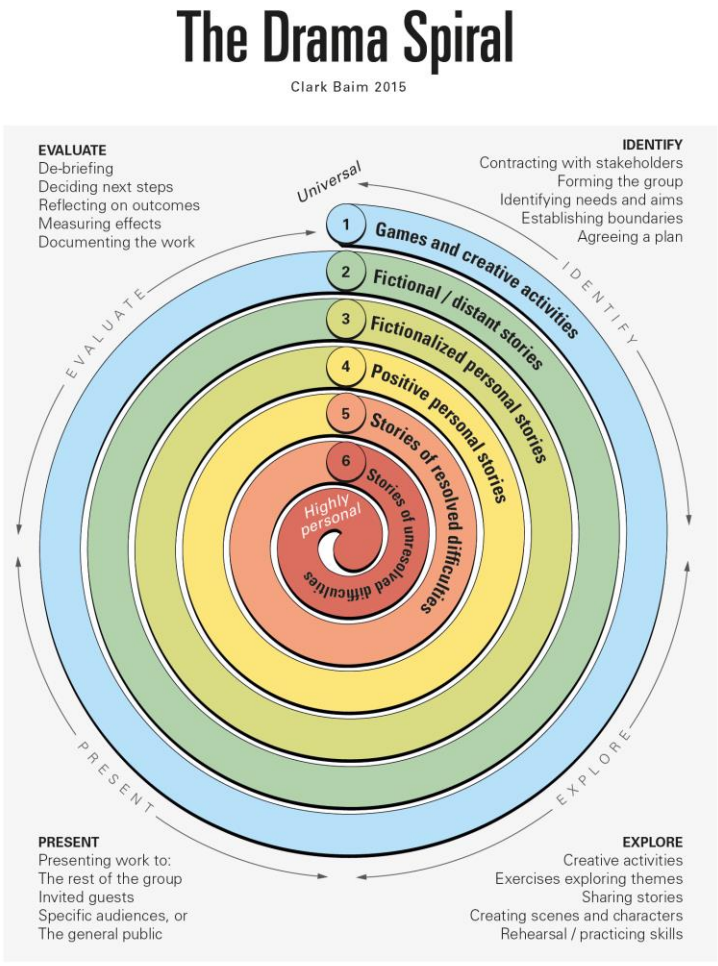
DCS (2005) supplies the policy framework in the White Paper for corrections, for departmental legislation, subordinate policy development, as well as long-term departmental policy

development. It stresses the focus on rehabilitation at the centre of all its activities and the department's contribution to corrections at a societal level (DCS, 2005:10). It is significant in framing the analysis of human rights violations in prison. This may be accomplished by analysing and understanding what DCS is legally required to provide offenders, and in contrast, how prison experiences shape the identity of those released.

Vignoles, Schwartz and Luyckx (2011) acknowledge that identity is fourfold; individual or personal, relational, collective, and material. Each of these four components are made up of multiple elements that combine to form identity.

'Individual or personal' identity refers to the self in terms of one's belief system, standards for behaviour and decision making, religious views, ethics, morals, goals, desires, and overall life story (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:3). The research contextualises personal identity through understanding and analysing participants' views about their sense of self during incarceration and post-release. In contrast, relational identity refers to the roles one assumes in relation to others, including one's interpretation of assumed roles. These roles could include mother, father, spouse, partner, employee, employer, and student. Relational identity analyses how the different roles assumed in prison contribute to one's sense of identity. Collective identity refers to the social groups or categories to which one relates or belongs such as prison gangs or a theatre company made up of those on parole. Similar to relational identity, individuals ascribe meanings, feelings, and attitudes to these groups and perpetuate existing attitudes and behaviour specific to those groups. But they have the agency to project meanings, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes onto these groups, as a result of identifying with them. Material identity moves beyond social identities within the individual self. It includes material possessions that hold emotional significance in one's life: clothes, houses, cars, and money, all which people view and treat as part of their identity (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:4). Theory of identity analyses the components of identity presented by participants in the workshops through their embodied autofiction.

This study is informed, but not analysed, by the Drama Spiral's understanding of safety when using participants' personal stories in performances, classes, and workshops (Baim, 2020). The Drama Spiral provides a framework to examine ethical practise. The Drama Spiral is a tool for arts and theatre practitioners to engage with personal stories ethically and safely to avoid triggering their participants. The Drama Spiral moves along the continuum from the fictional to the highly personal (Baim, 2020:120). The figure below illustrates the six rings of the spiral.



The Drama Spiral is a decision-making tool intended to help theatre and arts practitioners to work safely and ethically along the continuum from the fictional to the highly personal. In the outer rings, participants are involved in creative activities and work at the metaphorical and fictional level. As one 'spirals in' towards the centre, the rings represent stories that are increasingly personal and sensitive for the participants. Each ring of the Spiral includes four important processes: *Identify, Explore, Present and Evaluate.*

Image 1: The drama spiral (Baim, 2020:120)

The Drama Spiral and its guidelines for storytelling, are significant to the processes in this research because much of the work explored, includes personal storytelling, translated through the body and words, through performance. Baim's (2020) ethical practice guides the fieldwork's use of autofiction. The research itself is informed by the value of storytelling and story making as it connects to real life experiences in a safer way, where the participants distance themselves, using their imagination to retell the story.

This research analyses metaphors through Gersie's theorisation of metaphor and catharsis in storytelling. Creative writing was a significant part of the fieldwork as "every story is an emblem of existence, the symbolic representation of someone's interpretation of reality, of the interaction between inner and outer worlds" (Gersie, 1983:8). The interpretation of metaphor

in the research and its presentation to participants, is that it should be used to represent their lived experiences. That is the reason for using the term autobiographical fiction to describe its creative writing genre. The creative work in the fieldwork are fictionalised representations of real events that happened in participants lives. In their writing, metaphors should be created to represent moments, events, and emotions, without having to directly mention them. Using metaphor, and by extension symbolism, in this way, provides an aesthetic distance where participants can explore their lived experiences through autobiographical fiction.

McCarty (2016), Wagner (2016), and Kozlowska, Walker, Mclean & Carrive (2015) all understand polyvagal theory as a third type of nervous system response known as the social engagement system. The two widely known nervous system responses are fight-or-flight and freeze, but polyvagal theory has added social engagement. When faced with threat or triggering situations, the body's response is either to fight or flee from the situation. The body responds in a specific way based on its immediate needs and to ensure survival. These responses indicate that the individual is out of homeostatic balance. Homeostasis is balanced among the body's systems to survive and function (McCarty, 2016:34). Freeze or dissociation is the body's response to trauma and often occurs at the beginning of a threatening or triggering experience. In this state the individual experiences heightened attention, hyperawareness to threat cues, tension in the body, stilling of the body, and a drop-in heart rate (Kozlowska, Walker, Mclean, & Carrive, 2015:270). Homeostasis is re-established once the threat is no longer present.

The social engagement system is controlled by the ventral vagal nerve and aids in navigating relationships through social behaviour. Unlike the fight-or-flight chemical reactions which can take between 10 to 20 minutes to return to a pre-fight/pre-flight state, the social engagement system has no such chemical reactions meaning a quicker adjustment between activation and calm. To operate within the social engagement system, people need to establish a safe environment. To do this the body needs to move into a temporary fight-or-flight state. If an individual is in a more dissociative state, they need to temporarily shift into fight-or-flight and as its intensity increases, they then need to find a sense of safety. Once this safety is established, they can shift into their social engagement system. When in an increased dissociative or shutdown state, the body requires shaking or shuddering to emerge from the state, to release fight-or-flight energy (Wagner, 2016). This explains the shaking the body experiences in response to stress, anxiety, and panic. By shaking, and experiencing the movements, the body wakes up and self-regulates.

In addition to these three responses, there is a fourth known as fawning. Fawning is a co-dependent defence mechanism. Co-dependent behaviour in relation to fawning is "the inability to express rights, needs and boundaries in relationships; it is a disorder of assertiveness that causes the individual to attract and accept exploitation, abuse and/or neglect" (Walker, 2003:1). When an individual fawns they brownnose to protect themselves from abuse. This is often the case in prisons; many assume a submissive role and feel the need to obey commands from others to survive. As mentioned earlier in the discussion on the varying degrees of violence in prison, fawning in this context, can be when the individual is forced to assault an inmate or guard as a part of gang initiation. This is especially significant as the unwritten rules of prison dictate that the individual risks becoming the target themselves, if they fail to fulfil the instruction of the gang leader. Evidence of this is given by Participant D (2022), when sharing his experience of being the target of a gang initiation. He recalled that when the individual could not go through with the attack and informed the guards of their task, he was immediately moved to a secure area, as they knew that the gang leader would employ someone else to attack him. In contrast, fawning in female prisons presents as doing someone else's washing and cleaning for them in return for money or protection. Fawning responses shape identity in prison by stripping the individual of agency and replacing it with subservience. The need to survive is so strong that individuals will assume any role, to please high-ranking prison members if it means they are protected.

Polyvagal theory is seen as an approach to addressing trauma, making it suitable for the research but it cannot be assumed that participants of the research are trauma sufferers in terms of mental health. There are links to trauma when considering the emotional impact of their experiences of human rights violations in prison because the experiences themselves were traumatic.

Murphy (2020) discusses glimmers as products of the social engagement system. Glimmers are cues of safety produced by the body when it experiences its environment as safe and calm. These cues can be anything that brings an individual a sense of calm and that counteracts feelings of fear or anxiety. Glimmers include spaces, places, people, objects, sounds, and smells that an individual associates with safety and that can move them out of their triggered state. It is necessary to move out of this state, as triggers disrupt mental equilibrium due to past trauma or negative experiences (Murphy, 2020). Like glimmers, triggers can include specific places,

spaces, people, objects, sounds, and smells that are associated with past trauma. The sense of calm is produced as one imagines and revisits one's glimmers.

Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) creates a frame for the analysis on identity in terms of how the performativity alludes to effects on identity. TO is significant for this research as it contextualises oppression to be human rights abuse and its resulting impact on emotional wellbeing. Santiago-Jirau and Thompson (2019) explain how the body's production of physical images creates a language of its own. Image Theatre explores oppression by using non-verbal expression, sculpting one's own and others' bodies into frozen physical images that depict concrete situations or abstract ideas, such as feelings, political issues, or personal moments (2019:156). In context of the research, the physical language expresses the experiences of human rights violations. It could potentially transform the body into a vehicle for storytelling and emotional wellbeing.

Speranza (2019) explains Newspaper Theatre techniques used to fight against censorship and resist dictatorship. Censorship in the context of these workshops, pertains to DCS' and the media's reluctance to publish details about the realities of healthcare and living conditions inside prisons. DCS violates offenders by not attending to their wellbeing and by not following up on their reports about ill-treatment, poor living conditions, and health issues (Participant B, D, 2022). Both, DCS and the media are censoring the public by denying them all the facts. The theatre strategy is made up of a range of techniques involving news articles. These include simple reading, complementary reading, crossed reading, and parallel action amongst others. Simple reading requires the article to be read outside of the context of the publication (Speranza, 2019:152). Complementary reading adds the missing information to the news story. Missing information may include who has been left out in the article, and who has the power in the article. Parallel action uses the body to show what the story hides or distorts to reveal the hidden interests behind the story. In producing these re-written articles and letters to DCS, participants escape the censorship and resist dictatorship that was inflicted upon them in prison. Even though they are not doing this inside prison, the theory still applies because of their experience within the system and the impact that it had on their sense of identity and sense of embodied voice.

The above literature reviews the South African context of this research and shows that human rights violations in prison is a significant issue, and that the penal system is not employing the White Paper's policies. It reviews theory of identity and concludes that identity is four-fold. It

shows how certain components of identity might present itself. The review notes that Image Theatre and Newspaper Theatre implemented in practice, are potential ways of performatively expressing institutional oppression and talking back to it using the body. It discusses the use of metaphor in story, poetry as a mode of storytelling, and the relationship between glimmers and polyvagal theory. The following chapter explains how these resources were used to inform the research design, and more specifically how the core themes were implemented into the design.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

The research study is designed within qualitative research umbrella and falls under the Applied Theatre as Research (ATAR) paradigm (O'Connor & Anderson, 2013). This type of framework is necessary for the research because of the topic's subjective nature. The testimonies provided by fieldwork participants and in case studies are subject to individual interpretation. There were four participants all of whom were members of the Second Chance Theatre Project and as such were chosen for their membership within the company and the experiences they bring to the company. The participants all identified as coloured[1] and included three males and one female. They will be referred to as A, B, C, and D in this research to protect their identities. Participant A identified as a coloured female, and participants B, C, and D, identified as coloured males. The males ranged between the ages of 29 to 38, and the female between the age of 45 to 54. Providing their sex, race, and age is important because it forms part of their identity. All participants served in Pollsmoor at some point in their sentence. Participant A also served in Worcester prison, participant C in Goodwood prison, and participant D in Drakenstein Medium B Youth Centre in Paarl. Further information on participants can be found in the addenda.

Qualitative research was chosen for its characteristic of the research as a key instrument. This refers to a researcher gathering the data themselves through interviews, questionnaires, documents, participant journals, and observations (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018:298). For the purpose of the research, the data referred to would be the data collected during the fieldwork conducted, which informed the analysis of the research.

ATAR is a relevant approach for this research as its multi-modal practice, which includes aural, oral, kinesthetic, and symbolic interaction (O'Connor & Anderson, 2013:192) meets the requirements of qualitative research. O'Connor and Anderson (2013:192) note four similarities between drama and qualitative research as a means of acquiring information. These similarities include a sensitive and self-reflexive response to the environment, a disposition to improvisation and risk taking, performing multiple roles, and adapting to changing settings,

[1] Although in other countries 'coloured' is seen as pejorative and offensive, in South Africa some of this association has been lost, and the term reappropriated.

and an eagerness to engage with narrative (O'Connor & Anderson, 2013:192). ATAR, in its capacity as a methodology to collect and disseminate research through dramatic processes (O'Connor & Anderson, 2013:191), is significantly evident in this research as the data collected is based on creative and embodied findings produced during the workshop series.

The fieldwork study, Rewriting, Redefining, Reclaiming Identity, was designed as a thirteen-part workshop series using performative autofiction that explored experiences of human rights violations to rewrite, redefine, or reclaim identity. The workshop series was designed to be in four stages. Stage one was an introductory workshop to the fieldwork themes, the dramatic strategies involved, generating a code of conduct, and exploring, through play and discussion, participants' experiences of human rights violations in prison. Stage two was the process-based workshops, which were initially designed to have one explore Image Theatre and the next to continue the exploration through storytelling. This changed as the needs of the workshop process changed. Each workshop was then redesigned to have the one half explore through storytelling and the other performatively. Workshops two to four discussed the right to safety and security. Workshops two and three use storytelling and Image Theatre and workshop four used storytelling and forum theatre. Workshop five discussed violence through storytelling and poetry. Workshops six and seven discussed the right to healthcare, using Newspaper and Image Theatre. The eighth and final workshop discussed the right to adequate living conditions and used Newspaper Theatre as its performative mode of working. The right to human dignity served as the overarching theme throughout the workshop process. The final part of stage two was allocated to scripting for the audio drama and rehearsing for its recording. The audio drama was generated through content produced by the participants in the workshops to share their lived experiences through fiction. Stage three was the recording of the audio drama itself, and stage four was the evaluation of the workshop outcomes, to be discussed in depth in the analysis.

Feedback forms were designed to measure the impact of each workshop. These forms were given to participants at the end of each workshop and consisted of questions that could generate open answers. Participants could provide their own views and unbiased answers, but the themes and practices of each workshop guided the types of questions asked in each form. Some feedback forms asked participants for keywords or a set number of answers for each question. The first feedback form was provided in workshop two and consisted of baseline questions intended to establish their past and present sense of identity, and the impact of human rights

violations on that sense of identity. The feedback forms that followed included questions about self-discovery, the growth in their identity, and the impact of the performative on their sense of self. The final feedback form was two-fold as it asked about participants' sense of identity after completing the workshop, and whether participants were able to rewrite, redefine, or reclaim identity.

The fieldwork and analysis design both show qualitative research, as the researcher collected four types of qualitative material. The use of embodiment and theatre in the workshops to generate data serves as qualitative audio-visual material. Qualitative audio-visual material includes creative data collection procedures such as living stories, metaphorical visual narratives, and digital archives (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018:306). The embodied work produced by participants constitutes living stories, as they presented their own experiences of human rights violations inside prison. Qualitative audio-visual material also includes photographs, videos, art objects, computer messages, audio, and film, which was collected during each workshop (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018:308).

Throughout the research process, qualitative observations were collected by making notes about the embodied work and participants' engagement. Qualitative observation refers to the researcher taking notes about the individuals and their activities, at the place of research, and the researcher is allowed to record, in an unstructured or semi-structured way (using prompt questions) (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018:306). These records take the form of participant reflections in the fieldwork. Participants were prompted by questions contextualising the before and after - participants were often asked reflective questions about the safety and security, living conditions, and healthcare in prison.

Qualitative interviews were conducted throughout the research process and include in-person, via telephone, with a group, or over email or the internet. The qualitative interviews collected in the fieldwork were via social messaging applications interviews in qualitative research can be conducted via web-based platforms (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018:308). In individual private chat spaces, over the course of this research, participants were asked a range of questions covering identity, human rights, the prison system, faith, and reclaiming identity. The feedback forms provided at the end of each workshop served as qualitative follow-up interviews, as participants were given a set of questions to answer.

The most common data type present in both the fieldwork and the analysis chapter, is the use of qualitative documents. These include public documents such as official reports, and newspapers, or private documents such journals, diaries, end letters (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018:306). A range of news articles and case studies on human rights violations in prison were used in certain workshop activities, to provide further evidence of these violations and on the media's views of prison. In the analysis chapter, the theatre practices, writing practices, and identity formation, use public qualitative documents to provide theory justifying the activities and the analysis of the outputs. The creative writing produced by participants constitutes a private qualitative document because these were stories and poetry documented in workshop issued journals. The feedback forms given to participants were also private qualitative documents as they presented participants' views and opinions of their identity based on the workshops. All collected data pertaining to the fieldwork can be found online as supplementary information on Zivahub[2,3,4,5,6].

There are a range of qualitative documents that serve as evidence for the fieldwork research design but were not used in the analysis of the research. These documents include theories on audio drama and satire, and case studies about theatre inside of prison. The fieldwork produced an end-product which was an audio drama, but the research will focus on the process of the workshops as opposed to the performative outcome. The audio drama was titled, "Prison: Where your rights are a privilege". The creation of an audio drama in the fieldwork is theorised via imaginative intimacy, which refers to "placing hearing at the forefront of the five senses" (Vachon & Woodland, 2021:651). In context of the audio drama and relative performative audio practices in the research, imaginative intimacy serves to disrupt any existing preconceptions and power dynamics of socio-cultural elements that may be present during a sight-based performance (Vachon & Woodland, 2021:651). These socio-cultural elements can include but are not limited to race, sex, ethnicity, class, and culture. The inclusion of an audio drama in the workshop series examines the value of the method, as a vehicle for social justice dialogue. The collaborative process of devising and performing the audio drama shows ATAR

[2] DOI: 10.25375/uct.22080872

[3] DOI: 10.25375/uct.22080917

[4] DOI: 10.25375/uct.22080929

[5] DOI: 10.25375/uct.22080857

[6] DOI: 10.25375/uct.22080707

as an effective qualitative methodology as a key factor to qualitative research is a collaborative relationship between researcher and participants (O'Connor & Anderson, 2013:192).

Satire theory furthers the social justice theme, as the form has been a powerful tool in South Africa's theatrical landscape as a means of protesting against the state and dealing with other current affairs. Satire creates performances consisting of a series of sketches, related by either the persona of the performer, the subject matter, or the tone of the presentation. Satire exposes the shortcomings and failings of human beings in an amusing way, intended to make us laugh or smile (Ciro et al., 2015:219). The audio drama scene about healthcare and living, is a clear depiction of satire in performance, as it details the conditions in the form of a sketch. It conveys institutionalized oppression and abuse through humour.

Case studies on theatre in prison contexts, informed the fieldwork design but were not used to analyse the work created in the workshops. Nor were any of the practices adapted or used in the fieldwork practice. The fieldwork was influenced by the themes of these case studies, as they were about theatre practices with those in the criminal justice system, and broadly touched on themes of identity, and provided evidence of what theatre in prison can accomplish. Theatre practices *inside* prisons is well-documented through international and South African scholars. Young-Jahangeer (2020), Low and Vaughan (2020), and Biggs (2016) discuss theatre projects in South Africa that reflect on prisoners' self and identity. Young-Jahangeer explains how women from the Westville Female Correctional Centre (WFCC), wrote plays between 2000 and 2014, that dealt with three overlapping phases of politics: the politics of the issue, the politics of identity, and the politics of human rights (2020, 46). Young-Jahangeer argues that plays dealing with the politics of identity initiated a process of "renegotiating individual and collective identity" (2020, 49), within the women. The plays provided a way for the women to renegotiate their Zulu identity. Biggs (2016) writes on the production, "Serious Fun at Sun City", organized by the Medea Project: Theatre for Incarcerated Women, in 2009 to 2012, which took place in Johannesburg Female Correctional Centre. The production, made up of thirty incarcerated women, focused on the participants' visions of themselves, their dreams, needs, and desires, all of which formed the basis of script for Serious Fun at Sun City (Biggs, 2016:11). Biggs (2016) notes the project's creative strategies as personal testimonial monologues, personal narratives, and choral songs. Similarly Low and Vaughan (2020) focused on developing the self through performance exercises such as sculpture and dialogue about the self, and the future. Despite these and other South African studies, there is little documentation

of theatre projects with ex-offenders and parolees. This research therefore reflected on prison experiences recounted by the participants, exploring themes of human rights. This is discussed under the limitations of the research.

The analysis chapter is designed to focus on three core human rights violations: safety and security, healthcare and living conditions. Each of these violations disregards the right to human dignity. The chapter discusses four of the eight process-based workshops. It discusses workshops two, five, seven, and eight, as they illustrate the impact that performative writing had on the sense of identity in relation to human rights experiences. In analysing these workshops, research showed that creative writing and embodied work are an effective means of understanding one's sense of identity in relation to human rights violations, and how these modes produce critical self-reflection.

Research Methodology

The analysis, in chapter four, discussed the core activities of workshops two, five, seven, and eight. These workshops were chosen as they each discussed a specific human rights violation relevant to the research. Workshop two discussed safety, security, and human dignity. Workshop five discussed violence in relation to safety and security. Workshop seven discussed healthcare, and workshop eight discussed living conditions. These violations were chosen because they were the most commonly experienced violations amongst participants. These workshops provided data that shows the development of identity and the impact via performative autofiction on identity.

The analysis is divided into four core sections. Section 4.1. consisted of three subsections: poetry and storytelling or autofiction, Newspaper Theatre, and Image Theatre. Each subsection summarises the specific activities of the workshops, and groups them according to the workshops in which they occurred. Poetry and storytelling were part of workshops two and five. Newspaper Theatre was part of workshops seven and eight. Image Theatre was part of workshops two and seven.

Section 4.2. discussed human rights experiences and is divided into four subsections. The subsections correspond to the workshops that explored the specific human rights themes. In each subsection, the specific right is presented according to the Bill of Rights and the White Paper. These rights are compared to participants' stories and reflections which serve as

evidence of the violation of these rights. These participant testimonies are confirmed via case studies, news articles, and reports that present evidence of the same type of abuse.

Section 4.3 is the theatre impact and is divided into two subsections: Image Theatre impact, and Newspaper Theatre impact. The activities are grouped according to the workshops in which they appear. Workshop two used Image of the Word (Boal, 2002:176) and Complete the Image (Boal, 2002:139). These activities were placed in workshop two to understand how abuse mechanised ways of being and presenting the self in prison. The images produced were unpacked to understand how the body physically articulated the lived experiences of abuse.

Workshop seven used Image of Transition (Boal, 2002:185) and asked participants to create three images about the healthcare situation in prison. Each image was unpacked in relation to the meanings presented, and the production of emotional liberation. This activity was placed in this workshop to end the theme of healthcare and to carry the transitional energy through to the final workshop.

The second subsection unpacked Newspaper Theatre used in workshops seven and eight. The same newspaper practices were implemented in both workshops. Workshop seven used three Newspaper Theatre techniques: simple reading, complementary reading, and parallel action (Speranza, 2019:152). Simple reading required reading a newspaper article, complementary reading added missing information, and article was then rewritten, and parallel action embodied the article's hidden information. Parallel action took place in the Image of Transition (Boal, 2002:185) activity where the real image was embodied. Workshop eight's open letter was an adaptation of the complementary reading technique. These outputs were analysed by comparing media claims to participants' lived experiences.

Section 4.4 is divided into three core subsections, all of which analysed the impact of autofiction on participants. The first subsection analysed the creative writing strategies in workshop two. It analysed the images created and the meanings they present in relation to incarceration, safety, and security. It compared the presence of self-reflection to Baim's (2020) understanding of the evaluation quadrant of the Drama Spiral. The second and third subsections analysed creative writing outputs of workshop five. Subsection two unpacked metaphors in stories and poetry. Subsection three analysed keywords and phrases from participants' poems in relation to polyvagal theory.

Subsection three also analysed glimmers present in these poems in relation to the meaning that they hold for participants. The research used the concept of glimmers in the fieldwork to round off the layered and heated topic of violence or a lack of safety. Its aim was to transport individuals out of that space and into one that completely encapsulated their growth and the glimmers of their journey. Creating that emotional space where glimmers are explored, includes triggers but fosters the process of moving out of the place of judgement one associates with one's triggers and one's subsequent responses (Murphy, 2020). That space pinpoints the glimmers of their journey and helps individuals to view their journey from multiple perspectives.

Limitations

Despite the potential positive outcomes of combining TO with metaphor as glimmers, the fieldwork presents limitations with regards to available literature, sample of participants and samples of human rights. The researcher is also not trained in psychotherapeutic techniques and therefore the workshops were kept at the level of storytelling suggested in Baim's ethical guide in the Drama Spiral (2020). These limitations mean that the workshop analysis will instead focus on that which it has laid out in the methodology.

A significant limitation of the research is the lack of available literature on theatre with parolees and ex-offenders in South Africa. Where literature is available, it is located outside of Africa, and even then, most of the literature focuses on theatre inside prisons. Such literature includes *The Geese Theatre Handbook* (Baim, Brookes & Mountford, 2002), *Staging women in prisons: Clean Break Theatre Company's dramaturgy of the cage* (Walsh, 2016) and *'Heart and heartbeat': Working beyond prison theatre, performing protagonismo social in the real world* (Glass, 2019), all of which discuss the value of theatre inside prisons. This means that there is little analysis with which to compare and contrast the approach to Applied Theatre with ex-offenders. Because the research and study are in an emerging field of study in the South African theatre and socio-political landscape, it means that the results are only applicable to the specific participants involved in the fieldwork. It can show the potential outcomes of using Applied Theatre practices in reclaiming identity but cannot show whether those specific outcomes may occur or emerge if practiced with another group of individuals. The size of the fieldwork group only provides testimony to substantiate those participants' individual experiences. This made the use of existing literature on the human rights abuses in prison even more important, to provide some weight to participants' claims.

The research intended to explore more than the three violations discussed in the research, but it would have gone beyond the allowances made for this dissertation. This means that results yielded from the research and fieldwork are only based on the three core violations making it a limited set of results in terms of human rights violations.

The fieldwork and the analysis could not further discuss meanings produced by participants or ask them to elaborate on a deeper level. To include this kind of questioning and practice, the researcher needs psychotherapeutic training. As the researcher does not have that qualification, their engagement with participant reflections and embodied work could not move beyond safe explorations. Even though identity is linked to emotional wellbeing, the reflections that emerged were of the participants' own volition.

Chapter Four: Workshop Analysis

This chapter will expand on the data collected from the fieldwork. The four chosen workshops provide key observations, activities and theories related to the research topic and research goals. These four sessions are Workshop Two, Workshop Five, Workshop Seven, and Workshop Eight. Workshop two addresses issues of safety and security. Workshop five addresses violence in prison. Workshop seven addresses healthcare issues. Workshop eight addresses living conditions.

This chapter will only discuss the core activities belonging to the four workshops as opposed to the secondary activities. The data in question includes both the participant reflections during and after each of the relevant workshop sessions. The collected data also includes questionnaires that the participants received. It will analyse the performative activities of each workshop in relation to existing theatre practices and theory and how it aids the process of reclaiming identity through performance. It will supply patterns of identity present in participants' work and interpret them in relation to the identity components outlined in the introduction.

4.1. Activities Breakdown

Poetry & Storytelling

Poetry is a core feature in the research practice because it introduces a different medium of communication and self-reflection. Performative creative writing guides participants in accessing identity through autobiographical fiction. It relies on metaphors, similes, symbols, rhyme, and rhythm, to create texture and critical depth. Though intangible, those elements create physical and emotional texture. It creates physical images that connote the emotional and self-reflective being of the poet. This is specifically done through metaphor and symbolism because, as Bennett (2018:47) explains, metaphor compares two dissimilar things to emphasise its similarity, while a symbol is one thing's representation of another, and together these elements pack multiple meanings into a single word or phrase.

Workshops two and five included poetry and storytelling tasks. Workshop two's activities opened the conversation about identity, and asked participants to draw themselves with their eyes closed, and to write a collective story. Participants were invited to reflect on the representation of their sense of identity in their drawing by writing keywords. The storytelling

activity asked participants to write a sentence about their experiences when they "dynamized" (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:159) the group sculpt, created in the Image Theatre activity. The writing activity used the previous Image Theatre activity to create a story about their individual experience. The story was created by passing a sheet of paper in a circle, with each participant adding their sentence or word and folding the paper once to hide their writing. At the end, the paper was unfolded to reveal the story.

The core activities of workshop five were storytelling and poetry. Participants each wrote a story about an experience inside prison, where they felt their right to safety and security was neglected. They extracted lines from their stories that they felt had a significant impact on their emotional security. These stories serve as testimony to the violation of the right not to be subjected to violence. They serve as testimony to the human rights violations evident in the case studies discussed earlier in this research.

The main activity of workshop five invited participants to both paint and create poetry. Participants painted one hand each and stamped it onto a large posterboard. They then painted all their palm lines onto their handprint. The poetry task invited participants to look at their handprint and reflect on how it made them feel, what it made them think about, what it made them believe and what it made them imagine. The poems all had to start with the line, "These lines on my hands". The handprint activity was an adapted version of an original drama therapy activity, where both hands were drawn. One hand would contain one's triggers, and the other would contain one's glimmers. The concept of glimmers was based on Polyvagal theory and the term was coined by Deb Dana (2018). In this task, participants only painted their glimmer hand and used the story to represent their trigger hand. The trigger story, as discussed above, maps everything contributing to the sense of identity in prison.

Newspaper Theatre

In the continuation of workshop six's design, workshop seven built on the articles and activities produced in the previous session. Focused on healthcare issues in prison, workshop six looked at a news article and asked participants to write about the content of the article and to include what actually happened. In workshop seven, participants wrote a second article in the form of a monologue, depicting what the healthcare system in prison should look like. The news article was about poor healthcare in prison, high TB rates and fatalities and the lack of available nurses and doctors (Skosana, 2015). The article noted that various correctional departments have

implemented agreements partnering with their provincial health departments to provide medical and dental care to inmates. It also mentioned that improvements in DCS include better access to essential medication.

Workshop eight adapted the complementary reading technique of Newspaper Theatre to write open letters to the media, DCS, or to anyone the participants believed had encroached upon their sense of identity with regards to the living conditions they had to endure. The open letters were based on extracts from news and journal articles, detailing the inhumane living conditions in South African prisons. These are the articles on human rights violations discussed in the literature review and in the introduction of this research. Thereafter, participants improvised news broadcasts based on their open letters. The focal point of this workshop's analysis will be on the open letters and the impact of witnessing each other's stories.

Image Theatre

Workshops two and seven both used Image Theatre as a means of performative embodiment. Workshop two's preliminary Image Theatre activity was Complete the Image (Boal, 2002:139). Participants were invited to step into the circle and create an image that represented a human rights violation that they experienced or witnessed during their incarceration. One person would step into the circle and create a frozen image with their body while the other participants observed and then step in to complete the image with their body. Once a different person steps into the circle the first person re-joins the rest of the participants.

The main Image Theatre activity; Image of the Word (Boal, 2002:176), as referred to in the creative writing task breakdown, invited participants to create a group sculpture, presenting an experience of human rights abuse in prison. The next step in this activity was to dynamize the image. This was done by each participant adding either a word or phrase as they stood frozen in their image. It was further dynamized with rhythmic movement. Each participant would add one single rhythmic movement to their image. The final dynamization was the repetition of either the word or phrase, or the rhythmic movement. Participants were signalled to either repeat their movement or word, one at a time or as a group.

Workshop seven used Image of Transition (Boal, 2002:185) to translate participants' healthcare monologues into the body. Image of Transition (Boal, 2002:185) is made up of three images: the real, the transition, and the ideal. In this context the real image had to represent their first monologue by showing the realities of the prison healthcare system. The second

monologue was translated into the ideal image where they showed what the prison healthcare system should look like. Once these images were created, participants were invited to create the transition image which would represent the journey to the ideal. Important in creating this transition image, is knowing that it is an imagined ideal, and that in the present state the ideal can be representative of anything in life that the participant wishes to achieve with what they have at their disposal. This involves acknowledging the tools one has at one's disposal to avoid perpetuating powerlessness and feeling inhibited.

4.2. Human rights experiences

Safety, security & human dignity

Workshop two indicates the violation of the right to human dignity, and safety and security as set out in the Constitution of South Africa (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, No. 108 of 1996, 1996:s35) under the Bill of Rights and the White Paper on Corrections (DCS, 2005). As mentioned previously, the Constitution mandates the freedom and security of all people. Freedom not of movement when detained, but of violence. The White Paper on Corrections stipulates "the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources; not to be tortured in any way; and not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way" (DCS, 2005:78). The human rights violations mentioned by participants are present in their blind drawings, reflections and the stories they told in the workshop.

1. Complete the Image: Strip search

2. Complete the Image: Safety

Upon reflecting on Complete the Image (Boal, 2002:139) the participants claimed that "the strip search oppressed us, and our human dignity was being stripped away" (Participant D, 2022). Other participants agreed and Participant A stated that she was stripped of her dignity by having all rights to privacy removed (2022). It is important to note that upon incarceration people lose their right to privacy and freedom of movement. The emotional and physical degradation is a result of the disregard for human dignity. Two participants testified to this through their reflections, stating that the manner in which the person was holding themself in the image indicated a lack of human dignity: the participant's arms were wrapped tightly around their body. It demonstrated, "you trying to hold yourself back, but you can't really because everything you do is just open" (Participant A, 2022). This can be corroborated with case studies mentioned earlier on the human rights violations in South African prisons.

The participants showed the disregard for their right not to be tortured or to be inflicted with violence. It is made clear in the first image that there is an element of violence; a violation of the right to safety and security, and not to be tortured. This is clear when one participant freezes in a kicking position whilst appearing to kick another participant while they cower on the floor. It demonstrates the relationship between wardens and prisoners and shows the abuse of power and the fear that prisoners experience, providing further evidence of the "abuse of authority" (DCS, 2005:45). The second image demonstrates the lack of human dignity with one participant standing partially with crossed arms. The distance between both participants and their images is indicative of the lack of dignity. It shows that incarcerated people are strip searched in front of others, and placed into a vulnerable position as others watch and experience it themselves.

The above interpretations are made clear in participants' reflections of their images. Participant B (2022) recalled their experience; "If you're not a number, *dan word jy gemoer* (then you get beaten). I was *moered* (beaten) first because I was from the same area as some of the guys. You had to try to defend yourself but even though you wanted to, you were still powerless". This shows a violation of their safety and security. The powerlessness suggests an achievement for the perpetrators of violence as they were able to make the other person feel small and displaced. Another participant recalled their own experience where they felt fearful and defenceless. She commented that "even if you want to, you can't do anything. You're not just fighting the person who's doing it but you're fighting a system" (Participant A, 2022). It suggests violence inflicted by the very people who are required by law to protect you. It provides further evidence of the

department's knowledge of the abuse that occurs and their inability to act accordingly. The case studies discussed earlier in this research provide further details about the violations which corroborates these participants' stories.

Violence

Participants portray varying degrees of violence in their stories, including commentary on emotional and verbal abuse. Workshop 5 dealt specifically with the right not to be tortured. Participant A's story incapsulates the nuances of the issue of violence inside South African prisons

Participant:	**Story:**	**Analysis:**
A	One morning we were woken up by screaming and shouting. I checked my watch with my lighter, 3 am on a Sunday morning. The whole room was awake. Through the windows we saw members running across the courtyard. Then the taskforce appeared. The screaming continued. Other than that, there was an unnatural, deathly silence in the prison. Then the news came. One of the maximums had waited for everyone to fall asleep and then stabbed a rival with a modified coke can. She just missed the woman's eye and the femoral artery, but the damage was still bad. She also attempted to throw a full flask of boiling water over another woman who had witnessed everything. This was my first real exposure of violence in prison. It was surreal, we heard the screams, we heard the stories. We knew the story, but we saw nothing. The attempted murderer who already had a total of 76 years was put in a single cell and the two victims were sent to an outside hospital. Reality hit home for me that night. You were never safe. Not ever. The women that were fighting had left the prison more than two years previously and these two had actually been friends and were on speaking terms. The perpetrator had plotted and planned for 2 years before making her move. I realised that safety was	Participant A addresses the lack of safety present in a female prison. Evidence of stabbing in South African prisons is made clear in the JICS annual report of 2017/2018, noting that "Inmates were killed as a result of stabbing with self-made knives, assault with fists, and/or kicked to death" (Matamela et al., 2017:53). When compared to Participant A's story it is clear that the coke can serves as the self-made knife to which JICS refers.

	just an illusion, a concept you constructed to convince yourself and others that you were okay. You can never be safe in a place filled with people who have been stripped of their dignity and human rights.	

Gersie (1983:8) notes that a story is more than the act of giving voice to unknown experiences but also describes the process by which this knowledge is acquired. The unknown or the acquired knowledge in the case of Participant A's story is the realisation of safety as an illusion. It is the realisation that safety as a fundamental human right has not been upheld. This provides further evidence of institutional flaws especially in prisons that could be defined as functional. Participant A's story reveals how they came to realise that safety was a self-constructed emotional illusion. The reflection of an illusion is indicative of the emotional impact. An interpretation of the realisation of an illusion is that when the façade was shattered by the screams in prison, they realised how desensitised they had become to the prison environment. That realisation could have been what made the experience surreal. The feeling of surreal links to an unnatural silence. The perpetual fear produced an internal silence. When the illusion broke, the silence with which they were familiar, no longer existed. It suggests that, at least in Participant A's experience, there was no real sense of security provided during that time.

The idea of safety as an illusion is further concretised by Participant C's experience of violence. Participant C's experience shows abuse from authority as the wardens beat him with a cricket bat for inadvertently obstructing a soccer match (2022). It suggests that for those participants they felt that there was no concrete sense of safety. There was no one they could rely on to keep them safe and uphold their right to safety, hence the construction of an illusion of safety.

The act of writing and putting these experiences into story concretizes the link between lived experiences and imagined reality. The act of this storytelling puts the imagined into a comprehensible reality with the capacity to be reflected upon years after the experience itself. Bringing the past into the present through metaphor can be understood as the storyteller "moving within his or her own personal boundaries, around the known, the unknown and the potentially known" (Gersie, 1983:8). The researcher's interpretation is that storytelling in this instance further enhanced the understanding of this experience and the capacity for critical self-reflection on the topic. This interpretation is informed by the idea that "When attention is paid to integrating the new-found material into the existing experience of self an enhanced understanding can lead to healthier functioning" (Gersie, 1983:8). Thus, implying that story is representative of, through the use of metaphor, the participant's lived experience and presents as a reflection in itself.

The extracted lines that participants extracted from their stories and then arranged, establish that they are aware of their rights to physical and emotional security. It also establishes that

aside from the law, they personally feel that they deserve physical and emotional security. The extracted lines are presented in the order in which it was collated by participants:

> There was an unnatural deathly silence in the prison.
>
> Abused their place of power,
>
> Grabbed me from behind and choked me.
>
> According to him I was being disrespectful.
>
> Meaty arm around my skinny neck.
>
> Exposure to violence.
>
> They robbed me of my stamps,
>
> I was surprised and shocked.
>
> Safety was just an illusion.

The ill-treatment corroborates the history of the prison system and its views on punishment. The Jali Commission reported that many warders maintain the opinion that prisoners are in prison for punishment and not as punishment (Muntingh, 2016:41). This is based on evidence provided by the Jali Commission in which they note that "prisoners were subjected to torture, assault and abuse, and made to perform duties that infringed on their dignity" (Muntingh, 2016:41). The lines, "abused their place of power" and "safety was just an illusion", show the existence of the traditional view of prison. These lines relate specifically to treatment from authorities and the environment created by the system.

Healthcare

The most common healthcare issues made evident by the participants are the lack of available doctors, the infrequency of doctors' visits, and the disregard for human dignity and prisoners' needs. Authorities turn away prisoners in need of medical attention. The first article written by participants discussed these issues. These articles negate the evidence provided in the news article on the supposed changes that have been implemented in the system. Participant A provided further testimony about her experience of warders ignoring ill prisoners. She wrote in her article that:

> When a prisoner gets ill the officials will try and avoid sending the inmate to an outside public facility for as long as possible. For the simple reason that it complicates their own lives. A

> member/official has to accompany the inmate and if they stay in hospital, they get handcuffed and have to be guarded for 24 hours, meaning that the guards are hugely inconvenienced.

These delays in getting medical help places added stress on offenders' emotional and physical wellbeing. The individual not only worries about the infection or illness spreading through their body but is aware that it could spread throughout the prison making the situation even more dire. This is evidence of how the disregard for human dignity can happen to all offenders inside. Further evidence is the significantly disproportionate ratio of doctors to offenders. Participants all agreed that the article was correct in saying that there is "one professional nurse for every 195 inmates and one doctor for every 14 545 prisoners" (Skosana, 2015). All participants agreed that they waited weeks, often months for a doctor's visit inside prison. This contradicts the article's claim that a doctor visits the prison a maximum of 1 day per week (Skosana, 2015). Participant A (2022) commented that in the prison she was incarcerated in, the doctor only visited once every few months. This shows that offenders are not being treated with human dignity nor are they getting the adequate medical treatment set out in the Bill of Rights (1996:s35(2)(e)) and the White Paper (2005:78).

The common feature in the second set of articles was the system's abuse of power and its definition of humane treatment. This was implied in several ways by participants. Participant B wrote, "The question is, how do the state staff view the world? What do they see as humane?" Participant C wrote, "What the article should highlight is the abuse of power exercised daily and how people are treated by fellow humans". Participant D wrote "The reality kicks in when you experience the prison system, experience how the rights of inmates are violated, and experience how some see it as a non-violation". These testimonies suggest that the constitution's definition of human dignity and its interpretation are subjective and linked to morality. The universal understanding of human dignity especially in relation to the law is about respecting everyone's rights and treating all bodies with respect but views and interpretations of respect can be subjective. This subjectivity is clear in the attitude of DCS authorities towards offenders. It goes back to the regressive belief that prison is for punishment. The manner in which some warders treat offenders are based on their interpretation of dignity and respect. That interpretation is influenced by their bias towards criminality, prison, and offenders. It is influenced by the ethos underpinned in their training and the attitudes to which new warders adopt when assuming the position.

Living Conditions

The open letters that participants wrote exposed the inhuman living conditions in prison. The letters provided further evidence of the injustices mentioned in the extracts that the participants read. The most common issue experienced by all participants was the lack of toiletries and the condition of the cells, which when added to the prisons being overcrowded by 33% (Mandela, 2022) caused physical and internal turmoil. Participant C notes that they had to ask fellow inmates for soap and toothpaste as the prison could not supply them. Participant D stated that there was an inadequate distribution of cleaning detergents for the cells. Participant B noted that cells were poorly ventilated and that where there was ventilation, was due to broken windows. The second most common issue was the inedible food and its contribution to infection inside the prison. Participants noted that the dry ingredients were often expired, the food was rotten, and that they would sometimes find worms in their food. When eaten offenders would sometimes become ill and develop secondary infections because warders refused to provide them with proper medical treatment. This explains the high spread of diseases noted by Participant B, and when coupled with the open wounds and diarrhoea mentioned by Participant C, it demonstrates the level of ignorance the system had towards the treatment and wellbeing of offenders. It shows the claims made by extracts the about the presence of rodents and cockroaches and a single toilet and shower allocated to 50 to 60 inmates (Agboola, 2016). Another extract mentions emaciated inmates and inmates with wounds and boils (Hopkins, 2015). These conditions violate Constitutional legislature stating the right to "provision, at state expense, of adequate accommodation, nutrition, reading material and medical treatment" (*The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No.108 of 1996*, 1996: s35(2)(*e*)). Crowding people into cells with mouldy walls (Participant B, 2022) designed for a maximum of thirty bodies cannot be constituted as dignified or adequate accommodation. Adequate implies sufficient in quality and quantity. This also applies to the provision of adequate nutrition. If it were adequate or sufficient, offenders would not become ill, there would be no infestation of insects in the food or in the kitchen itself. The spread of communicable diseases would not be as high, with inmates treating themselves for shared infections.

4.3. Impact of theatre practices

Image Theatre

The multitude of images created within a single frame are indicative of the participants' individual stories and experiences shared in workshop two. The emergence of these multiple images can be explained with the idea that in stepping into an image and freezing it "Various possibilities are explored to show all the 'meanings' a single image can have" (Boal, 2002:139). As much as the images in this workshop produced multiple meanings, they also produced collective meanings. The participants collectively agreed that many of their experiences overlap, including emotional experiences resulting from physical interaction.

The exercise, Image of the Word (Boal, 2002:176), and its subsequent dynamization produces a clear image of abuse towards their rights to human dignity, and safety and security. The purpose of dynamization is to generate further exploration of the images and its content and to "deepen community dialogue" (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:159). The image is indicative of feeling trapped in a space where one is surrounded by many other people but still feels alone. This corroborates the feelings of loneliness mentioned by participants earlier on in the session. Dynamization assists in tracking the thoughts and feelings of the characters through adding repetitive movements, rhythm, ritual gestures, sounds, and words (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:159). The dynamization of repetitively swinging the arm as though to hit the other person is an expression of continuous abuse and violence. The image suggests that it is violence perpetuated by both the wardens and prisoners and suggests that violence and abuse are entrenched in the system especially when coupled with mismanagement and gangs. It is contradictory to the DCS policy that states that "The use of force itself should at all times be a last resort and should be utilised only when order has completely broken down" (2005:45).

The line "*Die issie jou ma se huis nie*" (This is not your mother's house) can be interpreted as the level at which people are forced to conform and adapt to the prison environment. It raises the idea of either conforming or risk being hurt. These visualisations through the repetition of sound and words serves as a concretization of ideas (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:159). Although it focuses ideas, it does not intend to build complete narratives (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:159). This correlates with the theoretical ideas embedded in Complete the Image (Boal, 2002:139) as they both present collective abuse, but everyone produced their own single image that was left open to interpretation. This point of reflection aids in the de-

mechanisation process. De-mechanisation aims to break down fixed ways of being and performing and is important in this work as it develops greater consciousness of mechanized processes in the world, which helps us build better, stronger tools in the fight for liberation (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:159). When fixed ways are broken down, they can be re-written according to the individual's own standards and beliefs instead of conforming to what others want. In the context of identity, it means that de-mechanisation can help to redefine or reclaim identity according to one's own personal understanding of the self. Expanding on the idea that de-mechanisation could build liberation, it suggests that it provides one with the free space to discover and explore identities not dictated by the prison environment. It showed participants the extent to which those experiences were ingrained in both their emotional and physical being. This indicates the process of de-mechanisation in providing a space to break down ingrained behaviour as a means of fighting for liberation.

Workshop seven utilizes Image of Transition (Boal, 2002:185) because of its capacity to unpack the real, the ideal, and how one might achieve the ideal. It has the capacity to produce empowerment and emotional liberation. The original dynamization called for the joker; the facilitator, to clap to show each person performing a movement indicative of decreasing the oppression, within the transition image as the form produces physical and emotional discovery and rehabilitation, and the theatrical language of the concept of de-mechanisation. (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:157). Despite all the adaptations to the original exercises, the core element that remained was the process of dynamizing the images and the body, which enabled emotional liberation and empowerment. Below is the full Image of Transition (Boal, 2002:185) created by participants.

Image 3: Image of Transition

Within the three stages of the image of transition, each participant created individual images within the same activity space. Participants immediately gravitated towards an image of unity within all their images. Their individual images were an acknowledgement that they were helping each other on their respective journeys as presented in their transition image. Their ideal image presented a system that provides proper treatment and refers inmates to outside hospitals when they are unable to treat them internally. Their images were representative of their own personal experiences but were also representative of a collective experience. This suggests the importance of building an individual and collective image. It develops and nurtures individual and collective empowerment. Creating the unconscious collective image from the individual images, helps to empower each other. By empowering others, they re-affirm that they have the capacity to empower themselves.

As much as the creation of an individual image produced individual empowerment and liberation, it did not produce it within the bigger image due to the systemic nature of the issue.

On the individual level of liberation, they presented their own interpretations of liberation. This suggests that liberation can be a state of mind as well as a breaking away from a system, space, or place. It suggests the importance of acknowledging that the creative and performative process can inspire change and glimmers of liberation but cannot make concrete change. The liberation produced was emotional liberation in that they acknowledged what they had at their disposal which included each other.

These dramatic strategies were chosen for its capacity to push against power or oppressive systems and develop liberatory and empowering experiences. It provided a platform to speak through the voice that was censored during their incarceration and gave them the opportunity to speak out against the oppressive system that once 'owned them'.

Newspaper Theatre

Fear of the media

Workshop seven's articles expressed the system's fear of the media. Participants' writing reflected the DCS fear of the media. Their writing also reflected the media reporting fallacies that sugar coat the issues or ignore them completely. This is shown through the information given in the news article in comparison to participant lived experiences.

The information given to the media, conceals the realities of prison life. This information is often the only source of information given to the public life inside South African prisons. Not only does this create an inaccurate representation of the state of the criminal justice system but also fosters inaccurate opinions about prisoners and their experiences. This is especially harmful and hurtful for the incarcerated as their truth never gets heard beyond the walls of the system. It fosters feelings of self-doubt, inadequacy and powerlessness. It is in this way that one's sense of identity is compromised by having a different version of one's truth presented to the world. By maintaining these fallacies, DCS fosters the belief that they are implementing their restorative justice approach and that all functions of the prison are underpinned by respect, open communication and a concern for human rights. Participants' articles indicate that this remains a utopian view of corrections that is inaccurate. By providing the media with inaccurate information, and by implication the public, prisoners and ex-prisoners are made to feel inhuman and unworthy of human dignity and respect.

The act of exposing the inaccurate reporting of the media is a further indicator of the theories of Newspaper Theatre. Newspaper Theatre argues that because of the internet "a message is

incredibly accelerated compared to that of the page of a print newspaper; simultaneity replaces sequentially, which, according to Franco Berardi, diminishes our ability to interpret statements critically to the point that this ability is extinguished" (Speranza, 2019:153). People are unable to think critically about the stories and statements they read because of the rapid pace at which news is released. In the context of the participants' reflection, society believes the information they are being fed by the media about healthcare in prison and are unable to consider the accuracy of the story, before being exposed to a new article. This contributes to the prison system's poor healthcare services as no one has the time to challenge the information provided. This affects the sense of identity amongst prisoners as their truths are not accurately represented in the media and they cannot count on the public to advocate for them because they in turn are influenced by what the media tells them.

Fear of accountability

Workshop eight's open letters presented the fear of accountability. Their letters highlighted the dismal living conditions and pointed out DCS' lack of accountability when it came to providing offenders with adequate accommodation and nutrition. All participant letters were addressed to the DCS and held them accountable for the poor treatment they had received in prison. By directly addressing the DCS they were able to reclaim their space and re-affirm themselves and their self-worth. A further suggestion of their self-worth and capacity for critical reflection was in their ability to make suggestions regarding changes to the system. Their suggestions were based on personal experience but were rational and indicated critical thinking. They suggested a fortnightly system for the distribution of cleaning supplies and toiletries and upskilling for the DCS staff, including training in psychological and emotional contexts. Participants displayed human dignity in their letters as these changes would restore offenders' sense of humanity. Participant B stated that "Humans should come first", an indication that the living conditions and ill-treatment of offenders are inadequate. The capacity to be able to critically reflect and voice these thoughts is affirming for participants as it acknowledges much of what the media and public was unable to see.

The sense of affirmation increased when they realised that these letters could be forwarded to the media to create discourse on human rights violations in prison. The option to do so was at their disposal but they recognised that they needed to consider any risks such as anonymity, conflict with DCS, and possible conflict with those that benefit from an environment that mistreats people. It remains an option. The act of writing and acknowledging that their letters

could be distributed and used to create discourse on prison and human rights, was their way of "unsilencing" their voices.

4.4. Creative writing impact

Drawing with the eyes closed in workshop two was a way to imagine identity without preconceived images appearing in the drawings. It can be argued that drawing with one's eyes closed only makes one visualise the image more clearly. The researcher's interpretation suggests that this activity is emotionally driven rather than physically driven by sight. The keywords they each provided reflect their journeys and how they see themselves. One participant noted that they are bold, strong, and fearless (Participant C, 2022). The researcher interprets this as a celebration of the self and their journey. This understanding is based on the humiliation and lack of dignity they felt when they were strip-searched in prison. Their reflections or keywords represent the impact that experiencing human rights abuse had on their sense of identity. This suggests that feeling defenceless, fearful, and without dignity, affects the sense of identity by losing a sense of agency. This is why joining a gang is seen as an "adaptation strategy to incarceration" (Lindegaard & Gear, 2014:370). This suggests that incarcerated people are forced into activities for their survival and become malleable to the forces of their environment. This connects to the lack of human dignity and the system's inability to uphold this basic human right. Upholding human dignity is not only physical but emotional too. The prison system did not deliver on the right to emotional human dignity as made evident by one participant's drawing of themselves with a square box for a head indicating that they felt emotionally confined to an empty box.

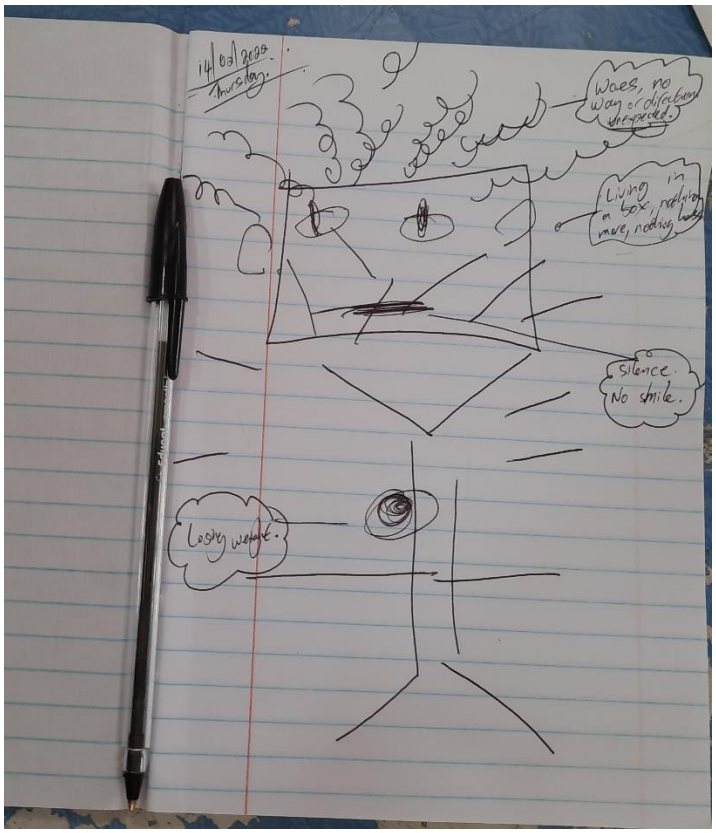


Image 4: 'Boxed' (Participant D, 2022)

Metaphors in story and poetry

The stories verbalised participants' experiences of abuse, through written testimony of their treatment during their incarceration. Although the act of creating story or poetry within that particular framework could be triggering, the generation of metaphors in the poetic form provides distancing for the participants. Baim (2020:150) explains this distancing strategy as one which focuses on the theme of the original material and changes some particulars. These changes are made through metaphor. The poetic framework "can include working entirely in metaphor, i.e., the entire story can be contained within an encompassing metaphor" (Baim, 2020:150). In this case, and throughout the entire fieldwork study, the term story includes poetry.

What we saw, what we felt, all inside

So, there was this girl who always sat on her bed,

Jy kom sit hier soos iemand wat vooregte het.

Die issie jou ma se huis nie.

Are you insane or are you lame?

Is it a shame to make the same mistakes again and again? Wake and please refrain.

Trying to write just a letter.

Damn, I should have known better.

To attempt to do it in here,

But my response is coated with fear.

The significant metaphor found in the poem was the line, "But my response is coated in fear" (2022). The metaphor of a fear- coated response; a fear- coated letter, or a fear- coated being, suggests the impact that feelings of constant physical and emotional insecurity, and a loss of human dignity may have on the sense of self. The way in which "coat" (2022) has been used shows fear as all-encompassing. Conventionally, the word coat refers to protecting something or covering something. In the context of this poem, it is not a marker of protection but rather a marker of oppression. Fear is a marker for how the voice and body have been oppressed by the prison system, authority figures, and fellow offenders. It may only be interpreted as a form of protection in that the fear stops one from truthfully expressing oneself both verbally and physically. In that way it is protection because in expressions of truth there are risks of abuse inflicted by fellow offenders and/or authorities. Other than the interpretation of fear as protection, it is oppressive as the notion of fear-coated indicates danger or vulnerability. The suggestion here is that one cannot be fear-coated and feel protected and safe at the same time. Whether that fear stops one from getting hurt, the presence of fear is indicative of danger or that something in one's environment is making one feel unsafe.

The fear the poem speaks of coats, at some point during their sentence or even throughout their entire sentence, their words, feelings, thoughts, opinions, and actions. For example, to visualise the encompassing feeling of fear, it can be likened to paint coating a wall to cover blemishes or marks. The paint coats the wall to hide what it really looks like. The same could be applied to something coated in fear. Since one is encompassed by fear what one wishes to say cannot be said and what one does say is to appease those imposing the fear. The paint is the fear of being abused, hurt, and humiliated. As indicated in participants' testimonies of abuse and lack of human dignity, it is clear that this sense of fear is alive because of the unpredictable correctional environment. The sense of fear also extends to emotional abuse considering its effect on offenders writing their own identity and embodying it. Instead, the fear writes an

identity conforming to the system. They have been manipulated and abused so much that fear is part of their identity and moulds it into one that conforms to the prison system and its environment. Here fear is the paintbrush that paints over their self-authored identity with paint made up of identity suited for survival inside.

Expanding on the fear-coated response metaphor, it suggests the opportunity to bear witness to the poem as a whole and that metaphor reflects their individual past experiences. This not only correlates the point on reflection and its relationship with de-mechanisation, but also correlates to the importance of metaphor in story. Gersie notes that in expressing that story is a metaphor for someone's life, it indicates that the story-characters, the events, and the moods represent the storyteller's current experiences and feelings (1983:10). The word "But" truly concretizes the feeling of being stuck and forced to conform. It provides a rich image of how the metaphor connects with their experience. It shows that all that they were wanting to say and do, and perhaps what they were writing in that letter, was unable to materialize because of fear.

The poem gives a strong image of the disregard for human dignity, and the lack of appropriate security measures. The poem establishes a mode of self-reflection for the participants as it was written collectively. This ties in with the evaluation quadrant that occurs during each ring of the drama spiral (Baim, 2020:127). The evaluation quadrant includes de-briefing and "includes de-roling, sensitive listening, sharing common experiences, talking about feelings, and encouraging mutual support among the participants" (Baim, 2020:128). The lines they wrote were based on their experiences indicating self-reflection. Once the poem was read in its entirety, it enriched their self-reflection as they acknowledged the common experiences they shared. In that acknowledgment they show their mutual support for each other. The poem's title, "*What we saw, what we felt, all inside"*, which was collectively created by the participants, considers both external and internal reflection. It defines external reflections to be about the physical environment and treatment. The use of the words "all inside" and the context of the poem denotes the physical experiences. The "we" indicates collective experiences and collective sharing of those experiences. It is also a sharing of individual experiences because they each served in different prisons across the Western Cape. It is a combination of the collective and the individual because they share their individual experiences framed by a shared theme, environment, and system.

The meaning of the words "all inside" are two-fold. The first mentioned above is about physical experiences. The second meaning presents internal reflections as it links to the inability to

express themselves for fear of retaliation. The fear of retaliation goes back to research indicating the risk of retaliation by a fellow inmate if abuse or injustice was reported. If reported there was also the risk of a lack of support from authorities. The title connotes reflections of feeling mentally and emotionally imprisoned because of the overwhelming sense of fear.

The above interpretation not only suggests the presence of the evaluation quadrant of the drama spiral in the fieldwork but also indicates participatory creativity. This is made evident as indicated by Baim (2020:124) "all these processes are essential to participatory theatre". The processes mentioned in the evaluation quadrant (Baim, 2020:128) are amongst the essential elements in producing participatory work. Although the poetry task did not produce participatory theatre it was nonetheless participatory considering the collective creativity that took place in creating the poem. The poem is presented as a sharing of common experiences based on their physical images indicating the presence of the evaluation quadrant. By extension indicates participatory practices considering participatory theatre was used to create the poem.

The act of writing the poem is a de-mechanisation in itself as it provides space to reflect on their emotional processes that have been mechanised. It indicates how much space those thoughts occupied. Reading the poem and seeing what they wrote shows them their mechanised thoughts. This then brings forth a space to de-mechanise. This interpretation is based on the evidence provided in the feedback as one participant explained that "It takes me back to the prison setting and makes me feel somewhat uncomfortable even though I have made peace with the past" (Participant B, 2022). This reflection shows the residual effects on identity. It shows that although not much time is given to thinking about the past and present identity, it is still there and still playing a part in current identity. The discomfort indicates that perhaps peace has not been made, and that the peace experienced may have been a direct result of prison's mechanisation. Prison is capable of mechanisation because of how it shapes an individual's behaviour in order to survive. This means that in using Image Theatre in the context of prison and human rights one would refer to prison as an institution of oppression, the prison and those inflicting human rights abuse as the oppressors.

Understanding prison as an oppressive system that repeatedly ignores human dignity is based on the notion that oppression targets the entirety of the body, from the way the body moves to the way the body interacts with other bodies (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:157). Not only is the former point indicative of the physical treatment inside prison that is oppressive but that the oppressive environment perpetuates adaptative behaviour for survival. The adaptation

strategy is about moulding the physical and mental body to adapt to the environment to survive. When inside prison the body adapts to the oppressive environment. Creating the poem and their subsequent awareness of their mechanised behaviour suggests the process of undoing "learned oppressive physicality" (Santiago-Jirau & Thompson, 2019:157). A further indication of the process of undoing and de-mechanisation is made clear in their responses to the question about what they learnt about themselves during the session's process. Their answers were as follows:

A. That even though it is almost 6 years later, I will never forget. The experience is always "there".

B. I need to talk more about my experiences.

C. To express more about who I am.

D. That it's always good to be yourself whether inside or outside.

Practicing Polyvagal Theory in poetry

Each participant's poem produced several individual glimmers. Each participant created metaphors to produce glimmers in their poems. Their metaphors represented the glimmers in their lives. Collectively the poems depicted several journeys. The journeys they speak of in their poems serve as the overarching glimmer while specific lines and the subsequent metaphors serve as their individual glimmers. The tables below analyse the metaphors and keywords of the poem.

Poetry analysis

Participant	A	C	D
Poem	These lines on my hands… Are the lines of my life. It depicts the joys, the tensions, The sorrows, the strife. How far I have come, Since those days of risk and fear. Since that feeling of hopelessness, Since the nights of silent tears. But I've grown, I am free. I've embodied a new one. What the future still holds though, Is a mystery you see.	These lines on my hands…. Make me think of all the hurt I've caused through the crimes I've committed. I'm glad to say out of my life it's all been omitted. I feel that I could've done better, But in my heart, I wrote them all a letter. I also believe I've been forgiven, By my father in heaven, And all the people I've left grief stricken. I also imagine what my hands could've done, If I chose another path with good to begin.	These lines on my hands… I see it as…. thinking of how different things could be. I feel I am blessed for growing within myself thus far. I believe I am able to do anything I put my mind to. And I imagine a better way of life for me from this day on.
Key phrases	"Lines" "Hopelessness" "Since the nights of silent tears"	"I'm glad to say out of my life it's all been omitted". "But in my heart, I wrote them all a letter"	"I feel I am blessed for growing within myself thus far". "I believe I am able to do anything I put my mind to".

	"But I've grown" "I am free. /I've embodied a new one"		
Analysis	The poem visualises the lines of the palm as all the journeys and directions the poet's life has taken. This interpretation is further evident in that the poem's brief asked participants to think, feel, imagine, and believe. The poem tells a story of her past, present, and the unknown future. **"Lines"** The plural use of the word line shows that they have lived many lives. She acknowledges that her life is not made up of a single journey. The lines of her life can be likened to the branches of a tree. Considering the trigger story she wrote before this task; she paints the landscape of her life in prison. **"Hopelessness"** Hopelessness corresponds with what she and the rest of the participants echoed throughout the project. They specifically said that you are aware of the inhumane environment around, but you cannot do anything because "you're fighting a system" (Participant A, 2022). Knowing you cannot do anything exacerbates the	**"I'm glad to say out of my life it's all been omitted".** It denotes that crime, or the act of committing crime is out of his life. But connotatively crime is still there. He understands the lines on his hands to represent the crimes he has committed. This implies that he has acknowledged that he is no longer part of that lifestyle. He also acknowledges, through seeing it in his hands, that psychologically it will remain part of his past. **"But in my heart, I wrote them all a letter"** The letter in his heart serves as a mode of self-reflection. In his heart he reflects on his actions, and dialogues with his internal self, God, and those he hurt. It is the second time that writing a letter as self-reflection has come up in the workshop. The first was in workshop two. The poem in workshop two which references writing a letter, was about the inability to communicate and express.	Once again there is a clear indication of what his thoughts and reflections were when reflecting on the inside where safety, security, and human dignity are concerned. **"I feel I am blessed for growing within myself thus far".** His poem reflects his present and how he sees his growth. It shows growth of the person inside prison and outside prison. It also shows growth from workshop two to workshop five. It shows personal growth especially since the themes of the workshops two and five remained the same, but the content and dramatic strategies changed. But the lighter and more celebratory feel of this poem suggests growth. Even though the poem's brief was designed to celebrate themselves, he still had full control over its interpretation hence why not everything in the poems is particularly positive. In workshop two he mentioned feeling alone and almost despondent. But when reflecting on his journey in this workshop through his poem, it is clear that he can see and feel his growth. They feel and see how their past and present are not two separate events but instead are

	hopelessness. It is not only the hopelessness of the system, but the hopelessness felt when forced to change your way of being to survive. **"Since the nights of silent tears"** Its literal interpretation is crying quietly in the dark, but its figurative interpretation represents internal crying. It is an internal cry because of the front needed to keep up in prison to survive. There is an internal conflict you go through when faced with abusive or ill-treatment. The internal conflict produces an internal cry. The internal conflict is about the risk of death and dignity. In reporting injustice, you either risk your life or your dignity. As mentioned earlier when talking about human rights violations, you risk death when reporting injustice because you become a target, and you risk indignity because officials are insufficiently trained in handling these cases. **"But I've grown"** The use of "but" acknowledges past trauma while simultaneously acknowledging that even though it happened, she still made it through and managed to grow.	But in this workshop's poetry task it is almost as if the letter from workshop two has developed. Workshop two's letter was the struggle to write words. Whereas workshop five's letter in the heart is able to write those words. Since workshop two's group poem represented his experiences in prison regarding loneliness, fear, inhuman treatment, and a lack of security, it becomes clear that workshop five's letter presents hope. It presents hope in its indication that those letters, even if it were in the heart, managed to be written. What is notable about this progress is that it was realised on the outside. Workshop two's poem was solely about the experience inside. Workshop five's poem was written by reflecting on his present and his growth since he was inside.	part of the same tree. They are different lines on the hand, but they are part of the same hand. **"I believe I am able to do anything I put my mind to".** They acknowledge growth from workshop two to workshop five by acknowledging that they can do anything they put their mind to. It shows that they have grown within themself not only from prison and back into their community, but from the processes of workshop two to the that of workshop five.

	"I am free", "I've embodied a new one" My visual interpretation is that of a body uncurling itself. The lines bring images of shedding. It is shedding skin if compared to the idea of looking at the palm and the uncurling body. It could be shedding the skin of the past. It is a shedding of the fear, hopelessness, and tears.		

Metaphors as glimmers

Participant	**A**	**C**	**D**
Poem	These lines on my hands… Are the lines of my life. It depicts the joys, the tensions, The sorrows, the strife. How far I have come, Since those days of risk and fear. Since that feeling of hopelessness, Since the nights of silent tears. But I've grown, I am free. I've embodied a new one. What the future still holds though, Is a mystery you see.	These lines on my hands…. Make me think of all the hurt I've caused through the crimes I've committed. I'm glad to say out of my life it's all been omitted. I feel that I could've done better, But in my heart, I wrote them all a letter. I also believe I've been forgiven, By my father in heaven, And all the people I've left grief stricken. I also imagine what my hands could've done, If I chose another path with good to begin.	These lines on my hands… I see it as…. thinking of how different things could be. I feel I am blessed for growing within myself thus far. I believe I am able to do anything I put my mind to. And I imagine a better way of life for me from this day on.
Metaphors as glimmers	"Joy" "I've grown" "I am free".	"By my father in heaven" "Out of my life it's all been omitted". "But in my heart, I wrote them all a letter"	"I feel I am blessed for growing within myself thus far" "And I imagine a better way of life for me from this day on"

	"I've embodied a new one". **Other notable keywords, phrases, observations, or themes:** Repetition of "since"	"I also believe I've been forgiven/ by my father in heaven". **Other notable keywords, phrases, observations, or themes:** Religion Agency	**Other notable keywords, phrases, observations, or themes:** Growth Affirmation
Analysis	The poem presents glimmers relating to the present and future self. The "joys" the participant speaks of was a result of a glimmer in their life. The phrases "grown" and "a new one" shows that glimmers have been consistent within her life. These glimmers may have changed over time but nonetheless have always been present. The phrases show that there has been some sort of process in Participant A's life. It suggests that a glimmer or several glimmers were part of that process helping it reach its ever-changing destination. The poem indicates that even though they have "embodied a new one" (Participant A, 2022) their journey is not over since the future is a "mystery" (Participant A, 2022). It indicates that their new manifestation of self is only	The significant glimmer present in C's poem is their faith. There is a clear religious theme throughout their poem suggesting both redemption and repentance. The religious theme only becomes directly clear in their line "By my father in heaven". However, once that line makes clear the theme it becomes clear that "Make me think all the hurt I've caused through the crimes I've committed" (Participant C, 2022) suggests repentance. It suggests reflection of past actions and feeling remorseful. A further indication of repentance is in the line "But in my heart I wrote them all a letter" (Participant C, 2022). It suggests that they have internally reflected on their past actions and in their heart apologised to everyone that may have been affected by their crimes. Even though it was not a direct	Participant D presents a clear sense of journey and progress in their poem. Their poem is evidence of how glimmers, when activated, can grow beyond triggers. Their poem is a glimmer for them considering the level at which they are celebrating themselves and their growth. They recognise their progress as they write, "I feel I am blessed for growing within myself thus far". Within that self-recognition they are reflecting on their past and present selves. Since their story was based on when they were in prison, it can be assumed that they are taking stock of their sense of being during that time and their sense of being in the present. The poet's capacity to be reflexive in their work serves as a glimmer because of the level of acknowledgment they are giving themselves. That sense of

	one of the many destinations in their life. This commentary brings back the point on Participant A's poem representing the present and future self. The notion of the future as mysterious is how they see and acknowledge their future self. The acknowledgement of growth and a new self, represent the current view of themself or current identity. The use and repetition of the word "since" (Participant A, 2022) serves as an indication of the individual moving out of a space of judgement of their triggers. Polyvagal theory suggests that "the trick is not to get rid of triggers entirely but to move out of a place of judgment regarding the things we find triggering and our response to this trauma" (Murphy, 2020). The word "since" and its repetition suggest an acknowledgement that there has been and possibly still are triggers in their life. The triggers present in Participant A's poem regarding the word "since" are tears, risk, fear, and hopelessness. They name their triggers and through doing that they acknowledge them and cease their judgement towards them. The internal reflections activate the glimmers; however, the sequence of reflections is in itself a glimmer. It is a	apology to everyone affected, it remains an act of repentance considering showing their feelings of remorse. It implies that in those letters they are reflecting on their past; dialoguing with their past and present self about what had happened and dialoguing with and asking for forgiveness from those they may have hurt. The line "out of my life it's all been omitted" (Participant C, 2022) suggests an act of redemption. It suggests that they made the choice to choose a different path and leave that one behind. The act of choosing was their act of redemption. The act of choosing, and even having the capacity to choose and act on it, can be translated into a glimmer because said act represents agency. It shows that they have agency over their own lives. Agency post-prison is a glimmer since the prison environment often strips away agency. My interpretation is that to have something that is rightfully yours that you did not have full control over in the past is a glimmer. It fosters the sense of self and re-builds the sense of identity. The lines "I also believe I've been forgiven, / By my father in heaven" (Participant C, 2022) provide further	acknowledgment fosters self-confidence and affirms their sense of self. It is through those acts of affirmation that glimmers, or cues of safety and peace are produced. The final line of their poem, "And I imagine a better way of life for me from this day on" is evidence of their poem, in its themes of growth and affirmation, serving as a current glimmer in their life. It implies how they want those glimmers to affect their future.

	glimmer because it shows that the participant could navigate between their triggers and glimmers without dismissing the weight that each of them hold.	testimony to the theory that they were asking for forgiveness in the "letters" they wrote. It also shows that those were not only letters for the people they had hurt but were also letters addressed to God so He may grant them forgiveness. This suggests that God's forgiveness may have been the ultimate form of redemption in their eyes, allowing them to acknowledge their past and let their new-found spirituality lead them forward. The notion of forgiveness is a glimmer considering in terms of faith it fosters peace, calm, and safety. It suggests that religion or faith is a glimmer they can take with them and use in the future.	

The analysis has shown that participants were able to combine their lived experiences with Image and Newspaper Theatre. Through the performative autofiction form, participants were able to produce various understandings of their sense of identity. They showed that not all reflections of identity need to be positive, and that no matter their opinions towards their sense of identity, they nevertheless produce glimmers which enable resilience and strength.

4.5. Interpreting the work

The interpretations discuss witnessing and co-regulation, and the identity impact of the workshop series. It discusses how witnessing and co-regulation are reflections of growth in the understanding and acknowledgment of participants' sense of identity. It discusses the findings of performative autofiction in producing co-regulation. It discusses two specific components of identity presents across the workshop series and how those were present in the creative writing.

Witnessing & Co-regulation

There was no in-depth discussion of the stories with participants considering their emotional weight. Proceeding with the activity in this way was based on the notion that a story can be acknowledged, heard, and received, and then left for the unconscious to make sense of (Gersie, 1983:10). It speaks to how important witnessing is as a tool for self-reflection especially as in-depth unpacking requires a trained psychotherapist.

The poem and the act of performing it as spoken word poetry, by going through the poetry in a rhythmic and sequential manner, brought theories of witnessing into practice. Witnessing in this context means being present as the other bodies in the space share their poems. The act of witnessing is a glimmer for both the storyteller and their listeners as the storyteller has their experiences acknowledged, and the listeners share in the journey of the storyteller and find similarities with their own stories. The latter point is evident in Gersie (1983:8) as they note that once a story is told it then exists as independent of the storyteller, allowing the listener to decide what happens to the story. This suggests that once the individual has shared their poem, the onus of acknowledging and interpreting it falls on the listeners. Once shared, the poem sits in the shared space and here the listeners can absorb, unpack, and digest the experience. It remains their story and experience but once in the shared space all bodies have the capacity to mould the story as it has entered the outside world. However, the story, in its existence in the

outside world, has the capacity to affect the individuals of the outside world, in this case the individuals in the shared space. According to Gersie (1983:8), this is because the story lives a life of its own. This also implies that the listener, as much as the story, as its own entity, is affecting the physical and emotional states of its listeners. The listeners are potentially choosing the degree at which they are viscerally affected. Further analyses of the shared experience align itself with Gersie's belief that when individuals listen, they acknowledge that they are ready to accompany the storyteller on their journey by providing them with the necessary space for their experience (1983:9). By making space for the storyteller's offering, they are reaffirming the storyteller's value of their experience and memories. The storyteller then feels heard and acknowledged. The listener benefits as it becomes part of their life experience. The sharing and witnessing becomes a glimmer moment, as the participants can look back on the experience in the future and use the associated glimmers to bring them back to safety.

Witnessing as "glimmers radiate" (Murphy, 2020) shows that a process of co-regulation takes place when glimmers are surfaced and acknowledged. Co-regulation in the context of this research is defined as connections of support (Murphy, 2020) between participants sharing common experiences. This suggests that through a process of self-regulation glimmers are produced. Through those glimmers all interacting in the same space, participants begin to co-regulate with each other, bringing them all into a space of acknowledgement, presence, and support. Sharing produces glimmers and makes glimmers known. This allows the individual to self-regulate as they become more aware of their cues of safety and immerse themselves in a shared space of accessing glimmers and self-regulation. In this shared space of self-regulation, they can feed off each other's energy or co-regulate. In the context of the workshop once Participant A had shared her poem, it was then made available for Participants C and D to project their experiences or emotions, and vice versa. Participant A expressed her glimmers while C and D accepted and affirmed their glimmers through listening. Once all the poems had been shared, all of the subsequent glimmers then existed in the shared space. It is a mutual sharing of glimmers, space, and stories, which builds the relationship they have with one another. This sense of relationship building is significant in polyvagal theory as:

> through co-regulation, a foundation of safety is created, and attachment follows. Co-regulation creates a physiological platform of safety that supports a psychological story of security that then leads to social engagement. (Dana, 2018:37)

The researcher's interpretation of co-regulation is that all participants are watering one garden but each with their own watering can. The water in each of their cans are their glimmers and as the water falls it spreads across the garden. As the water is absorbed, the garden grows. The latter point provides further evidence for how engaging with each other's glimmers can form stronger relationships. The "social engagement" Dana (2018:37) mentions are the relationships formed between participants in the shared space. What makes this even more significant is the fact that all the poems were dealing with the same human rights violation, and all were inspired by an event that happened in prison. As there was a basic structure for the workshops and its trigger-glimmer activities, it can suggest that social engagement may have been easier for this particular group of people because of their existing work relationship prior to the workshop series. Relationships between the participants strengthened because of their ability to co-regulate because co-regulation is at the forefront of positive relationships such as work alliances and friendships (Dana, 2018:37). This suggests that not only are the support systems amongst individuals strengthened but that the development is the strengthening of the support system to the glimmers. The glimmers as separate from their individuals become stronger as they engage with the other glimmers in the space. This then takes it back to the point on how glimmers radiate. The strength that the group shares because of their capacity to co-regulate can extend beyond that space. Once they as a group, or individually, encounter others, their glimmers and co-regulative status radiates towards others.

The above findings conclude that witnessing brought forth co-regulation because of participants' capacity to use metaphor as a way of bringing fellow participants into their factual memories and fictional endeavours.

Identity

The research outlines the four components of identity: personal, relational, collective, and material. Personal identity refers to an individual's self-definition, self-esteem, self-worth, values, beliefs, and introspective questions concerning "Who am I?" (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:2). Relational identity refers to the roles one plays in relation to others, and the meanings attributed to those roles (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:3). Collective identity refers to an individual's membership in social groups and categories, and members align themselves with the behaviours and attitudes of those groups (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:3). Material identity refers to possessions, such as clothes and money, that individual's treat as part of their identity (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:4). The discussion below

focusses on relational identity and personal identity as those were the two components present in participant stories, reflections, and feedback responses.

Relational identity

Relational identity was present in workshop two and was presented in Participant B's reflection on the workshop and his sense of identity. Participant B said that the feeling of loneliness continues throughout the prison sentence. He stated that "Yes, you've got buddies, you've made contacts with some people to get some things and whatever. You still feel that loneliness when you sit in a quiet space" (Participant B, 2022). This suggests relational identity through assuming a transactional role in prison. One has had to assume a particular role to get others to provide one with things one may otherwise not have had access to. The particular role one assumes in this situation is transactional and necessary for survival. That transactional role gives one access to food, cell phones, and tobacco amongst other things. The systems surrounding one are so corrupt that one must give up a part of one's relational identity to assume this transactional role in order to survive. The transactional role is rationalised by implying that it is a survival role and that its attached behaviour is because the authorities in the system are corrupt. It is rationalised by seeing the need for survival as one which outweighs the moral high ground, and even more so when warders themselves participate in illicit behaviour. It is rationalised by thinking that to survive, corruption needs to be fought with corruption.

In theory of identity this interpretation of relational identity can be explained by saying that relational identity cannot be completely defined or established by their respective individuals but need to be recognised by a social audience (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:3). The social audience are the individuals and other roles with whom one engages in their transactional role. This suggests that as an individual, one simultaneously has agency but is also not in complete control of one's agency. The roles one assumes and the meanings that one associates with them are one's own but full validation of those roles often relies on the opinions of others. Full assumption and manifestation of these roles are reliant on others because they serve others. As much as one's transactional role needs an audience, the person with whom one transacts also needs an audience, thus one becomes the audience for other individual's transactional roles.

Personal identity

All participants presented personal identity both in their work and their reflections throughout the four workshops discussed in the research. The research understands feelings as a theme of identity because of participants' personal identification with certain feelings. Common identifying themes in relation to feelings amongst participants were loneliness, sadness, fear, and feeling purposeless. Loneliness was present in workshop two in Participants B and D. Sadness was present in workshop seven in Participants B, C, and D. Workshop eight linked fear with Participants A and B and feeling purposeless with participants C and D. Workshop five was the only outlier, producing themes of introspection, values, and agency, as markers of personal identity. Participant A showed introspection, C showed agency, and both showed forms of acknowledging values.

Participants B and D (2022) reflect loneliness and emotional isolation in workshop two. The lines, "you still feel that loneliness when you sit in a quiet space" (Participant B, 2022) and "I think there's that sense of 'I'm alone in this' or 'I've got nowhere to go'" (Participant D, 2022) reflects a sense of personal identity. The lines present the core thought or feeling as one where one sees oneself as alone in the world and in one's space. It suggests that having been placed in that environment took away their entire sense of identity leaving them feeling empty. The notion of feeling empty is further emphasised in Participant D's (2022) workshop two comment about feeling 'boxed'. It suggests the impact on his sense of identity and the state of his emotional wellbeing as both emotionally and physically boxed. The immense feeling of being alone manifests into a new sense of self-definition which in turn potentially affects one's level of self-esteem. Feeling alone becomes part of their identity indicating a new set of "values, and beliefs" (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:3). Feeling alone is concretised in personal identity in prison because the sense of community inside is temporary even though one moulds oneself to suit the environment and its people.

In workshop five Participant A's personal identity is present through her introspection about feeling stripped of human dignity. Personal identity produces introspection because of an individual's history, experiences, orientations, and behaviours (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:519). The introspective feelings that came from that event were also influenced by Participant A's personal history. For example, when someone is strip searched in prison with a group of other people, the way they experience and interpret it as undignified is unique to them because of their existing feelings, emotions, experiences, and histories.

A further shift in Participant A's sense of personal identity is through the term "illusion" (Participant A, 2022). Participant A notes "I realised that safety was just an illusion, a concept you constructed to convince yourself and others that you were okay" (2022). To go from one state of belief to another shows a shift in the sense of personal identity. The first state of belief referring to feeling safe, and then once the incident occurred it shifted to identifying safety as a façade. The state of belief is known as a core orientation of the individual because in changing an aspect of their history or core orientation it fundamentally changes the person (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:519). Participant A's core orientation shifts because her belief in safety and security were compromised. The core orientation shift led to an introspective shift because when valuing something different and finding something previously moral as now immoral, would mean experiencing a fundamental shift in the sense of who they 'really' are (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:519). Therefore, the shift in self suggests a re-evaluation of what she believed to be true of the system.

Participant C's story in workshop five presents personal identity through his commentary on values and standards for behaviour, with agency as a through line of their personal identity. In standing up for himself and confronting the guard's behaviour it suggests that he recognised the behaviour as unethical and unlawful. His sense of self-awareness is personal identity because of its reference to values and standards for behaviour (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:3). The standards for behaviour he ascribes to are mutual respect and human dignity. He recognises how vocal he was about the actions as unlawful and acknowledged that the guards and wardens were abusing their "authoritative power" (Participant C, 2022). This shows that he could recognise the abuse as separate from his own standards for behaviour. The existing standards for behaviour and values shown by the participant indicates recognition of their self-worth and dignity.

Participant C presents a sense of agency as personal identity, as opposed to agency in relational identity. This is because the way he presents his agency is not via a distinct role he assumes but rather a view and a belief in himself that helps him to perform various parts of his identity. In the context of his story the degree of agency was possible because of his presentation of self. Beyond that presentation of self is the belief in self. This belief is important in personal identity where human agency is concerned. Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx (2011:614) note that exercising agency over one's life, one needs to believe in one's capabilities to achieve certain goals and to act in specific ways. Participant C's defence of his dignity and self-worth provides

an indication of an existing level of belief in his capabilities to achieve his goals and shows his developing agency.

The identification with sadness in workshop 7 is clear in Participants B, C, and D's feedback responses to a question on poor healthcare and identity. The prompt question and their reflections are as follows:

1. How did it affect how you see and feel about yourself when you were denied proper healthcare and treatment? Or if you had not experienced your health needs being violated, what was it like to witness someone else go through that experience.

A. /

B. I felt hopeless, useless and angry as I so much wanted to challenge them but I couldn't.

C. It's very saddening to have seen what little healthcare was accessible or available.

D. It was not good and actually made me sad because I personally had to wait to be tended to and it was not good at all.

These reflections constitute personal identity because of its relationship with internal presentation and the self. Individual identity is often coupled with introspective questions of who are "you" in its singular form, and "who am I" (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011:2). The level of self-questioning present requires a level of self-reflection translating into self-definition. Their reflections show a shift in the sense of self as the sadness brought by the lack of healthcare could make individuals feel unworthy of respectful treatment.

In comparison, workshop eight produces themes of fear and feeling purposeless. These two themes were in response to the question about what their sense of identity was like inside prison. Participant A (2022) and B (2022) both defined themselves as fearful. Participant C (2022) and D (2022) defined themselves as purposeless. These responses are a clear indication of self-worth, self-esteem, and self-definition. These feelings were all encompassing and large enough for them to consider it as an aspect of their identity because the question directly addressed identity. However, this workshop also presents growth from these themes. Participants were asked about their current sense of identity since participating in the workshop process. Growth was immediately clear as Participants B, C, and D (2022) reflected creating new versions of themselves through the understandings they generated about their past selves. The unanimous confidence shows growth in their self-definition and self-esteem.

Participant A produced a pattern of growth that showed an existing level of self-definition. As previously stated, she identified as fearful (Participant A, 2022), but when asked about her current sense of identity she stated:

> A. Having time to think about my experiences in prison and reflect on the changes that I have gone through; I realize how much I have changed since my incarceration. So, this workshop has helped me to identify the areas where I have changed.

The reflection indicates that she was already aware that her sense of self had changed in prison and had undergone further changes once she was released. Instead of developing a different version of herself like with the other participants, the workshop process helped her to identify where her sense of identity had changed. Age may factor into this different sense of growth as Participant A was the oldest amongst the participants. However, the emphasis here is on the years of experience as opposed to an age gap. The age factor suggests that personal identity may be in a more fixed state because of the varied experiences that come with age and being born into a different generation. Different generations have distinct lived experiences and varied interpretations of the past and present.

The identity interpretation concludes that relational identity only appeared once through the analysed workshops and presented itself through the transactional role Participant B assumed in prison. Personal identity was present in all participants at various points in the four workshops. The significant growth in identity was present in personal identity through participants' capacity to self-reflect and affirm themselves.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The research, *Transformative Arts Practices in the Criminal Justice System*, intended to examine violations to the Bill of Rights in prisons, specifically the clauses about safety and security, human dignity, healthcare, and living conditions as these were the most common violations experienced amongst participants. The study sought to reveal the impact of these violations on the sense of identity of ex-offenders and parolees. It intended to explore and analyse the impact of these violations through theatrical metaphors produced through storytelling and poetry that represent lived experiences. Image Theatre and Newspaper Theatre practices explored these lived experiences through the body and developed critical thinking about human rights abuses. In these explorations of body and metaphor, this research intended to analyse the components of identity present that emerged from incarceration and thereafter.

The research shows that the subjection of human rights abuses on offenders causes a lasting impact on their sense of identity which remains once they leave the prison system. The most common themes emerging from the explorations of human rights were fear, loneliness, and powerlessness. These experiences were analysed by comparing participant creative work, including reflections, with case studies and reports of abuse in South African prisons.

The research establishes that Image Theatre is an effective mode of presenting the extent of human rights violations. The lack of human dignity presents itself in the embodied images produced, showing the humiliation of a strip-search. The images present the random violence that occurs in prison between offenders and guards, and offenders themselves. These embodied images are further established through Newspaper Theatre, where the stories as testimony, are compared to the mass media's depiction of the South African prison system and its mismanagement. These comparisons show that the media presents surface level truths to the public. It emerged that these half-truths are a result of the DCS failing to provide accurate information about the system's true state, and treatment of the incarcerated.

The process shows that metaphor is an effective means of producing nuanced understanding of a sense of identity in relation to lived experiences. The research defines poetry as a mode of storytelling and shows that metaphors in both story and poetry effectively explore real events because metaphors provide aesthetic distance. Metaphors produce fictional worlds which makes the creative writing products autobiographical fiction because they contain real events of the individual's life put together with fictional elements.

The use of the ‘lines on their hands’ are representative of the lines of their life shows that metaphor is a tool for self-reflection. Participants reflect through these lines which produce glimmers that show growth in the sense of identity from prison to present. Poetry as storytelling concretizes the positive or affirmative elements of identity. These affirmations appear as glimmers in the poetry because the metaphors created are representative of glimmers.

The reflections produced through performative creative writing via the genre of autofiction emphasised that personal identity and relational identity are the two most common components to appear in the research. It was evident that personal and relational identity were the most impacted during the cases of human rights violations. Relational identity was identified as transactional in prison and was shown through reflecting on images produced in workshop two and understanding the need to exchange goods or services in prison to survive.

Personal identity was presented through defining oneself as alone and being defined by one’s sentence. Personal identity emerged from exploring autofiction and was found to be effective in developing capacity to embody affirmative qualities, i.e., glimmers. Workshop five was particularly important in showing this through stories presenting self-reflection on the belief in their individual capabilities to achieve goals.

Recommendations for future research and practice could include ensuring that all data measurement tools are completed and given back to the researcher to provide a clearer set of results and analyses. Future practice could include simplifying the number of activities used within a single practice in one workshop. This would give more time to fully explore and focus on the core activities related to the context of the research. The research could broaden the participant sample to produce a balanced representation of male and female experiences, and a range of ages to measure any changes that may have occurred in the prison system.

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Addenda

A. Informed Consent Document

Participant Consent Form

Title of research project:

Rewriting, redefining, reclaiming identity.

Names of principal researcher(s):

Nawaal Adams

Nature of the research:

Rewriting, Redefining, Reclaiming Identity, intends to explore the experiences of human rights violations in the South African criminal justice system. It intends to understand how the sense of identity amongst ex-prisoners can be reclaimed through the process of performative and autobiographical storytelling and performance. It will use creative writing; fictional and/or autobiographical, and performative strategies to aid in identity exploration and reclamation. These workshops are not therapy based and do not intend to provide therapeutic treatment; however, participants may come to their own experience of catharsis.

Participant's involvement:

(Detail the participant's envisioned involvement, the methods of data collection (written, recorded audio or visuals, etc) and how this data will be presented in the final research), and any other expectations or risks inherent in the project).

The participant will partake in the various creative writing and dramatic activities relating to their sense of identity, in each session. These activities require expression through the body, voice, movement, creative writing explorations. Participants will be given opportunities to share and unpack their stories and physicalised images of identity in relation to human rights violations. The participant will be asked to reflect on these activities with regards to its impact. The participant will be asked to fill out questionnaires pertaining to the impact of each session. They will also be asked to keep a book where they document all of their creative writing throughout the workshop series, their reflections, and notes. Scans or snapshots of these books will be collected for data if the participant consents. The sessions will be recorded as well as snapshots taken. If consent is given, relevant videos of the practice, audio, and transcriptions, will be placed onto a data management site for future research purposes and for the final report. Where participants consent to video and audio uploaded to the data management site, but wish to keep their identity anonymous, accommodations will be made. If the participant consents to having their experiences published in the report and the dissertation, all identities will remain anonymous. If, at any point, the participant wishes to withdraw consent they may do so.

Name of participant:

Contact details: (for informed consent purposes only)

Telephone: **Email**:

Postal Address:

- I agree to participate in this research project.

- I have read this consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions regarding them.

- I agree to my participation, responses and image (if applicable) being used for education and research purposes on condition my privacy is respected, subject to the following:

    - I understand that my personal details may be used in aggregate form only, so that I will not be personally identifiable.
    - Specific permission must be obtained from me, in writing, for any use of my image, in photographic or video form, for any use outside of the scope that is detailed herein, or where I may be personally identified.

Where the project **does not** form part of any degree I am registered for:

- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this project.

- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.

Where the project **does** form part of a degree I am registered for:

- I understand that I am ordinarily obliged to take part in this project but that I may have the right to withdraw from this project subject to clause 8.2 (Participation in Departmental productions) of the UCT Centre for Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies handbook, and subject to consultation with the Director of the Centre.

Further, I attest to the fact that I am eighteen years old or older.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of person who sought consent (Principal Researcher):

_____ Date: 11 April 2022

Name of person who sought consent: Nawaal Adams

B. Glimmer hand poster poem

C. Participant Information

All participants consented to having these biographies written and made public. Preferred pronouns have been used as their gender contributes to their identity.

Participant A

Participant A is a senior member of the Second Chance Theatre Project. She served her sentence in both Pollsmoor Prison and Worcester Prison. However, most of her sentence was spent in Worcester prison and therefore has more experience of the human rights violations in that space. She is an avid writer having taken part in many script writing competitions when inside prison. She has created many scripts for the company's productions.

Participant B

Participant B is a senior member of the Second Chance Theatre project. He joined the project in 2018 when it was still a theatre company working inside of prison. He served his sentence in Pollsmoor prison; therefore, his stories and reflections are based on his experiences within that setting. He is an avid facilitator with sound engineer skills, an advantage during touring productions.

Participant C

Participant C joined the Second Chance Theatre Project in early 2021. He served time in both Goodwood and Pollsmoor prison with the majority of his time spent in Pollsmoor over the years. He is passionate and engaging both as a facilitator and performer. He has leadership skills which includes running his church's youth group.

Participant D

Participant D joined the Second Chance Theatre Project in early 2021. He served 5 days of his sentence in Pollsmoor prison until his transfer to Drakenstein Medium B Youth Centre in Paarl. Therefore, providing experiences and testimonies of human rights violations in a youth correctional centre. He is a spirited facilitator and a fitness enthusiast with skills that significantly serve in warming up and training bodies pre-performance and workshops.