

Re-thinking audio documentary: reflections from the production

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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 other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____ Date: 16.08.2010

In this paper I explore and explain the thinking and production process behind my Masters Degree creative production work for the University of Cape Town. I will be looking into the challenges I faced but also the logic according to which I worked. My project includes an e-book called *Thinking and Doing: content based audio* and an audio documentary mini-series *There is a Human Being by the Side of the Road* which consists of two parts called *Woman* and *Man*.

This paper looks into the broad concept that all my submitted work relates to; the audio documentaries. Having explored many sides of documentaries in my e-book, in this paper, I am connecting some of those ideas together with my own production work and the existing academic literature relevant to my topics. I will also critically engage with both rather distinct aspects of my production; audio documentaries and the e-book, and offer the logic behind my choice of licensing of all my work, before finally concluding this paper.

At the very end the actual audio documentary scripts are added as appendices.

Theories of documentaries in relation to the production

In order to understand the broader context where my production – both its aspects – exists I will start by theorising the documentary work in general leading towards the audio documentaries. I do this with an aim to connect the existing theories with my experiences, but it is noteworthy to mention here in the very beginning that the ongoing theoretical debates are characterised by their distinct lack of acknowledging the audio documentary work. Later, when I

write more in detail about the e-book I have written, I will touch on this topic a little bit more, but for now, I will explore the connections of some existing theories and my audio documentary mini-series *There is a Human Being by the Side of the road*.

Robert Coles (1997) lists the genres of documentary as written, photographic and filmed (20). Keeping in mind that he does not view audio without a visual aspect as something that falls under his definition of documentary work – I assume this to be perhaps due to the relatively rare nature of audio documentaries, rather than that the audio work would not demand the same kind of considerations – he defines documentary work as a

twofold struggle: that of writers and photographers and filmmakers who attempt to ascertain what *is*, what can be noted, recorded, pictured; and that of presentation – how to elicit the interest of others, and how to provide a context, so that incident, for instance, is connected to the conditions that informed and prompted its occurrence.

Coles, R. 1997: 20

A documentary can be seen as an act of communication between its producer and audience. It mediates the reality and although the concept of *truth* is very complicated, the ideas expressed and the events covered should be honest and verifiable (Hampe 2007: 10).

The responsibility of production where the producer attempts to tell the truth is tremendous. Perhaps the strength of the documentary, as opposed to a news story for instance, is the higher probability to leave the receiver to decode the

message without highlighting the obvious opinions. Even if the opinion of the producer is pushed forward, in any meaningful documentary enough information is provided for the decoder to make up his/her own mind. Of course other methods can be used here to frame the topic with bias, but perhaps this is then the responsibility mentioned. To a large extent the decoder is the imaginer who also relies on his/her own world view to receive the message and can also choose not to receive it, or receive it in a way that it supports the values and opinions already existing regardless of its content.

The style of my documentaries is human interest story rather than news or reporting. It was, in fact, the notion of reporting that these documentaries were a departure from, for me. Instead I viewed myself purely as a participant observer who experienced the situation on behalf of the listener. I view my own character as an important one to support the narrative. Through my experience the listener can perhaps relate to the story if they are unable to relate to the interviewees, but the reflection of my own experience makes it impossible for me to be objective – which never really was my goal anyway – because I had made a conscious decision to aim for a realistic experience and a story that has no obvious good or bad – right or wrong – the one undeniable and universally agreed *truth*. This kind of positioning of self is rare in audio documentaries, but it is an important consideration because as a reporter I could have, at best, compile in all probability an all too simplified and narrow story that leaves most of the facts out and completely ignores the human element in the broader context of the industries and trades I was covering.

I wanted to distance myself from the truth in the documentaries I have produced in a sense of the word that it would be absolute and not just personal. I did not want to tackle complex social and even societal questions from an angle that they are simple or that one truth – absolute by its nature – should exist. It was my attempt to explore a person's (who was me) experiences with other person's (my subject) reality. Therefore the truth in a sense that it could be at most understood here is my truth of another person's truth, but nothing further than that. It is hardly universal or absolute, but just a snapshot of reality; a case study that only proves that what you have heard exists somehow and that it has made you feel, think or act, or left you untouched. I have had no interest in trying to quantify how things are with any academic exact measure as I felt that statistics would diminish the humanity of my interviewees.

Admittedly the original idea for the *There is a Human Being by the side of the Road* audio documentary mini-series came out of a twofold frustration: the lack of understanding of the differences in the South African public discourse and my personal need to get off the computer for a while to talk to real people – South Africans who are not being asked for opinions as often. I always saw, and still do, these documentaries as my small contribution, if only in principle, to the public discourse highlighting what I felt it was in need of; understanding of how South Africans are, live and think by different types of South Africans. This time I selected individuals from very specific segments of society which are often stigmatised; but the really important thing behind any of this work is that it is not offered as something to really explain anything but how these human beings

think and what kind of stories there may be behind people I have seen by the side of the road.

The stylistic guideline for the documentaries was simplicity and lack of gimmicks. There was a level of rawness that I wanted to remain in the sound, presentation and content in the edit. An example of this is that, although I spent a long time cleaning the interviews, I did not want them to lose the very essence of the characters that at times manifested itself in the way they spoke, and also on the other hand, while I used the stereo field when creating the atmosphere, I wanted to leave the overall sound very raw and almost a little bit unsettling because the situations of the interviews were at least initially just that. It may take a moment for the listener to get used to it, just like it did for me. This effect may be very subtle, should it even actually realistically be part of the listening experience, but I wanted it to be there even on a level that is less actively conscious. The effect was also about the experience I wanted to communicate, and that experience is more holistic than just words from a person's mouth.

Hampe (2007) suggests that the success of the documentary is measured by how effectively the messages are communicated to their audiences (10). I was thinking about the function of these documentaries for quite a bit. What impact I would wish them to have, where and to whom, and it was that, that informed the style – which I would consider raw and less commercial – that I followed. Originally I had thought about calling the series *Walk With Me*, but when I decided to change that I considered also *Just Listen*. The idea was disqualified soon, but I mention it because that was simply what I wanted the listener to do;

to listen and not prejudge or think they already know and even more so, they know better than my interviewees how their life is, but just to give this story a chance. I never wanted to sugar-coat it or even make it particularly easy to listen to. The only bait I have for the potential audience is a good interesting story – I believe in it – and if they do not share that belief they will probably miss it. These topics are not easy or simple and if a listener is open to hear them, they will, but if not, no gimmick is likely to make them listen anyway.

I had started the production with stations like SAfm or BBC World in mind, but as the production went further, I decided that this time doing justice to the material is more important than fitting it into a format an editor might require. Like said, I did not want to divert the attention from what I felt was important by just adding more voices. Also, I do not wish to sell the material to someone who in order for that to happen must own all the rights and therefore block any other possible broadcasting of this work. Having the final products ready, I think they could still fit into these stations, perhaps, but primarily I want to give them for free to people to listen to. The documentaries can be listened to and downloaded online and I am looking into ways to avail them to the community radios should they be interested in broadcasting this mini-series.

As far as the audience goes, these documentaries will work for open minded people mainly; people who can admit that things are complicated and who are willing and able to change their opinions if the need and evidence arise. I do believe that anyone who has the patience can listen to them, but since I had let go of any direct financial expectations and focused on the participation to the public

discourse, and to promote my name in the various professional radio fields, I had no reason to take any short cuts with the material or its logic.

The stories told in the documentaries, like said, are individual examples and very selective. It is probably true – to paraphrase Jonathan Glover (2001: 3) – that in order to participate in the public discourse in any meaningful way one must be very selective. It was not my goal to make documentaries about sex work industry or being a casual labourer, not to even mention underemployment, but rather to produce case studies of the individuals and their circumstances. I make no claims that they are representative of the broader context within which we often – be it just or not – view these persons. It would have simply been too big of a task to try to, for instance, cover the sex industry in South Africa or even in Cape Town, and I doubt that one could very easily make a documentary that would be anything but an indication of what it might be.

The nature of the documentaries was such that it was difficult to find too many different people who would be willing to talk about either sex work – the clients for example – and at the same time the clients of the men on the side of the road, but instead of spending days or weeks of trying to find these reluctant people, I cut my losses early on and focused on the stories of the individuals in questions in detail. I left out some interviews also because I wanted the two documentaries to have a similar structure and style and not have too many people contributing. Conventionally it is seen that a documentary could, even perhaps should have a few more interviewees, but since these pieces were always supposed to be more like profiles of human beings than a coverage of a trade or industry, there was no

need to crowbar more voices in. In retrospect I am convinced that it was a strike of luck that I did not have other interviews to confuse the message. Having said that, I did other interviews, and for both documentaries I left a lot of material and even whole interview unused, as I did not want the documentaries to lose focus.

The research that I did to prepare me for the production was just generally looking into the publications made out of sex work in Cape Town and as a coincidence at the time of production I was working with the African Labour Radio News at the Workers World Media Production in Cape Town, so I was dealing with labour realities on weekly basis which gave me a lot of insight to approach the second part of the series with a casual labourer. I also personally went to talk to, and recorded interviews at the offices of the organisations Men on the Side of the Road and SWEAT (Sex Worker Advocacy Taskforce), and some of the material recorded I also used for context in part one. I viewed my documentaries as journeys and therefore I wanted to also experience and to be able to record and share the research, and that is especially what the additional audio material specifically in the part two is, but also in general, what the whole mini-series is about.

From the practical production perspective it is not good enough to just talk to someone who happens to be a sex worker or a casual labourer – you need an interesting individual who is able to express and explain. There is an element of luck – good or bad – that comes into play when you approach the people, as you do not know how suitable they will be. I had very good luck in this regard, especially with Nancy – the sex worker – who was very sincere and open. That

was my wish for these documentaries and having done both of them myself and talking to the people I feel that the end results reflect the interviewees in a very realistic way. The other characters, besides the main interviewees and myself were included to add context for the main profile. I wanted to have audio that would put the opinions and anecdotes of the main characters into a some kind of framework as otherwise it could have been difficult to determine what to think about them. In part one, I interviewed Vivianne Lalu from SWEAT, an organisation that works for the betterment of the working conditions for sex workers and her academic approach and good engaging expression gave the documentary some hard facts to support the narrative. In part two I wanted to provide the context with some sound tape atmospheric audio which also supports the main interviewee's claim of endless waits and no work available. Both of the additional audio provides us with signposts in making sense of the thoughts and feelings the full documentaries may bring about.

One of my fundamental aspects of the production before its start was to avoid *othering* – approaching the concept from an idea that what I am is normal, at least more so, than what my subjects are. In my view that kind of arrogance at best leads to complete misunderstanding or an attempt to try to understand other person's reality through the framework of your own whether there are any similarities or not. In the final documentaries I had to approach the subject as me – the difference was of course so great – but I did my best to avoid the feeling of seeing myself as a standard, but rather just another person. Of course, pretending that I was used to the kinds of realities my interviewees talked to me about would have been both patronising and pretentious.

It is for these reasons that the way I positioned myself was also an important consideration for me. I mentioned that on a level of interaction I was rather an observer of an experience and my reactions, as they were, reflected that I was not untouched by the story, and hopefully that managed to communicate the important personal aspect that often is overlooked. Slightly different, but not any less important was the additional voice-work and the script. It was important for me that the scripts and voice-overs did not differ from the rest of the material too much so that the mood of the street environment would not be broken. I felt that it is important to provide some context and analysis, but to avoid giving explanations as they could result with a sense of misplaced simplicity of the topic. I also did not want to offer any explanations as I had none and I am unsure of there generally being any, and the general attempt to find them does not always do justice to the actual circumstances of the people like the ones I interviewed.

While primarily a radio student, I have always had a specific interest also on visual communication in the form of photography and graphic design. Before getting into the specifics of the e-book I have written, I want to include a few leading ideas of the CD cover designs I have made for these documentaries. The title embedded into a Stop sign – relatively universal as it is – communicates the message I hope to communicate: stop and listen. It takes a symbol we well know, but uses it in a different context which perhaps suggest the need for re-thinking or that the content might not be what it initially appears to be. A simplistic typography – borrowing from the newspaper headlines of yesteryear – promises no gimmicks, but catches our attention. I decided to add a small cross-promotion

in the CD sleeve as well, since the e-book is available online for free, it is by the producer of these documentaries and it is part of the broader concept and therefore may be of interest to the listener. Of course, most listeners would not see the covers as such, but they are made available online. The information; visual and otherwise, is not designed to be crucial, but additional and one can listen the documentaries without it, still having a clear idea, or with them perhaps with some added information received.

E-book Thinking and Doing: content based audio

Another part of my final submission is the e-book *Thinking and Doing: content based audio* which is aimed at people – primarily university undergraduate students – who are interested in learning about making audio documentaries or other content based audio. The idea has its roots in teaching the undergraduate students at the University of Cape Town. While I was giving feedback to a class of students for their small audio packages, I realised that on one hand they had a sincere interest in improving their work, and on other realising that the strengths and weaknesses were rather shared than unique to each student, so I wanted to write something about it. I thought initially this would be a blog post or maybe a few separate ones, but with time it became clear to me that it would be insufficient for what I wanted to say, and I started mapping out an outline and structure for an e-book.

The literature on documentary productions as practices or texts are rare in radio studies. The radio textbook written by Franz Krüger (2006) summarises the way they are often perceived in the field of South African radio. As an afterthought to

his chapter on reporting in radio, he says “longer packages are known as documentaries. They are rare on South African radio”(40). He is partly right; documentaries are not very common in many radio stations and on the public broadcaster SABC’s stations they are featured mainly in one weekly slot on Sundays on SAfm. This blunt observation, however, overlooks the fact that on community radio where the resources are limited and licences and mandates different, the various internationally produced documentaries are more commonplace and many local ones are broadcasted as well. It is not my intention to prove Krüger’s point wrong in my e-book, but to explore another idea which perhaps is much more difficult to quantify – the potential of documentary in an audio format online and on-air. The different approaches make my e-book complementary, rather than competing text to Krüger’s, in an area that has not been written much about especially in South Africa. Based on that, I would like to argue that there is, and has been, a need for my writing.

As a concept, audio documentary is problematic by its nature. What makes it complicated is the programming decisions made on various stations. These programming decisions are, in all probability, not informed by the impossibility of the genre because of its textual qualities, but its political economy. In South African radio the documentaries on SABC are poorly paid and on community sector possibly even unpaid, but mostly free of charge international productions (this raises many other questions about their usefulness to the community, community participation and ownership, but is not the focus of my attention here). I am not using too much time here to address my thoughts on the revisited political economy for audio documentaries, as in my e-book I have dedicated one

segment for it, but I conclude, that finding a way of utilising the technique in a financially feasible way could open an opportunity to a renaissance for these kinds of documentaries and other content based audio. For that to happen, the industry would have to admit the need to redefine its practices and embrace the possibility with creative and open minds. Nothing that I have seen suggest that this is to happen on any significant level in the South African mainstream industry in an immediate future.

The idea of an e-book was hardly a coincidence as I have been interested in this way of self-publishing and making content available freely online for some time. It is all part of an idea that in the time of social production, as Yochai Benkler (2006) introduced the response to the market based production, what may have been seen as a product before, such as this kind of e-book, has become a tool in promotion. I wanted to promote myself as a lecturer of radio and at the time it was also very crucial as I was in the middle of an application process to a position that would match my writing. The application process may have been unsuccessful and the e-book was not ready for that time either, but the rationale was very much linked to the real world situation I found myself in. The same rationale that I was following was also partly inspired by independent musicians who exist outside of the corporate major label structures; giving free music to fans ensures that fans can come to the concerts, buy the records or get some other merchandise. When it comes to these artists, the more established industry of record companies and radio stations are as little help as I felt the publishing industry would have been for me and my very targeted and specific publication that I feel passionate about, and for which I know there exists an equally

passionate target audience, but probably not enough for it to make sense purely as an artefact with mainly a financial definition. Another option was to try to independently sell the e-book, but that to me did not sound like a sensible idea as even a small fee would have decreased my potential readership dramatically and that would have made the professionally self-promotional aspect very weak, if not non-existent.

On top of the factors I listed as justification to go with an electronic e-book rather than a printed one is the increasing availability of technology; computers and mobile devices to use for the reading. Without this trend even the free distribution and lack of manufacturing costs, would not have made the concept sensible. The future is hard to predict, but the trends suggest that services like Google Books or Apple's iBook might become dominant actors in publishing, much like what services like iTunes, also by Apple, has done in the field of music sales and distribution. I have used the comparisons to the music industry now a few times in this paper, and it is my view that the lessons that have been learned from that field in general in the past few years are very useful and incredibly significant in the near future with e-books and perhaps other media texts as well.

The lack of any direct financial expectation and the hope of raising awareness of my work, it was very important to licence this work appropriately for there not to be, even if only theoretical, chance for people not to spread this work as far and wide as possibly needed. It was for that reason that I chose the Creative Commons licences that enable the information to be used as it is best seen fit by anyone in the public sphere with the exception of trying to sell it without my

permission. A little later I will get more specifically into the licensing of all the aspects of my production.

The actual e-book is structured as a textbook for the students and each segment could easily be transformed into a lecture so that all of them combined would result with an effective course on the topic. I had thought about the option of including suggested tasks for the students in the end of each segment, but I find that for a teacher, it is better to come up with one's own tasks as necessary so that they make sense in the specific context and time of teaching. As a lecturer, I would not wish to have them in a book written by someone else, and even if left unused, they would be there to clutter the actual segments.

The philosophy of this book – as if it was a teaching philosophy – is to provide tools of work and ideas of how to do, instead of telling how one has to do it. The book is about teaching what kinds of things to consider and through that to learn how to do. My goal was not to write a checklist of how to imitate a certain way of doing, but rather how to be able to work out a way to express oneself in an individual, creative and effective way, but still making sense within the framework of the conventional industry. It has been written in a style that aims to have the academic accuracy and holistic approach which does not simplify matters in any populist manner, but so that it is perhaps easier to relate to with anecdotal reflections from the real world industry.

The look and feel of the e-book is designed for the online and digital use. The layout and the links are created considering the act of reading taking place on a

computer or another suitable device, rather than on print. I do not oppose the e-book being printed, but I find text on the computer often easier to consult when working on some project – amongst other things it is searchable – and perhaps for the image of the e-book the environmental non-printing aspect is nicely in line with the zeitgeist.

The e-book has only now – at the time of writing this paper – entered the public sphere and it is my current project to get a few universities interested in it. University of Cape Town has expressed interest in using it as a reading material and I am talking about a similar arrangement with the university where I studied my undergraduate degree. At this point it is impossible to say how well it will work in the industry, but realistically it has the potential to find its useful place. How will it live to that potential will be an interesting case study on using such content in the way I have described here.

Licensing analysed

An important – also partly characterising – aspect of my production was the way I chose to license it. I have used Creative Commons licenses, so that all of the material is relatively freely usable and sharable to whoever finds it useful. With Creative Commons the right-holders can release certain rights of their work, which they can specify by selecting the appropriate licence from existing options (Boyle 2008: 180). Creative Commons as a concept is not against copyright; it is a kind of copyright, only more flexible potentially offering a solution to gain more

balance between commercial and non-commercial cultures, should it get more popular amongst the right holders.

My choice to use these kinds of licences is partly to raise awareness about them, like I do in my e-book as well, but mainly just to allow the use (not abuse) of my productions. It is also noteworthy that for an independent producer like me copyright is not necessarily purely a helpful incentive for creativity, since even dealing with the public broadcaster in South Africa, a standard clause in the contract ensures that all the rights of the to the work go to the broadcaster. This is quite a common occurrence (Copy / South Dossier 2006: 12), and in that light it is questionable to claim the copyright to function as a just reward for creativity if it is not owned by the creator of the text (Haupt 2008: 77). Of course, the currently relatively dominant media consumption practices are hardly respectful towards the copyright laws as they are.

For my productions the Creative Commons licences allow the people to share, print and borrow them freely, and also that non-commercial radio stations can play my work free of charge as long as they attribute it to me. One could include the community radio sector to that (although it is not a simple or monolithic sector either), and the e-book can easily and freely be used as part of teaching by any institution, organisation or individual. Only selling it is out of bounds. For the purposes of my production, holding on to the full copyrights would have been – if only in theory, but nonetheless – counterproductive.

Conclusion

In this paper I have looked into the specifics of my creative production as required for the completion of my Masters degree in Media Theory and Practice in the University of Cape Town. Besides the specifics, I have also explored the overarching thinking – a philosophy if you will – of the process.

All the work that has been submitted reflect the thinking that understands the convention, questions it and then decides what works best. I have not had interest in breaking rules in anarchy without knowing or understanding them or just out of principle, but while it is important to have the knowledge that has been accumulating through the years, there is no need to stop there, but to take it further. The success of this kind of standing on the shoulders of giants is always very relative, but so are most things in life. Some would always prefer the old ways, but without trying, new and improved ways could never be created. This is, especially with the e-book, really the key idea, and it is an important one specifically for its primary target audience which is university students.

I made mention that the real test for this material is still ahead. It is too early to talk too much about the response to this work at the time when this analysis needs to be submitted. It is clear, however, that for the material to be meaningful in practice and not just in theory, it needs to be used – read and heard – as otherwise its production would have been an act that does not relate to media and communication industry, but would only act as evidence of practical skills potentially useful in those fields. Having worked in this industry for over a decade, that on its own would seem like a shallow victory. Regardless of the lack

of any hard evidence, there is promise of the material to have its place online and on-air, and even if it still is merely a speculation, I feel very confident with the chances of the documentaries and the e-book alike.

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Appendices

- Script for audio documentary There is a Human Being by the Side of the Road Part 1: Woman.
- Script for audio documentary There is a Human Being by the Side of the Road Part 2: Man.

Audio documentary script

There is a Human Being by the side of the road

Part 1: Woman

By Mikko Kapanen

Credits:

This is part one of the audio documentary mini-series there is a Human Being by the Side of the road... This episode it is titled Woman, and it is produced by Mikko Kapanen.

SFX

Traffic noises panning from side to side

Clip 1. (dur: 13 sec)

Start: It's normal, there's nothing so much about it....

End: ...as people wanna make it out .

Link 1.

It's warm... even a bit hot evening in Cape Town South Africa... I'm walking down the main road from the direction of Claremont towards Kenilworth and Wynberg. The houses are quite posh looking really. This is a nice area.. many of the cars look expensive.. or at the very least they aren't cheap ones and very few people are walking. These cars are driving past, some of them looking around them.. this place has very distinct characteristics... the sex workers.. women by the side of the road nonchalantly looking like they are there just because, but it's quite obvious that they are there because of a very

specific reasons. The sun has just set and the area is getting dark.. it's here I meet Nancy.

Clip 2. (dur: 25 sec)

Start: circumstances – my husband left me....

End: ...You have to do that.

SFX: Traffic

Clip 3. (dur: 3min 3 sec)

Start: My doctor don't want to....

End: ...keep myself to myself.

SFX: Traffic

Link 2.

Sex as work.. it's somehow a very curious thing... sex as an idea is partly stigmatised and rest of it is treated like a joke. Male sexuality especially seems to be summarised as some kind of unquestioned masculine uncontrollable inevitable thing that must just be understood regardless of its consequences... well, I am not really here to judge.. I have no interest in that, but I am very interested to learn more about sex as a work.. or even as a business. The way it's talked outside the sexist jokes. I don't know what to think about Nancy.. she seems so hardened by its all.. she didn't choose this from many good options.. she chose this because she felt it was the least bad, and she is emotionally very detached from it...

SFX: Traffic

Clip 4. (dur: 35 sec)

Start: For me this is my income....

End: ...it's pathetic.

SFX: Traffic

Clip 5. (dur: 39 sec)

Start: I used to look at the girls.....

End: ...the police doesn't protect us.

SFX: Traffic

Link 3.

Rape... Essentially the woman who I am talking with is raped every so often.. perhaps a few times a week. I always knew this is a tough industry, but I am really taken aback by the thought of this person.. I quite like her.. she's very friendly towards me, she presents herself in a respectful manner... she's smart and observant and I'm learning so much from our chat... but she's raped so often and there's not a thing I can do about it. My own privilege, at this very moment becomes clearer than it has ever been before.

SFX: Traffic

Clip 6. (dur: 1min 42 sec)

Start: I wanted to stand...

End: ... get yourself a criminal record.

Link 4.

Nancy has a curious way of interpreting the law.. some of it she seems quite strict about and shows no understanding to the ones who cross those lines, but law doesn't protect her profession... that she categorically ignores.

SFX: Traffic

According to the law in South Africa prostitution is illegal – Whether to buy or sell it.. SWEAT an organisation which acronym stands for Sex worker Education Advocacy Taskforce is working for more rights and better conditions for sex workers. They work to have sex work legalised.. so that it is protected by law... their starting point are the human rights. I went to their offices where I met Vivianne Lalu... she talked to me about the industry in general and in Cape Town.

SFX: telephone and atmosphere of entering the SWEAT offices

Clip 7. (dur: 3min 8 sec)

Start: We did a piece of research ...

End: ... through those debates.

SFX: Traffic

Link 5.

We as people seem to like to make emotional call about sex work and then to figure out a logic that makes it to appear rational. Like with so many things, the symptoms are focused on instead of the causes...

SFX: Traffic atmosphere crossfades underneath and become the evening traffic where the main interview takes place

Back on the streets... Nancy continues to share her experiences... she has been working for an agency, like the ones that Vivianne from Sweat mentioned, so she also knows what they're about....

Clip 8. (dur: 1min 56 sec)

Start: Prior to my marriage ...

End: ... a lot of countries has it.

SFX: traffic

Clip 9. (dur: 1min 8 sec)

Start: After my marriage ...

End: ... what's gonna happen to them.

SFX: traffic

Clip 10. (dur: 52 sec)

Start: Now something I ...

End: ... as bad as Aids.

SFX: traffic

Clip 11. (dur: 2min 56 sec)

Start: Tell me about your ...

End: ... without five cents in my life.

Link 6.

Before meeting Nancy, I thought perhaps it's this job that's cynical... and of course the life that goes with it.. the conditions where it comes from.. And how going to work in the evening might be scary for many of these women.. With Nancy, that's the best bit of her reality... she's not bothered about her reality because she has only, in her opinion, worse options to choose from. It's all very melancholic... I haven't talked to other girls or women, but Nancy strikes me as mature and level headed, perhaps more than I expected although, I really had no reason to assume anything.. But she isn't as young as many other people I see. Even though she said she's a loner, perhaps she also is a bit of mother figure on the streets. She says she tries to offer her advice to some younger girls who have a good income coming in right now.

Clip 12. (dur: 1min 41 sec)

Start: I've said to them ...

End: ... as people make it out.

SFX: cars

Link 7.

I've enjoyed meeting Nancy... I must admit I was nervous when I first approached her. Do I agree with what she does – I don't know... it's not ideal, but then it's not an ideal world, and perhaps the most important thing I did learn from Nancy is that it's complicated. Like most things are... And I don't want to take sides for or against what she does, because neither will remove the real problems at hand... Nancy puts up a brave face when she talks to me.. perhaps it's her street attitude, and probably it is, but I'm sensing that somewhere deep in her being there's massive disappointment in life which she has veiled with cold rational philosophy of survival. She is many things, a mother, a daughter.. and someone who sells sex for living.. and you can think whatever you want, but she is real.. she isn't a statistic but she isn't alone either.

SFX: traffic

Clip 13. (dur: 10 sec)

Start: It's a trade that won't come to an end ...

End: ... discreet way.

SFX: traffic

Clip 14. (dur: 38 sec)

Start: If you can't live with it ...

End: ... so what must we do.

SFX: *traffic fades out*

Audio documentary script

There is a Human Being by the side of the road

Part 2: Man

By Mikko Kapanen

Credits:

This is part two of the audio documentary mini-series there is a Human Being by the Side of the road... This episode it is titled Man, and it is produced by Mikko Kapanen.

SFX: Traffic noises

Clip 1. (dur: 38 sec)

Start: The rain... it's raining....

End: ...what must I do now.

Link 1.

It's around midday and I'm walking in quite central Cape Town.. ... The weather is cloudy today...the heavy rains of the morning have disappeared already, but it's not really a warm day... Today, I'm trying to find out about the life of men on the side of the road. The casual labourers who every morning come here.. and many other places for that matter to look for a job.. I suppose Ideally they'd like to have a proper job that would last for as long as possible, but the

reality is that a few days.. or even a one day job is a bit of strike of luck. It can't be taken for granted..

On few corners around me I see the men sitting and waiting.. I think they're looking at my direction in case I'm the one who's gonna hire them and I must admit I find myself.. for now.. sort of avoiding the eye contact. The life here doesn't look very easy, but for many it's a standard..... just like it's standard to try to improve it ... Vusi is one of these guys...

Clip 2. (dur: 1min 28 sec)

Start: I'm 32 years...

End: ...Looking for other bosses.

SFX: short traffic

Clip 3. (dur: 47 sec)

Start: I used to be a bright guy

End: ...I have to buy something to eat.

Link 2.

Vusi is being very open with me... perhaps he's hoping that I could help him...I'm sensing him balancing a hope that maybe the interview

will improve his situation and on the other hand the realistic scepticism that it might not be enough for that to happen.. but he's still talking to me... Maybe he just isn't being asked that often so he wants to use the opportunity to share whatever its worth... or just to kill the time..

Vusi is a good example of South Africa today.. with all the talk about transformation, freedom and equal opportunity, he's done all of his schooling before any of that started even in theory. And he's only in his early thirties, most of his working life still ahead of him.

SFX: traffic

Clip 4. (dur: 1min 38 sec)

Start: I'm tiler...

End: ... if you want to buy that stuff.

SFX: traffic

Clip 5. (dur: 51 sec)

Start: I've got two kids...

End: ... they are my kids, mos, my brother you see.

SFX: traffic

Link 3.

There are many sides to this story and I guess many of the problems are systemic.. whether inheritance of the old system of apartheid or

slowness in the delivery of the new South Africa, which arguably is the inheritance – at least part of it – of the old South Africa... these are the big questions of job creation and training the people who could use it.. things like that, but then on the actual every day level, there are the people who employ these men. I was hanging around spending some time, but I didn't see any so I didn't really get to witness a pick up...and how the actual hiring happens and how the negotiations go.. I wanted to know more about it so I went to talk to Elisha... he's working for an organisation which actually is called men on the side of the road, He's located on the raodside of Wynberg, Cape Town. The non-profit organisation Men on the side of the road has tried to organise the trade.. they've registered the workmen and their skills and these men can then also be booked through their call centre... But the men are now sitting on the pavement and waiting.. Elisha talks to me about the weather and how it impacts the day...

Clip 6. (dur: 1min 25 sec)

Start: It's very central here...

End: ... life is very difficult.

Link 4.

Hours of waiting day after day doesn't sound much fun...I came here with hope to be able to witness a pick up.. to see someone coming and hiring one of the men, but it appears that against my wish.. and definitely, against the wishes of the workmen I've witnessed no one coming.. Sometimes, even many times of course, the men are hired, but on too many occasions they aren't; and there definitely isn't any guarantees in the morning when you wake up..

Clip 7. (dur: 1min 38 sec)

Start: You see, to be frank with you...

End: ... it's permanent in their lives.

Link 5.

I'm feeling pretty unsettled just by the cars driving past next to us.. and often you hear people saying that these guys are just lazy.. they don't want to work, but to me they look like they want nothing more than that.. but Elisha tells me that it isn't always so clear cut.

Clip 8. (dur: 2min 9 sec)

Start: You see, I have to be balanced with you...

End: ... Then you've got work.

SFX: traffic

Link 6.

Back in central Cape Town.. Vusi who is one of the guys who aren't registered with the organisation but only relies his own luck, has different experiences to what Elisha was talking about... he starts explaining me why on an informal level the Identity Book isn't what helps with the income....

Clip 9. (dur: 37 sec)

Start: Me, I'm just thinking...

End: ... the guy from other country, you see.

SFX: traffic

Clip 10. (dur: 1min 44 sec)

Start: Here in South Africa...

End: ... so we think, e-e, these guys.

SFX: traffic

Link 7.

I know that I oppose violence, especially the type that has taken place between some South Africans and other African citizens in the townships.. but what I don't know is how I would feel if I found myself first after living through apartheid still sitting and waiting and seeing other people, almost anyone, to be more employable than me... that's not to say I condone, only that I can't take any moral high ground as the situation is so hypothetical. But It seems clear that to

do away with the problem, what is needed is something more than awareness raising campaigns and big words of unity; African or otherwise.

Originally Vusi started more carefully by saying there are some guys saying that the other nationals must go, but as he talks it changes more to his opinion than just reporting the hearsay... it all comes from his version of the truth.. his experiences on the streets, but whether the facts in his stories are always absolutely accurate or not, the feeling he shares with his fellow job seekers on the road, is not an act.

I had asked about these things from Men on the side of the road.. the actual organisation who deal with these matters and their message was that the matter is a little bit more complicated than what it's made out to be like... and to have more balanced view they said it's also a question of work ethics.. they said South African workmen have a habit of politicking and the one's from outside just do the job. its perhaps because of less options due to their lack of papers and permits .. so there's complaints from both sides.. from all sides actually, but in all this, the conflict that is an outcome of perhaps years of frustration and losing hope manifests itself amongst the workers against the 'other'. I think this is how anti-immigration feelings work in every country; only, in south Africa the extreme conditions create extreme reactions.

SFX: traffic

Clip 10. (dur: 1min 21 sec)

Start: This guy, they are working...

End: ... I'm not stupid man.

SFX: traffic

Link 8.

The new South Africa is very young, and unfortunately while the change happens constantly, it's not always as quick as people would wish.. It's quite natural, but at the same time it is no doubt frustrating and that's why it's easier to talk about the statistics, as grim as they may be, than the actual real human beings.. Vusi, essentially, is unemployed... or at the very least underemployed.

There's many people who are just like him... men and women..

These matters aren't simple, but what does someone like Vusi hope and dream from the future.. what would be his best case scenario..

Clip 12. (dur: 5 min 11 sec)

Start: You know, I've got house already...

End: ... as a general, I'm not free.

SFX: traffic

Link 9.

Education... Vusi didn't have the best chances to study.. he went to school in the 80's in the township of apartheid South Africa... that hardly created a level playing field and no democratic election changes that, because no democratic election can undo the past...

Vusi seems quite bitter about his lack of education. He sees the education to be the key to good life. Granted he had his own share of trouble in school, and he dropped out to look for a job, but he had his circumstances as well...

These are not simple matters... as a man Vusi seems to be quite conservative of his chances in life to be all that he can, but as a father he hope his children will have more access

Clip 12. (dur: 27 sec)

Start: I'm thinking like that...

End: ... it's nothing.

SFX: traffic fades out
