

Sediment: Palimpsest spaces and Polyphonic voices

Scenographic Exploration of Palimpsest, Polyphony, and Site-Specific Theatre

Daniella Mizrachi / MZRDAN001

A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfillment* of the requirements for the award
of the degree of The Masters in Theatre and Performance

Faculty of the Humanities

University of Cape Town

2024

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: Daniella Mizrachi

Date: 1 May 2024

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Acknowledgements

With heartfelt thanks to:

All the staff at the Centre for Theatre Dance and Performance at UCT for their continuous support.

Thank you to Leigh Bishop, Dilshaad Jack and the wonderful woman working in the Wardrobe department, for being my home away from home. Thank you to Lungile Cindi, Mark Miller and Justin Jacobs in the Workshop department, who never failed to support and lend a hand when I needed it.

Thank you to Jenni-lee Crewe for her patience and guidance for both my undergraduate degree and now my Masters.

Thank you to my mentor and the woman who has inspired me always, Cathy Dodders.

Thank you to my family, Emma/Mama/Mom/Mother, Abba/Father/Dad and my brother Mathew/Tookie/Meesa, who drove me mad, but kept me sane.

Thank you to my friends, to all the late-night calls, discord conversations and the promise of waffles.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Scenography as the creative method.....	5
Creative context.....	8
Play (2022)	12
Hauntology as the theoretical lens.....	18
Site-specific intervention.....	22
Present Past (2022).....	24
Palimpsest and Polyphony as techniques to engage with heritage sites.....	30
References.....	34

Introduction

This explication serves as a way to try understand how to create a scenographic site-specific intervention into spaces of performances, theatrical or non-theatrical. By creating a dialogue between scenography as the creative method and hauntology as the theoretical underpinning, a performance which is rich in history and visual stimuli emerges. Hauntology and scenography help generate a language between the past of a site and the present socio-political context it exists in.

What is being proposed, is a way in which to use a site's history whether it is part of a broader history; an accumulation of traumatic events; or as simple as a personal experience, to create performances which are visually rich and consider the possible presences that exist in these spaces. This presence is a spectre or phantom, something invisible but exists nonetheless. 'Hauntology' as coined by Jacques Derrida refers to the spectre (Derrida, 1994:2), something that has the capability to haunt and affect those around it, whether it is a person, a book or a building. There is a presence of the past that has the ability to haunt the bodies of the performers and the performance itself. Hauntology lays the foundation for understanding how to approach and respect chosen sites through acknowledging the past in the present. From this acknowledgment an understanding between the scenographer and the spectre should emerge.

These kinds of spaces are often heritage sites or sites of historical trauma. In my engagement with site-specific work, my chosen sites are rich in history and information, an example would be working with Adderley Street in Cape Town. It is a route from the *Castle of Good Hope*¹ towards the *Company Gardens*.² This route was important as it was a way to move slaves from the boats docked, to the *Slave Lodge*³ from 1653 until 1834, when Slavery³ was abolished in the British Cape

¹ The Castle of Good Hope was a bastion fort built in the late 16th early 17th Century as a replenishment station for ships traveling along the Coast. It housed lodgings, a church, shops, cells and many more features. It became an established heritage in 1936.

² The Company Gardens is another heritage site in Cape Town and was originally intended to grow produce for the ships passing through the Cape. It is now a flourishing garden with trees, plants and different monuments from Cape Town's history.

³ The Slave Lodge was built in 1679 and was used as a slave lodge to house the slaves from the Dutch East India Company (VOC) until 1811. It became a cultural museum in 1966, and the acknowledgment of the role slavery played happened in the

Colony. Consideration of these spaces and care towards them is crucial as heritage spaces are often sites of traumatic history. As mentioned above with Adderley Street, the sites are often built on or around traumatic events. This explication serves as a way to engage with these spaces through scenographic intervention.

Scenography as the creative method

There are two versions of scenography in which I have engaged. The original definition and intention of scenography derives from the Greek word *skēnographía* (Dictionary.com, 2012), which was a painter of the *skēnē* (Dictionary.com, 2024), the backdrops that would accompany the productions and plays up until the 20th century. Pamela Howard's definition of scenography ties back to the original and traditional definition of a set painter or set decorator. In her book *What is Scenography?* (Howard: 2003), Howard views and uses scenography in a more traditional sense: as collaboration between director and scenographer.

Pamela Howard states that “scenography is the joint statement of the director and the visual artist of their view of the play, opera or dance that is being presented to the audience as a united piece of work” (Howard, 2003:xix). Howard's use of scenography is to design or build the world of production according to the director's vision. Although her use of scenography is not the way I have been taught to use scenography, Howard's comprehension of space is where I find myself being drawn. Howard defines space as a living breathing being, which has a past, a present and a future. Howards states that; “Its atmosphere and quality deeply affect both audience and performers. A space is a living personality with a past, present and future. Brick, ironwork, concrete, wooden beams and structures, red seats and gilt and decorated balconies all give a building its individual characteristic” (Howard, 2003:7). Howard's definition of space and the way in which it is described as having the ability to affect audience and performers, while also having a past, present and future are all aspects I agree with. As within scenography, the comprehension of space and how

1990s. It was renamed the Slave Lodge in 1998 on Heritage Day. Today it is a part of the Iziko museums of South Africa. It is dedicated to the education and acknowledgement of slavery in Cape Town.

to use it is a very important element. Depending on the configuration of space, the effect it has on the audience/spectator can differ. Having a conventional theatre space with a proscenium arch versus a non-theatrical space such as a parking lot will not carry the same conventions or have the same expectations of the audience/spectator. Any space can define and inform the relationship between the audience and the performance.

The version I find my work in is a method to devise and create without being limited to serve a play text. To be able to create without the limitations of an already described world. This version is found through visual dramaturgy, an idea that theatrical elements do not require a source text. Dramaturgy is the practice of 'world-building', it is a method of creating plays, productions and performances.

Theresa Lang and Bert Cardullo speak towards dramaturgy as a way to create a performance. Although both refer to dramaturgy as a way to create through play text. Lang suggests a creating or rather curating an experience for an audience. Dramaturgy according to Theresa Lang in *Essential Dramaturgy* (Lang, 2017) is a person who helps to build, generate and question throughout the creative process. What is interesting about Lang's dramaturgy is the question of "(w)hat does this have to do with us?" (Lang, 2017:13). Lang states that questions as a part of the creation help generate and facilitate the creative process. Questions become a way of negotiation between the text, the production's team and the audience (Lang, 2017:14). What is different and interesting about this process is asking what it has to do with "us" (Lang, 2017:13). By asking continuous questions it facilitates the creative process and streamlines it into what it needs to be, this is dependent on the production, the audience, the genre and the style of play. .

However, she later states that the dramaturg is an important role in determine the parameters of the project itself. What I agree with in terms of Theresa Lang definition of the dramaturg or dramaturgy is the idea of curating a performance through a gathering of material. In comparison Bert Cardullo reiterates the point that dramaturgy is a way to generate performance through a play-text. Which is the intent of most dramaturgs and the original intent of the term dramaturg. In the book *What is Dramaturgy?* (Cardullo, 1995), Bert Cardullo states that "dramaturgy today denotes

the multi-faceted study of a given play: its author, content, style, and interpretive possibilities together with its historical, theatrical and intellectual background” (Cardullo, 1995:3). Cardullo explains that dramaturgy is both a way to understand and engage and create through a play-text. Dramaturgy comprises the elements of theatre; theatre space; design; the director; the performer; the audience and text. All these elements fall under the umbrella term which is dramaturgy. Dramaturgy is a creative method in which to build and create performance however, it is often informed by a play text. Which is why it is often stated that dramaturgy is a text-driven method. What interest me and what method I am using in the creation and curation of *Sediment* (2023) is the idea of visual dramaturgy.

Dramaturgy as mentioned is a method as to how scenographers make a production based on or around a play text, it is a collaboration of the director and scenographer. Visual dramaturgy on the other hand, is the idea that these theatrical elements are not limited to or based on a play text, it doesn't require reliance on a text to exist in order to be able to create. This version is discussed through *The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography* (McKinney & Butterworth, 2015), which argues that a scenographer is not just the set painter or collaborator of a play or production, but rather an important and vital role in performance making.

My comprehension of scenography as a creative lens is not Howard's version but rather one which exists in post-dramatic theatre. The version of scenography to which I am referring to is found in *The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography* (McKinney & Butterworth, 2015), which considers scenography a vital component of performance as a way to create rather than to decorate or build a production's set. McKinney and Butterworth refer to Howard and her engagement with scenography but do not entirely agree with it. Their understanding of scenography is that space becomes an interactive environment for performers and spectators alike. It's the creation of an environment and a world from which to explore and create. They refer to Hans-Thies Lehmann who states that scenography is a part of visual dramaturgy. Visual dramaturgy is “not subordinated to text” (Lehmann, 2006:93) and can “develop its own logic” (Lehmann, 2006:93). As stated, dramaturgy is a text-driven way for a scenographer and director to collaborate and create. Visual dramaturgy is not reliant on text as a method of creation. Instead, visual dramaturgy

becomes a way to aid scenography as a creative tool, a way to devise performance. Scenography is the method by which *Play* (2022), *Present Past* (2022) and *Sediment* (2023) have been and will be made.

Creative Context

Throughout this process, I have been working scenographically; working with space to devise a performance or spatial intervention. There are two techniques, visual and audible, with which I have engaged. These are **palimpsest** and **polyphony**.

Palimpsest originated from the Latin word *palimpsestus* (palimpsest, 2012) which was derived from the Greek word *palimpsestos* (palimpsest, 2012) meaning 'scraped again'. In 1660 it became palimpsest, which was a technique used to remove ink from the vellum (animal skin) of books for new books to be written over the old. However, the ink would often stain the pages and leave behind a faint trace of the previous writing. It would be a reddish-brown stain layered underneath the new book or text. Another version of palimpsest commonly used by writers or poets was to take a piece of parchment or paper and write in a portrait layout. After filling the page, they would turn the page to landscape layout orientation and write in between the lines made by the first text. This technique is what palimpsest refers to as a 'remnant or trace' of something, usually referring to the text that will stain the page. Palimpsest is a visual tool in which to understand the presence of absence. This concept and hauntology have the ability to work cohesively. As stated, hauntology refers to something felt, not seen. Presence of absence refers to a sign or trace of their presence left behind, a visual indication of them being in the space, proof of their existence. What I am proposing is that if hauntology is something felt but not seen, then the presence of absence can be the visualization of this unseen presence.

Polyphony was coined in 1862 as the multiplicity of sounds. Originating from the Greek word *polyphōnía* (polyphony, 2012) which means a variety of tones. This term is found in music and is often described as a complexity of sound: the layering of two or more bars of melody/music/motif over one another, the melody/music/motif can be similar or completely different. What makes polyphony relevant to my creative

process and understanding is the complexity and accumulation of sounds it can offer towards animating the presence of spectres in a site. My first introduction to polyphony was through Igor Stravinsky's *The Firebird* (1910). He combines the use of polyphony and rhythmic changes to create works that are very different to the classic ballet compositions of his time. Stravinsky's *The Firebird* (1910) was controversial and challenged the classical ballets. His ballet was loud and abrasive, but it was beautiful in its unique way. Stravinsky uses multiple melodies overlaid with each other, set to different tempos. *The Firebird* (1910) challenges the lyrical and beautiful melodies associated with ballet. Stravinsky's music for *The Firebird* (1910) reintroduced another technique referred to as non-tonal, which is used to aid in the creation of a supernatural effect for the work. Non-tonal or atonality, refers to a style of music that does not adhere to conventional harmonics or the use of a musical key. The language Stravinsky uses to tell his story is through the bars of music we cannot see, but hear. Polyphony and hauntology have the ability to work cohesively, similar to how I have proposed palimpsest and hauntology can. Both polyphony and hauntology are based on something invisible. However, because polyphony is audible, what I am proposing in my creative research is to use polyphony as an audible palimpsest, to layer sound and to create a soundscape to accompany my work in site-specific interventions such as *Play* (2022) and *Present Past* (2022), both of which were creative research outputs in my Masters programme coursework.

Both palimpsest and polyphony have a common feature, which is a layered effect, where traces of past activity are evident in the present. What is intriguing about these techniques is how they play into hauntology and further into the concept of the presence of absence. This layered effect is what I am attempting to engage with in all of my interventions, *Play* (2022), *Present Past* (2022) and my final creative research project named *Sediment* (2023).

For context, when I was studying for my undergraduate degree in Theatre and Performance, specialising in scenography, we were tasked to intervene in a site-specific location that was public. For my site, I chose Adderley Street in Cape Town. The third year of my undergraduate was completed during COVID, so the intervention I decided to do was a digital accumulation of events located in Adderley

Street. A palimpsest mapping of Adderley Street. As it was COVID, the archives and material we had access to was more than we would have in previous years. As everything was through online meetings and classes, all information had to be accessible. We had to consider events, the socio-political history and any kind of documentation or media surrounding the site. The entire map of Adderley Street was made on an iPad, with a pencil and a program called *Procreate*. I chose to show how the route from the *Castle of Good Hope* towards *The Company Gardens* had remained the same since its establishment. I took the route from three different maps from 1933, 1947 and 1950. All the maps and images used within this project were found within the University of Cape Town's Libraries Digital Collections. I then layered them over each other, and all three remained visible, just in different opacities. I chose to trace photographs depicting two events: a gas explosion, and when a female architect, Miss Gabebah Abrahams, in 1982 found the original water canals underneath Adderley Street. In my palimpsest map, I used the information on the source page within the UCT digital archives to fill in a diagram of her silhouette - the text was a detailed account of what she had found. She found what would be a wall and as digging continued it revealed it was a canal built around the same time as the Castle of Good Hope, which was built between 1666 and 1679. She also found some porcelain, bone, pottery, a piece of clay pipe and the bottom of a bottle, all dated around the 17th century. The next events which were layered over the maps and traced photographs from Adderley Street, was the establishment of a taxi rank (which was originally a place for horses and carriages) and the installation of decorative Christmas lights on the street. Every year in December Adderley Street has neon lights strung in every direction; between light posts, traffic lights and trees. I made my own neon signs depicting the gas explosion, Miss Gabebah Abrahams, the date of the explosion and more surrounding the chosen events.

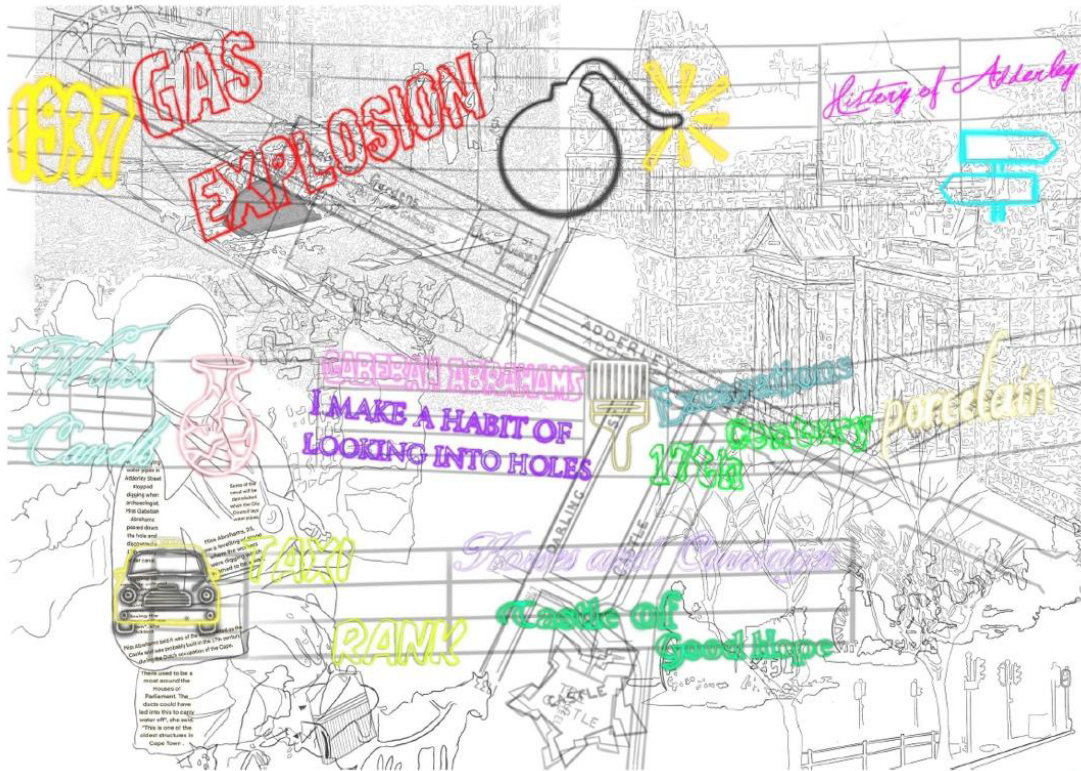


Fig 1. *Adderley Street project.* 2020. [Digital Drawing] (Personal Collection)

This project was my introduction to both site-specific work and the visual artist, William Kentridge. Kentridge as an artist is important to me and my creative journey. Kentridge was introduced to me during my undergraduate studies, before the Adderley Street project. Kentridge is well known for his prints, drawings and animated films. He uses the technique of palimpsest but doesn't refer to it directly. His most recognizable work is his drypoints. A drypoint is a type of printmaking, using a needle and a plate or matrix. It is similar to how engraving is produced. Within the book *William Kentridge Trace* (Hecker, 2010), there is a series of prints depicting a typewriter. This typewriter is one of his most famous and recognizable icons in his works. Kentridge uses a layering technique which contains traces of previous works or the same artwork underneath it. An example of this would be Kentridge's *Copper Notes, States 0-11* (Kentridge, 2005) a series of drypoints which contain a series of drawings that are erased and covered over repeatedly, until the desired layered effect is achieved. It is a ghostly presence of the previous marks barely visible underneath the final work. The presence of previous drawings smudged or erased underneath the final work is what drew me to his work initially. This is what palimpsest embodies; a layering of the past, with the present

continuously being renewed until the past is barely visible. Palimpsest is a technique which points to the presence of absence.

The Adderley Street project is where my love of palimpsest was bolstered; the layering of images and words, and where I found my inspiration for site-specific work. Although it was not a physical installation, it was a digital palimpsest. What inspired me about this project was the act of researching and delving into the history of a specific site and discovering its complex past. Learning about what a site has to offer, finding any and all information about it or its surroundings and trying to make something out of the information, whether an actual installation or some kind of intervention. This kind of research and interaction with the site is what has been carried into my research and in my other projects such as *Play* (2022), *Present Past* (2022) and *Sediment* (2023), my final creative project.

Play (2022)

The first site-specific project, *Play* (2022), was the first of my MA programme. I approached a chosen site and used it as a 'source site' for a scenographic installation. The 'source site' was to be used as inspiration for an installation in a new environment. This idea can be found in Nick Kaye's discussion of "Non-site" (Kaye, 2006:92) which implies an absence of the actual site, but a presence of it through objects and materials found within the "Non-site" (Kaye, 2006:92). An example of this would be how the British Museum would place an object from Egypt, such as hieroglyphs or mummified remains; they are a visual indicator of the original site or 'source site'. "Non-site" (Kaye, 2006:92) would be the exhibit in the museum. "Non-site" (Kaye, 2006:92) is the signifier (Elam, 2002:5) of the signified (Elam, 2002:5) site. The 'source site' of *Play* (2022) was a park located in a residential estate. The park was the signified and the performance installation itself was the signifier.

The 'source site' was a space I had unlimited access to no matter what time of day and could sit there as long as I wanted or needed as it was abandoned. There were never any children, dogs, or people sitting wherever I did. The only other occupants in the park were the gardeners, cleaning and tidying and maintaining the park for the

residents' use. I am uncertain as to how many days they work but the park was always perfectly kept. The only indication or trace that I had seen them was a garden rake left behind. They were the only people I saw in the park during the day apart from some domestic workers of the estate homeowners who would walk through the park around five every day on their way home. Although the park was meticulously maintained, it was not enjoyed by people or children even though there was a jungle gym with swings and a slide. I only ever heard children in their homes.



Fig.2. *Play.* 2022. Photograph] (Personal Collection)

I sat in the park for seven days, all at different times during the day without intervening in the action that might take place, a silent observer. I placed myself in different parts of the park and wrote down what I observed daily, documenting what was felt or noticed. I recorded sounds alongside documenting, photographing and videos and tried to capture as many different sounds as possible. This particular site was a park that lacked people, perfectly preserved, without being inhabited by people. The only noticeable existence of people was footprints in the sand, which were often stepped over so many times that they were virtually indistinguishable. The only interruption to this place was the sound from the surrounding houses and their inhabitants. In their gardens, you could overhear children playing and people talking but you could not see them. I only ever heard children and even caught an argument between a mother and daughter fighting over the fact that the daughter locked her mother on the balcony. It was always perfectly abandoned and perfectly maintained. I documented the walk from my home to the park every time that I walked there, and even on the walk there, there was no one.



Fig. 3-6. *Play.* 2022. [Photograph] (Personal Collection)

I collected as much data from the site to use as a source site for my installation in a new space, one without the visual indicators of the park. The project was inspired by a jungle gym. The jungle gym was painted primary colours, the structure had holes in it, offering a unique, but limited view of the park. The key ideas I tried to engage with were the labour required to maintain this park in a perfectly preserved fashion, and the lack of play or enjoyment within the park.. *Play (2022)* had a series of videos and audio recordings playing during the performance, showcasing the different moments I experienced within the site: the walk each time to the site on different days, the sounds I heard, the workers and the different perspectives of the park.

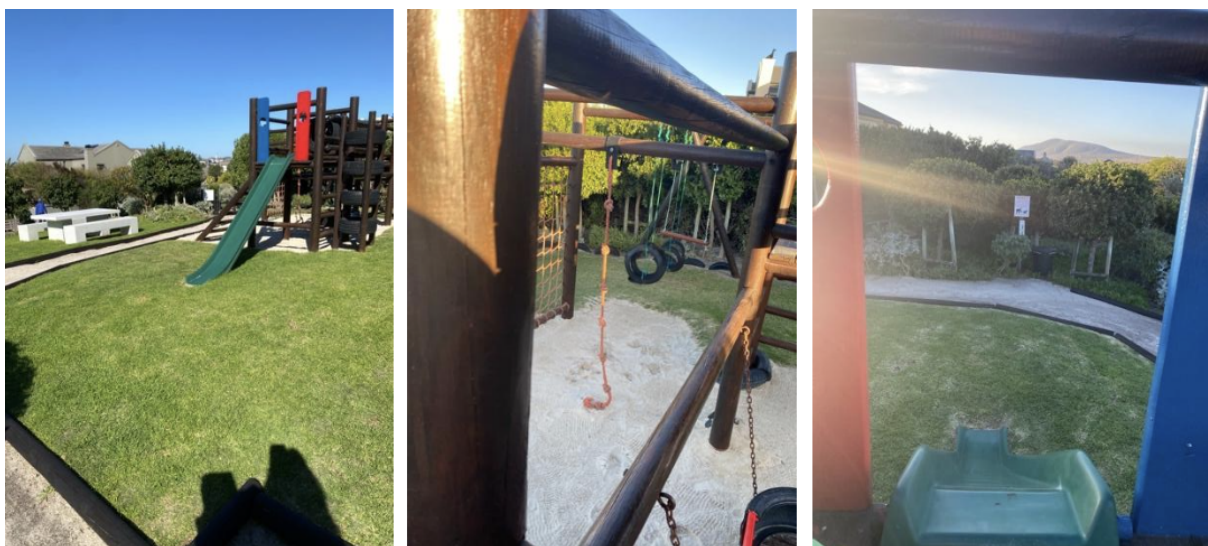


Fig. 7-9. *Play.* 2022. [Photograph] (Personal Collection)

Rather than place all the elements indicative of the park in a similar environment, *Play* attempted to engage with creating a similar environment. The installation was a

recreation of some of the elements of the park. I used green curtains to suggest grass, I created a fence with holes inspired by the jungle gym, and I painted wooden benches and a table white to mimic the concrete bench and table located in the park. On the fence, I had added layers of paper, hair colour spray, newspaper and magazines to create a palimpsest on which to project videos from the park. For the installation, I made a series of thaumatropes toys, which are disks depicting two images, one on each side of the disc, that when spun would make one singular image. The most iconic image associated with thaumatropes is a bird in the cage. On one side of the disc is a bird, on the other a cage and when spun, the bird appears in the cage. I drew pictures depicting a worker and his rake, a child smiling, a child playing on a slide, a bird in a birdhouse, different footprints, one in shoes the other barefoot and a mother and daughter holding hands. I attempted to use polyphony to create a soundscape and recreate the noise of the environment. The soundscape which I collected over the course of the seven days, was an accumulation of the events I had experienced. I tried highlighting significant moments, the workers talking, the mother and daughter arguing, and any sounds I could get out of the jungle gym. All moments were experienced in the park or around the park. All the images are indicative of “Non-site” (Kaye, 2006:92), the images are representations of events and moments collected from the ‘source site’. The purpose of the intervention was to engage with the concept of play, hence the name. To attempt to engage with what was lacking in a park meant for children. To bring attention to the manual labour which maintained the park ‘behind the scenes’.



Fig.10-16. *Play.* 2022. [Photograph]
(Personal Collection)

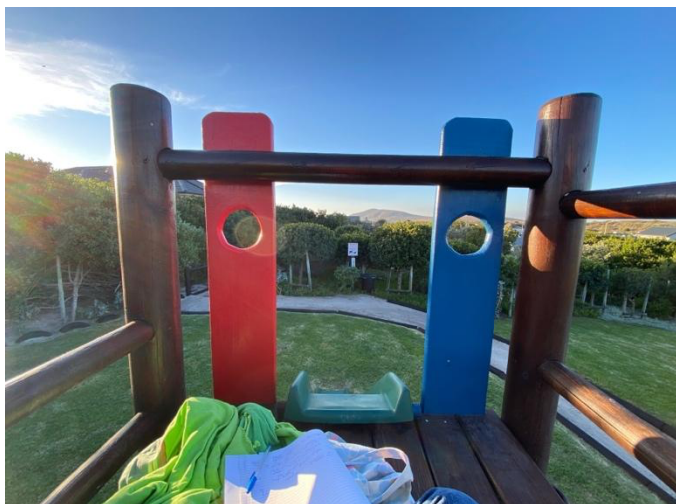


Fig.17. *Play.* 2022. [Photograph]
(Personal Collection)

The performance of *Play* (2022) was successful in its invitation to play. However, it was unsuccessful as the elements and moments documented in the park were lost in

favour of playing. These thaumatropes were ignored in favour of stationery placed on the recreated garden bench and table, inviting visitors to play, draw and create at the table. All the items and imagery created were a means to recreate the environment of the original playground site only, this time to include the missing element: the element of play, of childlike wonder, and people. As a spectator to the performance, it was intriguing and eye-opening to see how a relationship developed through play with the audience. Some audience members decided to take advantage of the stationery and started to draw or write or cut up paper and string to collaborate on an unplanned project. Other audience members became spectators of both the videos and the audience members who were participating. Over the performance time, which was a dedicated 15 minutes per student, the participants and spectators formed a relationship with each other. The spectator became like a parent overseeing a child, trying to see what they were doing. In turn, the participant would hide and deny the spectator, not allowing them to see until they deemed themselves finished. This relationship between audience members struck me as similar to a parent and child. The spectator/parent trying to see what was guarded so closely and the participants/children who fight over resources, whisper to each other and help one another throughout the 15 mins. The spectator/parent would consistently try to engage with both the participant/child and the stationery available on the table but was often hindered or had to intervene to stop them from 'fighting'. This was the most intriguing part of *Play* (2022). How the relationship of the audience can be manipulated or swayed if given the appropriate spatial and material cues, and perhaps the right initiator within the audience. From feedback I understand that if one audience member didn't initiate the performance everything would have remained untouched. The audience created a new dynamic within a "Non-site" (Kaye, 2006:92), igniting the elements lost in the original 'source site': the lack of play, the lack of enjoyment, the lack of childish nature associated with a park.

However, as stated, there were also elements of *Play* (2022) that failed. The soundscape was lost amid the noise and play of the participant/child and their arguing and creating. With all the chaos created during the 15 minutes, most if not all of the video and audio was lost. All the other content of the installation was ignored in favour of that one element that was lacking, the play of childlike inhibition. The critical feedback I received after *Play* (2022), centred on the failure of the installation

to highlight palimpsest or polyphony as a strategy for creating a scenographic work that responded to a source site. Despite this failure, there was an acknowledgement of the childlike engagement that *Play* (2022) created. This project was successful in inviting audience members to engage with an installation, however, it failed to highlight palimpsest or polyphony visually or audibly. This is where my research direction changed to explore a site-specific installation within the chosen site. To forgo a 'source site' and use the site both as inspiration and as the performance space, which is how *Present Past* (2022) was presented.

Hauntology as the theoretical lens

The concept of hauntology is the theoretical framework which encompasses the main concept of this research and its practice. The term was coined by Jacques Derrida in his work *Spectres of Marx* (Derrida, 1994). Derrida suggests that the philosophy and effect of Marxism had left a physical or felt change in society. Derrida claimed Marxism haunted him, and he asked to communicate with this 'spectre' to listen to what it might convey. The first time he read the manifesto of Karl Marx it left him with a feeling of the "spectre of a communism then *to come*", a presence of an unknown future. Years later whatever he felt or experienced was left behind for him to rediscover. This created a 'ghostly' effect which he called the spectre of Marxism (Derrida, 1994:34). Derrida's spectre is the presence of a future we do not know yet, one we can't understand as we do not have the language to decipher it. Although Derrida was not the first to use this term, his version of hauntology gained traction because of followers of Marxism, and therefore brought light to its predecessors Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok (Davis, 2005:373).

Colin Davis in *Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms*, states that Derrida's use of the term hauntology is both influential and controversial and as Davis says, it is neither present nor absent, neither dead nor alive. In Derrida's work, *Spectres of Marx* (Derrida, 1994), he refers to what his spectre is. He states that; "What manifests itself in the first place is a spectre, this first paternal character, as powerful as it is unreal, a hallucination or simulacrum that is virtually more actual than what is so blithely called a living presence"(Derrida, 1994:32). The manifestation that Derrida's is

referring to is his spectre. While Derrida states that the spectre is considered a hallucination or something that isn't alive, it is still considered a powerful presence or rather a living presence. The manifestation of the spectre in Derrida's case is a feeling. Something that remains behind. Derrida's predecessors Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok (Davis, 2005:32) in contrast, speak towards generational trauma that is passed down; known or unknown. It carries an effect through generations and is something more to be understood rather than just a presence, something that carries a heavy burden. Abraham and Torok refer to this ghostly presence as a phantom, something that you can commune with but will lie and deceive to hide its often shameful secrets. They encourage communicating with this phantom to unveil its secrets to be able to move forward. Derrida also encourages communication; his spectre is something to be discovered or to be revealed in the future. Abraham and Torok encourage communication as well, but their reason is for the phantom to be dispelled.

Abraham and Torok had become interested in transgenerational communication, particularly the way in which the undisclosed traumas of previous generations might disturb the lives of their descendants even and especially if they know nothing about their distant causes. What they call a phantom is the presence of a dead ancestor in the living Ego, still intent on preventing its traumatic and usually shameful secrets from coming to light. (Davis, 2005: 374)

Abraham and Torok speak towards "transgenerational communication" (Davis, 2005: 374) discussing how the spirit itself is theorized to have an effect on generations of a family. What is interesting to me in this idea of a generational spirit; the idea of the spectre or phantom moving beyond philosophical ideas towards becoming more personal and familiar. What is absent from this comparison between Derrida and Abraham and Torok's understanding is how hauntology and these spectres/phantoms might affect other things besides the "living ego" (Davis, 2005:374). These spectres are understood to have the capability to haunt text, according to Derrida. Is it not possible for these spectres to have the ability to haunt places or spaces of performance? What is being proposed is a way in which to use a site's history. Whether it is part of a broader history, traumatic events, or as simple as personal experience. To create performances which are visually rich in its impact

and considers the possible presences that exist in these spaces. This presence is a spectre or phantom. Something invisible but exists nonetheless.

Through engaging with the article, *Space for haunting: site-specific theatre as a method for engaging with the complexity of heritage sites* (Halligey & Guhrs, 2023), and its performance within the heritage site of *Windybrow Theatre in Johannesburg* (Halligey & Guhrs, 2023), it helps to establish how scenography and hauntology can work cohesively to engage with the history of a site. *The Windybrow Arts Centre* in Johannesburg, South Africa, has a documented history of its existence for over 122 years. It was transformed from an opulent mining engineer's house into an officer's mess during the Boer War and eventually into a theatre, which despite running during the period of Apartheid, still had works that challenged the regime of the time. The socio-political background of the site, which holds so much of the past within South Africa, created an unease within the cast and crew. Halligey and Guhrs collaborated with the Market Theatre Laboratory's *KwaSha!* (Halligey & Guhrs, 2023) which is the resident theatre company of *Market Theatre Laboratory* and the *Windybrow Arts Centre*. This scenographic collaboration between Halligey and Guhrs and *KwaSha!* (Halligey & Guhrs, 2023) allowed the freedom to engage with the site's history. Hauntology played an important role in this production as the company engaged with the 'spirits' that were felt within the site. In their paper, they refer to Abraham and Torok's concept of hauntology as generational trauma. By collecting and using different kinds of documentation such as archival documents, newspapers and oral testimony, this knowledge of the socio-political context of the site helped them engage with its 'presences'. Halligey and Guhrs, given their positionality as white women, and within the context of the production being a post-colonial response, felt the need to engage with a trained 'sangoma'. A sangoma is a traditional healer, who specialises in traditional African medicine and perform rituals to engage and communicate with their ancestors. By having a sangoma as a part of their engagement and understanding of the history with the heritage site, it acknowledged and encouraged the differences in spiritualities between the cast and crew.

Halligey and Guhrs worked alongside a *sangoma* who at the time of this production created during 2017/2018, was the artistic director of the *Windybrow Arts Centre*,

Keitu Gangwa. Together they established a dialogue between the eerie feeling the cast and crew felt within the heritage site. By having conversation through what they all felt and experienced and giving the disquieted spirits a voice through Gangwa, they were able to move forward with the knowledge that everything and everyone was comfortable. Although communicating and engaging with spirits is not considered as a conventional theatre making practice, Halligey, Guhrs and Gangwa decided that engaging with different Southern African spiritualities was a vital part of creating an understanding of the context of their production. By accessing key events in the building's history, they were able to create scenographic installation interventions into the site that felt rich and unique, as this type of engagement is not common. Through objects, furniture, tapestry and costume, the cast switched from one event to the next and took the audience on a journey through the building. Each new space was a reflection of a key moment in the building's 122 year history, traversing through time by recreating its past in the present.

This performative installation example engages with the version of hauntology I intend to engage with. In this instance I intend to work with Abraham and Torok's version of hauntology, specifically their concept of intergenerational trauma and of a presence or spectre that is disquieted. I am attempting to engage with their concept of the spectre and use it to work with the history of a site, similarly to Halligey and Gurhs. The generational trauma in this instance is not through people, but rather held within the walls of the site. Hauntology provides a possible theoretical framing to understand how to approach and respect heritage sites through engaging and acknowledging the presence or spectre. Hauntology foregrounds an unseen presence; it exists in our bodies, according to Abraham and Torok (Davis, 2005:373), or in our books, according to Derrida (Derrida, 1994:34).. Scenography is a tool with which to engage the concept of hauntology; to create by acknowledging this presence and to build a world in which it will exist. Hauntology can extend beyond the text or the body, as seen in Halligey and Guhrs' project. Their work engaged with the unseen eeriness or presence felt within the heritage site. They encouraged acknowledgement of this presence and the effect it may have on the performers and the performance. This acknowledgement is what aided in their understanding of the site. I intend to take their engagement with the site and how they approached the

performance and bring it into my own work with my intended final project site *The Little Theatre* on the University of Cape Town's Hiddingh Campus.

Site-specific intervention

Site-specific interventions are often complex, whether they are theatrical or not. The process of creation is often dictated by space or a chosen site. My projects in both my undergraduate studies and Masters programme have worked with site-specific intervention in some way. My undergraduate project was digitally realised using a busy part of central Cape Town as its source location. My first Masters project, *Play* (2022) worked with a park as a 'source site', and my second Masters project, *Present Past* (2022) was set underneath a heritage site, *The Little Theatre*.

Referring back to Howard's comprehension of space, "[a] space is a living personality with a past, present and future" (Howard, 2003:2). This definition and consideration of space as a living entity resonates within hauntology. Hauntology speaks to an unseen presence, something that can exist without being seen. Howard's definition of space resonates with my understanding of site-specific work and provides a way of engaging with any of my chosen sites. Just like Howard, I understand space to be alive, it is not just a venue in which to create but can instigate performance. Howard's idea of space supports my understanding of hauntology and the spectre; that space is alive, it can be felt and drawn from to create a performance.

This comprehension of space resonated with me and followed me into the creation of *Present Past* (2022). According to McKinney and Butterworth, in *The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography* (McKinney & Butterworth, 2015), scenography is broken into seven elements. These are: scenic environments; objects; costumes; light; sound; space and time (McKinney & Butterworth, 2015:6). The elements of space, time and scenic environment are important when working with site-specific interventions. Space is perhaps the scenographic focus of site-specific work. The

type of architectural or natural spaces inform how the performance might happen and the creation of work relies on the space, informing the design and intervention.

Mike Pearson and Clifford McLucas, founded an idea referred to as the “Host and the Ghost” (Kaye, 1996: 209). The site is the “Host” (Kaye, 1996:213) and the performance is the “Ghost” (Kaye, 1996:220). What makes the idea of the “Host and the Ghost” (Kaye, 1996:209) effective is that it is used as a way to distinguish between the space and the ephemera. It implies a haunting of space. In other words, the performance will haunt the space. McLucas and Pearson's concept of “Host and the Ghost” (Kaye, 1996:209), similar to Howard’s comprehension of space, which supports my understanding and use of hauntology. There are certain criteria to determine a “Host site” (Kaye, 1996:213). Kaye refers to it twice, originally in 1996 and more recently in 2006 stating that a host site has:

- A. a particular and unavoidable history
- B. a particular use (a cinema, a slaughterhouse)
- C. a particular formality (shape, proportion, height, disposition of architectural elements etc.)
- D. a particular political, cultural or social context
- E. a particular kind of 'halfway house' for event and audience to meet (a workplace, a meeting place, a street, a church)

(Kaye, 1996:213)

In my personal experience with site-specific work, as referenced through the Adderley Street project, even if it was not a physical installation, the more documents and archival resources I found, the more detailed my response to the site was. The Adderley Street project was successful in the quantity of research material I was able to access. As it was during the COVID quarantine, resources were easily accessed online. *Present Past* (2022) and *Play* (2022) were both site-specific interventions although as stated, *Play* (2022) was working with the concept of “Non-site”(Kaye, 2006:92) and *Present Play* (2022) attempted to engage with hauntology and “The Host and The Ghost” (Kaye, 1996:209). The site of *Present Past* (2022) is an ideal example of a possible “Host site” (Kaye,1996:213) as it was located in the dressing room named *The Pit* underneath *The Little Theatre on UCT’s Hiddingh Campus*.

Since it is a heritage site, it has an unavoidable history. It was originally used as a chemistry lab until 1931 but from 18th August 1931 it operated as a theatre. *The Little Theatre* operated as an amateur theatre until it became a part of the University of Cape Town's Drama Department. As it was operating during Apartheid, 1948 - 1994, this space was dominated by white producers and white casts, the amateur drama groups and the university's students. It has been home to many thespians and has held many people and their stories since. *The Little Theatre* has a social and cultural context and has a particular use - it is a performance space for the students at UCT and has been a part of major historical events in Cape town. *The Little Theatre* is a good example of a "Host site" (Kaye, 1996:213) according to Clifford McLucas and Mike Pearson's definition; which is to have both a social and cultural context.

Present Past (2022)

The second project of my MA programme was *Present Past (2022)*. This project was set within a site which had an existing palimpsest. As mentioned previously, palimpsest is a visual iteration of presence in absence and contains traces of the past in the present.

Present Past (2022) was set in the dressing room of *The Pit*, under the stage of *The Little Theatre*. *The Pit* has a direct connection from the stage to the dressing room through a trap door near the centre stage. Originally, the dressing room was the orchestra pit, hence the name and the stage can still open to reveal where the orchestra would have sat. My intent with *Present Past (2022)* was to engage with hauntology and the idea of "Host and the Ghost" (Kaye, 1996:209). To use the site's history as the main input for which to create. *Present Past (2022)* was a vastly different approach to *Play (2022)*, it was an installation made within the chosen site.

The reason I chose *The Pit* was not only the abundance of information, but the existing palimpsest on the walls. The walls of the dressing room are covered in graffiti and text from past students. There are names covering the entire dressing room from floor to ceiling. As *The Pit* is located underneath a heritage site most, if not all, of the performers who have been on *The Little Theatre* stage have used *The*

Pit as a dressing room. This gave me access to more information than I knew what to do with. With a past of over 92 years, it was a chemistry lab until it was eventually converted into a theatre. The same theatre from 1931 that we still use today as students. *The Pit* dressing room is covered in writing as it is tradition to leave your name somewhere within the theatre. Most of the time the graduating class will use *The Pit* as their final dressing room and will write their names on the wall leaving their mark knowing that somewhere, their signature, still exists within that room.



Fig.18-20. Present. 2022. [Photograph] (Personal Collection)

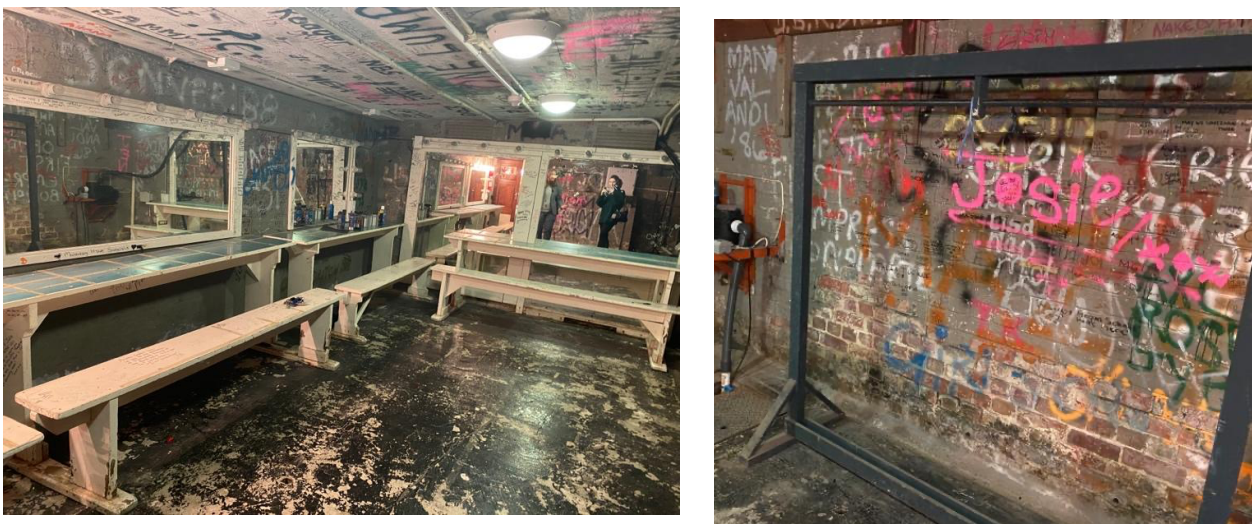


Fig.21-22. Present. 2022. [Photograph] (Personal Collection)

Pamela Howard's definition of space as a living breathing entity followed me into this dressing room. *The Pit* has been around long before me and will be there long after.

It buzzed with an energy; something that was felt but could not be seen. *The Little Theatre* is often rumoured to be haunted. I have heard many stories of people being chased out or feeling like they were followed throughout their walk through the theatre. I believe *The Pit* and *The Little Theatre* is an example of both a hauntological site and in my work, it became a “Host” site. It has a history that is unavoidable and contains traces of the past which are made visible through the writing on the walls.

Within Pamela Howard’s practice of space, she mentioned a technique called the “Living Museum” (Howard, 2003:i), which is a creative collaboration between all the cast. It exists in a rehearsal space and is a way to build a visual and material wall of objects, photographs, and fabrics to build a production. At the end, you have a collage of many people’s ideas and contributions, something to return to during rehearsals and continuously add to. When devising and engaging with *The Pit* I built a mini “Living Museum” (Howard, 2003:i) with artists who have inspired my work since the first engagement with site-specific work, namely William Kentridge and Alice Lok Channa. These artists both engage with layering, which is a visualisation of palimpsest. Alice Lok Channa, unlike William Kentridge, works with paint and newspaper, as a common set of materials. What drew me to her work is how she uses her past as the fuel for her work, she is a survivor of the holocaust and her work reflects her experiences. She expresses her experiences and trauma through paint. Her work haunted me and has stuck with me ever since. Similarly to William Kentridge, both of them use the layering of materials which is a visual representation of how palimpsest can look.

The concept of *Present Past (2022)* was to engage with seven decades at the University of Cape Town within *The Pit*. I was able to access the archive located on the Hiddingh Campus, which housed photographs, programs and posters of the productions performed at UCT. Although this room is filled with photos it is quite complicated to find certain decades such as the 40s and 50s photographs. They are a type of photograph that fingerprints could ruin forever and have to be handled with care or with special gloves. This archive is where the idea for costumes from different productions came from. There is not one set costume for any production, even different versions of the same play have a unique design or interpretation. This

makes recreating them difficult. I had chosen to go through the different decades at UCT, to find or recreate costumes from 1940. This was complex. However, I was lucky as some of the costumes from these seven decades still exist in a storage facility, on top of *The Little Theatre*, in an 'attic'.

To be able to create and engage with palimpsest and polyphony, I needed more than just the costumes and photographs. To gather more information and engage with people who had used *The Pit* and the theatre, I decided to speak with past and current staff. I was able to conduct and collect interviews from past staff such as Christopher Weare, Luke Ellenbogen, and Jacqui Singer. From current staff at the University, I was able to interview Mark Fleishman, Sara Matchett, and Leigh Bishop. I took advice on who to interview from the people I interviewed if they offered that information. What was pointed out to me through feedback and through my lecturers was how almost all of the people I had spoken to were white. I had not spoken to or interviewed any person of colour. This was a massive oversight on my part.

As mentioned before *The Little Theatre* has been around for at least 100 years. It only became a theatre space in 1931. It is a heritage site as of 2004. The *Little Theatre* has such a long-standing history and existed through Apartheid. This history is something I had to keep in mind while working with the site. However, as I am a white woman I am aware of where I might stand positionality-wise in engaging with *The Little Theatre's* past. As a person who is not of colour my voice and my perspective could be perceived as paternalistic or condescending which is not my intention. The intent was to engage with the past as a medium. Therefore I am attempting to rectify the mistakes made in *Present Past* (2022) with *Sediment* (2023). The objective is to engage with the past of the *Little Theatre* and use the social and cultural content of the site to generate a scenographic intervention into the site, without pushing my own voice into the performance. The audio I used for this project was a clash of voices from the people I interviewed, I intentionally had cut my own voice out of the audio as I felt it wasn't needed considering the history I was engaging with. The installation I crafted scenographically, had to engage with the University of Cape Town's role within Apartheid. From interviews, I gathered that people of colour were new to the stage as casts and the majority of students were white from the time-period I chose, 1940s - 2010s. Students during Apartheid fought

for equal rights and would face repercussions through police enforcement or tear gas. It was a difficult and traumatic era for South Africa. I attempted to subtly highlight this disparity of colour by labelling the costumes. I had given them all a name, a production, a gender and a race. Instead of being an acknowledgement and a way to highlight this prejudice, it became instead a statement of complicity in the ~~complacent~~ systematic prejudice within UCT's history. This was one of the areas where *Present Past* (2022) failed to produce its intended outcome.

The Pit was filled with labelled costumes and objects such as a handheld mirror and compact make-up, hairbrush and other feminine beauty products all labelled with masking tape to look like a prop table. I created a slide show from the photographs I collected from the archive, showing photos of the costumes hung and draped all over the site. This slide show was projected onto all the costumes during the 20 minutes of the performance. There was one costume in particular, a dress recreated from the University's production of *Ghost* in 1940 - the projection on the dress had such a ghostly effect, as it was a white dress with thin layers of fabric that allowed the projected images to pass through it with clarity, onto a mirror. What made the project interesting was how the audience had to navigate the space as it is small and cramped and once used to house the orchestra. The costumes being hung from the ceiling and connected by strings of fishing lines created a semi-invisible maze in which people had to navigate.

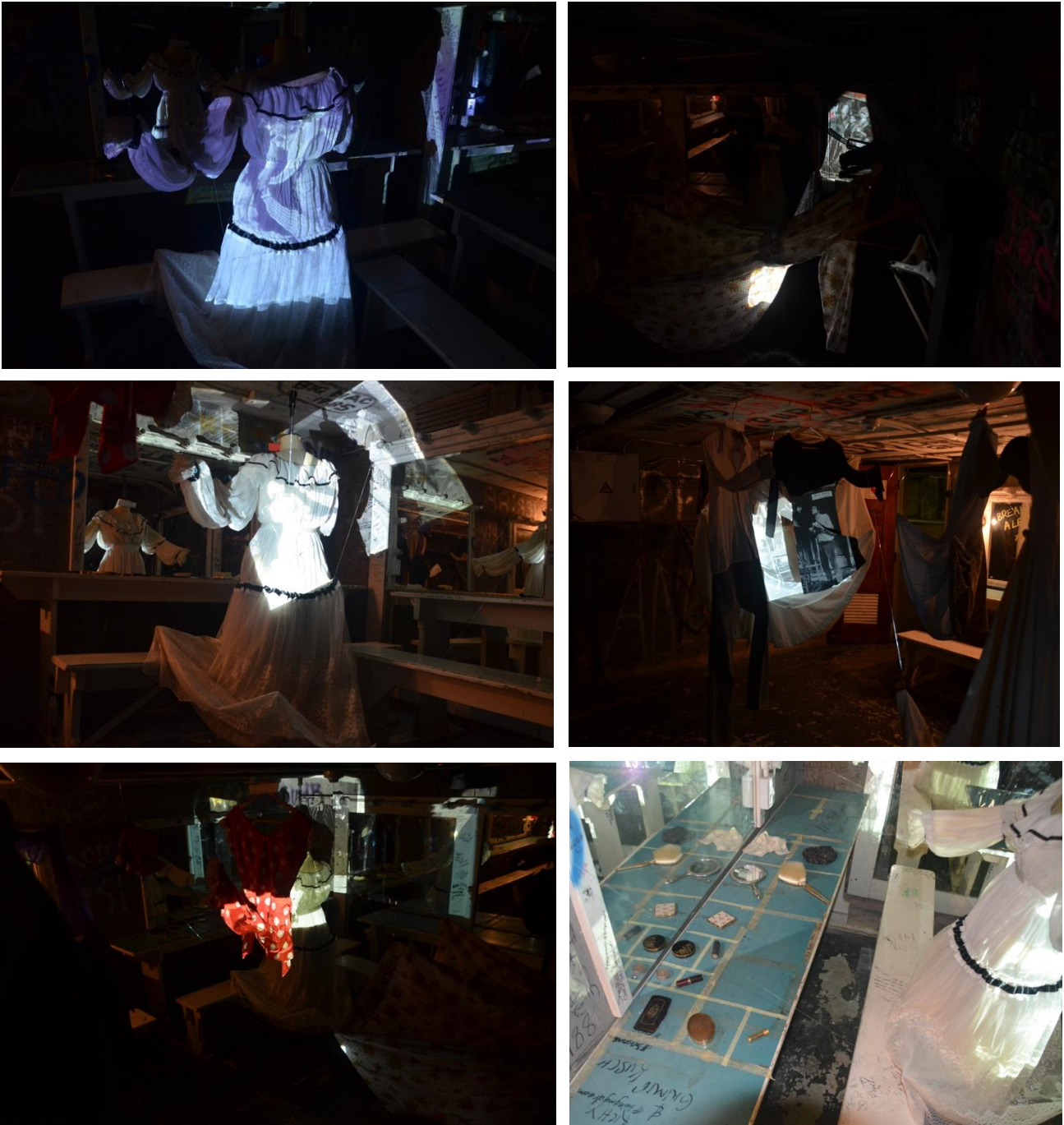


Fig.23-28. *Present.* 2022. [Photograph] (Personal Collection)

Using the information I had learned about *The Pit* and *The Little Theatre*, I attempted to create a polyphonic/palimpsest soundscape of voices from the interviews. However, the voices blurred together and created the hollow sound of a crowd, even transferring one voice to the left or right speaker didn't change the hubbub that was the soundscape. From the interviews, I also learned that underneath the *Little*

Theatre is a flowing river. I tried to add the sound of water flowing to bring attention to it but it was lost similarly to the voices and their stories. The installation itself lacked something that was performative, even with the projection moving through the space, onto mirrors, costumes, and sometimes people. The soundscape was lost and the signatures on the walls were the biggest distraction. People who had previously as students written their names would search and ask if their friend had found their name yet, or discuss where it could have been. A lot was lost in *Present Past* (2022) but I gained an understanding of what is appropriate and I am allowed to tread into what was murky socio-political water for myself and acknowledge and challenge the systemic prejudice that exists within the University's history. I intend to take this knowledge and permission into *Sediment* (2023).

Palimpsest and Polyphony as techniques to engage with heritage sites

Sediment (2023) is an attempt to engage and create a performance using the history of *The Little Theatre* at UCT as a chosen site. Through scenography as the method of creation and by using Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok's (Davis, 2005:373) understanding of their spectre, which is a generational traumatic spirit, I am attempting to create a performance that is both historically rich and visually engaging. I want to bring the spectres of the past into the present and give them a voice by using palimpsest and polyphony as theatrical techniques.

Palimpsest and Polyphony refer to a way to layer image and sound respectively. By using hauntology as the theoretical framing of *Sediment* (2023), palimpsest and polyphony lay the visual and audible comprehension of how it might feel, look and sound. The type of hauntology I am engaging with, emphasises the body as a host for the ghost of the past. Something that can be felt but not seen.

Ruth Hellier-Tinoco describes palimpsest in *Performing Palimpsest Bodies: Postmemory Theatre Experiments in Mexico*. (Hellier-Tinoco, 2019) as involving "strategies of re-using and re-forming, where traces endure, sometimes scarcely palpable, sometimes ghostly, yet always remaining." (Hellier-Tinoco, 2019:5). What Hellier-Tinoco states is that palimpsests are traces and presences that continue to

exists even as time passes and the world changes. She refers to palimpsest as ghostly, something that endures time. This trace is theatrically often referred to in a hauntological sense, meaning it's part of the past within a present context. The reddish-brown words haunt the reader as they read the new text. Hellier-Tinoco's definition and use of palimpsest goes further than a book, or art. Hellier-Tinoco delves further by exploring a body, as a palimpsest. She implies that by interacting with and playing with items from the past, they can be "taken in" and added to the performers repertoire; applying what they have felt or learned in a performance.

Scenographers work with all aspects of theatre. The body will always be involved in some capacity. Whether it be a performing or working body, the body is a part of the creative process. If we take this idea of the body being able to absorb the knowledge of ephemera, then there is the potential for anybody; whether performer, theatre maker or spectator, to perhaps leave a part of their own history in a space. This method of palimpsest resonates within my personal practice, the traces and engagement of the performing body were absent from both *Play (2022)* and *Present Past (2022)*. Our bodies hold onto memory, Abraham and Torok agree that the body carries the spectre. Our bodies already have the ability to hold a phantom/spectre, our bodies as modes of performance carry our past performances within them. Why can't our bodies be palimpsests?. If palimpsest is trans-temporal, and the past is always active, then it is possible to engage with spaces and the bodies that occupy them, as a type of material. By engaging the body as a palimpsest being, the performance becomes more complex and will involve more than just the chosen site's history, but also the bodies of the performers alongside it. This kind of scenographic site-specific performance is intended to be rich in material, history and information.

Similarly, to palimpsest within the body there is the language of polyphony as a voice or soundscape to the backdrop of the production. Sound is important, as associations are made every day with sound. If you have the same ringtone as someone else, you will still check to see if it was your phone ringing. Sound can evoke memory and it engages one the body's main senses. Polyphony can also be referred to as audible palimpsest; it is layered, it is not one voice or language it is many. It is the past and the present. Polyphony can be used in a scenographic

approach as well, as it can be used to build the environment of the play. Sounds are often used to influence an audience as to where a play might be taking place. My intention with polyphony is to create a soundscape of as many voices as I can, and allow them to be heard, to give a voice to people who didn't previously have one.

As mentioned, space is one of the elements of scenography and the architecture of the site affects how the performance takes place. Clifford McLucas states that architectural space affects the relationship between the performers, the audience and the space itself (Kaye, 1996:217). Each new relationship has a different interaction, whether it is audience and space or a performer and space, the relationship affects the performance and its comprehension. McKinney and Butterworth also mention how the relationship with the architectural space affects the audience or spectators' approach to the performance itself (McKinney & Butterworth, 2015:119). It follows that space affects the scenography and how it is constructed. (McKinney & Butterworth, 2015:119) As *The Little Theatre* is a proscenium arch stage, the idea within this project is to move beyond the set parameters dictated by the architecture.

Scenography in *Sediment* (2023) will be used as an approach to understand the space itself. Site-specific installations/performances aren't always limited to the architecture of the space. In the creation and performance of *Play* (2022), the site was located somewhere else from the actual performance location. This is why it is referred to as the "Non-site" (Kaye, 2006:92). The "Non-site" (Kaye, 2006:92) as stated in relation to *Play* (2022), signifies a location or site with objects, or visual indicators of a park. This project didn't have the effect it should have had on the audience and I have not used this method of site-specific intervention in *Present Past* (2022) nor will it be used in *Sediment* (2023). Instead, I will be engaging Cathy Turner, Mike Pearson, Clifford McLucas and Michael Shanks to understand and create site-specific intervention.

Cathy Turner attempts to create a language in which to understand site-specific performances. In the article *Palimpsest or Potential Space? Finding Vocabulary for Site-Specific Performance* (Turner, 2004) through engaging with theatre practitioners such as McLucas, Pearson and Nick Kaye, she creates a dialogue between them

through palimpsest. She states that practitioners have come to view space as a layered entity (2004:373). She refers to spaces of site-specific intention as a palimpsest, that it is a rewriting of layered writings (Turner, 2004:373). If the site is constantly occupied, each new performance is a new layer over the site. What resonates with my work and comprehension of site-specific intervention is this concept of layering. Site-specific works are not one-dimensional performance pieces, there is a reason they are site-specific. The intention is to use the site as a whole, its past and its present at once to create a work based on what might be found.

The method of generating site-specific performance that I will be undertaking in my practice is Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks *Theatre Archaeology* (Pearson & Shanks, 2005) and Clifford McLucas and Mike Pearson's "Host and the Ghost" (Kaye, 1996: 209). *Theatre Archaeology* (Pearson & Shanks, 2005), is one method which is intended to be used in the creation *Sediment* (2023). It theorises how archaeology can be used as a creative method in site-specific performances. Archaeology is the discovery of the past, to learn more about the societies and structures that existed before our time. This concept of discovery of the past is how I intend to view and use what I have found from *Present Past* (2022). As *The Pit* and *The Little Theatre* stage are connected, the events within *The Pit* are directly connected with what has happened within the theatre.

By engaging with documentation, objects and material from the original "Host site" (Kaye, 1996:213) and using it to create a performance within *Sediment* (2023). The main method I will engage with is "Theatre and Archaeology" (Pearson & Shanks, 2005:68), which is the "re-enactment and representation of the past" (Pearson & Shanks, 2005:68). It is a performative way to reveal the past in the present. This method of site-specific performance is a palimpsest, it is layered with documentation that pulls from the history of the site. *Theatre Archaeology* (Pearson & Shanks, 2005) uses archaeology as a way to uncover and understand what a chosen space has accumulated. The act of uncovering the past, removing layers of dirt and debris to reveal something that existed long before we existed.

Heritage sites, like *The Little Theatre*, make for unique interventions as they have a documented history which is often more easily accessible, making interaction and

intervention richer. Heritage sites as performance spaces are often complex and there is a need to step carefully and avoid difficult histories. This is where *Present Past* (2022) was challenged. Although I have mentioned the importance of the socio-political background of a site, my own engagement with the site didn't fully contextualise and grasp its full history. Site-specific scenographic installations allow the complexities of the sites such as the *Windybrow Arts Centre* and *The Little Theatre* to be fully realized, or at the very least to be unearthed. My intention with *Sediment* (2023) is to engage with everything *The Little Theatre* has, no matter what it is or will be. I intend to take on its history and make the presence of its past known.

References

Cape Peninsula Publicity Association. 1933. *Map of Cape Town central and neighbouring suburbs*. [Map] University of Cape Town, Libraries. Available: <https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-19894> [2023, September 11]

Cardullo, B. Ed. 1995. *What is Dramaturgy?* American university studies. Series XXVI, Theatre arts; Vol. 20. Available: https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=wE9g4Jt8buAC&oi=fnd&pg=PP9&dq=what+is+dramaturgy+bert+cardullo+pdf&ots=-nyARaEW3J&sig=qk_6XUI75KUp-ZzxR4j_cdsiwjM&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false [2023, September 11].

Davis, C. 2005. *Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms*, French Studies, 59(3). OUP Academic. <https://academic.oup.com/fs/article/59/3/373/638853> [2023, September 11].

Derrida, J. 1994. *Jacques Derrida, Spectres of Marx, NLR 1/205, May–June 1994, New Left Review*. Available: <https://newleftreview.org/issues/i205/articles/jacques-derrida-spectres-of-marx> [2023, September 11].

Elam, K. 2002. *Semiotics of Theatre & Drama*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Ltd

Balanchine, G & Stravinsky, I. 1910. *The Firebird*. Palais Garnier, Paris France

Halligey, A & Guhrs, T. 2023. *Space for haunting: site-specific theatre as method for engaging with the complexity of heritage sites*. Taylor & Francis. Available:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10137548.2023.2174901> [2024, April 15].

Hecker, J.B. 2010. *William Kentridge Trace*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Hellier-Tinoco, R. 2019. *Performing Palimpsest Bodies: Postmemory Theatre Experiments in Mexico*. United Kingdom: Intellect.

Howard, P. 2003. *What is Scenography?* London: Routledge.

Kaye, N. 2006. *Site-Specific Art Performance, Place and Documentation*. Taylor & Francis. Available:
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203138298/site-specific-art-nick-kaye> [2024, April 15].

Kaye, N. 1996. *Art Into Theatre Performance Interviews and Documents*. Taylor & Francis. Available:
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9781315077796/art-theatre-nick-kaye> [2024, April 15].

McKinney, J. & Butterworth, P. 2015. *The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography*. Cambridge Core. Available: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/cambridge-introduction-to-scenography/E26BC64FF392082A1D6D0052823F229C> [2024, April 15].

Kentridge, W. 2005. *Copper Notes, States 0-11* [Drypoint]. Johannesburg, Artist Proof Studio

Lang, T. 2017. *Essential Dramaturgy*. New York: Routledge

Lehman, H.L. 2006. *Postdramatic Theatre*. Translated by Karen Jürs-Munby. Taylor & Francis. Available:
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203088104/postdramatic-theatre-hans-thies-lehmann-karen-juers-munby> [2024, April 15].

Palimpsest. 2012. *Dictionary.com*. Available:
<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/palimpsest> [2023, September 11]

Pearson, M. & Shanks, M. 2005. *Theatre / Archaeology*. Taylor & Francis. Available:
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203995969/theatre-archaeology-mike-pearson-michael-shanks> [2024, April 15]

Polyphony. 2012. *Dictionary.com*. Available:
<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/polyphony> [2023, September 11]

Scenography. 2012. *Dictionary.com*. Available:
<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/scenography> [2023, September 11]

Skene. 2024. *Dictionary.com*. Available: <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/skene>
[2024, March 29]

Turner, C. 2004. *Palimpsest or Potential Space? Finding a Vocabulary for Site-Specific Performance*. *New Theatre Quarterly*, 20(4). Cambridge Core. Available:
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/new-theatre-quarterly/article/abs/palimpsest-or-potential-space-finding-a-vocabulary-for-sitespecific-performance/5849A11C59A3A8BDB7414007B40AC92B> [2024, April 15]

Map of Cape Town (central). University of Cape Town, Libraries. 1950. [Map]
University of Cape Town, Libraries. Unavailable:
<https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-19913> [2024, April 15]

Map of central Cape Town. University of Cape Town, Libraries. 1950. [Map]
University of Cape Town, Libraries. Unavailable:
<https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-19922> [2024, April 15]

17th century water canal, Adderley Street, Cape Town. 1982. Cape Times.
University of Cape Town, Libraries. Unavailable:
<https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-19913> [2024, April 15]

Gas explosion in Adderley Street, Cape Town. 1937. University of Cape Town, Libraries. Cape Times. Unavailable:
<https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-17346> [2024, April 15]

Gas explosion in Adderley Street, Cape Town. 1937. University of Cape Town, Libraries. Cape Times. Unavailable:
<https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-17388> [2024, April 15]

Sediment

By Daniella Mizrachi

Sediment is 'the matter that settles to the bottom of a liquid'.

The heaviest past always falls first.

To lay and create a foundation from which to grow.

It is rough and textured.

It is layered.

This work is one iteration in the long-standing performative repertoire that has existed on the stage of The Little Theatre. The installation was devised through engaging with the archive of the University of Cape Town's Hiddingh Campus and the past of the land underneath the Little Theatre long before it ever existed. The research poses the question: how can the past be used as a source in which to create a scenographic installation that is both past and present, by layering material, time, light, sound and histories?

Inspired by the artists William Kentridge and Alice Lok Cahana.

There are two spaces in which to explore and interact with. You'll enter through the foyer and walk through the auditorium; the first part of the installation is located on The Little Theatre's stage. Please be mindful that the trap door is open on the stage. There are two ways to enter the next part, through the trap door down a ladder or down a flight of stairs to enter the venue named The Pit. The use of a phone as a torch is encouraged and will light what was once hidden.

Consent Form

This document is to give consent to the publication of the recorded live event titled 'Sediment' that was held on 29th and 30th of November 2023 in the Little Theatre, Hiddingh campus, Cape Town to the University of Cape Town's ZivaHub. ZivaHub is an online institutional repository that is a publishing and access platform for research data. The record of this performance may include audio and video recordings of the live performance which may contain snippets of an interview conducted with you. This document is a record of your consent to be published on ZivaHub.

By signing this document, you confirm and consent to the publication of digital traces (photographs & video) of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project titled 'Sediment'.

You have had the following interactions:

- I received an email / or message about an interview and consented to a meeting in person.
- I consented to be recorded while being asked a set of questions.
- Meeting consent was reiterated before the recording started.
- End of recording was stated.

I _____ give consent to digital photographs and/or video of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project being posted on ZivaHub for public record. This document serves as a record of your consent and will be attached as an amendment to final submission of Daniella Mizrachi's thesis.

Consent Form

This document is to give consent to the publication of the recorded live event titled 'Sediment' that was held on 29th and 30th of November 2023 in the Little Theatre, Hiddingh campus, Cape Town to the University of Cape Town's ZivaHub. ZivaHub is an online institutional repository that is a publishing and access platform for research data. The record of this performance may include audio and video recordings of the live performance which may contain snippets of an interview conducted with you. This document is a record of your consent to be published on ZivaHub.

By signing this document, you confirm and consent to the publication of digital traces (photographs & video) of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project titled 'Sediment'.

You have had the following interactions:

- I received an email / or message about an interview and consented to a meeting in person.
- I consented to be recorded while being asked a set of questions.
- Meeting consent was reiterated before the recording started.
- End of recording was stated.

I Jacqueline Singer give consent to digital photographs and/or video of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project being posted on ZivaHub for public record. This document serves as a record of your consent and will be attached as an amendment to final submission of Daniella Mizrachi's thesis.

Signed by candidate

Consent Form

This document is to give consent to the publication of the recorded live event titled 'Sediment' that was held on 29th and 30th of November 2023 in the Little Theatre, Hiddingh campus, Cape Town to the University of Cape Town's ZivaHub. ZivaHub is an online institutional repository that is a publishing and access platform for research data. The record of this performance may include audio and video recordings of the live performance which may contain snippets of an interview conducted with you. This document is a record of your consent to be published on ZivaHub.

By signing this document, you confirm and consent to the publication of digital traces (photographs & video) of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project titled 'Sediment'.

You have had the following interactions:

- I received an email / or message about an interview and consented to a meeting in person.
- I consented to be recorded while being asked a set of questions.
- Meeting consent was reiterated before the recording started.
- End of recording was stated.

I Sivenkosi Gubangxa give consent to digital photographs and/or video of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project being posted on ZivaHub for public record. This document serves as a record of your consent and will be attached as an amendment to final submission of Daniella Mizrachi's thesis.

Signed by candidate

Consent Form

This document is to give consent to the publication of the recorded live event titled 'Sediment' that was held on 29th and 30th of November 2023 in the Little Theatre, Hiddingh campus, Cape Town to the University of Cape Town's ZivaHub. ZivaHub is an online institutional repository that is a publishing and access platform for research data. The record of this performance may include audio and video recordings of the live performance which may contain snippets of an interview conducted with you. This document is a record of your consent to be published on ZivaHub.

By signing this document, you confirm and consent to the publication of digital traces (photographs & video) of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project titled 'Sediment'.

You have had the following interactions:

- I received an email / or message about an interview and consented to a meeting in person.
- I consented to be recorded while being asked a set of questions.
- Meeting consent was reiterated before the recording started.
- End of recording was stated.

I Mark Fleishman give consent to digital photographs and/or video of Daniella Mizrachi's Masters creative project being posted on ZivaHub for public record. This document serves as a record of your consent and will be attached as an amendment to final submission of Daniella Mizrachi's thesis.

Signed by candidate



**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**Certificate of Corrections
(Masters Dissertations)**

I, the undersigned (supervisor), hereby certify that

Daniella Mizrachi (MZRDAN001)

has completed the corrections to his/her Masters dissertation to my satisfaction and as required by the Masters Dissertation Examinations Committee.

SUPERVISOR	SIGNATURE	DATE
Jenni-lee Crewe	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Signed by candidate</div>	30 April 2024

CHAIR - MDEC	SIGNATURE	DATE
A/Professor L Schrieff-Brown,		