

# Un-structuring Museums: *reclaiming agency and space in the Company Gardens*

**Design Dissertation**

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2022



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*To uMakhulu, uMamam, uZola, uMaV*

*the women whose stories inspire,  
whose support drives me,  
and whose love has gotten me this far.*

## Abstract

This dissertation explores the impact of colonial museum-making methods on the communities which they serve and the human body. Based on this research it then proposes alternative approaches of museum-making in a post-colonial context.

The inquiry begins with an exploration of the history of museums in within a European, and then a South African context. It then goes on to look at the physical effects museums have on the human body and how people choose to engage as a result. This entry point ends with a summary of what people may need to be physically able to better engage with museums.

The dissertation then goes to identify the Company Gardens as a site area and looks to its narrative as a guide to design.

Based on this process, emerges an architectural intervention of an indigenous botany library and museum that aims to share the narrative of indigenous

plants and Khoisan-based plant knowledge through its design.

Initially, this dissertation aimed to find a fixed framework and approach to de-colonial museum design. But through the research process it becomes clear that there is no fixed approach to de-colonial museum design but rather it is a context-based process.

This project becomes about reclaiming a previously colonised space and regaining agency of narrative. It attempts to disrupt colonial continuities that are still present in the Company Gardens.

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## Methodology

**PART A** of this project began with the theory and technology paper. The paper aimed to look at museums and their impact on the human body from their inception to their current standings. This inquiry served to help me better understand role of museum-making and their role in creating narratives, belonging, and knowledge in a post-colonial landscape.

**PART B** explores how the museum is experienced by visitors today. This part investigates the factors that influence whether a visitor may choose to engage with a museum at all, and if they choose to; what influences how deeply they choose to engage with the museum. This inquiry is conducted by analysing the content a museum presents, how they present it, and the visitor.

**PART C** identifies the Company Gardens as a possible site area. The reasoning for this decision is explained in this part. Then I will begin to proceed with a site investigation. The site is analysed using Christopher Day's approach as it ultimately explores the identity of a place through the experience.

Places build meaning through physical, temporal, mood and spirit. The spirit is created through the thoughts, emotions and actions of people who use the space.<sup>1</sup>

The physical refers to the material aspect of space, and how we meet places and things through our senses. It is unclouded by value or speculation.

The temporal refers to the process by which a place has come to be. It is the creation of space in a "time context".<sup>2</sup> It understands space as fluid through time.

This part will be investigated in two layers. The first layer will analyse how people use the site currently on a day-to-day basis. Observing the way people use the area will help me identify an exact location for my site. The second layer will look at how the site has come to be, the history of the site.

Mood refers to how our emotions respond to a space, how we feel in a space. In this sense, mood will be response to the physical and temporal findings.

Spirit refers to the individual identity of place. Through the identification of the mood of the place, I will then explore the current identity of the Company Gardens. Through the current identity of the garden, I explore a possible function for my architectural intervention that will begin to shift the current identity of place.

**PART D** expands on the function identified in Part C and tries to identify the needs of the building in order to serve its function. This part goes further to expand on concepts that guide the design of the building.

**PART E** is focused on developing a design. It begins by summarising all the concepts, frameworks and ideas mentioned thus far in the paper and then begins to put them together to develop a design.

It then proposes a final design and offers a conclusion to the paper.

## A. Theory and Technology

Early Museums

Into Apartheid

Conclusion

## The Early Museum

The Ancient Greek word “museion” which means “Seat of the Muses” was used to describe a philosophical space or a space of contemplation.<sup>3</sup> The Latin adaptation of the word which is “museum” was used in Roman times to describe spaces of philosophical discussion.<sup>4</sup> As a result, the first museum; the Museum at Alexandria was built 3rd in century BCE. With its scholars and library, it was rather an example of a university than what we would identify as a museum today.<sup>5</sup>

The first museums (the western institutions) we can identify today came about in 17th century Europe. They began in the 16th century as a form of entertainment where the nobility would collect rare objects and display them in “curiosity cabinets” for other nobility.<sup>6</sup>



FIGURE 1: An example of the curiosity cabinet (Wikimedia, 2018.)  
Over time, the cabinets started to become more organised taxonomic collections and classifications of natural history objects.<sup>7</sup>



FIGURE 2: Long East Facade of the Louvre (Rigaud, J, 1729.)

More structured museums started to develop after the French Revolution in the late 1700s, the Louvre Museum opened just after, in 1793.<sup>8</sup> The Louvre’s original collection was made of art seized from the royal family, churches and monasteries and aristocrats. This collection was symbolically announced as belonging to the nation.<sup>9</sup> However, the artworks portrayed distant places and the past, which was distant from the French working class. As a result, the Louvre was a storehouse for international art. The national museum focussed on forging an international identity rather than a national one. It signalled the membership of France in the pan-European cultural tradition and asserted political dominance.<sup>10</sup>

The Enlightenment period of the 17th and 18th centuries saw a shift in politics, education, science, and philosophy. This resulted in social and intellectual restructuring within Western culture.<sup>11</sup> The Enlightenment period sought develop a “universal” knowledge that was based on “reason” rather than religion.<sup>12</sup> Enlightenment thinkers sought to better understand the world. In order to understand something better, one must name it or label it.<sup>13</sup> As a result, there came a quest for classificatory systems in all aspects of life. The private curiosity cabinets moved to public displays.

Museums at the colonies would serve a different purpose that its European counterparts. The first museum in South Africa (the South African Museum in Cape Town established in 1825<sup>14</sup>) was established to record research on animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms so colonists could be familiar with the resources of the colony.<sup>15</sup>

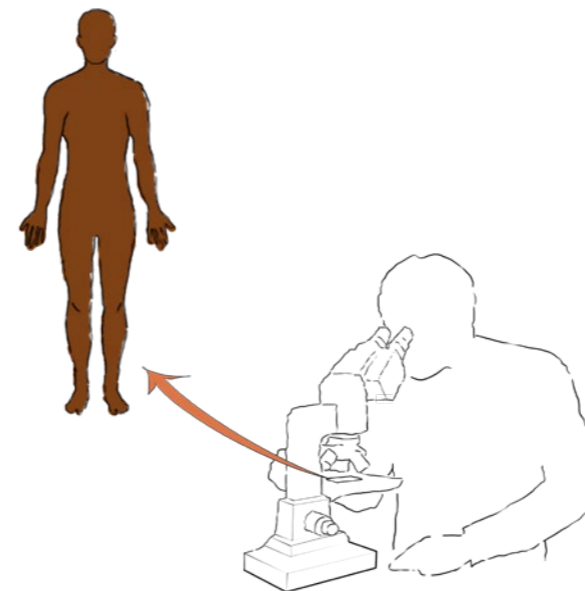


FIGURE 3: Objectification of the black human body (Phiri.S, 2022.)

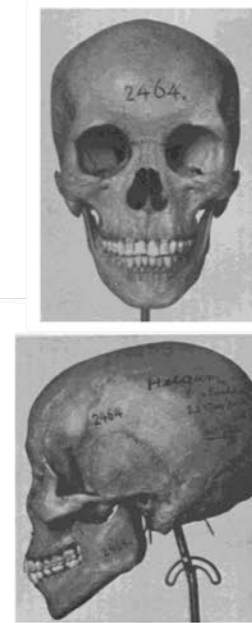


FIGURE 4: Classification of Indigenous People in the Museum (L. Von, 1914)

The Age of Enlightenment came with a European interest in the evolution of humanity from animals, and the spread of Social Darwinism.<sup>16</sup> Thus, quest for classification expanded to the human body. Scientists classified and ranked people based on race.<sup>17</sup> The white population was seen by European scientists such as Blumenbach as being the “original type” and any other race as “a degeneration from the original type.”<sup>18</sup>

Further theories such as that of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* which added the belief that due to the theory of the survival of the fittest, indigenous people were dying out because of their inferiority and would soon become extinct. As a result, there was a need to collect evidence of their existence as part of the natural history of the world.<sup>19</sup>

Indigenous South African material was collected by museums and was placed within the ancient and natural history of the world. Indigenous people were seen as an example of "one of the earliest stages in the evolution of man"<sup>20</sup>. The objectification of indigenous people is not only seen through the collection of human remains in South African museums, but also through its link with the museums in the colonising Britain.

Colonial and international exhibitions created room to show off the wealth and intellect of different colonies and nations.<sup>21</sup> Because of these exhibitions, South African museums gained an educational role through their content.



FIGURE 5: *Saratjie Baartman on Display* (edited by Phiri.S, 2022)

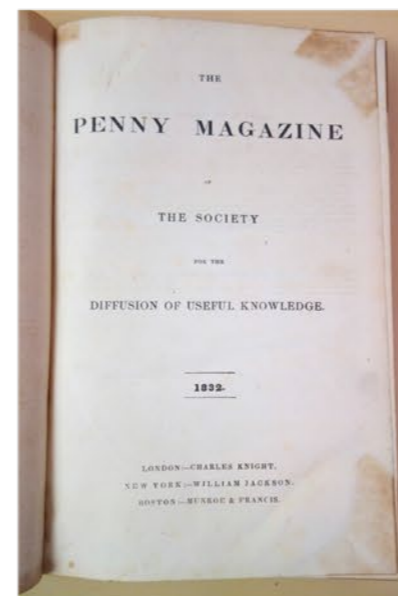


FIGURE 7: *The Penny Magazine*. (Norman, n.d.)

From the Penny Magazine's article on "how not to embarrass oneself while at the museum"<sup>25</sup> one can see that it was a way to reconstruct a new public sphere that was "polite and rational"<sup>26</sup>. This created room to asperse spaces of popular gathering, and thus the people who inhabited them.

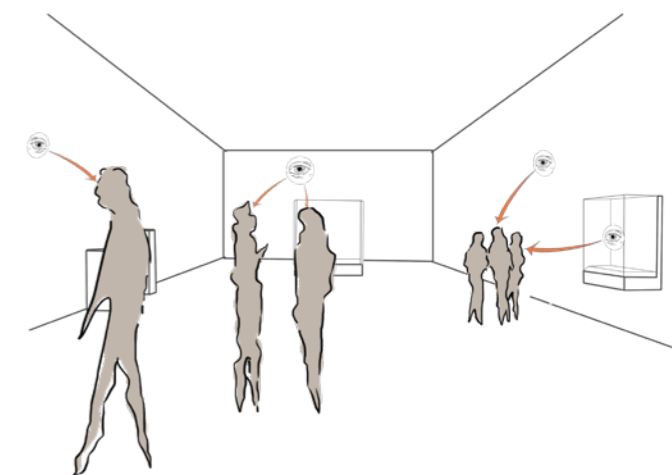


FIGURE 8: *A public under observation* (Phiri.S, 2022.)

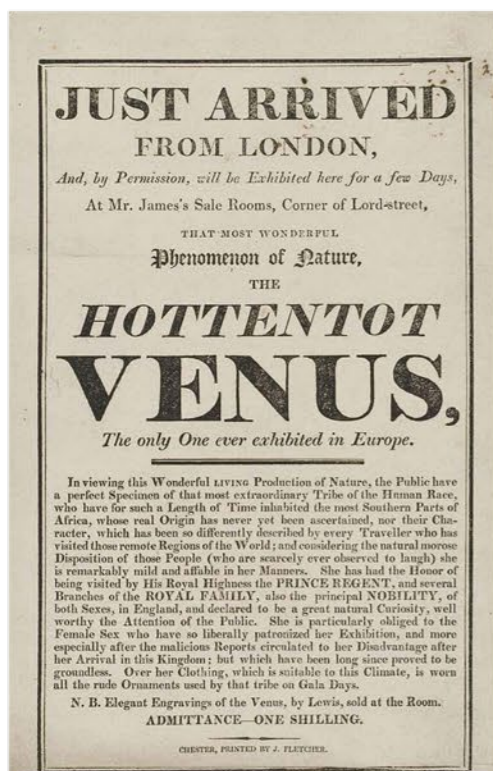


FIGURE 6: *Pamphlet for the display of Sara Baartman* (Fletcher, J.)

An infamous example of this is the case of Saartjie Baartman, a Khoikhoi woman who in 1810 was taken to England. On 225 Piccadilly, people could enter for two shillings and watch Baartman walk onto a stage, sing a song, and then turn around. The spectator could then poke her behind with their walking sticks.<sup>22</sup>

In the exhibition, the black body performed various rituals, ceremonies, and even daily routines.<sup>23</sup> Cultural and racial otherness became viewing subject of the European gaze in the South African museum.

The quest for a "universal" knowledge and the museum as an institutional manifestation thereof cemented the dehumanisation of the black body. Indigenous people were denied as a people with their own histories and cultures.<sup>24</sup> Indigenous people and culture were used by the European population for "scientific" purposes and museum display in life and in death.

Culture, which is described as the "habits, manners, morals, manners, and beliefs of the subordinate class"<sup>27</sup> was seen as something that needed to be regulated and transformed by the government.<sup>28</sup> The museum as a space of official display, increases the self-awareness of the visitor when they enter the space. They become a viewing subject that is judged on good or bad behaviour. As a result, the museum became a government tool whereby the lower classes could learn appropriate ways of being through the copying of behaviours and aesthetics exhibited by social superiors. As a result, the practice and "prestigious imitation"<sup>29</sup> ritual of moving through a museum began. It was thought that this transformation would create a classier popular interest, therefore giving the tavern less of an appeal.<sup>30</sup>

This would create for a more sober and industrious society. Thus, the museum would help curb rebellion and disobedience against authorities.<sup>31</sup>

The non-indigenous population of South Africa did not see the country as having its own history to build upon. The indigenous population existed outside of history and time, and settler narrative of the white population was not seen as suitable to build a nation upon. Museums had created a narrow image that was based on a nation being European, as a result, white museum curators turned to Europe for continuity.<sup>32</sup>

The Cape Colony aimed to develop its identity and allegiance to Britain, its "mother country."<sup>33</sup>

## Into Apartheid

The racial segregation and discrimination that was disguised as ethnographic and scientific research<sup>34</sup> during the British rule continued under the National Party during apartheid. Museum practice matched the social theory and political ideologies of the apartheid government. “Museums were sites of contestation and political arenas where cultural identity was stripped deliberately.”<sup>35</sup> During apartheid, the SAM was under government control<sup>36</sup>. This meant that all museum-related activity required government approval.

In 1969, the South African Cultural Museum images and drawings became a separate entity to the SAM.<sup>37</sup> In the first published annual report of the museum, the museum’s aims were:

*“... to sketch in the cultural historical background of the many peoples who settled in South Africa, the importance of the Far-Eastern trade to the opening up of this country, and in the archaeological section, to show something of the origins of Western Civilization”*  
(SACHM, 1976:2).

The museum was directly influenced by the Apartheid government’s policies, which aimed to promote white culture and dismiss the histories of the rest of the population.

The role of the black artist in the art museum in the 1960s was complex. Commercial galleries exhibited black art under strict conditions. The black artist could only exhibit the “township painting”. These figurative paintings depicted black urban life, they were portrayed light-heartedly and picturesque. Both the local and international white audience enjoyed the works.<sup>38</sup> They offered something “exotically other”<sup>39</sup> as access into the townships became more difficult.<sup>40</sup>



FIGURE 9: Pemba, G. (1977). *New Brighton* [Oil on Board]. East London; The University of Fort Hare

Though this somewhat offered the black artist a space to be heard. It was still governed by the white body and its marketing needs.

## Theory and Technology Summary

South Africa exited the apartheid landscape to find itself in one of “global coloniality”. Today’s capitalist world-system is based on colonial cultures and structures, thus continuing uneven power structures which favour the global north.<sup>41</sup>

South Africa must still conform to Eurocentric ideologies in order to be considered on a global scale. Therefore, global coloniality limits and constrains African agency.<sup>42</sup>

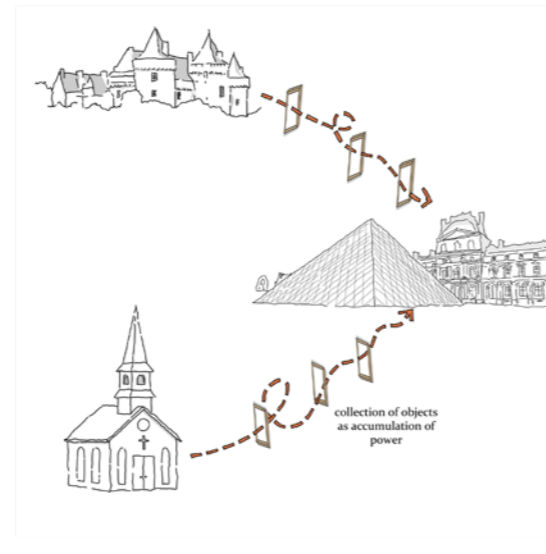
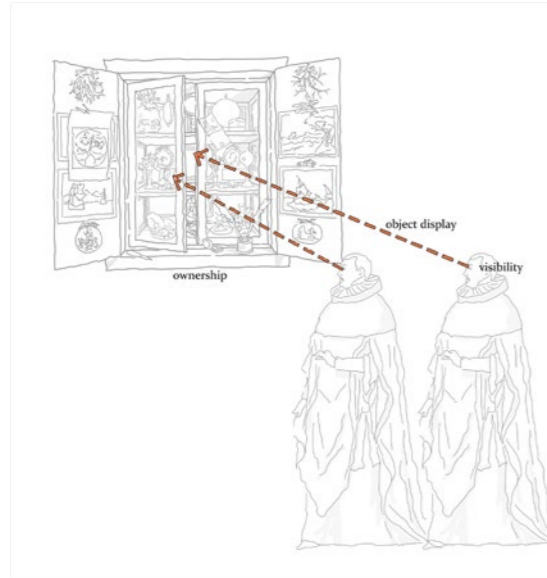
At their inception, modern museums dealt histories the average person could not relate to.<sup>43</sup> The narratives of enslaved and then oppressed people were fully dictated by institutional representation.

Many of the museums built after 1994 in South Africa focus on the narrative of the apartheid liberation struggle, and therefore deal with the heritage and memory of living people. In a free, post-apartheid South Africa, black people can relay their own narratives and experiences. However, the institution is still trapped in a global coloniality that does not have room for the black voice.

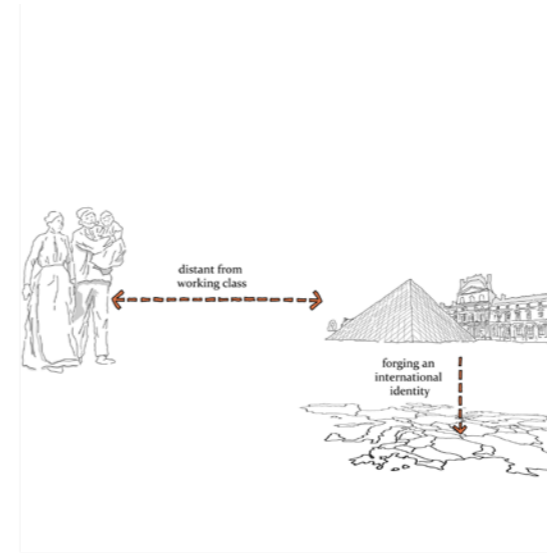
Furthermore, I believe that black people have a history and narrative that goes further back than apartheid, to pre-colonial times. This narrative is still told through a shallow, Western lens which is only interested in that which is useful or exotic.<sup>44</sup>

As a result, this intention of this dissertation is to explore a possible museum space that looks at telling a historical pre-colonial narrative through an indigenous lens. It intends to de-conceptualise the museum as a space that commodifies and objectifies the black narrative. It aims to create space for the black voice to own, relay and share its own narrative. It further aims to restructure the museum to be a space of communication and learning rather than a space of display and behavioural mediation.

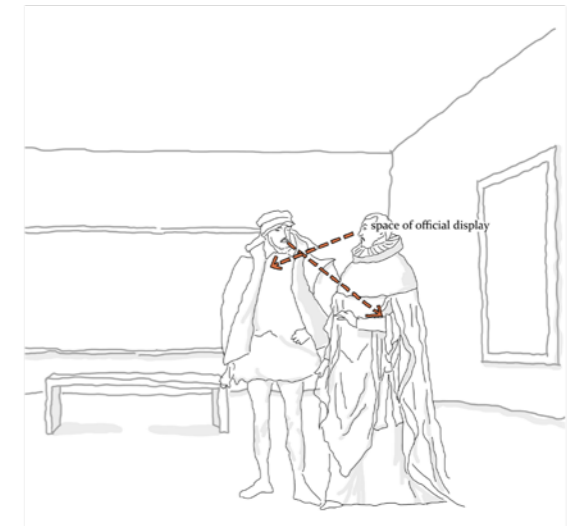
Theory and Technology Take-away



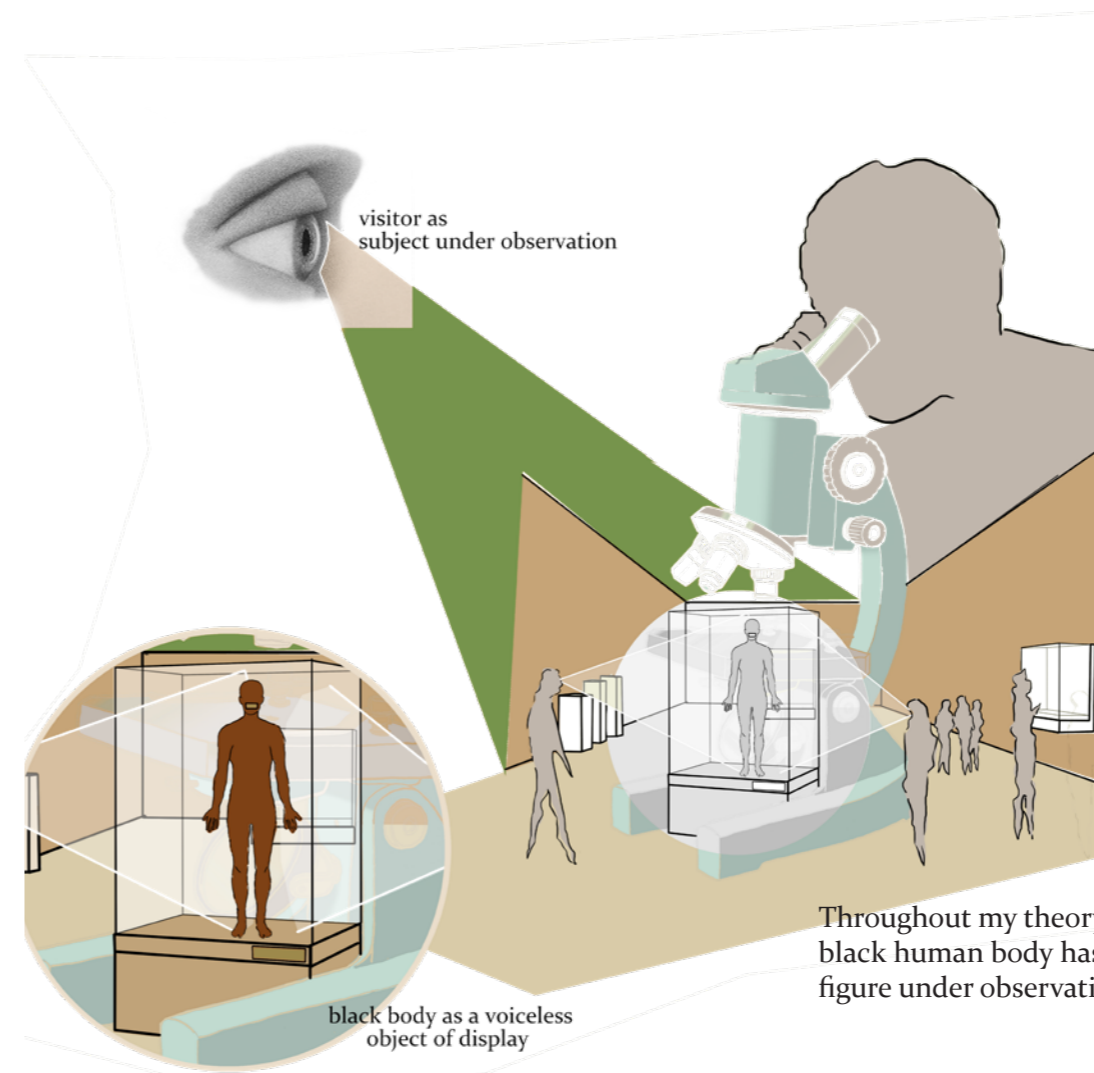
accumulation of objections = accumulation of power



museum content unrelatable to the public



museum as a space regulation of the human body



Throughout my theory and technology research the black human body has been a voiceless non-human figure under observation of the Western eye.

## B. The Visitor and The Museum Visit

### The Visitor

#### Visitor Types

#### The Exhibition

#### Museum Fatigue

#### Chapter Summary: Principles

This theoretical framework has specific interest in the visitor experience of the museum. To begin, I will explore the three factors, that according to J.K. Smith and L.F. Wolf, influence how the museum is experienced: the content, the presentation, and the visitor.<sup>45</sup>

## The Visitor

In her comic “I Make Exhibits,” Cole highlights the importance of understanding who the visitor of the museum is and creating an exhibition that considers the visitor’s identity.<sup>46</sup> The easiest way to identify the visitor is to use demographics: race, age, gender, nationality. Cole identifies that museum visitors are often white; children are the targets of exhibitions and women are more likely to visit the museum.<sup>47</sup>

She also identifies that people who live in closer proximity to the museum have the potential to be repeat visitors.<sup>48</sup>

Demographic information begins to tell the story of who visits the museum, it does not tell the full story of the identity of the visitor, nor does it explain why visitors visit museums.

Falk has argued that every museum experience is different dependent on the visitor.<sup>49</sup> The experience is defined who the visitor is, their goals and needs for the museum visit on a specific day, at a specific place, at a specific time.<sup>50</sup>

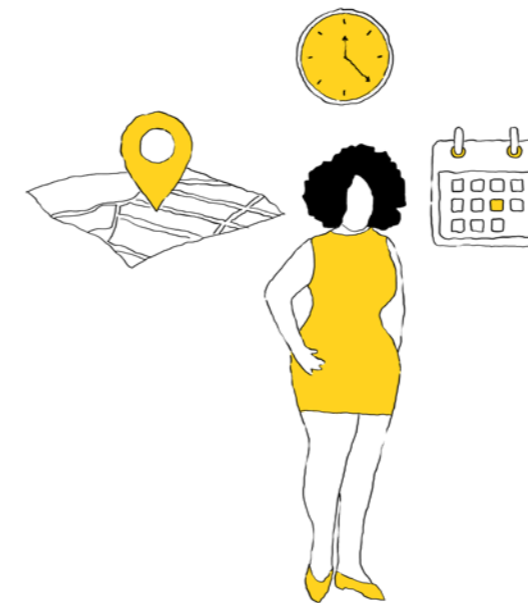


FIGURE 10: Factors affecting the museum visit (Phiri.S, 2022.)

To understand how a visitor may engage with a museum; one needs to go beyond the demographic characteristics of the visitor and begin to look at the visitor identity. Identity is the values, relationships, memories and experiences the create a person.<sup>51</sup>

Falk divides identity into “big identity” and a “small identity”. The “big identity” is the unchangeable characteristics of a person, and the “small identity” is the changeable characteristics of a person, such as interest, etc.<sup>52</sup>

However, based on the American Psychological Association’s definition of identity (see glossary) and the definition mentioned above; I understand identity to be one entity that is defined by the accumulation of certain characteristics. Therefore, I understand Falk’s “big identity” to be fixed characteristics, “small identity” to be flexible characteristics, and all these characteristics create an identity.

A sense of self refers to how one sees themselves or how they see the characteristics that make up their identity.<sup>53</sup> Goffman states that the sense of self is built through interaction with others, and interaction with institutions.<sup>54</sup> As a result, the museum as an institution can influence one’s sense of self and therefore their identity.

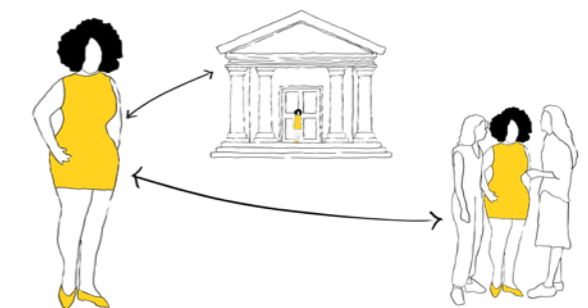


FIGURE 11: Museum influences self and identity (Phiri.S, 2022.)

However, one can begin to question the sense of self that is created through interaction with the museum for a person of indigenous decent. The museum is shaped by the social relationships of the visitor, and it is defined by who it includes and who it excludes.<sup>55</sup> Specifically in South Africa's colonial history, the museum has been founded on a foundation that excludes black people or portrays them as less than human. Though there have been efforts to try and correct exclusionary/dehumanising past of museums (e.g., the removal of the human casts at the South African Museum<sup>56</sup>) the fundamental architecture of the institution remains unchanged.

## Visitor Types

Falk identifies five museum visitor types; these visitor types characterise the reasons one may visit a museum.

The explorer: the visitor who is curious and wants to learn new things.

The facilitator: the visitor who wants to have a meaningful social experience.

The experience seeker: the visitor who is checking something off their list

The enthusiast: the visitor who has a keen interest in history.

The recharger: who is looking to unwind (they often avoid history museums). The recharger looks for a quiet space for reflection.<sup>57</sup>

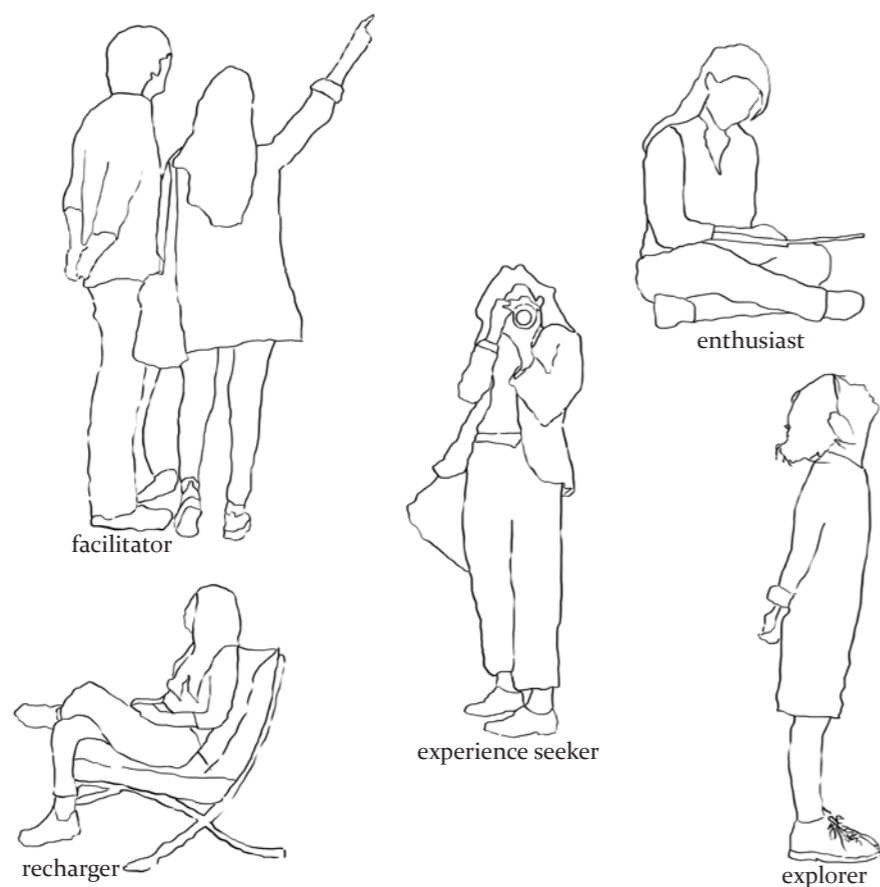


FIGURE 12: Museum visitor types according to Falk (Phiri.S, 2022.)

Identifying these user types helps one understand how different visitors engage with the museum. The explorer and the enthusiast may engage with the content more deeply than the facilitator. They may also choose to experience the museum on their own. The facilitator may prefer a share museum experience. This shared museum experience can be a process of collaborative learning which through shared meaning-making.<sup>58</sup>

This is not to say that the person visiting the museum is limited to one visitor type category for the duration of their visit.



Two people may visit a museum together. At the beginning of the visit at least one of the visitors must be the facilitator.



At some point during the visit they may separate and look at exhibits on their own.

The one visitor may be really interested in a certain topic and thus go through every detail of the exhibition has to offer. In that same duration, the other companion may skim through four exhibits, focussing a little bit more on one. When they spilt one visitor became the enthusiast, while another became what The experience seeker skims through the exhibitions just for the sake of seeing them, and while occasionally pay a little bit more attention to parts of the exhibition that will catch their attention.



FIGURE 13: Illustration of changing visitor types (Phiri.S, 2022.)

Then they will bump into each other again at some point and continue their museum visit together. When the two visitors reunite, they may continue the viewing as a social process, whereby they do not question each other's knowledge, but appreciate each other's judgements, comments, or point of view.<sup>59</sup>

Based on the above understanding of the purpose for the museum visit; it makes sense for a museum to be organised in a layered manner.<sup>60</sup> A layered exhibit allows for visitors to decide how deeply they want to engage with the content, thus creating a more complete museum experience for both the enthusiast and the experience seeker.

Layer one (the most public layer) would highlight the theme and the period of the exhibition.<sup>61</sup> This layer should capture the visitor's attention, as it is the point where they choose whether they want to engage further with the exhibition.

Layer two would introduce limited information.<sup>62</sup> Though the information is limited, it should still offer a complete picture.

Layer three would provide in-depth information.<sup>63</sup>

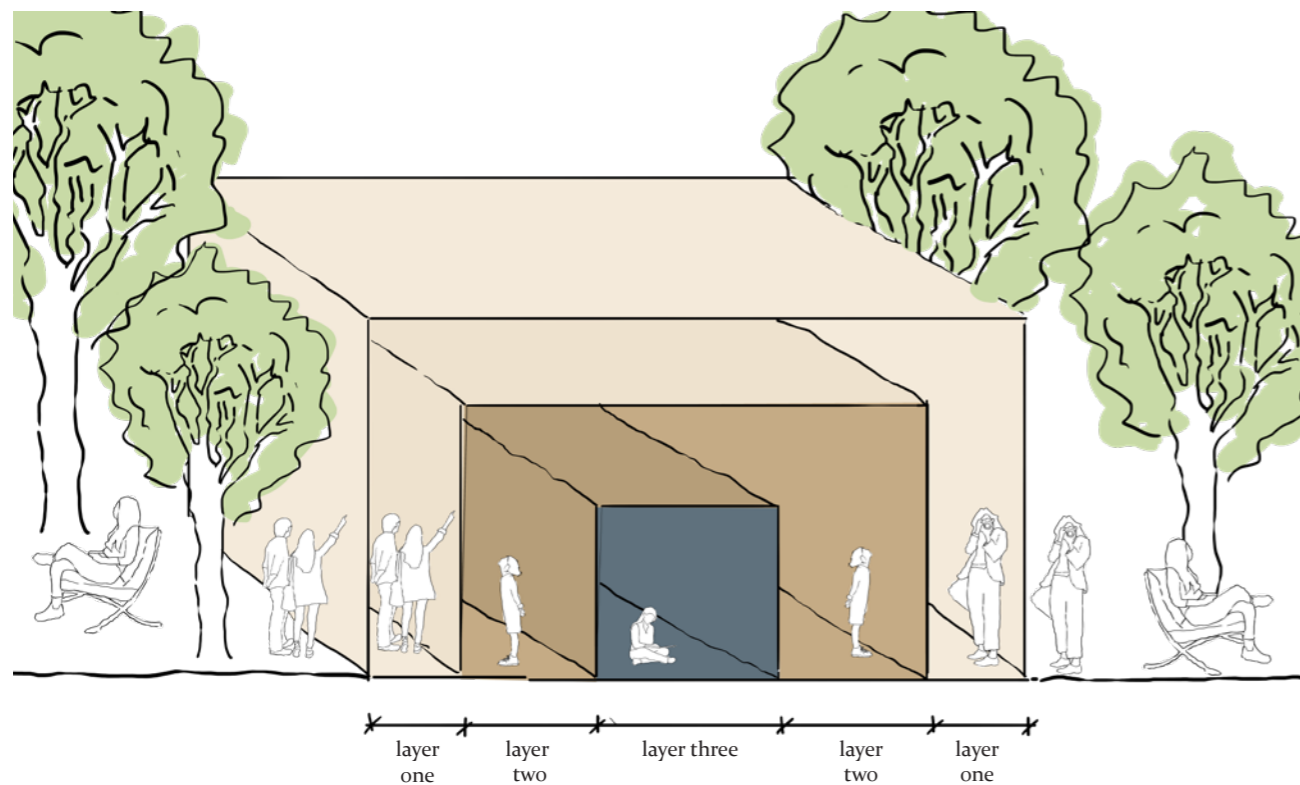


FIGURE 13: Layering of space to accommodate different visitor types (Phiri.S, 2022.)

## The Exhibition

An exhibit is a three-dimensional story-telling environment which one can move through and interact with.<sup>64</sup> One cannot force a visitor to look at everything in the exhibition. It becomes important to consider multiple ways of telling a story, so that the visitor has a full exhibition experience regardless of how they choose to engage with the exhibition.

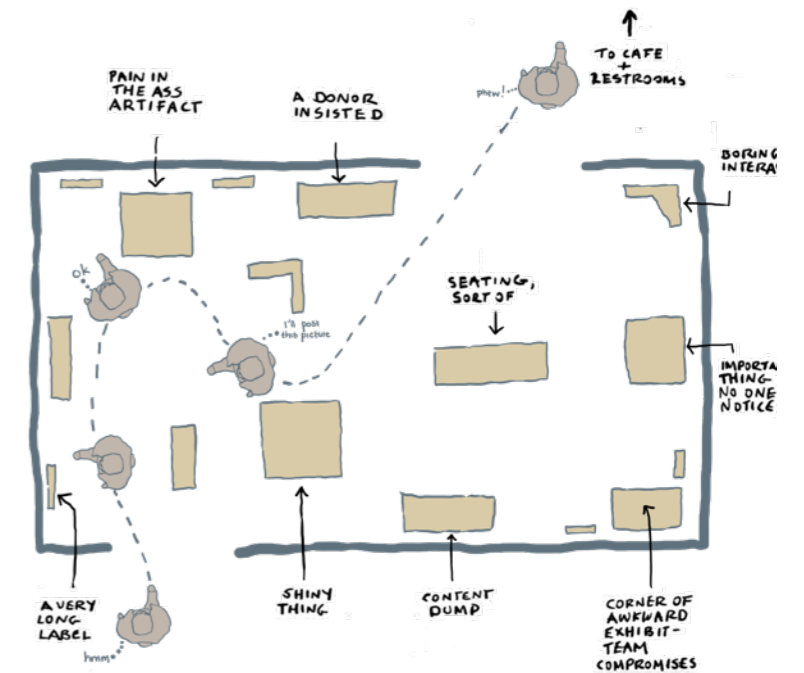


FIGURE 14: A typical museum visit (edited by Phiri.S, 2022.)

From my personal experience, I know that at some point I just stop reading the text all together and hope I can get the gist of what is said just from labels and the object. Supporting this argument, in her article: Your Labels Make Me Feel Stupid, Gail Gregg finds that a visitor can handle about 50 words in an object label, no more than 150 in a room label, and maximum in an introductory text.<sup>65</sup>



Light plays in key role in exhibition-making. A spotlight often guides the visitor from object/text to object/text. Exhibition rooms are often dark. When the exhibition room is light, it is a white cube that only has the object on display and its text.

Contrast with setting background further focuses visitor attention to the object on display, as does line of sight placement and the isolation of the object.

The Object

Line of sight placement

Isolation

FIGURE 14: Components of the museum experience (Phiri.S, 2022.)  
Route of the Museum Visit

The visitor chooses whether they want to engage with parts of the exhibition through movement.

## Museum Fatigue

Museum fatigue states that audience interest decreases as a museum visit progresses.<sup>66</sup> Though there is no clear cause for the phenomena, in his article: What is Museum Fatigue, Davey suspects that it may be due to the setting of the museum and the attributes of the visitor.<sup>67</sup>

Some exhibits require more effort to view because of the way they are presented.<sup>68</sup>

In an experiment, Falk, Koran, Dierking, and Dreblow found that visitor interest is highest upon entrance to the museum and remained at the peak for 30 minutes. After the 30 minutes the interest deteriorates exponentially. As a result, the initial slow movement through the exhibition becomes a faster cruise that becomes more selective with its stops.<sup>69</sup>

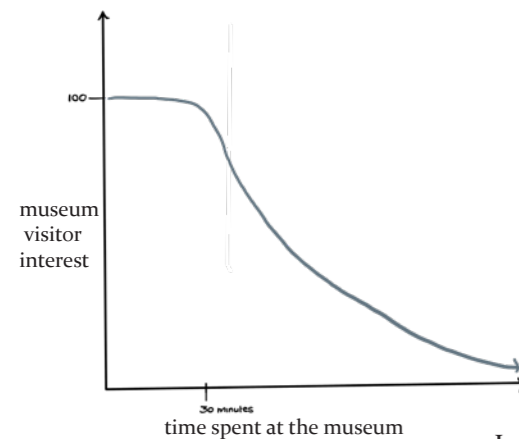


FIGURE 15: Graph indicating deteriorating visitor attention (Phiri.S, 2022.)

This has been supported in other experiments. In their experiment, Bitgood, Patterson, and Benefield found that the first exhibit is viewed for a little longer than the others. They found this by allowing visitors to visit a series of displays in a linear order. They then reversed the direction of the visit. In both instances the first exhibit got the most attention.<sup>70</sup>

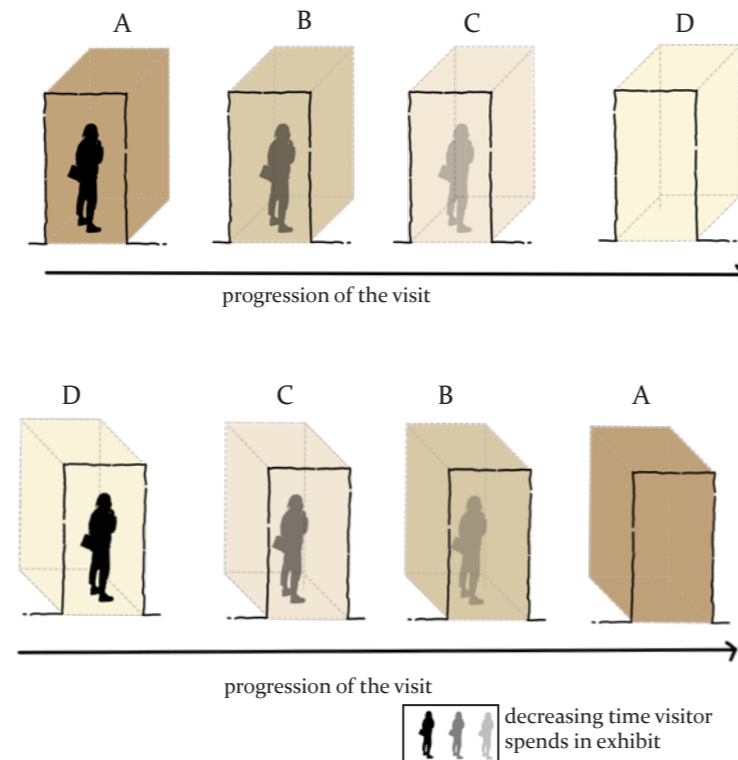


FIGURE 16: Fading visitor interest (Phiri.S, 2022.)

In his experiment, Mitchell created a route whereby all the exhibits were identical.

He found that the exhibit at the entrance was the most seen, the exhibits most close to the main axis were more likely to be seen, and the exhibits at the exits was least likely to be seen.<sup>71</sup>

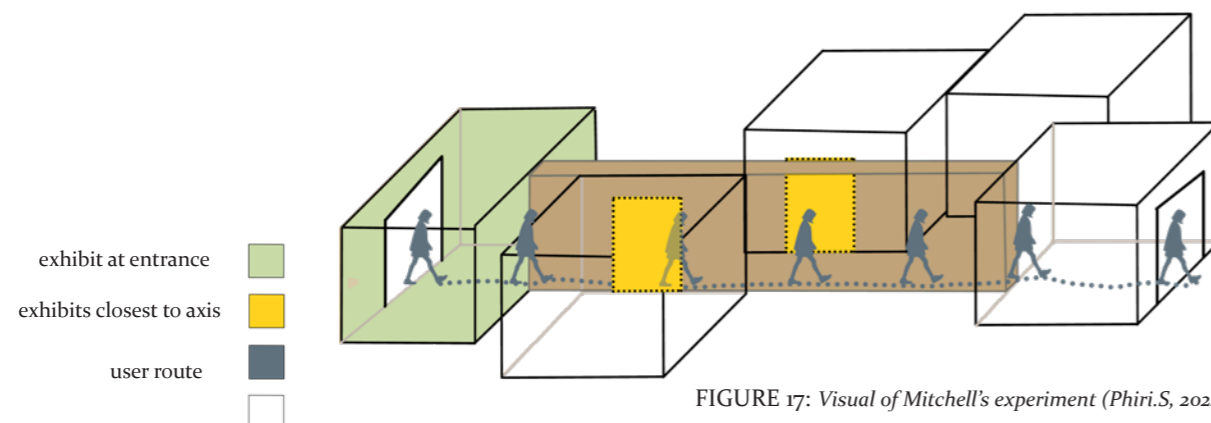


FIGURE 17: Visual of Mitchell's experiment (Phiri.S, 2022.)

Museum fatigue can be identified through an increased speed of viewing with no rest, and an increased selectivity of which exhibits to view.<sup>72</sup> It is important to note that people do get physically tired.

People have a limited attention span and can only focus on one thing at a time.

Over-exposure to a certain topic can lead to wear-out, as with similarities in theme and size.

In a study of a hundred exhibitions, Serrell found that visitors normally spend less than 20 minutes in an exhibition regardless of its topic or its size.<sup>73</sup>

Bitgood suggests to hold a visitor's attention, one should:

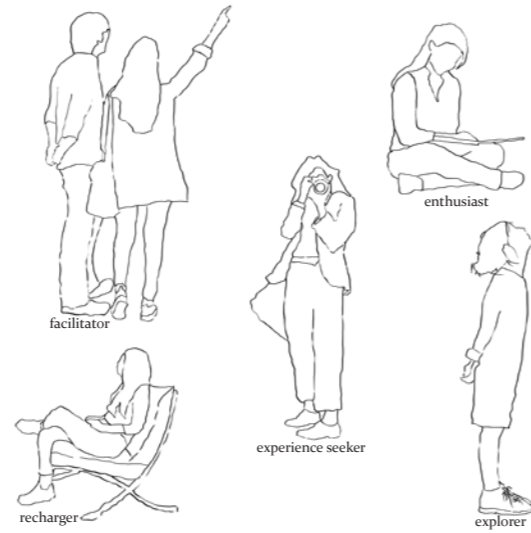
- Reduce the mental effort required to understand the exhibit.
- Minimise distractions
- Increase exhibit distinctiveness
- Create space for breaks
- Motivate visitors to engage

## Chapter Summary

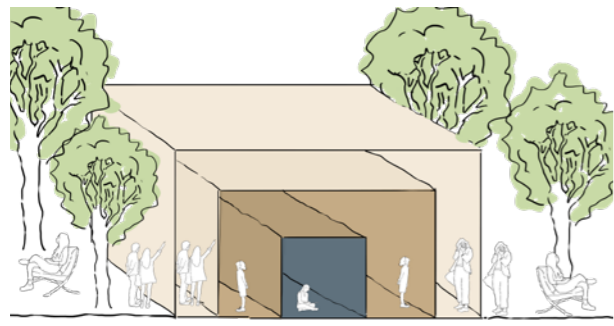
The principles I wish to consider in this project going forward are:



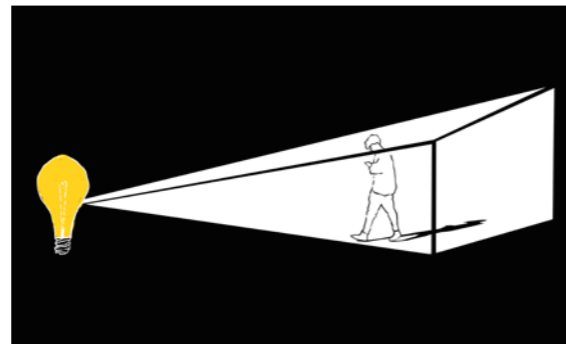
1. Creating a space for multiple narratives to exist.



2. Considering the visitor types.



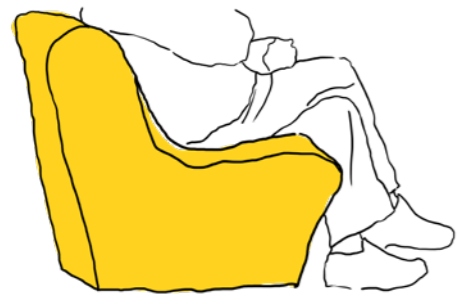
3. Creating spaces in a multi-layered to allow for different degrees of interaction.



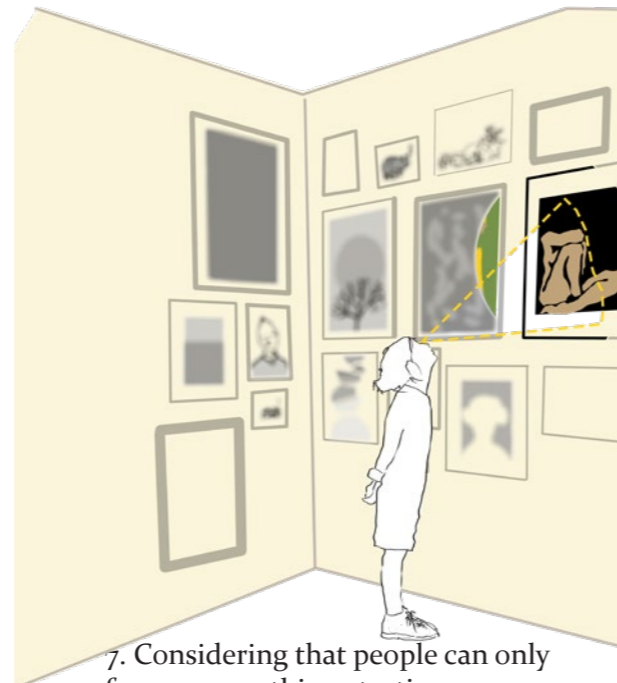
4. The importance of light, and contrasts.



5. Walking and the museum route.



6. Allowing space for breaks.



7. Considering that people can only focus on one thing at a time.

## C. Site Investigation

Introduction

Activity on Site

Site Choice

History of Site

Going into my research, I knew that my site would be in the area in or around the Company Gardens. This site area is of historical significance to Cape Town's colonial history and is one that kept on coming up during my research South Africa's first museums.

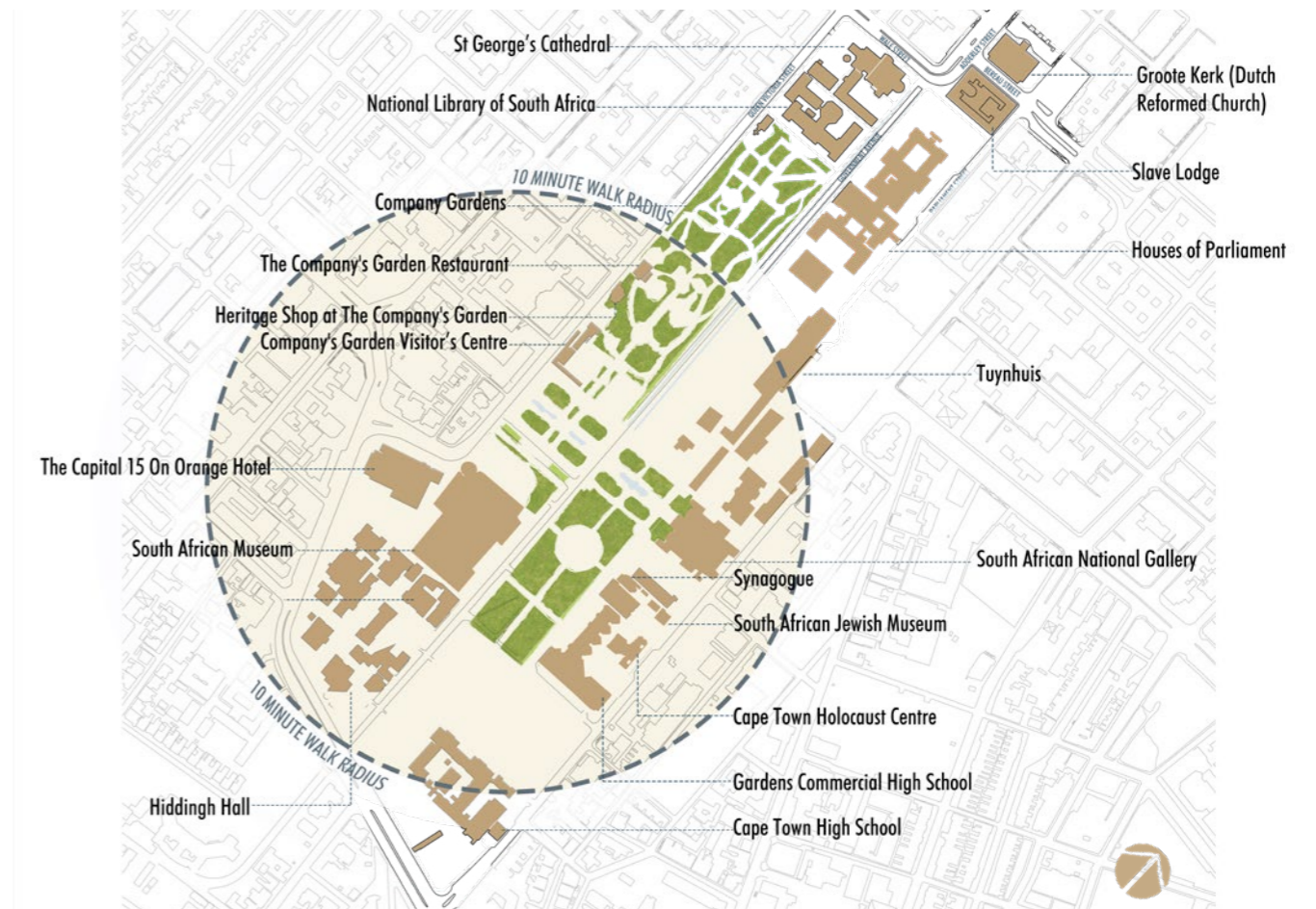


FIGURE 17: Company Gardens and its Surroundings

## Activity on site

To pick the exact location of the site I started by looking at how the site is used and its users. This process began by going to the Company Gardens on different days, and different times of the day.

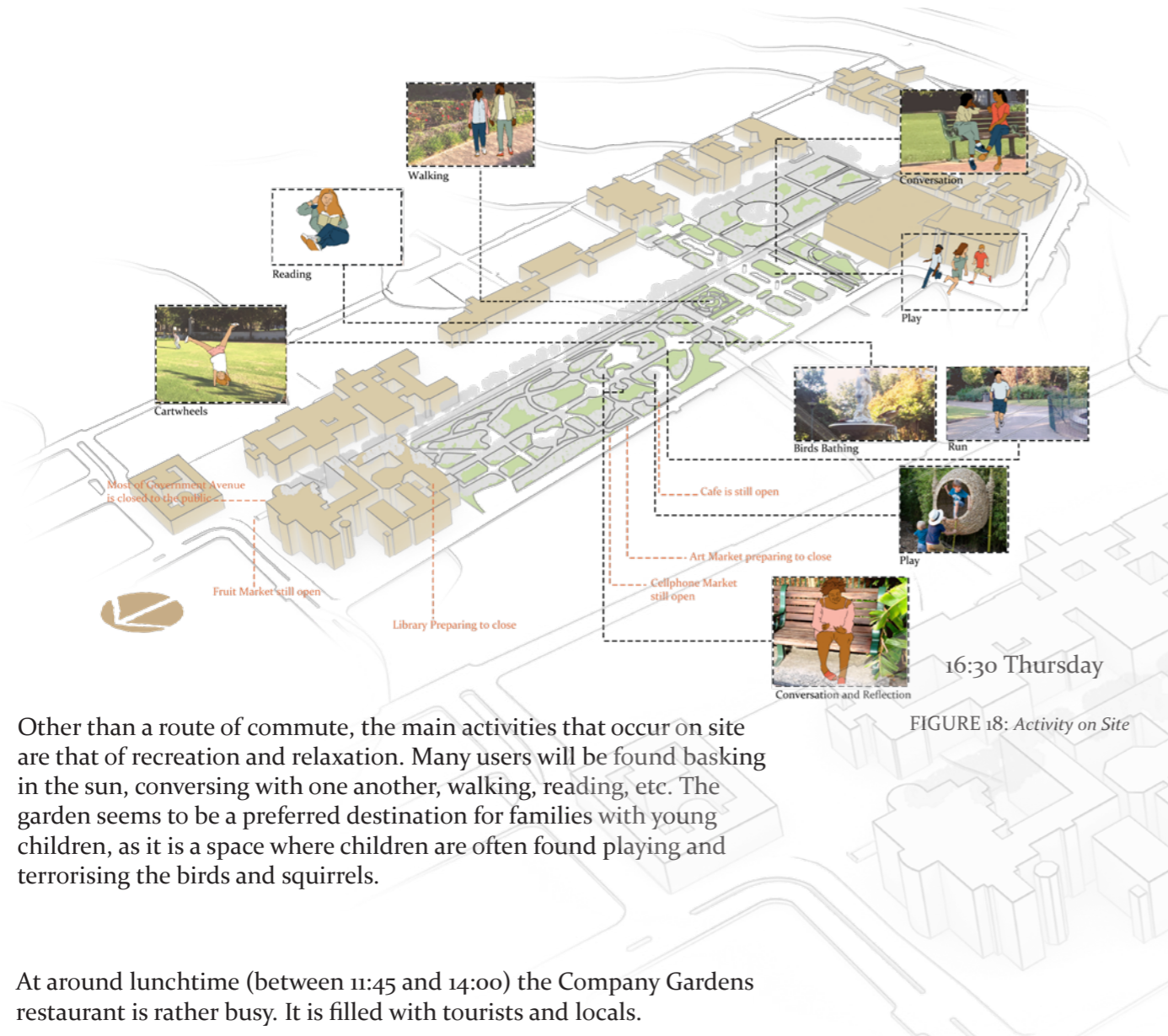


FIGURE 18: Activity on Site

At around lunchtime (between 11:45 and 14:00) the Company Gardens restaurant is rather busy. It is filled with tourists and locals.



FIGURE 19: Company Gardens Restaurant at Lunchtime

The peak activity hours of the gardens are in the morning between 07:30 and 09:00, this seems to be the time when people are going to work, and children are going to school around the gardens. This commuter activity is then reversed for an extended period between about 14:00 and about 17:30. This peak period consists of people primarily in movement through the gardens.

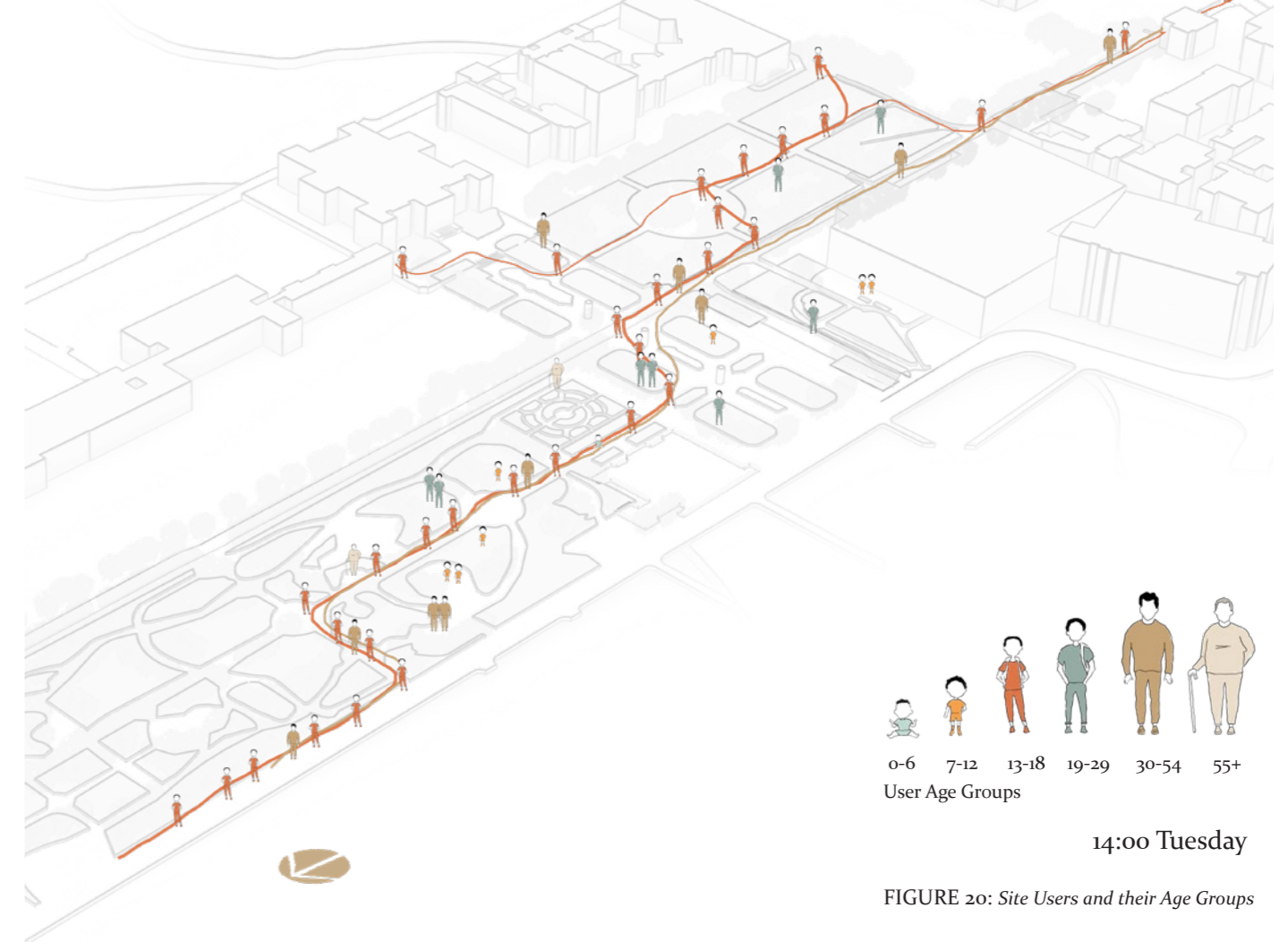


FIGURE 20: Site Users and their Age Groups

Graph Indicating the Trading Hours of the Company Gardens and the commuting activity

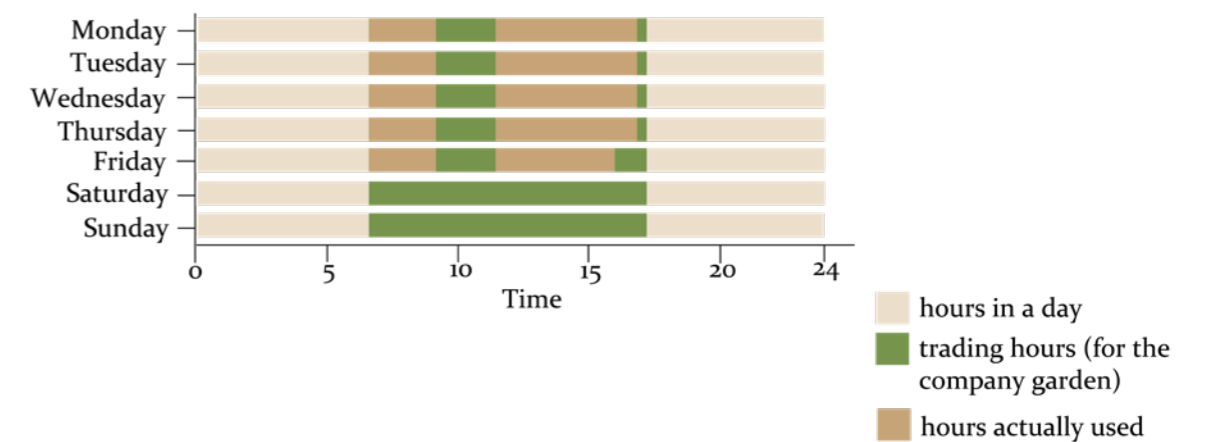
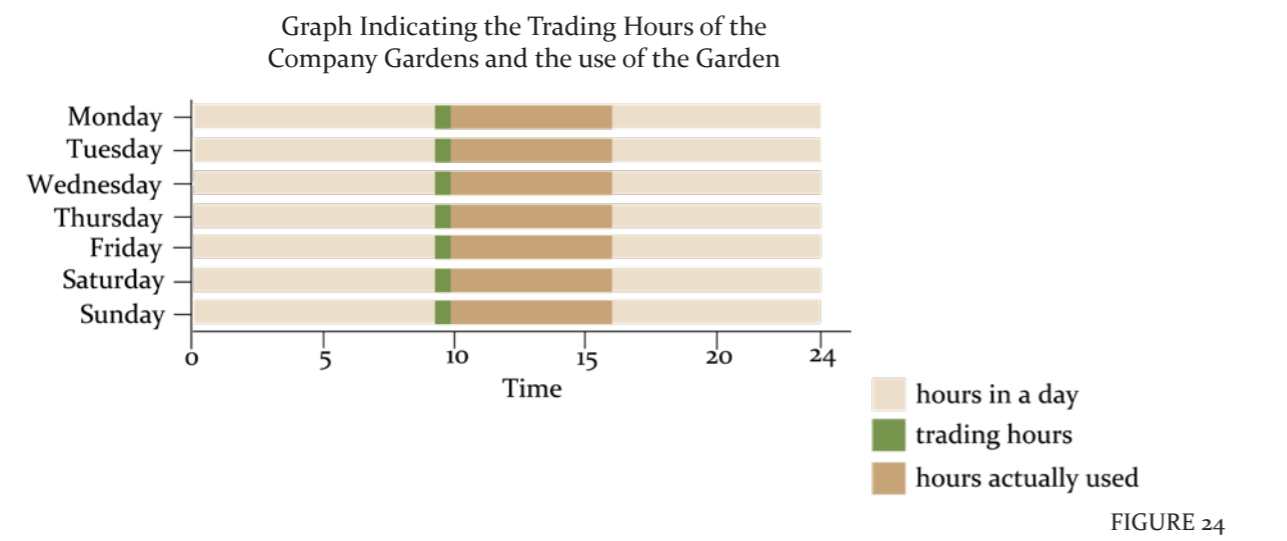
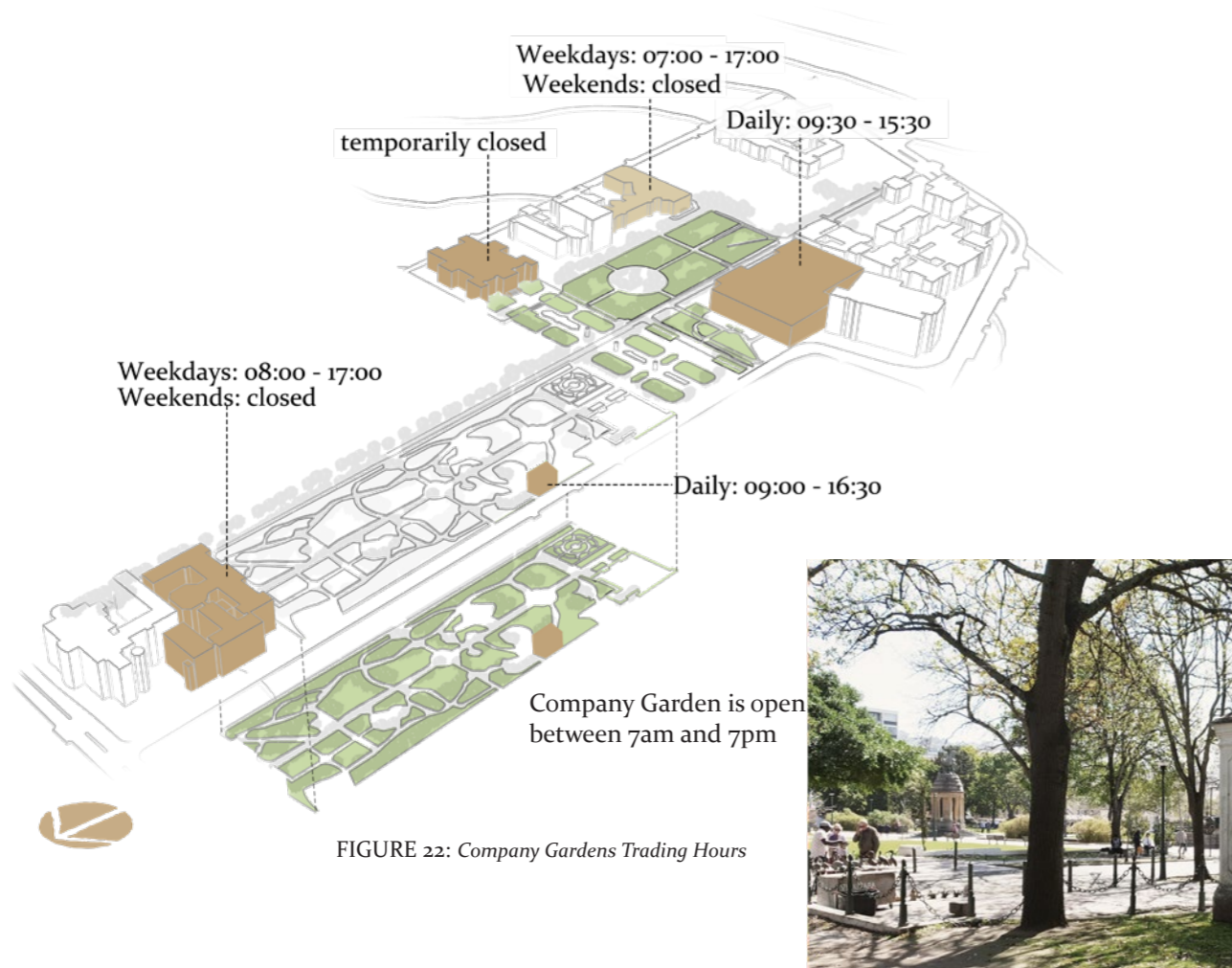


FIGURE 21

Tourists are often found on walks with guides, taking pictures, and being in awe of how tame the squirrels are. The tourists also often the visitors of the South African Museum. The museum is also a popular destination for families who have children, and for school outings.



Graph Indicating the Trading Hours of the buildings on the Company Gardens and the hours they are used

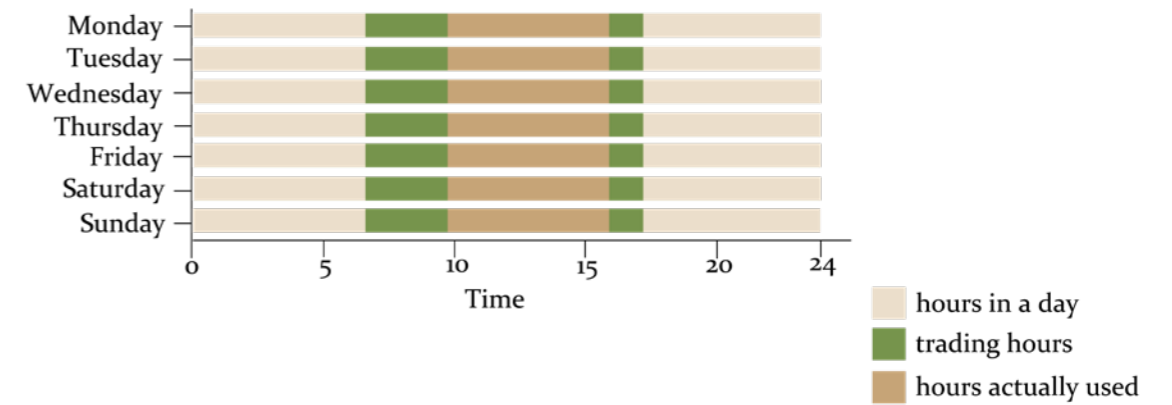
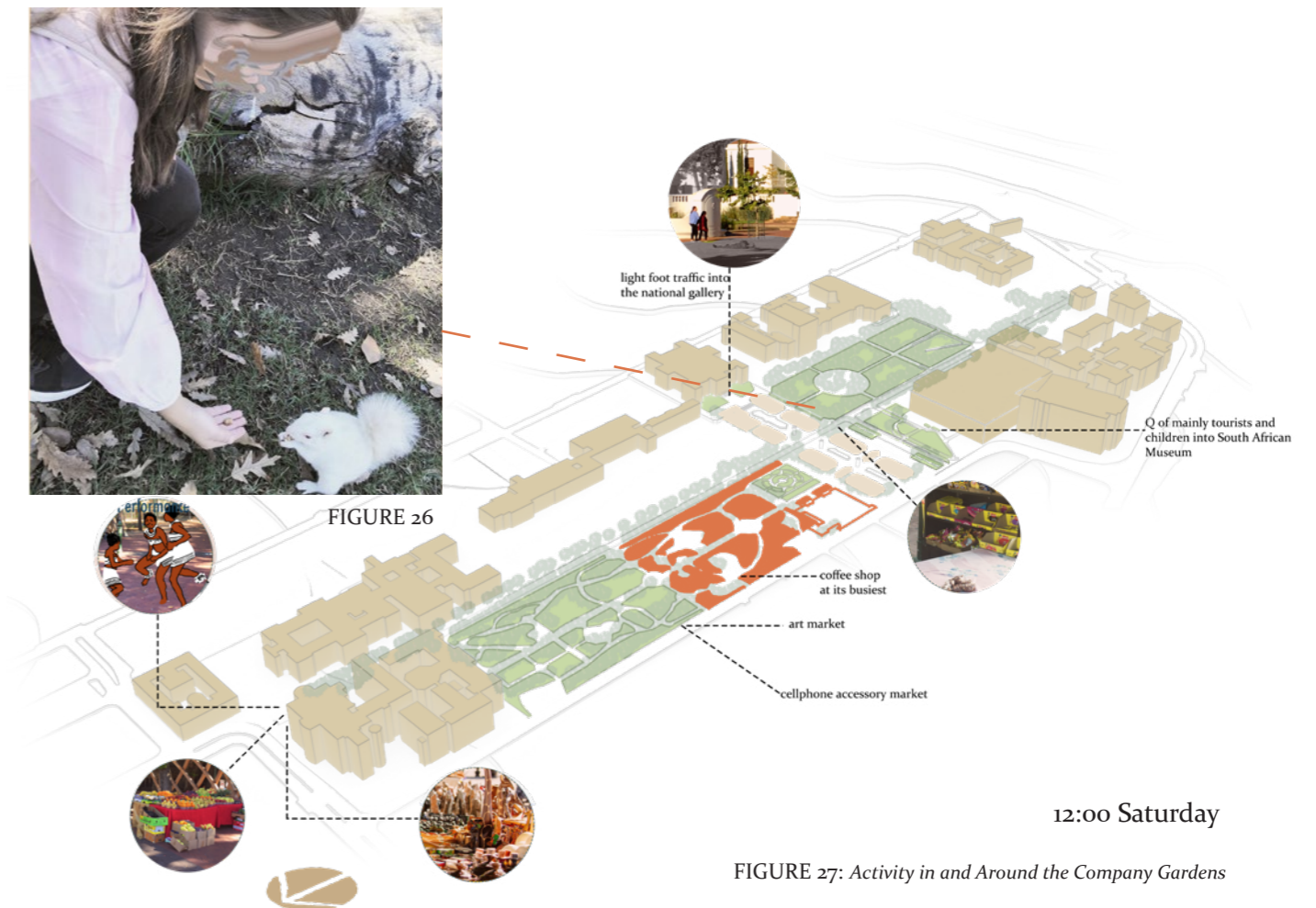


FIGURE 25

The garden is inactive in the evenings as all the attractions in the area are closed, and the garden trading hours are between 7am and 7pm. Activity in the company garden continues during the weekend, though there are far less commuters through the site and the activity dies down earlier than on a weekday.





## Site Choice

Despite the inactivity before sunrise and after sunset, the Northern side of the Company Garden is well used. Considering this, I identified the paddocks as a site area as it is less well used than the rest of the Company Garden.



FIGURE 29



FIGURE 30: The Paddocks

I then began spending time at the paddocks to try understand why it used so much less than the rest of the gardens. Two factors stood out. The first was how dark the area was compared to the rest of the garden. This is due to the shadows cast by the trees and the buildings around. Another factor was that the paddocks and the lower parts of government avenue are recipients of harsh boundaries and the back end of surrounding buildings. As a result, there is no reason for people to dwell in this area.

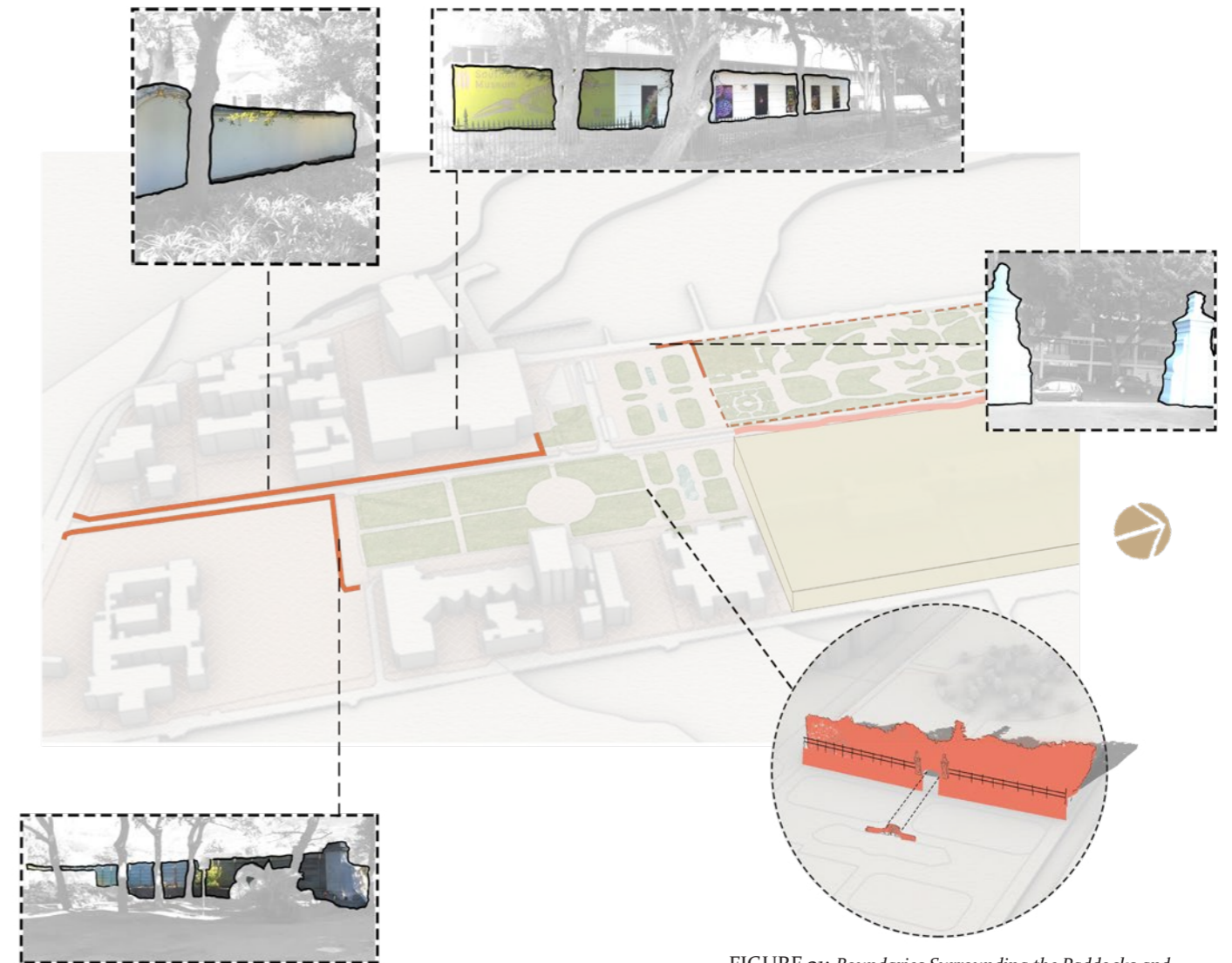


FIGURE 31: Boundaries Surrounding the Paddocks and the South end of Government Avenue

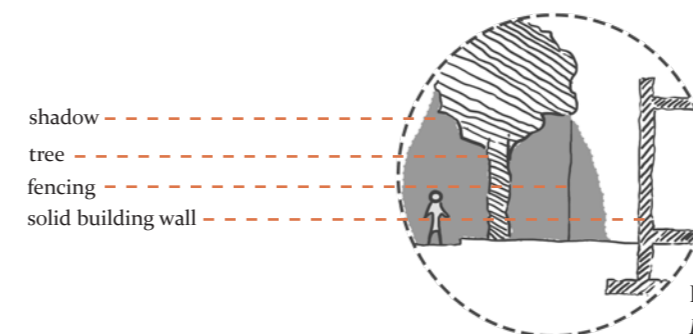


FIGURE 32: Layering of Boundaries on the Site

# Analysing the Paddocks

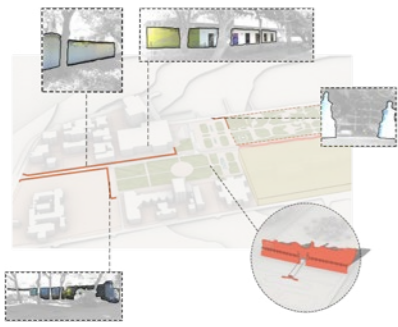


FIGURE 48: boundaries on site



FIGURE 49: walked route on site



FIGURE 50: sun on site

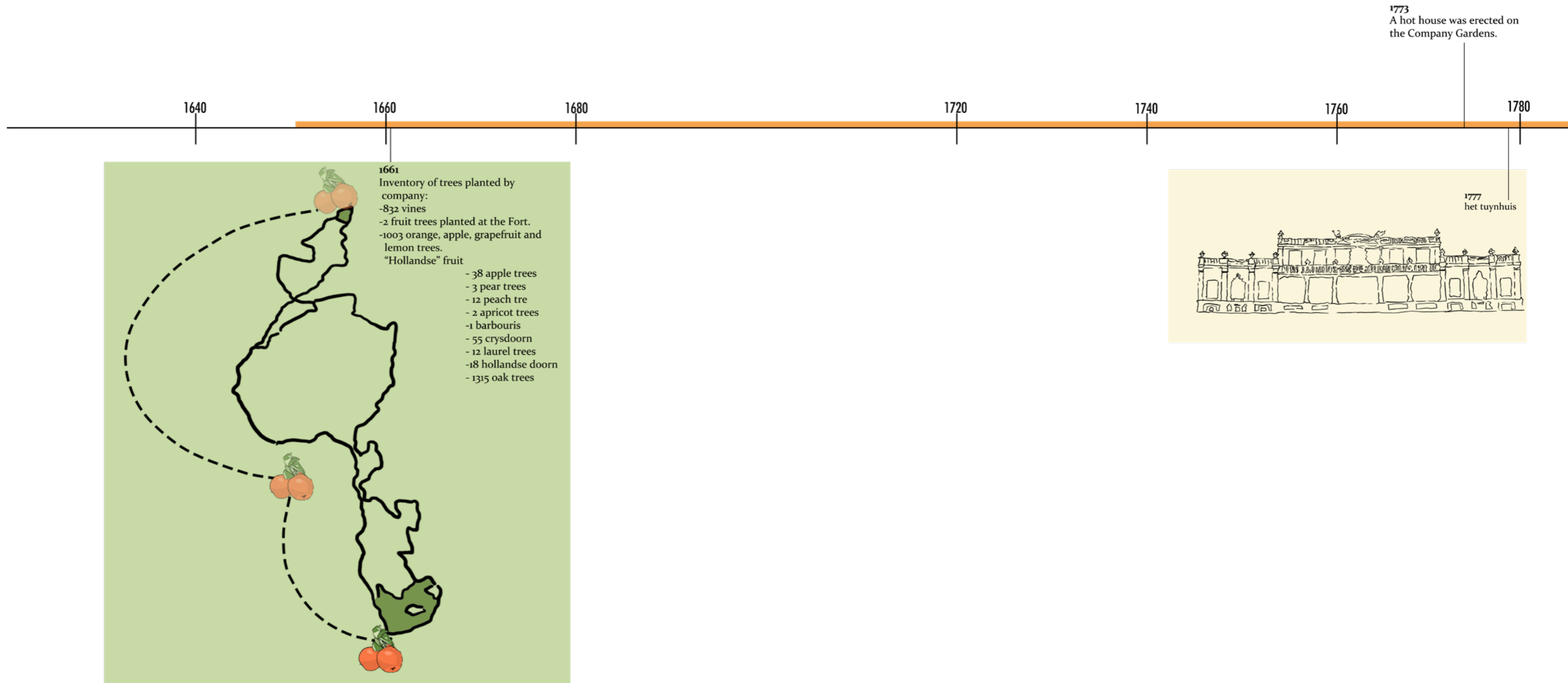


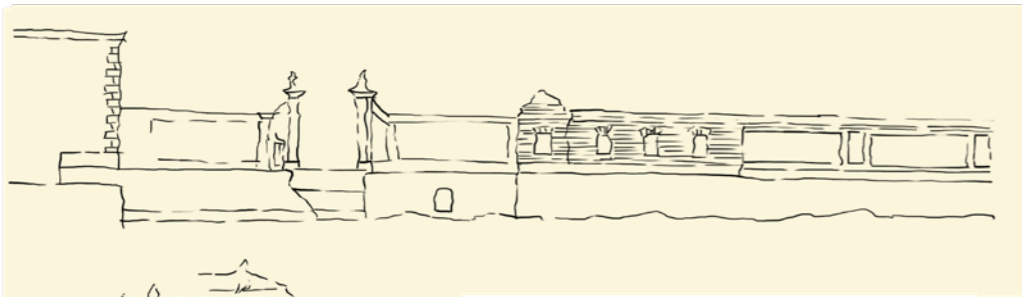
FIGURE 51: site analysis summary

# History

Because the site has such a dense history, I looked at the history of the Company Gardens in three strands:

- 1. People
- 2. Architecture
- 3. Plants





1791  
entrance to Company Gardens

1807-1814  
British rulers at the Cape were military men concerned with **keeping law and order in the a expanding colony** were there was conflict with indigenous people.

1856  
evaluation of the effectiveness of the company gardens as a bontanic institution

It was considered to be a pleasure garden:  
as no plants were named, classified, or planted in a systemic way.  
- No botanist was attached to the garden.

almost half the Garden is no longer available to the public

military band attracts visitors on Wednesdays

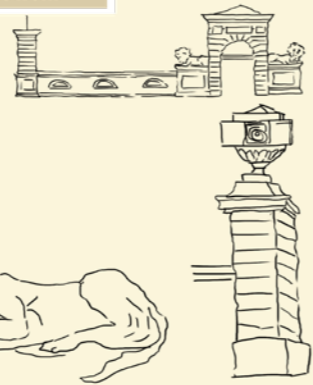
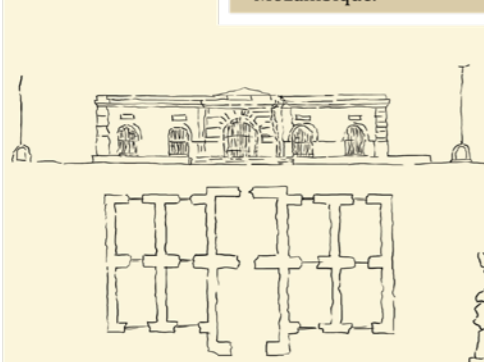
1804  
architectural developments of the zoo



1807  
menagerie contained a lion, a lioness, and a bengal tiger. walled camp opposite a gnu and some ostriches.

1807  
abolition of British enslavement ships meant enslaved peoples could no longer be imported.

1807  
due to shortage of labour black people from a Portuguese enslavement ship were auctioned at the Cape, and a further auctioning of 500 enslaved people from Mozambique.



1856  
importing of:  
-latrapha manihot  
- Piper nigrum  
-Ilex paraguayenses  
- New banana varieties

1807 Plant Inventory (by William Burchell)

few indigenous plants were cultivated and these were distainfully referred to as "Bosjes" by many colonists.



1856  
indigenous plants are almost entirely absent



lower boundary of the garden is planted with Osage Orange (aclura aurantiaca) , a plant introduced from North America 1818 and was used in the US and Europe for Hedges.

1858  
"Correspondents abroad will understand, that although the Catalogue does not contain the names of many beautiful plants indigenous to the Cape and surrounding districts, yet seeds or plants of such are always available."  
- Catalogue of Plants, J. Mc Gibbon



1864  
Statue of Sir George Grey  
Former governor of the Cape

1863  
Inauguration of the Jewish Synagogue.



Reason Company Gardens Failed as a Bontanic Garden according to 1890 Bontanic Gardens report:

- newly established forestry department.
- parcel post was introduced, it was cheaper. for people to order bulbs directly from England.
- competition.
- garden kept shrinking due to increase of streets and houses.
- lack of water during dry seasons.



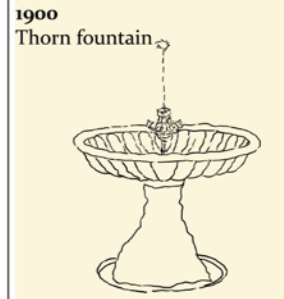
JAPANESE CHRYSANTHEMUM SET

1899  
chrysanthemums from China and Japan introduced to the west in 18th century and therefore became a company gardens display in late 19th century.

1890  
Bontanists report: representatives have the interest of a **museum on the most ornamental part** of the Garden. This causes an uproar amongst the commissioners of the garden and they resign.

1918  
25 new oak trees planted along government avenue.

1919  
two anghora are still present at the company gardens



1900  
Thorn fountain

The layout of the Company Gardens remains largely unchanged from 1893.

1913  
a Pergola was planted with various creepers ( bougainvilla, wisteria, and climbing roses)



1893  
South African Museum is built.

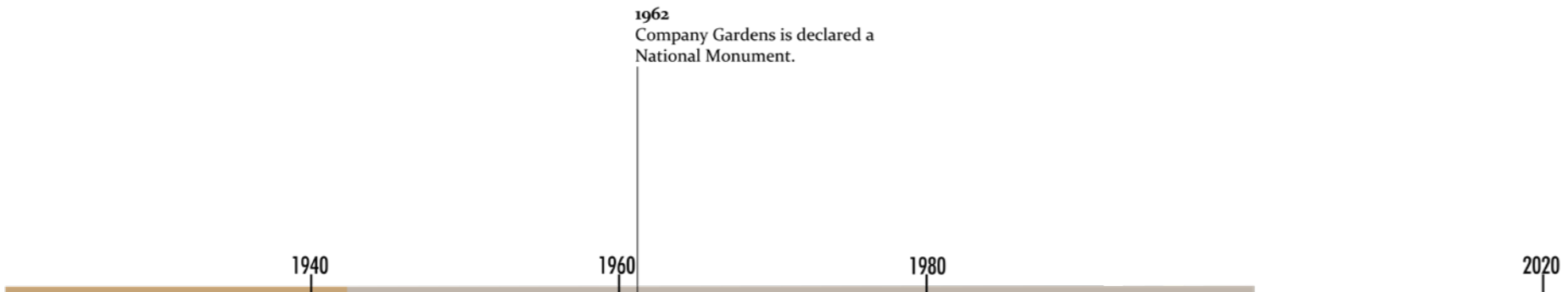


1886  
Public can only access the garden three days a week. The were few subscribers to the garden; they had access to the garden four days a week.

1857  
a fenery is constructed in the upper garden

1858  
a potting shed is constructed on the upper garden

1861  
lower part of the garden is proposed to be a leisure garden, and the top of the garden be reserved for human habitation garden.

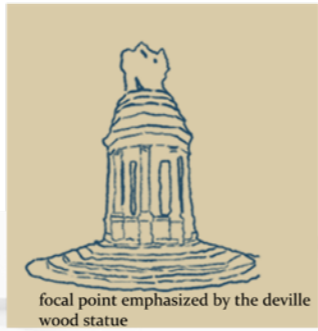


**Development of the Axis  
South of the Company Gardens**

**1939 -1944**  
Main axis where the South African Museum sat was insignificant.

A central focal point is highlighted by the Deville Wood Memorial. And then lesser statues to be a lesser focal point.

Founded in **1930**, the National Gallery was placed where it is today. On a raised podium, it creates a stronger axis.



secondary axis leading to the museum

government avenue goes unnoticed

main axis leading to art gallery

art gallery placed on a podium thus creating a monumental approach

the garden as shady, cool plant rich area that provides secluded areas of rest for city dwellers is unimportant for this scheme.

## History Findings

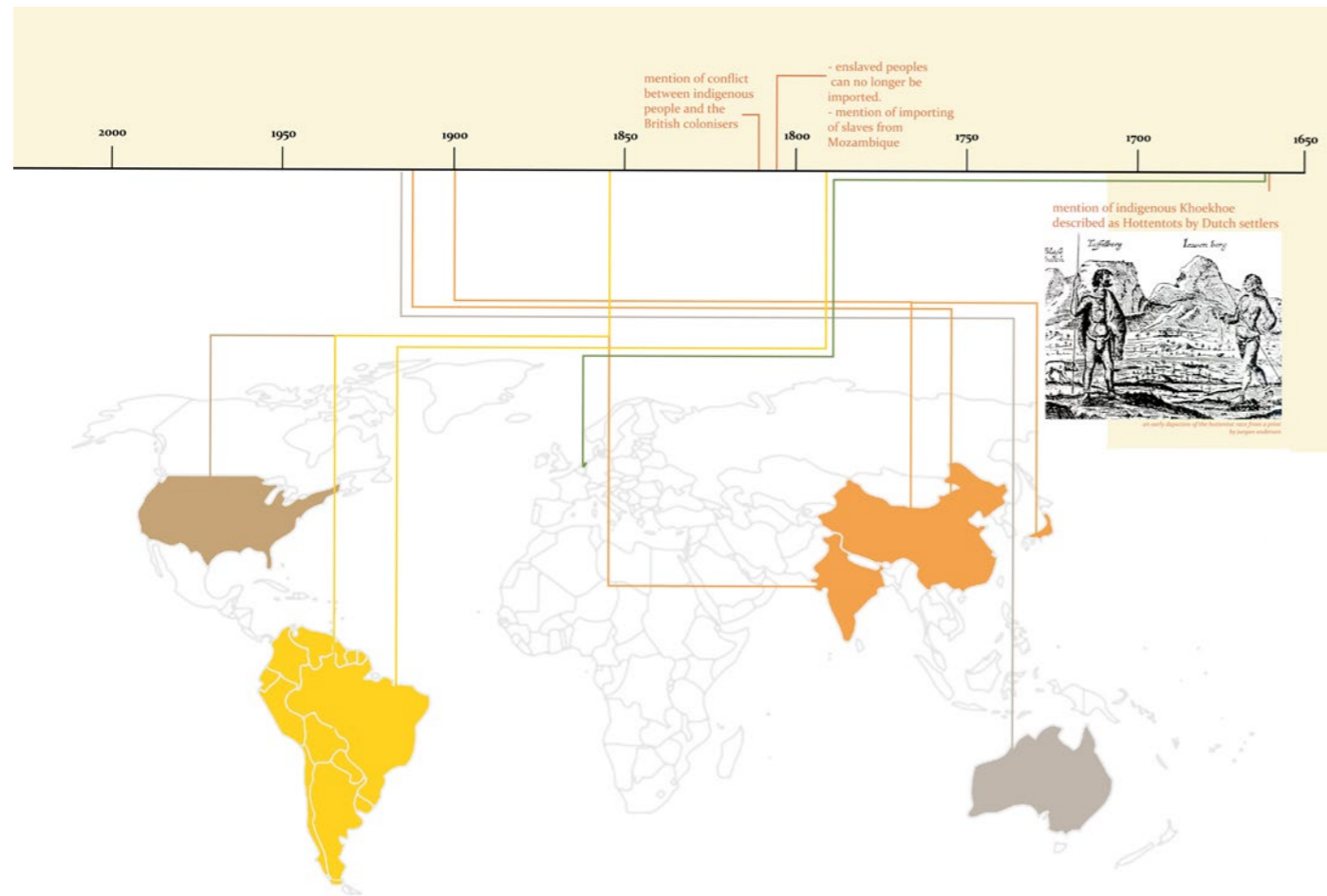


FIGURE 36: Summary of Historical Findings

### Programme Choice

In exploring the history of the Company Gardens, it is clear that all that is indigenous (both people and plants) have been left out of the history of the place. Throughout history it is mentioned that there is a lack of indigenous plants in the gardens. Furthermore, the indigenous Khoisan are only mentioned twice, first with the arrival of the Dutch and secondly when there was a brief mention of war between the “indigenous” people and the British colonisers.<sup>74</sup> Black people are mentioned once with the “abolition” of slavery.

As a result, the function of my intervention would be an indigenous plant library and museum, that is about sharing indigenous knowledge about indigenous plants and creating a space that begins to record a knowledge that has been passed on orally from generation to generation.

## D. Company Gardens as a Botanic Library and Museum

What do Plants need

Plants in the Cape

Unearthing a Pre-Colonial Site

Digging Deeper

Thus far, I have been conducting my research solely based on human experience and needs. From how the development of the museum impacted the human body to how the human body experiences the museum today. Then again in the site investigation, where I explored how people experience the site and what they may need.

## What do Plants Need?

To survive, all plants need what I will describe as the “plant survival factors”. These needs are what a plant will need to survive. However, the amount of a plant survival factor a plant needs to thrive is dependent on the species.

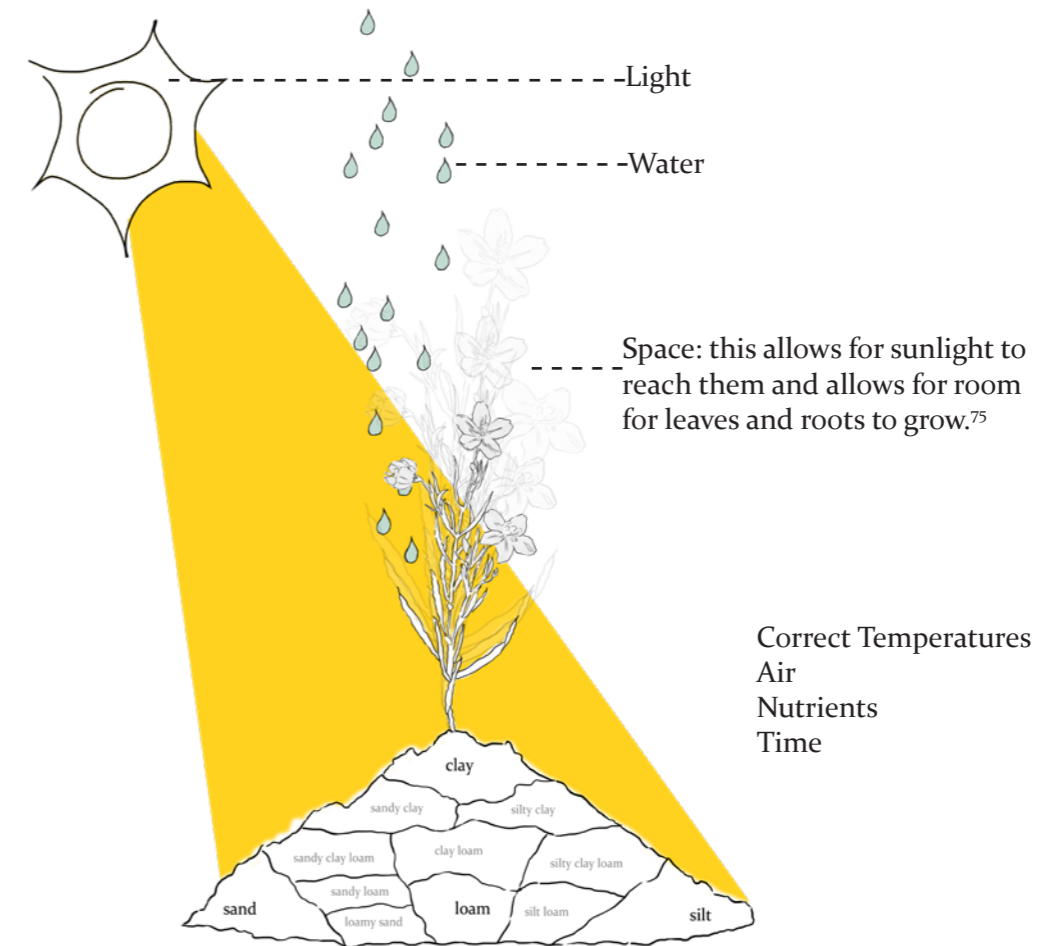


FIGURE 37: What do Plants Need

Soil: different plants need different kinds of soil to grow.<sup>76</sup>

**Clay:** feels lumpy and sticky when wet. It does not drain well.<sup>77</sup>

**Sandy:** feels gritty, it drains easily, dries out quickly, and holds few nutrients.<sup>78</sup>

**Silty:** feels soft and soapy, it holds water and is rich in nutrients.<sup>79</sup>

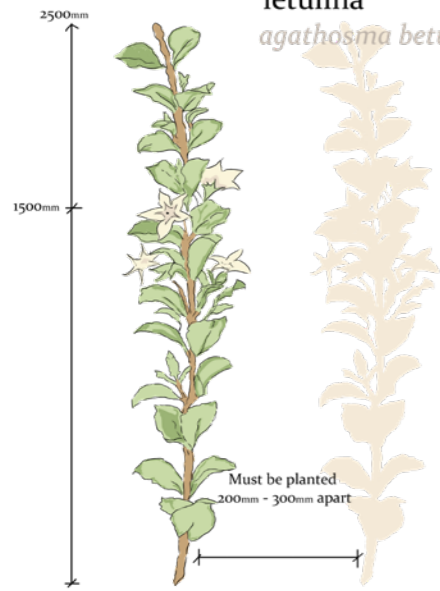
**Peaty:** it is dark and feels damp and spongy. It is acidic and holds fewer nutrients.<sup>80</sup>

**Chalky:** is large grained, appears stonier and drains well.<sup>81</sup>

**Loamy:** is a mixture of sand, silt and clay, it feels fine textured and is slightly damp.<sup>82</sup>

To better understand the needs of local plants, I conducted an analysis of twelve plants that indigenous to Cape Town. This analysis provides the size of the plant, what the plant looks like, their specific plant survival factors, their Khoi/Nama names, their "scientific" name and their uses. In conducting this analysis, I hope to better understand the needs of local plants, and their uses.

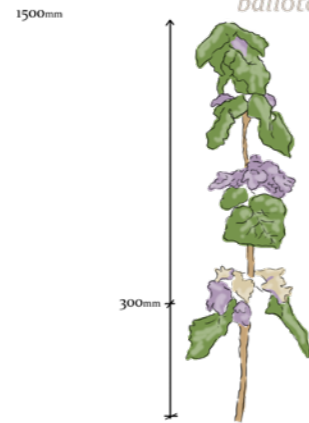
boegoe  
buchu  
letulina  
*agathosma betulina*



leaves; are used for bladder and kidney ailments. leaves in vinegar are used for wounds, sprains and contusions

-slow growing plant  
- minimum soil depth of 600mm for planting.  
- requires compost

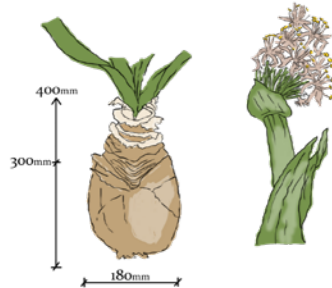
ghwarrieson  
*ballota africana*



herb: for a weak heart. leaf infusions are used for flu, colds, fever and measles

-requires light watering

gifbol  
*boophone disticha*



bulb scales are used for skin diseases leaf decoctions are gargled for a sore throat, and used for diabetes.

-drought resistant plant

bitterbos  
*chironia baccifera*



leaves, stem and fruit is used for post-partum to expel placenta, as a traditional Khoi medicine.

keita  
geita  
nceta  
*monsonia emarginata*



Herb and root used for diarrhoea Khoi remedy for colds and inflammation of the chest

-flowers open in the midmorning sun and close in the evening

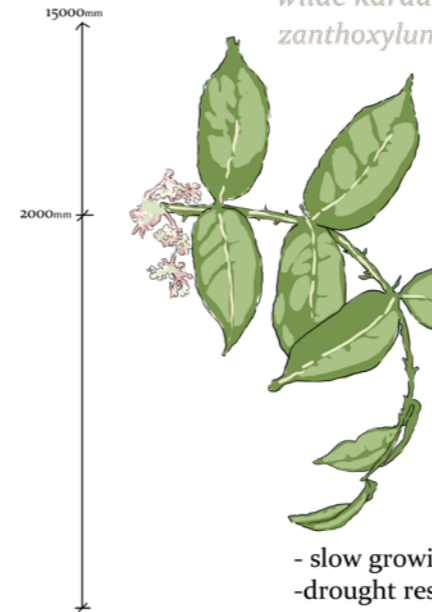
t'koubi  
*dodonaea angustifolia*



tips are used for colds and fever general tonic for inflammation and lung ailments, tuberculosis

-drought and wind resistant  
- evergreen tree  
- fast growing

wilde kardamon  
*zanthoxylum capense*



Fruit used as a colic, flatulence, paralysis

- slow growing  
-drought resistant

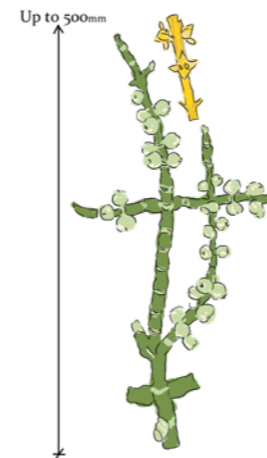
genesblare  
*withania somniferum*



leaves are used for ulcers and wounds, root bark is used as tonic

-drought resistant  
-evergreen

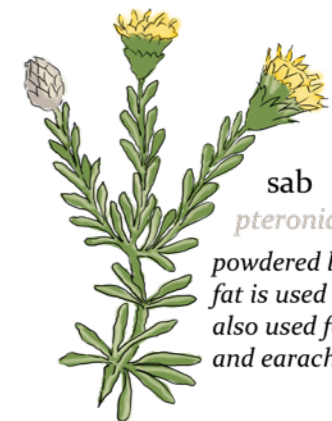
voelent  
*viscum carpense*



The whole herb is used for infusions, antispasmodic, epilepsy in children and wasting disease.

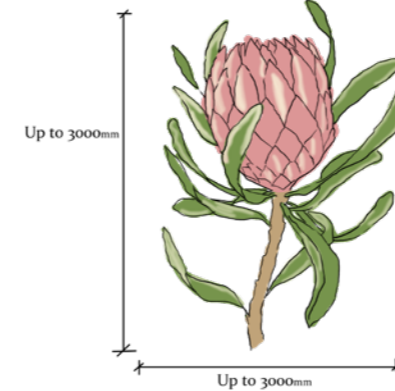
-poisonous plant

sab  
*pteronia onobromides*



powdered leaf mixed with fat is used to anoint the body. also used for sunburn, burns and earache.

suikerbos  
*protea repens*



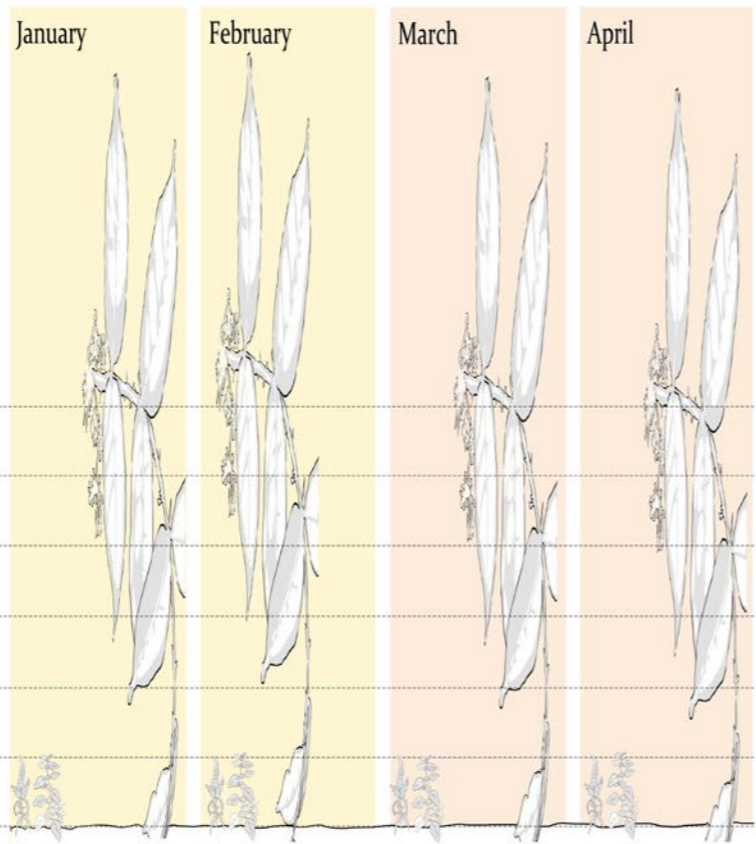
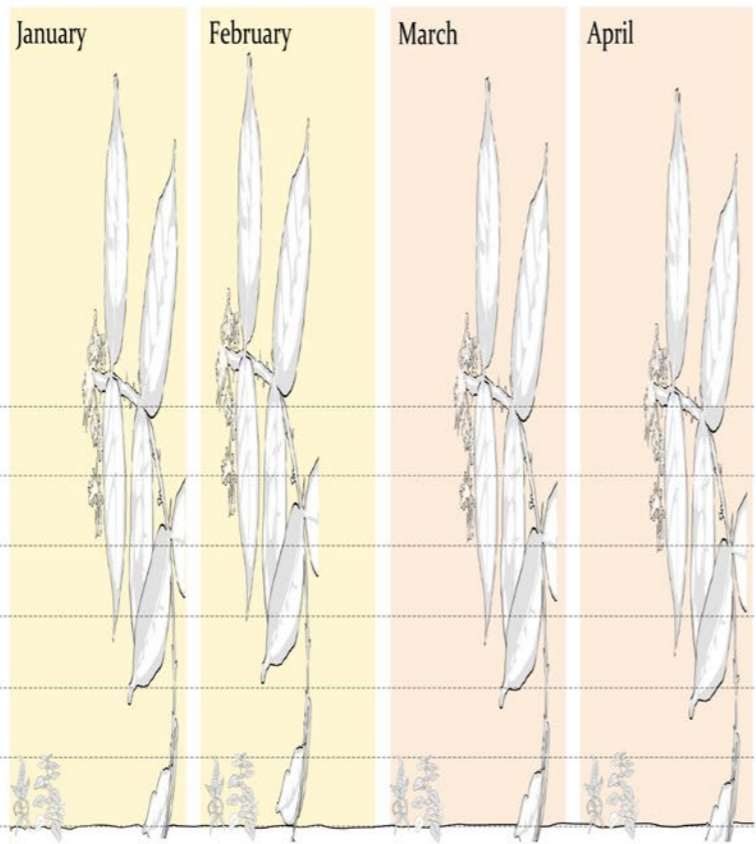
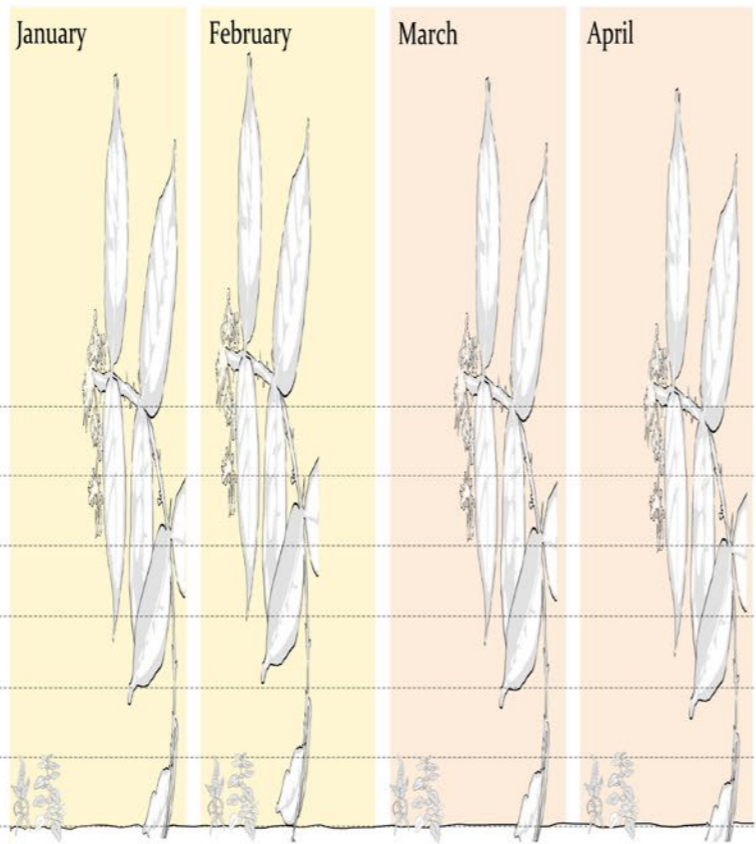
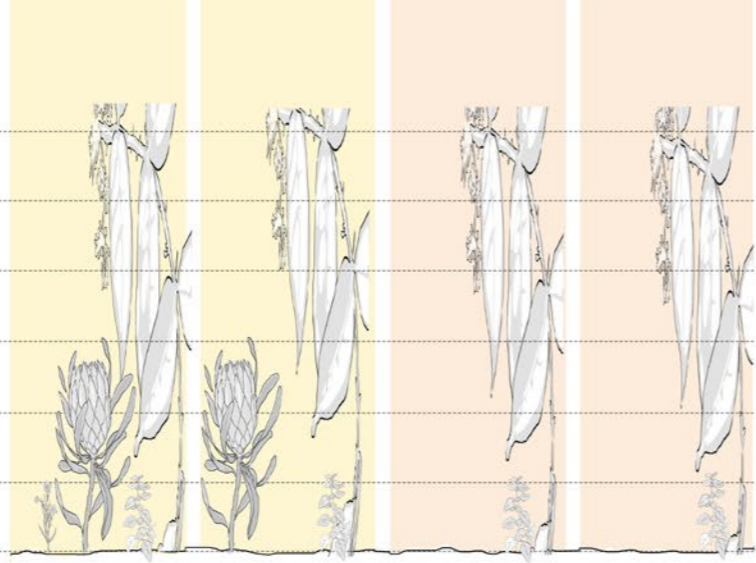
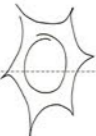
t'kamma  
*mentha longifolia*

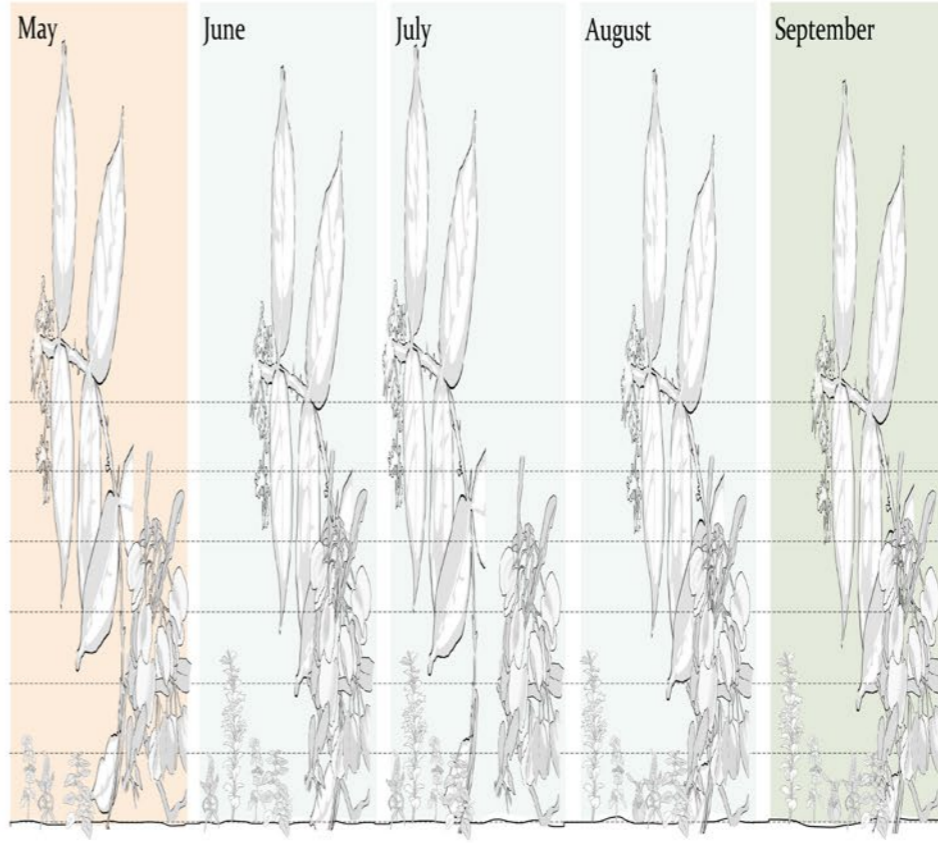
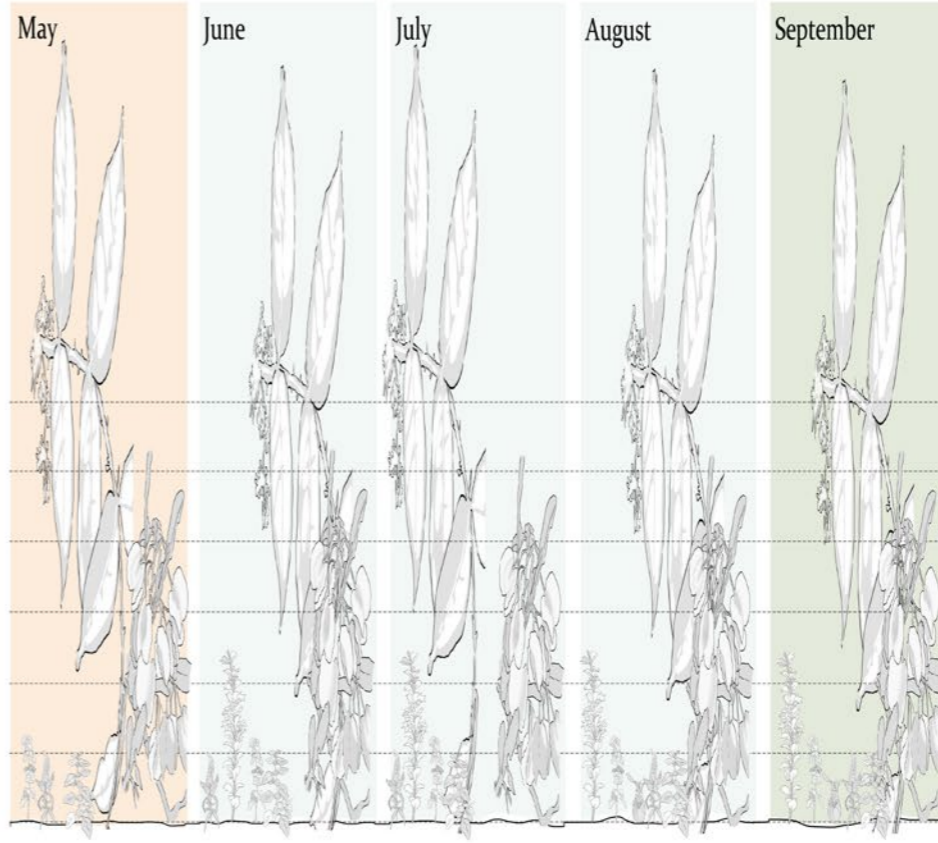
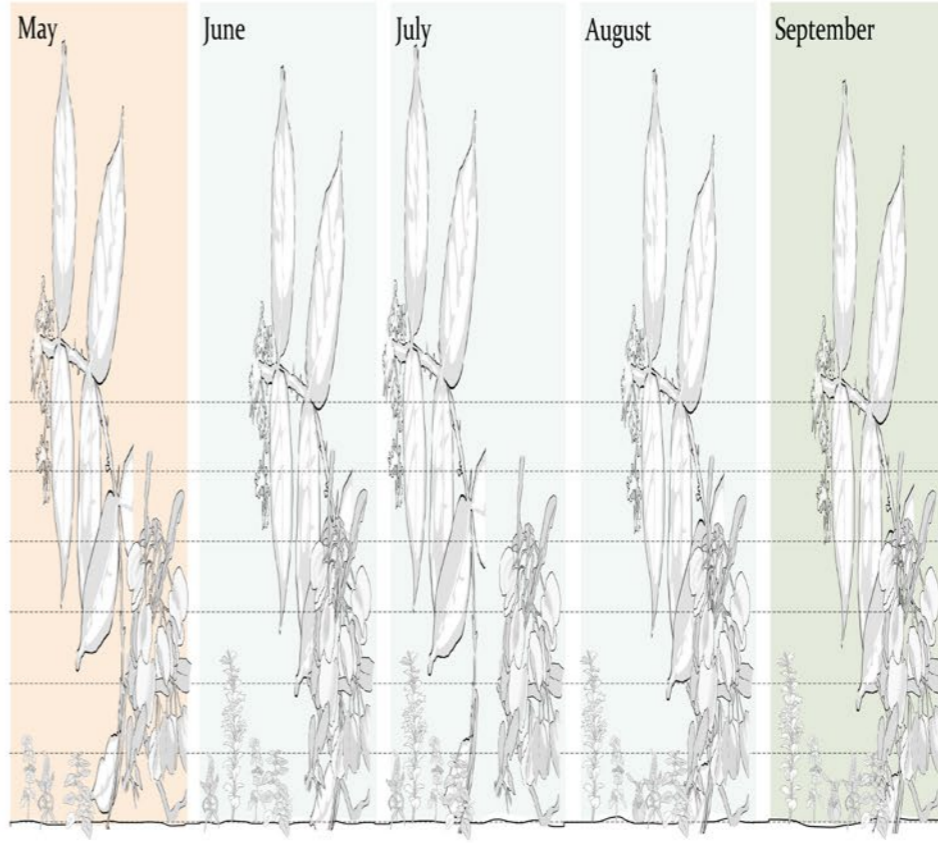
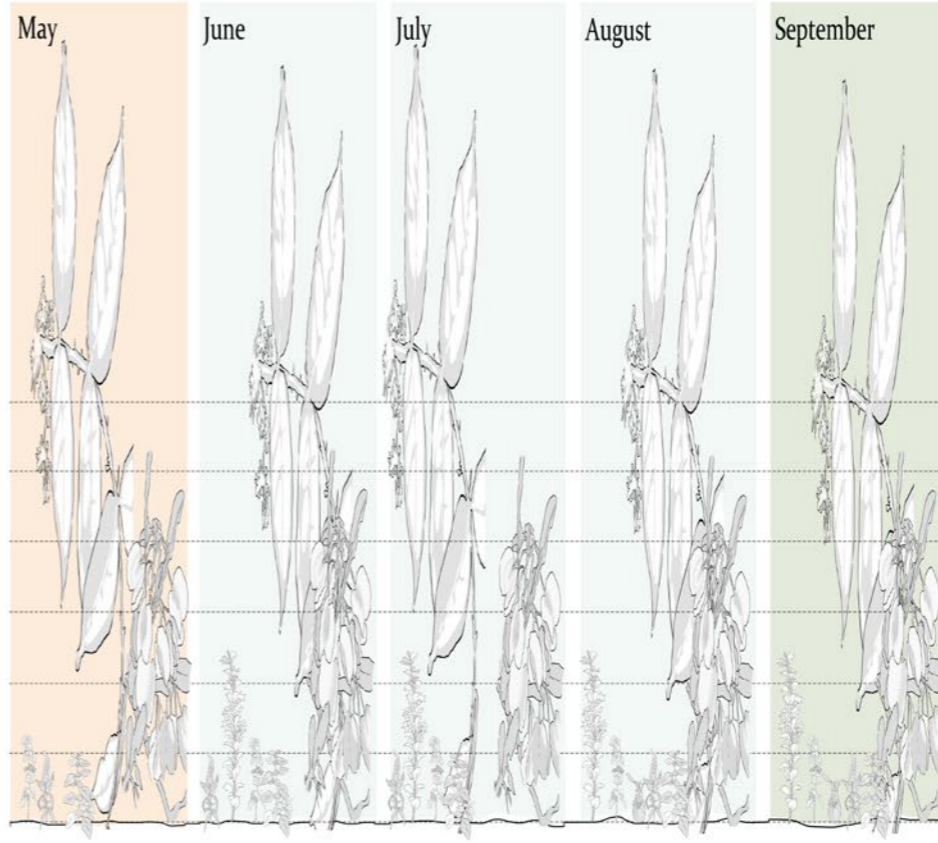
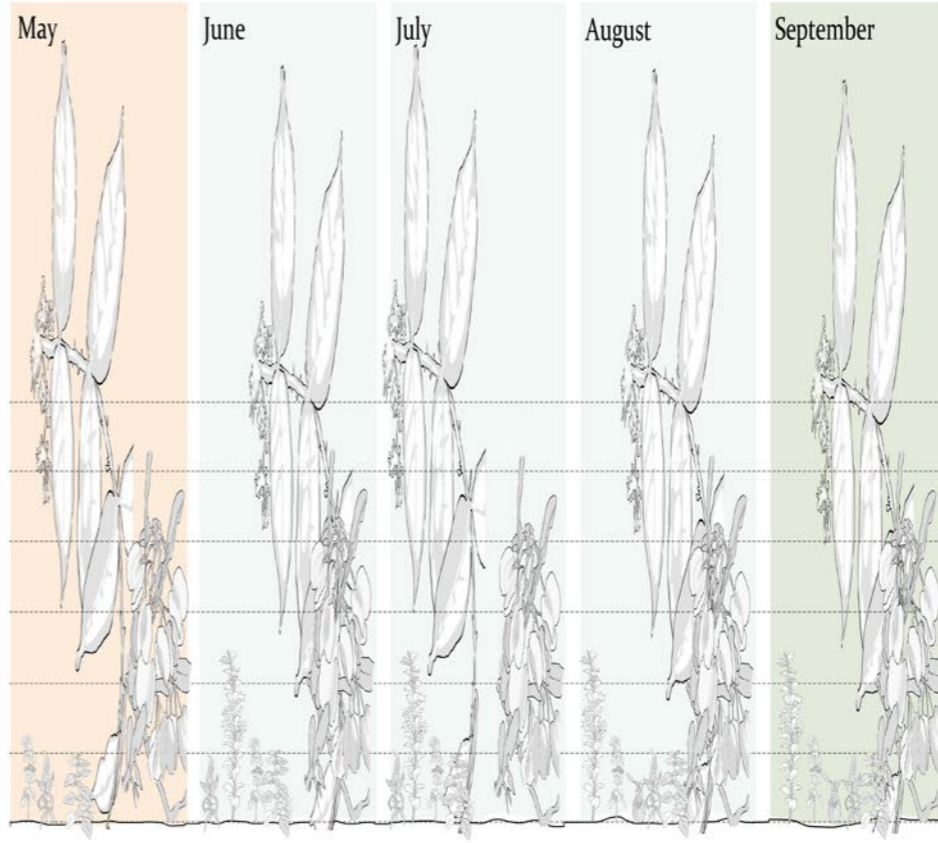





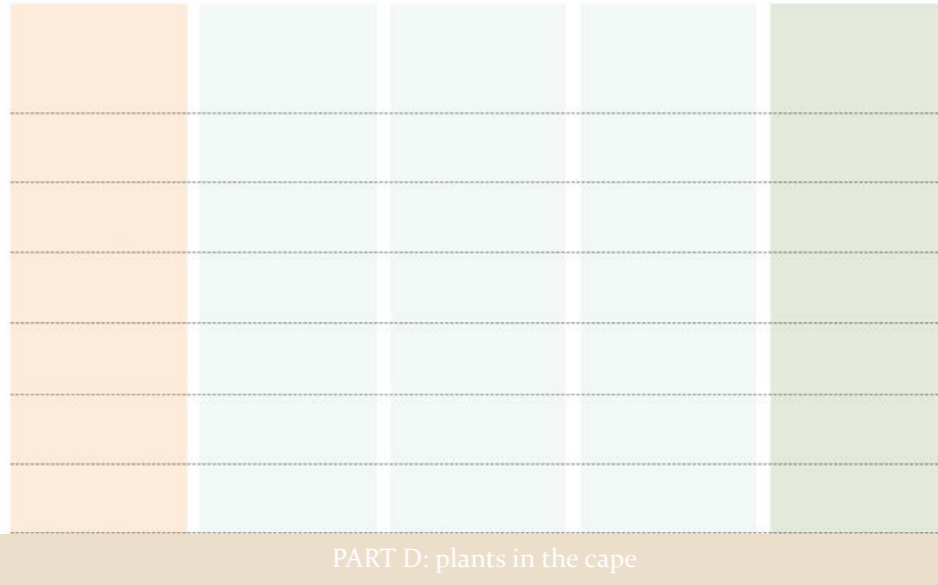
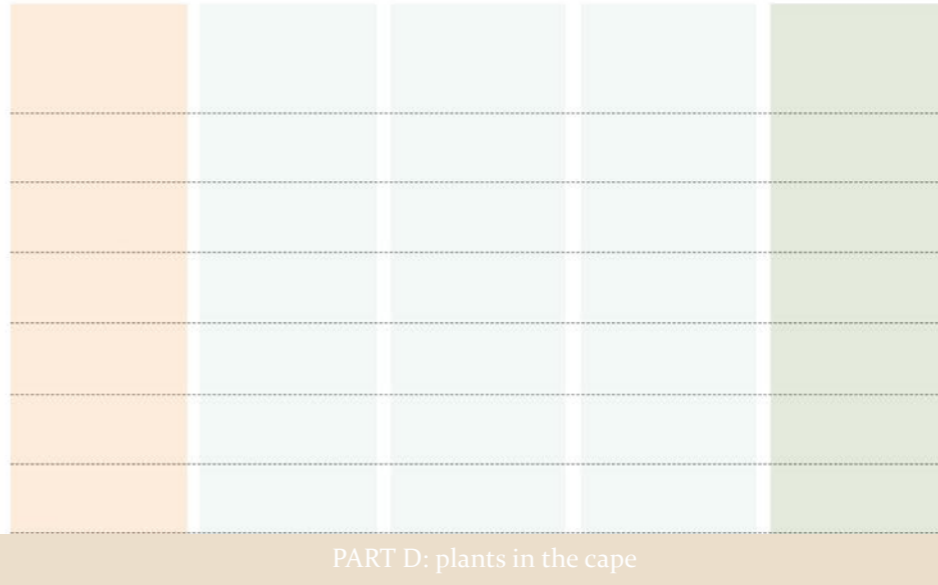
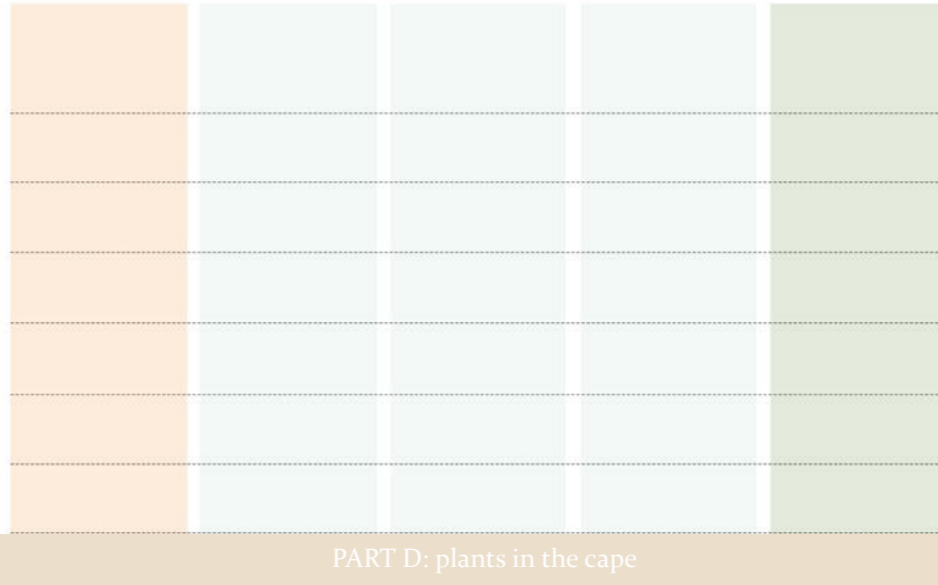
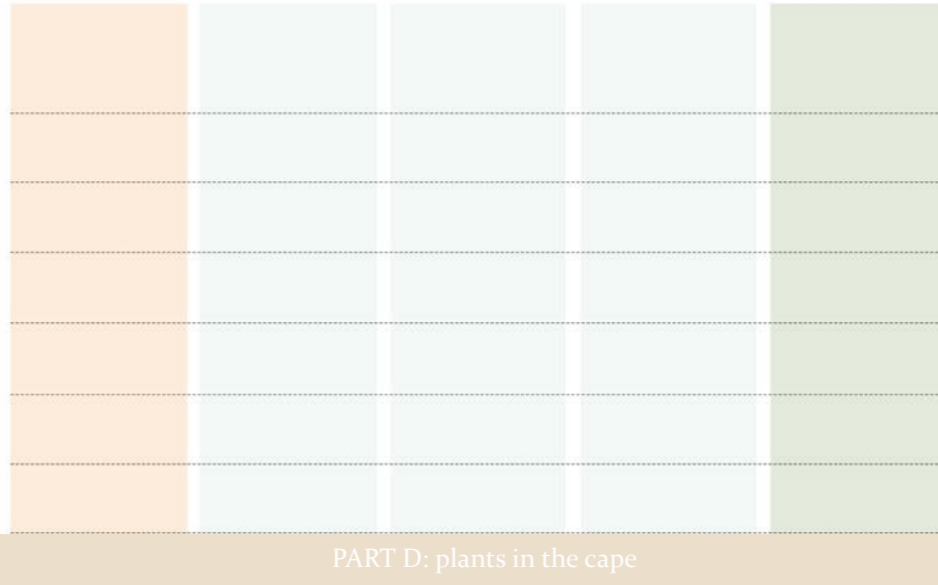
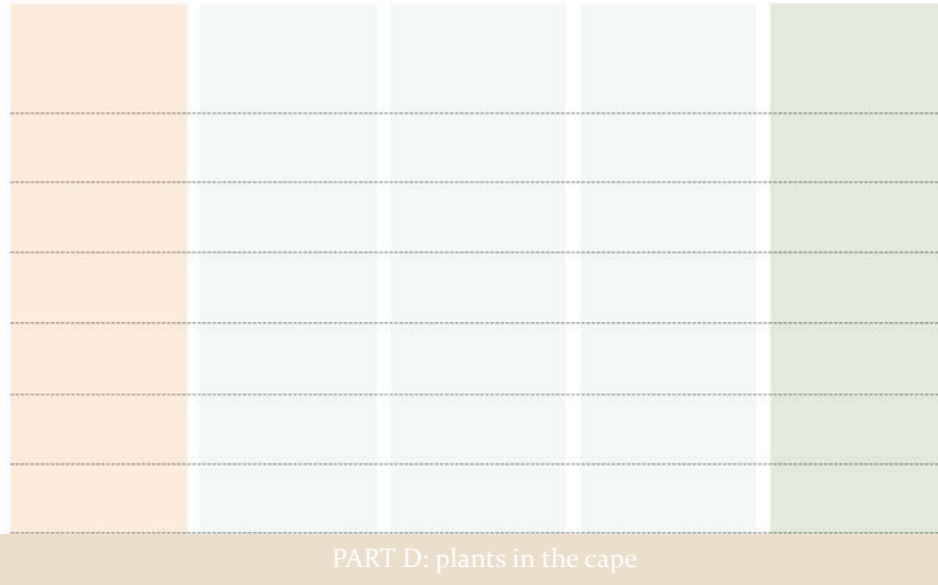


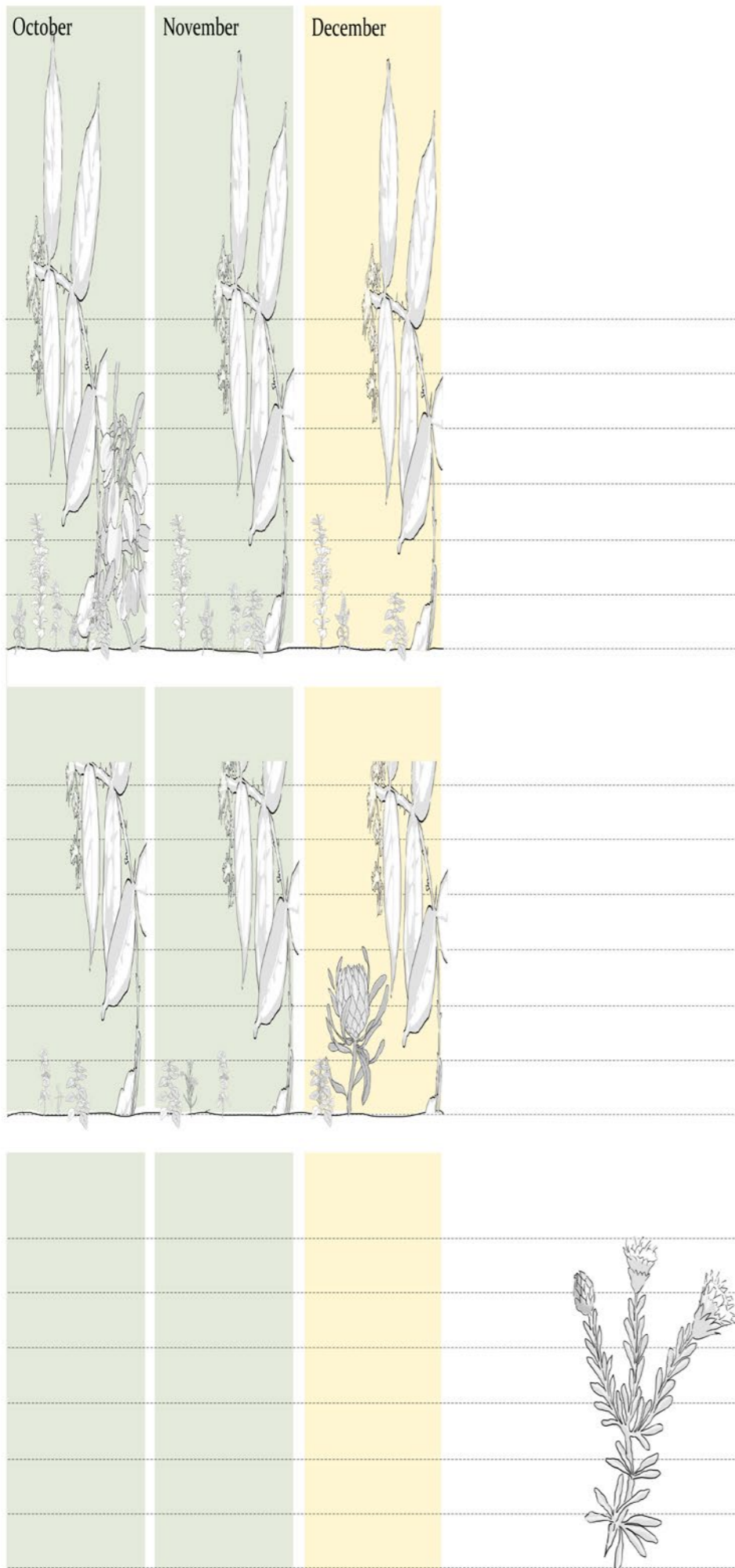
Herb is served as tea, antispasmodic, carminative; treatment of colic, hysteria; diaphoretic

-fast growing

Recording Plant Growth  
Seasons and the Amount of  
Sunlight Needed

	January	February	March	April
				
				
				

May	June	July	August	September
				
				
				



## Findings

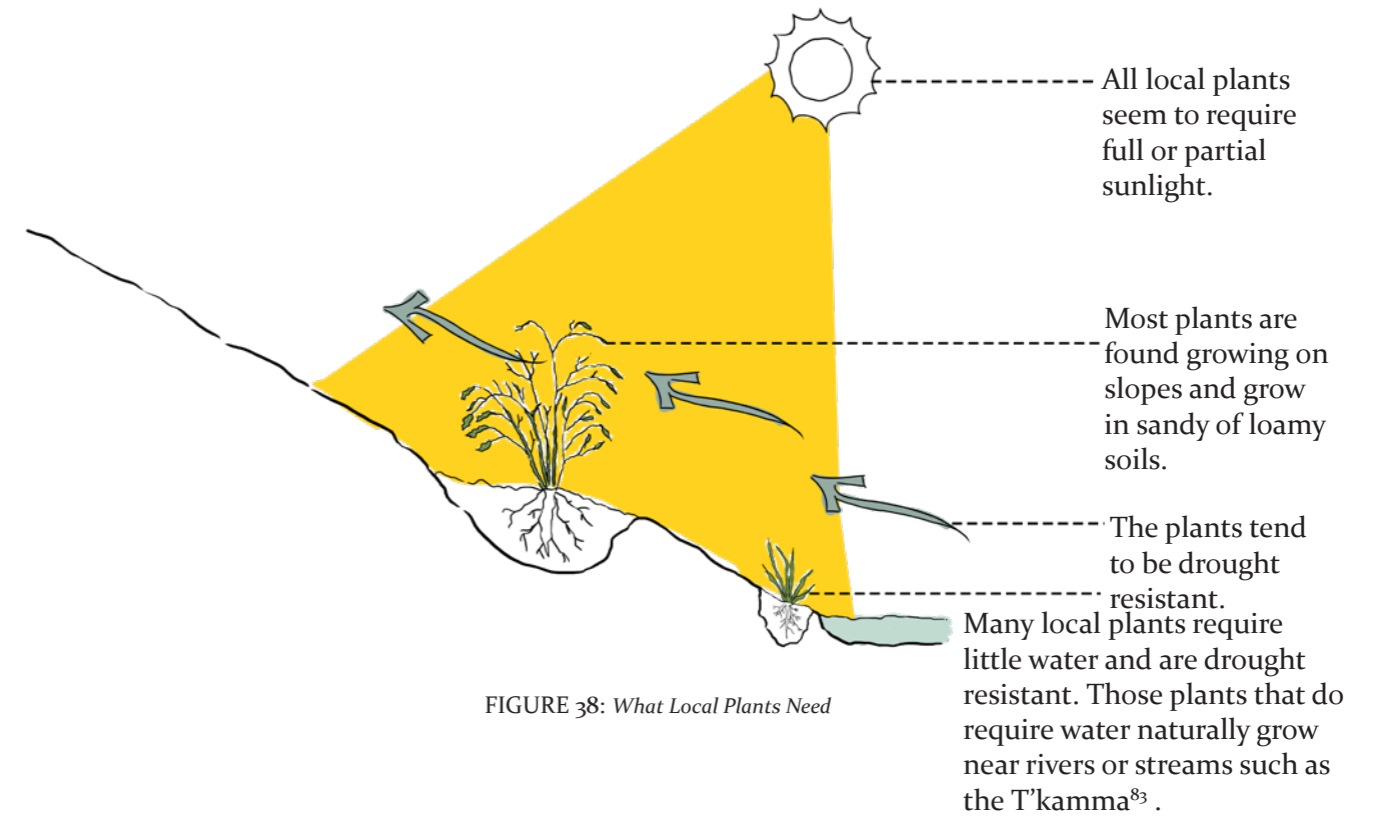


FIGURE 38: What Local Plants Need



FIGURE 39: Current Site Conditions

Looking at the conditions on site, they do not match the conditions needed by local plants to thrive. The company gardens consists of perfectly manicured lawns which sit on a flattened-out slope. Furthermore, most of the South side of the garden is largely shaded by dense-canopied trees, which creates a largely shaded area.

## Unearthing a Pre-colonial Landscape



As a result, I began a process of working backwards to unearth pre-colonial landscape of my site. This process consisted of finding historical maps that had records of rivers on the site. Overlaying multiple maps would help me find a more accurate river course.

The maps I could find came from the VOC archives and as a result, contained a built-up company garden that re-channelled the rivers. To account for this I used a contour map re-identify the natural slope from the mountain and to help me find where the river may have naturally flowed through the gardens.



This process is not only about unearthing a site that is suitable for local plants but also about unearthing a site that is pre-colonial and thus looks familiar to the indigenous eye.

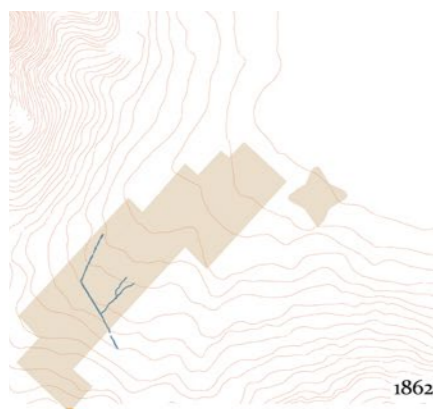


FIGURE 40: *Unearthing a Pre-Colonial Site Process*

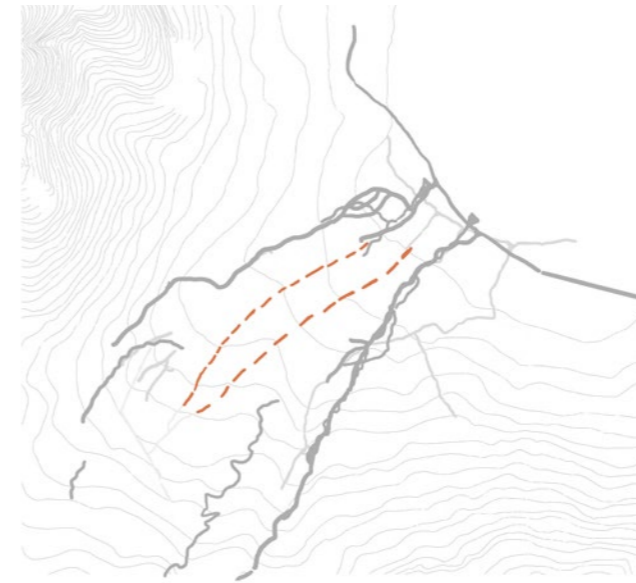


FIGURE 41: *Unearthing a Pre-Colonial Site Process: Connecting a River*



FIGURE 42: *Unearthing the Slope and the River on Site*

## Digging Deeper

In researching indigenous plants, I found that though it is widely known that indigenous peoples had and continue to have deep understanding of the healing properties of local plants, deeper understanding of this and the traditions of healing remain largely unknown. This can be seen through the gaps and assumptions made in “official” records.

Examples of this can be seen in Table A by G. Scott and M.L Hewett<sup>84</sup> which records the medicinal uses of South African plants. These plants have been renamed and been given a “scientific” name. The “vernacular name” column is often labelled as “not given”. Furthermore, it is not clear whether medicinal properties of the plants have been taken from the knowledge of indigenous peoples, or if they have been based on a knowledge of similar species.<sup>85</sup>

Table 2  
Medicinal uses of South African plant species as recorded in botanical literature of the period 1650–1800

Species	Plant family	Vernacular name	Plant part used	Medicinal use	Dosage form	Reference	New info	First record
<i>Polygonum cavallatum</i> (L.) L'Hérit. var. <i>cavallatum</i>	Geraniaceae	Wilde malva = wild mallow	Overground parts	Treatment of gastric pain, colic, bowel disorders, nephritis, urinary retention, renal calculi	Decoction, fomentation, enema	Hermann (1687)	No	Yes
<i>Knobloksnie capensis</i> (L.) Huth. (Fig. 8)	Ranunculaceae	Brandblare = leaf that burns	Leaf	Counter-irritant and rubefacient in treatment of inflammation	External application as poultice	Complan (1697-1701)	No	Yes
<i>Helichrysum</i> spp.	Asteraceae	Not given	Leaf (?)	Nervousness, hysteria	Oral	Boerhaave (1727b, pp. 179-180)	Yes	Yes
<i>Coma aurea</i> sp.	Asteraceae	Not given	Leaf (?)	Colic, gastric acidity	Oral	Boerhaave (1727b, pp. 180, 8)	Yes	Yes
<i>Coma aurea</i> sp.	Asteraceae	Not given	Leaf (?)	Treatment of colds	Oral	Boerhaave (1727b, pp. 180, 9)	Yes	Yes
<i>Sedum</i> sp.	Crasulaceae	Not given	Leaf	Treatment of dysentery	Fresh leaf juice taken orally	Boerhaave (1727b, p. 368)	Yes	Yes
<i>Centraden</i> sp.	Crasulaceae	Not given	Leaf	Promotes longevity	Fresh leaf juice taken orally	Boerhaave (1727b, pp. 369, 2)	Yes	Yes
<i>Melastoma</i> sp.	Melastomaceae	Not given	Flower nectar	Mood enhancer	Oral	Boerhaave (1727b, p. 380)	Yes	Yes
<i>Polygonum odoratisimum</i> (L.) L'Hérit.	Geraniaceae	Not given	Leaf	Cardiac stimulant	Leaf preparation taken orally	N.L. Burman (1759, pp. 37, 43)	Yes	Yes
<i>Polygonum myrsinifolium</i> (L.) L'Hérit. var. <i>myrsinifolium</i>	Geraniaceae	Not given	Root	For menstrual and other disorders of the female reproductive tract; tonic; treatment of TB; relief of carache; colic remedy	Root tincture in wine taken orally; root sap applied fresh to outer ear; ground seed taken orally in wine	N.L. Burman (1759, pp. 45, 59)	Yes	Yes
<i>Polygonum maritimum</i>	Geraniaceae	Not given	Leaf	Diuretic; wound healing	Leaf juice applied as a plaster to fresh wounds; ash from dried and burnt leaf taken orally; dried leaf used in poultices and enemata	N.L. Burman (1759, pp. 46, 60)	Yes	Yes
<i>Polygonum pinatum</i> (L.) L'Hérit.	Geraniaceae	Not given	Root	Appetite stimulant	Roasted root taken orally	N.L. Burman (1759, pp. 49, 66)	Yes	Yes
<i>Solanum frutescens</i> Hepper and Jaeger	Solanaceae	Not given	Root	Treatment of oedema	Root decoction taken orally	Hoentjyn (1776), 206, pp. 248, 24	Yes	Yes
<i>Polygonum triste</i> (L.) L'Hérit.	Geraniaceae	Not given	Root	Diarrhoea, dysentery, renal calculi, acid burning urine	Dried powdered root taken orally	Thunberg No. 2 (1785, p. 2)	No	Yes
<i>Eclipta africana</i> (L.) Cogn.	Cucurbitaceae	David's wortel = David's root	Root	Treatment of STDs, dermatological complaints; as a diuretic, purgative and emetic	Decoction taken orally	Thunberg No. 3 (1785, p. 3)	No	Yes
<i>Haemanthus coccineus</i> L. <sup>a</sup>	Amaryllidaceae	Not given	Bulb	Diuretic, expectorant	Taken orally mixed with honey and vinegar	Thunberg No. 4 (1785, p. 4)	No	Yes
<i>Aulopis crispus</i> P.J. Bergius var. <i>crispus</i> <i>Xiomolobium undulatum</i> (L.) Aiton f. var. <i>undulatum</i>	Apocynaceae	Bitterwortel = bitter root	Root	Diuretic	Decoction taken orally	Thunberg No. 5 (1785, p. 5)	No	Yes
<i>Antropus echinatus</i> L. (Fig. 7)	Apiaceae	Not given	Root	Treatment of gonorrhoea	Decoction taken orally	Thunberg No. 6 (1785, p. 8)	No	Yes
<i>Lobelia piniifolia</i> L.	Lobeliaceae	Not given	Root	Blood purifier (purgative?)	Not given	Thunberg (1795, p. 9)	No	Yes

FIGURE 43: Table Indicating Lack of Insight into Local Plants



FIGURE 44: Plant Drawing with Lack of Annotations

Another lack of knowledge can be seen in the absence annotations in “scientific” drawings.<sup>86</sup> In Figure x taken from *Hermann's Cape herbarium, collected in 1672 (Volume 75 in Sloane Herbarium, BM)*<sup>87</sup> one can not only see this no annotation (besides the Latin binomials which were added at a later stage)<sup>88</sup>, but also, the lack of understanding of the plant through time. The plant is only shown in its flowered stage, the other stages of the plant's life are not portrayed.

Expanding on the few details of local plants and their indigenous uses; information on Khoisan healing practices and medicinal knowledge is sparse in old literature, and primarily come from the accounts of the Western observer.<sup>89</sup>

As a result, I feel that it would make sense not only for my intervention to be a space to for local plants and their indigenous uses, but for the building to be a space that takes the visitor through a procession of plant-based healing practices.

## Indigenous Healing Practices: Wind

Though the Khoisan consists of various groups with various knowledge systems, there are underlying principles that ground collective ideas and practices of healing.

The Khoisan have layered understandings of wind which occur simultaneously.<sup>90</sup>

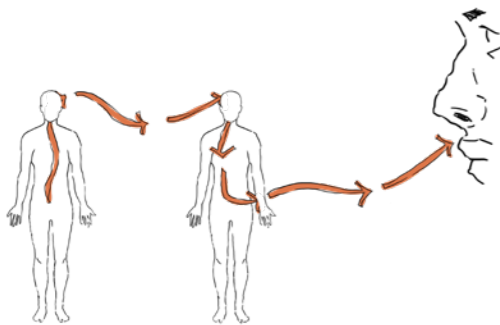
The first, is climatic phenomenon which influences the rains, and the way in which the plants grow.<sup>91</sup>



Another belief is that of wind being able to carry news, wind as a “transmitter of information.”<sup>92</sup>



A life-giving wind. This wind is often equated with potency. Everyone has their own characteristics which equate to their potency. Potency is the power one may have over another.<sup>93</sup> This potency is associated with a smell which is specific to the individual. Smell can then be identified as the essence of an individual.<sup>94</sup>



It is believed that it is the smell of the plant that removes illness from the body.

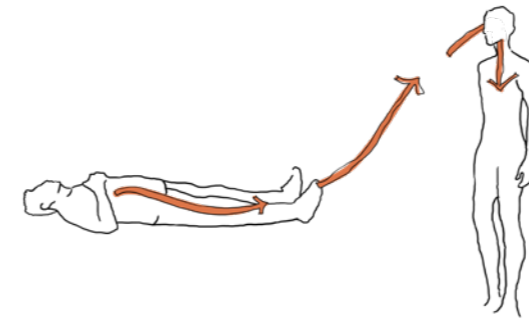
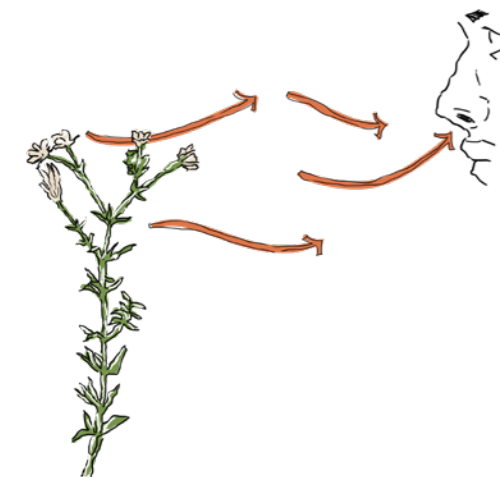


FIGURE 45: *Different Understandings of Wind*

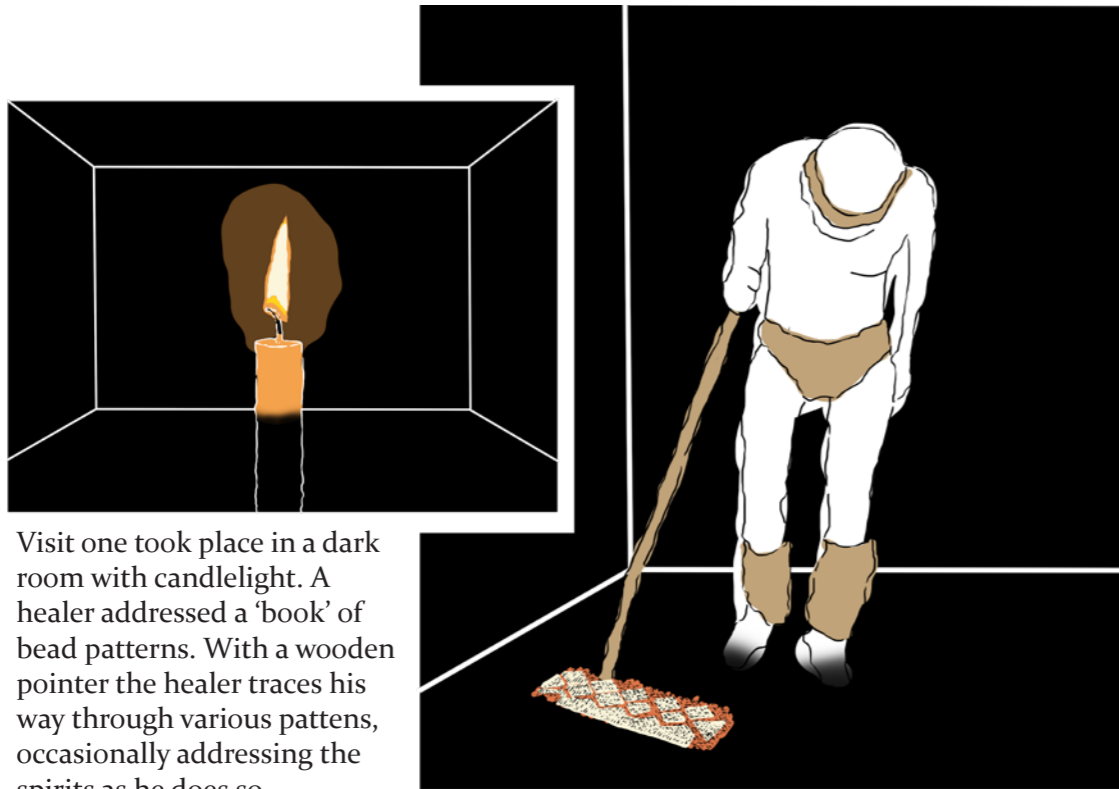
Another understanding of wind is the wind that enters the body and causes moving or “standing up” of the organs. This displacement of organs can cause one to become ill. A healer may be required to massage the organ to make it “lie down”.<sup>95</sup>

The healer removes illness from the sick patient by “pulling out” the wind and putting it within themselves. Potent winds can be brought into the body through rubbing or inserting potent substances into a cut.<sup>97</sup>

As a result, massaging a mixture of a plant and a lubricant into the body is a common way of transferring the plants potency.<sup>98</sup>

## Indigenous Healing Practices: Acts of Healing

In his thesis *Khoisan Healing: Understandings, Ideas and Practices*, Low describes the process through which he went through to become a healer. The process occurred in two visits which were some months apart.



Visit one took place in a dark room with candlelight. A healer addressed a 'book' of bead patterns. With a wooden pointer the healer traces his way through various patterns, occasionally addressing the spirits as he does so.

He then communicates with the student explaining the process and difficulties of becoming a healer. After a brief discussion and about 40 minutes of bead reading, the healer begins to straighten the /gais (/ais) already within the student and adds more. This process consists of about 20 minutes of the healer primarily rubbing the forehead, throat and chest of the student, and blowing in his ears. Occasionally, the healer presses the wooden pointer firmly on path where the /gais are being positioned.

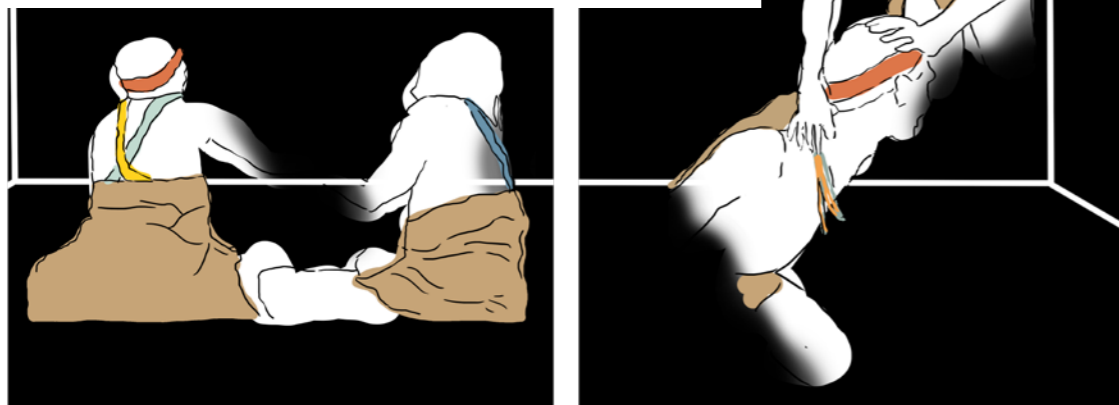
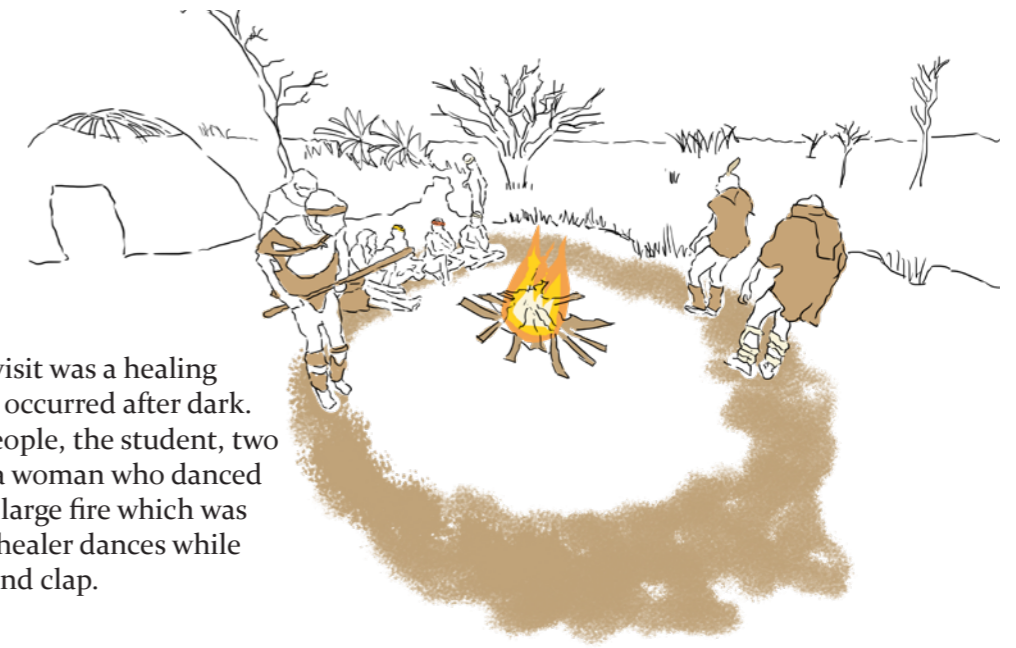
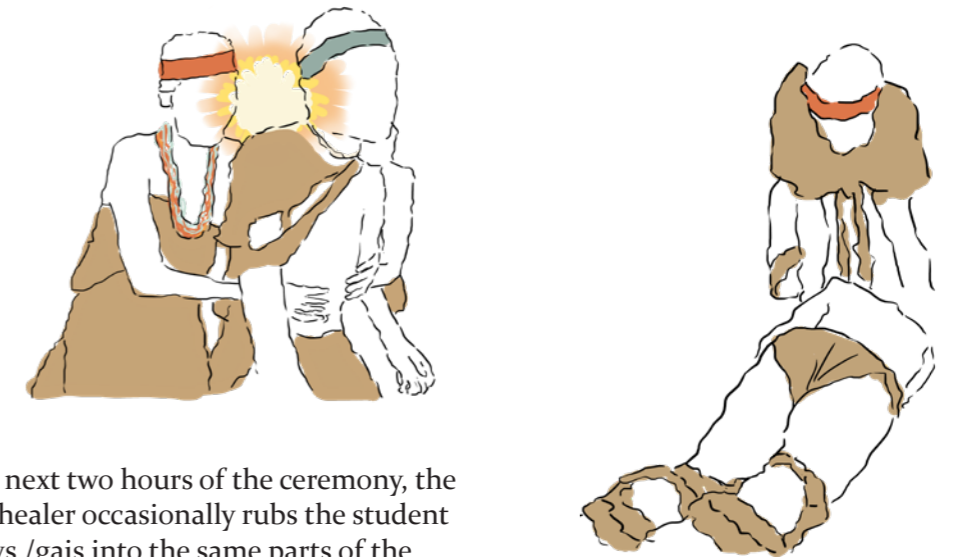


FIGURE 46: Documenting the First Visit



The second visit was a healing dance which occurred after dark. About ten people, the student, two healers and a woman who danced sat around a large fire which was outdoors. A healer dances while others sing and clap.



Over the next two hours of the ceremony, the dancing healer occasionally rubs the student and blows /gais into the same parts of the body as the first ceremony, but this as the lower back and legs.

FIGURE 47: Documenting the Second Visit

After about forty minutes of the students being extremely stimulated, the body begins to twitch and jump involuntarily.

The ceremony ends with a build-up that releases, causing the student to collapse on the ground. Thereafter, the ceremony begins to calm down. The singing dies down, and some of the crowd begins to leave. The healers continue to check on the student.

## E. Design Development

Design Development

Final Design

Reflection

## Design Development

In my design, I wanted to consider all the concepts and principles that I had explored in my dissertation document thus far.

I knew that the form of the building would have to consider the conditions that local plants. Thus, the sloping form is something that I would have to take forward regardless of whatever else happened around the design.

My first design attempts aimed to consider the two healing visits mentioned in the previous chapter, and ideas of wind.

However, I struggled to combine these ideas to create a design that was practical.

Feeling stuck, I returned to theory to try and find a different approach to the design.

The environment plays a crucial role in the Khoisan healing process.<sup>99</sup> The environment can affect the healing process, this can be the limitation of access to resources or the complete depletion thereof.<sup>100</sup>

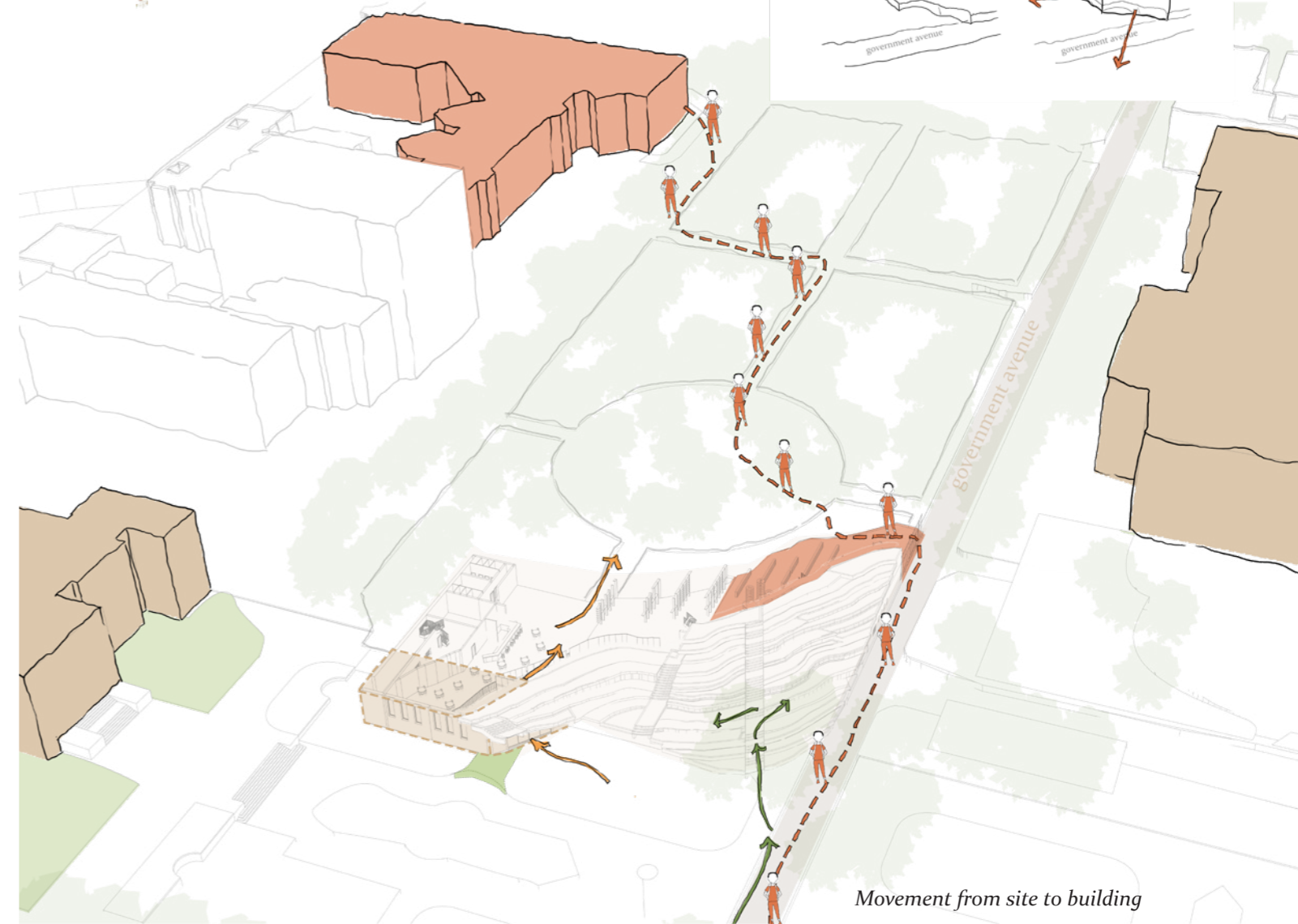
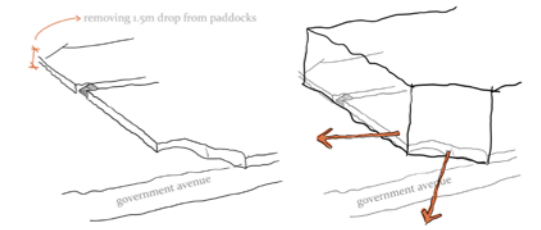
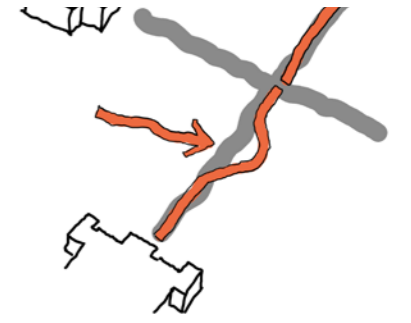
The role of the environment expands beyond the natural world. It also influences how people may relate to their indigenous beliefs. As Low states: "The outcome of 'good education' for some urban Khoisan is a complete removal from their traditional world."S -(Low. C, 2004)

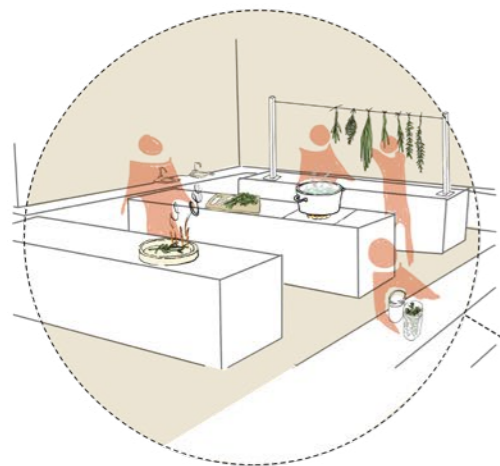
As a result, I began focussing on the environment of the building. I wanted the building to be as open and transparent as possible and not limit access to the building and its resources



1. Inserting my intervention into the memorial strip so that it disrupts the formal axis created for the South African Museum and the National Gallery. This physically forces my intervention to be part of the conversation between the “official” institutions.

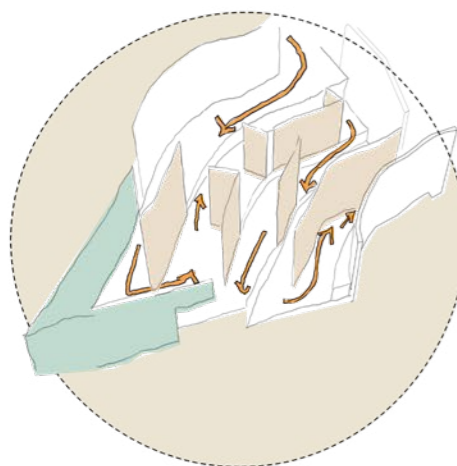
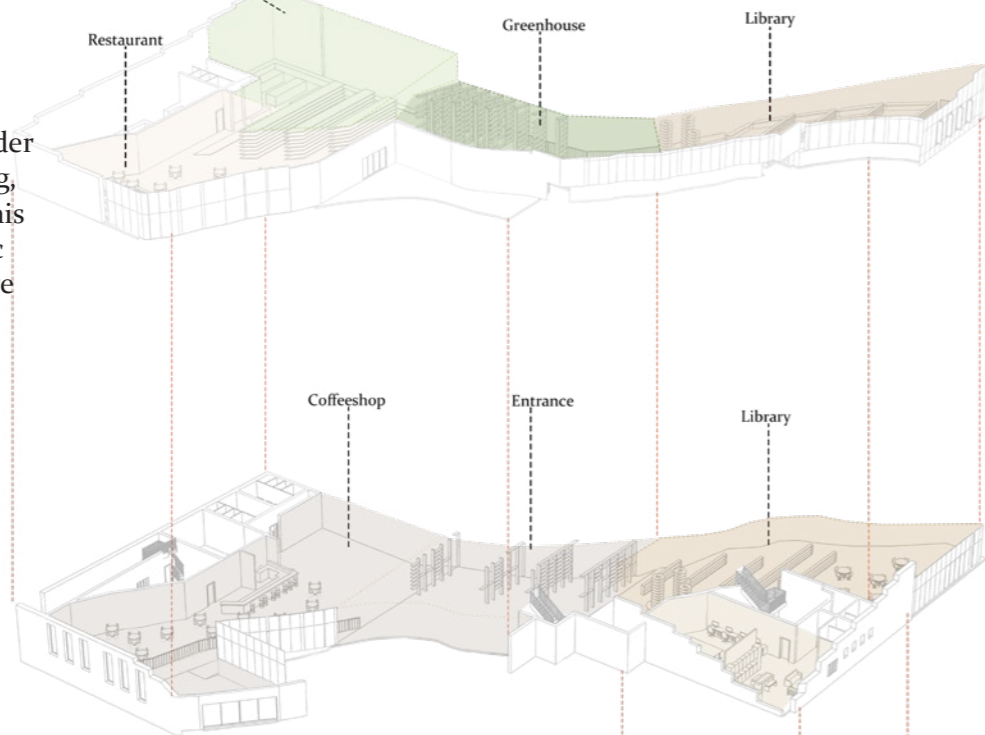
2. Between the Paddocks (the site) and the museum mall, there is 1500mm drop. The intervention is lowered 1500mm so that it sits directly in the museum mall. This also allows access to the roof from ground level.





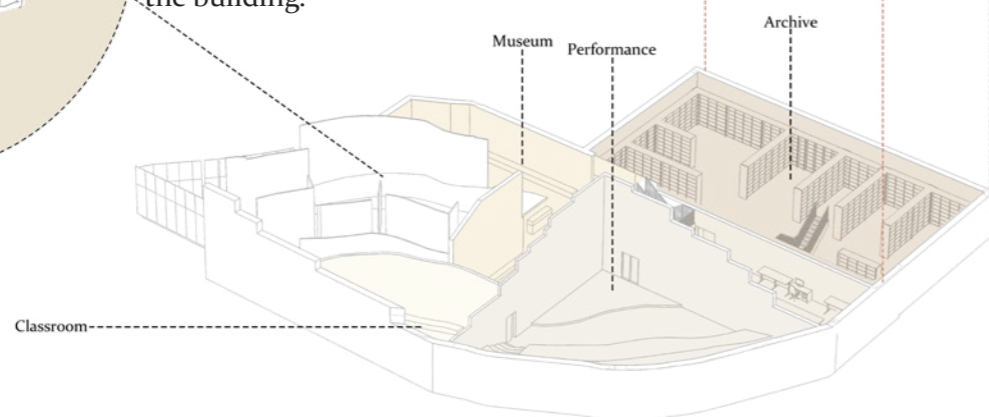
**processing corner**

This corner of the greenhouse accommodates the process the plants need to go through in order to be utilised. This could be, drying, burning, boiling, etc. Making this space open and therefore public allows the visitor to engage more deeply than just looking at the plant.

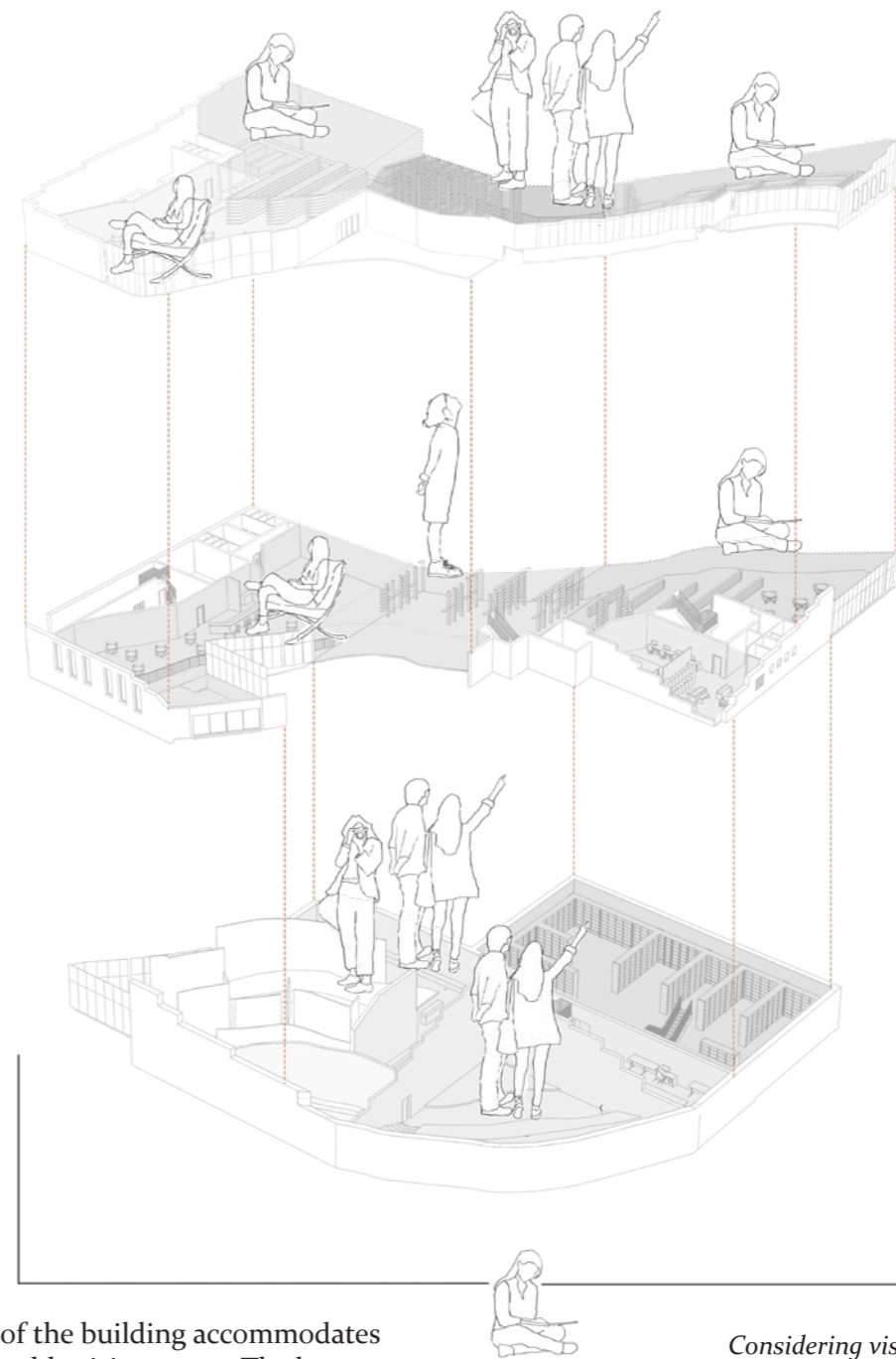


**exhibition walkway**

The exhibition walkway is a continuous ramp that takes the visitor from ground to basement. It is the walkway into the museum experience of the building. The visitors are able to view the content of the museum as they move through the building.



In the design, I aimed to create spaces that accommodated for different visitor types in way that visitors did not have to interact with the whole building if they chose not to.



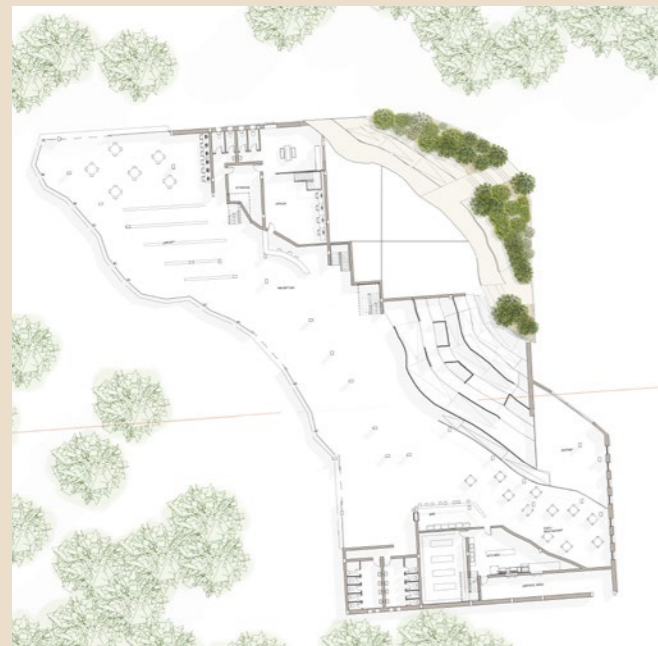
Though most of the building accommodates for interchangeable visitor types. The basement that contains the museum, the archives and the performance are created with specifically with the enthusiast in mind.

*Considering visitor types*

Final Design



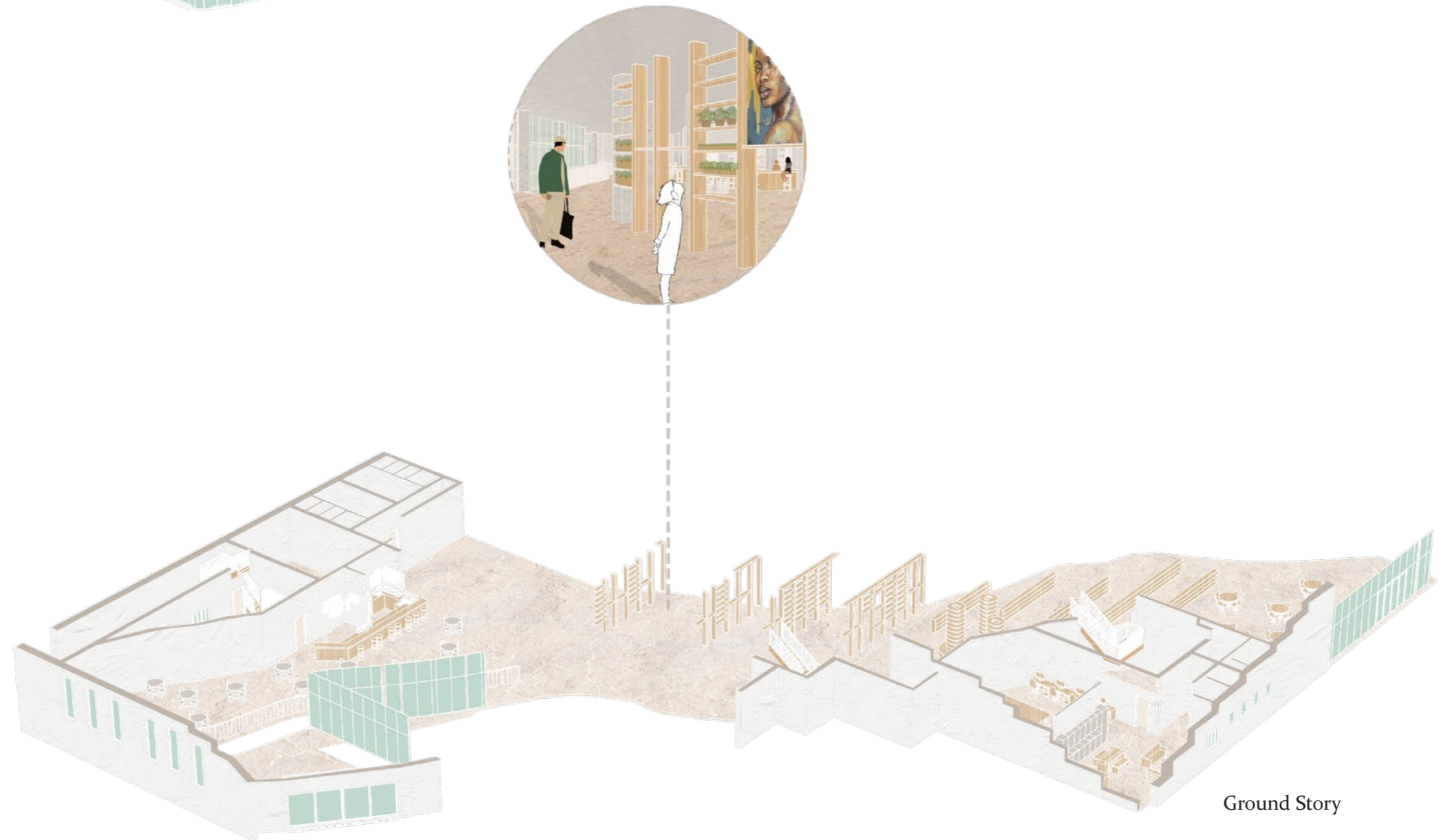
First Plan



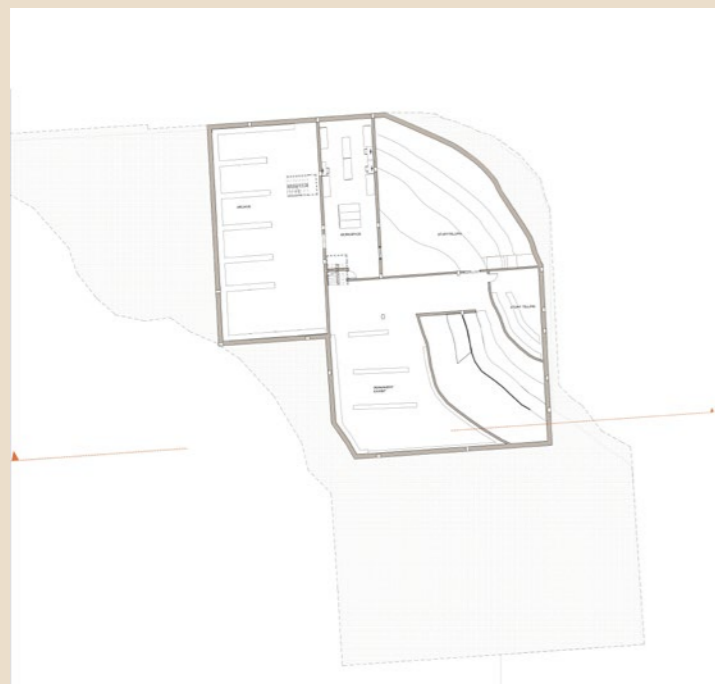
Ground Plan



First Story



Ground Story



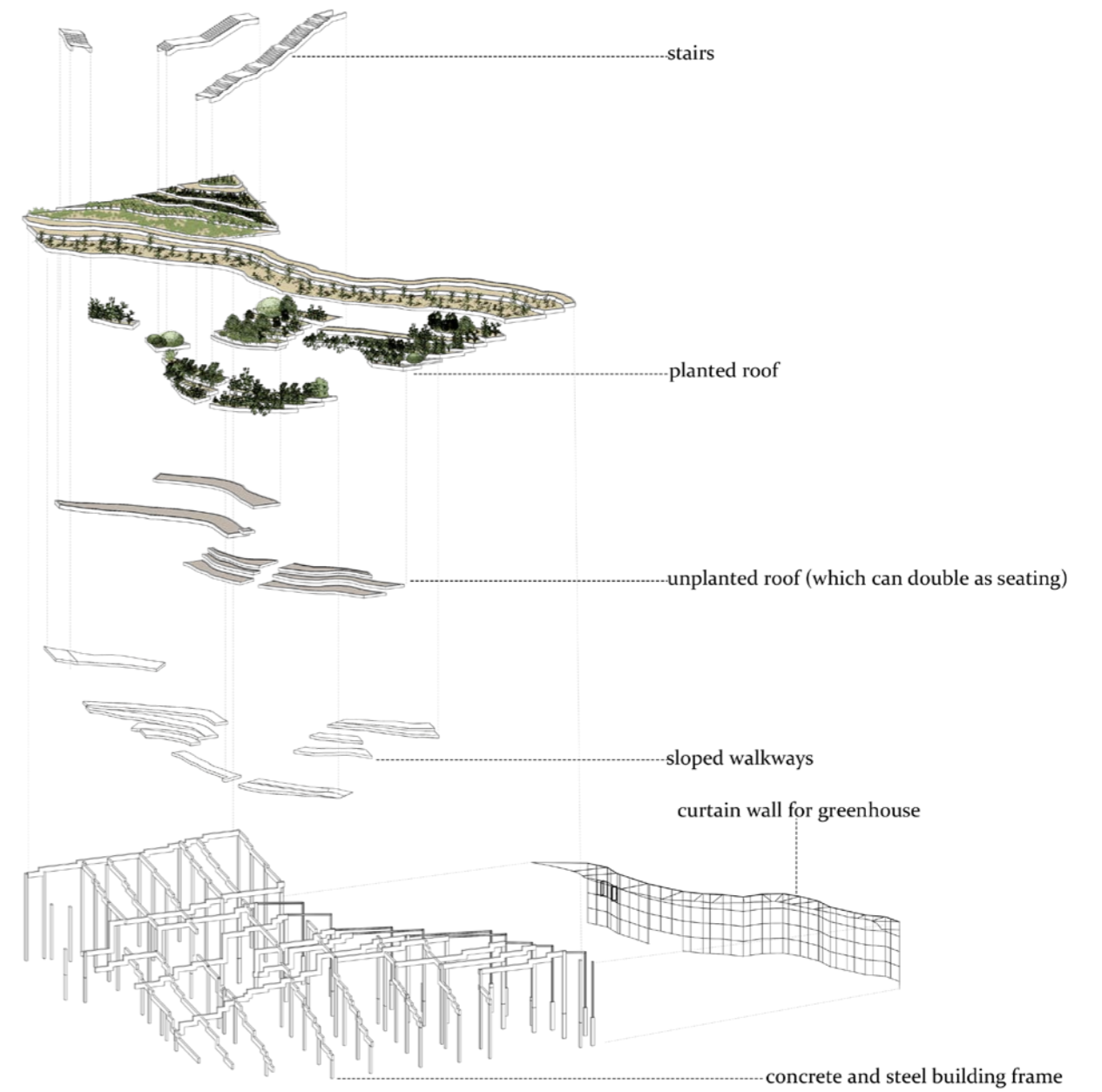
Basement Plan



Basement Story



Section AA



Roof and Structure





Exhibition Walkway

Performance Space





From South Entrance



Museum

Greenhouse





Roof Garden

## Reflection

As seen with my own thesis, a decolonial approach to museum-making must be site specific, as different sites have different narratives and therefore difference exclusions. There is no standard recipe to a decolonial approach to museum-making.

As an a student of a western curriculum, I found it difficult to unlearn the standards I have learned thus far and thus the design process of this project become that much more difficult. This is not to say a decolonial project is impossible, but rather it is a process that takes time.

This time spent may not have a physical manifestations, as it requires thinking, reflecting, observing, learning and more thinking.

I've learned that a decolonial approach cannot occur without physical interaction with the people whose stories have been left of history.

A decolonial approach to design can be a rather uncomfortable process for everyone involved, but it is an important one.



## Glossary

### **/gais (/ais)**

Khoisan notion of spirit - (Low. C, 2004)

### **Apartheid**

A policy of segregation that was based on the grounds of race, occurred between 1948 to the early 1990s in South Africa.

### **Eurocentric**

Based on European history or culture and excludes the view of the greater world.

### **Global Coloniality**

the presence of colonial situations at time where colonial administrations have been erased. - (Grosfoguel. R, 2011)

### **Identity**

“an individual’s sense of self defined by (a) a set of physical, psychological, and inter-personal characteristics that is not wholly shared with any other person and (b) a range of affiliations (e.g., ethnicity) and social roles. Identity involves a sense of continuity, or the feeling that one is the same person today that one was yesterday or last year (despite physical or other changes). Such a sense is derived from one’s body sensations; one’s body image; and the feeling that one’s memories, goals, values, expectations, and beliefs belong to the self. Also called personal identity.” - (“APA Dictionary of Psychology”, n.d.)

### **Indigenous**

Occurring or originating in a particular place.

### **Khoisan**

A collective term for the Southern African groups consisting of the Khoikhoi and the San.

**Latin binomials**

“scientific naming of species whereby each species receives a Latin or Latinized name of two parts, the first indicating the genus and the second being the specific epithet.” - (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004)

**Massaging**

The action of rubbing muscles and joints in or to alleviate tension or pain.

**Modern**

Identifiable by Western standards.

**Mother country**

Country which colonises another country.

**Official (as in “official” records)**

What is accepted as fact, or a true account based on a Eurocentric system.

**Plant survival factor**

An element required by a plant in order to survive

**Rubbing**

The action of applying firm pressure to a surface, whilst using a backwards and forwards motion.

**SAM**

South African Museum

**Scientific**

based on or characterized by the methods and principles of Western science.

**Sense of Self**

Refers to one’s perception of their identity (how they see themselves). - (Raypole, n.d.)

**Unearth**

To dig up something in order to reveal something.

**Universal Knowledge**

The western knowledge that is seen as objective and sees itself as indisputable fact regardless of context.

**Visitor type**

The identity of a museum visitor based on their behaviour during a museum visit.

**VOC**

Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (Dutch) - known as the Dutch East India Company in English. - (Briney, A, 2019)

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