

FEB, 2012

Given the diverse natures of their solo careers, the collaborative work of Stephen Hobbs and Marcus Neustetter as Hobbs/Neustetter should be read in terms of cross-pollination or contamination. Their individual artistic interests in urban social change and exploration and mapping respectively have been fused into a shared vision through years of experimentation with the juxtaposition of hi- and lo-tech, dead and new media, mark-making and photography. By its very nature, contradiction demands a pursuit of beauty through a series of process-driven revelations rather than a singular, fixed outcome. Hobbs/Neustetter, through a shared fascination with invention and reinvention of visual metaphors, therefore capture in their work some of the properties associated with the *memento mori*, or a souvenir of the transient. These revelations raise questions about the representation of order, balance and security, especially within the context of the urban landscape, which is a recurring theme in their work. As artists they assert life as well as celebrate the inevitability of demise, which are always simultaneously at play in society and its urban structures.

Project examples

2012

10 Year Review Exhibition, Johannesburg,
Havana Biennial, Cuba
Afropixel, Dakar, Senegal

2011

Hand/Machine: Bamako-Djenne, Mali.
Living as Form – group exhibition by Creative Time, New York.
Smoke and Building Projections: St Pierre and Fort de France, Martinique.
Borderless:Alex-Zimbabwe-Mozambique, interventions in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Alexandra Township, supported by SDC programme of Pro Helvetia Cape Town.

2010

Ernest Oppenheimer Park, Sculpture Garden, public artwork commission in collaboration with Siphso Gwala, Malakia Mothapo, Stone Mabunda and Mfundo Ketye, Johannesburg
Entracte, in partnership with Ker Thioossane and Afropixel 2010, Dakar, Senegal.
Depth Threats, Bergen residency and exhibition with Stiftelsen 3,14 Gallery, Bek Center, USF and Maia Urstad
URBANET:Hillbrow/Dakar/Hillbrow, Arco 2010, African Pavilion hosted by Ker Thioossane

2009

Stadium-Scape / Ocean-Scape, installation commissioned for the Moses Mabhida Stadium, Durban, Kwazulu Natal
URBANET: 80+1 LINZ/JHB commission for Ars Electronica: 80+1 – *A Journey Around The World*, Linz, Austria
Parade, documentary film, Linz 2009, Kulturhauptstadt Europa by Peter Kuthan, Austria

2008

Metro Centre Public Artwork, site specific installation for the new Metro Centre Visitors Building, Braamfontein

Rea Vaya, Bus Rapid Transit Public Art Programme, prototype artwork for the City of Johannesburg and the Johannesburg Development Agency.

Black Out, public intervention project for Travesia at the CAAM, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas, Canary Islands

A Rough-Cut through Alex, experimental documentary and screening event commissioned by the Austrian Embassy in South Africa, Alexandra

2006/7

UrbaNET: Hillbrow/Dakar/Hillbrow, Ker Thioossane Media Lab, Dakar, Senegal, University of Johannesburg Gallery, *The Colour Line* Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

2005/6

M.O.D.M. Awaken the Dead, Hobbs/Neustetter: interactive installation, Design Indaba, Cape Town. Launching concept for a Museum of Dead Media, hosted by and developed with Enjin Magazine. Installation at CityVarsity Newtown (2006).

Urbanet: Tango City. Hobbs/Neustetter locative media deconstruction project inner city, Johannesburg.

2004

MirSessions collaboration with Station Mir, Gallery Premises

2003

'Detours R Us': installation artwork for Learning From* Neue Gesellschaft der Bildenden Kunst, Berlin and Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna

Transmediale.03 'Play Global!', Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany. Curated by Andreas Broekmann

2002

SafeFood II: Mr Delivery installation for "New Strategies", World Summit on Sustainable Development exhibition programme, Johannesburg Art Gallery (catalogue)

SafeFood at BIG Torino, Biennale for Young Art, Turin, Italy (catalogue)

Tricrotic (video installation) for the **16th Rencontres Video et Art Plastique**, Centre d'Art Contemporain de Basse-Normandie, Normandy, France (catalogue).

The Pseudo-Bureaucracy of the Network Neighbourhood, residency and exhibition, Kunstraum, Linz, Austria

2001

Apartheid Museum, Gold Reef City, Johannesburg, research and installation design.

SELECT ARTWORKS.../

2011: BORDERLESS – ALEXANDRA/ ZIMBABWE/MOZAMBIQUE

In partnership with Siphon Gwala and Prophet J.D., supported by: Pro Helvetia, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC and Alexandra Heritage Project

Hobbs/Neustetter collaborated with a group of ten artists from Alexandra (Bobzin M, Prophet J.D., Siphon Gwala, Mr Twigga (Kashkontant) Mulalo Mashau, Riverside Crew, Simphiwe Plaatjie, Sello Motaung, Sifiso Gumede, Moses Tshabalala) and three partner artists from Zimbabwe (Saki Mafundikwa, Sengamo Ndlovu, Stephen Biko) and three from Mozambique (Jorge Dias, Gemeuce Hilario, Goncalo Mabunda) on the experimental intervention that looks at questions of xenophobia, border-crossing and contextual value systems.

Part one of the project was herding goats from Alexandra Township into Sandton Central in a one hour intervention and photo shoot scheduled for 12:30pm on Sunday the 22nd May at the entrance of the Michelangelo Hotel with the support of Legacy Hotels.

Part two of the project invited the public of Alexandra Township to an experimental multi-media performance event at the Alexandra Heritage Project. The incomplete building served as a stage and backdrop for music, performance, dance, poetry, live actions, stunt bikes and projections.



2010: ENTRACTE, AFROPIXEL FESTIVAL MAY 2010, DAKAR (SENEGAL)

Located in Zone A, Sicap, Maison 46 - standing for 10 years, is destined for demolition to make way for a new development. In collaboration with students from the Ecole de Beaux Arts in Dakar a series of projection and performance scenes were developed as a reflection on the pathetic state of this building and the expectations of a new architecture to come. Hobbs/Neustetter's performance of live action, photographic stills, video and lazer projections included Aurora Sound Recordings by James Webb (SA) and selected tracks from Joao Orecchia's (SA) 2009 release Hands and Feet.

Special thanks to: Marion Louis-Grand and Francoi Sylla Ker Thiossane Residency and Afropixel. The Trinity Session Ecole de Beaux Arts, Dakar, Senegal

<http://www.youtube.com/hobbsneustetter>



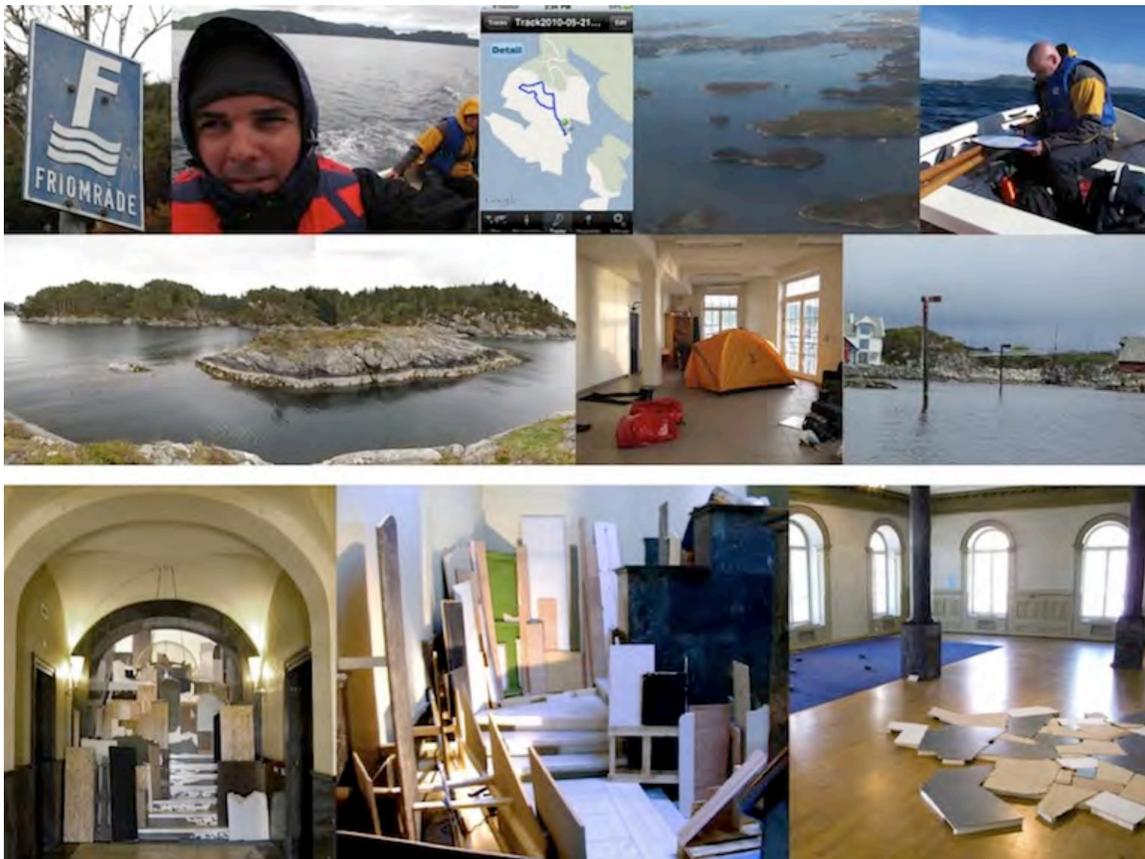
2010: DEPTH THREATS, STIFTELSEN 3,14 GALLERY, BERGEN (NORWAY)

Hobbs/Neustetter's sustained preoccupation with connectivity and communication in site specific situations, finds them regressing to a time when Norway's islands were connected less by bridges and more by good faith. Hence the artist's most current mapping project involves traversing a group of islands in Austevoll, Norway. Their resultant 6 day camping, hiking and boating exercise served as the artist's means of encountering and collecting particular experiences pertaining to the right of access. Hobbs/Neustetter's installation *Depth Threats* is a reflection on the constant state of measuring that the artists encountered as they read sea maps, deciphered land masses and negotiated often shallow rocky waters in Austevoll.

This exhibition has two parts, bringing together a variety of practices by South African artists. The first part sees two site-specific projects produced in Austevoll and Bergen respectively. The second is a screening of 11 video works. James Webb has chosen to engage with Bergen's diverse religious communities. *Prayer* is a multi-channel sound installation comprising of prayers from all the religions practiced in Bergen. Webb researched the many groups and met with them to make personal audio recordings of prayer that would be representative of their respective faiths. Broadcast from 12 floor-based speakers, the artwork allows listeners to wander through the installation listening to the many sounds as a whole or kneel down and listen to each voice intimately.

<http://www.stiftelsen314.com/Stiftelsen314/Hobbs-Neustetter.htm>

The project was made possible by by BEK Bergen Centre for Electronic Arts – Maur Prosjekter / Maia Urstad – Stiftelsen 3,14In collaboration with Artist in Residence // USF Verftet Bergen and ISIS Arts Newcastle



2008: *A Rough-Cut through Alex*

Hobbs/Neustetter's initial inquiry into the xenophobia attacks in Alexandra Township in 2008, which culminated in the live screening of their quasi-documentary, *A Rough Cut Through Alex*, in 2009. While the film focused primarily on Mozambican and Zimbabwean victims of the attacks and more broadly highlighted the difficult living conditions in Alex.



2008: BLACK OUT

Public intervention project for Travesia at the CAAM, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas, Canary Islands, 17 October 2008 – 4 January 2009, curated by Joëlle Busca and Christian Perazzone and funded by Casa De África - European Parliament.

Reflecting on the strategic position of the Island of Gran Canaria, for passage to Europe, the curators of Travesia have invited a range of contemporary African artists to respond to the myriad geo-political and humanitarian issues pertaining to forced migration and integration into European societies.

Poster and TV Advert: BLACK OUT - Inhabitants of Gran Canaria: turn off your lights between 17 October 2008 and 4 January 2009 to avoid immigrant boat landings.

Using numerous public platforms in the vicinity of Las Palmas and greater Gran Canaria, Hobbs/Neustetter's poster campaign and TV advert (4 times daily for two weeks) prompts the public and tourists to question their existence on the island and the extent to which the island as a strategic land mass for passage serves as an obstacle or enabler of integration.

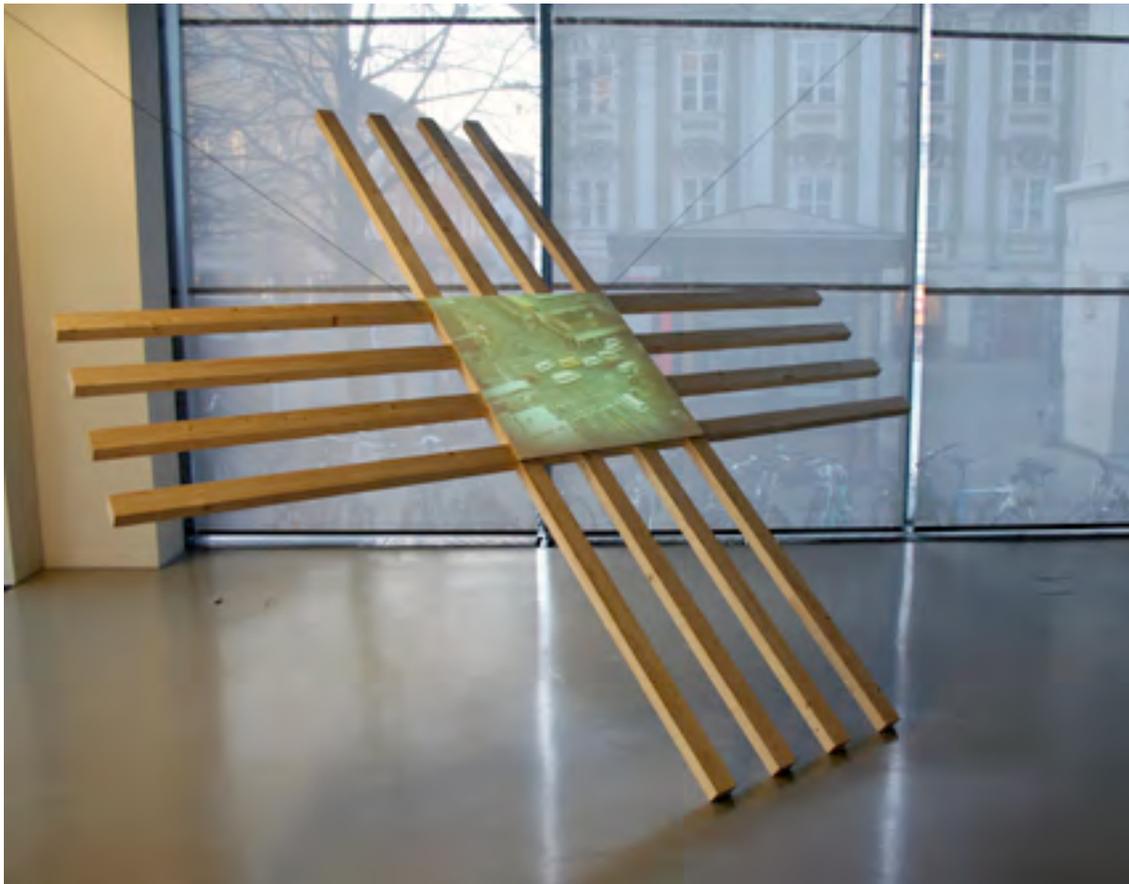
During the time of the exhibition the windows of the CAAM were blacked-out.



2007: Intersection and Desperately Seeking joburg

Hobbs/Neustetter and Machfeld collaborating at Medienkunstlabor im Kunsthaus Graz, Austria

Following the collaborative activities of Machfeld and Hobbs/Neustetter in South Africa, in March 2007, the final outcome was presented through public space interventions titled Desperately Seeking Joburg and an exhibition at the Medienkunstlabor, Kunsthaus in Graz, from 19:00 on 6 December 2007 to 13 January 2008.



2006/7: UrbaNET - Hillbrow/Dakar/Hillbrow

Kher Thioossane Media Lab, Dakar, Senegal, University of Johannesburg Gallery, *The Colour Line*
Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

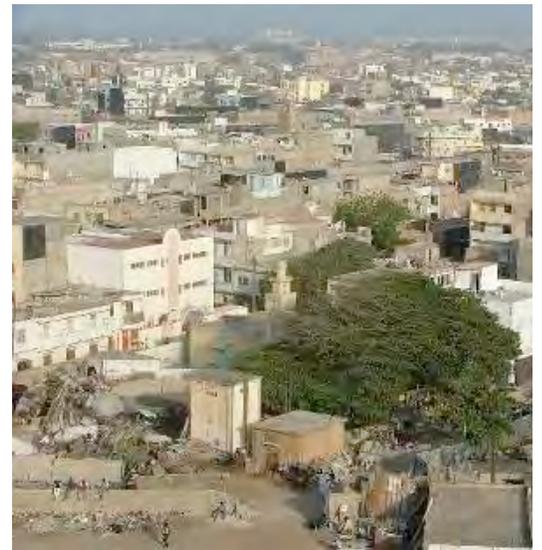
Inspired by encounters with francophone immigrants in Hillbrow (a neighbourhood of Johannesburg's inner city, notorious today for its state of urban decay and influx of African immigrants) Stephen Hobbs and Marcus Neustetter (for their contribution to the Dak'Art Biennale 'Off' Programme) interviewed a group of Senegalese immigrants asking them to draw maps of Dakar, which Hobbs/Neustetter would use to navigate the city during their two week residence in May 2006. The culminating exhibition at the Ker Thioossane residency space in Dakar comprised a series of wall-map-paintings and photographic stills projections that reflected on the interactions and engagements resulting from navigating Dakar on foot and visiting colleagues and friends of the Senegalese immigrants.

Given the state of racial and ethnic territoriality both a hangover from apartheid and a result of repopulation of the city by African immigrants, many of these spaces are highly contested in terms of the nature of there perceived negative transformation. Hobbs/ Neustetter's project has for themselves and for the Senegalese community served as a socially engaged process whereby engagement through interviews and drawings have been employed to produce a comparative analysis of the two cities and at the same time cross substantial psychological barriers inherent in contemporary South African society.

Returning to Johannesburg, the project has been featured at the "Sightings / Site-ings of the African City" conference held at the Wits Institute of Social and Economic Research in June, and a project page has been commissioned for the September 2006 issue of Art South Africa. Most importantly, an audio-visual presentation and action-reflection session on the comparative findings between Johannesburg and Dakar was held at Chez Ntemba, a night-club in Hillbrow for the Senegalese immigrants.

IMAGES.../

2006/7: UrbaNET - Hillbrow/Dakar/Hillbrow - images



2005/6: M.O.D.M. Awaken the Dead

Hobbs/Neustetter: interactive installation, Design Indaba, Cape Town. Launching concept for a Museum of Dead Media, hosted by and developed with Enjin Magazine. Installation at CityVarsity Newtown (2006).



2005/6: Urbanet: Tango City

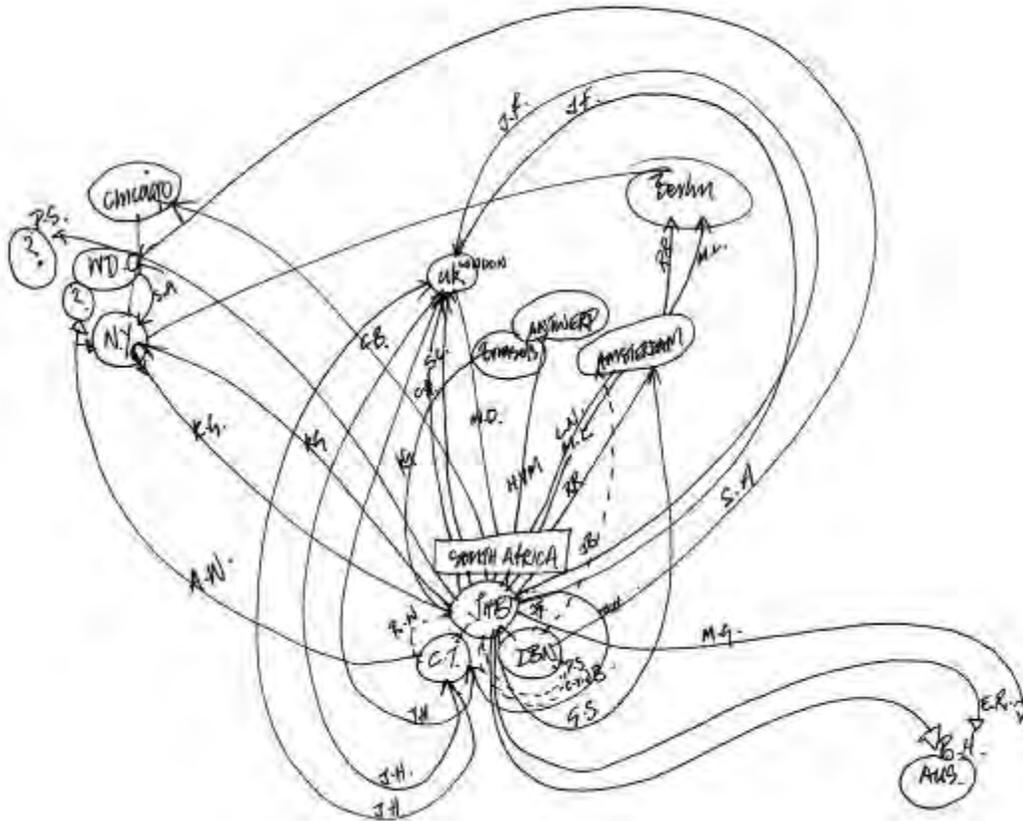
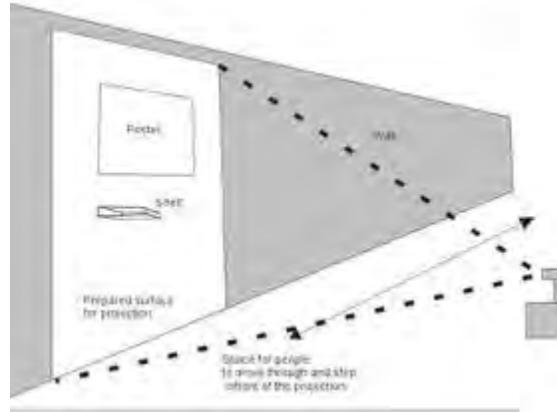
Hobbs/Neustetter locative media deconstruction project inner city, Johannesburg.

Tango City explores the role that locative media and technology can play in spaces of human and built density. While continually exposed to advances in new media, programming and technological devices Hobbs / Neustetter locate their practice within the domain of the digital divide as experienced in Africa and South Africa. This more localised experience has had a profound impact on their choice of expression with new media and technology, and in most instances they will opt for a lo-tech solution to scripto- visual representations of their findings in digital and urban environments. Tango city is a performative work which uses mobile phones and digital still and video cameras. These devices are employed to produce the combined results akin to GPS technology. Hobbs positions himself at the highest point in the city and Neustetter is mobile on the ground; between these devices they attempt to locate one another. In this somewhat anti (technological) convergence position taken by the artists, their project aims to investigate, through sound, moving image, text and photography, the multi-valent dimensions of the city of Johannesburg.



2003: 'Detours R Us'

Installation artwork for Learning From* Neue Gesellschaft der Bildenden Kunst, Berlin and Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna (The Trinity Session)



2003: M.O.: Trinity Session Artministration
Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg





2003: Transmediale.03 'Play Global!'

Installation and performance Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany. Curated by Andreas Broekmann
(The Trinity Session)



2002: SafeFood II: Mr Delivery

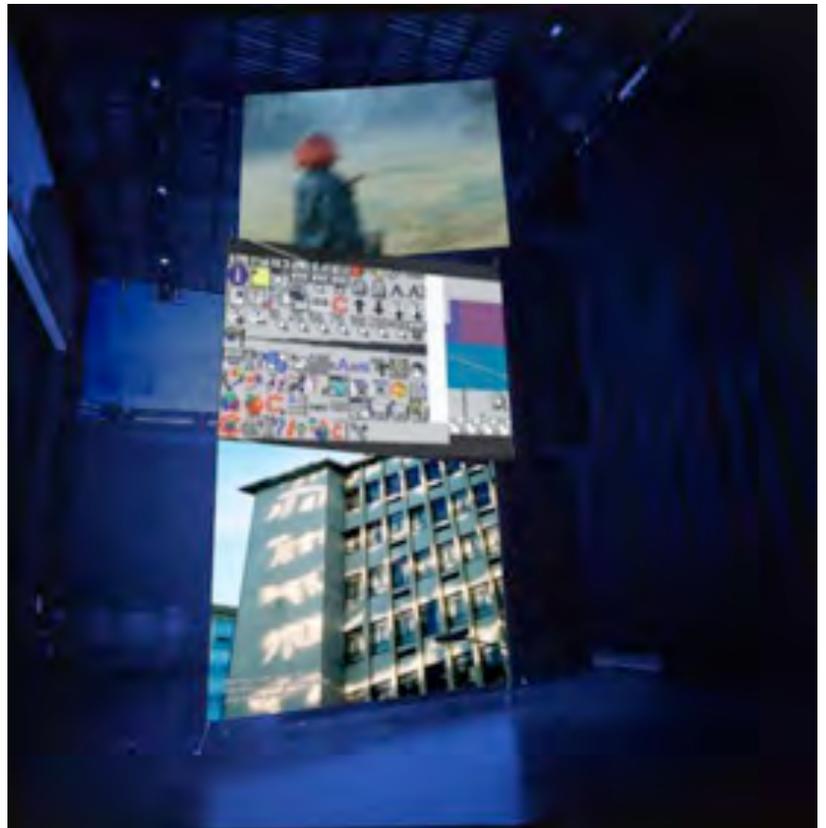
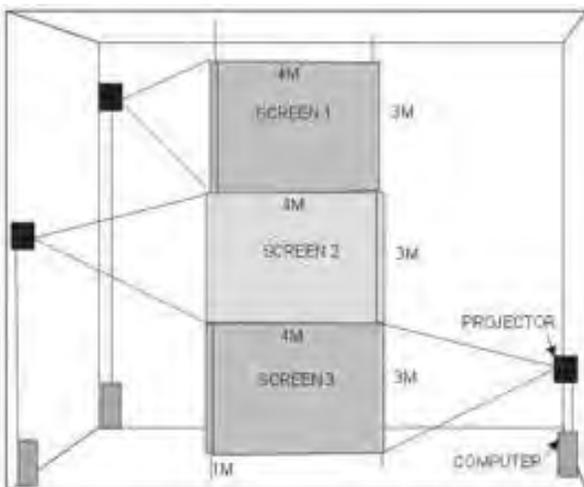
Installation for “New Strategies”, World Summit on Sustainable Development exhibition programme, Johannesburg Art Gallery (catalogue) (The Trinity Session)

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2002: Tricrotic

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2002: The Pseudo-Bureaucracy of the Network Neighbourhood,
Residency and exhibition, Kunstraum, Linz, Austria (The Trinity Session)



2001: Apartheid Museum

Research and installation design at the Apartheid Museum Gold Reef City, Johannesburg, (The Trinity Session)

