

The Excavation Project Report: Summary

Another study arose from the local interest in the suppressed and/or erased stories and histories of Stellenbosch and Kayamandi (an informal settlements situated at the outskirts of Stellenbosch). This project engages with modes of curatorship and mapping (as a visual and social practice that traces and plots forms of movement, sites of meaning and systems of personal knowledge), and uses such a methodology of curatorial-mapping to engage with the life experiences of members of local communities.

Thus far, the following components have been launched:

A postgraduate, interdepartmental and inter-institutional research seminar has been running from the beginning of the year, which engages postgraduate (honours, masters and doctoral) students from the Visual Arts Department of Stellenbosch University, as well as from the Departments of Music, English, and History. Participants from other institutions, such as the University of the Western Cape, are also part of this seminar series, as well as interested members of public. These seminars were successful insofar as they created a platform for scholarly and community engagement in forms of curatorship, archival research, historical intervention and critical citizenship.

An exhibition is currently being assembled and conceptualized that will open in March 2016 at the Gallery of Stellenbosch University.¹ This exhibition is serving as the platform for engaging with the material culture of Stellenbosch and the participating lecturers, students and interested members of the community are currently working together to create a new experimental exhibition. The purpose of this exhibition is to critically explore and speak to the complex, historically loaded history of this town as it was affected by various socio-political and cultural discourses pertaining to the colonial, postcolonial, apartheid and post-apartheid eras.

In this way, the goals of this project have been realized, particularly as it is actively promoting forms of social inclusion through the development of a technological interface that can be used as a product or learning tool within both academia, as well as the general public. In addition, this project promotes active citizenship where the different role players have the platform to share in and engage with local histories. In all, these processes are actively leading up to the production of an exhibition, with the ultimate aim of creating an interactive platform for sharing knowledge, learning about local histories, and exploring theoretical and practical tools for engaging with such histories.
