Chapter five

Intervention through art – Performing is making visible

Introduction

In this chapter, I will use the performative archive as a source of study and analysis. Before I start to elaborate the concept of political intervention through art, I will explain, how I see the role of social movements related to housing in this book and why I choose to study performative art, rather than the related movements.

South Africa is unthinkable without the many manifestations, strikes, and road blockades the different social movements, workers, farmers, shack dwellers, students, etc. organise on an everyday basis. Within the immediate struggle of the people affected against forced eviction, different campaigns and movements against evictions and urban development policies have been initiated. The most famous example is the shack dwellers movement Abahlali baseMjondolo that is predominantly active in Durban and other parts of KwaZulu Natal province. Since its initiation, its members are being punished, murdered, and criminalised for the political challenge they present as an effective and organised social movement. They continuously face being killed in demonstrations or being assassinated, as was/is the case particularly during the first months of the year 2013 and the first half of 2017.[1] In order to repress their political gatherings, the national, provincial, and city

1 Cf. Pithouse, Richard: *Outcry Over Oppression in Cato Crest*. in: Rhodes University publications. October 5, 2013; Gibson, Nigel: *Fanonian Practices in South Africa – From Steve Biko to Abahlali*. Scottsville 2011; pp.192-193; Abahlali baseMjondolo article: *The Criminalisation of the Poor*. February 25, 2011. Source: http://abahlali.org/node/7820/; Langford, Malcom and Kahanovitz, Steve: *South Africa: Rethinking Enforcement Narratives*. in: Langford, Malcom; Rodriguez-Graviato, César and Rossi, Julieta (eds.): *Social Rights Judgments and the Politics of Compliance: Making it Stick*. Cambridge 2017.

governments use a law that was passed by the apartheid regime in 1993. *The Regulation of Public Gatherings Act* secures the prevention, banning, and brutal disruption of demonstrations that the governments values as intolerable. After having visited members of the shack dwellers movement, Depelchin describes: "Here were people who, living among the poorest of the poor, were standing up and insisting on being treated with respect and dignity, as called for by the South African constitution, but who, strangely, were being charged, beaten up and arrested by the police as though they were criminals. How could a police force, under the political leadership of the ANC, behave in a way that is reminiscent of the apartheid police?"[2]

In the Housing Assembly, residents of different parts of the Cape Flats have come together to protest for dignified housing and against exclusion and marginalisation. They criticise the concept, implementation, and distribution of RDP houses (Reconstruction and Development Programme Houses) and try to illuminate why the working class has been neglected systematically.[3] Another younger example is the Reclaim the City campaign that was launched in February 2016 in Cape Town. Domestic workers and other low-income residents have come together to struggle against forced evictions, forced relocations to Temporary Relocation Areas, and for social housing in Cape Town's suburbs that have remained racialised sites of exclusion and segregation.

Several scholars have tried to make sense of the movements and their demands. Anna Selmeczi's work for example, is a very meaningful engagement with Abahlali that tells a lot about how the movement organises itself, about its struggles and oppression.[4] In addition, the social movements themselves describe and analyse their work on their websites. One only has to browse for a few minutes and will find many articles on the movements' goals, strategies, methods, and contents.

This adequate representation of the social movements that struggle for dignified housing, against forced eviction and relocation and for an inclusive city, made me think of the analysis of social expressions and interventions that engage the city through a different tool. What I would like to engage with in this last chapter of the study of forced evictions and criminalisation is

2 Depelchin, Jacques: *Reclaiming African History*. Cape Town 2011: p.44.

3 Cf. Matlawe, Kenneth: *Housing Assembly and the Decent Housing for All Campaign*. Housing Assembly article. April 11, 2017.

4 Cf. for example Selmeczi, Anna: *Abahlali's Vocal Politics of Proximity: Speaking, Suffering and Political Subjectivization*. in: Journal of Asian and African Studies. October 2012. Volume 47: pp.465-481.

something very unique to Cape Town and maybe some other cities in the post-colony. As in the previous chapter, I will change my perspective and method of analysis. In this chapter, I turn my attention to performative art interventions, which challenge forced eviction and practices of urban development that perpetuate inequality and segregation. I treat performance art and other artistic production in two ways. Firstly, as a direct social and political response to long-term unequal politico-economic conditions and secondly as a method of processing and digesting the pain, trauma and anger that humiliation and inequality generate. How does art attempt to inhabit the spaces of inequality? As suggested by V.Y. Mudimbe, I read the attempt of finding expression through creative forms as literary and visual text[5], or, as an archive, and its outputs as statements inside the archive, because I treat its operations as performative or other artistic formations of meaning-making that can be thought through and read as any other oral or written statement and thus as a valid source of study. As Diana Taylor puts it, it is to "take seriously the repertoire of embodied practices as an important system of knowing and transmitting knowledge" and "to expand what we understand as 'knowledge'".[6]

One of the aims of this chapter is further to elaborate on the power of arts to undo and disrupt the seamlessness of biopolitics. How this takes place, I will elaborate on later. In this introduction, I would like to prepare the reader to engage with the analysis of the artworks and the elaboration of this idea. The notion is that performance can be both, self-reflexive as a means to deal with the artist's own location inside the constellation of domination and subjugation, as well as a reflection of the relations of power within the social outside. As elaborated in chapter three, self-location and social outside have a reciprocal relationship through which they decisively affect the physical body. Art as a method of intervention bears the ability to shift visibility and audibility. There are many examples of artists and arts collectives in the greater Cape Town area who use their work to intervene in processes of silencing, one-sided media coverage, and dominant city, provincial, state and business sector discourses. Interventionist art has the potential to trigger the senses of its interlocutor in a different way than written text or oral speeches. Jacques

5 Cf. Mudimbe, V.Y.: Reprende: *Enunciations and Strategies in Contemporary African Arts*. in: Oguibe, Olu and Enwezor, Okwui (eds): *Reading the Contemporary: African Art from Theory to the Marketplace*. London 1999: p.32.

6 Taylor, Diana: *The Archive and the Repertoire – Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham 2003: p.26,16.

Rancière speaks about this relationship of art and its interlocutors, when he argues about the social regulation of the senses, essentially the partitioning and distribution of the senses. Rancière states:

> "Politics revolves around what is seen and what can be said about it, around who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, around the properties of spaces and the possibilities of time. It is on the basis of this primary aesthetics that it is possible to raise the question of 'aesthetic practices' as I understand them, that is forms of visibility that disclose artistic practices, the place they occupy, what they 'do' or 'make' from the standpoint of what is common to the community. Artistic practices are 'ways of doing and making' that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility.... The arts only ever lend to projects of domination or emancipation what they are able to lend to them, that is to say, quite simply, what they have in common with them: bodily positions and movements, functions of speech, the parcelling out of the visible and the invisible. Furthermore, the autonomy they can enjoy or the subversion they can claim credit for rest on the same foundation."[7]

The notions of art as "literary and visual text" and thus as an archive as Mudimbe puts it; or as a "repertoire of embodied practices" that forms a system of knowledge as Taylor phrases it; or as a political "aesthetic practice" as Rancière conceptualises it, complement one another. All three concepts helped me to conceptualise what I was perceiving when looking at the artworks.

The intention here is not to deliver a critique of the works analysed, but to use them as evidence for the existence of a specific politico-economic violence and to work with their contents as data that speaks of that violence.

Out of the many examples one finds on Cape Town's streets, on house walls, and in galleries, four art projects have shaped my own understanding of the cities, their laws and by-laws, their security units, the role of business sector, and decisions taken on provincial and municipal level. In the analysis of art projects in South Africa, I had to temporarily shift my focus from the greater Cape Town area and include one art project performed in Johannesburg. The reason for this is firstly that South African interventionist art

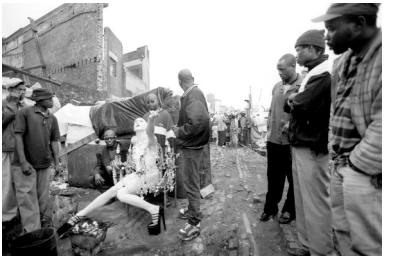
7 Rancière, Jacques: *The Politics of Aesthetics – The Distribution of the Sensible*. London 2013: pp.8, 14.

is unthinkable without taking into account the many manifestations of art within the greater Johannesburg area, including Soweto. The second reason is that although forced eviction and criminalisation as a politico-economic practice becomes executed in all over South Africa and especially in South Africa's urban landscape, something relatively particular in terms of visibility and discursive setting of forced eviction is happening in Johannesburg: One of the security companies frequently deployed by the city of Johannesburg and by different branches of the business sector, the *Red Ant Security Relocation & Eviction Services (PTY) Ltd*, represents a quite specific approach towards forced eviction of residents from their homes. What that means, we will encounter in the analysis of the first art project in this chapter.

To give a short explanation of what the reader can expect, I included four different art projects - a work of a long-term arts collective located in the Western Cape; a video installation; a work that is composed of three art pieces; and a performance artwork by an artist in Johannesburg. Starting with the latter, I have chosen Steven Cohen's invasive performance in the middle of the forced eviction of *illegal* squatters in Newtown/Johannesburg, as my first example.

Steven Cohen – The Chandelier

Images of The Chandelier performance in Newtown/Johannesburg 2002 by John Hogg[8]



8 Images by Hogg, John: Chandelier by Steven Cohen. Squatter camp behind the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, South Africa. First published by Canadianstage.

Newtown/Johannesburg's city centre, close to Mandela Bridge, 2002: Security officers of the *Red Ant Security Relocation & Eviction Services (PTY) Ltd,*[9] engaged by the City of Johannesburg government, are busy evicting the residents of an informal settlement and confiscating their goods.

The artist uses his own body as the centre of the performance. His costume and make-up are highly aestheticised, exaggerated and shrill. With oscillating and vibrant movements and without the use of a continuous choreography composed beforehand, he paces between the shacks that are awaiting to be bulldozed, between the anxious residents and the uniformed security guards who are dressed in red, processing the violence that is registered in the manner the bodies of the residents and the guards relate to each other. The scene is composed of three different worlds, overlapping in this moment of confrontation.

As discussed in chapter three, most security guards hired by city governments, provincial governments, the free market, or public-private cooperations, live in townships themselves, without any perspective of improving their economic conditions. This makes the eviction a paradoxical situation, as the lives of guards and residents are profoundly intertwined. Consistent with this chaos of different lives and different roles that collide in this scene, Cohen's trajectories are not predetermined, nor is any structured framework discernible. At the same time, this does not imply formlessness. The spontaneity and uncertainty of what happens next inherent in the performance creates a form of its own. Whereas each of his movements fold into the next, the guards seem shocked and unsettled at the same time. While continuing their work of removing the residents' belongings from the shacks, they try to ignore this uncomfortable situation and pretend to not see the artist. This act of trying not to see, becomes part of the performance. The turning a blind eye of the guards represents a highly symbolic metaphor. This, the removing of belongings, and the pure presence of the guards itself, stage a performance of power that is omnipresent in the space.

At the other end of the performance, Cohen's semi-nude body represents both vulnerability that is offensively put out there, without it creating fear or insecurity, and the sacrificing of the body as the last possible instance of

9 The Red Ant Security Relocation & Eviction Company is a private security company that the City of Johannesburg government continuously engages for the execution of forced evictions of people from their homes. The grade of violence the security company exercises increased over the years. (see Epilogue).

opposition and accordingly, as the most radical method of taking a subject position and raising one's voice. Offense, here, means active disruption, towards the political and economic structures that favour the eviction and the space of class privilege Cohen comes from. The body is also central to the language the performance uses. The language of the body as the most possible intimate language penetrates every corner and the whole interior body of the space. Cohen is not performing to touch on the surface; he is concerned with the core of unequal power relations.

Although *illegal* squatters are in permanent pursuit of being able to rent in formal housing, forced eviction from the structures they created as home is what residents of informal settlements fear the most. It is this feared and at the same time familiar situation that Cohen has come to face and to defy. Even though it seems as he identifies deeply with the residents and their social position, it is true that in relation to the space and the residents, he appears detached or unanchored. To intervene means he has to surmount the insecurity this brings with it. As illustrated in chapter two, forced evictions have become routine in the everyday of urban life in South Africa and are no departure from the metropolitan norm. Cohen's performance is set to disrupt this normality that has created an aesthetics of its own – an aesthetics of normalised violence and fear. At the intersection of state force, the experience of loss and an artist's body contesting the whole situation and the discourse behind it with an intentionally stylised mode of articulation, collision is inevitable.

The chandelier that also lends the art piece its name is wrapped around the artist's body. I suggest that it symbolises the privileged bourgeoisie that the artist identifies as complicit in the present-day forced evictions and its victims being silenced, passively watching and affirming the neoliberal project of the city. Cohen pushes for encountering the city from this view above the informal settlement with its residents being evicted, which turns the site into a space of ruins, physically, but also of ruined identity and self-determination. This is not to argue that people lose their identity through the loss of their homes. But since one's ability to self-determination becomes so substantially shattered, one's identity and socialisation become target of insecurity and fear and thus have to be built almost anew.

The Christmas-tree ornaments decorating the chandelier evoke associations with "northern suburb privilege"[10] and the identity-enclaves based on numbness, consumption, ownership, perpetual beautification of the home, guarding belongings, and, as Frantz Fanon puts it, "aesthetic forms of respect for the status quo"[11], that come with uncritical privileged life. At the same time, the chandelier is also about illuminating and "bringing to light", as the subtitle of the performance tells us. The artist's intended hypervisibility stands in great contrast to the policies of invisibilising sites as the informal settlement and its residents that are inscribed as superfluous, degraded to the status of ghosts in the city. Highly alien to the atmosphere of the squatter camp, Cohen's body interferes with and disturbs the routine of the security guards in charge of the eviction.

The scene seals off the world outside and it seems as if only Cohen, the residents of the Newtown informal settlement and the security guards exist on the surface of the earth. But time does not halt. The guards continue to remove the residents' belongings from the shacks, preparing them for demolition. For Cohen, the performance is a political act and the position from which he speaks is accordingly politicised. In one of his interviews he explains: "In South Africa, everything is political. Even shit is political, because you have a toilet and there are many people who don't have a toilet. Everything is politicised, even space… And performance for me is about attacking the street and leaving the stage."[12] Through attacking the street and raising his body, he connects his own humanity to the humanity of the residents, becoming not *the* voice, but *a* voice inside the location of those who were denied speech and who are living a life under erasure.

Cohen's performance forces the audience to have an engagement with the effects of forced evictions through illuminating and visibilising the actual scene of eviction. In other words, Cohen's performance presses weight upon the ground of the happening that now has to be recognised, that now has to be spoken of. What makes it a radical approach is also its unilateral choice of its audience, who through the volume added to the event, are forced to recognise its message. In so doing, the performance disrupts the routine of

10 Bunn, David: *Art Johannesburg and Its Objects*. in: Nuttal, Sarah and Mbembe, Achille (eds.): *Johannesburg – The Elusive Metropolis*. Johannesburg 2008: p.165.

11 Fanon, Frantz: *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York 2004: p.3.

12 Cohen, Steve: Interview with arte. Source: https://vimeo.com/113489663.

evicting and destabilises the power relations between the security force and their targets of eviction.

The performer does not speak on behalf of the subjects located on the bottom of this relation of domination, rather he speaks for himself. Knowing that the residents possess other means to generate social power, he stresses the need to investigate how through our stepping back and emphasising powerlessness, according to the motto of, "there is nothing I can do", policies of displacement and their executers are handed obstacle-free pathways. Hinting at the ability of every individual to react, even while witnessing a defeat, his performance sets a statement inside discourses of nihilism.

In his performance, Cohen reflects on access to basic facilities like electricity and water and how informal settlements and townships are created as sites of non-access. In another interview on the Chandelier, he expresses how it is unbearable that millions of people are living without electricity, toilets, and water and that the chandelier itself also alludes to that.[13] That he chose a crystal chandelier and not a simple lamp refers to the stark contrast of non-access and luxury or highly comfortable life. The fact of the artist himself being read as *white*, distances the art piece from unavailingly seeking to arrange itself in an imposed empathy with the situation of those being evicted. The real materiality of empathy emanates from the background of the artist acting out of a reaction to the inactivity of the middle classes, the very social position he himself comes from. At this, the performer does not appear helpless or desperate. Inherent to his movements is the will to take agency and to demonstrate/perform self-determination. The use and active exhibition of his own body and its offering as a tool of resistance contributes to this. Stuck in a combination of unpreparedness and anger, the security guards hesitate to react to the performance. The artist's body positions itself as an evidence of the witnessed injustice, as it transports the urgency with which the decision was taken to run the risk of being arrested by the security force. Having chosen semi-nudity as performative material, the artist underlines this urgency. It also demonstrates the force behind the performance, meaning that the artist saw himself as obliged to respond and the response as an urgent one. During his moving inside the settlement, no comfort or eases can be interpreted in his bodily gestures. The spontaneous, flexible and uneven movements suggest aesthetics of fight and struggle, not of composed harmony. For the *black* body

13 Cohen, Steve: Interview with Festival Extra. Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkwJ29fUQyk.

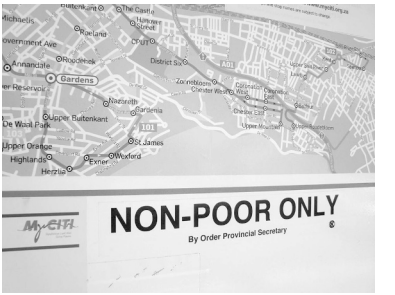
that was constructed and brutally objectified as exotic spectacle with the beginning of colonialism[14], Cohen subtends his own body, placing it at the centre of attention, relieving the *black* body from the heavy burden of being inspected and exhibited. In so doing, he establishes a counter-narrative to *white* superiority and the biological discourses of scientific racism that have been used to justify the exploitation of the *black* subject and lists questions about imposed identity and the inscription of colour on the body. The domains of power related to the order to evict had not foreseen an unusual attack like that. His performance leaves traces of an imagination, an imagination of what seems unreachable, especially in the face of this scene of forced eviction, an imagination of a more equal city. The performance, then, is not only making visible but also a form of imagining. After the eviction is executed and the shacks bulldozed, what stretches out over the city are not only the physical ruins and the misery, but also this imagination.

The Xcollektiv – *Non-Poor Only*

American District Telegraph private security company Central City Improvement District (see chapter three)

14 Cf. Gqola, Pumla Dineo: *What is slavery to me? Postcolonial/Slave Memory in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Johannesburg 2010: p.193; and Enwezor, Okwui: *Reframing the Black Subject: Ideology and Fantasy in Contemporary South African Representation*. in: Oguibe, Olu and Enwezor, Okwui (eds): *Reading the Contemporary: African Art from Theory to the Marketplace*. London 1999: p.381.

The Parade in central Cape Town, where Rosheda Muller and MyCiti Bus company routes (see chapter three) other informal traders have their stalls (see chapter three)



The Old Biscuit Mill Neighbourgoods Market (see chapter three); University of Cape Town Administration Building during the Rhodes Must Fall Movement (see chapter four)[15]

Cape Town. Xcollektiv. Ongoing project since 2013: In this section of the chapter, I would like to turn to an art project of the Cape Town-based Xcollektiv. The Xcollektiv is a long-term political collective. It includes artists, academics, writers, filmmakers and activists, who started to work together in February 2013, thematising present day forced evictions, the criminalisation of individuals, and the takeover of public and private space through construction companies and the broader business sector. The collective offers a socio-

15 All images taken from Xcollektiv's website. Source: https://xcollektiv.wordpress.com/stickers/.

political response to what is called "city development" or "spatial and economic development"[16] that perpetuates poverty and ignores the majority of people in South Africa.[17] The streets of Cape Town are their main sphere of activity. Their projects are always about disrupting and intervening in normalised structures of exclusion and marginalisation. The only time they accepted to be part of a conventional exhibition inside a gallery was when they brought a bucket toilet from one of Cape Town's townships that still contained excrement and placed it in the middle of the gallery space. The stench stretched out over the entire gallery space, confronting the visitors promptly with everyday township troubles.

The specific art project I would like to focus on in this book is the *Non-poor Only* project. Stickers that feature the statement "Non-poor only" build the project's material. Members of the collective place them all over Cape Town, including on benches in the Company Gardens, backpacker lodges, private security signs, first class train carriages, and on walls in Cape Town's main train station. They also place the stickers at bus stops of the *My City Bus* company that is highly criticised for operating mainly between middle-class and wealthy districts[18]. Other destinations of the sticker are benches in an area called "the Fringe", a part of District Six that, as explained in chapter three, is being renamed and redeveloped under a new urban planning project of the city. Remarkable to notice here is that the company in charge of the "redesigning" and redevelopment, the *Cape Town Partnership*, is also the one who instructs the Central City Improvement District, which has been discussed as well in chapter three. In a public discussion in the *District Six Homecoming Centre* on "the Fringe", Andrew Putter of the *Cape Town Partnership* made clear how he evaluates the project's ambitions: "Our aim is to turn shit into gold."[19]

The Xcollektiv's art project *Non-Poor-Only* speaks directly to the dispraise and degradation of *poor* life to "shit", to the criminalisation and marginalisa-

16 Cf. the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of the City of Cape Town; or the national Economic Development Department Annual Report 2011-2012.

17 Terreblanch, Sampie: *Lost in Transformation*. Sandton 2012: p.101.

18 The My Citi Bus company started to operate between the city and Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain in July 2014. Until today, many townships, other working-class areas, and informal settlements have been excluded from the cities infrastructural development plans that centre in the My Citi Bus project.

19 Putter, Andrew: talk at the public discussion. Title of the event: *The absence of memory in design-led urban regeneration*. Organisers: District Six Home Coming Centre and African Centre for Cities of the University of Cape Town. May 29, 2013.

tion of low-income residents, to forced evictions and to the silencing and erasure of the reasons of poverty. It does not play with any conceptual metaphors or use figurative language and its implied complexities, but written text as its material. While evoking associations with apartheid segregationist policies as the declaration of "*whites* only" and "non-*whites* only" areas, the project invites to an engagement with present-day neoliberal urban planning and its effects on the lower classes. Drawing from the "*whites* only"/"non-*whites* only" signs implemented during apartheid, the text traces a line between the inability to invade *white*-declared areas in the past and the inability to end exclusion and forced evictions today. Through emphasising the connections between the past and the present, the text secures its historical aspect to be recognised.

The repetition of its appearance in different places throughout the city aims to reach as many interlocutors as possible. This approach secures a markedly heterogeneous audience, preventing only an already politicised one that visits art galleries and engages with critical art on a regular basis to be confronted. The interlocutor's reaction, sitting on the bench or standing in front of the sticker after having read the statement, can be seen as part of the installation. The confrontation that happens on that site cannot be reversed. As such, the artwork already preoccupies the interlocutor. Its message has to be thought of. The messages the art intervention wants to put across, will take on a special urgency and destabilise the ways in which one has thought of public space before.

At the same time, the sticker itself becomes part of an archival "system of transfer" [20], because it speaks about the oppression of the past and its conti-

20 For the expression "archival system of transfer", I have been inspired by Diana Taylor's concept "acts of transfer": "Performances function as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated, or what Richard Schechner has called "twice-behaved behaviour". "Performance," on one level, constitutes the object/process of analysis in performance studies, that is, the many practices and events - dance, theatre, ritual, political rallies, funerals - that involve theatrical, rehearsed, or conventional/event-appropriate behaviors. These practices are usually bracketed off from those around them to constitute discrete foci of analysis. Sometimes, that framing is part of the event itself-a particular dance or a rally has a beginning and an end; it does not run continuously or seamlessly into other forms of cultural expression. To say something is a performance amounts to an ontological affirmation, though a thoroughly localised one. What one society considers a performance might be a nonevent elsewhere. On another level, performance also constitutes the methodological lens that enables scholars to analyze events as performance. Civic obedience, resistance, citizenship, gender, ethnicity, and sexual identity, for example,

nuities in the present, suggesting a new understanding of public spaces and their pasts. As such, aiming at the interlocutor's imagination and their ability to contextualise, the sticker departs from the present and lands in the past, not allowing any neutral space in which the interlocutor can hide. The presence of the interlocutor and the supposable absence of a person labelled as undesirable and superfluous, becomes the embodiment of and functions as the ultimate symbol for what the artwork is pointing at. Displacement is represented through this constellation in an unpredictable non-artistic manner, without the need of any inventiveness of the audience. Without the interlocutor aiming for it, he or she is placed in a field of direct interaction. Although the interlocutor's reaction is unpredictable, he or she is still caught in an unescapable situation. And this situation is embedded in a larger social condition that shapes all particulates of the fragmented urban.

The places of this interaction are chosen meaningfully, each either inhabiting a historical relation to the forced removals, or constituting public spaces where the "undesirables" are being constantly evicted from. Including the histories of the removed during apartheid, the artwork gestures towards the continuation of removals, opposing the collective amnesia mentioned in chapter three that Murray stresses.[21] By focussing on this continuation, the stickers try to process the experiences of humiliation in both, past and present, so as to be able to generate the possibility to react and accordingly to resist. Through its inherently provocative feature, catching the audience by surprise and therefore, navigating the ways of being looked at, the sticker addresses the ignorance and political opportunism of society's elite that does not question its own privilege inside the signified spaces. Presented to the public as an urgent project, the sticker's simple but aggressive characteristics are composed to it on purpose.

The Urban Development Discourse with "safety", "cleanliness", "liveability" and "profit" as its rationalising parameters against which the artwork can be read, becomes challenged, essentially finding itself opened for a new kind

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are rehearsed and performed daily in the public sphere. To understand these as performance suggests that performance also functions as an epistemology. Embodied practice, along with and bound up with other cultural practices, offers a way of knowing. The bracketing for these performances comes from outside, from the methodological lens that organizes them into an analyzable "whole." Taylor, Diana: *The Archive and the Repertoire – Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham 2003: pp.2-3.

21 Murray: Martin J.: *Taming the Disorderly City: The Spatial Landscape of Johannesburg After Apartheid*. New York 2008: p.224.

of questioning. Disempowered and suspended, the discourse makes way for new meanings, emerging to reveal the paradoxes one finds in the relation between the position of the self and the breeding grounds for the discourse, for it being read against the backdrop of the past, re-thought and replaced. The interlocutor is put back into a situation, where the utilising of the ability to link and position the different information about processes of criminalisation and marginalisation and to establish the connections in between, is restored. The artwork also stimulates the imagination of suppressed stories of the excluded that were, along with them, consigned to the margins of official narrative, or, at worst, completely erased. These are the stories behind the homelessness or *poor* living conditions of a person, not only in terms of individual loss, but also in terms of the political and economic dynamics behind it. Entering the consciousness, the stickers render the reasons of poverty a pervasive question. The stickers' public appearance resists the concept of the positioning of art into restricted installation spaces.

Through the stickers' ability to penetrate the places of interrogation and eviction, the artwork does not remain a symbolic act, but becomes a physically intervening one. As in the case of Cohen's performance in Johannesburg, it takes place in everyday social spaces rather than in more isolated artistic spaces of a gallery or a museum. Here, it does not necessarily point to something that is new to the interlocutors. Much more likely, it underlines a process that is well known between most Capetonians. The silence and lack of sensitivity about lower-class subjects being criminalised and marginalised does not mean that it is not part of common knowledge. Because of its illuminating a process that is being recognised but pushed aside, it disrupts the interlocutor's perception of public space as an equal zone of interaction, movement, and bringing people together. Through its deliberate provocation, the sticker echoes the violence inflicted on the body that is labelled undesirable in all over the space that surrounds the sticker. The sticker locates the site of exclusion and functions as a non-ambiguous medium that does not offer different possibilities of interpretation for the interlocutor. To repress feelings about the specific city spaces or to push them aside is almost impossible. One either has to react with incomprehension and/or disgust, or, empathy, and the will to put oneself in the position of a marginalised *poor* person. Pointing fingers in a very direct manner, it renders the violence central to the atmosphere and performs as the material manifestation of exclusion and humiliation. In this way, the flatness that might be inherent to some artworks that use text as their main material, becomes repealed.

In addition, the text endows stability to the message. Although the work does not carry any title, there is a subtitle attached to it that is the calling to act, or at least introducing the possibility to act. The technology behind apartheid segregationist policies, from which the *whites* only/ non-*whites* only signs stem, was, at least on the institutional level, defeated. But the artwork invites to rethink this defeat and think of collective organisation and opposition through establishing narratives of resistance. Demonstratively taking sides with the criminalised and marginalised, it suspends all rationalising arguments that allow the violence, as the above-mentioned argument of "more safety" and so forth. Instead, it turns the technologies used for exclusion into a persistent question that can only be answered through increased sensitisation and concentrated mindfulness to the structures of the marginalisation of "the *poor*".

Ayesha Price – Save the Princess

Images of the video installation

The Lovell Gallery, Woodstock/ Cape Town. November 2013: Within the scope of one of its projects, the construction company *Insight Property Developers* was planning to build a 9000 square meters shopping mall on the very ground of Princess Vlei, a wetland to whose surrounding area, people classified as *coloured* under the apartheid regime, were forcibly removed. Holding a diverse ecosystem that purifies the water before it runs into the ocean, the wetland is of the few protected natural landscapes that is accessible for leisure

for the communities of the Cape Flats. Situated right in between Grassy Park, Southfield, Heathfield, and Retreat, it also connects communities from different parts of the Cape Flats and builds a central meeting point. The schools of the area take their learners to walk-arounds to the Vlei to teach them about indigenous birds and plants. The imposed exclusionary feature of nature that I have analysed in the first part of the previous chapter, letting natural landscape emerge as sites of non-access for many low-income families[22], invests a special importance on the wetland's sustainment. Different values are attached to it, touching various spheres of the communities' lives. Constituting particularly a place of historical value, social identification, and refuge, it enabled the excluded communities to engage and personalise *The Princess*, inscribing new meanings on their histories of being exposed to alienation, allowing multiple narratives and a variety of identity building processes that entail the continuous attempt of creating home/homeland to co-exist. When discussing this co-existence, it is important to underline that one of the central uses of the Vlei is leisure. In the Urban Development Discourse, leisure of working-class and other low-income people is set as such a faraway imagination that it becomes practically denied as a category or activity to working-class communities. Bearing this discursive imaginary in mind, leisure as a central aspect of the social value and use of the Vlei becomes important for any analysis of the Princess Vlei demolition threat.

Princess Vlei has been created as a site of belonging by the people living in its surrounding areas. As such, it is not only used for recreation but also for ceremonies. These can range from Rastafari rituals, to Christian baptising ceremonies, to commemoration of Khoi ancestors. To explain the latter, the history of the Vlei of before the forced removals of people to that area is an analogy to the development plans of the company. The Khoi inhabitants of this very same land that they used as a main water source and to grow their food and graze their animals, were deprived of the land and banished from the area. At the same time as it is a site of ceremony, it is also used by local fisherman for fishing, as the lake holds a variety of fish. Following the logical consequences of these dynamics, the formation of community movements against the development plans speaks for itself.[23] How else should have the residents form a political response against the destruction of the site if not

22 See chapter four.

23 Cf. for example: The Princess Vlei Forum. Source: http://www.princessvlei.org/.

united? If the City of Cape Town and the Western Cape Government Environmental Affairs and Development Planning section would have decided in the company's favour and sell the land, not only the eviction of communities that live in immediate proximity and hence on the sold land would have been guaranteed, but also a dehistoricising of the area and yet another denial of the possibility to connect with nature for communities that structurally have less access to nature reserves, mountain sites etc.

It is this project of destruction and displacement against which Ayesha Price's video installation was composed. The naming of the artwork *Save the Princess* speaks to the identification of surrounding communities with the area who gave the wetland its short name "the Princess". Holding the images in the colours black and white, the installation plays with shadows and light, with illumination, fading and flashing, and thereby features highly flexible capabilities. Eight different projections and three sound tapes play at the same time and are woven into a single narrative. Artist, musician and arts educator Garth Erasmus provided the music that is used, indigenous tones that go in loops, alluding to the cyclical nature of life, as Price described it in our conversation. The soundscape harmonises with the landscapes portrayed, each sound meshing with one of the nature elements. The images projected on the wall are tall, narrow, and huge, dominating the room from the floor to the ceiling, sucking the visitor directly into the atmosphere they aim to create. One has to walk around the room as all walls are covered by images. "You couldn't stand still, you had to move around and make choices about the way you want to go", Price explained. While incorporating nature elements as trees, stones, creeks, lakes, and grassland, the bodily gestures of human shadows are set in dialogue and interaction with the nature space. The ways in which the bodies interact with nature display codes of belonging that are not imitable. All grass and stones and trees have stories to tell, as it is the land and the lake that preserves history. It seems as if everything that has ever been said at the lakeshore, is inscribed on the landscape. Highly intimate and familiar with their surrounding, the bodies epitomise their inhabiting and embracing of the space. The nakedness of the bodies underlines this intimacy and rootedness, containing the desire for its preservation. This embodiment of harmony, not as sterile decorative aesthetics but as a circuit of contextualised political expression, performs as an antagonism towards the disharmony and defamiliarity inherent to the development plans. The manner in which the bodies' engagement with the nature elements is composed, is set as an allegory for the actual relationship Princess Vlei has with its communities. Taking full

possession of the wetland means marking it inextricable from the definition of home and belonging. The relationship between the two imports complexity into the interwoven formations of the communities' lebensraum and the natural space. Besides, it is this complexity that determines the bodies' vocabulary as the only adequate source of representation. The movement of the bodies is the literal transfer of what the installation wants to say. "You can use the movement as literature", Price said. Nature and bodies share a common denominator that is dance. It means that aesthetical movement is as much inherent to the nature elements as it is to the displayed bodies, releasing nature from its objectness and investing it with subjecthood within the meaning-making processes of the installation. It also reveals a very personal relationship of the artist herself with the Princess itself but also with natural spaces in general, weaving her own essential realities into the work.

In order to be able to capture and fully absorb the audience, the images entirely cover the walls of the installation room. That way, it secures the interlocutors to become emotionalised towards what the wetland embodies, on the one hand, and the potential loss and destruction, on the other hand. Teasing out their empathy and providing the full emotional knowledge about the contemporary condition of the wetland, the interlocutors find themselves placed in the centre of the distress. The bilaterally influenced processing of the impulses becomes translated into a contemplative, corporeal experience. The atmosphere created is neither melancholic nor does it indicate victimhood. The gestures in the images rather suggest worried, unsettled and questioning bodies invested with a historical consciousness that, while trying to re-personalise the space, are engaged with the threats that shadow them. Historical consciousness here means that their bodily expressions transmit the traumatic memory of displacement that has been reproduced throughout history. In principle, the concept of worry/anxiety that can readily turn into sorrow, is central to the installation. The image in which the lake is pictured reveals layers that build upon one another, forming the understory of the lake, comprising indistinctly held faces, frontally catching and confronting the interlocutor's eyes. Read against Princess Vlei's historical background, they stand for the many layers that constitute its past, gesturing towards the different histories of forced removals and re-identification that are connected to the place, their rediscovery and restoration. The interlocutor's confrontation with these layers might represent the most emotive moment in the story of the Princess told in the installation. The land and the lake recall that trauma and the water is symbol of everything that is subconscious or everything that has been

forgotten, as Price explained. The indicated reciprocal relationship between identity formation and "the Princess" stabilises the position of the wetland as characterised by the preservation of memory and its function as a real public space.

Through playing with fragments that hint at a meaningful past, the artwork challenges the politico-economic processes that resurrect and perpetuate apartheid policies, using the ability of art to record images of history even after the occurrence of the historical event. The bodies that represent community members of the past and the present, who bear the readiness to take agency and aspire towards self-determination and thus hold maturity, are positioned as the antipode of the fluidity that is inherent to political decisions that are navigated by market rule. This demonstration of resoluteness towards the business plans destabilises arguments in favour of neoliberal urban planning and thus its rationalisation and justification. The setting of the bodies conflicts narratives of modernisation and development as necessary progress that is invested with a positional superiority, turning the politico-economic discourse behind it upside down. Price also explained, that although the City cancelled the plans of the construction company for now[24], the people engaged against the development plans did not celebrate any victory. The City cancelled the plans during election time and the people do not forget that the land is prime land that could make any investor very rich, she further remarked. Hence, trust in the city government is impossible. Too many times were investment companies the winners when it came to a decision between residents' concerns and market-driven development projects. But what I could also understand from Price's explanations is that the only positive aspect of the development plans was that the communities grew together as a unit, discovering that they were able to make themselves heard and build fronts whose struggle, in addition, was able to accumulate the power to reach success collectively, without any financial backing, without any material interests, and for the only sake of maintaining the space they have created as a space of belonging.

Just as the installation is set to overwhelm the visitor, it is not surprising that Price had originally planned to set it up on the site of Princess Vlei itself.

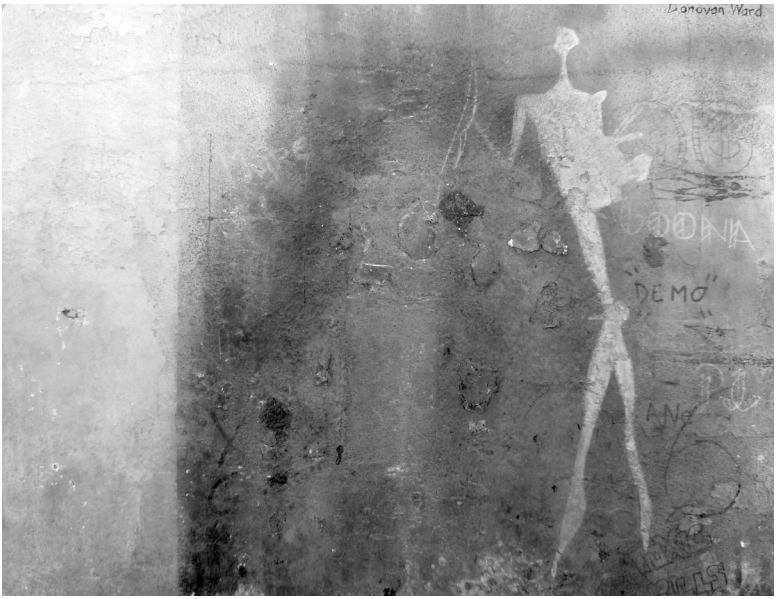
24 The plans were cancelled after this section was written. Nevertheless, the process until it was cancelled, the community's struggle, and the artwork itself, remain highly meaningful in relation to the understanding of the Urban Development Discourse and community work that is positioned against it.

The lack of resources prevented it to become an open-air installation right on the site of the struggle. But in our conversation, she explained how for her, the artwork is as much an intervention as her activism against the construction plans and her involvement in the Princess Vlei Forum, of which she was part from the beginning of its formation. She wanted to radically disrupt accepted forms of art and let the images of the installation create conversations and debates. The installation's concept was developed in consultation with her fellow activists. Price wanted it to form part of the community struggle, and not an isolated art exhibition somewhere in town, to which only certain audience circles interested in art would go. The artwork thus represents a political engagement and is used as a tool to be able to express the different meanings Princess Vlei occupies. Different than written or spoken words, it is able to transmit what direct text cannot articulate. How else would it have been possible to let the underworld of the lake speak? Or to materialise what it means to create nature as a space of belonging and that it is the body that does not surrender to sadness and loss but that reclaims that space even though it does not possess the equal means to compete with the economic power of investment companies? Or to locate those who have come to engage, in a corporeal experience in which dialogue is established from body to body? Hence, Price facilitated an engagement with the struggle for Princess Vlei that personalised the Vlei even for those who have never visited the site. The interlocutors become almost intrigued by the sense of familiarity with the Vlei that the installation produces. This sense Price could evoke because of her reaching out from an insider position, from the position of a deeply affected person that has stories to tell that narrate against the City's plan, using a language that is creative and at the same time deeply radical.

Donovan Ward – Living on the Edge

Cape Town, at Donovan Ward's house in Woodstock. The artwork's material: Cement, Collage, acrylic, and soot on masonite: This last artwork that I include in my approach of reading art as an archive against criminalisation and marginalisation are selected works of a series of three art pieces by the artist Donovan Ward, who is particularly well-known in South Africa for his co-creation of the Gugulethu Seven memorial that commemorates the seven Umkhonto we Sizwe cadres murdered by the apartheid security force's Civil

First piece. Untitled



Co-operation Bureau who were all shot dead in a false flag operation on 3rd of March 1986.

Between 2013 and 2017, Ward and I hold several personal conversations on his artworks and the way he views forced eviction and criminalisation. In one of our conversations, he characterised the concept of *Living on the Edge*:

> "These works attempt to link the earliest signs of habitation in Southern Africa and claims to place with present day dislocations. The earliest records of habitation are the rock art paintings and engravings of the indigenous tribes. Today the remnants of these people are often found living on the margins, often landless and homeless. In these works, I was referencing the places where homeless people seek shelter. As you know, many seek shelter in shop front doorways and under bridges and elsewhere.
>
> Often the signs of 'home' are the soot marks on bridge sidings caused by cooking or heating fires. These blackened surfaces also serve as 'canvases'

Second piece. Untitled; Third piece. Under the Bridge

with names, and graffiti etc. scrawled or scratched into it. I symbolically represented the territorial contestation between the homeless and state, and/or corporate power by accretions of fresh cement and paint."[25]

In the first two pieces, the white colour, tending to grey, of the deformed bodies sets the bodies apart from the dark and heavy background. Although distinguished from the heaviness and darkness, the bodies are not set as their opposites, legerity and lightness, but as highly affected by the absorbing and all-embracing power of the ground they are positioned on. The contours of the bodies converge with the heaviness and darkness of the ground. The simplicity in which the bodies are held alludes to a practice of erasure through which people are rendered indiscernible and ghosts to the city. Bordering on both representations, the silhouette of a body as well as the body itself, they are suggesting the seesaw between visibility and invisibility to which poor people/homeless people are exposed. The bodies also speak about how in certain situations, people living on the streets need to regulate their visibility for not being called upon to leave or not being displaced from the space they occupy. Often, they need to cover as anonymous shadows, informal beings that assure

25 Email conversation with Donovan Ward. December 2, 2013.

to not touch upon formal life. The decision of where to reside becomes a practical one. The bodies' movements need to be navigated toward spaces where they attract less attention, and still, all movements are unsecured, bare and vulnerable, exposed to any kind of intervention by security forces, the police, or ordinary residents. To be able to sit or sleep somewhere depends on the constant activation of their alertness. There is no moment of ease. As we have seen homeless people re-inhabit the semi-demolished District Six houses in chapter two, the only temporary safe place to occupy is a ruin, an abandoned, decayed place in which nobody enters until the bulldozers arrive. So ruins are the only legitimate part of their trajectories. At the same time, the painted bodies are not demonstrating any theatricality, nor are they performing as spectacle. The bodies' shapes are taken from ancient rock art figures, creating a link between the present and the past. This time, they are not placed in mystical caves or mountain passes, hinting at an ancient history. In fact, there is nothing mystical about these figures. This time, the bodies speak about the present and about naked realities of a repressive social order. The only thing handed down from the past is the continuation of a violent condition.

Although the bodies are not stylised at all, they are still claiming a certain aesthetics – an aesthetics of deformation and disharmony. The weight of deformation conglomerates in every piece differently. In the first piece, it centres at the bodies' spine, suggesting the formation of a blastoma, raising associations with an inextricable burden that the body has to carry. Embodied memories of a social condition, or the condition itself has weighed down the body. In the second piece, the lower extremities, more precisely, the underside, backside and legs are deformed, pictured through swellings that weigh down and occupy a more feminine body. The underside of a female's body as the part where new life is created and protected is here exposed to disease, presumably caused in consequence of social mistreatment. Although moving, that can be indicator of both, moving as moving on or as being existent/surviving, the bodies suggest states of isolation and being left to their own resources. The texts and symbols painted and carved into the background allude to wall paintings suggestive of bare and remorseless streets with their coldness and coarseness. In one of our conversations, Ward explained how the graffiti and wall paintings are actual copies from the streets. He took photos of them, projected them onto the wall and copied them into the artworks. Only the scales become adjusted. "So I really just take what is out there", he

says.[26] The graffiti-like text at the bottom of the first piece stating "toxic pills" activates our imagination about the dangers of street life and the hardship that it implies, converting the expectation of life into an expectation of death that is possible at any time, anywhere, whether the cold brings it, or through physical violence, malnutrition or disease. It hints at the biopolitical power over bodies that is in the Foucauldian sense the power to "make live and let die".[27]

In principle, the texts are harsh and bitter, not aesthetically striking or romantic. The dollar sign carved into the background of the second piece, I suggest, stands for the mercilessness of the market rule, as well as for the influence of foreign interests and dictations of economic policies, as the dollar is a foreign currency – "images of power that are seeping through", as Ward puts it, absorbing the body into their inner. The indicated British flag beneath the dollar sign evokes the same. Both, dollar sign and British flag are reminiscent of apartheid legacies that flow from the politico-economic power the apartheid regime established by means of British and US-American allocation of apparatus and the mutual profit this presupposed. They are also symbols of the birth, realisation and export of neoliberal urban planning, if one remembers for instance where the implementation of CCTV had its debut and where the security sector gained its significance. At the same time, the British flag is the emblem of a Cape Flats gang based in Mannenberg that is coincidentally named The Hard Livings. The carved crown that faces the dollar sign on the other side of the deformed body proposes associations with the wealthy elite of society that lives royally, constituting the extreme antipode of poor life towards what the artwork gestures.

The third piece that is named *Under the bridge*, shares the same heaviness and darkness, although not as dominant as in the first two pieces. Holding a collage as the background it is positioned on, the painted body is held in a comic-like mode. The protruding semicircle on the back of the body can be both, a swelling as well as exaggerated buttocks. The collage integrates text and pictures, one of a young woman and one of a young man, both seeming to hold a *white* middle or upper-class background. The manner in which the woman and the man stare frontal and straight ahead, comprises ambiguity, but can be read as exhibiting viewership while standing on the side-lines.

26 Conversation with Donovan Ward. June 2, 2013.

27 Foucault, Michel: *Society must be defended. Lectures at the College de France, 1975-76*. New York 2003: p.241.

Their posture involves a kind of artificiality, something plastic and stiff attached to it. What appears as the remnants of the anti-apartheid slogan "Freedom now" is drowned out and paled, as it would slowly fade away. The large-scale painted letters "YGB" stand for the Cape Town based gang "Young Gifted Boys". Its integration in the piece incorporates Cape Town's wall scenery that displays the immortalisation of different gangs and their marking out of territory. Against the backdrop of poverty that causes weak family structures, gangs constitute social establishments that provide a specific kind of social security and spaces for the formation of identity and socialisation.[28] Interwoven with the life of the lower classes, they are inherent part of South African cities' social landscape.

All three pieces speak out on the silencing of homelessness and the policy of "let die" in terms of placing homeless life at the very bottom of the hierarchy of values, letting them die social deaths. The painted bodies themselves are hold as line drawings, pointing to their dehumanisation and erasure and at what people have been reduced to, as Ward explains. They aim to make visible what assumingly, a considerable number of the upper classes clandestinely wish outside their range of vision and in case of encounter turn a blind eye to it and in so doing, erase what is existent but undesirable. The artwork challenges this contradictory positioning of homeless life in simultaneous spheres of being and non-being, of life and ghost life. It also points to the processes through which discourses of homelessness equating diseased life are constructed, turning them around through interchanging the misplaced positions of cause and effect. Through the bodily gestures of the painted bodies that imply movement, the pieces lay emphasis on survival even under the condition of abject poverty rather than on collapse. Survival as a theme runs as a thread throughout all three art pieces. Thereby, the pieces pose as much an archive of rehumanisation as they pose an archive of suffering. To end with the artist's own words, it is about "lives that have been degraded… I am trying to show how people are being cleaned up".

28 Cf. conversation with Edith Kriel, psychologist of the Child Trauma Centre in Cape Town: Februray 2, 2012.

Conclusion

The artworks analysed above must be read as political responses, as "The political arises when the given order of things is questioned; when those whose voice is only recognised as noise by the policy order, claim their right to speak, acquire speech, and produce the spatiality that permits and sustains this right. As such, it disrupts the order of being, exposes the constituent antagonisms, voids and excesses that constitute the police order, and tests the principle of equality."[29] But they are also attempts of putting across the histories of the excluded and the physical lives of crisis, making them understandable and tangible, opposing their narratives being flushed away, creating and amplifying social memory in this regard, and thereby, writing history and producing knowledge from below. Just as the people immediately affected by forced eviction who stored their narratives in counter-archives, the artworks I looked at are too, creating counter-archives against what they are created that is the dominant discourse. They must therefore also be seen as attempts of memorialising all that is aimed to become forgotten and silenced, controverting the memorialising needs of the dominant discourse and the political power behind it. In this relation, memory itself becomes a site of struggle in which its permanent reclaiming and reprocessing has become a permanent task.

Without claiming that they release as much power as social movements, the artworks, through the many layers of meaning they are transmitting, provide the same abundance of archives of suffering, impacts of violence and dehumanisation, as well as of rehumanisation and freedom. Here, the concept of rehumanisation stands for redistributing the refused humanity of the subjects whose stories are told and in so doing, restoring the ability to possess the body. As they are responding to, broadly speaking, relations of domination, they are evidence of processes of politico-economic violence, functioning as the mirrors of these processes and therefore, disrupt discourses that inscribe regimes of shame and dispensability on specific bodies and that attempt to justify the inflicted violence and trivialise its impacts. In this vein, although they remain nonverbal practice, they take a discursive place, holding up against which they are composed and invite to a critical re-thinking of the normalising effects of biopolitical power that emanate from this justification and trivialisation and from the repetition of that violence in everyday

29 Swyngedouw, Erik: *Where is the political?* Manchester 2008: p.24.

urban sceneries. As such, they also contest the liberal idea of art as an entity standing for itself, art for art, depoliticised and decontextualised from social questions, packageable, saleable, and consumable. As Rancière describes: "Political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place's destination. It makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise."[30]

Gaining access to their audience through a creative language that stimulates the interlocutors' senses, the artworks increase the sustainability of the messages transported. What I mean is that in comparison with messages propagated through mass media, such as newspaper articles, television reports or radio podcasts, interventionist art creates an alternative medium whose contents are no longer dependent on the mercy of mass media and its structures of desire. This is especially the case with those intervening artworks that are located outside more isolated spaces such as conventional museums and galleries and that are therefore able to choose their audience themselves. While revealing forced evictions, criminalisation, exclusion, and marginalisation as violence, they register the locations of its appearance and thereby render visible what is aimed to be erased. It is this locating of violence that can trigger the public imagination to revise the relationship between the city and its inhabitants and distribute the ability to identify unjust exclusion on the very site it is happening. Through this, the artworks take a political position and transgress the boundaries that are set to enable a distinction between desirable and undesirable, between conducive and superfluous. Although they differ stylistically, all artworks analysed above choose the body as their focal point. This feature bears witness of a lineal engagement with and defiance of biopolitics which is directly targeted on the body and its control or so to say on the flesh. Perhaps this feature of the body as the point of origin, the point from which everything begins, derives from a subconscious knowledge that one has to set off from the body itself in order to be able to create an archive that positions itself against dominant discourses. Moreover, the artworks are also about reclaiming the body. Although they remain intangible acts of meaning-making, they challenge a very material and concrete social condition. Occupying, or at least intervening in spaces that are designated to the implementation of those politics targeted on the body, the artists take an additional step beyond pure responding and mature to the stage of creating

30 Rancière, Jaques: *Disagreement*. Minneapolis 1998: p.30.

art as a political revolt against the normalising effects of the Urban Development Discourse. Revolt here primarily means to re-politicise and re-historicise space, to locate the violence and unveil the sites of exclusion and displacement. For this purpose, the artists incorporate their own subjectivities and redefine them in relation to the inequalities they are alluding to.