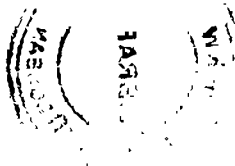


**SHIFTING SPACES IN THE 'NEW SOUTH AFRICA':
SITE-SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE AS AN INTERCULTURAL
EXPLORATION OF SITES, USING AS EXAMPLES JAY
PATHER'S *CITYSCAPES*, DURBAN (2002) AND *HOME*,
DURBAN (2003)**

**By
Clare Craighead**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
(coursework) in the Drama and Performance Studies Programme, University of
KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, 2006.



Supervisor: Lliane Loots

DECLARATION:

I declare that this dissertation is my own work unless specifically referenced within the text. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts (Coursework) in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.



Clare Craighead

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for guidance, advice, assistance and patience:

- Liane Loots (my supervisor)
- Miranda Young-Jahangeer
- Vasu Reddy
- Wesley Maherry
- Roselyn Craighead
- Ritchie Craighead
- David Craighead

ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to investigate an extended notion of *site* within site-specific dance theatre. Using multiple theoretical frameworks, which include second wave feminism and its recognition of *the body as a site of/for struggle* (Goldberg, 1987) in conjunction with site-specific performance theory (Kaye, 2000; Kwon, 2004), Foucault's (1979) notion of 'biopower' and cultural studies, this dissertation seeks to engage site-specific dance theatre as a mode of social and cultural production. Multiculturalism (Schechner, 1988/1991) and interculturalism (Bharucha, 1996; Schechner, 1991) in performance theory and practice, are also engaged to solidify debates around performance as instances of cultural production. These frameworks are engaged in relation to the contemporary production of site-specific dance theatre in Durban, South Africa. Local dance practitioner and academic Jay Pather's site-specific/installation works *CityScapes*, Durban (2002) and *Home*, Durban (2003) are used as case-studies for interrogation and investigation in relation to the chosen theoretical discourses.

CityScapes and *Home* provide two instances of site-specific dance theatre that have emerged from within post-apartheid South Africa. The two works are engaged in close relation to the post-apartheid South African context, and its promotion of a 'rainbow nation' in the 'New South Africa'. *CityScapes* provides a platform to engage ideas of access to and ownership of dance forms and the spaces which they occupy – prompting critical questioning around the impact of South Africa's historical segregations and their influence upon contemporary (South African) society/societies. Similarly, *Home* provides a platform to engage notions of 'home-spaces' as these relate to access to and ownership of private and public spaces, and how this impacts cultural inter(re)actions in post-apartheid South Africa. Both case-studies provide instances of critical performance practice, which allows for meaningful theoretical inter(re)action in relation to the two chosen performance works. In this light, this dissertation also provides an instance of much needed academic enquiry into the local, South African contemporary dance-scape.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	v
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
<u>CHAPTER ONE:</u>	
Bodies in sites and Bodies as sites – towards a theory of <i>the body politic</i> in site-specific performance	4
1.1) Site-specific sights: space/place/location, interculturalism and the body politic in performance	6
1.1.1) Site-specific, site-specificity, the body and performance practice	7
1.1.2) Empty spaces?	8
1.1.3) Interculturalism and site-specific performance practice	12
1.1.4) Performance, representation and the body	14
1.2) Private lives in public spaces: the interconnections between architectural spaces and live performance – towards a practice of site specific performance	15
1.2.1) Installation art, performance art and site-specific performance	16
1.2.2) Engaging private discourses in public through site-specific performance	17
Concluding remarks	18
<u>CHAPTER TWO:</u>	
Home-grown identities and iconography in intercultural spaces: re-locating performance art in South Africa and the emergence of Jay Pather's site-specific dance theatre	20
2.1) Colonial rule and the influence of geographical conquering	21
2.2) Cultural production in post-colonial, apartheid South Africa	22
2.3) Site-specific performance in South Africa	25
2.4) Jay Pather's shift to site-specific performance	26
2.5) Jay Pather's use of home-grown iconography	29
Concluding remarks	30

CHAPTER THREE:

<i>When the rainbow is not enough: CityScapes and the politics of accessibility and ownership in a multicultural society</i>	31
3.1) Cultural Studies – useful theoretical frameworks	31
3.2) <i>When the rainbow is not enough</i>	33
3.3) The dance-object and culturally produced bodies	36
3.4) <i>CityScapes</i> – background information	37
3.5) <i>CityScapes</i> – breaking the boundaries of multiculturalism	39
3.5.1) 320 West Street	41
3.5.2) North Beach pier	42
3.5.3) The Workshop: <i>Out of Africa Coffee Shop</i>	42
3.5.4) The Albany Hotel	43
3.5.5) The Musgrave Shopping Centre	43
3.5.6) <i>CityScapes</i> at The Durban Art Gallery (D.A.G.)	44
Concluding remarks	46

CHAPTER FOUR:

<i>Out with the old, and in with the new – or is it the other way around? At Home in the rainbow nation</i>	48
4.1) Private home-spaces and public home-spaces	49
4.2) <i>Home</i> – a descriptive account	51
4.3) Intercultural inter(re)actions in the ‘Rainbow Nation’	53
4.4) Performing <i>Home</i> , at home in the ‘New South Africa’	55
Concluding remarks	60

<u>CONCLUSION</u>	61
--------------------------	----

<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	64
----------------------------	----

APPENDIX

A. Transcript of interview with Jay Pather, 2002	71
B. Transcript of interview with Jay Pather, 2002	74
C. Transcript of interview with Jay Pather, 2005	77
D. Original programme notes to <i>CityScapes</i> , 2002	94

E. Original programme notes to <i>Home</i> , 2003	99
F. Press Kit for <i>CityScapes</i> media launch, 2002	101
G. Electronic Questionnaire – Thando Mama, 2005	107

INTRODUCTION

Throughout *Freedom Charter*, a work which traces aspects of the movement against racial apartheid in South Africa, this statement is constantly repeated: *our struggle is also a struggle of memory against forgetting*. In much new exciting cultural practice, [and] cultural texts [...] there is an effort to remember that is expressive of the need to create spaces where one is able to redeem and reclaim the past, legacies of pain, suffering, and triumph in ways that transform present reality. Fragments of memory are not represented as flat documentary but constructed to give a "new take" on the old, constructed to move us into a different mode of articulation [...] a politicization of memory that distinguishes nostalgia, that longing for something to be as once it was, a kind of useless act, from that remembering that serves to illuminate and transform the present. (hooks, 1990: 147)

Given the historical climate of racial division in this country, via the ideological system of apartheid – and the repercussions of this division within the country's young democracy – South African bodies and the locations of these bodies are (often) racially overdetermined¹. On one level, this dissertation concerns itself with the interconnections between space and time (Foucault, 1984 in Faubion [ed], 2000a; Massey, 1993 in Keith et al [eds], 1993) in the sense that post-apartheid South Africa offers opportunities for the production of site-specific performance works that would not have been possible in apartheid South Africa. On another level, this dissertation interrogates the notion of 'site' as a multifaceted concept – used to engage socio-cultural politics as these relate to site-specific performance practices.

Site-specific performance practice as it is engaged in this dissertation, provides an extended and deconstructed notion of site as a cultural formation which is inclusive of locational/architectural sites as well as physical/body sites (Bloomer et al, 1977; Goldberg, 1987; Butler, 1993; Schneider, 1997; Hoy, 1999; Goldberg, 2004). This allusion to the notion of site as a contested cultural formation hinges on ideas around performance as a form of cultural practice (Ness, 1996; Loots, 1999/2001; Pather, 2000)². Site-specific performance practice, as it is engaged here, provides ideas around space (as locational/architectural and physical/body sites) as an unstable and contested area embedded in socio-cultural power relations (Soja, 1989 in Keith et al [eds], 1993; Foucault, 1976/1979/1984; Bharucha, 1996; Kaye, 2000).

Using Jay Pather's³ site-specific dance theatre works *CityScapes*, Durban (2002) and *Home*, Durban (2003) as case-studies, notions of space/place/location, the body and culture as these relate to performances as modes of cultural production, are interrogated. The first chapter provides the basis for the theoretical concerns of this dissertation, while simultaneously

¹ My allusion here to racial overdetermination in South Africa does not deny that issues relating to race are important socio-political concerns; rather it highlights the fact that within this context, often interlocking discursive politics such as gender, class and sexuality amongst others are marginalised and often under-interrogated (hooks, 1989).

² This will be detailed specifically in chapter two of this dissertation.

³ Jay Pather is a prominent South African choreographer and academic. He was, up until 2005 the Artistic Director of Durban based Contemporary Dance Company: *Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre*. He is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. More information on Pather will be provided in chapter two of this dissertation.

engaging a brief historical view relating to the emergence of site-specific performance forms in Western theatre practices. The second chapter takes the theoretical foundations laid out in the first chapter, and engages these in relation to historical and contemporary South African spaces/places/locations, before turning to focus on Jay Pather's engagement with site-specific dance theatre in South Africa. The provision of both theory and history in the initial stages of this dissertation provides the groundwork for the later interrogations into a case study of Pather's site-specific dance theatre as it relates to the theory and the South African context. Chapter three provides *CityScapes* as a focus-study to engage discourses within and relating to conceptions of post-apartheid, democratic South Africa as a 'rainbow nation'⁴. This precedes the fourth and final chapter's investigation of *Home* in relation to private/public spaces/places/locations (Tong, 1989; hooks, 1990), the body and cultural production.

Theoretical foundations for this dissertation include Nick Kaye's (2000) theories around site-specific performance and Miwon Kwon's (2004) critical engagement of site-specificity in his *One Place After Another: Site-specific Art and Locational Identity*. In addition, interculturalism (in theory and practice) as problematised by Indian performance theorist/practitioner Rustom Bharucha (1996) is utilised as a point from which to engage Pather's site-specific performance practices. This linkage is used to explore notions of accessibility and cultural ownership (within post-colonial/post-apartheid) South African society. In a similar vein, American performance theorist and practitioner, Richard Schechner's (1991) critique of multiculturalism and fusion as performative practices, are used in relation to Pather's site-specific performance works in order to problematise these forms as redundant modes of operation within the contemporary South African performance-scape. Issues of space and the politics of spatiality, as embedded in power discourses (Bloomer et al, 1977; Foucault, 1979; Soja, 1993 In Keith et al [eds], 1993), are infused into the intercultural interrogation of site-specific performance practices. Such ideas are solidified through the use of British site-specific performance theorist Nick Kaye's theorisation that "without *presence* there is no final *location*, only the process or activity of *locating*" (2000:51). In addition, conceptualisations of bodies as sites offered herein are foregrounded by the feminist adage: *the personal is political* (Hanisch, 1968) and claims that *the body is a site off/for struggle* (Goldberg, 1987). Feminist theory and its concern with the body politic provide a platform from which to theorise points of convergence between site-specific performance and its origins in performance art (Goldberg, 2004) as modes of performance which rely on the physical body as the means through which the forms are displayed/displayable, bringing to the fore, issues of representation as they are implicit within performance practices.

In accordance with conceptions around interculturalism and intercultural exchanges as they are embedded in power relations (Bharucha, 1996), Foucault's (1976/1979/1984) ideas around power, more specifically, his conceptualisation of 'biopower' (1979), informs the spatial interrogations which will be offered in this dissertation. Foucault's notion of 'biopower'⁵ is conceptualised through the idea that bodies are physical *sites* that are shaped by ideological power discourses (Butler, 1990/1999, 1993) and in essence

⁴ This notion will be investigated in later chapters of this dissertation.

⁵ The concept of 'biopower' will be explored in greater detail in chapter one of this dissertation.

become institutionalised within architectural sites and spaces – as they are the structural sites in which operational power discourses are performed:

The human body must react to the surrounding world as it is the result of this world. (Rolla, 2005:267)

This understanding of the body as a *site* is located within Poststructural and Feminist thought which engages *the body as discourse* (Goldberg, 1987; Foucault, 1976/1979/1984; Butler, 1993; Weedon, 1997). The interrogation offered within this dissertation adopts this position – locating Pather’s site-specific dance theatre as a lens through which to investigate the performative (and political) migration between locational/architectural sites and bodily/physicalised sites within the ‘New South Africa’. This location of Pather’s performance works is but one way of reading meaning into the two case studies provided, this study is by no means a definitive reading into the two works up for interrogation, rather it is intended as one moment of performance/theory interaction in relation to the concerns out-lined in this dissertation⁶.

⁶ The readings into Pather’s works which follow are therefore to be considered amongst many other possibilities for interpreting Pather’s performance works, *CityScapes* and *Home*. It is important to acknowledge here, the analysis of Pather’s works (provided in chapter three and four) may not necessarily be the analysis that Pather would prefer, rather what is provided is an interpretive/interpreted reading of *CityScapes* and *Home* in relation to the theory set out in this particular study.

CHAPTER ONE

1) Bodies in sites and Bodies as sites – towards a theory of *the body politic* in site-specific performance

Introduction:

Each of the body's moves, as with all writings, traces the physical fact of movement and also an array of references to conceptual entities and events. Constructed from endless and repeated encounters with its physicality and referentiality. Each body establishes this relation between physicality and meaning in concert with the physical actions and verbal descriptions of bodies that move alongside it. Not only is this relation between the physical and the conceptual non-natural, it is also impermanent. It mutates, transforms, reinstates with each new encounter. (Foster in Carter [ed], 1998:180)

Site-specific performance, as it is conceived in this dissertation, constitutes live performance which finds location outside of 'conventional theatre spaces'⁷. This said, the label "site-specific" is overtly linked to notions of space. This chapter investigates, in line with architectural theorists Kent Bloomer and Charles Moore's (1977) position that the human body is a central site within architectural/natural sites, an embodied notion of site. Bloomer and Moore offer insight into "how buildings are experienced, before worrying about how they are built" (1977:ix). The linkage between sites and spaces is in order to establish the notion of site as inclusive of architectural/natural sites as well as physical/body sites, and to engage notions of space as contested areas of theoretical enquiry. This is carried through into later chapters of this dissertation and forms the basis for discussions around site-specific performance as a socio-cultural spatial dialogue between the spaces in which it occurs, and the embodied human subjects who participate in the performance and viewing of works of a site-specific nature. The concept of 'site' engages physical, metaphorical and discursive spaces in dialogue with one another (Kwon, 2004). These conceptions are integral as they relate to site-specific performance practice, as it is theorised in this dissertation, since they constitute the foundations for establishing a politics of site-specific performance offered through the two case studies discussed in this dissertation – Jay Pather's *CityScapes* (2002) and *Home* (2003).

The first section of this chapter engages notions of site-specific and site-specificity as they will be utilised in this dissertation. The notion of site is problematised in order to formulate an extended notion of site that is inclusive of the body as a site. This problematised notion of site is established through the use of radical feminist performance theorist Marianne Goldberg's (1987) assertion that *the body is a site off/for struggle*. The idea that the body is a site is integral in establishing the foundations for discussions around Pather's site-specific dance theatre in later chapters of this dissertation. Poststructural feminist and gender theorist Judith Butler's (1990/1999) discussions around the constructed nature of (gendered) identity are utilised to support notions that the body is a site off/for struggle. Butler's critique of normalised hegemonic identity

⁷ This concept will be elaborated later on in this chapter.

discourses is used to further establish the body as a contested site off/for representation. The establishment of the body as a site informs theorisations around site-specific performance practices as representational of the contexts within which and out of which they emerge.

After establishing a link between notions of sites and spaces, the concept of 'space' is dissected in order to offer it as a complex social formation. This conception is integral to ideas that live site-specific performance works are (amongst other things) mechanisms for the dissection of space. A diverse number of interdisciplinary theoretical paradigms as they relate to social space and the body politic are utilised as the bases for theoretical discussion. In this light, space is offered as a complex construction which often frames socio-political human inter(re)action. The argument posed is in line with prominent French historian/philosopher Michel Foucault's (1979) theory of 'biopower' which is used in conjunction with various readings in 'human geography'⁸ as offered in Michael J. Dear and Steven Flusty's (eds.) collective study, *The Spaces of Postmodernity: Readings in Human Geography* (2002). Such ideas are integral to the physical practice and creation of site-specific performance as it is documented, discussed and theorised in later chapters of this dissertation, these concepts will be carried through into a discussion of Jay Pather's *CityScapes* and *Home* as they are situated within post-apartheid South Africa. The interrogations of space and problematisation of the notion of site culminate in a discussion of site-specific performance practice as a mechanism off/for cultural production. When viewed as such, site-specific performance (and practice) is prone to ideas of multiculturalism, fusion and interculturalism as these are articulated and practiced by American performance theorist/practitioner Richard Schechner (1988/1991)⁹. Importantly, Schechner's formulation of these conceptions is problematised in relation to Indian performance practitioner/theorist Rustom Bharucha's (1996) radical re-reading of these abovementioned conceptions, as they are promoted and practiced as part of an established Euro-American canon. These conceptions are important within the context of this study and its location within the South African performance-scape, as they open up debates around cultural production, not only as a mechanism off/for power but also as a mechanism for subversion and cultural critique (Loots, 2001). These debates are filtered into later chapters specifically dedicated to critical discussion around Pather's *CityScapes* and *Home* as mechanisms off/for cultural production and simultaneously cultural critique.

The second section of this chapter offers a brief history of the emergence of site-specific performance in relation to the theoretical debates around space and the body politic, which precede it. This historical engagement with site-specific performance practice is in order to contextualise the form, and to act as a foundation for later chapters in this dissertation, which discuss the forms' emergence in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) and Durban specifically relating to Jay Pather's establishment¹⁰ of the form in this context. RoseLee Goldberg's (2004)

⁸ The theories of 'biopower' and 'human geographies' will be discussed in detail in the first section of this chapter – they are offered here merely by way of introduction.

⁹ These concepts will be discussed in detail in the first section of this chapter – they are offered here merely by way of introduction.

¹⁰ My use of 'establishment' here, indicates Jay Pather as the only local professional dance practitioner to have engaged site-specific dance theatre as a genre/form.

definitive study: *Performance: Live Art Since the 60s*, and Adrian Heathfield's (2004) comprehensive *Live: Art and Performance*, are principle resources from which the historical emergence and politics of performance art are engaged. Goldberg's study offers a point of reference in establishing the historical emergence of site-specific performance forms; and a point of departure from which to begin interrogating the emergence of site-specific performance within the historical and contemporary South African performance-scape. While Heathfield's collective study of varied essays and themes around contemporary live performance offers theoretical points for consideration, specifically with regard the role of live art within contemporary society; offering strong linkages between live art and the socio-cultural and political spaces in which it occurs. These factors are important in establishing a context regarding the historical emergence of site-specific performance and its relevance within the 'New South Africa'.

1.1) Site-specific sights: space/place/location, interculturalism and the body politic in performance

Site-specific performance practices are intricately linked with notions of space (Kaye, 2000; Kwon, 2004). Such performance practices offer theoretical locations from which to begin articulating "exchanges between [a] work of art and the places in which its meanings are defined" (Kaye, 2000:1). Taking cue from British site-specific performance theorist Nick Kaye's definition regarding the nature of site-specific art¹¹, a starting point from which to begin theorising the nature of site-specificity¹² becomes clear. Site-specificity is often articulated through semiotic theory, offering the idea of culturally codified "signs and signifiers" (Kaye, 2000:1) which can not be divorced from the contexts in and out of which they emerge. This alignment to semiotic theory hinges on the assertion that meaning is never fixed; it is constantly being deferred in relation to the broader socio-cultural contexts out of which it emerges (Derrida in Kaye, 2000):

[I]f one accepts the proposition that the meanings of utterances, actions and events are affected by their 'local' position', by the *situation* of which they are a part, then a work of art, too, will be defined in relation to its place and position. (Kaye, 2000:1)

This said, readings of any given textual subjects are indicative of the contextual and/or physical locations within or out of which they emerge. The idea of a textual subject is offered in line with postmodern inquiry, which offers an extended notion of 'text' as inclusive of written texts, bodily texts, cultural signs and symbols and iconographies amongst a myriad other notions of 'text'¹³. In line with the idea that meaning is contextually located, it is important to discuss the notion of location as it is to be understood in this dissertation. Location is offered here as both physical and metaphorical (real and imagined) – whereby any number of cultural signs/symbols and iconographies are situated within the meta-context in which any given work of a site-specific nature may arise:

In considering strategies which variously occupy urban and rural locations, which utilize found and constructed environments, as well as those occurring in conventional galleries

¹¹ 'Art' as it is used here, is indicative of the broadest possible representation of art forms – including (amongst others) live art and/as performance.

¹² This notion of 'site-specificity' will be elaborated on later in this chapter.

¹³ The notion of 'text' includes, amongst others, written texts, the body as discourse and spaces as they are imbued with meaning.

and theatres, site-specific practices are identified [...] with a *working over* of the production, definition and performance of 'place'. (Kaye, 2000:3)

In line with Kaye's assertion that site-specific performance practices are intricately linked with notions of space – the ambiguous nature of space becomes a concern worthy of interrogation. It is therefore necessary to offer the notion of space as a starting point from which to begin interrogating site-specificity as it relates to broader socio-political and cultural practices within which and out of which it emerges¹⁴.

1.1.1 Site-specific, site-specificity, the body and performance practice:

Before moving on to problematise the concept of space, it is necessary to engage how the notions of site-specific, and site-specificity are offered in this dissertation. Site-specific is a loaded term which when coupled with performance practice constitutes a multi-disciplinary area of performance practice and enquiry. The two case studies in this dissertation are primary examples of the nature of site-specific performance practice as collaborative and multi-disciplinary. For the purposes of this dissertation, the notion of site-specific performance is offered as live performance which occurs outside of 'traditional theatre spaces'¹⁵ (Bentley, 1968) and chooses as its stage an (non-theatre) architectural or natural setting for performance. Examples of such site-specific performance settings can be seen in Jay Pather's *CityScapes*, for instance, when he situates his performance works in a hotel room, at a busy shopping centre, in a restaurant or on the beach.

Site-specific is also offered, in this dissertation, as a contested area. This engagement with the notion of site is achieved through a conception of the body as a site which is constructed through discourse (Foucault, 1976/1984; Goldberg, 1987; Butler, 1993; MacGregor, 2003). This argument is supported through use of the second wave feminist assertion that *the body is a site of/for struggle* (Goldberg, 1987) in conjunction with performance frameworks that engage live performance as a representational practice – where the body becomes one of many means of expression and its cultural codifications offered up for scrutiny (Goldberg, 2004). Site-specificity relates to the *practice* of site-specific performance (Kaye, 2000). It constitutes performance that exists in close relation to the space in which it is made and in which it occurs (Kaye, 2000; von Held, 2002; Kwon, 2004). The implication is that the performance work and the meanings contained within any given site-specific work are specific to the context in which it is made and performed, and that to re-locate the work to another site is in essence to destroy the work (Serra in Kaye, 2000). This is not to say, however, that site-specific performance cannot be re-located into other spaces, but rather that in the act of its re-location its meanings are shifted as a new site/performance relationship is created (Kwon, 2004). An example of such re-location of various site-specific and non-site-specific works can be seen

¹⁴ This will be revealed in greater detail in later chapters in relation to discussions around Jay Pather's site-specific collaborations, specifically in relation to *Cityscapes*, Durban (2002) and *Home*, Durban (2003).

¹⁵ Traditional theatre spaces are those spaces architecturally designed to accommodate live performance, such spaces are constituted by 'proscenium arch theatre spaces' and 'arena theatre spaces' for instance. It is not within the scope of this dissertation, nor is it the focus of this work to engage these such spaces – it is however necessary to mention them as a counter-point for the discussion of site-specific performance as it is offered herein.

in Jay Pather's *Home* where various of his previous works were re-worked and re-situated into the Durban Art Gallery (D.A.G.)¹⁶ for performance¹⁷. It is this facet of site-specific performance, which renders the form one which acts as a performed (representational) deconstruction of space. In this vein, site-specific performance practices provide not only a heightened awareness of the place of any given (site-specific) performance – but it also makes visible the politics of space as it were:

Indeed, without *presence* there is no final *location*, only the process or activity of *locating*. Where architecture cannot make an appeal to the transcendental signified, it cannot state or present the site as signified, but must defer to the functioning of the signifier. Site-specificity, is found *in use*; and site, *location*, like architecture itself is always *being produced*, and so is subject to instability, ephemerality, and temporality. (Kaye, 2000:51)

The establishment of a politics of space, in relation to the concerns of this dissertation becomes increasingly important in later chapters. Through the politicisation of space, the historical legislation of South African spaces is scrutinised and the contemporary conceptions around being branded 'proudly South African'¹⁸ are questioned in relation to Pather's site-specific collaborations.

1.1.2 Empty spaces?

Given this brief situation of the notions of 'site-specific' and 'site-specificity' in relation to how they are used and conceived in this dissertation, it is necessary to offer the notion of 'space' up for scrutiny. Notions of space are inseparable from any conception of site-specific performance practice, since such performance practices act as mechanisms for the de-construction of the spaces in which it occurs:

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be coloured with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not super imposable on one another. (Foucault, 1986:23 in Soja, 1989:17)

The idea of space carries with it a complex and often under-interrogated diction. Space is often considered in relation to some 'common-sense' understanding of the term: "Buried in these unacknowledged disagreements is a debate which never surfaces; and it never surfaces because everyone assumes we already know what these [spatial] terms mean" (Massey in Keith and Pile [eds], 1993:142). Such an understanding of space often renders it an ambiguous idea constitutive of diverse physical, metaphorical and conceptual locations. The properties of space as established through a 'common-sense' understanding of it, render the term and its *real* and *metaphorical* statuses invisible and intangible, as space often constitutes an 'in-between-ness' (Keith and Pile, 1993). The idea

¹⁶ The Durban Art Gallery is situated in a Victorian municipal building which also houses the City Hall in Durban. The building is reminiscent of colonial power and governance in (South) Africa. It also houses a Victorian collection of artworks which form the core of its collection – this is a stark contrast to Pather's performance works which seek to interrogate such hierarchies. Pather's performance works will be discussed in greater detail in chapters three and four of this dissertation.

¹⁷ This will be discussed in more detail in chapter four of this dissertation.

¹⁸ 'Proudly South African' is a contemporary catch-phrase/nation building strategy, used in part to promote the production and sale of local South African produce and goods, in South Africa.

of space as it has filtered into notions of common-sense, has become some abstract and passive gap, only realised in relation to processes which occur in that gap. The assumption is that space is shaped by various processes which it accommodates, but which it finally has no influence over¹⁹. It is often considered empty and intangible, a void lacking any politics. Space, in line with ideas of its perceived a-political nature, has become a generic label to describe and delineate a myriad of 'spatial markers'²⁰ encapsulated within architectural locations, natural geographies²¹ (Bloomer and Moore, 1977), and in this current cyber-age the idea of space is also filtered into conceptions of a world wide cyber web or cyber-space (Cranny-Francis, 2005). This said, space is also indicative of the entire solar system and has in this light been described as 'the final frontier'²² – supporting the belief that space is passive – it is to be acted upon, and has no influence over actions which it frames²³. With such broad and diverse (mis)recognitions of the loosely defined term – the idea of 'space', in its utterance becomes an ambiguous marker for some non-material gap that exists in a state of dis-embodied absence – and only finds location/articulation in relation to how it is or is not occupied (Kaye, 2000). Part of the ambiguity in relation to how space is articulated, is a result of its perceived dis-embodiment, since space often frames embodied human action (if one aligns ones-self with aforementioned notions of space as a common-sense label).

For the purposes of this investigation, the idea of space is placed within a social context and is articulated primarily through Pather's *CityScapes* and *Home* as they will be articulated as moments of cultural production, located within post-apartheid South Africa²⁴. This placement of space within a socio-cultural context is assumed in line with the conception that space is not a mere reflection of society, rather, it is society (Castells, 1983:4 in Soja, 1989:71). When linked with site-specific performance practices, this assertion re-iterates the citation offered earlier in this chapter:

[I]f one accepts the proposition that the meanings of utterances, actions and events are affected by their 'local' position', by the *situation* of which they are a part, then a work of art, too, will be defined in relation to its place and position. (Kaye, 2000:1)

In this light, site-specific performance practice, as it (often) occurs in 'social spaces' (Soja, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991; Dear and Flusty, 2002) potentially becomes a mechanism for the representation (and perhaps critique) of existing social structures²⁵. In line with conceptions of space as society, the assertion that *social space is a social product* (Lefebvre, 1991) is important regarding this

¹⁹ In later discussions around Pather's site-specific performance practices – which are intricately linked to the spaces in which they occur and out of which they emerge. this assumption will be challenged.

²⁰ The term 'spatial markers' is a loaded idea – constitutive of and constituted by the ambiguous nature of space. 'Spatial markers' constitute both physical and metaphorical markers which uncover the relational nature of space – that the idea and physical natures of space are context-bound and fluid, rather than static. This space-context relationship is indicative of a time-space continuum, which elevates space out of its abstraction into a context.

²¹ Natural geographies – as offered by architectural theorists Bloomer and Moore (1977) simply constitute natural 'environmental' spaces (basically spaces which are not human-made).

²² The caption "Space: the final frontier" is taken from the television series *Star Trek*'s prologue.

²³ The use of the word 'frames' here is to illustrate the perceived nature of 'common-sense' space as a passive void – which rather than influencing the actions which it locates; merely frames them.

²⁴ *CityScapes* and *Home* will be discussed in detail in chapters three and four of this dissertation.

²⁵ This idea of performance as mechanism of and for re-representation will be elaborated on later in this chapter.

particular investigation into space, and how it relates to site-specific performance practices – in the case of this dissertation, particularly Jay Pather's *CityScapes* and *Home*. The idea that space is socially produced makes the label not only an ambiguous one (as outlined earlier in this chapter), but also renders space a contested area – since to articulate space as socially produced is also to render it an area of cultural and political production and inter(re)action. Soja in his book *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, articulates this when he offers the insight that:

Once it becomes accepted that the organization of space is a social product – that it arises from purposeful social practice – then there is no longer a question of its being a separate structure with rules of construction and transformation that are independent from the wider social framework. (1989:80)

Furthermore, this idea of space as socially produced offers support for Foucault's assertion that "space is fundamental in any exercise of power" (Foucault, 1984 in Soja, 1989:19); thus articulating space as a practiced place (Kaye, 2000) in which ideological power relations are manifested. Foucault's ideas around locating the concept of space within dynamic social power relations offers it as an active partner in socio-spatial power relations. Space thus becomes a diverse power-force which straddles various architectural, locational and structural (amongst other) spheres of society and the practice of site-specific performance becomes one mechanism for the critique and de-construction of notions of space as a generalised concept²⁶. Foucault (1979) elaborates ideas of space as a diverse socio-political power-force through his conception of 'biopower'. Foucault's (Ibid) notion of 'biopower' provides points of connection between how bodies are socially produced through what he labels *technologies of power* (Foucault, 1976 in Faubion [ed], 2000b). Such *technologies of power* (Ibid), Foucault argues, are symptoms of modern society:

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a form of power comes into being that begins to exercise itself through social production and social service. It becomes a matter of obtaining productive service from individuals in their concrete lives. And, in consequence, a real and effective "incorporation" of power was necessary, in the sense that power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes, and modes of everyday behaviour. Hence the significance of methods such as school discipline, which succeeded in making children's bodies the object of highly complex systems of manipulation and conditioning. At the same time, though, these new techniques of power needed to grapple with the phenomena of population, in short to undertake the administration, control, and direction of the accumulation of men (the economic system that promotes the accumulation of capital and the system of power that ordains the accumulation of men, are from the seventeenth century on, correlated and inseparable phenomena): hence there arise problems of demography, public health, hygiene, housing conditions, longevity and fertility. (Foucault, 1976 in Faubion [ed], 2000b)

Foucault's (Ibid) provision of the complex power networks that operate within societies and upon bodies is captured in his notion of 'biopower', which can be explained thus:

'Biopower' is Foucault's term for the institutional control of the body in the modern state, through methods of categorization, measurement, definition and validation. It includes practices in all institutionalized areas of life (including education, health work, reproduction and law and order) which thereby generate

²⁶ Such debates are particularly relevant to later discussions in this in chapter three of this dissertation, around Pather's *CityScapes*.

specific kinds of knowledge about the body and so produce specific kinds of bodies. (Cranny-Francis: 2003:188)

The concept of 'biopower' as offered by Foucault, provides a further dimension to the conception of space, when he includes the body as an integral part of spatial discourse and politics. Foucault not only places the body in space, but also offers it as a discursive place. In doing so, Foucault problematises conceptions of the body as neutral – and offers, in line with second wave feminist politics: *the body as a site off/for struggle* (Goldberg, 1987). Thus, the body becomes integral in relation to conceptions of social space, and the practices of space as offered through the conception of biopower. Such conceptions around the body are integral to this dissertation, and will be picked up later in relation to discussions around the discipline of dance and its focus on the body, in relation to Jay Pather's site-specific dance theatre practices.

This introduction of the body into the lexicon of space, as constitutive of and constituted by spatial practices and properties offers a reading of site-specific performance that is inclusive of the dual relationship between bodies and their contextual and social placement within any given performance of this nature. It is useful here to introduce the concept of human geographies (Dear and Flusty, 2002) as part of the spatial lexicon as discussed thus far. The notion of human geographies (Ibid) places emphasis on embodied social subjects within a social-spatial and political context – and when read in conjunction with Foucault's notion of biopower – becomes a powerful lens through which to view and articulate site-specific performance practice:

Human geography is that part of social theory concerned to explain the spatial patterns and processes that enable and constrain the structures and actions of everyday life. It provides an account of the ways in which complex sociocultural economic, and political processes act through time and space [...] Human landscapes are created by knowledgeable actors (or agents) operating within a specific social context (or structure). The linkage between two, the structure-agency relationship, is conceived as being mediated by a series of institutional arrangements, which both enable and constrain human action. (Dear and Flusty, 2002:2)

Both the concept of biopower, and the notion of human geographies draw attention to embodied (human) situations in space. Furthermore, the concept of human geography situates space in relation to time thus offering space as a place through which power discourses are relayed; and in the same instance offering the idea that space, like all social structures, is historical (Foucault, 1984 in Faubion [ed], 2000a). This linkage between time and space proves helpful in offering a mechanism through which to articulate the potential of site-specific performance practice as a mechanism for the multi-faceted²⁷ de-construction of space through a problematised conception of *site* within site-specific performance practices. This linkage of space and time also finds powerful articulation in relation to this dissertation and its location within post-apartheid South Africa; raising questions around the historical legislation of space and the nature of Pather's site-specific performance works in relation to this history. The link between space and time is also important in relation to site-specific performance as it constitutes one modality of live performance which occurs in space *and* time:

²⁷ My use of the notion 'multi-faceted deconstruction' is in lieu of the complex nature of space and its linkage with socio-cultural and political discourse.

Whether it emerges from the clash of 'real' time with the 'fictional' time, from an actual physical wounding or from the excessive density of enacted events, the charging of attention used by many contemporary Live artists brings the spectator [and I would argue, the performer too] into the present moment of the making and unmaking of meaning. (Heathfield, 2004:9)

Having made the link between space and time, and hinting at its importance within site-specific performance practices, it is necessary to include space and time into conceptions of space as a socio-cultural construct and a vehicle for cultural interaction.

1.1.3 Interculturalism and site-specific performance practice:

Into the idea of social-space is filtered the idea of space as culturally encoded (Keith and Pile, 1993; Kaye, 2000) – this conception brings to the surface the notion that space is produced, practiced, articulated and negotiated within specific contextual (socio-cultural and political) parameters. In order to clarify this, it is useful to draw on ideas contained in notions of multiculturalism, fusion and interculturalism (Schechner, 1988/1991), as they are offered within performance theory as practiced, embodied (re)presentations of culture. American performance theorist Richard Schechner (1991) has offered *multiculturalism*, *fusion* and *interculturalism* as problematised areas of performance practice: “Defining *Multicultural*, he refers to it as a ‘melting pot’ where different cultural practices are placed together [...] in one performance space” (Schechner, 1991 in Loots, 2000:1); describing “*fusion* as the ‘opposite of multiculturalism’” (Ibid); and offering interculturalism as an exploration of “misunderstandings, broken messages, and failed translations – what is not pure and what cannot successfully fuse. These are not disasters but become fertile rifts of creative possibilities” (Ibid). Schechner’s formulations are useful in terms of offering multiculturalism and fusion as inadequate cultural explorations within the South African context (and indeed in the context of Pather’s *CityScapes* and *Home*); as superficial practices which in essence re-enforce old established separatist discourse and practice (as promoted through colonial discourse and apartheid ideologies).

Ideas of multiculturalism, fusion and interculturalism as modalities of cultural practice, when placed alongside performance practice render the discipline of performance as a mechanism for cultural (re)production. Ideas of multiculturalism, fusion and interculturalism within spheres of cultural discourse are articulated in and through their placement within social spaces. The notion of interculturalism is important in relation to site-specific performance as it is offered in this dissertation²⁸. What the concept of interculturalism offers in relation to the concerns outlined in this dissertation, is a tying together of conceptions of social space. This in relation to the idea that *culture is not neutral* (Tax, 1978 in Loots, 2001), renders the cultural codification of space an area of interlocking power discourses²⁹ (hooks, 1989). In relation to the concept of biopower, and the notion of human geography – interculturalism in performance

²⁸ This importance stems partly from the focus on Pather’s work and his experience of having studied under prominent theatre practitioner/theorist Richard Schechner, while a student at New York University in the 1980s, during South Africa’s second state of emergency. See Appendix F.

²⁹ Such interlocking power discourses are inclusive of race, class, gender and sexuality amongst others.

practice offers a point to uncover the socio-political-cultural power relations as articulated through these conceptions:

Interculturalism is the meeting in the moment of performance of two or more cultural traditions, a temporary fusing of styles and/ or techniques and/ or cultures [...] It is impossible to provide an elaborate recipe of or for interculturalism because the nature of the interrelationship between cultures and between artists depends heavily on the individuals and the individual cultures concerned. It also depends on the encounter, the exchange, any financial contributions, and the complexities of mixing certain cultures. (Hollledge and Tompkins, 2000:7)

The above quotation offers the complex nature of interculturalism as a practice that can expose the uneven distribution of socio-political power relations (Bharucha, 1996), but it also highlights intercultural practice as a double-edged sword which runs the risk of re-establishing cultural stereotypes through blind assumptions that intercultural practice automatically results in two-way dialogues between two or more cultures. Indian performance theorist/practitioner, Rustom Bharucha, is skeptical of interculturalism, and warns against assuming "that a Euro-American perspective on interculturalism is applicable and acceptable to everyone" (1996:41). This is an important criticism to include, since, interculturalism can become a tool for cultural imperialism or it can be a practice of dialogue and cultural inter(re)action. Instances of cultural imperialism in relation to the South African performance-scape are often historical, and relate to processes of colonisation and apartheid and how these systems of power have informed a cultural high/low dichotomy in relation to local cultural production³⁰. Peterson (in Gunner [ed], 2001) explains:

The politics and power relations that are operative in collaborative productions can be seen in a project mounted by the Native Affairs Department of the Johannesburg City Council in 1972. The Native Affairs Department commissioned Doreen Lamb to 'assist' in the development of black performance in Soweto. Lamb worked with a group of twelve performers for eighteen months at the end of which they performed a play that she had written, *The Frightened Lady*. Apart from 'teaching' acting, stage-craft, and 'correct' pronunciation, Lamb impressed upon the actors that 'politics do not belong in the theatre, social evils yes' [...] *The Frightened Lady* was based on the theft of a diamond ring at a function held at the Malawian ambassador's residence in Pretoria. The culprits turn out to be well-respected members of the Soweto elite. (Peterson, 1994 in Gunner [ed], 2001: 41)

This example offered by Peterson, sheds light on the potential for (inter)cultural exchanges in relation to collaborative performance practices, to become a one-sided manipulation where one party of the exchange holds and wields more power than the other³¹. It is this power dynamic that potentially exists within any intercultural exchange that, Bharucha (1996) warns, should be acknowledged and actively challenged in order to make provision for meaningful cross-cultural dialogue and exchange.

Further to this, Bharucha (in Pavis, 1996) offers interculturalism as a multi-faceted tool for cultural analysis and exchange where the creation of dialogue across not only two or more cultures occurs, but where the artists/practitioners

³⁰ This history will be documented in chapter two of this dissertation.

³¹ In the case of this example, the un-equal power base was directly derivative of racist apartheid legislation in South Africa that valued European/Western performance/art forms, often identified as 'white-owned', and de-valued local/indigenous forms that were often also political performance forms, often identified as 'black-owned'. These debates will be re-visited in chapter two of this dissertation.

may engage a foreign culture as an experimental ground for cultural exchange, or where they may engage in dialogue which is mediated through meaningful interaction with their own historical context³². Interculturalism thus becomes a mechanism to engage embodied social subjects in socio-spatial relationships. Continuing in this vein, French performance theorist Patrice Pavis (1996:5) offers interculturalism as a device to uncover the complexities of embodied cultural inter-relations in space:

In order to grasp the relationship between cultures and to encompass the idea of the *intercultural*, we must first distinguish it from other concepts with which it is often implicitly associated. 'Intercultural' does not mean simply the gathering of artists of different nationalities or national practices in a festival. In this banal sense of *intercultural* (or *cosmopolitan*), one may say that contemporary theatrical or choreographic production has become international, often for simple economic reasons: in this way artists and producers stand a much greater chance of making a profit, since their productions can be understood everywhere without adaptation. This may seem to justify them, but it also risks reinforcing national stereotypes.

Such 'national stereotypes'³³ are conceived in relation to the meta-cultural discourses which inform the context of such intercultural meetings and exchanges. In South Africa, such 'national stereotypes' are rife and evident within conceptions of a *simunye*³⁴ culture and *rainbow nation*³⁵. Continuing with the capacity of intercultural practices to engage meta-cultural discourses, it becomes possible to argue that such (intercultural) practices may constitute "a direct response to our steadily shrinking world, where geographical and national boundaries, which formerly segregated cultures, have been called into question" (Bharucha, 1996:1). The importance of interculturalism in relation to this dissertation, is that it offers a point from which to engage Pather's site-specific dance theatre (in this instance *Home*) as it emerges out of and often engages and critiques such abovementioned 'national stereotypes' within the South African context³⁶. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the nature of intercultural practice as embodied – this is to say that cultures can only meet/ dialogue and clash if there is a vehicle through which they may be articulated. In the case of performance – and in this case, specifically site-specific performance practice – that vehicle is the body.

1.1.4 Performance, representation and the body:

The body in live performance practice thus becomes a primary site of representation (Goldberg, 1987; Butler, 1990; Goldberg, 2004). The body as a site of/for representation elevates the body to the status of political, thus rendering the body as a contested site (Loots, 1995; Castelyn, 2000). Such a

³² This contextual interaction is evident in both of the case-studies provided in this dissertation.

³³ 'National stereotypes' are rife in contemporary South Africa, where for instance slogans such as 'Proudly South African' are used as a commodification strategy to woo South African citizens into buying local goods and thus become 'Proudly South African' citizens.

³⁴ *Simunye* is an isiZulu word that translates to mean *we are one* in English. The slogan *Simunye – we are one* is a commonly used on South African Broadcasting Services – S.A.B.C. 1 – a South African broadcasting station. This notion will be explored in detail in relation to Jay Pather's *CityScapes* in chapter three of this dissertation.

³⁵ Archbishop Desmond Tutu, dubbed South Africa a *rainbow nation* in 1994 after South Africa's first democratic elections. This notion will be explored in detail in relation to Jay Pather's *CityScapes* in chapter three of this dissertation.

³⁶ This statement will be elaborated on in later chapters of this dissertation.

conception may render the body as a subversive site for socio-cultural and political questioning and critique, or may in turn buy into and re-enforce its stereotypical socio-cultural inscriptions. Such stereotypical socio-cultural inscriptions often represent an ideologically constructed 'norm' (Butler, 1990/1999) which includes (amongst others) racial and gendered stereotypes. Through articulating the body as a site – it acquires agency – since it acquires the properties which are associated with sites as unfixed and fluid representations of a broader social and cultural macrocosm in which embodied subjects exist and operate. This said, there is an undeniable link between social space, cultural practice and cultural encounters – when these are articulated through embodied social subjects in (site-specific) performance, the encounters between space, body and culture form a triad of representational discourse which ultimately hinges on notions of a body politic. Performance theorist, Philip Auslander in his book *From Acting to Performance* (1997) articulates this position, which I will offer here as a statement for consideration in relation to the debates offered herein:

If the modern body can be shown to have been produced by the ideological discourses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, discourses only recently made visible by contemporary scholarship, the "postmodern body" is the body actively and currently conceived of as produced by ideological encodings which it cannot simply transcend. (Auslander, 1997:92)

The quotation above offers support for the notion that the body is a site, furthermore, it engages the body site as culturally codified, and thus inscribed with ideological meanings. The argument here is that such culturally encoded meanings cannot be ignored, however performance practices, as they are representational, may offer such "ideological encodings" around the body, up for scrutiny.

The following section of this chapter engages a brief history of the emergence of site-specific performance in order to offer the foundations for later discussions around the forms' emergence within the South African context.

1.2) Private lives in public spaces: the interconnections between architectural spaces and live performance – towards a practice of site-specific performance

"Live [a]rt encounters some of the most difficult moral and political issues of [the late twentieth] and early twenty-first century" (Heathfield, 2004:13)

This section offers a brief historical overview of site-specific art and its inclusion within realms of performance, to foreground the debates and examples offered in the remaining chapters of this dissertation. This section also draws from debates and discussions offered in the previous section of this chapter in order to establish the importance of the historical emergence of the form, and its link to contemporary theorisations around the form and its related concerns as they are offered herein.

1.2.1 Installation art, performance art and site-specific performance:

The history of site-specific art runs parallel to a history of performance art as a discipline. Both share a basis in installation art forms³⁷: "*Installation* is the noun form of the verb *to install*, the functional movement of placing the work of art in the "neutral" void of gallery or museum" (Suderberg, 2000:4). The idea of installing a work of art into a 'neutral' void is significant to the processes and practice of installation art such that:

[it] is the art form that takes note of the perimeters of that space and reconfigures it. The ideological impossibility of the neutrality of any site contributes to the expansion and application of installation, where sculptural forms occupy and reconfigure not just institutional space but the space of objecthood as well. (Ibid)

In this manner, the act of installing an artwork constitutes a practice in and of itself (Suderberg, 2000). This de-construction of the process and practice of art making has been assumed into performance art practices, where artists who engage this diverse genre engage the body as the primary site of and for the construction and representation of meaning (Goldberg, 2004). Performance art offers an awareness of how the body can become subversive in performance, by drawing attention to "the paradoxical status of the body as art" (Heathfield, 2004:11). In line with previous debates in this chapter, the idea of the body as a site becomes a key point of linkage between performance art (in all its myriad forms) and site-specific performance practices. Importantly, the emergence of site-specific performance, as it hinges on installation art, emerged as an active engagement of the performer with broader socio-political and cultural concerns, as did it emerge as an experiential form – where 'the audience', as constructed through 'conventional theatre necessities',³⁸ became a part of the experience of the performance (Kaye, 2000). The boundaries between audiences and performers as demarcated within traditional theatre spaces are de-constructed, and the performers engage the notion of space as an area of experiential dialogue between themselves and their audience. In this way, live performance has come to signify a mechanism for the engagement of social, cultural and political audience/performer interaction:

It was in the 1960s that an increasing number of artists turned to live performance as the most radical form of art-making, irrevocably disrupting the course of traditional art history and challenging the double-headed canon of the established art media – painting and sculpture. (Goldberg, 2004:15)

This turn to live performance not only challenged established art media canons, it also raised debates around the perceived dichotomy between life and art: "Historically performance art has been a medium that challenges and violates borders between disciplines and genders, between private and public and between everyday life and art" (Goldberg, 2004: 30). It is this 'historical violation' that has aided in conceptions of performance art as a multitude of inter-related practices which lacks singular identification or definition:

The drive to the live has long been the critical concern of performance and Live Art where the embodied event has been employed as a generative force: to shock, to destroy

³⁷ Performance art often, though not always, assumes positionality within gallery spaces – and finds its intellectual roots in the discipline of fine art.

³⁸ The idea of 'conventional theatre necessities' hinges on the notion that in order to exist – the art of performance requires that there be performers *and* an audience to watch the performance.

preference, to break apart traditions of representation, to foreground the experiential, to open different kinds of engagement with meaning, to activate audiences. (Heathfield, 2004:7)

In relation to this previously mentioned 'historical violation' regarding the myriad discipline of performance art; Goldberg (2004) asserts that performance is always located politically and culturally and should thus be viewed in relation to the broader socio-cultural, political spaces within which and out of which it emerges. An important, and arguably, defining feature of much performance art is its location out-side of 'traditional theatre spaces' – it is such locational practice which allows the form a linkage into the realm of site-specificity. This dissertation draws specific links to "[t]he correlation between performance art and 'the moving body' of dance" (Heathfield, 2004:11) since the emergence of Pather's site-specific dance theatre has strong links to earlier site-specific dance practices as they were established through "the minimalist aesthetics of experimental choreographers of the 1960s and 1970s" (Heathfield, 2004:11).

1.2.2 Engaging private discourses in public through site-specific performance:

Site-specific performance practices often implicitly engage the dichotomy between private and public spaces, as will be interrogated in relation to Jay Pather's *Home*, in the final chapter of this dissertation. The dichotomy between private and public spaces is one which has been taken up in feminist debate, and will be explored in the last chapter of this dissertation in relation to Jay Pather's performance work *Home*, Durban (2003). Second wave feminist activists³⁹ offered this public/private dichotomy as one hinged on the gendered division of space into private (home) spaces and public (political/cultural/capitalist) spaces, the former spaces have been inscribed – through ideological discourse – as spaces for occupation by women, while the latter spaces are predominantly reserved for men. Second wave Feminist claims that *the personal is political* (Hanisch, 1968), which have been interpreted to mean: "No persons, actions or attributes of persons should be excluded from public discussion and decision making, although the self-determination of privacy must nevertheless remain" (Young, in Landes [ed], 1998:14), become important points for consideration. These insights render this aforementioned dichotomy between private and public spaces redundant, and offer a platform for the articulation of private (personal) narratives to engage the public (political) sphere:

Moreover, by focusing on questions of public and private life, feminism calls attention to the ways in which public and private divisions have been drawn in the past and continue to be drawn today. (Landes [ed], 1998:16)

In this way, site-specific performance becomes a mechanism through which to engage not only the body as a site of/for struggle (Goldberg, 1987); but also elevate personal experiences within political spheres and engage these in broader public debates (MacKenny, 2001). Site-specific performance, in addition to engaging these aforementioned areas of social enquiry and critique can also become a mechanism to engage a de/re-construction of space as a social, cultural and political realm of embodied experience.

³⁹ Primarily in Europe and America in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Notions of public and private sites become increasingly important to the emergence of live site-specific performance, since the form with its roots in performance art practices often blurs the boundaries between the constructions that constitute public and private realms:

This is a deliberate strategy for many Live artists, bringing the reception of the artwork into the elusive conditions of the real, there the relation between experience and thought can be tested and re-articulated [and challenged]. (Heathfield, 2004:9)

Site-specific performance as it is practiced necessarily de-constructs notions of performance and its placement within society. As has been established previously in this chapter, performance is often relegated to 'conventional theatre spaces'; these spaces are constructed spaces for the re-enactment of various performance and performative forms. Site-specific performance practices, as they are re-located into non-theatre spaces therefore become interactive and challenge the construction of spaces and how these are labeled for use. Site-specific performance practices also bring to the fore notions of spatial ownership and spatial-cultural ownership. These debates are pertinent within the post-apartheid South African context as they offer social and cultural spaces as non-neutral areas of political power relations and interaction.

Concluding remarks:

Notions of site-specific and site-specificity are contested areas within the lexicon and discourse of space. Space has been articulated as an abstract and material area of and for socio-political power relations, achieved through the use of Foucault's notion of 'biopower' in relation to the concept of 'human geographies'. Ideas of multiculturalism, fusion and interculturalism have been introduced in relation to how they will be used in the following chapters of this dissertation – as cultural and spatial markers for use in the analysis of Jay Pather's *CityScapes* and *Home*. The notion of site has been problematised to an extended understanding of the term, which includes the body as a site. The inclusion of the body as a site within the framework of site-specific performance practice is not only an important historical factor, but also locates the form as it is discussed in this dissertation – in relation to Jay Pather's site-specific dance theatre. The discipline of dance and its overt use of, and concern with the body will be detailed in the following chapters of this dissertation. The establishment of links between installation art, performance art and site-specific performance in the latter part of this chapter serve to locate the form of site-specific performance historically. These latter linkages are made too, in order to establish site-specific performance as a practical mechanism for the de-construction of space; and a vehicle through which the boundaries between life and art (private and public) can be (re)negotiated. The debates offered in this chapter are very much located within ideas that performance, in all its myriad forms, is a vehicle of/for cultural production through ideas which locate performance as representational. The importance of this acknowledgement in relation to site-specific performance practices indicates the importance of performance as a mechanism for cultural critique and commentary within contemporary (South African) society.

The following chapter situates these debates within the South African context, to investigate a localised politics of space. This investigation is articulated through

an interrogation into the historical legislation of space in post-apartheid South Africa.

CHAPTER TWO

Home-grown identities and iconography in intercultural spaces: re-locating performance art in South Africa and the emergence of Jay Pather's site-specific dance theatre

Introduction:

Concerned to integrate art more directly into the realm of the social, either in order to redress (in an activist sense) urgent social problems such as the ecological crisis, homelessness, AIDS, homophobia, racism and sexism, or more generally in order to relativise art as one among many forms of cultural work, current manifestations of site specificity tend to treat aesthetic and art historical concerns as secondary issues. Deeming the focus on the social nature of *art's* production and reception to be too exclusive, even elitist, this expanded engagement with culture favors public sites outside the traditional confines of art both in physical and intellectual terms. (Kwon, 2004: 24)

Miwon Kwon's words in the quotation above serve as a point of linkage between the previous chapter's concerns with the complex nature of site and this chapter's discussions around home-grown site-specific cultural production. Thus, having problematised notions of site in relation to site-specific performance practices and its linkage with notions of culture in the previous chapter, this chapter will investigate the emergence of site-specific dance theatre within the South African context. Picking up from the thread of debates offered in the previous chapter, the later stages of this chapter further investigate notions of site, in relation to the emergence of Jay Pather's site-specific performance practices. The dual legacies of colonialism and apartheid, and their influence on the South African landscape and performance-scape inform the initial stages of this chapter. The importance of re-visiting these historical systems of social control is highlighted in order to investigate how they relate to spatial restrictions and restrictive spatial and geographical legislations (which in relation to the processes of colonialism and then apartheid in South Africa, are intimately linked with racial discrimination and racist ideologies). The impact of colonialism and colonial and apartheid ideologies, and the subsequent legislation that emerged in relation to these systems of power, is picked up as a continuation from the discussions around power, and specifically in relation to Foucault's (1979) notion of 'biopower' offered in the previous chapter.

This chapter continues from chapter one and its argument that, performance (in all its many forms) constitutes modes of cultural production. The importance of positioning performance in relation to cultural production is to locate the often under-estimated value of performance as a vehicle for political subversion and critique, and to recognise that performance is inherently linked with culture and identity – and moreover that these notions are linked to the extended notion of site offered in the previous chapter of this dissertation. This linkage will be demonstrated through establishing performance as relative to the socio-cultural milieu which it often responds to.

2.1 Colonial rule and the influence of geographical conquering:

Colonialism was not an identical process in different parts of the world but everywhere it locked the original inhabitants and the newcomers into the most complex and traumatic relationships in human history. (Loomba, 1998: 2)

As the quotation by Loomba above indicates, colonialism has not been a singular and identical process in all of the centres of its historical emergences. Within the South African context, colonialism laid the foundations for the system of apartheid and its institutionalised and legislated racism and racial division of spaces and social accesses.

The processes of colonisation are related to power and ownership and can be defined simplistically as "the conquest and control of other people's land and goods" (Loomba, 1998:2). Such colonial impulses around conquering are overtly linked to the conquering of geographical sites, but the processes of colonisation were not limited to geographical conquering. Colonisation also rendered bodies as sites to be conquered, some of the by-products of colonisation can be linked, for instance, to a conquering of the (indigenous African) people; a prominent example of this is the emergence of the African slave trade. These impulses are influential in relation to the concerns of this dissertation in so far as the colonisation of both geographical and physical/body sites renders them subject to a myriad of socio-cultural and spatial politics which have resulted in an unequal distribution of power. Such unequal distribution of power relies often on the geographical and spatial locations of social subjects, and how they exist in relation to the dominant social and cultural constructions⁴⁰. Colonialism relied heavily on racial constructions which informed much colonial discourse around difference. As post-colonial theorist, Ann Laura Stoler in her study *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*, points out: "racism was not a colonial reflex, fashioned to deal with the distant Other, but part of the very making of Europeans themselves" (2002: 144). As Stoler indicates, the processes of racism operate in a dialectical relationship to engage a constructed 'otherness' and an equally constructed 'norm'.

Foucault's notion of 'biopower' (1979) as introduced in the first chapter of this dissertation provides one mechanism for de-construction and explanation of the (side) effects of colonisation in structuring a European/African dichotomy:

'Biopower' is identified as having two distinct forms: one concerned with the life of the individual, the other with that of the species. It is the micromanagement of the individual body and the macro-surveillance of the body politic – and the two circuits of control between them – that [link] the fate of the two. Note here the crucial link: the 'encasement' of a disciplinary power targeting the individual within state power targeting the social body. (Stoler, 2002:150)

Foucault's concept of biopower draws further attention to colonialism as a system which on the one hand engaged in geographical conquering – colonisation of the land; and on the other hand colonisation of physical beings and social subjects into forced categorisations and social positionings. Furthermore, the conception of biopower is useful here, as it offers insight into

⁴⁰ Such unequal power relations are, in contemporary society, inherently linked with processes of capitalism and globalisation – which it is not within the scope of this dissertation to engage in any greater detail.

the mechanisms and processes of control in which racism became institutionalised. This system of classification was “not a benign cultural act, but a potent political one” (Stoler, 2002:8). The politics of such racial categorisations within colonial discourse has tended to separate coloniser/colonised into a high/low dichotomy. Such a high/low dichotomy has filtered into spheres of cultural production with the impact being that colonial value systems have been adopted as the yard-stick through which and by which all colonised bodies and cultures measure and come to be measured (Fanon, 1986). As Loomba points out, “[c]olonialism [...] reshapes, often violently, physical territories, social terrains as well as human identities” (1998: 185). Such historical ‘reshaping’ of territories, terrains and human identities holds influence in contemporary society where for instance cultures have been commodified and constructed within the aforementioned high/low culture dichotomy⁴¹.

Colonisation of this continent, and indeed in South Africa, has tended to white-wash our value systems, offering the culture of the colonising body as civilised and the measure through which African culture (as a colonial construction) has been homogenised and constructed as lesser, often on the basis of race and geographical situation. Such power relations filter into notions of cultural identity⁴² and (contemporary) cultural production – like dance, which will be further elaborated later in this chapter, as too will the link between performance and its bearings in relation to representation and its ability to de/re-construct cultural identities and iconographies as they are still largely hinged on (re-invented) colonial discourses.

In South Africa, the system of apartheid was premised on similar dichotomies as were constructed through the various processes of colonisation in Africa. Apartheid in this sense may, arguably, be considered somewhat of a continuation of colonisation and colonial rule specifically in the context of South Africa. This is important in relation to the concerns of this dissertation, insofar as apartheid legislation has impacted the development of theatre and performance in South Africa. The historical legislation of space in relation to the apartheid system of governance is important to recognise specifically in relation to discussions around site-specific performance and how people mediate their accesses to public spaces. The following section of this chapter focuses on the impact of apartheid on the South African performance-scape.

2.2 Cultural production in post-colonial, apartheid South Africa:

[O]ur contemporary culture and contemporary lives, as well as our entry into a modernist and post-modernist paradigm, has been shaped by a colonial hangover that we have not shaken off [...] the way we view the world is a lens that we can hardly call our own. (Pather, 2004a: 19)

In the quotation above, South African choreographer and academic, Jay Pather suggests the ever-present influence of colonialism on contemporary cultural

⁴¹ South Africa is no stranger to cultural commodification. Within the realms of cultural production for instance, many indigenous cultural forms like indlamu and ingoma dancing are used as commodities to be sold to Western/European visitors within the notion of an ‘African experience’.

⁴² Cultural identity is both geographical and embodied, thus the concept of culture becomes a point from which to interrogate the interrelationship between human bodies and the locations in which they exist and operate.

production. South Africa's recent performance history is testimony to the influence of this 'colonial hangover' on local political and socio-cultural structures and institutions.

The historical power relations manifested through colonialism influenced the emergence of apartheid governance in South Africa. Like its predecessor, apartheid as a system of governance highlighted racial differences in order to control social subjects and legislate access to a vast range of social, cultural and political spheres and activities. As a continuation of the legacy of colonialism and already-imposed European cultural value systems, apartheid extended and further entrenched racial dichotomies in South Africa by promoting 'separate but equal development' of people of colour and white South African peoples. In practice however, equality between races was not a reality. The historically established colonial systems of white superiority and black inferiority were further entrenched through various mechanisms of control, most predominantly, state legislation. The maintenance of the apartheid system of governance was achieved through stringent legislation and social policies which were passed throughout apartheid rule in South Africa. Such legislation in South Africa minimised access of people of colour to social institutions and geographical locations, and were also passed in order to prohibit political and cultural 'subversion' as defined by the advocates of apartheid rule in this context. Here again, Foucault's (1979) conception of biopower as a form of structural control that engages a layered understanding of power, is useful. South African legislature operated within a network of biopower, and through its stringent racialised legislation, managed to control a large mass of African peoples and bodies. The concept of 'human geographies' (Dear and Flusty, 2002), also begs re-mention as it is integral to engage how human bodies and the spaces in which they exist and through which they travel are shaped in relation to each other and the broader socio-cultural political context in which they exist. Apartheid South Africa is one example through which to engage the multiple meanings attached to the notion of site as it has been introduced in the first chapter of this dissertation.

South African legislation under the apartheid regime provides an interesting and blatant example of how bodies become sites and how discourse around bodies renders them physical battlegrounds: "The law endlessly writes itself on bodies. It engraves itself on parchments made with the skin of its subjects" (de Certau, 1988: 7 from Mansfield and McGinn in Scott and Morgan [eds], 1993: 49). The observation made by de Certau, when placed within the context of apartheid, resonates how structural power was maintained through legislation of the body and its access to various public spaces. This was achieved through legislation in South Africa which simultaneously legislated and produced racialised bodies and identities. In South Africa this has resulted in a kind of racial over-determination in the sense that often the discourse of race becomes a primary point of mediation and focus in relation to how identities are constructed and peoples identified. bell hooks (1989) argues that race is one of many systems of power that relate to identity and identification. Gender, sexuality and class for instance also impact on how identities are constructed, mediated and maintained. In South Africa, the over-determination of race has resulted in it becoming a primary identity marker and often other spheres of power and social operation are over-looked because of this. The discourse of race and subsequent

construction of a racial hierarchy resulted in the public/state mediation of accessibility on the basis of race. This illustrates the constructed nature of systems of control, such as apartheid and how they are maintained through 'normalising devices' (Butler, 1990/1999). Such normalising devices operate through consent (Gramsci, in Loots, 2001). This consent is achieved through hegemonic discourses (ibid), which for instance during apartheid governance in South Africa pitted white skin and minority rule as superior to the black South African majority, and furthermore situated this discourse within constructed and historical colonial 'norms' that re-inforced such irrational belief systems. Fanon (1986:110) in his study *Black Skin, White Masks*, resonates this sentiment when he states:

[Not] only must the black man *or woman* be black; s/he must be black in relation to the white man *or woman*.⁴³

Of course, the processes of colonisation are more complex than this, as notions of superiority and inferiority between races has also been adopted intra-racially:

While it is true that many Third World nationals who live in Britain and the United States develop through theoretical and concrete experience knowledge of how they are diminished by white western racism, that does not always lead them to interrogate the way in which they enter a racialised hierarchy where in the eyes of whites they automatically have greater status and privilege than individuals of African descent. (hooks, 1990:93/94)

The impact of this black/white dichotomy within hierarchical structural systems of power, like apartheid, has meant that racism has been normalised to the extent that Western/European (often white-cultures/cultural practices) have been constructed as civilised and *normal* while indigenous/African cultures and cultural practices have been relegated un-civilised and often barbaric; such perceptions have also filtered into spheres of cultural production and which forms have historically been valued over others which have been dismissed.

Over the decades of apartheid rule in South Africa its foundations were premised on segregationist policies with stringent, racist legislature such as the 'Group Areas Act, No. 41 of 1950' which, via forced removals of people of colour led to their relocation in what were defined as 'coloured areas' and furthermore restricted movement and travel of people of colour within South Africa. The 'Suppression of Communism Act, No. 44 of 1950' was set in place such that any dissident or subversive individuals, groups or materials could be banned. The 'Bantu Authorities Act, No. 68 of 1951' legislated the separation of space into what were called 'Bantustans' (independent homelands). The 'Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, No. 67 of 1952' enforced rigid pass law systems to control the access of people of colour to various geographical locations. Other laws include the 'Population Registration Act, No. 30 of 1950' which led to the creation and documentation on a national register each individuals race for the purposes of (racist) law enforcement, and to control the coloured population in South Africa. Such legislation resulted in a kind of 'urban disciplining' (Ferrell, 2001), where access to places and spaces, for example, was legislated on the basis of the pigmentation of people's skin.

⁴³ Italics are my addition, and do not feature in the original document (*Black Skin, White Masks*) from which the quotation is taken.

The impact of such legislation was wide-spread with one side-effect being that it isolated local artists and limited artistic and cultural exchange between the races in South Africa (Koloane, 1995). Such legislation too, has had significant bearing on the emergence of performance forms in South Africa. Much local cultural production has, of necessity assumed a political status and it has often rendered the juncture between life and art non-existent⁴⁴, as it has been used as a political tool for mobilisation and protest against the unjust political system of apartheid. The emergence of 'protest theatre' in the South African context bears a direct relationship to the apartheid system of governance⁴⁵ (Gunner, 2001). Much like the performance art of the 60s and 70s in Europe and America, the protest theatre of apartheid South Africa emerged as a political form of cultural production to engage and critique socio-cultural and political imbalances. South Africa's performance history has therefore been mediated by the political climate within which it emerged, as has it been influential in shaping alternative contemporary approaches to performance making in this context.

Jay Pather is one contemporary theatre practitioner who has been greatly influenced by the South African context:

I've never really thought of dance or the theatre as being anything but political. I think that being born raised and living in South Africa a lot of the choices that one makes and the very fact that one chooses to dance is very often a political choice. It comes out of a very strong sense of wanting to make sense of the world. (Pather, 2004a:77)⁴⁶

The notion that performance can be political is integral to the emergence of site-specific performance in South Africa, as historically spatial legislations and restrictive access policies have hindered public accessibility and use of all space. Site-specific performance in this sense is as much a contemporary manifestation of cultural production as is it a challenge to historical political systems of governance.

2.3 Site-specific performance in South Africa:

As has been argued in chapter one of this dissertation, the discipline of performance art and the practices associated with installation art were predecessors to the formalisation of site-specific performance as a genre (Kaye, 2000; Kwon, 2004). The radical performance practices of the 1960s and 1970s in Europe and America⁴⁷, which included a vast array of performance and entertainment technologies and techniques, re-located performance practices outside of conventional theatre spaces. This re-location was often to galleries for installation, or public spaces where performers located their works as a kind of public intervention (Goldberg, 2004). The relatively recent emergence of site-specific performance within the South African context has followed a similar route in relation to its emergence from within re-actionary modes of performance.

⁴⁴ Similarly, the broad, encompassing discipline of performance art as introduced in the previous chapter, engages this same juncture as non-existent.

⁴⁵ Barney Simon, Mbongeni Ngema and Winston Ntshona's *Woza Albert!* (1983) is possibly the most prominent and recognizable protest play to have emerged out of South Africa.

⁴⁶ Pather's political concerns are inherently connected to his experiences having grown up in apartheid South Africa and his life in Durban. See Appendix A/B/C.

⁴⁷ These have been introduced in chapter one of this dissertation.

However, ours is not a legacy of performance art⁴⁸. Perhaps because of our countries history of segregation and overt physical policing of peoples bodies, our context during the 60s and 70s did not lend itself to radical performance art making, because the legacy of apartheid rule has shaped much of contemporary local performance and performance aesthetics and concerns: "In South Africa many of the barriers of apartheid legislation have fallen [...] Much, however, remains to be resolved" (Gunner, 2001:1).

The local emergence of site-specific performance as it is inherently situated within the historical legislation of spaces and so this form of performance in the South African context provides an interesting platform for the socio-cultural, historical, and political de-construction of the spaces in which it occurs. Local site-specific performance practices are tied up within South Africa's recent history and the legislation of public and private spaces, which has had a profound impact on how South African bodies access and utilise these spaces in our 'New South Africa'.

It is important here to distinguish site-specific performance as a genre within the broader field of the performing arts. As has been argued in the previous chapter, site-specific performance necessarily engages the notion of site as integral to its formal processes. Site-specific performance as a formalised genre relies as much on the space to which it responds and within which it eventually is performed, as it does on its existence outside of conventional theatre spaces:

Site-specific works deal with the environmental components of given places. The scale, size and location of site-specific works are determined by the topography of the site, whether it be urban or landscape or architectural enclosure. The works become part of the site and restructure both conceptually and perceptually the organisation of the site. (Serra, 1989 in Kwon, 2004: 12)

In the quotation above, Serra draws attention to the dialectical relationship between space and (in the case of this dissertation) performance. The next section of this chapter investigates Jay Pather's⁴⁹ shift to site-specific performance within post-apartheid South Africa.

2.4 Jay Pather's shift to site-specific performance:

In post-apartheid South Africa, the genre of *site-specific* performance as a formalised practice has been adopted by local practitioner and artistic director to ***Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre***⁵⁰ Jay Pather. Pather's shift to site-specific dance theatre performance within post-apartheid South Africa emerged out of his need to engage performance, context and space as they interact and intersect and impact upon South African peoples:

⁴⁸ Performance art practitioners have emerged within the South African context, but have not been as prominent as other alternative performance practitioners in this context.

⁴⁹ Jay Pather has been a pivotal influence within the South African dance-scape. Through his political dance theatre and more recently his site-specific dance theatre works, he has offered the discipline of contemporary dance theatre as a collaborative tool for socio-political critique and exploration.

⁵⁰ *Siwela Sonke* in isiZulu means crossing over to a new place altogether. The *Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre* has developed a tradition of doing precisely this in its endeavour towards finding a South African dance language that mirrors the rich cultural heritage of Kwa-Zulu Natal. The company brings together disparate strands in forms of dance, music and theme revealing in its various juxtapositions a commonality that runs through all our diversities. (Appendix D). See Appendix F for further information on *Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre's* company history.

Pather sees the intersection and confluence of almost unimaginable possibilities of human interaction [...] as a source for his art. (Janse van Rensburg, 2004: 1)

Pather's shift away from traditional theatre spaces, to create site-specific dance theatre "was prompted by the limitations of the black box, and coincidentally at a time when traditional display institutions were becoming more eager to invite 'breathing' art into their hallowed spaces" (Janse van Rensburg, 2004:1). He describes his shift into site-specific dance theatre as a move towards *decentralising performance to make it more accessible* (Appendix A/B/C). Pather says of his shift towards site-specific dance theatre:

There are a few reasons [for deciding to create site-specific dance theatre] but I think the two most focused ones, is the fact that... and this was in *Shifting Spaces*... was my pre-occupation with architecture, the architecture of Durban and the architecture of public spaces, and my fascination with how these spaces and architecture shapes the body [...] But, I think there's a more pedestrian kind of reason as well [...] I just became very tired of 'costume making' these works for [...] my friends and family... you know [...] in a theatre space – with all of the trappings and everything... and it's fairly popular amongst our... you know... people who can afford it... or people who watch dance. (Appendix C)

This impetus to 'decentralise' performance in a context that has historically legislated spatial access (on the basis of race) is also important in relation to Pather's decision to create work in public spaces, as with *CityScapes* and its various locations in and around Durban's Central Business District (C.B.D.)⁵¹.

Interestingly, Pather has emerged within the South African performance-scape as the only local artist to identify his works as *site-specific*⁵². It is necessary to clarify how this term is used, and understood, specifically with the historical baggage around the legislation of space and peoples access to spaces within the South African context. In response to a question regarding how he engages the term and practice of 'site-specific' in relation to his performance making, as a relatively new genre of performance within South Africa, he engages the notion of site-specific within the framework of site-responsive performance making:

I think you know there's an artist who exhibited at the NSA⁵³ and she called it *site-responsive* [...] And I find that quite lovely, I think that's more what it is... It's about... it's not about, finding a site and doing a performance, it's about finding a site, responding to the site, chewing on the site and then trying to figure out what's going on here... and then developing something in it... so I think that's what I understand, I think it comes closest. (Appendix C)

His engagement with the notion of site-responsive performance adds further dimensions to site-specificity within performance, as it renders the spaces in which it occurs as integral and active *participants* in the processes of performance making. These ideas will be elaborated in later chapters of this dissertation in relation to two of Pather's recent site-specific works: *CityScapes* and *Home*.

⁵¹ *CityScapes* will be elaborated on in chapter three of this dissertation.

⁵² This may be partly due to his academic studies at New York University, and the possible influence of American performance art on his development as a performance practitioner, while studying there.

⁵³ The NSA (or KZNSA) is a local Durban Art Gallery space which is often also used as a performance and dance space.

Moreover, Pather has explained his contextual connection to Durban as an important influential aspect with regards both process and product in relation to the creation of his site-specific dance theatre works:

My connection to Durban is very strong [...] it is such a concentrated cultural experience. The political environment of KZN lends to our specific aesthetic. Durban, unlike Cape Town is not blasé, we are somewhat forced into an intercultural clash/explosion, [...] in Durban we are still aware of our separateness. (Appendix A/B)

Pather's alignment with contemporary dance and his integrative, often collaborative method of making political dance theatre, inform his processes of understanding and viewing bodies as sites. Pather articulates:

The body is a site, but it is also within a site... you know... it's held by a site, it's rejected by a site; it is... it can carve itself into a site, or it can be in an antagonistic relationship with the site... I mean, I think the fact that it *is* a site is just... makes it an ideal kind of mirror – reflecting or opposing whatever... the larger site... I think that's basically what the issue is. I think, the body as a site completely... for me it is not complete though, unless it is located in a context. (Appendix C)

This sentiment is important, specifically in relation to the debates raised thus far in this dissertation. Pather acknowledges an important premise of the argument proposed in this dissertation, that bodies as sites are influential over and influenced by the spaces through which they travel and in which they exist. To this, Pather adds a further dimension of *context*, indicative of the socio-cultural and political underpinnings of any given space. Furthermore, Pather's background in contemporary dance theatre has also influenced his use of space and bodies within the production of his recent site-specific performances.

Pather's roots in contemporary dance theatre have also been influential in his adoption of site-specific dance theatre as a working practice within South Africa. In aligning the disciplines of dance and theatre, Pather significantly engages a cross-over style of performance making that is not confined to any singular formal rules. In establishing his work as dance theatre, rather than just *dance* Pather also engages an idea of dance that tells stories, that his dance theatre works are not just abstract movement, but rather more accessible movement narratives:

Dance theatre is a mediation of dance and theatre; essentially it is dance that tells stories in a completely abstract way, dance that deals with notions of narrative and even anti-narrative, but dance that is not formal. I try to capture work that deals with narratives and recognisable histories; these are mediated by the performers with whom I am working – usually dancers who act or actors who dance and therefore already have a mediated palate. Essentially the dance theatre that I create seeks to make theatre work that is accessible. (Appendix A)

The idea of access is an important one within the South African context, given the history of (racially) regulated and often denied (spatial) accesses in this country.

Pather's commitment to engage work that is accessible is also evident in his use of cultural symbols and iconography that he engages. His use of contextual icons and South African-isms within the context of his site-specific dance theatre is an integral part of his working processes and presentations.

2.5 Jay Pather's use of home-grown iconography:

Throughout his performance-making history Pather has been renowned for his ability to tap into certain cultural icons that may well resonate in other contexts, but are also undeniably South African. From using *Lucky Star* pilchard logos, to the *Holy Bible* and the image of Jesus on his cross in a township kitchen, to images of rural women carrying bundles of sticks on their heads and images of hostel life in apartheid South Africa to urban images of skateboarders on Durban's beach front and kugels at Musgrave shopping centre; Pather's work is un-mistakably South African.

His work is often layered with local iconography – often topical in relation to the time-frame of the work being made/performed, for instance in *State of Grace*, 2002⁵⁴ Pather engaged the urban/rural dichotomy in South Africa through working with textured surfaces, like red clay/sand as indicative of rural areas, and smooth white linoleum as a floor covering, representative of urban South Africa. In conjunction with this, he also utilised traditional and contemporary dance/movement forms to resonate the already established urban/rural dichotomy. This iconographic layering often renders his dance theatre one where iconic images are as important as the performance in which they are contained. For instance, in one of his early works – a predecessor to *CityScapes* called *Shifting Spaces... Tilting Time* (1999), Pather used the image of a white ballerina in a torn tutu made out of the old South African flag and added a pair of bloodied ballet pumps to the image – which speaks on many levels about a form (ballet) that was historically (and racially) privileged within a violent system (apartheid) that for so long governed South Africa. Pather speaks of his use of cultural iconography thus:

It's about finding its exact fit. Finding its exact formation; really, really trying very hard – and very often it is about paying respect to that particular thing in a very fundamental way, and I very often have to really dig deep to the level of respect that I have for it. For instance in *Shifting Spaces...* the original *Shifting Spaces*, Pravika⁵⁵ did an entire piece with her hands bandaged [...] and I mean, how can an Indian dancer bandage her hands [...] I do a lot of soul searching [...] I have to be very, very clear. (Appendix C)

His use of icons reaches often far beyond any conventional use or symbolism, because they are undeniably contextual insofar as his collaborative working methodology also means that he engages many different perspectives, and therefore accesses many different cultural icons that may or may not be used in the context of performance.

Pather's use of space may also be seen as iconic, for instance in *CityScapes*, which will be engaged in greater detail in the next chapter of this dissertation. Pather's use of space becomes significant in light of his practice of site-specific dance theatre – within the South African context, given the historical legislation of space in this country. It is necessary here to engage, if only briefly, the

⁵⁴ *State of Grace* was commissioned by the *Jomba! Contemporary Dance Experience* in 2002. It was custom made for the KZNSA Gallery – and billed as a site-specific performance work. The *Jomba! Contemporary Dance Experience* is an annual local (Durban) contemporary dance festival hosted by *The Centre For Creative Arts*, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College Campus).

⁵⁵ Pravika (Janki) is the name of one of the performers with whom Pather worked on this particular performance piece.

emergence of Pather's practice of site-specific dance theatre in South Africa, in order to lay the foundations for the following chapter's focus on *CityScapes*, Durban (2002).

Concluding remarks:

As has been established in this chapter, much of the legislation around the separate development of races in South Africa during colonialism and then later, apartheid, still has ramifications in contemporary society. The legislation of space, based on arbitrary racial markers, and the allowance of (spatial) access of one race over another has had a significant impact on the performing arts in South Africa. The emergence of site-specific dance theatre within the South African context has as much to do with the historical uses of various spaces, as well as Pather's need to engage dance theatre as an accessible medium in this country (Appendix A/B/C).

When linked with the previous chapter's investigation into multiculturalism, fusion and interculturalism, this chapter re-iterates performance forms such as contemporary dance and site-specific dance theatre as modes of cultural production. This recognition is indicative of profound linkages between performance and representation. The idea of performance as a sphere of representation is illustrated in Pather's symbolic use of cultural iconography and also cultural identity⁵⁶. These ideas in relation to the problematisation of space as it has been offered in the previous chapter, engage and further re-inforce the notion that space is not neutral. The idea that space is not neutral is re-enforced in the next chapter of this dissertation, with its specific focus on Pather's *CityScapes*.

⁵⁶ This will be discussed in detail in chapter three of this dissertation.

CHAPTER THREE

***When the rainbow is not enough*⁵⁷: *CityScapes* and the politics of accessibility and ownership in a multicultural society**

Introduction:

This chapter engages Jay Pather's *CityScapes* (Durban, 2002) in order to locate the theoretical debates offered thus far within the context of a concrete working example, and also to engage contemporary rhetoric in South Africa relating to concepts of it being a 'rainbow nation'. The notion of a 'rainbow nation', and the surrounding multicultural discourses provide a point of linkage between the previous two chapters' discussions around performance in all its myriad forms as instances of cultural production. This chapter's specific focus and engagement with multiculturalism is also relative to Jay Pather's body of performance works, and where *CityScapes* is located within his performance-making history, and his conscious re-location of his dance theatre works into the realm of site-specificity – or as he has come to identify it – *site-responsive* dance theatre (Appendix C).

In order to offer the context of *CityScapes* and the scope of this particular work, the first section of this chapter engages cultural studies as a theoretical framework from which to begin interrogating multiculturalism as it is understood and offered in this dissertation. This is then followed by a general engagement with the concept of multiculturalism as it relates to processes of cultural production within the South African context. It is important too, in relation to the focus of this chapter on Pather's site-specific dance theatre and more specifically *CityScapes*, to situate the discipline of (contemporary) dance in relation to site-specific performance practices. This situation of (contemporary) dance within site-specific practices is also important as it offers a point of linkage between the first chapter of this dissertation and its engagement with an extended notion of site – which includes the body as a site. Dance as a discipline in all its myriad forms necessarily engages the body as the principle focal point within performance. Finally, Pather's *CityScapes* is then offered as a point of discussion and linkage around notions of multiculturalism, accessibility and ownership in relation to site-specific performance in (Durban) South Africa⁵⁸.

3.1 Cultural Studies – useful theoretical frameworks:

Cultural studies is a hybrid and interdisciplinary discursive discipline (Hall, 1996/1997; Grossberg, 1996) which offers insight into notions of culture, identity and identification as socio-cultural and political areas of inquiry relating to the lived experiences of social subjects. Cultural studies as a discipline negotiates historical theoretical shifts in relation to a politics of identity, and locates these within contemporary theoretical debates around the formation of identities (ibid).

⁵⁷ “When the rainbow is not enough” is appropriated from Ntozake Shange's (1997) choreopcom entitled: *For Coloured Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enough*.

⁵⁸ In order to accomplish this, a general background, and programme notes to *CityScapes* are provided in Appendix D, as a point of reference for background and production information in relation to the work.

As an area of inquiry, cultural studies has a broad basis which renders it interdisciplinary. This interdisciplinary status is useful in any discussion around performance as one mode of cultural production as it offers various levels to engage performance practices as representative of the broader cultural contexts in which they exist.

Cultural studies offers a useful theoretical lens to view performance as cultural production, as both disciplines engage notions of representation. The concept of representation is arguably at the core of cultural studies as a theoretical discipline (Grossberg, 1996; Hall, 1996), and cultural production as a myriad of practical applications. Furthermore, cultural studies emphasises the first chapter's establishment of a triad between culture, the body and geographical location – as markers of identity formation:

Actually identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we come from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation. (Hall, 1996: 4)

Thus identities, as with natural/geographical spaces and physical/body spaces, as they have been theorised in the first chapter of this dissertation, may too be identified as sites. This identification is partly reliant on the notion that identity is, in contemporary society, very much tied up within discourses around the body (Butler, 1990/1999/1993), how it is constructed and perceived and how it influences and is influenced by the spaces in which it exists and passes through. Hall (1996: 6) reflects this idea when he uses identity as a concept that refers to:

The meeting point, the point of *suture*, between on one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into place at the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken'.

In this light, identity may be seen as a site of/for struggle, a negotiation between constructed norms and abnormalities (Butler, 1990/1999; Hall, 1996/1997). Such norms and abnormalities are inclusive of a politics of the body that is enmeshed in notions of individual, cultural and social identity. Identity as a concept therefore becomes a negotiation between constructed representational discourses and the social subject's ability to re-negotiate such constructions and representations (Butler, 1990/1999). Thus notions around identity as a singular, static a-political concept, become redundant. This statement is echoed by cultural studies theorist, Lawrence Grossberg (1996: 89) when he points out:

Identity is always a temporary and unstable effect of relations which define identities by marking differences. Thus the emphasis here is on the multiplicity of identities and differences rather than on a singular identity and on the connections or articulations between the fragments or differences.

In relation to the notion of identities, as an unstable, fragmented multiplicity of meanings – how they are maintained and authenticated becomes a primary concern (Grossberg, 1996; Hall, 1996/1997). In South Africa, identity is often associated initially with racial markers based on historical racial classifications which have been established as primary identity markers⁵⁹. This racial over-

⁵⁹ Such historical racial classifications find their roots in the systems of colonisation and later, apartheid.

determination can not be separated from the geographical location of South African subjects as part of the greater (or rather constructed, *lesser*) African continent. The linkage between identity and geography (in relation to race) in South Africa is important in relation to the concerns of this chapter, and Jay Pather's *CityScapes*.

The homogenising tendencies produced by racial over-determination are cause for interrogation, specifically in relation to the notion of a 'rainbow nation' and how this impacts upon contemporary cultural production, and access to and ownership thereof within the 'New South Africa'. Access to and ownership of cultural production in the 'New South Africa' is informed by historical separations of race, which determined cultural ownership of various (in this instance) dance forms: Ballet is understood as a white owned form, gumboot dancing as a black owned form and Kathak as an Indian owned form, for instance. These racial ownerships while informed by history have filtered into contemporary cultural production within the 'New South Africa', where it is common practice for primarily white dancers to engage Ballet; Indian dancers Kathak (and other classical 'Indian forms') and black dancers gumboot (and other 'traditional' South African forms). When linked to notions of multiculturalism in performance, such racial ownership of forms become problematic, as they still exist separately and within spheres of racial ownership. The notion of a 'rainbow nation' and its links to the concept of multiculturalism are important points for consideration in relation to Pather's *CityScapes* which will be discussed in later sections of this chapter.

3.2 When the rainbow is not enough:

In talking about cross-cultural contact in the domain of art we must not forget that we live at a stage of our history in which the playing field between cultures is not levelled. (Degenaar, 1995:64)

Degenaar, in the quotation above draws attention to the contemporary cultural reality in South Africa – where cultures exist un-equally in relation to each other. As discussed in the previous chapter, this un-equal relationship is historically rooted in the systems of colonialism and apartheid.

South Africa is often, in contemporary dialogue, referred to as a multicultural society. Indeed South Africa has been coined a 'rainbow nation' on the basis and adoption of multicultural politics and policies along with the rise of democracy in post-apartheid society. The idea of a multicultural society and a developing democracy are influential in post-apartheid South Africa insofar as they promote the notion of tolerance in a context that for so long had dismissed it altogether. With the abolition of apartheid governance in South Africa, and the adoption of democratic policies, multiculturalism has been constructed as the social ideal. The acceptance of multiculturalism in the 'new South Africa' has been assumed into a so-called *simunye* culture, with the (often under-acknowledged) effect of homogenising the many cultures in South Africa under one multicultural umbrella through the slogan: *Simunye, we are one!* Any adoption of this *simunye* mind-set fails to recognise that it is an ideal premised on equal access, which in South Africa (and many other contexts) is not a reality in social practice. The effects of South Africa's adoption and promotion of a *simunye* ideal have been multiple, with a prominent feature of the adoption of

multiculturalism being the *separate* development of many local cultures. This is not un-similar to apartheid policies around separate but equal development. Multiculturalism in practice, in South Africa, echoes a politics of difference, which arises primarily from the historical (and contemporary) workings of power in society and through space (Soja and Hooper in Keith and Pile, 1993).

The emergence of multiculturalism as a social ideal also impacts on all spheres of cultural operation, not least of all cultural production in the form of performance in all its multiple forms. Miwon Kwon (2004: 92) in his site-specific study: *One Place After Another: Site-specific Art and Locational Identity* links multiculturalism in performance practices to: "do-good community-based public art". The significance of this recognition lies in the awareness that multiculturalism rather than effecting any real cultural change, engages a false sense of cultural togetherness. This awareness, when placed within the South African performance-scape renders multiculturalism in performance a redundant practice. As Loots (2000: 1) articulates: "Multiculturalism in South African performance practice, has lulled us into another type of stereotyping (dare one say racism)". The multicultural promotion of cultural togetherness often overshadows its highlighting of cultural difference (Loots, 2000). Multiculturalism also promotes cultural ownership, which in South Africa is premised on historically established value systems which relate to race and the high/low culture dichotomy as it has been established in relation to race in this context⁶⁰.

American performance theorist Richard Schechner's (1991) conception of multiculturalism provides one mechanism to interrogate multicultural performance practices within the 'New South Africa'. Schechner (1991) identifies multiculturalism as a *melting pot* where different cultural practices co-exist on a shared platform. It is this conception of multiculturalism which seems to have been adopted quite uncritically within post-apartheid South Africa. The conception of multiculturalism as a cultural *melting pot* (Schechner, 1991), when placed within the context of performance practices in South Africa is significant insofar as such a conception masks the pitfalls of multicultural practices. Loots, a South African choreographer and academic who also works in Durban⁶¹, highlights some such pitfalls when she articulates:

What has been vaguely disconcerting in this [multicultural] performance practice, however, is that Indian dance has remained with Indian dancers, ballet has remained with (primarily) White dancers and African traditional, is still performed by Black dancers⁶². (2000:1)

This awareness that multiculturalism and multicultural performance practices are inadequate in relation to addressing issues around cultural ownership and the associated power dynamics which are embedded within any cultural exchange (Hall, 1996/1997), are important because it opens up cultural production to spheres of representation and the politics of representation within cultural dialogue.

⁶⁰ These debates around the establishment of high/low value systems in relation to colonisation in this context, and the establishment of racism have already been introduced in the previous chapter.

⁶¹ Lliane Loots is the artistic director of Durban based Flatfoot Dance Company. She is also the Dance lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Drama and Performance Studies Programme.

⁶² Jay Pather's works often critique multiculturalism by challenging such stereotypes within a (dance theatre) performance context, as will be discussed in later sections of this chapter which focus specifically on *CityScapes*.

Performance practitioners like Jay Pather, who have found multiculturalism an inadequate aesthetic/artistic/political marker, have often turned to interculturalism as a form of critical cultural production. Of necessity, intercultural performance practices lay bare cultural clashes and (mis)representations to expose culture as a myriad conception that is closely related to the contexts in which it exists and finds articulation:

[C]ulture is not an isolated concept or empty sign; rather it is the way in which we construct our sense of self and others. Intercultural performance, therefore, constantly re-negotiates this relationship [...] The precise nature of these negotiations depends on the social context of the performance, the mix of cultural elements within the production, and the underlying power relationship between the cultures engaging in the encounter. (Hollidge et al, 2000: 177-178)

Interculturalism, as explained in the quotation above is a complex cultural formation that is engaged in dynamic power relations between and within cultural meetings and clashes (Schechner, 1991; Bharucha, 1996). It is important to note that these intercultural exchanges are rarely if ever based on equal accesses, and often therefore result in unequal dialogue for the parties involved in any given intercultural exchange (Bharucha, 1996). This understanding indicates that within any given cultural exchange there are inherent power relations between dominant cultures and their lesser cultural counterparts within any given cultural exchange. This is an important realisation in relation to Pather's rejection of multiculturalism as a performance aesthetic. His conscious engagement with cultural layering and clashes within spheres of cultural practice and production often render his performance works as critical in relation to discourses around cultural access to and ownership of forms as racially identified and determined⁶³.

These realisations also prompt recognition that culture as a socio-political sphere of operation is inherently linked with space, as cultures exist within various places and are often geographically identified (Keith and Pile, 1993). Such geographical identification of cultures often lends itself to homogenising cultural tendencies to associate an entire geographical location with a (homogenous) Western or African culture for instance, without recognising the impact of intercultural dialogue and globalisation⁶⁴. Culture in this sense, is also very much connected with space as it is designed and lived in, passed through, and constantly re-created by social structures and the individuals that exist within the frameworks of urban spaces, social spaces and sites in general. Jeff Ferrell in *Tearing Down the Streets: Adventures in Urban Anarchy* puts this succinctly when he writes: "If the notion of cultural space offers anything of use, it's the understanding that, unavoidably, we imbue the urban spaces we occupy with meaning and emotion" (Ferrell, 2001: 223).

Pather's engagement with site-specific dance theatre also engages culturally encoded standards and expectations in relation to the creation and production of his work. Working against multiculturalism as the standard marker of aesthetic and cultural production in South Africa, Pather's site-specific dance theatre also

⁶³ This engagement is often implicit.

⁶⁴ There are many debates around globalisation in relation to cultural production; however, it is not within the scope of this dissertation to explore these any further, other than by way of mention.

engages notions of cultural politics within spheres of identity politics and cultural access and ownership, as will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

3.3 The dance-object and culturally produced bodies:

Cross-cultural dance research presents great potential for the study of cultural difference. It illuminates the diversity of cultural experience in profoundly personal terms. It reveals in the most concrete discourse conceivable, the talk of physical experience – body talk – the impossibilities of merging culturally defined systems of understanding human thought and action. It foregrounds the manner in which bodily participation in given forms of symbolic action produce forms of wisdom, necessarily distinctive, necessarily culturally specific in their interpretation, forms of human understanding without corresponding representation across cultural divides. (Ness, 1996: 266/267)

Contemporary dance, and by extension, all performances is/are cultural products (Loots, 2000/2001). Thus contemporary dance becomes one modality of cultural production and expression, which engages spheres and debates around notions of representation (and its links to access and ownership). Ness (1996: 245) indicates that “[d]ance, as an object of cross-cultural study, has produced a dazzling array of methodological activity” – and has become an entry point to engage, amongst other issues, the politics of representation through interrogating multiculturalism as an aesthetic/artistic/political marker, for instance. Contemporary dance, like any performative form is not an homogenous discipline and has developed from a history of reaction (to classical performance forms such as ballet, for example). Thus contemporary dance, as an area of study and as a practical discipline is political and historical, acknowledging its intrinsic relationship with the contexts out of which it emerges as cultural products (Polhemus, 1998). Pather (2000:3) reiterates this point, when he says: “in most societies, art and culture exist side by side, stretching boundaries, providing sustenance in an active symbiotic relationship with each other”.

Contemporary dance, and any dance form for that matter become interesting points of navigation between cultural theory and practice, since the primary mechanism for the portrayal of the *dance object* (Ness, 1996) is the body – marked by race and gender, and not separate from social operational power discourses and identity politics. Contemporary dance is one instance where one is forced to look at the body and to engage its existence within space – in relation specifically to site-specific dance theatre and multicultural performance practices. As a discipline, contemporary dance has thus often (although, not always) been used to illustrate how “the social construction of the body *deforms* it” (Hoy, 1999:4). In this light, Banes (1994:46) offers the view that the body has become a site, a battleground for identity and body politics when she states:

The contemporary body has become a battleground not only in the struggle in the public sphere [...] but also in scholarly debates on cultural theory [...] culture wreaks utter tyranny on individual bodies. Bodies [...] are disciplined, moulded and rearranged by dominant powers, which simultaneously promote the illusion that people are ‘free’ to construct their own bodies.

In this light, contemporary dance can be viewed as a performative representation of cultural identity/identities; both its constructed-ness and how it may/may not be perceived is testimony to it as a sphere of cultural identity/identification. The

idea that dance as one of many performance forms that prioritises the body "is linked fundamentally to the search for identity and adequate representation" (MacGregor, 2003:58). As a re-actionary form, it emerged out of a growing need to engage meaning through movement and challenge (established/constructed) dance (and equally constructed ideological 'body') aesthetics. Through questioning historical and ever-present high/low art dichotomies and ideologies as have been discussed in the previous chapter and the accompanying issues of cultural ownership and access, contemporary dance has arguably become one mechanism for the dismissal of ballet (for instance) as *the* form through which all other theatre dance forms were and often still are measured. Contemporary dance has thus often been colloquially dubbed 'ballet done badly', however its recognition and inclusion within the South African performing arts-scape, has proved it as a mechanism for the illustration of and subversion of cultural ownership and accessibility. To this end, a space has been created for questioning around how a dancer's body should look physically/ethnically, as well as what subject matters dance can/should engage, amongst other culturally inscribed questions (Loots, 1995/2000).

These debates are important in relation to how they have influenced Jay Pather's working processes in his creation of *CityScapes*, Durban (2002). The following section of this chapter offers some back-ground information in relation to *CityScapes*, which will lay the foundations for further theoretical discussion in the later sections of this chapter.

3.4 CityScapes – background information:

Pather's relationship with Durban's shifting spaces goes back to his inner-city childhood. "My sister, three brothers and I lived in a small flat opposite the Shah Jehan cinema and the Himalaya Hotel on the corner of Beatrice and Grey streets" [...] He recalls peering through a small window of the flat on a Saturday night, watching the dressed-to-the-nines patrons of the Mountains club at the Himalaya transform after 11pm when all hell broke loose, with fists and bottles flying [...] It's this kind of ambiguity and incongruity that Pather sews as a thematic thread through *CityScapes*. (Robertson, 2002:8/9)

CityScapes was performed in Durban in 2002⁶⁵, with site-specific performances occurring on weekends over the month of March at various architectural and geographical sites in and around Durban's Central Business District (C.B.D.). Sites for performances included: Durban's 320 West Street; The Musgrave Shopping Centre; The Workshop's Out of Africa Coffee Shop; The Albany Hotel and The North Beach Pier. These five site-specific performances were followed by an installation at the Durban Art Gallery (D.A.G.) in April of the same year. In the media release for *CityScapes* 2002, the following brief was offered:

CityScapes

Dance and the spaces of Durban

Five site-specific dance theatre performances will occur throughout the month of March, on five Saturdays. Each performance is inspired by the space that it is performed in: the hypnotic notion of the surf at the North Beach Pier, the landmark escalators of 320 West Street, the character full double room

⁶⁵ *CityScapes* was invited to the Johannesburg FNB Dance Umbrella in 2003 where performances took place at The Carlton Centre, The Devonshire Hotel, Sandton Square and The Oriental Plaza before culminating in an installation at the Johannesburg Art Gallery. It is not however within the scope of this dissertation to discuss this second phase of *CityScapes*.

overlooking Smith Street at the Albany Hotel. Each performance lasts approximately 15 minutes, and will be performed three times. (Appendix F)

Pather's move towards site-specific dance theatre in order to decentralise performance with his intention to "make it more accessible"⁶⁶ (Appendix A), is important to consider, specifically given the historical legislation of space in South Africa and the impact that this has within the contemporary South African dispensation. Such historical and racial legislation of space in South Africa has rendered contemporary (spatial) accessibility un-equal – as has been detailed previously in this chapter. Such un-equal access has impacted not only on performers but also audiences in general, where for instance historically the racist spatial legislation dictated that people of colour were legally prohibited from attending state-owned theatre structures and the various productions that they housed (Peterson, 1994 in Gunner, 2001).

Interested to locate his work within the 'New South Africa', and also to remain critical in his engagement with and within the 'New South Africa' primarily through the discipline of contemporary dance theatre, Pather has said, in relation to his approach to making site-specific dance theatre:

I think that the politics of the space are, or rather have to be quite [...] significant to me. I think there is a simple notion that we are a democratic society now [...] constantly, is something that I'm fascinated with and I keep trying to press against and try to push and see just how democratic we are I find that actually spaces carry a history against which this kind of questioning and all of that can really happen [...] with dexterity. (Appendix C)

Pather's political consciousness has, for a long time, informed his approach to performance making and indeed the subject matters which he chooses to engage (Loots, 1999; Sichel, 2004). He is renowned for his political approach to performance making, and this approach often informs the iconography and imagery he employs as part of any given performance, as indicated in the previous chapter of this dissertation. More than this, Pather's works have too, for a long time involved collaboration:

Collaboration is the key to Pather's oeuvre – through the development of script and performance frameworks with performers, or working closely with video, sound and installation artists, mall managers and curators to realise often ambitious projects. Traditional and classical forms, and how contemporary life dissects and reinterprets these forms are a major point of interest. (Janse van Rensburg, 2004: 1)

Following on from his interest in collaboration, specifically in the realms of multimedia, Pather approached five local video/visual artists to feed into the creative processes of *CityScapes*. For 320 West Street, Pather asked Thando Mama to collaborate; Virginia MacKenny worked on the Musgrave Shopping Centre segment of *CityScapes*; at The Workshop's Out of Africa Coffee Shop, Greg Streak took the role of video artist; for the intimate space at The Albany Hotel Storm Janse van Rensburg was brought in to create a video interpretation of the

⁶⁶ It is debatable whether merely re-locating dance theatre works will render them 'accessible'; however on a basic level, Pather's re-locations of his dance theatre works to specific non-theatre sites in and around Durban's C.B.D. in *CityScapes* did open up the myriad dance forms he used to a broader public, who may not have witnessed performances of this nature prior to the events of *CityScapes*. This said, it is arguable that merely re-locating in this instance, dance theatre works, to public spaces automatically makes for greater 'conceptual' access – in terms of audience members' conceptual understandings of the actual stories engaged through the various works.

work and, at North Beach Pier, Junaid Ahmed took on the role of video artist for that particular work in the *CityScapes* series⁶⁷.

These local video/visual artists were asked to interpret/document one (each) of the five site-specific performances of *CityScapes*, through video-art. These interpretations formed part of the *CityScapes* installation at the Durban Art Gallery (D.A.G.), offering a further dimension to *CityScapes* in the form of video/installation-art. Pather is renowned locally for his engagement with multi-media to “create sophisticated layering of the postmodern experience” (Janse van Rensburg, 2004:1)⁶⁸.

CityScapes also engages yet a further dimension – not only is it a re-location of dance theatre into various social and non-traditional theatre spaces, but it also engaged a further re-location from an exterior architectural/natural/geographic site into a gallery space (D.A.G.). As discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation the linkages between installation art and site-specific performance are historical insofar as the act of installation is in and of itself located within performance art as a discipline, and further to this, performance art offers the historical beginnings of relocating performance outside of theatre spaces (Goldberg, 2004). In this light, it is also important to acknowledge Pather's dissatisfaction with the structural confines and limitations of contemporary theatre buildings (Appendix, A/B/C). These limitations are very much related to Pather's own dissatisfaction with theatre structures offering spaces that re-iterate separation (of audience and performers). His pre-occupation with “taking performance somewhere else” (Appendix A) is part and parcel of his rejection of old-established ways of making performance and new policies that are often under-critically adopted.

CityScapes provides a pivotal moment in Pather's career, and is significantly his first consciously site-specific body of work. The following section of this chapter explores *CityScapes* in relation to multiculturalism within cultural production in South Africa.

3.5 *CityScapes* –breaking the boundaries of multiculturalism:

What does Durban offer beyond the bounteous surf, the beaches, Zulu dancing, the race-course, bunny chow and Durban poison? *CityScapes* proffers some answers. The spaces of Durban, peopled as they are with ancient customs, languages, sounds and smells, offer a vast array of intermingling aesthetics and sensibilities. The spaces are rich with possibilities and imprints that are reflected in the architecture as well as on the faces of the people that inhabit this architecture. (Appendix D)

The sheer scale and scope of *CityScapes*, with its re-location into non-theatre spaces and its engagement not only with a variety of local dance forms/styles and companies but also with local video artists, renders it an historical moment within the local South African performance-scape. While site-specific performance practices are by no means new in relation to a global performance history, within the context of post-apartheid South Africa and the historical legislation of space within this context it is not surprising that the site-specific

⁶⁷ Details around the video/visual artists are offered in Appendix D and F.

performance has followed a different route and taken a longer time to emerge. Such performance practices could not historically have been realised⁶⁹. The impact of colonisation and the imposition of colonial value systems on what constitutes high and low culture followed by apartheid's racist legislation of spatial access, are two profoundly influential factors which have rendered the emergence of such forms of performance in South Africa only emergent within the last five years. The current promotion of multiculturalism and the notion of a 'rainbow nation' are current factors which Pather engages in order to subvert and question and perhaps offer alternative ways of seeing.

CityScapes engaged various themes and styles and forms. Pather's intention was, and is often not to create a multicultural façade – a happy *simunye* ending where our personal histories as South Africans are erased in order to promote a contemporary lie (Appendix C). Pather's concern, as he has said, is not to buy into a political system that promotes democracy in theory, but not in practice (ibid)⁷⁰. Engaging the various sites as they exist within the contemporary South African landscape but also engaging his own personal and historical experiences within these and similar spaces, Pather has managed to create dance theatre works that are diverse in their (dis)placement and subject matters, but are connected in their raw human-ness and interconnected often uncomfortable (human/cultural/spatial/formal) relationships.

At 320 West Street, Pather merges a popular township youth dance form – pansula within the corporate environment of 320 West Street. Cell phones, Armani suits and briefcases are part and parcel of this performance spectacle (Appendix D). At North Beach Pier, the rhythms of the waves are reflected in the rhythms of three culturally specific forms, not for the sake of *simunye*, but rather to celebrate the natural ocean rhythm that each form interprets in its own way, and yet share space where no form dominates. Rather than merely sharing rhythms each form listens to the others to create percussive soundtrack (Ibid). In the Workshop's Out of Africa Coffee Shop, a desperate struggle for communication between various couples occurs. A nostalgic soundtrack and a kitsch and rather contradictory caricature of a battered woman blowing bubbles is seen amongst the turmoil of other relationships in the space. The Albany Hotel provides a personal rather claustrophobic performance space where beds are not used for merely sleeping, and cupboards conceal 'ghosts of the past' (Ibid). The Musgrave Centre piece, probably the most overt in its mixture of contemporary and traditional cultural identities explored contemporary contradictions within post-apartheid (urban) Black African identity.

As a body of performance and multimedia works, *CityScapes* provides a conscious, though often implicit exploration into alternatives to multiculturalism in performance practice. Through promoting a dance theatre that does not merely

⁶⁹ The historical legislation of space and spatial access meant that any 'inappropriate' use of or access to space – within apartheid legislature – would probably have lead to offenders being arrested.

⁷⁰ South Africa's constitution as it is written, promotes democracy as it relates to all spheres of personal and social operation, however in reality, democracy is not a social practice – there are still huge disparities within the 'New South Africa' in relation to race, class, gender and culture for instance, where the status quo is still maintained through power discourses which in practice privilege certain social groups over others. This is one reason for the need to engage critically. discourses around the promotion of a 'rainbow nation' and *simunye* culture.

offer artifice and technically correct dance (Appendix C), Pather engages culture and context in a dialectical relationship through his use of various traditional and contemporary movement forms within public spaces. Detailed below is a synopsis of each of the five works that formed part of *CityScapes* as well as its final installation into The Durban Art Gallery in 2002.

3.5.1 320 West Street:

For this particular performance piece that formed part of *CityScapes*, Pather engaged pansula – a popular local township dance form often associated with tsotsis⁷¹, within the spatial parameters of the front entrance to 320 West Street. 320 West Street is a business arcade in central Durban, which during the day is a hub of activity with a constant flow of human traffic. The main entrance is also situated on West Street, a main road in central Durban, and so there is a constant flow of motor traffic throughout the day as it stops at or passes by this particular location. Lynn Goodman, a local theatre reviewer in Durban referred to this particular performance as a juxtaposition of “joyously rural [with] city slicker” (2002:1).

For this segment of *CityScapes*, Pather worked with a local KwaMashu⁷² based pansula⁷³ group called *Our Hour Pansula Dance Company* and facilitated the creation of a performance premised both on the actual spatial location of the work (320 West Street) and also on the popular dance form used. Pather also drew from the contemporary image of a black business man in post-apartheid South Africa, and had the performers dress in business suits, with cellular telephones and brief-cases. Further to this, the soundtrack for this particular work featured a remix of Carl Orff's *O Fortuna* (1935/1936) from *Carmina Burana*⁷⁴ – a subtle mirroring of the juxtaposition of popular culture within one of Durban's business centres. Through engaging a popular dance style to the soundtrack of re-mixed classical music, Pather successfully places two culturally specific forms within one architectural setting, without buying into the discourse of multiculturalism. His active refusal to display a visual and performed version of the 'rainbow nation', and preferred engagement with uncomfortable cultural juxtapositions and clashes through his use of contemporary and classical iconography characterise this work. Pather's programme note states:

The façade of this building as well as the moving escalators have inspired a dance theatre performance with Pansula dancers costumed in pinstripe suits, hats, and briefcases and cell phones. The dancers work with the motions of the escalators, as well as on the pavement in front playing with the notions of businessmen taking themselves seriously. The work combines the formal lines of the architecture with the spectacle of Pansula dancing, narrative storylines and characters. (Appendix D)

⁷¹ 'Tsotsi' is local Zulu slang which in English translates to 'gangster'.

⁷² KwaMashu is a township in KwaZulu-Natal.

⁷³ Pansula is also often referred to as isiPansula, amaPansula and is'Pansula. Pansula is a township dance form, characterised by fast foot-work - often to local music like Kwaito.

⁷⁴ *Carmina Burana* is a manuscript collection of over 1000 poems and songs that were written in the early 13th century. Between 1935 and 1936 German composer Carl Orff set 24 of the poems to music which he also called *Carmina Burana*, the song entitled *O Fortuna* is possibly the most famous of Orff's compositions.

3.5.2 North Beach pier:

This was the second segment in the *CityScapes* series of site-specific explorations. Situated at Durban's North Beach, on the North Beach Pier, the shore-line adjacent to the pier and the public walk-way in front of the two areas, Pather engaged three culturally-specific forms: Shembe⁷⁵, Celtic⁷⁶ and Classical Indian dancing in the form of Kathak⁷⁷. These forms were not merely explored for their rhythmic, racial and cultural specificity. Rather they were engaged as rhythmic mirrors in relation to the ebb and flow of the Indian Ocean's tides. Pather's concern with this work was to engage various cultures through rhythm, in relation to the natural rhythms of the ocean (Appendix D). Rather than creating a multicultural façade, Pather succeeded in providing a stimulating rhythmic work that provided space for three cultural forms to meet, merge and at times clash through their responses to the tidal ebb and flow of the Indian Ocean. Pather says in his programme note for this work:

The sea always associated with the more obvious tourist delights of surfing, water-skiing and sun bathing provides in this work another context. The ebb and flow of the surf, the formations of foam edged waves have inspired hypnotic, ritualised dances depicted by Shembe, Celtic and Indian dancing. The dancers do not aim to provide cross-cultural dialogue as much as mirror, reflect and be part of an aspect of the sea that is seldom evoked or rarely enjoyed. This is its serenity, its stillness in motion and its ability to transport ones spirit without need for anything else but the capacities to look and feel. The three groups of dancers, Shembe, Celtic and Indian use the length of the pier and the enveloping surrounds to create moments of peace, beauty and reflection appropriately performed near what many consider a Holy Weekend.⁷⁸ (Appendix D)

3.5.3 The Workshop: *Out of Africa Coffee Shop*:

The *Out of Africa Coffee Shop* is a sunken coffee shop on the first floor of Durban's Workshop Shopping Centre. For this work, Pather worked with seven contemporary dancers from several of Durban's local dance companies, and the former Durban Technikon. The soundtrack for this work was provided by pianist and singer Ricky Gass, "who is a major feature of the Workshop" (Appendix D). This work used the restaurant setting, with its tables and chairs and plates and cutlery to explore various intimate relationships between the various dancers. Pather worked with very strong characters in this performance piece, engaging very much with the notion of dance theatre and its combination of dance and acting in performance. In his active pursuit to critique multicultural aesthetics, Pather provides a myriad of formal dance styles using contemporary dance as a base – the effect being that he manages to expose 'cultural ownership' as a deeply flawed concept, since all dancers in this particular work come from different ethnic and cultural back-grounds and are at times able to share space and form through contemporary dance. Rather than relegating various culturally and racially specified forms to the various dancers, Pather chose to focus on inter-personal relationships between the dancer's characters and expose human conflict and vulnerability through his placement of the various dancers and dance

⁷⁵ Shembe is a religious and ritual dance/movement form associated with the teachings of Isaiah Shembe. It is a slow, rhythmic and 'earth bound' form.

⁷⁶ Celtic is a traditional Irish dance form, it is characterised by fast, rhythmic foot-work.

⁷⁷ Kathak is a classical Indian dance form, like Shembe, Kathak is also a religious form. It is characterised by intricate eye and hand gestures, and also involves rhythmic stamping as part of its technique.

⁷⁸ The 'Holy Weekend' that Pather is referring to is Easter Weekend – the site-specific performances of this particular segment of *CityScapes* took place on Easter Sunday.

forms within one small coffee shop in central Durban. In his programme note for this particular segment of *CityScapes*, Pather says:

Seven dancers draw from the carnival atmosphere that surrounds an intimate, sunken coffee shop in this space of variety and kitsch. The dancers combine intimate gestures with burlesque, working with dance forms such as tap and jazz. The work is wacky and energetic, using athletic, tumbling, jumps, lifts and falls to produce slapstick comedy with zany characters. Veteran Durban musician Ricky Gass, who is a major feature at the Workshop, plays popular tunes to accompany the dance. (Appendix D)

3.5.4 The Albany Hotel:

The work that has come to be called *Hotel*, constituted the fourth segment of *CityScapes* in Durban, and is probably the most intimate and demanding on its audience (MacKenny, 2002). The venue for this work was a room in Durban's Albany Hotel, a place that Pather recalls as being influential early on in his development as a choreographer/director:

I stayed at The Albany Hotel for four weeks [while working on *Ahimsa-Ubuntu*, 1996] and I think that a lot of seeds happened there around me and Durban and [...] I think the seed for the Albany Hotel piece was planted then and certainly the seeds for *Shifting Spaces*, *Tilting Time*, because, what used to happen was that for some reason I used to walk a lot, *obviously* – I don't have a car, I don't drive... so walking a lot, but also walking on late afternoons, because I was so central. Late afternoons, early mornings, and I would see the city in a very [...] different way... and almost, it was like seeing in black and white [...] I began to be aware of a city, that without the people, speaks... is resonant... there are these ghosts [...] these voices... but when you put people in... the dialogue is so rich. (Appendix C)

Pather's approach for this *CityScapes* segment was to create a performance within a hotel room at The Albany Hotel. This particular performance work engaged physical theatre, and dance theatre in a vulnerable performance work about the relationship between a white man and black woman and the secrets they keep from each other. In moving beyond any multicultural ideal, Pather did not merely offer his audience an inter-racial relationship; rather he challenged his audience to move beyond the racial dynamics of this particular relationship. Pather offered an intimate story that engaged various cultural and iconic clashes through its performance, at times utilising language as a point of communicative clash (where Ntombi Gasa speaks in isiZulu and Denton Douglas in English) and at other times engaging a more subtle communicative clash through the notion of secrecy and how the two performers hold secrets from each other. In his programme note for this work, Pather says:

A woman lies on the bed under a sheet; a man in a raincoat and hat enters with the audience. An intimate dance work begins, depicting a mysterious and intriguing relationship. The dance is offbeat and passionate, funny and sad. The audience (of ten) watches an intricate and subtle relationship that emerges from inside the room. The dancers work with physical theatre and use the room, the bed, the side chair etc. to create a complex kinetic quality, brazen physicality as well as soft intimate details, of touch, grimace, half smile. The work speaks of the mysteries of union and separation, foregrounding the peculiarly interesting and revealing qualities of the more quaint spaces of Durban. (Appendix D)

3.5.5 The Musgrave Shopping Centre:

In this segment of *CityScapes*, Pather blatantly situates iscathimiya – a traditional local popular performance form alongside contemporary consumer culture (signified by The Musgrave Shopping Centre complex) to investigate the

ramifications of consumer culture within post-apartheid South Africa. In this work, a black *kugel*⁷⁹ abseils, laden with shopping bags, down the side of Musgrave Shopping Centre while a troupe of isicathimiya performers serenade her as she descends. They sing *Don't cry for me eTekhwini*⁸⁰, to the tune of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's *Don't cry for me Argentina* from the musical *Evita* (1978). Following the trend of the previous works in the *CityScapes* series, rather than fall into the trappings of multiculturalism, Pather opted for a rather more difficult route. His intention with this work, he has said was to specifically engage notions of traditional and contemporary black urban identity. Pather's programme note to this work reads:

A black *kugel* abseils down the side of Musgrave Centre in a hoop skirt while a group of male isicathimiya singers sing the praises of eTekhwini on the pavement. They interact marginally, making space for each other, negotiating survival in the middle of consumer paradise. This work takes an ironic look at cultural confusion, the traditional and the contemporary and finds no big deal. (Appendix D)

3.5.6 Cityscapes at The Durban Art Gallery (D.A.G.):

The locations were an integral part of the creations and the random audiences became enthusiastically and uninhibitedly involved. In keeping with the whole project, the undercover culmination was far removed from elitist theatre, formal ticket sales and bums on seats. Watchers shambled from gallery to gallery, glass of wine in hand to stand or squat on the floor. (Goodman, 2002:1)

The installation of *CityScapes* into the Durban Art Gallery adds another element to the already discussed notion of site. Of course Galleries are traditionally designed as *display institutions* (van Rensburg, 2004), and within contemporary performance practices, it is by no means original practice that such institutions are used for the presentation of live performance. However, Pather's use of multi-media also engages not merely the use of a gallery space for live (dance) performance, but also the use of a gallery space for video installation as an element of performance. Pather's engagement with multimedia is evident within his performance-making history as early as 1984 (Appendix C). The use of multimedia within site-specific performance practices adds another element to the already established and argued extended notion of site within this dissertation:

In exploring the spatiality of the multimedia text we work from the basic principle that the individual text is conceptualised as a continuum, with meanings generated from the relationship between different textual elements, which include what we may perceive as '(empty) space' [...] space in a film is not an area where there is no film-stock or pigmentation. Instead, this is an area in which the contrast between visual elements – between objects portrayed or between areas of pigmentation – is very high. (Cranny-Francis, 2005:122)

The notion of (empty) space has already been investigated in the first chapter of this dissertation. However in relation to Pather's use of multimedia within *CityScapes* and its installation at D.A.G. is significant specifically in relation to Cranny-Francis' idea that multimedia texts exist as a continuum mediating relationships between different textual elements. For *CityScapes* in its site-specific phase, various local video-artists were commissioned to collaborate on

⁷⁹ *Kugel* is slang for a woman who spends much of her time in up-market urban places, like up-market shopping centres, and restaurants.

⁸⁰ eTekhwini is the Zulu name for Durban.

the various works by creating a video-interpretation of one (each) of the various works in *CityScapes*. These visual interpretations then formed backdrops to the various performances within the various spaces of Durban Art Gallery. This said, these video installations not only offered an interpretation of each of the five works in situ, Pather also insisted that each artist have their own interpretation of their assigned segment of *CityScapes* (Appendix A/B/C/F). The effect of this in terms of the overall installation of *CityScapes* into D.A.G., was that the video-installations provided more than just backdrops for the performances, they became a point of reference, another layer for the audience to engage (Appendix C).

Thando Mama's video interpretation for 320 West Street offered, for the most part a documentary of the site-specific performance work in situ (Appendix G). The video was not timed in exact accordance with the performance and so "often produced conflict of timing with the dancers appearing onscreen before they were on stage" (MacKenny, 2002: 1). This said, Mama's video also shows, in slow-time filming, various buildings around the area of 320 West Street offering more than a mere documentary of the work, and rather "evoking a looming metropolis very different from the popularised sea, sun and surf image normally projected of Durban" (MacKenny, 2002:1). His sometimes-focus on the buildings around the area of 320 West Street, also echoes Pather's engagement with architecture and so it offers what Pather refers to as another layer to the performance (Appendix C). Junaid Ahmed's video installation for the North Beach Pier has been described by Virginia MacKenny (also a video artist involved in *CityScapes*) as "part impassive observation, part lyrical interpretation of the beachfront and early morning light shattered on a rising sea" (2002:1/2). Ahmed's video installation, like Mama's was filmed in situ; however Ahmed's choice of focus was not on the site-specific performance. His installation showed a video-square of a section of the Indian Ocean and the tidal influence on the movement of the water. When juxtaposed with the actual gallery performance of Shembe, Kathak and Celtic dance rhythms it offered much more than a back-drop – rather it provided a fourth natural rhythm of the ebb and flow of the tides. Greg Streak's video for The Out of Africa Coffee Shop segment of *CityScapes* offered moments of the in situ performance of this work, spliced together with some footage from Hollywood films – *When Harry Met Sally* (Rob Reiner, 1989), *Pulp Fiction* (Quentin Tarantino, 1994) and *Gummo* (Harmony Korine, 1997). As with Mama's video interpretation of 320 West Street, Streak's interpretation of Pather's Out of Africa Coffee Shop piece was not always in-time with the actual live performance, providing an interesting inter-relationship with the performance where sometimes live movements were synchronised with the video projection, and at other times the projection pre-empted moments in the live performance. Streak's splicing of Hollywood film footage into his video installation further "created moments of irony, humour and tragedy, reinterpreting Pather's work with wit and intelligence" (MacKenny, 2002:1). The Albany Hotel video installation was provided by Storm Janse van Rensburg. His approach was to film the in-situ rehearsals as well as the actual site-specific performances with a small spy camera from various angles within the hotel room – evoking ideas of surveillance (not un-common in relation to South Africa's recent apartheid history). van Rensburg had six televisions installed into the Durban Art Gallery and used five of these to re-play his un-edited documents of this particular work. He also installed a spy camera in the gallery space where *Hotel*

was performed and used the sixth television set to display the live, real-time footage from the gallery performance:

Unedited, the "evidence" of the first performances was replayed for the D.A.G. audiences on five televisions, with a sixth, utilising the same tiny camera, showing real-time footage of the audience viewing the work. With the televisions bunked up in towers of three on either side of the performance, van Rensburg's utilisation of the idea of surveillance, its voyeuristic implications bounced back on to the audience watching both themselves and the work. (MacKenny, 2002:1)

Virginia MacKenny's video interpretation for The Musgrave Shopping Centre piece focussed not on the performance, but on the site of the performance. MacKenny filmed both the architectural location where the site-specific performance took place prior to its installation at D.A.G., and Hlengiwe Lushaba's⁸¹ initial jump off the side of the shopping centre, before she began abseiling down. Again, as with the other video installations for *CityScapes* MacKenny offered another layer to the gallery performance, by offering a video installation that offered interpreted and edited images of the original site of performance: "My video gave viewers access to what could not be recreated in the gallery – the actual jump. Under the neon Legends sign" (MacKenny, 2002:2).

Local theatre reviewer Peter Machen (2002:1) described *CityScapes* at D.A.G. thus:

Together in one giant exhibition with several pieces playing at any one time, dance and video in coitus. *CityScapes* at the gallery was a powerful exploration of the notions and histories attached to place and our sense of place. And more than that, it was a thing of pure and intense beauty. The layers of meaning you could write a book about, but in the words of the kugel: "that's just beautiful".

Concluding remarks:

[S]pace does not stand awaiting us to give meanings to it, but space *becomes*, that space is *constituted*, through meaning. (Woodhead, 1995:236 in Cranny-Francis, 2005:119)

The idea that space is imbued with meaning is not a new idea (Foucault, 1984 in Faubion [ed], 2000a; Kaye, 2000; Kwon, 2004) in relation to the concerns detailed in this dissertation thus far. In South Africa, with its historical and racist legislation of spaces (and bodies), the idea that space is constituted through meaning (Cranny-Francis, 2005) is integral in relation to practices related to local site-specific cultural production. This too, in relation to post-apartheid South Africa's obsession to become a 'rainbow nation' and blind promotion of such sloganage as *simunye: we are one!*, is important in light of various debates around multiculturalism, cultural access and ownership within this context.

CityScapes from its live in-situ performances to its multi-media, installation performances at the Durban Art Gallery provide various instances of collaborative cultural production that actively critique the notion of a 'rainbow nation' and multiculturalism as an artistic and aesthetic device within contemporary South Africa. Pather's active engagement with inter-personal

⁸¹ Hlengiwe Lushaba was a performer in The Musgrave Shopping Centre performance that formed part of *CityScapes* in Durban, 2002.

dance theatre stories and multi-media layering renders *CityScapes* a sophisticated investigation into contemporary South African identities. His use of architectural and natural sites as performance locations in conjunction with his focus on dance theatre as a discipline confront notions around multiculturalism and ideas around racially specific access and ownership on many levels. By re-locating performance and placing it within public and social spaces, Pather provides one point of contestation to notions of cultural ownership through literally creating work in publicly accessible places. It is arguable whether this renders his work conceptually accessible; however it does open it up to a broader audience base who may, or may not choose to engage his public displays. Furthermore, his use of local traditional and popular forms in relation to and conjunction with contemporary dance theatre provide a multi-faceted base where many cultures can meet and fuse, and where, in Pather's work they most-often clash and expose multiculturalism as an inadequate cultural aspiration in this context. Ultimately Pather's *CityScapes* in its conscious re-location and active refusal to embrace multiculturalism provides a contemporary instance of critical and political cultural production that re-iterates the value and strength of cultural production to create awareness and possibly effect change within socio-political spheres of operation. In South Africa, this is an historical legacy.

CHAPTER FOUR

Out with the old, and in with the new – or is it the other way around? *At Home* in the rainbow nation

Introduction:

The focus of this chapter is Jay Pather's *Home* (Durban, 2003). *Home* debuted in Grahamstown at the National Festival of the Arts in July, 2003 before its performances in November of that same year in Durban, at The Durban Art Gallery (D.A.G.). Unlike *CityScapes*, with its initial site-specific performances occurring in actual architectural and natural/geographical spatial locations; *Home* was not performed in real home-spaces before its installation at The Durban Art Gallery. In its inception *Home* was conceived for a non-theatre space (originally The Great Hall in Grahamstown, South Africa), into which designed and deconstructed home-spaces were installed. These designed home-spaces included, amongst others, a kitchen, a living room, a lounge area, a hostel (reminiscent of the mine-workers hostels during the apartheid era in South Africa), and a bedroom/hotel room space. Also, unlike Pather's *CityScapes*, *Home* was not so much a response to the architecture of actual home-spaces as was it a performed investigation into meanings around the notion of home in the context of "global unease" (Appendix E).

Home as it is engaged in this chapter, it taken in relation to Pather's assertion that "*Home* also serves as a metaphor [...] for larger, global impulses of inward looking in the threat of change" (Pather, *Home* publicity flyer, 2003). This said, *Home* simultaneously provides a point of linkage and also a point of departure from the previous chapter's investigations into Pather's rejection of multicultural performance practices and his alignment with intercultural inter (re)actions in his site-specific performance processes and practices (Pather, 2000). Moving from previous discussions around cultural ownership and access in relation to *CityScapes*, this chapter shifts its focus to engage notions of interculturalism (Schechner, 1988/1991; Bharucha, 1996; Pavis, 1996; Holledge et al, 2000) in relation to Pather's *Home* as it is situated within his repertoire of site-specific performance works. This engagement is in response to Pather's conception of *Home* within greater "global impulses" (Appendix E).

In order to offer the context of *Home*, and the scope of this particular work, the first section of this chapter re-visits notions of space/place/location in relation to site-specific performance practice in post-apartheid South Africa, and in this case specifically *Home*. Included in this investigation into space/place/location an engagement with the notion of home as both a material and metaphorical socio-spatial marker (Appendix E), which encompasses an extended notion of site to include its influence on the body, is offered. Gurney's assertion that home is "a social and physical space in which we can most easily be our (embodied) selves" (in McKie and Watson [eds], 2000: 55) provides the starting point for this engagement in relation to the 'home-space' (hooks, 1989/1990) and Pather's production, *Home*. This engagement will lead to a brief descriptive account of Pather's *Home* in order to locate the performance work within these debates.

Following this, the notion of interculturalism as it has already been established in previous chapters of this dissertation will be engaged as one point of reference relating to *Home* as it falls within site-specific dance theatre as one mode of cultural production within post-apartheid South Africa. Pather's *Home* is thus investigated as a point of convergence to engage notions of site in relation to site-specific dance theatre as one mode of cultural production (which in this instance is investigated through conceptions of interculturalism in performance); and the politics of space/place/location and the body within home-spaces in post-apartheid South Africa.

4.1 Private home-spaces and public home-spaces:

Home is one of those delicious concepts that only becomes visible in its full sociological complexity when one pauses to think about it. Thinking about *your home*, images of love or hate, of safety or danger, or of freedom or restraint will – depending on your biography – spring to mind. Typically, these images will be articulated through stylised descriptions of home as a place where you can – or would, at least, like to be able to – be *yourself*. (Gurney, in McKie and Watson [eds], 2000:57)

The quotation above engages home as a complex socio-spatial formation, encompassing both private/personal and public/political spaces. In this light, the notion of home-spaces replaces the more limiting label house, so as to include ideas of home within broader socio-political spaces of embodied human experience: "A house that has been experienced is not an inert box" (Bachelard, 1994:47). The idea of home as it relates to the concerns of this dissertation combines notions of space/place/location in the sense that notions of home encompass both private and public ideas of a social subject's physical (embodied) and geographical location (Gurney in McKie and Watson [eds], 2000). These notions provide one point of interrogation in relation to Jay Pather's site-specific collaboration *Home*, which the later sections of this chapter will investigate.

The notions of home in relation to space, contained in the concept of home-spaces provide a point of linkage between site-specific performance practices as these rely on various conceptions and receptions of space (Kaye, 2000; Kwon, 2004). The idea of home provides one point of entry into discussions around 'the politics of space'⁸². In line with Foucault's (1984, in Soja, 1989:19) assertion that "space is fundamental in any exercise of power", the space of 'home' too can be considered within greater social power discourses and networks. In this light, the space of home is not neutral (hooks, 1990), rather it exists as a bridge between spatial discourse and physically constructed home-spaces. In this way home (as both concept and physical structure) is part of the greater social make-up and discourse within any given society. Castells' (1983, in Soja, 1989) conception that space is not a mere reflection of society, rather, it *is* society, provides support for the notion that home-spaces can be articulated as 'social spaces' (Soja, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991; Dear and Flusty, 2002). Home-spaces, therefore, as with other social spaces are embedded in politics and imbued with meaning (hooks, 1989/1990, Dear and Flusty, 2002). This conception of space relies on notions that space does not exist in a vacuum, rather it is "understood as created by the meaning systems we use to understand ourselves and our

⁸² The idea of a 'politics of space' has been explored in the first chapter of this dissertation.

world" (Cranny-Francis, 2005:136). This conception of space is evident within the realms of site-specific performance practice – where the performance space becomes an active participant in the performed construction and de-construction of spatial meaning (Kaye, 2000; Kwon, 2004).

The dichotomy between public and private as these categories relate to space, situates home-spaces within the realms of private space⁸³. This distinction is historical, social and political and is clarified in second wave feminist discourse (hooks, 1990; Walby, 1994) in relation to spatial ownership and the gendered division of space. Private spaces as they have historically been constructed are understood as 'women's spaces' (Tong, 1989) (spaces of domesticity, spaces separate from socio-political areas of interaction, spaces of un-paid labour); and public spaces have been constructed primarily as spaces used and owned by men (spaces of employment, access, power, knowledge, economics, legal rights and recourse) (Landes [ed], 1998). The situation of home-spaces within the realms of the private has relegated the home as distinctly separate and different from conceptions of public spaces.

The distinction between private and public spaces in relation to the home as a living space and geographical location, and Pather's performance work *Home*, provides links to Foucault's (1979) notion of 'biopower' and how home-spaces are embedded within greater socio-cultural and political discourses. What occurs in the home as a private space is relative to greater socio-political practices that occur within the public home-space (in this case post-apartheid South Africa), and how these home-spaces impact and influence the body (Gurney in McKie and Watson [eds], 2000). Importantly, home-spaces are not spaces of unified experience, as Gurney (in McKie and Watson [eds], 2000) indicates when he alludes to home as a space of experiential understanding which is dependant upon one's biography (this biography is inevitably social).

South Africa's historical racist legislation of space hugely impacts embodied physical experiences within South Africa as a (geographical) public home-space⁸⁴. The dual legacies of colonisation and apartheid in South Africa have also impacted notions of home-spaces in this context. Historically, South Africa as a (geographical) public home-space has also been a site of struggle and division. These notions are relevant in relation to the concerns of this dissertation, as the public home-space has often also been associated with the paradox of belonging and dislocation (Pather, 2004b). In South Africa this paradox is reminiscent of a history of racial tensions and racist legislation⁸⁵ that has resulted in notions of home that are multiple and fragmented and which also engage home-spaces as simultaneously private and public spaces.

Indeed the very meaning of 'home' changes with experience of decolonisation, of radicalisation. At times home is nowhere. At times, one knows only extreme estrangement and alienation. Then home is no longer just one place. It is ever-changing perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference. One confronts and accepts dispersal and fragmentation as part of the construction of a new world order that reveals more fully where we

⁸³ The connotations of this situation of home as 'private' are important since home-spaces are often viewed as separate from the greater socio-political, cultural climates in which they are located.

⁸⁴ This has been detailed in chapters one and two of this dissertation.

⁸⁵ As has been detailed in chapter two of this dissertation.

are, who we can become, an order that does not demand forgetting. (hooks, 1990:148)

In the quotation above African-American feminist activist bell hooks (Ibid) engages home as *ever-changing perspectives* that engage conceptual understandings of a home-space, as well as notions of home as a socio-political spatial formation. She engages home as a multiple and fragmented concept, which includes conceptual, architectural and geographical understandings of home-spaces. In the context of post-colonial South Africa, understandings of home become contested and fluid, rather than static singular living spaces. Home, in post-colonial/post-apartheid South Africa, becomes a concept that is both literal and metaphorical as it relates to historical spatial and racial divisions and how these divisions have impacted upon contemporary living spaces in the 'New South Africa'.

The concept of home, in straddling both private and public spaces/places/locations is important in relation to situating Pather's performance work *Home* as a public engagement of private home-spaces. These ideas are important in relation to situating *Home* within realms of site-specific performance, as too are they important in engaging ideas around space and home-spaces as historically and socially produced. These ideas echo ideas articulated in the first chapter of this dissertation around space as a contested area of cultural and political production and inter(re)action. These ideas too are important in relation to Pather's concerns in *Home* around private and public South African home-spaces and how these home-spaces are situated in relation to what he terms 'global unease' (Appendix E). This situation is also articulated in the context of the twenty-first century and discourses relating to a shrinking world where: "In the dizzying interface of national, cultural, linguistic and religious traditions, the once-clear definitions of 'us' and 'them' are being blurred" (Kim, 2001:1). Into this is filtered the idea that space does not exist in a vacuum, but as with any social formation it has a history "and one cannot fail to take note of this inevitable interlocking of time with space" (Foucault, 1984 in Faubion [ed], 2000a: 176). The importance of this space-time continuum is relative to the emergence of Pather's site-specific dance theatre in the 'New South Africa' and is also important in relation to later engagements with Pather's *Home* as it relates to intercultural performance practices (Schechner, 1991; Pavis, 1993; Bharucha, 1996; Holledge et al, 2000)⁸⁶.

Before advancing with any discussion in relation to Pather's *Home*, it is necessary to offer a brief descriptive account of the work so as to situate it in relation to the concerns of this dissertation as they have been outlined thus far.

4.2 Home – a descriptive account:

This descriptive account of Pather's *Home* will provide the impetus for critique and analysis in later sections of this chapter. Like *CityScapes*, *Home* falls within the parameters of Pather's site-specific dance theatre repertoire, due to its performance locations existing outside the confines of conventional theatre spaces (Bentley, 1968): "Pather's dance piece consists of nine 'homely'

⁸⁶ The point here is that interculturalism begs the awareness that intercultural performance practices do not occur in a cultural vacuum, but rather they exist within larger socio-cultural networks.

locations and furthers his preoccupation with place" (Krouse, 2003:5). Sharing many similarities with *CityScapes*, *Home* was concerned with the dissection and deconstruction of space, it too engaged multi-media and it also found its second phase of performance at The Durban Art Gallery (in 2003). What follows is information that was printed on flyers for distribution before *Home* was installed for performance at The Durban Art Gallery:

Home was commissioned by the National Arts Festival for [the 2003] National Arts Festival and was chosen as one of 10 "Must See" productions at the Festival by *The Star*, in Johannesburg. This production comprises a series of works set inside various home spaces: a bedroom, a kitchen, playground, a solitary uncluttered space, a migrant worker's cubicle and a lounge. In the main, the works revisit the paradox of the desire for both security and freedom, restlessness and the aching need for rest. *Home* also serves as a metaphor (through its use of a range of visual imagery, dance and performance styles) for larger, global impulses of inward looking in the threat of change. As with *CityScapes*, *Home* is also an exciting collaboration between dance and the visual arts. (Pather, *Home* publicity flyer: 2003)

Home consisted of a series of danced fragments⁸⁷ all located in suggested home-spaces, encompassing both interior and exterior locations. For the most part, the fragments that made up *Home* were danced by relatively fewer dancers than the works performed as part of the *CityScapes* series; a decision primarily based on the intimacy associated with many interior home-spaces.

For *Home*, Pather constructed a multi-layered vision of home as a series of spaces which contain personal, cultural and political exchanges. His vision of the home-space was constructed around the idea that home is "a space we yearn for and hate, desire and desire to flee from when the boundaries of civility and accommodation are replaced by doubt and discomfort" (Pather, 2004b:1). In terms of this work fitting within a site-specific mould, its location outside of any conventional theatre space and location within designed and de-constructed home-spaces situated on the periphery of the greater gallery spaces in which it was contained, locating the audience in the centre of the spaces and action, also re-defined the theatrical use of space and challenged the theatrical and spatial notion of theatre-in-the-round⁸⁸. In its original form at The Great Hall in Grahamstown, these designed home-spaces were situated around the periphery of the singular hall space that housed the production, upon its re-location within The Durban Art Gallery; the works were placed in various gallery spaces – with the same focus of placing the audience at the centre of the peripheral performance spaces. Thus, unlike *CityScapes* which primarily found its articulation in reaction and relation to various architectural and natural geographical settings and floor surfaces, *Home* provided designed locations in which the series of fragmented *Home* performances took place.

The concept of home within the performance of *Home* encompassed notions of private home spaces and public home spaces. This was evident in the set-design by Storm Janse van Rensburg that actively de-constructed the performance/audience spaces by placing the audience at the centre of the

⁸⁷ The use of 'fragments' here is indicative of the structure of *Home* as a designed cross section of home-spaces which housed various self-contained performed fragments that made up *Home*.

⁸⁸ 'Theatre in the round' within theatrical spatial configurations is understood as a theatre space where the stage-space/acting area is surrounded by the audience-space/auditorium, on all sides (usually these spaces are circular – hence the name 'theatre in the round').

greater performance spaces that housed *Home*. Holledge and Tompkins (2000:106) engage the importance of the location of the audience in relation to performance practices and exchanges:

The location of the audience (geographical as well as distance from stage, or interactive possibilities with the actors on stage) can affect the audience's subject positioning. Theatre space, like any space, exists in a particular physical and metaphysical place within the social sphere. This is perhaps easiest to see in the context of South African theatre space during apartheid.

The *Home* set consisted of a series of fragmented home settings some indicative of interior home spaces as with *kitchen*, others provided exterior home settings as with *playground* while others still provided in-transit living spaces as with *hotel* and *hostel* where a hotel room and migrant workers hostel were symbolically re-constructed and represented as small home-fragments within the greater *Home* set. These home settings are also situated on the periphery of the greater performance (gallery spaces): "The work happens in the round – with the audience in the middle of the action. Each scene is danced on a length of cheap, garish linoleum" (Krouse, 2003:5). In addition to this set design, Pather's conception of *Home* included the public/private dichotomy in relation to contemporary issues of 'global unease' (Appendix E). This is alluded to in his programme note for the work:

With the very foundations of war taking on a completely new face, the phrase 'threat closer to home' has become palable in global unease, the inviolate home becomes refuge and once more a symbol of sanctity. Shifting identities however, keep home truths in flux and the home, just as notions of "the people" or the family, have become all flux. Hotels and cardboard boxes and bomb shelters thrive as homes while picket-fenced suburbia caves in, give in to fluid identities or acquire steel gates to restore sanctity and uneasy safety. This provides the impetus for *Home*. (Appendix E)

In engaging 'global impulses' Pather's *Home* also provides a moment of cultural production that engages notions of interculturalism as a (site-specific) performance practice (Schechner, 1991).

4.3 Intercultural inter(re)actions in the 'Rainbow Nation':

In South Africa, the dismantling of apartheid has foregrounded [the concept of interculturalism] with greater force and freshness since there [are] a great deal more open encounters amongst people and we all have to deal with the myth of the Rainbow Nation and that rather silly television jingle: Simunye – we are one! (Pather, 2000:1)

The notion of a 'rainbow nation' within post-apartheid South Africa has rendered discourses of multiculturalism a point of contestation and dis-satisfaction. The notion of multiculturalism as it is understood in this dissertation proves inadequate in understanding and dissecting post-apartheid South African performance practices as modes of cultural production (Loots, 2000; Pather, 2000).

As has been argued in relation to *CityScapes*, multiculturalism in post-apartheid performance practices has often provided an under-critical engagement into cultural production in relation to issues around cultural ownership and (spatial) access. For this reason, it is useful to draw from Schechner's (1991) conception

of interculturalism as it relates to performance making and performance practice. Schechner (1991:30) articulates:

Interculturalists explore misunderstandings, broken messages, and failed translations – what is not pure and what cannot successfully fuse. These are not disasters but become fertile rifts of creative possibilities.

Schechner's notion of interculturalism provides a critical counter-point to multicultural performance practices in that it provides an impulse for cultural exchange rather than cultural ownership (Loots, 2000). In relation to Pather's working practices this notion of interculturalism provides a point of challenge to notions of cultural ownership and (spatial) access in relation, in this case, to specific dance forms (and in this chapter, within specific deconstructed and designed home-spaces).

This said, intercultural performance practices are not neutral, and should not be adopted uncritically (Bharucha, 1996; Pavis, 1996). In any cultural exchange there exists the possibility for the emergence of a 'dominant culture' and 'subordinate cultures' (Ibid). Since interculturalism exists often in the context of cultural exchange it is important to recognise the power dynamics present within any exchange or inter(re)action (Bharucha, 1996). Given previous debates in relation to cultural ownership and the historical processes of the systematic valuing and devaluing cultures⁸⁹, (in South Africa) it is important to engage interculturalism as a practice that is embedded in power relations. In relation to Pather's *Home* and his conception regarding this series of site-specific works in relation to the context of "global unease" (Appendix E); ideas of interculturalism are placed within a global context thus placing post-apartheid South Africa in relation to an 'international community'. This placement situates post-apartheid South Africa within the context of broader cultural power relations. This placement too is significant in relation to *Home* and previously discussed notions of physical private and public home-spaces, as these encompass historical socio-cultural and political practices that have impacted the (material and metaphorical) (re)shaping of the 'New South Africa' both as a geographical space, and in relation to historical processes that have shaped its emergence within the context of post-colonial/post-apartheid discourses. Thus the notion of interculturalism in theory and in practice is immersed in notions of space/place/location. Holledge and Tompkins (2000:89) provide support for this view of interculturalism in performance when they articulate: "the ways in which space determines the nature of intercultural encounters and the ways in which space can be manipulated in intercultural performance". This line of thought is extended further when Holledge and Tompkins in their book *Women's Intercultural Performance* (2000) go on to argue:

The construction of space in culture (and theatre) helps to determine social systems of meaning and representation. In one of the most basic and insightful arguments about spatiality, Michel de Certeau asserts that '[s]patial practices in fact secretly structure the determining conditions of social life' (de Certeau, 1984:96). One need only consider the effect of various architectural designs [...] to understand how the organisation of space governs social existence. (2000:89)

These above discussed notions are relative to site-specific performance practices as they are informed through notions of space. Further to this, in line with debates engaged in the first chapter of this dissertation, the (embodied)

⁸⁹ These debates are in chapter two and three of this dissertation.

performer is at the centre of performed intercultural exchanges and so it is necessary to engage the politics of space/place/location as too is it necessary to acknowledge how these relate to the body as a site: "The body is not an essence and therefore not an anatomical destiny: it is one's primary location in the world, one's primary situation in reality" (Braidotti, 1991:219 in Holledge et al, 2000:110). Here too, Foucault's (1979) conception of biopower provides a way of engaging such embodied, spatial and cultural exchanges (not as separate entities, but rather as interconnected material and discursive power relations).

It is important too, in the context of intercultural exchanges, to engage interculturalism within the greater global context and how this relates to notions of space/place/location. Henri Lefebvre (in Merrifield, 2006:122) engages global spatial exchanges when he situates the contemporary society in relation to global cultural exchanges and 'uneven development', articulating that ours is:

[a] world in which information technology collapses distances between continents and fosters cultural and market exchanges, yet simultaneously reifies "uneven development" between (and within) richer and poorer countries.

Thus, interculturalism as it is conceived and utilised here, encompasses notions of spatial cultural exchange and interaction within notions of site as it includes embodied spatial interactions and exchanges. This notion of interculturalism will be explored in the next section of this chapter in relation to Pather's *Home*.

4.4 Performing *Home*, at home in the 'New South Africa':

When one considers home – the actual place as well as Jay Pather's work of the same name – one cannot but situate oneself in relation to the objects of desire that characterise it. In this work produced by Durban's Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre, these objects are skewed to represent not the haven we think of lovingly, but rather the battleground we remember in the nightmare of youth. (Krouse, 2003:5)

Home as it is located within the 'New South Africa' provides a platform from which to investigate notions of home-spaces in relation to intercultural exchange within Pather's site-specific performance work. In relation to the performance of *Home*, Pather's concept of home-spaces was multiple and included the following home-spaces in its structure:

Kitchen took place in the home-space of the kitchen. *Hotel*, from the *CityScapes* series was relocated and formed part of the *Home* series – offering a 'bedroom'; *Untitled* one of Pather's early works was re-visited and provided the lounge-space within the home. A solitary space was created for *Hostel*, a solo-work which provided images of the apartheid hostel spaces which became a home-away-from-home for many black men who worked on the gold-mines during apartheid governance in South Africa. *Canopy* provided a living room within the home, that Pather chose to engage as a prison for women who historically have been relegated within the (private) confines of the home. Another slice of home – was the exterior playground/garden setting where a series of sculptures were installed – the understanding that home-spaces are both interior and exterior. Backed by a video installation by Storm Janse van Rensburg, of Durban's cityscape, *Travelling* offered an in-between home-space in its movement between exterior and interior home-spaces. *Door* another segment of *Home* occupied a neutral space with free standing (and movable doors), locating doors

as integral within the structure of the private home-space as they provide both places of entry and exit into and out of the home-space, and boundaries of separation between interior and exterior home-spaces. Another area provided in Pather's *Home* was a neutral area with a big video wall where two sections of choreography around home rituals⁹⁰ were undertaken. These rituals involved mundane everyday rituals like brushing ones teeth, but also rituals of arrival and departure to and from the home-space.

These performance fragments that collectively combined to produce *Home* were also combined with video installations which at times re-inforced the performance action within the various designed home-spaces; and at others served as a point of linkage to connected global concerns. This is re-iterated in Pather's (Appendix E) programme notes for *Home* when he states:

In global unease, the inviolate home becomes refuge and once more a symbol of sanctity. Shifting identities however, keep home truths in flux and the home, just as notions of "the people" or the family, have become all flux [...] This provides the impetus for *Home*.

Thus Pather actively locates his *Home* series within a broader global context, situating home within the context of diverse local and global conceptions of home-spaces (as both public geographical locations and private architectural settings). The realisation of this situation in the performances of *Home* was mediated through his collaborative use of video installation, cultural iconography and carefully selected and juxtaposed dance and movement forms. In relation to previous debates around *Home* as it relates to intercultural performance practices, Pather's reaction to notions of a 'threat closer to home' become points from which to navigate this series of works in relation to interculturalism both in theory and performance practice.

In performance *Home* opened with recorded television footage of American president George Bush Junior's 'War on Terror' in Baghdad⁹¹. This footage was projected onto a large video screen behind the designed (exterior) home-space where the segment *Playground* was performed. *Playground* provided an exterior home-space with green Astroturf providing the floor surface, combined with a series of wrought-iron sculptures by artist Milijana Babic (Appendix E). These sculptures included "a wrought iron swing caught in mid-air without an occupant" (Appendix E), a sawn-off slide and half of a see-saw; creating an image not of "a playground, [but] more an obstacle course" (Krouse, 2003:5). This subversion of playground spaces as places of potential danger provided an unsettling image of 'home'. This image in relation to a 'War on Terror'⁹² as imaged in the video back drop provided points of linkage to the global impact of war.

The performance space of *Playground* became reminiscent of a battle-ground in performance with its unfinished playground utilities not fit for use. The location of this segment of *Home* and its physical performance location within South Africa provides points of linkage between notions of South Africa as a home-space, historically scarred by racial segregation and apartheid's race wars and how

⁹⁰ Such 'home rituals' included habitual home routines like brushing ones teeth. These home-rituals were performed through mime.

⁹¹ This footage was recorded from an SABC 3 news report in 2003.

⁹² This 'War on Terror' is George Bush Junior's response to 11 September 2001 attacks on America's World Trade Centre, and has filtered into a global rhetoric relating to the notion of a 'War on Terror'.

these may or may not relate to contemporary notions of a 'War on Terror' which incidentally also includes notions of race within its pursuit of justice through war. In relation to interculturalism as a performance practice this segment of *Home* engages a notion of home not merely as an isolated, private physical location, but rather situates such private home-spaces within the context of global interaction, engaging a cultural and historical cross-over and exchange which opens up interrogations into binary categorisations of "us" and "them" in relation to geographical spatial locations as home-spaces (Kim, 2000).

Pather's impulse to situate home as a simultaneously private and public space was at the core of each segment of *Home*. These private and public spaces include both physical home-spaces, but also engage private and public spaces on a discursive level. This is evident in *Kitchen*:

In a bare kitchen are a table and an old cupboard, filled with Lucky Star pilchard tins. Above the cupboard one of the dancers hangs motionless as Christ on the crucifix while a woman sits next to it staring past the audience, her face caked with red mask. She is an unmistakable figure in the domestic imagination of South Africa. (Small, 2003:1)⁹³

Kitchen provided a visual and danced mixture which included African traditional dance (in the form of Shembe) and Western Christian iconography (an image of a Christ figure hanging on a cross). Through the use of African and Western traditional iconography Pather provided at moments synchronicity where Western and African signifiers found points of connection, as seen in the still silent domestic figure and the live Christ figure who, like the Greek chorus, bared silent witness to the at times violent and at times tender danced interactions between the two performers, Neliswa Rushualang and Siyanda Duma. There were also moments of tension and clash in relation to Pather's subversion of expected gender roles in this segment of *Home*:

In a township kitchen, [...] there are cheap tins of pilchards on a shelf – hardly a mother cooked meal [...] the wife dances with money literally pinned to her (could this indicate that she is the breadwinner?) while the husband falls apart along with the kitchen sink. (Krouse, 2003:5)

This layering of the work through identifiable imagery, and dissection of contemporary cultural expectations actively dispels contemporary myths around the promotion of a *simunye* culture within the 'New South Africa'.

In *Hotel*, originally from Pather's *CityScapes* series in Durban, and then later re-located for performances in Johannesburg, Pather engaged a reconstruction of the original site of performance (Durban's Albany Hotel) but utilised video artist Jo Radcliffe's video footage from its re-located performance at the Devonshire Hotel in Braamfontien, Johannesburg. In situating this work simultaneously (physically) in Durban, and through the use of video, simultaneously in Johannesburg; *Hotel* provided a highly specific inter-racial relationship within a non-specified hotel room providing at once a schism between Durban and Johannesburg and also apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. Here again Pather's pursuit is one that seeks to dispel contemporary drives towards multiculturalism in performance as these often ignore historical processes that situate contemporary cultural production in relation to notions of cultural

⁹³ Khara-Jade Small the writer of the review: *Home is where the art is*, from which this segment is drawn was, at the time of her writing, a Masters student in Fine Art at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

ownership and access. The performers in this piece Denton Douglas and Ntombi Gasa engage dance theatre in the extreme, where they “literally inhabit the space defined for them” (Krouse, 2003:5). Pather’s active, if often implicit, engagement with the historical processes within the South African context serve to locate his work within the context of intercultural awarenesses to dispel myths of a unified ‘Rainbow Nation’.

Another of Pather’s *Home* fragments was located in a migrant worker’s hostel:

One episode stands out for its relevance to the unfortunate personal history of millions of South African men. Sphelele Nzama⁹⁴ plays a lone mineworker in a hostel, dancing solo, imagining a woman he cannot have. Above him Pather has chosen to use the astounding photography of Angela Buckland – images she presented in a series of 100 hostel-dwellers’ beds. (Krouse, 2003:5)

Hostel engaged apartheid history in relation to notions of the home-space. This particular segment of home provided a link between historical division and legislation of space and its impact upon contemporary social (and oftentimes spatial) division. Here Pather offered the interconnections between public legislation and its influence regarding access to and ownership of (private) spaces. In this *Home*-fragment Pather seemed to be engaging notions of settlement within conceptions of home-spaces:

The business of settlement is critical: staking out territory, demarcating, designing and inhabiting a territory defines the activity that is home. What of the person who has no real claim to the space in which they live, or are made to live: the squatter, the migrant worker, the domestic worker, the homeless? Who controls that space and defines its boundaries? Here we move from settlement to unsettlement, from roots to rootlessness, from home to exile. (Small, 2003:1)

In this *Home*-segment also existed an implicit engagement with the notion of a ‘remembered home-space’ (hooks, 1990). This Pather captured in the time gap between the ‘Old South Africa’ under apartheid legislation and the ‘New South Africa’ with its drive towards democracy. In relation to his dismissal of multicultural aesthetic practices, Pather’s focus was not on the creation of a hostel space that exists in an historical vacuum. Rather, he engaged this work in a dialectical relationship with the impact that apartheid legislation has had upon contemporary access to and use of space in the ‘New South Africa’.

Canopy, engaged two classical Indian dance forms – Bharatha Natyam, and Kathak – in a home-space reminiscent of a living-room:

an Indian woman in a monumental dress floats in on a tea trolley, goddess-like, while her husband, wearing a shirt saying ‘Basketball is Life’ watches television in the lounge. They mime. She washes the dishes and prepares food while he eats and gets very excited about what’s on TV. When she does not respond to his calls he goes in with a rifle and chases the man pushing the tea trolley out from underneath her skirt. (Small, 2003:2)

This danced *Home*-fragment was an exploration between two classical Indian dance forms; Kathak and Bharatha Natyam. Further to this rhythmic exploration Pather placed this exploration within the context of gendered divisions within private home-spaces. Overt explorations of cultural difference were displayed in

⁹⁴ This review segment was written in relation to the Grahamstown National Arts Festival performances of *Home* where guest dancer to Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre, Sphelele Nzama performed this solo. Mdu Mtshali performed this segment of *Home* at The Durban Art Gallery performances.

this *Home*-fragment: initially and overtly between two Indian religious and cultural performance forms, which provided the foundation for the myriad cultural explorations that were present in this work. As with *Kitchen* and its use of African/Western iconography in a fluid often uneasy relationship, tensions and similarities between Traditional Indian and Western cultures were explored. Pather achieved this through his representational use of iconography and imagery, like for instance, a t-shirt that reads 'Basketball is Life', which hints towards the impact and influence of the United States of America on many world-cultures; this in relation to the television set as a symbol and mechanism of consumerism become profound engagements with culture and power, signifying dominant socio-cultural discourses as American within the 'New South Africa'.

Pather's *Lounge*, a re-visitation of one of his earlier works *Untitled*, 1998 provided an engagement with local cultural iconography that is symbolic of Pather's performance works. In *Lounge* Pather made use of his infamous 'spirit figures': dancers painted from head to toe with traditional white clay (*Umceko*)⁹⁵, in this instance, clad in saris and wearing dark sun-glasses. Pather admits that these figures are representative and reminiscent of ghosts of the past, of secrets untold and underlying forces within human nature (Appendix A/C). In this *Home*-fragment, two men engage contemporary dance as a form to explore an intimate relationship that is at times aggressive and competitive and at other times fragile and tender. This exploration of a same-sex relationship, performed by Siyanda Duma and Vusi Thabete who are joined by two spirit figures, Eric Shabalala and Mdu Mtshali, provided a view of home that is a place of privacy and secrets. In addition to this the performance of a same-sex relationship between two Zulu men also resonates contemporary popular discourse around gay black men as unAfrican⁹⁶.

Door had no set location, but rather provided points of entry and exit into the greater *Home* space(s). For *Door*:

[T]wo dancers wearing red clown noses perform between coloured doors on wheels, teasing each other and playing. But even then, there is an uneasiness that sits under the surface reflecting the tragic-comic paradox at the centre of all homes. (Small, 2003:2)

In this segment Pather used free-standing doors as points of entry and exit into places of safety and danger. Performers Eric Shabalala and Mpume Gasas were locked in a surreal relationship of playfulness and youth, but beneath this surface one has to situate this *Home*-fragment in relation to the context of *Home* in its entirety. This work seemed to provide the schism of home-spaces as both private (interior) and public (exterior), thus engaging the complexities of the formal properties of home-spaces as these are culturally constructed and encoded.

Ultimately *Home* should be viewed in its entirety not as separate segments of the same work. Part of the impact of Pather's *Home* in its critical examination of

⁹⁵ Umceko is a traditional white clay substance, used in ritual ceremonies where either the entire body, or parts of it are 'painted' white.

⁹⁶ The notion that black gay men are 'unAfrican' is a common social and cultural understanding in South Africa. While it is not within the scope of this dissertation to engage notions of 'black masculinities'; it is worth mentioning in light of this 'Home-fragment'.

home-spaces lies in the juxtaposition of each of these works in relation to one another:

Within this collective of pink fluffy slippers, hotel-rooms, Xhosa-like figures painted in white wearing sunglasses and devils, kitchen tables, brides and basins, the domestic space is politicised and poeticised so that the ordinary becomes miraculous and the ritual of everyday becomes a record of our past and a portend of our future. (Small, 2003:2)

Concluding remarks:

Pather's *Home*, unlike *CityScapes* is not overtly site-specific in its engagement of/within actual public locations. However, in line with the extended notion of site provided in chapter one, *Home* fits into conceptions of site-specificity in performance. The deconstruction of the performance space in relation to the set design for *Home* is testimony to this. It's location within the South African context, and active pursuit of an aesthetic outside of multicultural standards within the 'New South Africa' also locates Pather's *Home* as an instance of intercultural performance. Such intercultural performance practices provide insight into historical processes of cultural ownership and contemporary cultural power relations, which render notions of a 'Rainbow Nation' in need of critical investigation and re-evaluation.

Intercultural performance practices, while immersed within greater power relations (which are often reminiscent of geographical situation and historical processes like colonisation and apartheid for instance) provide greater insight into current cultural practices within the 'New South Africa'. Such an insight is integral in addressing notions of cultural and spatial ownership and perhaps negotiating the space between old established categories of difference that still persist twelve years into South Africa's democracy.

Conclusion

Site-determined, site-oriented, site-referenced, site-conscious, site-responsive, site-related. These are some new terms that have emerged in recent years among many artists and critics to account for the various permutations of site-specific art in the present. (Kwon, 2004:1)

Notions of site are multiple, contested, cultural and political. They are immersed in power relationships that hinge on notions of private and public in relation to embodied-sites, the body as a site and also public architectural/natural/geographical sites. Site-specific performance practices are one medium through which an extended notion of site can be articulated and demonstrated. Through interrogating the notion of site, to include the body as a site, this dissertation has engaged the complexities of *site* within site-specific dance theatre. Furthermore, it has provided a platform to engage the South African context, and its historical legislation of bodies and geographical spaces/places/locations. Foucault's (1979) notion of 'biopower' in conjunction with Dear and Flusty's (2002) conception of 'human geographies' provide useful insight into the dynamic power inter-play between sites as spaces and bodies as sites. These insights have also been useful in relation to the two case studies provided for interrogation in this dissertation: Jay Pather's *CityScapes* and *Home*. These case studies have provided two instances of local South African site-specific dance theatre up for scrutiny, critique and reflection in relation to Pather's performance processes and practices and the theoretical foundations laid out in the first two chapters of this dissertation. As has been argued, in the 'New South Africa', site-specific dance theatre provides a mechanism for socio-cultural and political questioning and critique. Discourses and practices that relate to multiculturalism and interculturalism provide points of exposure relating to notions of culture as political and performance as one mode of cultural production (Loots, 2001).

This is evident, as has been argued, in relation to Jay Pather's *CityScapes* and *Home*. *CityScapes*, in its public exploration of some of Durban's prominent sites and spaces, may be used to engage site-specific dance theatre in relation to notions of cultural ownership and access. These issues are rife in the 'New South Africa' with current nation building strategies which promote a *simunye* culture through the notion of a 'rainbow nation'. The notion of a 'rainbow nation' when placed under scrutiny falls flat, and Pather's *CityScapes* has been utilised as a case-study to investigate and interrogate this notion and its ties specifically to Schechner's (1991) conception of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism according to Schechner, in performance and social practice, in essence does not challenge old established boundaries between cultural ownership and accessibility; rather it re-establishes the separatist discourses that are embedded in South Africa's history (Loots, 2000). *CityScapes* evokes questions relating to its public performance spaces and who accesses/is allowed to access these spaces. In conjunction, *CityScapes* also engages notions relating to cultural ownership of specific dance forms. South Africa's racist historical legislation of space has had profound impacts upon the 'New South Africa' and issues of cultural and racial ownership; thus, often South African audiences are exposed to under-critical portrayals of a *Simunye* culture where for instance, racial ownership of various

performance; and in this instance – dance forms – is un-critically accepted⁹⁷. *CityScapes* as it emerged from and found its performances within the 'New South Africa', provides one example of contemporary cultural production that may provide insight into the pit-falls of *simunye*. Pather's *CityScapes*, when viewed in conjunction with Schechner's ideas around the inadequacies of multiculturalism, draws focus to issues around historical privilege in South Africa. This critique of multicultural performance practices lays bare the often un-equal power base between the cultural forms and cultural ownership in the 'New South Africa'.

Pather's *Home* provides further critique of multiculturalism as an aesthetic marker. Through Pather's choice to engage "global unease" (Appendix E), *Home* engages the notion of global cultural exchange and ownership, which the notions of multiculturalism and *simunye* can not adequately account for. In line with Schechner's (1991) conception of interculturalism Pather's *Home* dispels the myth of *Simunye* and actively pursues moments of tension and clash between cultures. This exploration provides potential to explore and engage the unequal power relations between cultures. This exploration too, provides awareness around dance theatre as a powerful mechanism for social, cultural and political critique.

Site-specific dance theatre in the 'New South Africa' provides insight into the impact of historical legislative processes around racial accesses to or lack thereof in this context. Pather (2004), in his acknowledgement that performance is political also engages critical modes of collaborative performance making in the South African context. In his pursuit to create and engage *accessible* (Appendix A/B/C) work Pather often also challenges standard aesthetic markers like multiculturalism (as with *CityScapes* and *Home*). Thus while it is arguable whether or not Pather successfully creates *accessible* products, it is undeniable that his work seeks to deconstruct the contemporary myth that markets South Africa as a *simunye* culture under the guise of a 'rainbow nation'. In this light, Pather's site-specific works can provide points of exploration of the spaces in-between, where the bands of the rainbow meet/clash/dialogue/disagree.

Much of the theorisation provided in this document has been layered onto *CityScapes* and *Home* in order to elevate dance practice within academic study. And, while the readings of Pather's works provided herein, may not necessarily concur with his own intentions and processes; it is important to recognise Pather's own articulate recognition of his site-specific dance theatre as a mechanism for critical cultural production:

I think that the politics of [...] space are, or rather have to be quite... you know is very significant to me. I think there is a simple notion that we are a democratic society now... constantly, is something that I'm fascinated with and I keep trying to press against and try to push and see just how democratic we are. I find that actually spaces carry a history against which this kind of questioning and all of that can really happen... with, you know... with dexterity... with a fair amount of dexterity. (Pather, Appendix D)

⁹⁷ Such racial ownership of dance forms can be seen in common (social) assumptions around Ballet as a primarily 'white-owned' and 'white-practiced/accessed' dance form and Gumboot as a primarily 'black-owned' and 'black-practiced/accessed' dance form, for instance.

This all said, important questions around the life of site-specific dance theatre in South Africa out-side of Jay Pather's production of the form, need to be raised and subsequently addressed. There have been relatively few other local performers and artists who have decided to engage site-specific dance theatre as a formal genre. Many established artists/choreographers overwhelmingly choose to create work within the confines of conventional theatre spaces,⁹⁸ one possible reason for this may be due to South Africa's historical legislation which prohibited access of many local artists to formal public theatre spaces through enforcement of, amongst others, 'The Group Areas Act', 1950. Perhaps the historical prohibition of access to formal theatre spaces which forced many of South Africa's artists of colour to create and perform works in non-conventional/traditional theatre spaces, has resulted in a contemporary preference towards using formal theatre spaces. This may be one possible reason for the relatively small occurrence of site-specific performance work being made in the 'New South Africa'.

While there are a hand-full of young artists/choreographers who have considered and worked within the genre of site-specific dance theatre, often this engagement has been short lived, and often also in close association with Jay Pather in his capacity as a facilitator to the working processes of these young practitioners. *Republic: performing the body politic* (2004) and *PARADISE* (2005), two site-specific dance theatre ventures which formed part of the *JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience* over 2004 and 2005, were both conceived and facilitated by Pather. These projects took the form of a series of workshops with local choreographers, video artists, experimental architects and gallery curators; participants were selected from a pool of young dance makers in Durban. The aim of these projects was the culmination of an evening of new site-specific/installation collaborative dance theatre works at Albany Grove⁹⁹ and ArtSpace¹⁰⁰ (for *Republic*) and The KZNSA Art Gallery (for *PARADISE*). While these two projects provided a platform for young dancers and dance-makers to engage site-specific dance theatre as a possible formal choice; none of the participants have continued on in this vein, subsequent works that have been presented by the participants of these projects have all, without fail been made for conventional theatre spaces. Perhaps this is a point of departure for further research in this area, as to possible reasons for the lack of engagement with site-specific dance theatre in Durban, and South Africa in general.

In closing, perhaps this document may serve as a future starting point to engage further academic research into local contemporary dance in South Africa, an often under-acknowledged area of academic study:

No art suffers more misunderstanding, sentimental judgement, and mystical interpretation than the art of dance. Its critical literature, or worse yet its uncritical literature, pseudo-ethnological and pseudo-aesthetic, makes weary reading. (Suzanne Langer, in Redfern, 1988:15)

⁹⁸ Either Proscenium Arch spaces, Thrust Stages, Theatre-in-the-Round or Open-Air Theatre spaces.

⁹⁹ Albany Grove is a street in Durban's city centre, it runs between the local Playhouse Complex and The Albany Hotel.

¹⁰⁰ ArtSpace is a Durban Art Gallery Space.

Bibliography:

Primary Sources

Performances/ performance viewings:

CityScapes, 2002. Conceived and directed by Jay Pather. Performed at various locations in and around Durban's C.B.D, and The Durban Art Gallery.

Home, 2003. Conceived and directed by Jay Pather. Performed at The Durban Art Gallery.

Interviews:

Craighead, C. (2002). *Interview with Jay Pather*. See Appendix A.

Maherry, W. (2002). *Interview with Jay Pather*. See Appendix B.

Craighead, C. (2005). *Interview with Jay Pather*. See Appendix C.

Programme notes:

Original Programme Notes from *CityScapes* (2002). See Appendix D.

Original Programme Notes from *Home* (2003). See Appendix E.

Press Releases:

Pather, J. (2002). '*CityScapes*' press release. See Appendix F.

Electronic Mail Questionnaire:

Craighead, C. (2005). *Electronic Questionnaire for Thando Mama*. See Appendix G.

Unpublished Sources:

Unpublished dissertations:

Castelyn, S. (2000). *A Feminist Poststructuralist Examination Around the Utilisation of The Body as a Contested Site of Struggle for Meaning in Contemporary Theatre Dance in South Africa*. Unpublished MA dissertation. University of Natal: Durban.

Unpublished conference papers:

Loots, L. (1999). "Articulating the Unspoken" – *Gender and Race (and Cultural) Constructions of the Moving Body in Contemporary Dance Theatre in South Africa (with specific reference to the Kwa-Zulu Natal context)*. A presentation paper by Loots at Confluences 2: 'Articulating the Unspoken' at the School of Dance; University of Cape Town. 14 – 17 July 1999. Reprinted by Drama and Performance Studies

Programme – University of Natal (Durban) in *Honours: Contemporary Dance, History and Aesthetics coursework guide*, 2002. Pp 22 – 32.

Loots, L. (2000). *The Politics of Appropriation: Inter-Culturalism and the use of Classical Indian Dance in Contemporary Choreography In the South African Context*. A presentation paper by Loots at Nritya-sammelan – a conference for Indian Dance. 5-7 May 2000, The Playhouse Company, Durban. Reprinted by Drama and Performance Studies Programme – University of Natal (Durban) in *Elective: dance and choreography manual*, 2001. Pp 110 – 112.

Pather, J. (2000). *Interculturalism: What's the Deal?* A presentation paper by Pather at Nritya-sammelan – a conference for Indian Dance. 5-7 May 2000, The Playhouse Company, Durban. Reprinted by Drama and Performance Studies Programme – University of Natal (Durban) in *Elective: Dance and Choreography Manual (Drama 3B)*, 2001. Pp 106 – 109.

Local Publications

Books:

Gunner, L. (ed). (2001). *Politics and Performance: Theatre, Poetry and Song in Southern Africa*. Witwatersrand University Press: Johannesburg, South Africa.

Pather, J. (2004a). *Keynote Address*. In *African Contemporary Dance? Questioning Issues of a Performance Aesthetic for a Developing and Independent Continent*. A published proceedings of the 7th Jomba! Contemporary Dance Conference, held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. 22-24 August, 2004. Coordinated by the Centre for Creative Arts: © University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Sichel, A. (2004). *Keynote Address: A Declaration of Humanity – the Evolution of Contemporary Dance in Africa*. In *African Contemporary Dance? Questioning Issues of a Performance Aesthetic for a Developing and Independent Continent*. A published proceedings of the 7th Jomba! Contemporary Dance Conference, held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. 22-24 August, 2004. Coordinated by the Centre for Creative Arts: © University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Journal Articles:

Hall, S. (1997). *Random Thoughts Provoked by the Conference: "Identities, Democracy, Culture and Communication in Southern Africa"*. In *Critical Arts: A Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol.11 No. 1 & 2, 1997. Pp 1 – 16.

Loots, L. (1995). *Colonised Bodies: Overcoming Gender Constructions of Bodies in Dance and Movement Education in South Africa*. In *The South African Theatre Journal*, Vol.9 No. 1 September, 1995. Pp 51 – 59.

Loots, L. (2001). *Re-situating Culture in the Body Politic*. In *Agenda* vol. 49: *Culture: Transgressing Boundaries*. Pp 9 – 14.

Mackenny, V. (2001). *Post-apartheid Performance Art as a Site of Gender Resistance*. In *Agenda* no.49: *Culture: Transgressing Boundaries*. Pp 15 – 24.

National Arts Council – published documents:

Degenaar, J.J. (1995). *Art and Culture in a Changing South Africa*. Reprinted by Drama and Performance Studies Programme – University of Natal (Durban) in *Multiculturalism and Performance (Drama 1B)*, 2005. Pp 57 – 69.

Local Media (Newspaper articles):

Robertson, H. (2002). *Space Explorer*. Sunday Times, Lifestyle, 14 April, 2002.

Krouse, M. (2003). *Home as a Battleground*. Cue, 28 June, 2003.

International Publications

Books:

Auslander, P. (1997). *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism*. London: Routledge.

Bachelard, G. (1994). *The Poetics of Space: A Classic Look At How We Experience Intimate Places*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Banes, S. (1994). *Writing Dancing in the Age of Postmodernism*. Wedey University Press: Hanover and London.

Bentley, E. (ed). (1968). *The Theory of the Modern Stage*. London: Penguin Books.

Bharucha, R. (1996). *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.

Bloomer, K.C. and Moore, C.W. (1977). *Body, Memory, and Architecture*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Butler, J. (1990/9). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London and New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies That Matter. On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London and New York: Routledge.

Cranny-Francis, A (et al). (2003). *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates*. Hampshire, London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cranny-Francis, A. (2005). *Multimedia*. London, Thousand Oaks – California and New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Dear, M.J. and Flusty, S. (eds). (2002). *The Spaces of Postmodernity: Readings in human geography*. London: Blackwell.

- Desmond, J.C. (1998). *Embodying the Difference: Issues in Dance and Cultural Studies*. In Carter, A. (ed). (1998). *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Duncan, J. and Ley, D. (eds). (1993). *Place/Culture/Representation*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Fanon, F. (1986). *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto Press.
- Faubion, J. (ed). (2000a). *Michel Foucault: Essential Works of Foucault 1954 – 1984: Aesthetics – volume 2*. London: Penguin Books.
- Faubion, J. (ed). (2000b). *Michel Foucault: Essential Works of Foucault 1954 – 1984: Power – volume 3*. London: Penguin Books.
- Ferrell, J. (2001). *Tearing Down the Streets: Adventures in Urban Anarchy*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Foster, S.L. (1998). *Choreographing History*. In Carter, A. (ed). (1998). *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1976). *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*. Translated from French by Alan Sheridan. London: Penguin Books.
- Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*. Translated from French by Alan Sheridan. London: Penguin Books.
- Foucault, M. (1984). *The History of Sexuality. Volume 3: The Care of The Self*. Translated from French by Robert Hurley. London: Penguin Books.
- Goldberg, R. (2004). *Performance: Live Art Since the 60's*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Grossberg, L. (1996). *Identity and Cultural Studies – Is That All There Is?* In Hall, S and du Gay, P. (eds). (1996). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage.
- Hall, S. (1996) *Who Needs Identity?* In Hall, S and du Gay, P. (eds). (1996). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage.
- Heathfield, A. (ed). (2004). *Live: Art and performance*. London: Tate Publishing.
- Holledge, J and Tompkins, J. (2000). *Women's Intercultural Performance*. London and New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (1989). *Talking Back: Thinking Feminism, Thinking Black*. London: Sheba Press.
- hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural politics*. Boston: South End Press.

- Hoy, D.C. (1999). *Critical Resistance: Foucault and Bourdieu*. In Weiss, G and Harber, H.F. (eds). (1999). *Perspectives on Embodiment: The intersections of Nature and Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kaye, N. (2000). *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Keith, M & Pile, S. (eds). (1993). *Place and the Politics of Identity*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-cultural Adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, London and New Delhi: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Kwon, M. (2004). *One Place After Another: Site-specific Art and Locational Identity*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The Mit Press.
- Landes, J. B. (ed). (1998). *Feminism, the Public and the Private*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Loomba, A. (1998). *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. London and New York: Routledge.
- MacGregor, C. (2003). *Bodies on the Boundaries: Subjectification and Objectification in Contemporary Performance*. In Beck, A. (ed). (2003). *Cultural Work: Understanding the Cultural Industries*. London and New York: Routledge.
- McKie, L and Watson, N. [eds]. (2000). *Organising Bodies: Policy, Institutions and Work*. London: Macmillan Press, Ltd.
- Merrifield, A. (2006). *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Mtwa, P. Ngema, M. and Simon, B. (1983). *Woza Albert!* London: Methuen Drama.
- Ness, S.A. (1996). *Observing the Evidence Fail. Difference Arising From Objectification in Cross-Cultural Studies of Dance*. In Morris, G. (ed). (1996). *Moving Words: Re-writing dance*. Routledge: London and New York.
- Pavis, P. (ed). (1996). *The Intercultural Performance Reader*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Polhemus, T. (1998). *Dance, Gender and Culture*. In Carter, A. (ed). (1998). *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Redfern, B. (1988). *Dance, Art and Aesthetics*. Foxton, Cambridge: The Burlington Press.

Rolla, M.P. (2005). *A Performative Body*. In Rolla, M. P. and Hill, M. (eds). (2005). *Manifestação Internacional de Performance (M.I.P)*. Brazil: CEIA Centro de Experimentação e Informação de Arte, 2005. Copyright © 2005 CEIA.

Schechner, R. (1988). *Performance Theory*. London and New York: Routledge.

Schneider, R. (1997). *The Explicit Body in Performance*. London and New York: Routledge.

Scott, S. and Morgan, D. (eds). (1993). *Body Matters: Essays on the Sociology of the Body*. London and Washington D.C.: The Falmer Press.

Shange, N. (1997). *For Coloured Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*. New York: Scribner. (Reprint Edition).

Soja, E.W. (1989). *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London and New York: Verso.

Stoler, L.A. (2002). *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

Suderburg, E. (ed). (2000). *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Tong, R. (1989). *Feminist Thought. A Comprehensive Introduction*. London: Unwin Hyman.

Walby, S. (1994). *Towards a Theory of Patriarchy*. In *The Polity Reader in Gender Studies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Weedon, C. (1997). *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Journal Articles:

Goldberg, M. (1987). *Ballerinas and Ball Passing*. In *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*. Vol.3 No.2. Pp 77 – 101.

Schechner, R. (1991). *An Intercultural Primer*. *American Theatre Journal*. October, 1991. Pp 28 – 35.

von Held, P. (2002). *Beyond The Black Box*. In *Dance Theatre Journal*, vol. 18, no. 4. pp 20-24.

Internet Sources

Goodman, L. (2002). *CityScapes*.
<http://www.artsmart.co.za/filmarchive/626.html>
(Accessed 27/01/05).

Hanisch, C. (1968). *The Personal is Political*.
<http://www.redstockings.org>
(Accessed 04/12/04).

Janse van Rensburg, S. (2004). *Jay Pather*.
<http://www.artthrob.co.za/04nov/index.html>
(Accessed 12/02/05).

Koloane, D. (1995). *Claiming Art/Reclaiming Space: Post-apartheid Art from South Africa*.
<http://www.nmafa.si.edu/exhibits/Sasite/satext.htm>
(Accessed 27/01/05).

Machen, P. (2002). *CityScapes at Durban Art Gallery*.
<http://www.artthrob.co.za/02apr/reviews/cityscapes2.html>
(Accessed 29/07/05).

MacKenny, V. (2002). *CityScapes*.
<http://www.artthrob.co.za/02apr/reviews/cityscapes.html>
(Accessed 27/01/05).

Pather, J. (2004b). *Fragments From a Remembered Diary: My Stay in New York City for the 'Personal Affects' Exhibition, September 2004*.
<http://www.artthrob.co.za/04nov/index.html>
(Accessed 22/01/05).

Small, K-J. (2003). *Home is where the 'art is*.
<http://www.artthrob.co.za/03dec/reviews/dag.html>
(Accessed 29/07/05).

APPENDIX A

Transcript of interview with Jay Pather
Tuesday, 24 September 2002
Royal Hotel Coffee Shop, 3pm – 4pm
Interviewed by Clare Craighead

Works mentioned:

CityScapes, 2002
State of Grace, 2002

Clare Craighead: Who do you make work for?

Jay Pather: I make work largely for 'audiences'. I have had no specific audience demographic in mind when I've created my most recent works; which is a shift from my working methodology 20 years ago, when I literally made work for myself, for 'the art'. Nowadays, I work with a semblance of narrative; recognisable music/ideas and popular icons/symbols – I am more concerned with people having some recognition, some sense of what is going on in the work. I can't really specify an audience; I work primarily in a postmodern paradigm... realising that different people will see, read and recognise different things.

Clare Craighead: How does your work evolve, where do you begin, and how long before rehearsals commence do you begin conceptualizing a dance work?

Jay Pather: I have a clear concept from the outset, a clear sense of what the work will be/ is about. For instance, I spent six months conceptualising *CityScapes* before I began rehearsing it. In the process of rehearsing, I don't tell the performers too much about what the work is about... this allows for much richness in the work and leads to more layers and a narrative to evolve that is... *less obvious*. Initially, when I began choreographing, I used to *make* or rather *do* lots of choreography; I used to spend hours in the studio making steps, but now I spend much more time out of the studio – observing and thinking laterally. My interest now does not lie in *figuring out moves* – although I may choreograph at least one combination to give the dancers/performers a sense of where the (movement) language needs to go (often recontextualises language) – using as impetuses for choreography: texts, drawings, histories, sound, improvisation etcetera. In terms of the structure of the work, I have learned not to be *precious*; I have learned to be able to strike a balance, where I can be definite about some things and so indefinite with regards other things... find the balance, allow the work to evolve – it is a question of clarity of choice.

Clare Craighead: Do you only work with technically trained dancers, or do you allow for multiple levels of ability in this regard?

Jay Pather: I work with technically trained people... but, technically trained in a range of different styles and areas... I find them to be more interesting. I look for strong technique, but individuality as well – strong acting, voice, singing, dance – technique – I am becoming more uninterested in working with technically trained dancers and in more recent years I have really begun to look to other areas of theatre and performance.

Clare Craighead: Your work has a strong narrative base, and you work a lot with characters... how do these 'characters' evolve?

Jay Pather: Sometimes the characters are idiosyncrasies that evolve out of the process, and it is important to note that these characters are *not* connected directly to who the performers are. I don't always have a clear notion of who the characters are; for instance in *State of Grace* I had a strong sense of Ntombi and Khulekani being 'of the past', while the other characters evolved throughout the process. Mostly the improvisation reveals the characters – I take quirks that the performers offer and make them into something – although I do not impose upon the dancers... there is always a strong sense of dialogue and communication between myself and the performers. *State of Grace* became quite awkward, because I originally wanted to work with older people – Khulekani and Ntombi were the first characters that came to my head – in dealing

with notions of presence and absence, and a lot of stuff emerged in the improvisations that I had to confront, and clarify in conversation with the performers. My dialogue with the performers develops and merges – I constantly throw something at the performers – but always with dialogue, not imposing, and at the same time not disclosing too much about my concept for the work. Essentially, characters and images develop with the process.

Clare Craighead: Most recently you have been working on *site-specific* performance works (as with *CityScapes* and *State of Grace*), could you explain this shift into *site-specific* works regarding the Durban context out of which these works have emerged – and do you think that you could make such work in another context?

Jay Pather: My connection to Durban is very strong, and I am very happy about making work here because it is such a concentrated cultural experience. The political environment of KZN (Kwa-Zulu Natal) lends to our specific aesthetic. Durban, unlike Cape Town is not blasé, we are somewhat *forced* into an intercultural clash or explosion, where in Durban we are still aware of our separateness; but we still have to deal with each other... unlike Cape Town for instance, where there is still no sense of this way of interaction... in my work I try to find the *underbelly*, the underlying force in things. I work with a fair amount of intensity and would definitely find it quite difficult to work in other spaces... though it may be nice to make this work in Turkey or Hong Kong (laughs).

Clare Craighead: What ultimately is your aim in creating *site-specific* works?

Jay Pather: Primarily I want to decentralise performance, and make it available. I feel impatient with theatre dance performance. I have a great interest in architecture and how it influences moving bodies. Living in 2002 – in this context – the notion of sitting in a theatre becomes less appealing – for me, it is a very old way of presuming *great truths*. How much illumination is there in a theatre? The postmodern, self-reflexive society that we live in makes us skeptical, and one would expect theatricality to transform. I believe that dance struggles in this sphere, and in creating *site-specific* works, I am attempting to take dance somewhere else – I am attempting to bring other dimensions to dance.

Clare Craighead: What has been your biggest challenge in creating your *site-specific* works?

Jay Pather: My stage manager (laughs)... no, the biggest challenge has been most definitely the floor surfaces... and of course co-ordinating the events for *CityScapes* – having to deal with numerous hierarchies of management with regards to each public performance... the Workshop piece, for instance, was a constant worry for me because of the uncertainty and lack of communication between the various levels of management with regards that particular piece...

Clare Craighead: What has been your biggest challenge regarding the work you have created thus far?

Jay Pather: *State of Grace*

Clare Craighead: How do you choose the specific images and design metaphors that you often make use of in your work?

Jay Pather: Often, the images are a series of different things – the images are more in my sub-conscious and they emerge with the process. For me these images are about harnessing my sub-conscious; I work with music in the same way – I often have a sense of the sound, but no idea of an actual song track... I don't think that these processes can be entirely conscious. My use of symbols in the works which I create is also to counter any sense of overt-ness in the works.

Clare Craighead: You work in the idiom *dance theatre*; can you offer your definition of this idiom?

Jay Pather: *Dance theatre* is a mediation of dance and theatre; essentially it is dance that tells stories in a completely abstract way, dance that deals with notions of narrative and even anti-narrative, but dance that is not formal. I try to capture work that deals with narratives and

recognisable histories; these are mediated by the performers with whom I am working – usually dancers who act or actors who dance and therefore already have a mediated palate. Essentially the dance theatre that I create seeks to make theatre work that is accessible.

Clare Craighead: What is/was the primary basis for your interest in creating *site-specific* works?

Jay Pather: I am a pedestrian, I don't drive, and I am always walking in between spaces. *CityScapes* is specifically about architecture; it deals with public and personal spaces – within these public spaces a range of personal experiences and emotions happen – and the spaces are momentarily transformed and then the people leave. For me, public spaces are in essence personal ones. So much happens in the spaces – they speak of absence and presence and the architecture in Durban is enmeshed in all of it – it is a metaphor for history and life and the layers of civilisations that have left imprints on each of the buildings. As a boy, growing up in Durban, I remember 320 West Street as the epitome of *having arrived somewhere*, now, years later, this modernist building is a changed space and it is more about isiPansula. The Workshop for me is evocative of a pseudo-trendy comment on something Victorian; which in 2002 is kitsch and a space that speaks of sadness and desperation and one which houses various levels of poverty.

Clare Craighead: Throughout the process of *State of Grace* you constantly stated that you do not want to make dance – an odd statement to make, since you are a choreographer – what specifically is your intention in producing the work that you do – specifically with regards to your own sense of your current statement of intent?

Jay Pather: I don't want to make artifice. What I really want to say essentially doesn't have artifice and I believe that in order to create work that *crosses over*. We have to have courage to take what we've learned and throw it away. I seek to make work about my experiences; my truths need to follow a kind of semblance of dance. Perceptions change so fast, and more and more I am finding that in order to speak my truths I must go *somewhere else*.

Clare Craighead: Do you believe that there is a contemporary dance aesthetic that is specifically South African, and how does your work fit your concept of contemporary dance in this context?

Jay Pather: I don't know what a South African dance aesthetic is, because I don't understand identity. I think that culture is an illusion, and that it doesn't exist. I believe that culture is a series of motifs that exist; we skill-fully extract and select attributes of *Otherness* to define a culture that supports notions of difference. Any notion of certainty is difficult. In creating contemporary dance in this context, I draw from things that I know, I rely on what I know because it is the vehicle through which I am able to express the inexpressible. It is important for me when I create work to be intimate with things, and have a surety of arrangement... but I hesitate to call it a *South African aesthetic*, that is the honest truth. I create work around necessity; my work deals with the essence of what needs to be said.

APPENDIX B

Transcript of interview with Jay Pather
Tuesday, 24 September 2002
Royal Hotel Coffee Shop, 4pm – 5pm
Interviewed by Wesley Maherry

Works mentioned:

A South African Siddartha, 1999

CityScapes, 2002

State of Grace, 2002

The Medea, 2002

Wesley Maherry: How has your training (your Honours Degrees from UDW, your Performance Diploma from Trinity College and your MA from NYU in Dance Theatre) impacted on the kind of work that you have and are creating?

Jay Pather: I have a strong structure which I am now able to dismantle. I started out in law, then went into acting and then went into dance – you are not always doing what you are studying but everything gives you an assurance to take things somewhere else.

Wesley Maherry: With this broad training are there any theorists that have influenced you most (especially from your time in New York)? How then do you appropriate what you have learnt to the South African Context?

Jay Pather: I have a basis in Alexander technique with its release and less affectation on the body. Other influential practitioners include: Stanislavski: for his use of Sense memory – emotional connection – to get dancers to find the correct impulse for actions. Artuad for his Minimalism and stripping down. And Grotowski: for articulating theatre as hard core. His stripping to the bare minimum and the essences of what need to be said are important in the immediate connectedness to experience.

Wesley Maherry: This category of dance theatre that you have called *Siwela Sonke* is quite broad and open, what do you define it as?

Jay Pather: Dance theatre tells stories it deals with narrative or anti-narrative in some way which make it recognisable in some way to an audience. This is mediated through whom you work with: dancers with a background in acting and actors with a background in dance. This is to make accessible theatre so that even if you don't fully understand you will have a clue to the performance. Dance theatre also involves a use of gesture it also is connected to phrasing rhythms and musicality.

Wesley Maherry: In what ways do you think dance and theatre are “crossing over into a new place” in *Siwela Sonke*?

Jay Pather: Decentralise performance – I am impatient with dance performance in a theatre. I am interested what happens when you take it outside of that confined space. For instance how dancers deal with floor spaces – and how they do what they need to. We are living in 2002 and for me theatre is an empty space – it is an old way of looking at performance. How many truths are illuminated in the theatre? I am not so sure. We live in a post-modern society where we are all so self-conscious and everything has been said. The theatre is something of the past and in which dance struggles. Choreographers have to work very hard to get there. I don't want to make artifice; I want unencumbered expressions of ideas. The things I want to say don't have artifice. I am still garnering the courage to take from the past and chuck it away. My truths need to follow a structure – a semblance of dance and when things are changing to fast now, to speak the truths, we need to find something else – it is also about finding the courage to do so.

Wesley Maherry: In what ways is dance theatre different to physical theatre?

Jay Pather: Dance theatre also involves a use of gesture it also is connected to phrasing rhythms and musicality. Physical Theatre is about physicalisation of action which is more towards acting.

Wesley Maherry: In most of your pieces (the Albany Piece from *CityScapes* for example) has very strong characterisation, how do you draw these out of the performers?

Jay Pather: I Encourage performers to use their memory and find real impulses for movements. For example the Albany hotel piece in *CityScapes*, which was about secrets and what is not always clear. I wanted that sense of surveillance from afar so in the one rehearsal we finished early and I got the one dancer to follow the other around. With racial differences this became a loaded activity but it was detail of experience which they could use in their work. It creates intensity.

Wesley Maherry: You also use dance styles to create characters, such as in *A South African Siddhartha* and *State of Grace*, how do these interactions speak about the stories you are telling in the pieces?

Jay Pather: I like using the idiosyncrasies that come out of improvisations from dancers but that are not connected to the dancers in a real way. There is always dialogue between the dancers and myself for instance I will sometimes try to 'restrict' a dancer in a certain way, but this is always done through detailed dialogue and not by imposing.

Wesley Maherry: How do you start making performances and from where do you encourage the performers to begin?

Jay Pather: I start with a concept – what it is about, even if I can't articulate it. I don't tell the performers so that they might play something else but which still works and adds layers to the work. I used to do a lot of choreography and making up steps now I think about literally not moves, but where the language needs to go. I don't get precious about structure but rather let it evolve and always with a sense of some definite things and some things that are variable.

Wesley Maherry: Who are you making performances for, and what do you hope they walk away with?

Jay Pather: I make work for audiences, but not specifically anyone in that audience. I make work that pushes a sense of theatre and a sense of narrative somewhere else. I draw from popular culture and iconography from within it and fill spaces with this so that people can read and experience. I usually choose the clear over the obscure but still allowing different people to see different things.

Wesley Maherry: How does the work that you are creating inform your own aesthetic and contribute to a larger South African way of making performances that speak about our context?

Jay Pather: I don't know what that is because I don't understand identity and culture. I can read a series of cultural motifs and patterns which ignore what don't apply to it. I try to work from the things that are constant to me and which are closest to me. Dance becomes a vehicle to express the unspeakable. If I make it intimate, what I am assured about, I am able to communicate that meaning across. I do hesitate to call it that. I have a very strong connection to Durban and I am happy where I work. Durban is a concentration of cultures and not in blasé way because our context is more aware. Our province has been very affected by separate areas and now there is an explosion. Race Groups have to deal with each other in a more in your face way. I am interested in finding what lies beneath things. This can lead to a fascination for the morbid and the depressing but if not only for their heightened intensity.

Wesley Maherry: How does dance impact on your theatre creation (as you are directing *Medea* at the moment) and theatre on the dance you are making – if there is any distinction for you?

Jay Pather: I use the impulse of acting and sometimes acting styles or stylised acting such as farce and caricature. The processes of dance and theatre are very much the same, at this point in my career – it used to be different but not too much but the principles involved are very similar. I do believe that actor's don't work hard enough whereas dancers are mostly very disciplined.

APPENDIX C

Transcript of interview with Jay Pather
23 December 2005
Royal Hotel Coffee Shop, 11am – 1pm
Interviewed by Clare Craighead

Works mentioned:

Ikanifati (with Jazzart Dance Theatre)
Life Out Of Balance, 1986
Bolero, 1989 (with Jazzart Dance Theatre and then later with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
Raw Dog Night (solo work)
The Stories I Could Tell (solo work)
The Medea, 1994 (With Jazzart Dance Theatre and then the Durban Institute of Technology)
Ahimsa-Ubuntu, 1996 (independent work)
Wet (and other works), 1996 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
And Then She Blue, 1997 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
Shifting Spaces, Tilting Time, 1998 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
Untitled, 1998 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
Forked Tongues, 1999 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
A South African Siddhartha, 1999 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
CityScapes, 2002/2003 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
State of Grace, 2002 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
HOME, 2003 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
EDGE, 2003 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
REPUBLIC: performing the body politic, 2004 (A JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience workshop/performance series facilitated by Jay Pather)
The Beautiful Ones Must Be Born, 2005 (with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre)
PARADISE, 2005 (A JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience workshop/performance series facilitated by Jay Pather)
Bombay Crush, 2005

Clare Craighead: Can you offer a brief autobiography in relation to what you have achieved thus far in your choreographic career?

Jay Pather: Okay, I think... I think the question even when I read it, I just thought to myself, the reason why it felt so vast was... it was to do with how many different influences I've had... so it's you know... I wish I could just kind of blithely say I walked into a choreography school and learned choreography and... So just to say that I... the change in the various stages of my life, from being at varsity and studying Law to doing English and Drama, but really thinking to myself that I will finally be an English lecturer – which was my thought at that stage, as far as I could think... And then not really paying proper respect to those years and years and years that I was choreographing in my head, you know, I was creating large epics in my head when my family would go on picnics and I would pretend that I was ill and I would stay at home and... and make these big... So, but I just assumed that you know, I would be a grown up and do this grown-up job. So going from that into Drama Honours and then into English Honours and then doing... *finally* doing the Masters which finally goes; 'wait a moment, the dance is...the dance is what I'm on about, that's my mainstay'. But very quickly... and it was funny with the packing... I find it gave... It gave me quite a retrospective of a few major events, and I realised that actually, my first multimedia production was actually in...well it was in New York... but it was in 1983, or 1984...

Clare Craighead: You spoke about this at Jomba! last year...?

Jay Pather: Okay yes, yes... So while dance and choreography began to be... you know, the mainstay; I quickly branched out into multimedia, into a kind of approach to choreography that involved more than one media, and as Adrienne Sichel says, my 'obsession with making a mess'... and not... and not trusting the human body. But I think the work then... from

there-on stayed in the realm of the mixed media... And then for various reasons I went into a kind of 'pure dance'. So my highlight in terms of mixed media was a production I did about black women in South Africa, which was an exposé of women living under apartheid in South Africa, but it had all kinds of media you know... from film, to sculpture, to visual arts, to video. So... well... and then the combination of choreography and politics, or some kind of dominant discourse around the nature of... of human rights and politicisation of the populous was... was completely... you know, it was kind of there from that time. I mean it's quite tragic, I think in some respects, because... I mean it's quite interesting also, that we're talking now... there's all those other productions and *Shifting Spaces [Tilting Time]* and all of that...but it's quite interesting that I just choreographed *Bombay Crush* (laughs)... which you know is just like another... another... completely weird and strange thing that has happened... but, you know, I was looking at it the other day and I hear myself very often kind of sending it up and apologising... or... you know; 'oh, it's just a little bit of froth that I've done', and whatever. But you know Clare, in one... If you look at one of my major productions last year... ah, this year: *The Beautiful Ones Must be Born* at Constitutional Hill... In *Bombay Crush* ... the number of people that saw *The Beautiful Ones Must be Born* will full one house in *Bombay Crush*, and they've got 97 performances... and I don't know... I mean that has been a learning curve for me around... around, you know... around, like you know, you could have a production that is redolent with rich imagery, redolent with all kinds of layering and unpacking of all kinds of politics... all kinds of issues and such, and about 25 people are going to see it. But you have this kind of 'light-weight' production and if you intersperse it with a few issues – hundreds and hundreds of people are going to come and see it, so, you know it's kind of like... you know as they say in the classics: 'do the math!' I'm interested in that... I'm not saying that I'm going to now become a Bollywood film producer ... (laughs). God forbid... but it's quite interesting... and people do come afterwards, after *Bombay Crush* and they're so astounded... 'this is so new'... 'and so amazing'... and there's like...

Clare Craighead: ...and you've been doing it forever... (laughs)

Jay Pather: ... Ja, this is just a smidgen. But you know, they see different cultures dancing to the same piece of music and it's like 'wow'... you know... this is so amazing, it's making me feel so 'proudly South African'... and you know...

Clare Craighead: It's kind of like the response to *Bolero*...?

Jay Pather: Exactly... Ja, so... and in between of course, there's been all of the other range... you know... I think New York was... I think it made an impact insofar as I was given space to explore... and that had particular significance if you think that this was 1984, (laughs) which was during our second state of emergency in South Africa. So... so, to have that with what was happening in South Africa... and then to come back here was quite a thing. It wasn't like I was an exile and then just stayed away from it all... you know, just to come back and then to transfer that... to a kind of fairly established... "The Establishment" which was the University of Zululand. And then to do that kind of work in the department with productions being banned and all of that... was... I think that also pushed the cards for me in terms of; you know your enquiry into the body, enquiry into the dance and all of that... but also equating that with... or not being in the position to equate that with economics. Which is quite an interesting thing now with all our issues around funding and the National Arts Council... but I mean, at that time you didn't even think about it... you know, you just... you didn't even think about it... I mean... when I left Zululand and went and took up a post at UC... at Cape Town, in *Jazzart ... Jazzart Dance Theatre*... I mean, I think I worked there for about four years before I was paid for one performance, and yet I would teach for like R10-00 an hour... you know... I'm just saying that the economics and the actual making of the work and all that didn't go hand in hand... and it's quite an interesting debate...

Clare Craighead: ...compared to now...

Jay Pather: Ja, it's quite an interesting debate... I mean I firmly believe now that... I mean less and less I'm prepared to do a production with out there being some kind of a budget for it. I don't believe that dancers should dance for nothing; I don't absolutely believe it... not in this dispensation! So the context has changed and that does... but it is quite interesting that

that actually transpired, but I suppose that's the way it is... Ja no, so... so I think after that, the next cluster of activity was Cape Town... and that... Oh, oh, before all of that I did have a stint at Durban-Westville and I did *Life Out Of Balance*, and there I was using mixed media... but also with budget and stuff I got propaganda films from the South African Information Services...

Clare Craighead: Yes, you spoke about this at Jomba! last year... (laughs)

Jay Pather: Oh, ja... so I mean, that... that pushed the multimedia thing in another direction. And then when in Cape Town, it was... it kind of began to be almost always about mixed media and about extending the body, and then I got really involved with the **Alexander Technique**... and then within **Jazzart**, under the leadership of Alfred Hinkel, there was a technique that was based on the **Alexander Technique**, that began to emerge and I think *that* informed a lot about how the body can be used in a fairly... as a purveyor of fairly neutral meanings. And then there was a kind of 'clinical-ness' which I think is prevalent in a lot of post-modern dance, that I... that never sat completely comfortably with me and I always felt that I had to augment it with something else... the layering, the layering, the layering. Then there was a piece called *Ikanifathi* which was quite a significant work within the **Jazzart** pool, that we developed as a company... And then I... also in Cape Town I did my one person shows... there was *Raw Dog Night* and then there was *The Stories I Could Tell*, and that dealt very specifically about being black and gay around the time of the new constitution... and so... but it was still about using words and image and dance. And then when I came back to Durban and I did *Ahimsa-Ubuntu* as on the invitation, then my sense of what possibilities exist in Durban were just like... you know – I was just so gob-smacked by how much essential talent... talent is a stupid word... but I mean just the, the meditation on culture and stuff is so concentrated here that people don't really know that that's what they're doing, and it was very fascinating for me. I think *Ahimsa-Ubuntu* was something – was a project that I was brought to do... but in a fascinating way, when I did it, while I was... when they invited me to do it, I stayed at the Albany Hotel for four weeks and I think that a lot of seeds happened there around me and Durban and, you know... I think the seed for the Albany Hotel piece was planted then and certainly the seeds for *Shifting Spaces*, *Tilting Time*, because, what used to happen was that for some reason I used to walk a lot, *obviously* – I don't have a car, I don't drive... so walking a lot, but also walking on late afternoons, because I was so central. Late afternoons, early mornings, and I would see the city in a very you know... in a different way... and almost it was like seeing it in black and white, and I think that was the big inspiration for black and white slides in *Shifting Spaces*, *Tilting Time*. I began to be aware of a city, that without the people speaks... is resonant... there are these ghosts, you know... these voices... but when you put people in... the dialogue is so rich. It's like rich chocolate cake, it's so rich – you can't take it all and... it's just so much... and I think in that tapestry *Shifting Spaces*, *Tilting Time* emerged, but of course I was only going to be doing that much, much later. That's the kind of genealogy, I think. And then I went back to Cape Town and did *The Medea*, and then came back and did the *Siwela Sonke* interview and got in as director. But initially my focus had to be on the dancers because when I first saw them, and actually Lynn – there was a training programme – and Lynn asked me about, you know... 'what do you think about directing?'; because Alfred was saying, you know: 'you need to get Jay in'. And I looked at them and I just thought: 'my god they're just too young' – you know – they were like babies, and I thought that the work that I was wanting to do was so up-beat and experimental, how was it ever going to happen... but I think when I did *Ahimsa-Ubuntu* I worked with *Siwela Sonke* dancers as well as the ballet company and all of that... but then, I kind of went... It may be a nice project that you actually make your own company and *then* get them to the point where you can then do your work. So a lot of the earlier training programme was spent trying to make a dancer that's well equipped, but also in a range of different styles, and also very strongly within improvisation and composition. I just really did not want to ever do... at that point even, I knew I didn't want to do the dance where you tell people what to do and you do this and then you do that...

Clare Craighead: ... and everyone looks the same...

Jay Pather: Yes!... But I knew that that needed to be part of their training, so we got quite a few guest people to come in and do this stuff. But I was really building the company towards

improvisation and composition... and then feeding it with different styles, feeding them with different styles... and in a very, very taught programme, you know where I even calculated... I mean I was obsessed and manic (laughs). I calculated the amount of hours they spent doing contemporary – I think it had to be 55% at the time, 10% of this, and then 25% of improvisation (laughs)... you know. So, I was doing all that kind of stuff... it was... and I was speaking to Ntombi and Eric and Nellie, and I was taking them back to those days, and I was just showing them some of my lesson plans and stuff, and I was telling them: 'you know this is what generated that... and this is what generated you guys to be able to do whatever you do... and you've got to understand that'. Sometimes you have to have that plan and just put your nose to the grind, and then just do it, you know, just do the slog work... so you just kind of have to do the kind of slog work and go from 9 to 5, and every day... they danced flat-out, 9 to 5 every day, and on Friday afternoons from 3 to 5 they were blessed with a kind of ... a discussion session, which was my seminar session...

Clare Craighead: ...a de-briefing? (laughs)

Jay Pather: (laughs)... a de-briefing. But the rest of the time they just danced which is/was quite phenomenal. It was a luxury and it was something... you know the Playhouse at that time was visionary enough to have instituted that.

Clare Craighead: But that's dissipated now... I mean there's just not enough money for company funding these days...

Jay Pather: Ja, and it's so silly, because it doesn't even cost that much, *really*...

Clare Craighead: No it doesn't, what it costs to run a dance company is generally not what it costs to run other companies... well, I mean it can (in an ideal world), but it doesn't have to...

Jay Pather: Ja, it doesn't have to... So, anyway, so all of that happened and then we did... we began to do the launch programme, and even in that I tried not to do anything particularly experimental, I mean the pieces were very kind of conservative... fairly conservative.

Clare Craighead: I can't imagine you being conservative (laughs).

Jay Pather: Well I mean it was kind of what they were... works... (laughs). But, by the end of it... by the end of that season I was, you know pushing and chopping up the bits, trying to get into something that I was ready for... that I thought the company was ready for. We had had the luxury... we had performed numerous productions after that, we had done Grahamstown and all of that, and then at the end of the year we had about a month... no, no we had about like ja, about three weeks – a break time, and I just got all, you know a range of like Tai Chi and weird and wonderful things. So different people inputted... or rather, had an input on the company, and then in January... in the middle of January when the company came back, I started *Shifting Spaces*... I was going to do it in the launch programme, and I knew that they weren't ready for that kind of thing... and then by the middle of January... I didn't know what the hell I was going to do (laughs)... I just knew that it had to do with architecture, it had to do with Durban at 4 o'clock in the morning, and it had to do with all these individuals that were going to come out of specific cultural matrixes and get thrown against each other, and stuff was going to happen. So, Ja... that's basically... I mean that's... It was, it was bloody scary (laughs)... I think it premiered at the International Writers Festival – a very, very long version, everyone came out going: 'Oh my god it was so long' (laughs). And then its *big* premiere was at the *Back to Back* with *The Fantastic Flying Fish*, and it was just bloody scary, it was the first time we were sharing a platform, and they were leaving, because we had both been retrenched at that point and we had chosen to stay for a year. It was quite a difficult, not a difficult time, but it was just like you know push, push, push... but I think what saved the work was ... I think that it was just quite funny...

Clare Craighead: I think needed also, because for instance, in Durban, it's very like... you know, it's not... it's not as *big* as Jo'burg and Cape Town... in terms of, you know, we don't have a *Jazzart* or a *Moving Into Dance*...there's a very different... vibe...

Jay Pather: Ja, for sure... and then that's how...in some respects, it's almost like there's a parallel between *And Then She Blue* and regular people, but in *Shifting Spaces*... there's that... costume...

Clare Craighead: ...caricature and stuff?

Jay Pather: Ja...and then after that... Oh, it's all been done after that (laughs)... After that we did ... the other piece that came soon after that was *Untitled*, and then... and then all the other pieces like *Forked Tongues* etcetera... and then *A South African Siddhartha* began to take shape... actually ...*Siddhartha* came before *Forked Tongues*. But it was really hard... I don't... I mean... I never really got great feed back from 'dance people'... I mean, you know with the exception of Lliane [Loots], I didn't really get good feed back from a lot of 'dance people'... I mean if you actually think about it...you know the works didn't...

Clare Craighead: Yeah, I think people didn't know how to take it really... I mean, you go to watch dance, and you get dance *and*... well you get video and all this stuff...

Jay Pather: I tell you *Shifting Spaces* with the dancers was so hard to do, because none of it made sense to them *at all*... and I realised... I mean many years later because I did capitulate and then try to make sense for people in some of the pieces, like even *Siddhartha* – it took a long time you know...

Clare Craighead: ...with character development and all of that?

Jay Pather: Ja... And it took me a little... a few years to realize that actually, and it began to happen only in *CityScapes* in the Albany Hotel, and all of that. Quite a very important point, and it's a very important point of realisation for me; that I did... I did capitulate; I felt like I capitulated to a discourse that did demand a certain level of narrative. *Shifting Spaces* was great, but it, it was a bit scary for me, because I think... I think that even when people really, really, really loved it... you know, the things that they said about it was not what I wanted to hear (laughs)...

Clare Craighead: (laughs)...Yeah, I know *exactly* what you're talking about... 'you just don't get it'!

Jay Pather: Ja, it's not about us living as one, it's about us not being *able* to live as one...

Clare Craighead: Yeah, it's that intercultural – that stuff, not the multicultural, rainbow-nation stuff...

Jay Pather: Yes, ja, and that the... you know for me the piece is dark and ugly, but I didn't expect it to be. I mean I didn't want the people to think it was not... I mean people must think what they want to...

Clare Craighead: But I think most of your work... and especially your most recent work is very dark, but it deals with that stuff... but in a very – I think beautiful way... like when you watch it... I mean I don't think you can ever call dance 'ugly'... and it demands that you think – to try to make sense of it...

Jay Pather: Ja, but I did feel like I capitulated a bit, I mean I did kind of... and it took me a little while before I finally went: 'you know, it actually doesn't matter'. I think what I began to be bothered about, and I think that this is where the politics of it... and I think it's something that... I don't know... I think, Lliane [Loots] and I share in the teaching, is that you know, you want to make the individuals feel – to make them sit right, and you want to make them feel empowered, but they only have to be empowered up to a certain point, because... it's too much power, and it's no good, it's no good for the work.

Clare Craighead: It's also no good for the company... (laughs)

Jay Pather: No, for the company... ooh, that came from a place (laughs)... No, it's very true. It's also you're giving a false sense of entitlement... Ja, and what do you do with the power, you can't do anything with it, because you can't make a decision...

Clare Craighead: Yeah, I know exactly what you're talking about.

Jay Pather: What happens, is that suddenly people feel entitled...

Clare Craighead: ...and you have to give over more, and more and more, because the boundaries become increasingly blurred...

Jay Pather: ...yes, and the boundaries are blurred, and technically they can't do much because they're not sitting 'outside'...

Clare Craighead: ...yeah, they can't do what they could do before...the relationship changes, and processes become under negotiated (laughs)...

Jay Pather: ...and you think: 'well wait a minute, there's Red Cross (laughs), there's a whole other world out there to do this, I don't need to be negotiating my life with...'

Clare Craighead: ... your company... yeah... but I think sometimes in this context these issues become overly-sensitive... people are nervous because of our history... I think with many contemporary dance companies – it happens... you know

Jay Pather: Yes, you know I've found more and more... I don't know if I've become dictatorial, but I've taken the role of *director* very seriously...

Clare Craighead: ...well, you kind of have to.

Jay Pather: It's like – I know what it is, and I know what I have to do and I can't, I can't... as a dancer, if you're standing in the way of that, then you're going to have to hear from me...

Clare Craighead: Well, I think that comes with experience... I mean the more that you've done... you know what the dead-lines are, and you're the one that is answerable... not the dancers...

Jay Pather: Yeah, and you are going to get to a point in the rehearsal where you go: 'I don't know why you should do it... you should do it because I'm telling you to!'...because I can't explain everything... because if I did have to...

Clare Craighead: ...it would not have the same quality...

Jay Pather: ...it won't...and, and I mean, you tell me – what... and you've seen this a few times because you pressed the bloody tape recorder... what the hell was *HOTEL* about?

Clare Craighead: Different things for different people, but I think that that's what makes your work, work. Is that there's no... I mean there's a very clear sense of relationship, but I think who ever you are and whatever your experience is... that's what you're going to read into it... and I think... I mean it's the same with *State of Grace* – there's so much, and there's so much imagery, and you can go... yeah... I mean that's situated in a very solid time and space, but the relationship is not situated, the relationship's fluid... and I think that that's the intrigue. And I think, the moment you start to dictate and say well that's the relationship and whatever... that gets lost, that fluidity – that ability for very many people to read it, regardless of any background... it becomes: 'well I was told to do it and that's why I'm doing it'... because unless your performer can explain what they're doing, I don't think that it has... there will be several layers missing... you know... not just one layer.

Jay Pather: You see Clare, it's very important for the performers to have a narrative, okay... so they have their own narrative and I just chop it up... and then it makes it... it's a totally different story, and it's totally different stories...

Clare Craighead: Yeah, I think that's your job as a director...not necessarily to *tell* people what to do... to say do what you do, and let me do what I do... (laughs)

Jay Pather: And that's why I why I think... and in respect of *HOTEL*, is for me, one of my most successful pieces, because I feel like Ntombi and Denton as performers knew that...

Clare Craighead: Yes, they got it... that's very clear...

Jay Pather: They got it, they got it like that (clicks his fingers)... and you know who also got it, it was S'thembiso; the first ghost. Because when he... he just came and he did what he had to do... he didn't try to make meaning, nothing...

Clare Craighead: It's an energy thing... I think it's about trust though... I mean, I think when you work with people it's like you have to have trust, because the moment it's not there, well, you know... it's about you have to trust that I can take you on this... in the middle of it you might not know what the hell is happening, but then we'll get onto the escalators, or into the hotel, and everything will make sense, in a weird kind of way... I mean, because I remember sitting in *State of Grace* at the technikon, and thinking: 'how is this going to fit there, and how is this going to happen on the stairs and the mezzanine?'... and then you get into the space and like in an hour it makes sense... because in the studio it looks like...

Jay Pather: ...a mess...

Clare Craighead: ...well, not a mess... but it looked chaotic... because that sense of physical structure is not there... I mean, in *your* head it is, but I think sometimes for the performers it's not – and the technicians... (laughs)

Jay Pather: I recall... I mean it's quite interesting that you're focusing on *Shifting Spaces*, well not, not entirely, but that's you're taking-off point...

Clare Craighead: Well, yeah – I'm kind of using *Shifting Spaces* as a starting point – a metaphor in relation to the notion of 'site-specific', and then moving on to look at *CityScapes* and *HOME* in relation to issues around space and the notion of 'site-specific'...

Jay Pather: Okay, well then perhaps we should move on...

Clare Craighead: Okay, so moving on to the next question... I think you've already answered some of it, but just to get back to it: Can you offer some insight into what your original intentions were in forming your *Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre*, and how have these intentions shifted in relation to the work that you have made... you know – what did you want *Siwela Sonke* to do and to be... has that shifted if it has at all... and now what is *Siwela Sonke* to you?

Jay Pather: You know, that's a great question... I think that, again the genealogy has shifted so much. It starts off as a training programme. I audition people. We get 8 or 9 dancers in the company. I think that this is a company that is going to last for posterity – I mean posterity meaning 5 years (laughs). One year after it is launched then it gets retrenched and I go: 'Oh damn!', then we had to make a fluid structure after that. So from there on I don't think... I think it becomes less of a plan and more of a response. It becomes a response to how you are... how to keep the external factors from destroying the notion completely... and still keep people fairly employed, and still keep our work going. So the plan is just basically survival, you know, and it's responding to a crisis. But that fortunately only lasts for a few years... it doesn't go on forever, because then the *National Arts Council's* company funding comes into place, the *Royal Netherlands Embassy* starts being nice to us... and then what happens is... I think that the youth of the company also determines who stays and who goes. I think the younger members wanted to just flee and go and find work and stuff... and then I think that the more mature people stayed and were able to institute the development programme which we then began. And then I think what happened after that, the company became a concept. I think it really just, it became a concept it existed... I mean it continues to exist as... not as a company of 8 dancers or 10 dancers... sometimes it's 200 dancers or 150 dancers (laughs)... you know it keeps moving from one place to

another... but it's really difficult to explain to people because I think everyone is kind of locked in the mindset of a modernist idea of a 'company'.

Clare Craighead: I think a lot of us are forced to work in that way... I mean if you can't offer somebody steady employment, but you can offer contract employment... and each production demands different things... and so the name *Siwela Sonke* becomes attached rather to the work – as such – there's no 'face' of the company... it becomes – as you say a concept... I mean I think a lot of people identify your work specifically, not because of the dancers, but because of the aesthetic – I mean Ntombi looks different from one work to the next.

Jay Pather: Right... that's great... I think that really clarifies that...

Clare Craighead: Okay, well then moving on from that... the shift in your choreography – you explained that you started the multimedia stuff very early on...but the shift towards a very definite decision to make 'site-specific' work and to call your work 'site-specific'... can you explain a little bit, how that happened... from doing choreography, or from making multimedia work, or whatever you want to call it... to making a very clear decision to say well, I'm going to do 'site-specific', and I'm going to engage 'installation' and the kind of cross-over between public spaces and art galleries in relation to performance... there's a very clear shift in your work... from *Shifting Spaces*... it is not surprising that *CityScapes* came after that. How did you get to that point where you kind of said well... 'there are many theatres and why not take these stories these architectural stories, and these personal stories... and put them into the spaces where they happen'?

Jay Pather: Ja, I think... these are great questions, it's very easy to talk about them, you're keying right in to where it is (laughs). There are a few reasons... but I think the two most focused ones, is the fact that... and this was in *Shifting Spaces*... was my pre-occupation with architecture, the architecture of Durban and the architecture of public spaces, and my fascination with how these spaces and architecture shapes the body etcetera, etcetera... But, I think there's a more pedestrian kind of reason as well... we did a production called *Wet (and other works)* and it was commissioned by the HUB, and so we were performing at all the HUB'S throughout Kwa-Zulu Natal... It's hard to think about *what* we've done... (laughs). Anyway, and we were performing in the HUB in Ladysmith, I think it was... and of course you know, there's this bloody programme and it's Christmas time and everyone's going mad and there's a piece in *Wet (and other works)*, I don't know whether you remember it... we did it also under *Cool Currents* at the Playhouse... it's a piece about a woman who's waiting at home and there's this guy that's coming on the taxi and he's taking a long time to come home etcetera... And, so as a chance we decided to not just do all of the Christmas jingle stuff and to do the piece like that, because you know I thought it was a seasonal piece, the guy was coming back home and... etcetera, etcetera... But it's, it's all contemporary dance. Anyway, and so we're in the middle of this shopping centre in the HUB, you know it wasn't even... it had nothing to do with aesthetics, it was horrible (laughs). And so outside the HUB we were doing this piece, and there was, you know, it was Thulebona and Nellie at that time doing the duet, and, I mean they were extremely focused... in the middle of all of this shopping chaos... and I caught sight of these women in traditional dress... about... a few women... watching this, completely transfixed... completely taken. I can still remember the one woman's mouth... she just... you know there was this disbelief that this was right out there... and I remember... there I was like this jaded kind of director... you know wanting to finish up and get back into the car and go back home... and suddenly there's this moment where you go 'my god, this is quite amazing'... and then straight after the piece, there was this silence, which, can you imagine, in the middle of a shopping mall – and this crowd just goes quiet... it's finished, they dance and they get together... and they didn't even know... it was almost as if...the people standing and watching... they couldn't believe that this was it, what was going on... that this was a performance. And they both were dressed in very kind of everyday clothes... So I just was fascinated – I was completely bitten... I was just like... I can't believe that that kind of work... I mean here we were up to that point... we were doing a lot of outside work... but, you know doing the pansula, doing the jazz... I mean I didn't... I wasn't that stupid to think that that kind of consciousness didn't exist, but here I was seeing it in real form and then I just went... Ja, and so it was always that thing that stayed with me from that time, that sat in my head, and then when I began to think about spaces and stuff,

and then put them both together. And I thought around performances of proper works with projected sounds, with very sophisticated... well not very sophisticated, but sophisticated enough story-lines, characters and popular dance but combined with contemporary dance. I mean look, it wasn't looking at a couple of women watching my piece... but it was about... I mean it's part of the larger debates around the fact that... it's the *Bombay Crush* debate – I, I just became very tired of 'costume making' these works for you know my friends and family... you know it was in a theatre space – with all of the trappings and everything... and it's fairly popular amongst our... you know... people who can afford it... or people who watch dance... and here these people were interested... well not interested... they – whatever it is... I do not want to analyse why audiences don't go inside a theatre to watch contemporary dance. I thought that in any event we could move towards getting to that point where people take that step...

Clare Craighead: Okay... well then moving on from that, the term 'site-specific' what do you mean by it... I mean the term 'site-specific' is pretty 'new' here and there's not much written around 'site-specific' performance and contemporary dance specifically, I mean there's loads of stuff around installation and all of that stuff... so if I had to ask you what you mean by 'site-specific' what would you say?

Jay Pather: I think you know there's an artist who exhibited at the NSA and she called it *site-responsive*...

Clare Craighead: Yeah... that term has come up a lot in my research...

Jay Pather: And I find that quite lovely, I think that's more what it is... It's about... it's not about, finding a site and doing a performance, it's about finding a site, responding to the site, chewing on the site and then trying to figure out what's going on here... and then developing something in it... so I think that's what I understand, I think it comes closest...

Clare Craighead: Okay... short and sweet... (laughs)... so moving on to specific works... like *CityScapes*. What were your intentions in making *CityScapes* with a very broad spectrum of works under one umbrella called *CityScapes*? What were your initial intentions... like moving out of a theatre and finding another way... another space... and so originally when you thought of *CityScapes*, other than the logistical nightmare of organising everything... what was your intention in making the series of works and collaborating with various artists and their forms... and then moving into an art gallery as a kind of 'installation performance'?

Jay Pather: I didn't know... (laughs)

Clare Craighead: (laughs)... I suppose that's why you did it...

Jay Pather: I had *no* idea, I mean which is why... I think that this is a perennial thing in my life, which is why I'm not a favourite with administrators (laughs). Because, I don't know... I don't know that it's going to get this big... I have no idea, I just go: 'ja well, this will be great here, and this will be perfect and we must do this...!'... and it just grows and grows and grows... and I didn't, I had no idea... I had no idea that beyond that original *CityScapes* season in Durban that it was going to go anywhere... and I think what was happening with it, because I was responding to a very, very strong instinct, the rest of it just followed suit... you know, it's a stupid cliché, I mean you kind of like go along with your gut.

Clare Craighead: I think a lot of artists do...

Jay Pather: Ja... you know, you go along with your gut, and you don't plan it too much, and then it will just... and it began to grow all kinds of other things... I mean the issue about video... I mean, what the fuck did I know (laughs)... I was... Virginia Mackenny was like: 'what is it that you're doing, what do you want from us, and how can you do it so quickly', and I'm like: 'oh no'. They wanted to know: 'what do you want us to do exactly'... and I'm like: 'I don't know, I just know...'

Clare Craighead: Interpret it... (laughs)

Jay Pather: (laughs) Ja, I mean, you know: 'go with me, go with me...work with me, work with me!'. But she was right in a way, and she was right to... but, I guess for me – and this is just about me, I'm not talking about with Durban or anything... when I have a new idea... I can only learn by when it actually comes up, you can think it to a certain extent, but after a while you can't... I mean, you can't... I'll tell you what I did know... I did know... about the video, I knew that there should be somebody who was recording it, interpreting it and then putting it on at the same time as the performance (in the gallery)... so that people could see what it was like in situ... but then I thought, then from there from the documentary type of thing, it got to, maybe it should be artists, artists would be great, because we're collaborating with one another and there would be layering involved... so then, after their pieces, I realised how to install it... that's the only time I realised, it was only as the videos were coming...

Clare Craighead: So it's about the process? About, just everything starting from an idea and then people who are willing to go with you on the journey?

Jay Pather: Ja, you really have to... you know... and I mean, just to fast forward to EDGE and PARADISE and REPUBLIC and all of that... is that I began to... and particularly with EDGE, like with Siyanda's piece and with Hlengiwe's piece; with Hlengiwe, you know, she kept changing... and it's so amazing, because I understood it so well (laughs), and I was like an indulgent kind of father, you know... because I just kind of *knew*... I mean, you know she did this remarkable piece...

Clare Craighead: ...the one with the fat women?

Jay Pather: ... Ja, I mean this piece has just gone into different places. And it was quite interesting that, I think that a more... a more organised choreographer wouldn't do that... and that is why I kind of think to myself, you know sometimes... that needing that thing by this particular time is quite... I mean ... it's chaos for everybody, I mean *you know*... it's completely... I mean sometimes it's un-doable... but it is... it is what it is...

Clare Craighead: So, it's more about the process really?

Jay Pather: Ja, ja...

Clare Craighead: Okay, so then moving on from that... specifically in relation to CityScapes, and about the five spaces that you chose to make performances in relation to – specifically in Durban; what is the significance of each of those spaces for you. Obviously the spaces are not chosen at random... you've obviously chosen for instance, Albany Hotel, as you've touched on earlier – very personal spaces to yourself... and obviously these five spaces are not the *only* spaces that you could have chosen, so could you offer some insight into your intentions in choosing these specific spaces for the works?

Jay Pather: Well, I think just to also say that... like with HOME, and what I've just said earlier... that, I think what happens... and what I think is happening generally in my work more and more, is that I think there's... where there was a large level of instinct that was operating, on hindsight it's a lot more mediated...you know, so... I mean if you just fast forward to Jo'burg – in Jo'burg I was... there was something more rational around issues of practicality, organization etcetera, etcetera. I knew that in Jo'burg we had to be hyper-organised because we were in a strange city and all-of-that. But to go back into Durban... I kept my options quite open for a little while... I knew that 320 West Street was, it was just something that I was quite familiar with... and then the beach – I did have a very clear idea that I wanted to do something on the beach... I did have a very clear idea that I wanted to do something in Albany Hotel... ja... and then The Workshop piece was one I looked for, because I was... I wanted to do a piece in a restaurant... and then there was one more... Oh, the Musgrave Centre piece was (laughs)... I wanted to take the work a little bit outside of the city and not do it here... you know and like Marianne from the NSA Gallery was like: 'why are you doing it in a shopping mall?'... but, I didn't want ... I wanted people, I didn't want... like Musgrave Centre... I was aware how interesting the demographics were – that was the interest... and, and it offered a nice high place for Hlengiwe to jump off (laughs)...

Clare Craighead: and a cocktail or two at **Legends** next door (laughs)...

Jay Pather: (laughs) Ja, ja...

Clare Craighead: Okay, so all of that aside, and I'm sure you're asked this many, many times... the label 'dance theatre' what do you mean by it... and how does it impact the work that you make? And also in relation to the people that you work with... I mean, how do you find/train 'dance theatre' performers that aren't just dancers and aren't just actors... I mean, how do you gauge that?

Jay Pather: Right... I think the dance theatre issue was something that used to pre-occupy me earlier, and it's key less so nowadays... I often find myself... I find it pretentious (laughs)... at this point... about 10 years ago I was very like: 'mmm dance theatre, ja, I want...', you know it was like... I think it was a response to: 'dance company' or 'ballet company'... because people... you know, we didn't want to be a ballet company and we certainly wanted to be a dance company... so I'm talking like in the *Jazzart* days as well... so then it began to be like... you know, this was dance that was not cabaret, and was not musicals and it was not pretty contemporary dance, and it also wasn't Martha Graham, you know it wasn't that *kind* of contemporary company... it was something that would, you know, it would bring in other things and it would take different forms, and, and be eclectic... so that was a response to that, but more and more in a kind of very funny way... I'm getting to the point where I'm thinking: 'well, I think it's a bit pretentious *now*'. I think it was important at that point to distinguish what it was... but now almost every company... everyone is using it, so the 'dance theatre' label is just a little bit superfluous... so I find I often just say *Siwela Sonke Dance Company* or *Siwela Sonke Company*. I don't want to take away from the history of that... but you know, you just...

Clare Craighead: Yeah, so it is, for you more of an historical moment or label... but that has shifted – it's not something that you'd intentionally allude to now?

Jay Pather: Right, right... I mean, and it stands to reason, to go to the second part of your question... is that, I am, I think more and more I'm looking at interesting people who I work with, and they can be whoever. Whether they are dancers or actors, it doesn't matter - whatever... I mean like in *Bombay Crush*, which is certainly not something I would make career out of (laughs)... but there were a lot of people that I wanted to work with... who when they auditioned I was like: 'Oh god why are they auditioning for this?' (laughs)... but you know... because there's a particular style and a particular look... which I had to understand, otherwise I shouldn't be doing this... you know what I mean... I don't like that kind of thing, you know like: 'oh, the great big political interventionist'... you know... when you have a corporate thing to do, you do what the client wants – that's what you do... don't mess with it... or give it to somebody else who can do it...

Clare Craighead: Got it... alright... so moving back to this issue of 'site-specific' or 'site-responsive' as you spoke of earlier, and 'installation dance theatre'... specifically in relation to *CityScapes* and *HOME* here in Durban... How do you understand the connection between site-specific/ site-responsive and installation art... do you marry the two, if at all... specifically in relation to *CityScapes* and *HOME*?

Jay Pather: That's very, very interesting. I've never... I very seldom use the word 'installation' and I think one of the main reasons for that, is that an installation for me feels like it could be something that is on-going, that there's some kind of residue in it, and that residue is worth watching, you know what I mean? I mean like the *HOME* set was like (laughs)... although Carol [Brown] did want us to leave some of it behind... and I was like: 'well, I don't know what they're going to watch'... but because it was in a gallery... so I think, a performing art installation in a gallery did almost demand a residue, because it's open all the time and there's people walking by. There's a very sharp curator at the Museum for African Art... Laurie... Laurie-Ann Carol... she's got a very interesting take on that... I mean when I did *HOTEL*, she specifically wanted a residue, she didn't just want a set... so we, we suspended a plasma screen... and what we did was that we ran... then that was a 'true' installation for me, because then I set it up... so if this was the hotel room and these were the beds... that was the wall (uses saucers and salt and pepper shakers from the table to

show me the 'set')... you had in front the screen the original performance in Albany Hotel actually, and at the back you had Jo Radcliffe's video.

Clare Craighead: Storm's video?

Jay Pather: No, no not Storm's video Greg Streak made a video of the actual performance... he made a 'pure documentary', it wasn't interpretation or anything, it was 'pure documentary' of what happened... and so ... it looked very nice... even if I say so myself... but I mean, you could follow the story and then you could see Jo's video in the background... as a kind of...

Clare Craighead: Without having to watch the actual 'live' performers...

Jay Pather: Right, it was like a conversation... Ntombi and Denton felt very betrayed (laughs)...

Clare Craighead: (laughs) Well, sometimes they must!

Jay Pather: Yes (laughs). That for me was an installation, I went in there... and I knew that... you know she said: 'you need to install something, after you guys go... that we want to see it all the time'... and so that, for me was an installation.

Clare Craighead: Okay, so the installation for you is not the live performance, but rather the residue as you put it – what stays behind and then how that continues to make further dialogue after the fact of the actual live performance?

Jay Pather: Yes, yes, and then the entire thing becomes an installation. I think just a performance... and you go and see it... I think that's just 'site-specific'... a response to a site.

Clare Craighead: Thank you, that clarifies quite a bit for me... so moving on to the next question... A lot of your site-specific works... or rather a lot of your works don't just exist in one moment and at one time... you are constantly re-inventing or re-working and re-making and re-locating your works... like *HOTEL* or *Kitchen*... and so what impact does the re-working and the re-location have on your work and specifically in relation to your site-specific work... I mean for instance, like, doing *HOTEL* at the Albany Hotel, Devonshire Hotel and then in an art gallery for instance... what is the impact, if any? I mean, because I think it's a space thing... and you've said it, that the space has a very big influence on how the work is perceived and how it is read... and how you make the work and how you shape it... how does that impact?

Jay Pather: Ja, it... it changes... I mean sometimes there isn't a *major* impact. It swings from not so... sometimes it's just the re-location and sometimes it's huge. Let's just see, if we actually think, the original *CityScapes*, if we look at the 320 piece... it translated fairly well to Carlton Centre, the dynamics were very similar, you know – in a very strange way, the demographics were similar (laughs), the escalators... you know all of that was quite similar, it was just the spacing... you know very, very small issues. I must that with hind sight, I would have done that piece with far more dancers...

Clare Craighead: Ja, 'cos the space in Jo'burg was much bigger... and people were watching from above.

Jay Pather: Ja, ja, and that the 320 experience was much more vital, you know for me it was like... you know... because it needed that like.... (makes a suffocating gesture)

Clare Craighead: Like a different energy?

Jay Pather: Ja... a totally different energy... because it, it needed that kind of... but with some things like... other things changed quite a bit... I mean like you see the North Beach piece went via *State of Grace* to the Sandton Centre Square... that was quite huge... I mean you're going from the beach to concrete... so ja, it does shift and meanings do change quite a bit...

Clare Craighead: Ja, it becomes contextual... and for you is that... I suppose what I'm trying to get at, is, is it necessary for you that the works are interpreted in a kind of historical way... with some sense of how the works pre-existed in their original form... you know like with *HOTEL*, or *Untitled*... with the re-locations and sometimes different performers; but the work still retains it's 'essence' somewhat... I mean contexts do shift meanings... but there is something that is still retained... can you speak to that?

Jay Pather: Ja, I often find... I don't know whether it's just me, but I often find it very difficult to re-cast as well. It's very, very difficult to re-cast, I mean, Siyanda is fantastic, but he's not Simpiwe... you know what I mean... there is an old-ness and a kind of a pathos that Simpiwe has, that Siyanda doesn't have... I mean Siyanda looks like he's on top of it; you know what I mean... I mean it's very hard... I mean, also... and the difference between Thulebona and Vusi is huge. I don't like to repeat performances without the original people... I can't... I find it very problematic...

Clare Craighead: I suppose that's because of the way you work... I mean you ask so much in terms the making of the work... I mean you ask people to bring their own stuff... their own life... and when someone else comes in and learns someone else's steps it becomes about that rather than about the meaning... the nature of the work... it becomes mechanical?

Jay Pather: Ja, you're right. I mean a lot of the work is about ownership, it is about how much I invest.

Clare Craighead: Okay, and so moving on... working primarily in the discipline of dance and looking more specifically at the nature of 'site-specific' dance theatre... would you say that... or rather do you see the body as a 'site', and if you do, how does this understanding of the body interact with your notion and practice of 'site-specific dance theatre'? So, for you, how important is the dialogue between the body and the space?

Jay Pather: The body is a site, but it is also within a site... you know... it's held by a site, it's rejected by a site; it is... it can carve itself into a site, or it can be in an antagonistic relationship with the site... I mean, I think the fact that it *is* a site is just... makes it an ideal kind of mirror – reflecting or opposing whatever... the larger site... I think that's basically what the issue is. I think, the body as a site completely... for me it is not complete though, unless it is located in a context.

Clare Craighead: Absolutely! Okay, so moving on... what is the importance, for you, of making this 'site-specific' work in post-apartheid South Africa... specifically with the historical legislation of space – I mean as you've already alluded to the fact that you could never have made this kind of work in South Africa during the second state of emergency... because of what South Africa was at that time... I suppose what I'm trying to get at is ... for you what is the importance of creating this work *now* in our post-apartheid context and the politics of that? I mean, I remember when we did *HOME* in Grahamstown, an entire family walked out at the moment in *HOTEL* when Denton and Ntombi touched hands and the image was blown up on Jo's video behind them... and that speaks volumes about our country's history and how that impacts on us now... so, I suppose what I'm trying to say is how do you see the 'consciousness' of this kind of work? It's a big question (laughs)...

Jay Pather: Yeah, we'll be here all day (laughs). Ja, I think it's a big question, because I think the question is more about what ushers in what in my own head... and... I think that the politics of the space are, or rather have to be quite... you know is very significant to me. I think there is a simple notion that we are a democratic society now... constantly, is something that I'm fascinated with and I keep trying to press against and try to push and see just how democratic we are. I find that actually spaces carry a history against which this kind of questioning and all of that can really happen... with, you know... with dexterity... with a fair amount of dexterity. So I guess what I'm meaning to say... is that I think... or rather, I look at the history and I press on the levels of hypocrisy if you want, and the levels of hiding or whatever. But, but just to illustrate – well then with Constitution Hill, each work was... I did a piece... have you seen anything from Constitution Hill?

Clare Craighead: Unfortunately not, I didn't make it to the Umbrella this year...

Jay Pather: Okay, I'll give you one example... I mean this was a small piece, but I'll give it to you as an example. In *The Beautiful Ones*... there's the whole notion of 'beautiful ones must be born', they all share this common thing, a middle class... you know etcetera, etcetera... so I did a piece with Siyanda, in a red tie and stuff... and he was on a running machine, and I installed this in Mandela's court yard, where he used to exercise... so the genealogy (laughs)... this is where he used to exercise in this court yard... and there's Siyanda on a stair-master...

Clare Craighead: long walk to freedom...

Jay Pather: long run to freedom (laughs)... At the back of Siyanda there's a video by Rika which starts off with very fleeting, fast images of something, and then it slows down and it focuses on a shack and goes inside the shack and all of that... and it goes into the detail of the shack... and then Siyanda starts... and the machine starts very slowly, he walks and then he then starts running, and that's really... so as the video slows down, he just goes faster and faster and faster; and this was in Mandela's court yard – where he was exercising. So in a moment like that it gets very queasy for me... I get very... and then in the last piece... I did a piece... it was pure contemporary dance... and then there was an installation of Rika's video... it was a map in South Africa, and people waiting on road corners and stuff. And the sound track was... Peter Taylor had written these e-mails about Thulebona's trial, and how Thulebona you know... about his day... and it's so amazing how he wrote it... it was like: 'day 14, went to...', and then you know: 'the prosecutor wasn't in' or, 'the magistrates were not at the case'... and so we used that as a sound track... and now all of this was right next to the Constitutional Court... so, you know... the idea is to...

Clare Craighead: Reflect? You know like, reflect the nature of the space and its historical functioning and what it is now... I mean you're making a work as a 'response' as you've already said...

Jay Pather: Ja, right.

Clare Craighead: Okay, last few questions... Looking at the images and the kind of iconography in your work, you use a lot of local references – obviously, what else are you going to use... it is the nature of your work... but, can you offer some insight into some of the reoccurring images and the iconography and how... I mean, what is the symbolism of this... I mean if you look at *HOTEL* and *State of Grace* or *Untitled* or even the beach piece from *CityScapes* etcetera, you've got these 'spirit' figures that seem to be in most of your work... I mean... there's a certain integrity in relation to your use of these cultural icons and images... how do you marry this into contemporary dance theatre... I mean it's clearly not about exploitative use... can you perhaps speak to that?

Jay Pather: This question has been asked of me only twice before, the thing about ghosts, about also using cultural iconography... look I think that the research is there... I think what I try to do... is, I'm not precious about it... and also, I understand... I don't make a big deal about, about stealing...

Clare Craighead: That's something that I've noticed... I mean you are like... 'okay you're going to be bald and paint yourself white and sing church hymns while standing in front of a wooden cross and... and that's what's going to happen...'

Jay Pather: Yeah... I think it's also about having exactly what needs to happen for the piece too, you know. I think if it's superfluous, I think it would be a problem; and there have been times when I have put in something that was superfluous and it was a problem. I think it's successful when it really *is* part of that piece... when it's not superfluous, when it's not a gimmick... I think it is as problematic, or not problematic as anything else – as any other piece of metaphor; a sound choice a music choice or anything... I mean you know... if you did a piece of very critical work... let's say I did *Beautiful Ones Must Be Born*, this piece that I was telling you about with Thulebona's thing, and then towards the end of that we played

Nkosi Sikelel i'Africa, and everyone... you know – held hands... I mean it would be totally wrong...

Clare Craighead: ...is it like feeling a responsibility to the work and not be pressurised into making a 'happy ending'?

Jay Pather: Yes, it's about finding its exact fit. Finding its exact formation; really, really trying very hard – and very often it is about paying respect to that particular thing in a very fundamental way, and I very often have to really dig deep to the level of respect that I have for it. For instances in *Shifting Spaces*... the original *Shifting Spaces*, Pravika did an entire piece with her hands bandaged... and I mean, how can an Indian dancer bandage her hands (laughs)... you know... and... so... I think ja... I do a lot of soul searching... I have to be very, very clear.

Clare Craighead: Yeah, because some of this stuff is very controversial, and inevitably you are going to offend some people...

Jay Pather: Yes, also, I think it's in many of the works – I know that I'm walking a very, very thin line... and I just... it's like there's one point when we did *HOME*, and after a few performances Denton came to me and said: 'you know, some of my friends are offended by me being Jesus Christ', and I was like: 'you know I can understand that', and he was like 'well, I don't know if I can do that' and I said: 'well, you know if... I will completely respect it if you have to step down' as so to speak (laughs)

Clare Craighead: (laughs)... Ja, you're not nailed to that cross...

Jay Pather: Ja, you're not nailed to that cross. But, you know, I tried to say... it is connected between *HOTEL* and you, there's nothing we're saying, it is an evocative image. So he kept trying to pin me down, he says: 'is this anti-religion', and I kept going: 'I don't know, I don't know'...

Clare Craighead: Well, of course... that depends on your own religion, spirituality, whatever...

Jay Pather: Ja, and I think it's also because of my own ambiguous notions of religion and spirituality because I don't know... but he just had a little moment... and then he was fine.

Clare Craighead: Good (laughs). So, just 3 questions more. A lot of your works... not just your 'site-specific' works are approached in very collaborative way and you've engaged various disciplinary forms... so what is your process in mediating this collaboration, where you're in charge... and how do you mediate that how do you approach the task of making the work make sense... getting your message across? I mean is there ever any doubt that – for instance – the video artist is just going to be completely off in relation to what it is that you're doing and saying... I mean what is your process?

Jay Pather: I have to just trust it... you know... there are times when that's happened and it's not been great. I have to trust it... but also I have to get more specific... I can be quite vague...

Clare Craighead: ...I know (laughs)

Jay Pather: (laughs) The more specific I get, the fewer anxieties I have, so I have to be quite specific... and I think of late I have been, I've understood what it is to... I think I avoid being specific because I want to give enough openness and range for things to happen, but I realise as well, that I have to be more specific... and also I'm needing to work with more time... I often work with such small time-frames (laughs)...

Clare Craighead: Yeah, don't we all... (laughs). So, moving on; in relation in to this collaborative nature and working processes, your work is often presented as a cross-over style of performance and performance making... and indeed the name *Siwela Sonke* literally means cross-over – how do you integrate that... I mean collaboration and cross-over can be

very much a marriage, but collaboration doesn't necessarily mean cross-over, and so how do you mediate that idea... where the work becomes seamless... where it's not like watching a video and then the dance and then the acting... where these elements become interconnected and they come together to form a kind of unity?

Jay Pather: I think the point to begin with is, it's how I think. I mean I often do think, I do think in a, in a kind of composite way... I don't necessarily think about performance in a composite way, I'm talking about just generally in my life. I'm very aware of those sorts of things happening, that when... I think the coherence is the over all... I think first of all... I think with the collaboration there are certain steps that I try to take. I think I also try very hard not to make a kind of 'happy company', you know... I try not to be holistic... and I try not to save anybody, because I find that that really interferes with the work. I like the approach that I work with them 9 to 5 and then I go home and then everyone goes home, you know and it's cool... without that kind of perpetual sense that you've got to do something... that your life is connected to this... because it's a real... I mean, I try to cut off as well. So for me then what that does, is it creates an island of consciousness, it creates an island of a space of focus where everything has to happen... and then when it's like that, it becomes very, very focused... I feel that that... I almost force a focus based on a structure and ensure that the rehearsals are in 3 hour periods... I mean sometimes we go a little bit over, but I try to keep it in manageable chunks so that invariably... you know look... I mean our world is a pile... our world is... every moment is a pile of unbelievable fragments of meaninglessness (laughs)...

Clare Craighead: bullshit (laughs)...

Jay Pather: Yes, meaningless bullshit... and we somehow process it – we make sense of it all the time, and that's because we are applying ourselves. I think when we don't we get depressed or we get sad, we... whatever. But when we do, then we're on top of it... and I think we have great facility to do it... and so I think combined with my sense of coherence, if I just do it... and it's literally about just doing it... and making it... I think that the people involved kick in... you know, that clicks in... and I think also that they realise that they're only doing this for a short period, and that this is not meant to have an impact on their lives or change their lives (laughs)... that it's just a little show... that it's fine, and it is that. Also so that there's narrative coherence in their heads... but it's a different coherence to what we're seeing... and I often do that... and change that around, so that there is a certain amount of coherence for the performer... but more and more, I've gotten to the point where people ask me to explain, and I go: 'no, I don't care... do it'... because as we spoke about in the other question, the explaining is... it boxes it off... and it's superfluous... you are not the one watching the piece and you don't need to know...

Clare Craighead: Okay, great. So now let's move on to the last question... How do you foresee the future of 'site-specific' performance – and more specifically 'site-specific' dance theatre in South Africa, you know, because not many dance people are taking the route... so do you think that it has a future?

Jay Pather: Yeah... well I mean our weather's good... when it's not raining (laughs). I don't know... I think it could... I think it is perceived to be a bit an affectation. I mean I think it's seen as more of a style than a genre... so, I think that's quite important, that people make stylistic choices around it... and that, you know, you need to be fairly into architecture and space and then not be to precious about dancing moves. And you've got to deal with the elements. And there is a fair amount of chaos... which is a stylistic thing; I think that your work must need... I mean I don't mind my work having that rough feel... it needs to have the finesse of form, but I don't mind, you know if the dancers hair is blowing in the wind... or if people are having to wear... you know I've choreographed a piece where the surface is terrible and the dancers have to wear shoes, I don't particularly care – I mean that doesn't really bother me. So I think those stylistic choices are something that is specific to an individual... and I think that, that's... the area of site-specific is enormous...

Clare Craighead: But not so much in dance... I mean I don't know many other dance practitioners who call their work 'site-specific'... actually I can't think of any locally... you know, Robyn Orlin label's herself a performance artist – and her de-construction is on

another level anyway...I mean even the younger generation... those who are emerging now... and those who are influenced by you... the Siyanda's and the Hlengiwe's, but there is more of a pre-occupation with the multimedia rather than this notion of 'site-specific'... I mean young people do it all the time... you know – look up to their 'mentors' and try to make work 'like' theirs.

Jay Pather: Ja, I see what you're saying... I think people will work, responding... I think also someone like Jabulani and Siyanda... but you're right... I think that even when people are influenced by, you know the kind of *EDGE*, *REPUBLIC* and *PARADISE* experience, they're more into the kind of the 'mixed media' of it... and not necessarily aligning with a particular style...

Clare Craighead: Well, I think some of them are... but kind of unconsciously, I mean... there was some very interesting work (in *EDGE*, *PARADISE* and *REPUBLIC*), and then you go and speak to the choreographer afterwards... and it's quite disappointing... you know it's like... 'well I just liked the stairs', or 'I just wanted video'... you know... under-considered? There's no one else that's willing to pin it down – you know, the ideas around 'site-specific' or 'site-responsive' are quite vast and often rather vague – and I'm talking here, particularly in relation to the discipline of dance.

Jay Pather: Yes, well absolutely... it is not performance art...

Clare Craighead: Ja, but many people would call it that...

Jay Pather: Ja, I think that a lot of people would! I think the reason that I'm saying that it's not performance art, is that it is... it does have quite specific elements that belong to architecture, belong to the discipline of dance, or it belongs to the discipline theatre... performance art embraces, or traverses all of those. I don't think I quite embrace all of those yet, maybe I'm just not *evolved* enough (laughs).

Clare Craighead: (laughs) Well, thank you Jay, I think that's a good note to end off on.

Jay Pather: Sure. Thank you.

APPENDIX D

PROGRAMME NOTES TO *CityScapes*¹⁰¹.

What does Durban offer beyond the bounteous surf, the beaches, Zulu dancing, the race-course, bunny chow and Durban poison? *CityScapes* proffers some answers. The spaces of Durban, peopled as they are with ancient customs, languages, sounds and smells, offer a vast array of intermingling aesthetics and sensibilities. The spaces are rich with possibilities and imprints that are reflected in the architecture as well as on the faces of the people that inhabit this architecture.

Public spaces are redolent with the memories of people accumulated over years and years. Spaces shape movement of people, who in turn shape those spaces and how they are used or even whether they are used at all. We sometimes go into a building or not, choose one street over another, follow one route and not make a detour. This may be a result of an obvious previous experience that one my pin down; a space where one might have witnessed something violent may be avoided whereas a space that offers views of the sea may be favoured. Beyond this however, certain spaces are attractive for sometimes, mysterious reasons. This interests me and interests me about Durban.

Spaces in Durban are filled with contradictions, ambiguities and oddities. Like with any city there are spaces that are comfortable and easy and there are those utilitarian ones that we hurry through. Durban however, stands out for its heady mixture of the clean lines with the gauche, a testament to influence upon influence by various cultures. It would seem that the city absorbed everything and spat out nothing. This was not the ideal apartheid city, so cultures and types rub up against each other with fervour and speed. My sense of Durban's public spaces is that things happen with an unpredictable mystery: a woman in traditional Muslim dress jogging down the beach front, an unlikely couple checking into the Albany Hotel, a skyline that puts in one small frame a tower of a church, a turret of a mosque and the spiralling apex of a modernist building. All contained in one space.

So then, these spaces carry a dialogue and an interaction that are rich and powerful. I bring to this space, dancers who draw their dance from this province. The dancers work within the context of the architecture and develop dance theatre works that are contained by the space yet also comment and reference their contexts.

CityScapes is also about bringing dance performance to audiences that may not have seen dance inside the theatre.

The responses of this passing-by, informal unstructured audience are in turn documented by artists who interpret on video what happens at these site-specific performances. In this instance I am interested in pushing the boundaries of how art is perceived as well as where it is perceived.

CityScapes finally allows for collaboration on a range of levels. The production brings together five eminent visual artists together with dancers from a range of companies, styles and backgrounds. The production calls for interaction within outside spaces as well as within an indicated exhibition space as the Durban Art Gallery. The collaboration extends even further to the generosity (and sometimes bewilderment) of a range of management and public relations and security structures responsible for the various sites.

¹⁰¹ All information provided here relates to the time of print (2002) – some of the information may therefore be out-dated

All of these factors have made my interest in public spaces and the people that move through them a rich and powerful journey. I hope that this is evident in the production – at the very least the vast range of human and physical architecture that is present in Durban and the wealth that emerges in the inter-action amongst all these elements on our streets.

This rich and layered interaction, to my mind, is what 'culture' is all about. (Jay Pather, 2002: *CityScapes* programme note)

Production Credits:

Choreography: Jay Pather (Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre) and full company
Stage Manager (sites and gallery): Clare Craighead
Production Manager (gallery): Jane Cross
Assistant Stage Manager: Pascal Dube
Lighting Design: Richard Parker, assisted by Dylan Heaton
On-site Announcements: Petros Duma
Video Editing: Greg Streak
Publicist: Illa Thompson of Publicity Matters
Pre-Production Assistance: Janet Walsh
Lay-out Design and Photography: Storm Janse van Rensburg
Photography: Virginia MacKenny

DURBAN ART GALLERY:

Carol Brown (Director), Jenny Streton, James Makola

Guest Dance Companies:

Our Hour Pansula Dance Company
Shwibeka Dance Company
Celtic Dance Company
Pravika's Kathak Kendra
Technikon Natal Drama Department
Flatfoot Dance Company

320 WEST STREET

Performers: Nkanyiso Kunene, Thulani Ngcobo, Mlungisi Hadebe, Siyanda Mabaso, Thamisanga Msomi, Ncebo Ngema, Thokozani Msane
Video: Thando Mama

Thando Mama received a National Diploma in the Dept of Fine Art at Technikon Natal, a B.Tech majoring in printmaking and is currently completing a masters in Fine Art. Has made three short videos experimenting with video art and performance and has plans to make four or five more videos this year. Has been involved in various projects and exhibitions throughout SA. Was a finalist in the Gauloises Art Competition in Grahamstown and was part of the Dogtroep KZN workshops. Has participated in various exhibitions, conferences and workshops.

Music: Scorpio Music (Carl Orff Remix)

PROGRAMME NOTE:

The façade of this building as well as the moving escalators have inspired a dance theatre performance with Pansula dancers costumed in pinstripe suits, hats, and briefcases and cell phones. The dancers work with the motions of the escalators, as well as on the pavement in front playing with the notions of businessmen taking themselves seriously. The work combines the formal lines

of the architecture with the spectacle of Pansula dancing, narrative storylines and characters. (*CityScapes* programme notes)

NORTH BEACH PIER

Performers: Khulekani Qwabe, Pravika Janki, Lisa Linton, Lindsay McDonald, Nokulunga Vilakazi, Thandeka Malinga, Zanele Mzolo, Thulile Mahlaba, Tharishna Sewpersad, Jabulani Mfeka, Presheen Chetty, Sthandiwe Mazubane, Nonhlanhla Mkhungo, Ayanda Tsotsi, Wonder-Boy Gumede, Hlengiwe Ncube, Charmaine Mpofo
Video: Junaid Ahmed

Junaid Ahmed has edited poetry anthologies, published articles internationally and has read papers on arts and culture at international conferences. Served on advisory committees and executive boards of NGOs, initiated and co-ordinated arts and culture events, conferences and workshops. Was General Secretary of COSAW; appointed onto the National Film and Video Foundation. A guest lecturer in Drama and Performance Studies at UND, teaches film and TV production and is a judge for the Durban International Film Festival. Has worked on corporate image videos, documentaries, short feature films and TV commercials. Has produced and directed productions for Channel Four (UK), The Discovery Channel (Europe), SABC and ETV. His works have featured on international film festivals and has received many awards.

PROGRAMME NOTE:

The sea always associated with the more obvious tourist delights of surfing, water-skiing and sunbathing provides in this work another context. The ebb and flow of surf, the formations of foam edged waves have inspired hypnotic, ritualised dances depicted by Shembe, Celtic and Indian dancing. The dancers do not aim to provide crass cross-cultural dialogue as much as mirror, reflect and be part of an aspect of the sea that is seldom evoked or rarely enjoyed. This is its serenity, its stillness in motion and its ability to transport ones spirit without need for anything else but the capacities to look and feel. The three groups of dancers, Shembe, Celtic and Indian use the length of the pier and the enveloping surrounds to create moments of peace, beauty and reflection appropriately performed near what many consider a Holy Weekend. (*CityScapes* programme notes)

THE WORKSHOP'S OUT OF AFRICA COFFEE SHOP

Performers: Neliswa Rushualang, Eric Shabalala, Seren McMurtry, Natasha Hosken, Andile Mngadi, Dumisile Mgadi, Mdu Mtshali
Video: Greg Streak

Greg Streak received an MFA in 1996 from the Technikon Natal. Resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Dunsten in Amsterdam 1997 – 1998. since returning to SA has taught video in the Fine Art Dept at the Art School in Durban. Founded PULSE – which seeks to create a platform for interaction and discussion in the visual arts through annual projects. Has exhibited abroad – Lava Edge, Arti et Amicitiae Amsterdam; Reykjavik Art Museum in Iceland and at the World Wide Video Festival in Amsterdam, and locally – Video Views, SANG Cape Town; Tour Guides of the Inner City, Market Theatre.

Music: Ricky Gass

PROGRAMME NOTE:

Seven dancers draw from the carnival atmosphere that surrounds an intimate, sunken coffee shop in this space of variety and kitsch. The dancers combine intimate gestures with burlesque, working with dance forms such as tap and jazz. The work is wacky and energetic, using athletic, tumbling, jumps, lifts and falls to produce slapstick comedy with zany characters. Veteran Durban musician Ricky Gass, who is a major feature at the Workshop, plays popular tunes to accompany the dance. (*CityScapes* programme notes)

THE ALBANY HOTEL

Performers: Ntombi Gasa, Denton Douglas, S'thembiso Mbatha

Video: Storm Janse van Rensburg

Storm Janse van Rensburg [is] a curator of extensive and varied experience. Is currently curator and manager of the NSA Gallery. Has contributed to significant conferences, seminars and workshops; co-ordinated the Dogtroep Theatre Co (Netherlands) KZN workshops; Advisor PULSE Initiative with Rijksakademie International Network; Video for *Tattamachance* by Jay Pather; set design *High Art* by Jay Pather for *jomba!* And Digital Visual Design *Laws of Recall* by Jay Pather for *Jomba!*. Judge Durban International Film Festival. Has exhibited nationally including Red Eye, NSA, BAT and DAG locally.

Music: Café del Mar

PROGRAMME NOTE:

A woman lies on a bed under a sheet; a man in a raincoat and hat enters with the audience. An intimate dance work begins, depicting a mysterious and intriguing relationship. The dance is offbeat and passionate, funny and sad. The audience (of ten) watches an intricate and subtle relationship that emerges from inside the room. The dancers work with physical theatre and use the room, the bed, the side chair etc. to create complex kinetic quality, brazen physicality as well as soft intimate details, of touch, grimace, half smile. The work speaks of the mysteries of union and separation, foregrounding the peculiarly interesting and revealing qualities of the more quaint spaces of Durban. (*CityScapes* programme notes)

THE MUSGRAVE SHOPPING CENTRE

Performers: Hlengiwe Lushaba, Joel Zuma, Siyanda Duma, Sduduzo Majola, Brian S. Nyanda, Menzi Biyela, Zamani Siamane

Video: Virginia MacKenny

Virginia MacKenny [is] a practising artist and Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the Technikon Natal. A writer and commentator on contemporary South African art and KZN arts editor for www.arthrob.co.za, an internet site dedicated to supporting the contemporary visual arts discourse in SA. A committee member of the NSA and an independent curator. This is her second collaboration in video with the dance world.

Music: Joel Zuma, Andrew Lloyd Webber, TKZee

PROGRAMME NOTE:

A black *kugel* abseils down the side of Musgrave Centre in a hoop skirt while a group of male isiCathimiya singers sing the praises of Tekweni on the pavement. They interact marginally making space for each other, negotiating survival in the

middle of consumer paradise. This work takes an ironic look at cultural confusion, the traditional and the contemporary and finds no big deal. (*CityScapes* programme notes)

APPENDIX E

Original Programme notes from *Home*, 2003¹⁰²
(Taken from the National Arts Festival Souvenir Programme, 2003)

Home was originally commissioned by the National Arts Festival, Grahamstown South Africa in 2003

“Home base, homely, home sweet home, **home truth**, home work, at home, **make a home**, home managers, home makers, **home breakers**, home away from home, homesick, sickhome, homestead, homey, homeboy, homeless homeless home”

With the very foundations of war taking on a completely new face, the phrase ‘threat closer to home’ has become palatable. In global unease, the inviolate home becomes refuge and once more a symbol of sanctity. Shifting identities, however, keep home truths in flux and the home, just as notions of “the people” or the family, have become all flux. Hotels and cardboard boxes and bomb shelters thrive as homes while picket-fenced suburbia caves in, give in to fluid identities or acquire steel gates to restore sanctity and uneasy safety. This provides the impetus for *Home*.

The production comprises a series of works set inside various ‘home’ spaces: a hotel room, a kitchen, a solitary uncluttered space, a migrant worker’s cubicle, and a lounge. In the main, the works revisit the paradox of the desire for security and freedom, restlessness and the aching need for rest. *Home* also serves as a metaphor (through its use of a range of visual imagery, dance and performance styles) for larger, global impulses of inward looking in the threat of change.

Home has been a collaboration of ideas with various dances and the visual arts. Dance forms range from the contemporary African language of Siwela Sonke to Denton Douglas’s emotion charged physical theatre, the rousing rhythms of Vaibhav Joshi’s Kathak to Shiksha Rampatha’s lyrical and sculptural Bharatha Natyam. Dance and ritual come together to evoke intimate, interior moments of belonging and dislocation, nurturing and fleeing.

In tandem, visual artist Jo Radcliffe provides startling visual images of the legendary Devonshire Hotel while Milijana Babic’s unsettling home sculptures include a wrought iron swing caught in mid-air without an occupant. Angela Buckland’s photography meticulously examines the bunkers of migrant workers in their temporary homes and video artist Thando Mama considers the textures of cardboard shelters with quite, street-wise cool.

Visual and performing arts combine to provide a complex layered presentation of *Home*.

Cast:

Siyanda Duma, Ntombi Gasa, Vaibhav Joshi, Shiksha Rampatha, Eric Shabalala, Denton Douglas, Marise Kyd¹⁰³, Sphelele Nzama¹⁰⁴, Neliswa Rushualang and Vusi Thabethe

¹⁰² All information provided here relates to the time of print (2002) – some of the information may therefore be out-dated

¹⁰³ Marise Kyd did not perform in *Home* at The Durban Art Gallery – she was replaced by Mpumi Gasa.

¹⁰⁴ Sphelele Nzama did not perform in *Home* at The Durban Art Gallery – he was replaced by Mdu Mtshali.

Visual Artists:

Milijana Babic, Angela Buckland, Thando Mama and Jo Radcliffe.

Production Credits:

Concept and Direction: Jay Pather

Choreography: Jay Pather with the Company

Set Design: Storm Janse van Rensburg

Lighting Design: Richard Parker

Production Manager: Jane Cross

Stage and Company Manager: Clare Craighead

Photography: Suzy Bernstein, Val Adamson

APPENDIX F

Press Kit for *CityScapes* Media Launch

CityScapes

By Jay Pather

Taking place at five sites in and around Durban's CBD over five weekend afternoons during March. Entry is free and all are welcome.

This will be followed by an installation of all five performances with accompanying original video presentations of the events by five leading video artists – for a season at the Durban Art Gallery on April 4, 5, 6, 7 at 7.30pm nightly. Booking through computicket.

For additional info, pix and media opportunities contact: PUBLICITY MATTERS

Illa Thompson

P o box 30547, Mayville, 4058 – tel/fax: 031 – 261 5518

e-mail: pubmat@iafrica.com

Special thanks to the National Arts Council and Durban Arts for assisting with the funding of this project.

MEDIA LAUNCH WED 6 FEBRUARY

- Andrew Verster:** Artist, Pioneer and Artist Activist. Speaking on behalf of the Durban Art Gallery.
- Jay Pather:** Director/Choreographer of the *CityScapes* season. Talks about the *CityScapes* concept.
- Virginia MacKenny:** Artist, Senior Lecturer: Fine Art Dept Technikon Natal.
- Greg Streak:** Artist, Lecturer Fine Art Dept Technikon Natal.

Both artists reflect on the diversity of approaches to the video presentations of the different works.

Questions and comments.

CityScapes

DANCE AND THE SPACES OF DURBAN

Five site specific dance theatre performances will occur throughout the month of March, on the five Saturdays. Each performance is inspired by the space that it is performed in: the hypnotic motion of the surf at the North Beach Pier, the landmark escalators of 320 West Street, the character full double room overlooking Smith Street at the Albany Hotel. Each performance lasts approximately 15 minutes, and will be performed three times.

320 West Street

The façade of this building as well as the moving escalators have inspired a dance theatre performance with Pansula dancers costumed in pinstripe suits hats and briefcases and cell phones. The dancers will work with the motions of the escalators and cell phones. The dancers will work with the motion of the escalators, as well as on the pavement in front playing with the notions of businessmen taking themselves seriously. The work combines the formal lines of the architecture with the spectacle of Pansula dancing, narrative storylines and characters.

Legends Restaurant/Musgrave Centre

A black *kugel* abseils down the side of Musgrave Centre in a hoop skirt while a group of male iscathimiya singers sing the praises of Tekweni on the pavement. They interact marginally, making space for each other, negotiating survival in the middle of consumer paradise. This work takes an ironic look at cultural confusion, the traditional and the contemporary and finds no big deal.

The Workshop (Out of Africa Coffee Shop)

Six dancers draw from the carnival atmosphere that surrounds an intimate sunken coffee shop in this space of variety and kitsch. The dancers combine intimate gestures with burlesque, working with dance forms such as tap, jazz, and performance art. The work is wacky and energetic, using athletic, tumbling, jumps, lifts and falls to produce slapstick comedy with zany characters. Veteran Durban musician Ricky Gass who is a major feature at the Workshop will be playing ragtime music to accompany the dance.

The Albany Hotel

A woman lies on the bed under a sheet; a man in a raincoat and hat enters with the audience. An intimate dance work begins, depicting a mysterious and intriguing relationship. The dance is offbeat and passionate, funny and sad. The audience (of ten) watches an intricate and subtle relationship that emerges from inside the room. The dancers work with physical theatre and use the room, the bed, the side chair etc. to create a complex kinetic quality, brazen physicality as well as soft intimate details, of touch, grimace, half smile. The third dancer, a male, hovers as a watcher, dressed in a sari and ray ban sunglasses. The work speaks of the mysteries of union and separation, foregrounding the peculiarly interesting and revealing qualities of the more quaint spaces of Durban.

The North Beach Pier

The sea always associated with the more obvious tourist delights of surfing, water-skiing and sunbathing provides another context. The ebb and flow of surf, the formations of foam edged waves have inspired hypnotic, ritualised dances in depicted by Shembe, Celtic and Indian dancing. The dancers do not aim to provide crass cross-cultural dialogue as much as mirror, reflect and be part of an aspect of the sea that is seldom evoked or rarely enjoyed. This is its serenity, its stillness in motion and its ability to transport ones spirit without need for anything else but the capacities to look and feel.

The three groups of dancers, Shembe, Celtic and Indian use the length of the pier and the enveloping surrounds to create moments of peace, beauty and reflection appropriately performed near what many consider a Holy Weekend.

CityScapes at the Durban Art Gallery

CityScapes will run as a season of dance at the Durban Art Gallery. Five leading artists, Greg Streak, Junaid Ahmed, Thando Mama, Virginia MacKenny and Storm van Rensburg will interpret the five site-specific works on video. This different video footage will be installed with the five performances in various spaces in the Durban Art Gallery. The performances will occur in a loop i.e. they will repeat themselves with short breaks for 90 minutes. Audiences may wander from one performance to another as if they were at an exhibition. They may choose to go anywhere at anytime or even revisit a performance. The Circular Gallery will also have a cash bar for audience to take a breather before moving on to watch another performance.

The performances will take place at the Durban Art Gallery from 4-7 April at 7.30pm. The performances will take place as follows:

On the stairs (320 West Street)
Small Gallery (The Albany Hotel)
First large Gallery (Workshop on one side and Musgrave Centre on the other)
Second large Gallery (North Beach Pier)

The works are conceived and directed by Jay Pather and choreographed in collaboration with the various dancers. The large cast of dancers emerge from a variety of companies, Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre, The Celtic Dance Company, Pravika's Kathak Kendra, The Flatfoot Dance Company, the Our Hour Pansula Dance Company as well as dance students from the Technikon Natal.

Performances run from 4-7 April at 7.30pm nightly.

During the day the five video presentations will comprise an exhibit of their own as an installation at the Durban Art Gallery.

[The directors note is also included in the press kit, but has been omitted here as it is included in APPENDIX D]

Artist Biographies In alphabetical order

Junaid Ahmed

Has edited poetry anthologies, published articles internationally and has read papers on arts and culture at international conferences. Served on advisory committees and executive boards of NGOs, initiated and co-ordinated arts and culture events, conferences and workshops. Was General Secretary of COSAW; appointed onto the National Film and Video Foundation. A guest lecturer in Drama and Performance Studies at UND, teaches film and TV production and is a judge for the Durban International Film Festival. Has worked on corporate image videos, documentaries, short feature films and TV commercials. Has produced and directed for Channel Four (UK), The Discovery Channel (Europe), SABC and ETV. His works have featured on international film festivals and has received many awards.

Storm Janse van Rensburg

A curator of extensive and varied experience. Is currently curator and manager of the NSA Gallery. Has contributed to significant conferences, seminars and workshops; co-ordinated the Doegtroep Theatre Co (Netherlands) KZN workshops; Advisor PULSE Initiative with Rijksakademie International Network; Video for *Tattamachance* by Jay Pather; set design *High Art* by Jay Pather for *Jomba!* And Digital Visual Design *Laws of Recall* by Jay Pather of *Jomba!* Judge Durban International Film Festival. Has exhibited nationally and internationally including Red Eye, NSA, BAT and DAG locally. He is editor of *artmail NSA* for the NSA Gallery.

Virginia MacKenny

A Practicing artist and Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the Technikon Natal. A writer and commentator on contemporary South African Art and KZN arts editor for www.artthrob.co.za an internet site dedicated to supporting the contemporary visual arts in SA. A committee member of the NSA and an independent curator. This is her second collaboration in video with the dance world.

Thando Mama

Received a National Diploma in the Dept of Fine Art at Technikon Natal; a B.Tech majoring in printmaking and is currently completing a masters in Fine Art. Has made three short videos experimenting with video art and performance and has plans to make four or five more videos this year. Has been involved in various projects and exhibitions throughout SA. Was a finalist in the Gauloises Art Competition in Grahamstown and was part of the Dogtroep KZN workshops. Has participated in various exhibitions, conferences and workshops.

Greg Streak

Received an MFA in 1996 from the Technikon Natal. Resident at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam 1997 – 1998. Since returning to SA has taught video in the Fine Art Dept at the Art School in Durban. Founded PULSE – which seeks to create a platform for interaction and discussion in the visual arts through annual projects. Has exhibited abroad – Lava Edge, Arti et Amicitiae Amsterdam; Reykjavik Art Museum in Iceland and the World Wide Video Festival in Amsterdam, and locally – Video Views, SANG Cape Town; Tour Guides of the Inner City, Market Theatre.

Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre

“Crossing over to a new place altogether”

Mission Statement

Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre aims to:

- Produce visually compelling contemporary dance theatre performances of high quality
- Develop a dance theatre language that draws from the rich variety of indigenous and contemporary dance styles of South Africa such as the indhlamu (traditional Zulu dance) gumbboot, isicathamiya, Indian dance, ballet, contemporary European and contemporary African dance
- Recreate our histories, and rediscover the rich myths and legends of marginalised people whose stories have remained untold
- Train and develop dancers from disadvantaged communities who have had no prior access to training opportunities
- Create socially relevant dance theatre that deals with the issues that affect the people we perform to – such as gangsterism in high schools, abuse against women – in places where the people are – community halls, shopping malls, clinics, prisons, clubs, outlying villages as well as theatres
- Be instruments for the ideas of people around us, but also to challenge these ideas

Jay Pather, director:

Jay Pather obtained Honours degrees in Literature and Drama from the University of Durban-Westville, a Performance Diploma from Trinity College, London, and an MA from New York University where he studied Dance Theatre as a Fulbright Scholar.

He has been Resident Choreographer for CAPAB's Jazzart, as well as Course Co-Ordinator and Lecturer in Dance at the Universities of Zululand, Durban-Westville and Cape Town, and for Community Arts Project and the New Africa Theatre Project in Cape Town. He has directed and choreographed over fifty productions nationally as well as internationally in India, Angola, London, Germany, Australia, Sri Lanka and New York. These include contemporary dance theatre versions of Euripides' *The Baccae*, *This Black Woman* based on the writings of Zinzi Mandela, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, and *The Stories I Could Tell*, in which he performed and wrote with Peter Hayes.

Pather was appointed Artistic Director of Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre in 1996. Since then he produced over fifty new works for the company, such as *Shifting Spaces*, *Tilting Time*, for which he won a First National Bank Vita Award for Best Choreography; and *A South African Siddhartha*, which was commissioned by the Standard Bank National Festival of the Arts on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary and for which he also received the FNB Vita Award for the Best Choreography.

Pather was also commissioned to choreograph and direct *Ahimsa-Ubuntu*, based on Mahatma Gandhi's life in South Africa. This production was invited by Mrs. Sonia Gandhi and the South African High Commission to tour India and Sri Lanka in 1997.

In 1998 Pather was invited to open the Interface Festival of Theatre and Dance in London with the Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre. He has received commissions from FNB Vita to produce work for the national Dance Umbrella and from the International Writers Festival.

Pather has delivered numerous addresses and papers including the international Confluences Dance Conference in Cape Town which he opened as Keynote Speaker, the Culture and Resistance Conference in Harlem and the Interface Inter-Cultural Conference at the British Institute in London; at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown and at the L'Afrique en Creations Conference hosted by AFAA in Lille, France.

In 1994, he was co-ordinator for performing arts on the Arts and Culture Task Group which was appointed by the Minister of Arts and Culture to develop new arts legislation for the new South African constitution. Pather also serves as a Trustee on the Board of the Arts and Culture Trust of the President, a national funding body in South Africa.

He has produced the dance component for the Commonwealth Heads of State Meeting. In 2000 Pather was appointed coordinator of the Performing Arts Programme of the XIII International AIDS Conference. He also produced and directed the Closing Ceremonies for this event.

Pather has co-ordinated and hosted several international exchanges such as Kafiq from France, Bullies Ballerinas and RJC Dance Company from London, Dogtroep from Amsterdam and Jayathi Bhatia from India.

In addition to directing the Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre he is also currently a lecturer at the Technikon Natal where he coordinates the Dance and Choreography courses. He serves as External Examiner for Masters Students for the Universities of Natal and Cape Town. Pather is an Executive Member of the National Advisory and State Theatre Board recently appointed by the minister of Arts and Culture, Dr. Ben Ngubane.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE COMPANY

Siwela Sonke Dance theatre was originally devised as a training and development programme for Black dancers with no access to training opportunities, initiated by The Playhouse Company in 1994. The aim of the programme was to provide a holistic dance education based on the natural movement and anatomy of the body, while referring to the major African dance traditions of the region. In this way, a new contemporary and indigenous dance language would be created that would be relevant to the educational and social needs of KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa. It would also stimulate and support new directions of performance art in the region.

The original curriculum was devised by Alfred Hinkel of Jazzart Dance Theatre, and the first programme with 18 students was an overwhelming success. In July 1995, ten dancers were offered full-time salaries to form a company that served as a performance vehicle for the training programme, and in 1996 Jay Pather was appointed Artistic Director of Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre.

Still under the wing of the Playhouse Company from 1996 to 1998, the influence and scope of SSDT expanded quickly. Pather and the company vigorously pursued their mission statement, contributing to dance education, development and performance on local, national and international levels. They were invited to perform at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, The Dance Umbrella in Johannesburg, the Macufe Festival in Taung, at the opening of the International Writers Festival and the Interface Festival in London. A hugely successful tour of India and Sri Lanka was supported by the Indian Government, and it became clear that Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre was fast establishing a reputation as a serious proponent of new South African Dance.

In 1996 the Mail and Guardian named the company as one of the "Hot 100" South Africans (alongside then Deputy president Thabo Mbeki), and The Star proposed them as the best new dance company of that year. Vita Awards were received by company members in the categories of Best Choreography, Best Female Dancer and Most Promising Male Dancer, as well as nominations for Best Male Dancer.

In 1997 the Durban Metro Mayor's Award for Achievement was given to the SSDT, in recognition of their commitment and contribution to the local community.

In 1999, SSDT was retrenched by the Playhouse Company, and formed a section 21 non-profit Company. Directors of the Board include prominent

members of the public health service, community development specialists as well as cultural practitioners. The Company began to canvas for its own survival and development and concerted plan to pursue its original mission statement while maintaining financial viability. The company continued to produce new work, often commissioned by such national festivals as the Dance Umbrella and the National Arts Festival.

In 2001 the Company was amongst ten dance companies in the country identified to be of national importance by the Minister of Arts and Culture and the National Arts Council. This ensures their receipt of partial funding as a permanent, full time entity.

SOME MEDIA COMMENTS

"Acclaimed choreographer Pather has taken South Africa's layered landscapes and mindscapes to create the superbly satisfying and insanelly lyrical South African interior dance dialogue we've been waiting for. Pather slowly unfolds a distinctly South African narrative with sophistication and an unselfconscious interplay of dance forms from Zulu and Xhosa dance, Kathak, Bharatha Natyam, Oddissi, Contemporary and Classical Ballet. It works beautifully. At times it is soft and calm, rational and dignified, comical and camp, balanced and harmonious then petulant and tortured. And yes, of course, even very sexy." – The Independent on Saturday

"Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre and its artistic director, Jay Pather, have proved that they make a formidable and ground-breaking dance company. With a successful tour to Europe, sell out performances at the Grahamstown Festival and several FNB Vita Awards under its belt, Siwela has made Durban proud to have a dance company of such international stature." - The Natal Mercury

"The Siwela Sonke company itself represents several South African cultural strands bound together by a passion to discover our hidden histories and camouflaged rhythms." – The Star

"Intimate, energetic, original... Boundaries are extended, feelings are probed, bodies are tested. Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre's Networks is refreshing, relaxing, interesting to watch and listen to." – The Sunday Tribune

"Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre is on the edge of a dance paradigm shift." – The Natal Mercury

"Just as our Hlabisa weavers create beautiful baskets from the dark and the light palm fronds from the Kwa Zulu Natal coast, Pather and the Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre know how to weave the light and the dark in dance theatre... there is cheek, and charm and even laughter... this is why Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre is such an incredible success." – Mail and Guardian

"Medley is a light-hearted piece that's as competitive as it's choreographic, with exponents of the various dance styles striving vallantly to out-dance their rivals." – The Natal Mercury

"Siwela Sonke in performance and choreography exudes a textured energy alive with individuality and an emerging cross cultural aesthetic." – The Star

"Lords of the Dance!" – The Daily News

"The highly regarded Durban-based dance company, seen by many as one of the leading lights in the South African contemporary dance scene, has wandered into intriguing territory with its new production, Networks." – Mail and Guardian

"Siwela Sonke's performance process is that of a negotiated sharing to create new inter-cultural dance languages, and the company is now dancing with a level of technical ability that leaves one awestruck." – The Natal Mercury

APPENDIX G

e-Questionnaire response from Thando Mama

Electronic Questionnaire sent to video artists involved in either *CityScapes*, Durban (2002) and/or *Home*, Durban 2003.

To be used as part of the research of Clare Craighead's Masters Dissertation entitled:

"Shifting Spaces in the 'New South Africa': Site-Specific performance as an intercultural exploration of sites, using as examples Jay Pather's *CityScapes*, Durban (2002) and *Home*, Durban (2003)".

The questionnaire was sent via e-mail on 21/10/05 (from danger77@absamail.co.za)

This response was received via e-mail on 12/11/05 (from thandomama@yahoo.com)

Name:

- Thando

Surname:

- Mama

Which production did you collaborate with Jay Pather/Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre on, *CityScapes*, *Home* or Both?

- *CityScapes*

Can you offer a brief autobiography in relation to your career as a practicing visual (video) artist, thus far?

- I graduated from the Technikon Natal (2000), majoring in printmaking and photography. But I have since worked and produced video art and installations both as a solo artist and in collaboration, having exhibited both nationally and internationally.

Have you collaborated with artists/genres other than Jay Pather/ Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre/ Dance? (If so, please provide some detail as to the nature of the collaboration[s]).

- Yes, I have collaborated with 3rd Eye Vision, an artist collective in Durban. With Hlengiwe Lushaba on her Jomba project in 2002. With poet Keith Kunene and Jan-Henri Booyeen on my video *Back to me*, 2003. With Kwezi Gule and Gabi Gcobo on their videos in 2004, and with photography students of Le Cambre in Bruxelles, Belgium this year (2005). My collaborations however, have been mostly with Jay and his company over the last years.

Can you offer some insight into your reasons for our collaboration with Jay Pather and the discipline of contemporary dance theatre? (i.e. why interact with dance as opposed to other performance disciplines?)

- Movement. These projects were of interest to me as they dealt with the city, a place where I was staying at (I am not in Durban anymore). They had an insight into the nature of the city and with my experiences of it ever since I got there in 1997 as a student. Also there was a need and growing interest in new media and digital arts of the moving image, movement and architecture then not for me but also with the director and performers. You will remember that video art has a history of activism and performance, the attraction came from there, making it happen in your environment and working with other people from the theatre was good for my own perspective at looking at the body and performance in my videos.

How do you think the disciplines of visual (video) art and contemporary dance theatre interact/compliment each other (if indeed they do)?

- As I said above, there is a strong history or a relationship between video art and dance. It has been happening overseas and in this country for a while now. To start off, video captures an image in motion, a series of movements and composition in the moving image allow for video artists to explore this. And for me at the time I was also interested in my own body as a site of artistic and social discourse. This I found to be strong in the theatre. The previous year I was involved with the Dutch Theatre Company that came to Durban called *Dogtroep*. I responded well to their style of theatre and how they brought visual artists with actors, and others like sound and musicians too, with a good improvisational and experimental approach to theatre and

production. I wanted more of that and I found it that video art and theatre compliment each other and this allows one to grow in confidence and experience.

Can you describe your working processes and intentions in creating your particular video installation(s) in relation to your collaboration on *CityScapes/Home*?

- I worked on the 320 West Street site with Pansula dance. Before I made the video I went to observe the rehearsals and to get a pace and rhythm of the piece while it was still at the studios then. I went to shoot before the performance and was walking around the site and taking footage late evening and in the morning to get a feeling of the place. On the day of the performance, I shot the performance three times. I then did the editing later. This was shown at the Durban Art Gallery with the performance live. The video starts with the pantsula dance on the site and ends with the long shot of the back of the building of 320 West, late afternoon, it is shot in Hi8 and is grainy, this was because I wanted to mock the glamour of the 'picture perfect Durban'; after this you see the neon lights of 320 at night and then it fades to black.

Can you offer some insight into your experience of your particular collaboration on *CityScapes/Home*?

- There is something scary about working in a public space, alone at night or surrounded by a crew during the day. There is also an energy that overwhelms you when you share thoughts and exchange ideas and at the end work towards a production that the public enjoys and could engage with. As artists we have that in ourselves. The realization of this is with us all. To look at your environment and place and allow other people to experience it the way you have captured it is priceless.

Can you offer some insight into the particular video installation(s) which you created for *CityScapes/Home* – what is the significance of your contribution to the final productions as they were publicly viewed at the Durban Art Gallery?

- I can't remember whether I have a title of the video or not! The video was my own interpretation of the brief of this project. The brief was itself limiting as you have only the performers and the site. I wanted to add my own comment about the city that we live at. I wanted to question the image that you see on television about Durban on the surface. I wanted to try to begin to see its 'truer colours'. It has that irony. As I said, the final product was shown with the live performance of the dancers. Where are these people from, the video seems to question, as I remember it. Where is this place, some might ask? Will the video be ever shown anywhere else, I ask?

Was the 'final product' i.e. the installation of *CityScapes/Home* into the Durban Art Gallery, in your opinion, successful? (Please offer reasons for your response to this question).

- In a way. I got to project it on a very large screen. NICE. In other ways I have to compromise: about sound, about the length and who knows what more. You always worry it its not too distracting with the performance itself, when you have two things happening at the same time, but again, when there is a still video people tend to get bored by that. Is video dead?

How important, do you think such collaborations (between artistic/aesthetic genres and disciplines) are within the South African Artscape?

- VERY, VERY IMPORTANT! We do that and we will never die. EVER!