

**JOURNEY THROUGH THE PAST: ANALYSING
PERFORMANCE IN MUSEUMS TO PROMOTE
MULTIVOCALITY IN HISTORICAL NARRATIVES
THROUGH A SELF-DEvised PIECE, *OUR FOOTPRINTS*,
IN BERGTHEIL MUSEUM, DURBAN**

**By
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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Drama and
Performance Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban

2018

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January 2018

Supervisor: Tamar Meskin

Declaration

Ideclare that

1. The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
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Stephanie Jenkins (Candidate)

January 2018

Supervisor's Declaration

As the candidate's supervisor, I agree/do not agree to the submission of this dissertation.

.....

Tamar Meskin (Supervisor)

January 2018

Ethical Clearance Letter



29 November 2017

Ms Stephanie Jenkins (213503045)
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Dear Ms Jenkins,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1870/017M

Project title: Journey through the Past: Analysing performance in museums to promote multivocality in historical narratives through a self-devised piece, *Our Footprints*, in Bergtheil Museum, Durban

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

With regards to your response received on 14 November 2017 to our letter of 31 October 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

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100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the role performance in museums might play through encouraging multivocality in the depiction and exploration of historical narratives in post-apartheid South Africa. The research is situated within the discipline of drama and performance studies, and focuses specifically on performing history in museums.

In conducting this research, a case study approach has been adopted to examine the process of creating museum theatre. The main focus is on the self-devised, Performance-as-Research project, *Our Footprints*, performed in the Bergtheil Museum in Durban. Three other examples of museum theatre are considered, namely Brett Bailey's *Exhibits A and B* (2012 & 2013), *This Accursed Thing* (Jackson & Kidd, 2007) and the Triangle presentation (Talbot & Andrews, 2008). These examples are used to explore how performance can be employed alongside the traditional archive to bring history 'to life' in museums.

The theoretical component of this dissertation examines the manner in which performance and historical narratives are framed – using Erving Goffman's (1975) frame analysis. In addition, it considers how multiple perspectives can be promoted in museums through performance – using aspects of Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981/1994) theory of heteroglossia. The pre-existing case studies noted above offer different approaches and techniques for making museum theatre which link to these theoretical ideas. Similar concepts are then explored in *Our Footprints*.

Museum theatre uses performance in sites that deal with historical narratives and artefacts to 'recreate' the past through action. This study explores how offering the audience the opportunity 'physically' to experience the past through 'participating' in performance, and connecting history to their personal lives and memories, creates possibilities for learning about, experiencing and remembering the past.

Through this study I contribute to the body of knowledge in drama and performance studies and museum studies by exploring the potential of museum theatre in post-apartheid South Africa to bring different – and, sometimes dissenting – historical narratives, into contact with one another, thus promoting dialogue through performance. *Our Footprints* is an original production in a new area of drama that investigates performance's role in exploring the past in the present.

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Introduction

Embarking on a Journey

“A play is a blueprint of an event: a way of creating and rewriting history through the medium of literature. Since history is a recorded or remembered event, theatre, for me, is the perfect place to ‘make’ history.”

Suzan-Lori Parks (in Magelssen, 2007: 135)

Plays and performances record and explore human experiences anew as they are performed. A process of remembering occurs as the characters are brought to life by the actors who commune, both directly and indirectly, with the audience, depending on the nature of the performance, allowing the lives of the characters to unfold in the play’s present. As playwright Suzan-Lori Parks notes, history, like plays, is a “recorded or remembered” event (in Magelssen, 2007: 135). While history is about the past, it is written in the present; and performance, while often rehearsed and planned in advance, also takes place in the here-and-now. Both unfold in the present moment with memory assisting in the recollection of the event even after the event itself has passed. I argue that through incorporating the presence of live bodies in the recording and remembering of the past, using the medium of what Parks calls “theatre” (in Magelssen, 2007: 135), history can be ‘made’ again in the present. Those involved in the performance, both actor/s and audience, have the opportunity to ‘experience’ the past in the present with an immediacy not available to the same extent in the written documentation of history.

In my dissertation, I am exploring the purposeful inclusion and incorporation of performance into spaces that remember and represent the past, specifically the museum.¹ Museums are buildings that house artefacts and narratives deemed important for remembrance (Vergo, 1989/2000: 41). The role and purpose of museums will be further explored in Chapter 1: Becoming an Explorer and Chapter 2: Journey through the Literature. Performance in museums is a recent phenomenon, with the earliest recording of museum theatre taking “place at Old Sturbridge Village² in 1961” (Bridal, 2004: 15). Since then, theatre in museums has gained prominence as more installations, re-enactments and educational exhibitions have been implemented around the world, particularly in America and the United Kingdom (Magelssen, 2007). The concept of museum theatre has not, however, entered the mainstream in South Africa. Through the creation of a self-devised piece, entitled *Our Footprints*, held at the

¹ While performance about history can be – and is – performed in theatres, the primary focus of my research is the exploration of the creation and staging of performance specifically in museum spaces.

² Old Sturbridge Village is an outdoor living history museum located in Sturbridge, Massachusetts in America which ‘replicates’ life of the settlers living in New England between 1790 and 1830.

Bergtheil Museum, in Westville, Durban, South Africa in December 2017, I am examining the creation of a theatrical work out of archival research. Additionally, other case studies of works staged in museums and around issues of history will be explored in relation to the construction and staging of my own work in the Bergtheil Museum.

This study seeks to explore the construction and creation of museum theatre works in South Africa, with specific focus on Durban and the Bergtheil Museum, with the aim of encouraging the presence of multiple perspectives and the portrayal of diversity in historical narratives depicted in museum spaces. I am primarily focusing on stylistic choices employed in the performances and their impact on challenging singular narratives. It is important to note that I am not conducting close readings of my chosen case studies, nor am I engaging with empirical research into how people respond to museum theatre and their retention of what is experienced in the performance, and thus, this dissertation does not focus on audience reception. I acknowledge that further study into audience reception and the impact of museum theatre in South Africa is possible in the future. My focus is, however, on how museum theatre is created and what techniques might be employed by the practitioner in making this creation with the intention of promoting multivocality. I am, therefore, exploring how performance can be used as a methodology for encouraging the presence of, and discussion around numerous historical accounts. While there are certainly other relevant aspects with the broad frame of museum theatre, for the purpose of this dissertation, my focus is on the construction and staging of *Our Footprints* within the delimited parameters.

In conducting this study around museum theatre and multivocality, I have identified three research objectives which are:

1. To explore how museum theatre can be created to facilitate recognition of multiple narratives and perspectives within museums encouraging multivocality with specific regard to history.
2. To create a museum theatre piece, *Our Footprints*, in the Bergtheil Museum, which encourages a negotiation of perceptions about the past through multivocality.
3. To investigate museum theatre's role in encouraging multivocality, with specific focus on *Our Footprints* in Bergtheil Museum.

In further exploring the key objectives of my dissertation, I have delineated three research questions around museum theatre in South Africa. The first question is: what role does performance have in reimagining the relationship between the traditional archive³, museums and post-apartheid South African theatre in order to promote multivocality? I define

³ The 'archive' refers to the collection of what are deemed 'authentic' records chosen, categorised and assembled by historians, which are referred to when attempting to document the past with "accuracy and objectivity" (Reason, 2003: 83).

multivocality here as the bringing together of a number of perspectives that clash, merge, challenge and confront each other as they are negotiated by those participating in a given event. In such an event, the presentation of only one version of that event, or one side of a story, is discouraged. It is critical to note that the relationship I am proposing between performance and the museum is not innate. Instead I suggest that a relationship between performance and history is forged when practitioners, curators and those concerned with remembering the past come together and create a shared space in which the past may be brought into contact with the present. Such a relationship can challenge and alter the manner in which history is represented and communicated in museums, and thus remembered by the public.

My second research question is: how can museum theatre, with specific focus on my case studies (about which I will elaborate further later in the chapter) and my own piece *Our Footprints*, be constructed and used to promote multivocality in museums? The process of creating performance works in museums, and their staging (as realised in practice at the Bergtheil Museum), will be discussed throughout the dissertation.

As I delve into the creation of museum theatre, I explore the third question which is: why is it necessary to include multiple versions of the past into museums? The inclusion of multiple voices discourages a one sided depiction of history.⁴ Instead, performance encourages the presence of multivocality, a key term used throughout this dissertation, which I will explore more fully in Chapter 8: Journey through Shared History. Combining theatre and history in a museum, therefore, offers a platform for active discussion and re-evaluation of preconceived notions about the past through the promotion of multivocality.

In exploring my proposition that a relationship between performance, museums and their narratives can create the engagement of multiple perspectives, I will investigate four main case studies⁵. Three of the case studies are works created by other practitioners that have informed my written research and practice. The central case study, however, is my own work and is discussed throughout the dissertation. This Performance-as-Research (PAR) piece titled *Our Footprints* is a self-devised piece that has been created around some of the narratives on display in the Bergtheil Museum while working in dialogue with the other case studies discussed in the

⁴ These voices include the individual historical personas from the past, the collective narratives that are pertinent to certain groups, popular accounts, the stories that are 'hidden' or have failed to be prioritised as well as current ideologies that are firstly, influenced by the past and secondly, used to analyse the past.

⁵ I have not personally seen the case studies I have chosen to discuss and am using secondary source material to discuss the performances and their creation. I acknowledge that my interpretation of the case studies is thus influenced by the sources (and their authors) and that I do not have firsthand experience of the performances.

dissertation. PAR and the other methodologies employed in the creation, discussion and evaluation of *Our Footprints* are discussed in Chapter 4: A Voyage through the Methodology.

The first case study considers South African practitioner Brett Bailey's *Exhibits A and B* (2012 & 2013) which is explored in Chapter 6: Journey through Recorded History. *Exhibits A and B* are performed installations that use ideas around the depiction of museum exhibits to explore the portrayal of human bodies (particularly black bodies) and their narratives. This 'portrayal', as used by Bailey in his works, is not the simple depiction of black people but instead involves a critique of the oppression placed upon these bodies and the silencing of their narratives. Performance is used to challenge the dominant narratives that have influenced the representation – or, lack thereof – of the black body in historical narratives. In Chapters 5 and 6, Bailey's work, the notion of the archive, ways of accessing histories, and the depiction of the 'other' will be discussed.

The second case study entitled *This Accursed Thing* (Jackson & Kidd, 2007), is from the Manchester Museum in the United Kingdom, and I will engage this work in a conversation with my own museum theatre performance, *Our Footprints*, in Chapter 7: Journey through Personal History. *This Accursed Thing* explores the slave trade⁶ with two actors taking the audience through various rooms of the museum while playing six historical characters (Jackson, 2011: 14).⁷ My PAR piece utilises the techniques of physically travelling from room to room during the performance as well as what Jackson (2011) calls 'unsettlement'⁸ which is also evident in *This Accursed Thing*. Chapter 7 explores how the audience members watching the performance can be encouraged to access personal memory.

The third case study, discussed in Chapter 8, is a presentation performed at the Performing Heritage Conference in 2008⁹ by actor and joint artistic director of Triangle Theatre

⁶ *This Accursed Thing* focuses on the city of Manchester's role in the abolition of the slave trade, though characters such as the abolitionists Thomas Clarkson and James Watkins, as well as addressing various other aspects of the trade itself, such as the transporting and auctioning of slaves.

⁷ The exhibitions and rooms of the Manchester Museum through which *This Accursed Thing* moves are not necessarily directly related to the depiction of the slave trade. Instead they are 'transformed' by the actors into various aspects of the slave trade through imagination and suggestion. One of the rooms includes the "long, high-vaulted Victorian-Gothic Mammals Gallery [which] lent itself momentarily to the decks of a slave ship, transformed later into a Manchester meeting hall" (Jackson, 2011: 14). In *Our Footprints*, however, the exhibitions of the Bergtheil Museum are directly related to the content of the performance.

⁸ Unsettlement refers to overturning and challenging audience expectations and perceptions (Jackson, 2011: 18). Unsettlement will be elaborated on in Chapter 7.

⁹ Performance, Learning and Heritage was a research project that occurred between 2005 and 2008 in England, with specific focus on Manchester, to explore performance in museums and historic sites

Company¹⁰, Richard Talbot and historian Norwood Andrews. The piece, while a presentation rather than a theatrical event, uses performance as a means to discuss other museum theatre works, *The Last Women* (2008/9) and a series of works done in Charlecote Park in 2008, created by Triangle. The presentation, which will be referred to as Triangle's presentation, uses a technique which Talbot and Andrews (2011) call slippage¹¹, a technique integral to the construction and performing of *Our Footprints*. The use of slippage, as a technique for encouraging multivocality in museums, as well as the 2008 presentation¹² is discussed in Chapter 8.

As stated earlier, the central case study of my research is the museum theatre piece *Our Footprints*. Through concepts such as slippage, unsettlement and heteroglossia (which will be explored further in Chapters 2, 3, 7 & 8), the piece seeks to explore how multivocality in South African museums can be explored, created and promoted through performance. *Our Footprints* will be a 30 minute 'journey' on which museum visitors will be taken. The visitors will be guided by the actors, whom I call actor-guides¹³, through each room of the museum, which is also an old German settler house built around 1850.

Performance in the museum offers the opportunity for a 'live' experience of history using the bodies of actors to evoke the historical narratives, rather than simply relying on the written panels, audio guides and guided tours, typically found in many museums. I will be using archival research from the museum and incorporating it into the scripted performance in the exploration of the history of Westville and the Bergtheil Museum (L'Eplattenier, 2009; Mohr &

(Jackson & Kidd, 2008: 6). Both Jackson and Kidd were influential in the recording and publishing of findings from the project.

¹⁰ Triangle Theatre Company was established in 1988 and is based in Coventry, England (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 172). The company is interested in "personal stories, family histories, and national historical events and figures" (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 172). They use 'slippage' in their productions which I am also using in my own museum theatre work.

¹¹ Slippage juxtaposes characters with the persona of the actor and the past with the present through the actor moving openly in and out of character in front of the audience (Talbot & Andrews, 2011). It will be further elaborated on in Chapter 8.

¹² A presentation of research conducted by various theatre practitioners and academics was presented in 2008 under the title 'Performance, Learning and Heritage'. The aim of the project was to "undertake research into the increasing and varied use being made of performance as both an interpretive tool and a medium of learning for visitors to museums and historic sites" (Jackson & Kidd, 2008: 6). The performed piece by Talbot and Andrews was presented at this conference exploring the work of Triangle and the technique of slippage and its incorporation into performances taking place in museums and heritage sites.

¹³ 'Actor-guide' is the title I have assigned to the performers in *Our Footprints*. They are firstly actors as they assume various historical characters through performance. Secondly, they act as guides because they are physically taking the audience through a house and 'guiding' them from room to room and through various exhibits. The combination of 'actor-guide' allows the performers to move in and out of character as they negotiate the various roles they play in the museum setting.

Ventresca, 2002). The performance will end with a question and answer session for the audience with myself and Bergtheil museum experts, which I will discuss further in Chapters 4 and 9. The construction of the work as well as the notions of multivocality and slippage will be analysed through frame analysis.¹⁴ These concepts will be further considered in Chapter 3: Exploring the Theory. Through my museum theatre piece and my research, I will explore how theatre can be created and used to encourage South Africans to interrogate the present through the past as contained in museums.

The past in museums is often researched, recorded and represented through a traditional collection of 'accurate' historical records which is usually referred to as the archive (Reason, 2003: 83). In Chapter 5, an exploration of the traditional relationship of archive, historian and museum visitor is explored through the metaphor of a traveller going on a journey. The metaphor of a journey is employed throughout the dissertation and is specifically discussed in Chapters 1 and 4. Chapter 5 further explores the concepts of objectivity and authenticity in representing the past and how this influences the storage and reception of narratives. The problematic focus on linear time in the historical timeline and the search for complete accuracy is also discussed.

The notion of the exhibition of the 'other' is elaborated upon in Chapter 6: The Journey through Repositioning History, with specific reference to the former /Xam exhibition in the South African Museum (SAM) and my first case studies, Brett Bailey's *Exhibits A and B*. Bailey's installation, performance pieces that mimic a human zoo, which, I argue, is effective in shifting perspectives, acts as the central case study in Chapter 6. The performance is included in a discussion around re-claiming and re-framing of historical narratives associated with the 'other'.¹⁵ Furthermore, Bailey's exhibition has raised questions around the censorship of art and historical narratives and who has the right to tell stories of the 'other'. The role of disagreement and debate in museums and in performance, which Chapter 6 also covers, therefore, becomes vital in the exploration of contentious and difficult narratives.

As both controversial and familiar narratives are negotiated through performance, museum theatre plays an important role in the active evocation and creation of both personal and collective memories in relation to the performed narratives. Chapter 7: Journey through

¹⁴ Frame analysis was first explored by sociologist Erving Goffman in 1974 looking at how social events are framed or displayed. It is discussed further in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3.

¹⁵ "Otherness" is used when discussing "difference" (Hall, 1997: 225). The 'other' is a term used to discuss the placing of one person or thing against another suggesting that the group becomes "'them' rather than 'us'" (Hall, 1997: 235). 'Othering' places people in opposition to one another, as one group is usually implicitly associated with superior status leading to disparities of power.

Personal History places specific focus on performance's role in memory making. Museums act as "sites of memory" (Winter, 2010: 312) which recall, represent and remember the past in the present. Memory, however, is often viewed as being in opposition to the traditional archive and is therefore underdeveloped in some museums (Reason, 2003: 85). Integrating performance into museums creates a space for memory to work alongside the archive in the exploration of what has gone before.

In the process of memory creation, Chapter 7 explores how 'grabbing' audience "attention" (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 212) and evoking their senses can assist in the making and recalling of both historical and present memories (Johnson, 2015: 50). In *Our Footprints*, I have employed a device called a Map of Memories which encourages the audience member to store new and old memories generated during the performance. The Map, as used in the performance in connection with the acted dialogue, is discussed in this chapter (and in Chapter 4) to explore the notion of the 'making' of the past in the present. The Map is connected to a 'thematic concept' I have focused on in each room of the museum during the performance. At each station, situated in each room, a relevant memory, in connection with the room's thematic concept, is recorded by the audience member at the encouragement of the actor-guides.

In addition to the making of memories, the nature of 'physically' experiencing the past through the audience literally moving from room to room as well as figuratively moving from one perspective to the next, 'unsettles' audience expectations, a process I will elaborate on through a discussion between the case studies of *This Accursed Thing* and *Our Footprints*. Both pieces employ elements of a journey and employ the technique of unsettlement. The roles of theatre professor Freddie Rokem's (2000) witness, hyper-historian and eavesdropper will also be elaborated on in Chapter 7 as both the actor and the audience become participants in the recreation and remembering of historical narratives.

Some museums, such as those serving the group/s in power, may have presented historical narratives as the 'truth' and the potential bias, framing (and interpretation of the framing) of such narratives is often ignored. To promote the awareness of artifice, my focus in Chapter 8 is to interrogate how performance in museums can assist in promoting an environment that has "evidently self-conscious" museum displays that "heighten the spectator's awareness of the means of representation" (Saumarez Smith, 1989/2000: 20). The technique of slippage, as employed in *Our Footprints* and the Triangle presentation, offers the performer and writer the chance to 'talk' to the exhibitions, play specific historical characters as well as directly address the audience from their own subject position reflecting on what is performed, challenging 'set' narratives (Talbot & Norwood, 2011: 173). The open acknowledgement of subjectivity, the

consciousness of retrospection and the purposeful inclusion and discussion of difference are important factors around the examination of multivocality in museums.

Extending the discussion around slippage and multivocality, an examination of types of narration, specifically focusing on first person and third person, is conducted in Chapter 8. Additionally, the juxtaposition of the past tense with the presence tense as part of slippage is noted. The nature of the body as an archive¹⁶, or 'repertoire', is also considered in Chapter 8. The inclusion of the body as a repertoire, becoming a legitimate and useful site for memory making and recording history, is noted as an important component of a performance's role in the depiction of the past.

The role *Our Footprints* has had in encouraging multivocality, the making of memories and the fostering of the relationship between performance and the museum will be discussed in Chapter 9: Assessing the Journey. The effectiveness of the journey at the Bergtheil Museum will be evaluated through self-reflection on my process of creating and staging my museum theatre piece. The future of my own museum theatre work and future research will also be discussed.

The conclusion reveals that performance in museums creates the opportunity to present, discuss and debate multiple historical narratives. Through allowing historical characters to 'speak' through actors in a performance, a range of perspectives, including often dissenting ones, can come into contact with one another as the past is negotiated in the present. When live bodies interact with one another, the actors and the audience are given the opportunity to speak, listen, see, feel and experience what is depicted in the performance.

¹⁶ The 'body as archive' has been proposed as an alternate to the traditional archive that stores mainly written documents (Dean *et al.*, 2015: 12). Through performance the body can be used to create and store memories, allowing it form a metaphorical archival space that challenges and is in dialogue with the traditional archive. This will be elaborated on in Chapter 8.

Chapter 1

Becoming an Explorer

“Our Museum contains many treasures; but if they are just treasures, untouchable, behind glass, stored in boxes, they serve no purposes.”

Ludmilla Jordanova (1989/2000: 40)

1.1. Huberta the hippo

I remember my first visit to a museum. I cannot recall my exact age, although I know I was very young, or what my favourite display was, as the many visits that followed have since blurred into one. I do, however, remember seeing the giant hippopotamus at the centre of the natural history section of the Amathole Museum in King William’s Town. This creature is the famous Huberta who travelled from Lake St. Lucia, in Kwa-Zulu Natal, down to the Eastern Cape in 1928 (Website 1). She gained attention and made headlines as people tracked her movements (Website 1). She was even referred to as “South Africa’s ‘national pet’” (Website 1).

When seeing her as a child in the early 2000s, stationary and stuffed, about eighty years later after her journey, I remember being both fascinated and disturbed by her glass eyes. The displayed animal was supposed to be the ‘real thing’, even though no longer breathing, but her eyes betrayed her. Despite her authentic hide which was skilfully preserved for future perusal, her eyes failed to capture the ‘real’ creature and looked like two big ‘marbles’ in my child-like observation. However, the off-putting effect of the glass globules did not stop me from making a connection to this extraordinary animal. Huberta subsequently became a topic for one of my school projects and I visited her regularly whenever we went to the museum. When I think about history on display, Huberta is the first museum exhibition to come to mind even though I have visited many other displays in many different kinds of museums since my Huberta days.

1.2. Going on a journey

The famous hippopotamus still interests me nearly ninety years later in 2017 even though I am no longer a child. Thinking about her brings back fond memories but she is also pertinent as a symbol for my research. Huberta ventured away from her own habitat into new territory where she had not been before. She went on a journey all on her own. I am interested in exploring the nature of a journey in my dissertation as well as in my museum theatre performance, *Our*

Footprints. The term ‘journey’ implies movement from one place to another; I want to explore this literally, in my performance piece (moving from room to room in the old house in which Bergtheil Museum is situated), as well as figuratively (moving from one perspective to another). Therefore, this metaphor frames my work as I go on a journey as a researcher whilst also creating an opportunity for others to embark on a journey to explore the past. As an extension of this metaphor, I have chosen terminology related to the notion of going on a journey for my chapter headings, rather than conventional thesis divisions. Each part of the dissertation is a ‘new destination’ and the reader and myself as the research are travelling from one chapter to the next as part of the voyage.

Huberta is a powerful symbol, to me, of journeying into new territory. Symbolically in my reading of her ‘journey’, she moved away from the safety of her home to a new environment and new experiences, finding potential new ways of seeing the world. For Huberta, the journey lasted about three years until she was found shot dead in the Keiskamma River in 1931 (Website 1). Huberta’s death was investigated and the farmers accused of killing her were fined (Website 1). The story of this fascinating creature and her behaviour, which, at the very least might be considered odd, has acquired new meaning for me as an adult. New territory, while a scary prospect, did not stop Huberta from embarking on her journey. She carried on travelling for years and through her wandering, if I may impose my own human interpretation, she gained new insight as she encountered new phenomena. These new experiences, however, came to an abrupt halt as Huberta met a violent end preventing her from completing her journey. All that remained of Huberta in the physical world was the carcass that was kept and stuffed to preserve her memory; that tangible object, however, is inscribed with many meanings and stories that might be seen and understood from multiple perspectives.

I have not been back to the Amathole Museum since my childhood years but Huberta is still a central attraction (Website 1). My experience of the Huberta expedition was filtered through a child’s eyes and the purpose of my research is not to evaluate the success (or otherwise) of her display, or the recording and interpretation of her story. I have, rather, chosen Huberta as a starting point to my research, since while she is a childhood memory, my experience of her display and narrative have influenced my thought process as I have investigated the impact of historical narratives on the present, through performance in museums. The past, while incapable of being literally recreated, may speak to present narratives, and understanding this connection is key to my research. My aim is to explore both museum exhibitions and performances, with specific focus on my own work in the Bergtheil Museum, and how through establishing and interrogating the relationship between the two, museum artefacts and narratives can be viewed from alternate perspectives, and thus be subjected to question and analysis.

1.3. Museums and representing the past

While my research is situated within the field of drama and performance studies, the recording and presenting of historical narratives, specifically in museum buildings, are important elements of my dissertation. Museums form a big part of how society remembers and preserves history. They “exist in order to acquire, safeguard, conserve and display objects, artefacts and works of art of various kinds” (Vergo, 1989/2000: 41). Museums act as places in which the past can be accessed and explored through the viewing of exhibitions that have been assembled for the public eye. While the ‘safeguarding’ of and access to history is a priority of museums, it must be noted that museums are not neutral spaces; as museum theorist Sharon Macdonald (1996: 4), points out, “Museums are socially and hierarchically located; and, as such, they inevitably bear the imprint of social relations beyond their walls and beyond the present”. The historical narratives presented in museums are influenced by the subjectivities of the people working in those museums as well as other dominant social and political forces situated in the present. Therefore, the manner in which histories are presented, what is displayed and what is left out influences how they are in turn viewed by the public.

People have been collecting and displaying items deemed valuable since antiquity (Vergo, 1989/2000: 1). However, not all gatherings of artefacts are classified as museums; some fall under the category of private collections. Museums are differentiated from private collections through two main features: artefacts need to be positioned in the museum with logical intention, rather than random compilation, and these artefacts need to be available to the public mainly for educational purposes (Saumarez Smith, 1989/2000: 6).¹⁷ The public are the recipients of the exhibited historical narratives and objects, which have been displayed in a specific manner for specific reasons, be they artistic, ideological or sociological. Museums rely on systematic classifications of artefacts which generate meaning, and public viewing of such pieces, in order to exist. Without such components exhibitions would “serve no purpose” (Jordanova, 1989/2000: 40).

It should be noted that the ‘purpose’, or ‘value’, of exhibitions and artefacts is not neutrally determined. The objectives for any museum exhibitions are determined by museum curators whose “judgements which may derive in part from the system of values peculiar to the institution itself, but which in a more profound sense are also rooted in our education, our upbringing, our prejudices” (Vergo, 1989/2000: 2), influence the nature of what and how objects are displayed. Objects acquire meaning determined by the environment or frame in

¹⁷ While Saumarez Smith (1989/2000) prioritises museums’ educational role, it should be noted that museums have multiple functions, including acting as tourist attractions and places of entertainment.

which they are situated which often extends beyond “any significance they may already possess” (Vergo, 1989/2000: 46). Thus, context is critical to the interpretation of any object, and that context is established by museum personnel whose decisions are based on specific intentions of any exhibition. It is people who make choices about the contents of museums, and the subjectivity this implies invokes questions about “[w]hat makes certain objects, rather than others, ‘worth’ preserving for posterity?” (Vergo, 1989/2000: 2). These choices, and the intention behind them, therefore, determine the ‘purpose’ and ‘value’ of artefacts, and this in turn might privilege certain histories over others. Value and purpose are thus socially constructed.

1.4. Frame analysis

If value and purpose are social constructs, then the museum which endorses and helps to create these constructs can also be regarded as such. Each museum exhibition, and every item forming part of that exhibition, is arranged in a particular manner determined by museum personnel. How the artefacts are arranged influences what the viewer reads into the presented objects.

In my exploration of the arrangements of both exhibitions and performance in museums, I will employ frame analysis to investigate their creation. Frame analysis was developed by Erving Goffman (1975: 11) in the attempt to explore the way people organise social experiences.¹⁸ The remembering and displaying of the past, like the act of general performance in front of an audience, are organised social experiences and therefore frame analysis is a useful tool with which to explore their meaning and construction. Meaning in social situations is derived from framing, particularly by what Goffman (1975: 21) describes as “primary frameworks” which transform “what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful”. Primary frameworks can be divided into two categories, “natural” and “social” (Goffman, 1975). I am most interested in social frameworks as they involve human agency unlike natural frameworks which are pre-determined (Goffman, 1975: 22). Social frameworks involve “motive and intent” which are focused on “deeds, not mere events” (Goffman, 1975:

¹⁸ Goffman was a sociologist, focused on “microsociology” which involves the study of “social interaction and its effects on the self” (Scott, 2007: 113). In his theorising, he compared social life to a “theatre” where people are constantly performing roles (Scott, 2007: 113). In his work on frame analysis, he explored the roles people perform to their audience, as “self-presentation”, arguing that “even the most private aspects of our lives are socially constructed” (Scott, 2007: 115, 114 & 118). An analysis of framing, therefore, assists in the reading of social situations from multiple angles while highlighting the constructed nature of the way social occurrences are presented (Manning, 1992: 118). Historical narratives are also framed by the institutions in which they are stored, the social and political circumstances that surround them, and the personal subjectivities presented in their creation and presentation. Frame analysis is, therefore, influential in the exploration of the framing of narratives in museums.

22, 23). Framing thus provides a way to look beyond that which is displayed and investigate further how and why it is presented or read in that way.

In a museum, any collected item is framed firstly, both literally and figuratively, by the museum building. In many museums, glass cabinets or plinths are used which set the object/s apart and encourage the visitor's attention to be caught by the displayed item. Sometimes items are placed in isolation and at other times alongside other artefacts deemed appropriate to complement the chosen item on display. Beyond the physical means used to present museum contents, various other political, social and ideological aspects influence the framing of the artefact or the narrative presented. The museum as an institution, the government in power, the funders who often provide the necessary financial sponsorship, and the curator who includes his/her perspective or frame in the designing the exhibition, all influence the ultimate representation of the history on display (Vergo, 1989/2000: 3). Furthermore, what is omitted from the exhibition also influences the meaning created (Jordanova, 1989/2000: 26). Thus, framing is a key component and throughout my dissertation I will be applying frame analysis to the performance texts that are created in relation to the historical narratives and/or artefacts. My aim is to use frame analysis to explore how performance – that engages historical narratives in museums – is created and presented as well as to look at how multivocality can be integrated into museums through such performance.

1.5. Tensions in post-apartheid South African museums

My museum theatre work is situated within the post-apartheid South African context in which a number of different histories are being negotiated. After the democratic elections in 1994 and the change of government, South African museums took on new purpose to encourage “peace (storytelling, civil society and civic culture, understood in terms of cultural identity, reconciliation and nation-building) and prosperity (economic development, primarily through tourism)” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2007: 39). These goals are particularly pertinent as one of the main functions of a museum is the creation and reinforcing of national and cultural identities (Zolberg, 1996: 70). The way the nation is represented is influenced by the choices made by museum personnel when exhibiting the histories of the various groups of people involved. In South Africa such histories include (and at times exclude) a number of different cultural, lingual and racial groups ranging from people who settled in the country and others indigenous to it. The first democratic president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, called upon museums “to ensure that our institutions reflect history in a way that respects the heritage of all our citizens”

(in Witz, 2007: 109). Many people's histories (mainly black, Indian and coloured¹⁹ people oppressed by apartheid laws²⁰) were seen as inferior and deliberately omitted from, or misrepresented in, museums. The curators, who during apartheid, were white, operated under the government-imposed fiction that "their work was objective and apolitical" (Davison, 2005: 206) and thus, 'true'; in doing so, the historical narrative presented was naturalised and normalised, entrenching its 'grand narrative' status. Post-1994 policy has challenged the dominant narratives that were previously on display and has encouraged the presence of counter narratives in museums. It is debatable, however, whether such policy has been implemented successfully, and whether multiple narratives and discussions around difference are effectively displayed and generated in South African museums.

While transformation has been encouraged in various South African museums, tensions between past and present agendas still exist. The purpose of museums in post-apartheid South Africa, according to Witz (2007: 110), can be argued to be two-fold. Firstly, museums are to act as vehicles of social transformation as well as encourage economic growth (Witz, 2007: 110). While such principles are both necessary and positive, they can create tensions in practice. Such tensions exist because presenting South African history for the tourist gaze²¹ often requires a different approach from that used to display the histories that explore new South African identity and heritage for the purpose of nation building (Witz, 2007: 110). Among the most visible tensions, deciding how to present and discuss colonial and apartheid history is a particular difficulty (Witz, 2007: 110).²² Some tourists, specifically westerners²³, want a "tourist

¹⁹ I acknowledge that the term 'coloured', which is often used in South Africa to identify people of mixed race, is a problematic term and one which some people do not accept. I am using it to reference past disparities, particularly within the preservation of history, and am not specifically looking at identity politics associated with naming.

²⁰ This listing of people oppressed under apartheid law is not exclusive. I acknowledge that there are other groups of people such as those of Chinese and Japanese descent living in South Africa whose histories were also not prioritised.

²¹ The tourist gaze is a term used to refer to the act of *looking* at sights of interests in a new environment usually different to the familiar milieu of the tourist's 'home' (Urry & Larson, 2011: 1). Simplistically, it involves "gaz[ing] at what we [the tourist] encounter" (Urry & Larson, 2011: 1). This gaze is not innate or accidental but socially constructed which means that it can be manipulated and altered (Urry & Larson, 2011: 1).

²² Museums which have been created for the purpose of displaying accounts that were left out of grand colonial and apartheid narratives, such as the Durban Kwa Muhle Museum, have different tensions to negotiate compared with some older museums which largely depicted white colonial heritage (Kayster, 2010: Website 2). Museums which primarily displayed colonial and apartheid heritage have the difficulty of offending one group of people over another when transforming such museums (Kayster, 2010: Website 2). However, transformation does not necessarily imply the removal of all colonial and apartheid artefacts and narratives (Kayster, 2010: Website 2). Instead, as argued by Anziske Kayster (2010: Website 2), head of the Graaff-Reinet Museum, it involves an "active engagement in shared cultural spaces informed by contested and empowering discourse for all South Africans". I acknowledge the difficulties present involving the transformation of museums as well as the transformative possibilities available through performance.

package that invokes the colonial journey” while museums also face pressure to remove colonial histories and instead focus on “new national pasts” (Witz, 2007: 110).

As a result, nation-building and economic development are at times at odds with one another. Museums, like other tourist attractions, are influenced by the tourist gaze which generates “interest and curiosity” (Urry & Larsen; 2011: 1) particularly at something the viewer has not experienced themselves. This tourist gaze is “socially organised” and is a “learned ability” (Urry & Larsen, 2011: 1, 2). If the gaze is learnt, it can be argued that the tourist ‘packages’ created by museums, are on one hand, influenced by the expectations of the gaze and on the other hand, seek to manipulate the gaze. The gaze both shapes and is shaped by the histories on display. The pressures placed on South African museums to be locales of international tourism manipulate some exhibitions into pandering to the expectations of tourist gaze. Additionally, such exhibitions influence tourists’ experiences of South African history which at times is distorted.²⁴ Of course, not all museums are allowing tourism and monetary gain to act as the primary influences on their exhibitions. Yet it must be acknowledged that tensions between colonial history and post-apartheid identities as well as tourism and the challenges of nation-building are present in museums.

1.6. Multivocality

One of the greatest challenges facing post-apartheid South African museums is negotiating the vastly different cultures and peoples living in the country and their varied histories. As noted earlier, some of these histories have been prioritised over others and many clash with one another. How then do museums include multiple narratives, even if they are unpleasant or do not easily correspond with another group’s histories? I argue that in addressing these challenges there is need for multivocality, a space for multiple voices and narratives, in museums to encourage debate and dialogue. In a museum that prioritises multivocality there is, as historian

²³ ‘Westerner’, in this case, refers to people from North America, Europe and Australasia. I acknowledge, however, that people from other countries, not living in the above geographical areas, may also have specific expectations when visiting South African museums and tourist attractions. Due to the fact that there are many different cultures, races and levels of education in ‘western’ areas which inform the tourist gaze, I am not limiting the term to those labelled ‘white’.

²⁴ The former /Xam exhibition in the South African Museum (SAM) in Cape Town which depicted the /Xam people, indigenous South African San people, as specimens of “scientific enquiry”, is an example of a problematic depiction of historical narratives, and is further elaborated on in Chapter 5 (Davison, 2005: 203). The exhibition has since been removed. While not situated in a museum building, ‘township tours’ which take tourists around township environments to experience and observe the culture of the people living in the area, create packages that influence the tourist gaze (Websites 3, 4 & 5). While I am not critically evaluating the role, place and influence of such tours on South African identity, the economy or the depiction of narratives, the township tours are noted as they manipulate the gaze and the manner in which the narratives of the people living in the toured areas are portrayed.

Paul Johnson (2011: 63) asserts, “no privileged position, and no correct reading of the totality of the experience. It leaves open multiple conflicting and contradictory readings, which each individual spectator must navigate and attempt to assimilate”. The museum visitor thus becomes an active agent in the interpretation of the histories presented and is given multiple angles from which to make deductions.

Multiple perspectives are a focus of the Russian writer and scholar Mikhail Bakhtin (1981/1994), who theorised about power relationships situated in language and literature as well as a concept he calls ‘heteroglossia’. Heteroglossia, of which ‘multivocality’ is a derivative²⁵, seeks to include multiple voices, or viewpoints, to create “the possibility of a free consciousness” (Morris, 1994: 16). By using heteroglossia in history and performance, the theatre maker and historian are encouraged to explore and portray historical narratives from more than one perspective to encourage discussion and empathy around stories, heritage and memory, especially if they ‘clash’ with one another. I am exploring multiple voices, i.e. multivocality, in a number of fields including performance, history, museology and memory (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2) and therefore have adopted multivocality as the primary terminology. Bakhtin insisted that, in the process of interpreting meaning, a dialogic process is necessary to “ensure that meaning remains in process, indefinable” (Morris, 1994: 74). He discouraged “[t]he authoritative word [as it] is located in a distorted zone,²⁶ organically connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher” (Bakhtin, 1981/1994: 78). The “authoritative word” (Bakhtin, 1981/1994: 78) situated in monologism involves a singular account which has been ordained with prior authority (usually by those enforcing the viewpoint), discouraging it from being questioned. Therefore, choice between various positions is discouraged as the authoritative word “demands our unconditional allegiance” (Bakhtin, 1981/1994: 78). Dialogism, by contrast, challenges the notion of a single account through encouraging multiple versions to come into contact and “struggle” with one another (Bakhtin, 1981/1994: 79). The authoritative word, which is singular or monologic, limits the scope for discussion and debate which Bakhtin (1981/1994: 79) believes is important in the fostering of multivocality, given his argument that “[t]he importance of struggling with another’s discourse, its influence in the history of an individual’s coming to ideological consciousness, is

²⁵ I have chosen to use the term multivocality as my primary terminology as it brings a number of different perspectives into contact with one another. It is a broader term than heteroglossia as it extends beyond literary works (in which heteroglossia was originally used) and can be used as a methodology to promote the inclusion of multiple accounts in research.

²⁶ In another version the “distorted zone” is written as the “distanced zone” (Bakhtin, 2017: 214). This zone is not of the present but is situated in the past; becoming “the word of the fathers [*sic*]” or in my interpretation the perspective of authoritative figures located in the past (Bakhtin, 2017: 214). The authoritative word is difficult to challenge as it is part of a time gone before with a previous authority already given, therefore located in a zone that is ‘distorted’ or ‘distanced’.

enormous”. I believe that museums also need to encourage people to come into contact with other discourses to discourage the authoritative word of one institution, ruling party or cultural group. Instead, different narratives need to be included in museums to promote dialogue with one another.

My research proposes that performance is one method that can be used to promote multivocality and dialogue within museums. Performance creates the opportunity for literal dialogue between actors as well as between actors and spectators. Additionally, it facilitates figurative dialogue, encouraging people to look at differing perspectives, which may not previously have been encountered. I am specifically looking at performance that negotiates the spectator’s assumed position by promoting multiple roles to be played by the audience member. When the museum visitor becomes involved in museum theatre, they go through a number of transitions throughout the performance. For example, as theatre professor Anthony Jackson (2011: 12) observes, they can assume the roles of “‘visitor’, ‘audience’, ‘participant’ and ‘learner’. Often they will switch back and forth between these roles from moment to moment as they negotiate their relationship both with the performance and with the museum or site environment”. Differing roles involve different frames which in turn encourage multiple perspectives. The visitor is encouraged to see history differently, through another medium, which is active and live, compared to the more traditional written panels and audio guides. The visitor encounters the historical narratives ‘now’, in the present, with other living human beings who may or may not see the world differently from them. A sharing between actors and spectators as well as between spectators themselves, occurs.

While heteroglossia is foundational to my research, and is a tool that can be used to facilitate dialogue and discussion around history, I acknowledge that multivocality in isolation is not enough to facilitate social redress. Simply providing a number of different narratives does not guarantee people will learn about or from them. Many people are afraid of what they do not know or are threatened by subject matter that disturbs their current world view. The danger of providing too many ‘options’ can also lead to confusion and may distort historical narratives if presented in a disorganised and chaotic manner. Each narrative, while having multiple perspectives and sides, must still be rooted in historical fact and presented in a way that is accessible to the visitor/audience member. Too many alternatives to choose from can be used as an excuse for not deciding on a set of practices or beliefs. I am not proposing that heteroglossia omits personal choice or alignment with a particular heritage, culture or history. Instead, I am focusing on using multivocality as a way to include different accounts, some that do not fit easily into the ‘accepted’ version of events, to provide a space for memories and narratives that

were perhaps neglected and forgotten, to be remembered, retold and learnt in dialogue with other viewpoints.

In my discussion around fostering heteroglossia in performance, I note that my museum theatre work, like many other museum theatre performances, is scripted and facilitated through a director. I recognise that my own voice as the director and the writer has a strong presence in the museum theatre work and that this voice shapes the way the historical people and events are then portrayed. It is for this reason that I openly acknowledge my subject position as the researcher, director and writer of *Our Footprints* and this dissertation. I want the audience and the reader to know that what is presented has been chosen and interpreted by me. The directorial voice, while holding some authority over the narratives present, does not have to limit the fostering of multivocality. Instead, through an awareness of subjectivity, and the purposeful inclusion of multiple angles, memories and narratives, the theatre practitioner can avoid the singular voice. Collaboration with multiple sources, actors, and the museum, and incorporating a number of styles and techniques, such as slippage (which is further elaborated on later in the dissertation), can assist in including multiple narratives and promoting different perspectives in museums. The directorial voice, when used in conjunction with subjectivity and collaboration, thus can assist in promoting multivocality.

1.7. Why museum theatre?

As stated by historian Ludmilla Jordanova (1989/2000: 40) in the opening quotation to this chapter, if we simply store and display the past in a detached and unattainable manner, then such narratives fail to serve a purpose. I argue that through using performance in museums, the past is encountered in a new way as visitors are involved in a live experience of historical narratives in the present. The visitor also becomes part of the experience, and thus detachment from the past as something distant and mouldy behind glass, is prevented. Performance can instil new life and give relevance to the narratives while encouraging people to discuss and explore them.

Museum theatre allows the theatre practitioner to combine the analysis of museum's content with theatrical performance in order to acknowledge both the construction of museum exhibitions and the role performance plays in exploring the narratives on display. Combining theatre and history in an institution offers a platform for active discussion and re-evaluation of preconceived notions about the past. Museum theatre allows us to explore unfamiliar histories more consciously and with more awareness of our own prejudice.

I am a museum enthusiast as well as a theatre practitioner and therefore see the merits of combining performance and history to interrogate present South African narratives by re-evaluating the past. Various theatrical styles and techniques can be used to tell and explore stories in otherwise often silent museums. Through museum theatre, people can be challenged to think differently about the past and in turn about their own sense of self.

As people explore new insights into history and themselves, they view the contents of the museum with increased sensitivity, thus altering the experience and becoming more self-aware. As I look back at the Huberta exhibit I now see a silent, stuffed animal 'residing' in the Amathole Museum, limited in her ability to tell her story. Much of Huberta's journey was lost when she was killed. This is the challenge of history, when people (and in this case an animal) who have passed are no longer present to tell their stories. These stories can only be told again through people interpreting the past in order to revive them in the present. Subjective interpretation, affected by the experiences of the people responsible for telling the stories, thus influences the manner in which these stories are told. In Chapter 2, I explore museum theatre in more detail and discuss the literature surrounding the study of museums, heritage and memory and their role in evoking the past.

Chapter 2

Journeying through the Literature

“Engagement with histories in museums can be on levels which stimulate the imagination, provoke discussion and increase the ability to question how and what we know.”

Gaynor Kavanagh (1999: xiii)

In this chapter I am journeying through the existing literature in the exploration of performance's role in museums. I will firstly discuss the concept of museology and its recent growth in evaluating museums' position and function in society. The second area I will explore is the notion of a 'new' kind of museum and the acknowledgement of subjectivity within museum practice. I will thirdly consider the concept of heritage and its importance in the South African context, followed by an examination of memory and its role in evoking history. Lastly, definitions around museum theatre and the inclusion of performance to explore the past in sites of history will be explored.

2.1. Museology

A museum displays collected items whose value²⁷ is usually determined by archaeologists, curators and museum officials (Vergo, 1989/2000: 2). These items are then displayed²⁸ in the museum with the intention of constructing a site of knowledge and potential education as well as a place of entertainment (Vergo, 1989/2000: 2). This dual function is significant in relation to interrogating the nature and purpose of museums, and is key to understanding the use of museum theatre as a mode of communication that might bridge these often contrasting intentions.

As a general rule, the knowledge function is usually prioritised as museums are often packaged as places of learning. Indeed, some museums have been critiqued for not appealing to the general public but rather targeting an audience of scholars, students and historians (Merriman, 1989/2000: 152). The emphasis on education and knowledge can sometimes make museums appear daunting, making them places to be avoided by some people who might not fall into the

²⁷ 'Value' is not a neutral term. Instead, I highlight that this value is culturally, politically, economically and socially determined and is, thus, changeable.

²⁸ Display in museums often includes the placement of artefacts on plinths, behind glass cases, pictures on computer screens and on written panels. I am proposing that 'display' can be extended to include the presence of live bodies in the museum space in addition to the arrangement of artefacts in exhibitions.

above categories of ‘educated’ people. Therefore, a museum’s appeal can be inhibited by the emphasis that is placed on its function, whether it is education or entertainment. Both knowledge and entertainment are important in museums. The process of learning is aided by having fun and the inclusion of performance into museum spaces can assist in ensuring a balance between the two. The manner in which these functions – producing knowledge and providing entertainment – are treated, influences how the history within the museum is presented. The status quo can be affirmed or challenged depending on the museum’s “active framing of its contents and our [the visitor’s] experience” (Pollock, 2007: 1).

Museology, the study of museums, is a relatively recent phenomenon even though the presence of museums has been traced to antiquity (Vergo, 1989/2000: 1). As museology has gained prominence, questions around the purpose of museums and the nature of their presentations have been raised. Museums claim an objective standpoint in relation to history in that they serve as witness to past events, and indeed, it is this objectivity upon which much of the museum’s educational credibility rests. It must be noted, however, that the personal subjectivity²⁹ of those working in museums can project certain ideologies that “reinforce a version of the past” over others (Zolberg, 1996: 70). It has become widely accepted by a number of different museum theorists focused on museology (Vergo, 1989/2000; Macdonald, 2007; Pollock & Zeman, 2007) that museums are not neutral spaces and are influenced by subjectivity. Some of the theorists who have written about museology and the constructed nature of exhibitions include museum advisors and curators (Durrans, 2001; Kavanagh, 1999; Buckley, 1999), art gallery curators (Graham & Yasin, 2007), scholars in history (Vergo, 1989/2000; Jordanova, 1989/2000; Saumarez Smith, 1989/2000; Witz, 2007; Davison, 2005), visual art studies scholars (Pollock, 2007); sociologists (Zolberg, 1996; Urry, 1996 & 2011; Bennett, 2007), cultural anthropologists (Macdonald, 1996) and performance artists (Frenkel, 2007), with many of the theorists overlapping and feeding into a number of fields. Museums are influenced by a number of internal and external factors including social, economic and political pressures. This notion that neutrality is not possible when depicting history is critical to my research as I explore the portrayal of multiple sides to historical events.

My aim in this research is to acknowledge the subjectivity implicit in the depiction of history through an exploration of active engagement with multiple narratives as well as an open

²⁹ I have chosen to use the term ‘subjectivity’, as it emphasises the personal nature of the museum personnel’s outlook, preference and experience which influences the portrayal of any given narrative. Sometimes subjectivity is ignored, or minimized, in order to promote a presentation of histories in a ‘neutral’ light. I am challenging this notion by reinforcing the role subjectivity has in the creation of both performance and museum exhibitions, as well as in my own writing and reflection on the research.

exploration of my own subject position as researcher, theatre practitioner and South African citizen. In this way I seek to challenge the notion of stasis within museums by using performance as a means to present alternate historical voices. I use 'stasis' to refer to the unmoving and unyielding versions of history which are presented as singular and fixed, ignoring the other versions that might exist alongside – or even in opposition to – the accepted static version. Such stasis remains unchanged when it is not challenged. Therefore, the idea of the "museum as a place for discursive thinking" (Pollock & Zemans, 2007: xx), which is often neglected in favour of the apparently homogeneous preservation of the past, becomes central in the examination of subjectivity and stasis. Multiple versions are encouraged instead of one, unyielding narrative.

2.2. The 'new' museum

One manner to highlight subjectivity and encourage discursive thinking is through the open acknowledgement of the constructed nature of museum exhibitions in what Roger Simon (in Frenkel, 2007: 126) has dubbed a "'new' kind of museum". This notion is explored further by performance artist Vera Frenkel (2007: 125) who makes work in museums that encourages "performing the museum". Performing the museum refers to encouraging the involvement of the museum visitor in the creation, interpretation and incorporation of narratives within museum exhibitions (Frenkel, 2007: 125). Frenkel's (2007) focus is primarily on performance art in museums, but I am extending this to include other aspects of performance, including scripted pieces and improvised works, in museum spaces. The idea of a 'new' museum is useful in describing the movement away from the 'older'³⁰ kind of museum, which has a strong link to the traditional archive and prioritises the depiction of the grand narrative.³¹ Educational authority in museums can lead to them "impos[ing] classifications onto other people's histories" (Riegel, 1996: 89). The 'new' museum challenges the authority or authoritative voice, as discussed by Bakhtin (1989/1994), through the purposeful acknowledgement of subjectivity. When those visiting museums are made conscious that what is presented to them is subjective and assembled by people working in the museums, the museum visitor may begin to see the museum as a series of constructs (Durrans, 2001). The 'all-knowing' authoritative position on

³⁰ I use the term 'older' in a binary relationship to 'new'. Older is not specific to chronological time and I am not necessarily referring to museums that were built and/or hold items that date deep into the past, although this is partially associated with the 'older' museum. Instead, 'older' refers to practice, with emphasis on those museums who promoted grand narrative status. A 'new' museum can be a very old museum which dates back centuries but has altered its focus to acknowledge subjectivity and multiple accounts.

³¹ Grand narrative refers to a dominant account that is often depicted as the 'truth'. The 'new' museum challenges this by including and promoting a number of accounts, often contradictory, which challenge the notion of a grand narrative.

history is then questioned as the influences on the museum's depictions, arrangement and subject matter are acknowledged rather than being accepted as undeniable 'truth'.

A 'new' museum is thus created where the visitor is no longer treated as a spectator operating from a removed position, often unable to access the narrative/s directly. The visitor's lack of access is influenced by the physical separation between the viewer and the artefacts and narratives on display. The 'new' museum visitor is instead encouraged to become involved in the act of viewing, debating the narratives and at times even participating in the creation of the exhibitions. While I see the notion of a 'new' museum as a change in direction from the stasis associated with many of the 'older' museums, this 'new' museum is not the 'ultimate' museum. Instead, the museum, including its evolution into the 'new', still has to go through further transformations in order to encourage a more active engagement with the past. Therefore, while the 'new' museum is important in highlighting the effects of subjectivity within museums, it is not the final stop and it too has to continue to grow and transform.

2.3. Heritage

In South Africa, the concept of heritage is often associated with remembering and recounting the past and is connected with people's personal memories and responses about what has gone before. While not a South African, Laurajane Smith (2011: 80), an academic in heritage and archaeological studies, offers a useful definition of heritage applicable to the South African context; she notes that "[h]eritage is a cultural process of performance that is engaged with the construction and reconstruction of cultural identity". Cultural identity, which is often linked to heritage, informs the way people create and sustain their identities. While culture is an important component of life, I note that at times culture can be viewed as homogeneous and unchanging which can lead to stasis and rigidity. I am interested in culture that, like historical narratives, has multiple sides and is treated as a dynamic entity. Culture is often closely linked with historical accounts and the way they are remembered, which affects how heritage impacts identity creation and the portrayal of the past. Heritage, therefore, becomes an important component to consider when representing the past in museums. Heritage can be viewed as the means by which people use cultural and historical items, events and places as "a way of seeing and feeling" (Smith, 2011: 69) the past rather than focusing primarily on the tangible artefacts and documents with which the recording of history is often associated. Acknowledging the influences of heritage and culture on the remembering and representation of history can assist in a greater awareness of multiple accounts about the past.

Heritage, however, like culture, can also be treated in a homogeneous light when people are afraid of change and difference.³² Groups of people who do not want their world view challenged may use heritage as a means of asserting their perspective/s as correct, therefore highlighting that heritage does not automatically encourage multivocality in remembering the past. I propose that through the inclusion of performance in places that represent and celebrate heritage, various accounts can be brought into contact with one another. When heritage is combined with performance in museums, personal connections between the historical narratives and the visitor's own experiences are encouraged, thus making performance an effective tool in exploring the past's bearing on the present.

2.4. Memory

Museums preserve and record topics of interest, such as the Sharpeville Massacre (1960) or Settler History, and these topics are often chosen to reflect "their nation's qualities" (Zolberg, 1996: 70) in the attempt to foster a national identity³³. To frame my research, I will consider the manner in which recorded history is interpreted, presented and remembered within museums, specifically the Bergtheil Museum.

Within the discipline of historiography³⁴, memory and personal histories have gained greater prominence with history and memory scholars. This is evidenced in the work of such scholars as Carolyn Steedman (1998), Susan A. Crane (1997) and Matthew Reason (2003) who note the need to move away from a sole reliance on the traditional archive in understanding history, and instead exploring the subjective nature of historical narratives and the influences of memory on history. While collective memory studies, pioneered by philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1941/1992), have gained traction, historian Wulf Kansteiner (2002), notes the limitations within such studies. Collective memory studies assist in highlighting how the social collective influences what, and how, people remember, and in turn how history is portrayed and received. While memory aids in providing an alternate to the written documentation situated within the traditional archive, I acknowledge that the way people collectively remember can be

³² Difference, as I use it here, includes racial, cultural and gender differences that may challenge the individual or group's world view.

³³ A singular national identity is problematic, particularly in a country such as South Africa, where there are many different cultural and racial groups. Instead, I propose a national identity that consists of multiple and varying identities in dialogue with one another. The national identity or 'personality' is thus made up from a number of variables and it not a homogeneous whole.

³⁴ Historiography looks at the "writing of history; *especially*: the writing of history based on the critical examination of sources" (Website 6; original italics). The focus on writing in historiography is significant as a contrast with performance which may provide an alternative to printed words on paper by using both aural and visual devices to tell stories. However, it is noteworthy that I am using both written histories as well as performance in my exploration of historical narratives.

distorted. This distortion is evident in processes of collective forgetting, such as the ‘forgetting’ of the Vietnam War from general American history until decades later when it was reintroduced (Kansteiner, 2002: 192-193), or the many testimonies of suffering and oppression during apartheid that were often silenced and ignored. While I am applying collective memory studies to my dissertation, I also recognise the importance of the individual in memory making. The individual, though shaped by the collective, can have memories different from the group/s to which s/he belongs. I am, therefore, exploring both the personal and the collective in conjunction with the documented records that exist in the archive and the relationship that can exist between them as filtered through performance.

2.5. History as memory

At times the personal is discouraged in the depiction of history since the focus is often on large events themselves, rather than on the experiences of the individuals who were involved in such events. Through a refocusing on the “little narratives”, as explored by Shawn M. Rowe *et al.* (2002), the personal is reintroduced, allowing a more nuanced view of the larger narrative. Not only is personal recollection from historical people important, but memory making about the past in the present is also of significance. As argued by Gaynor Kavanagh (1999: 2), museum expert and academic who focuses on memory and history studies, museums play an important role in evoking personal memories and responses that the visitor can use to connect with the historical narrative/s presented. Memory, according to philosopher and writer Walter Benjamin (1968/2007: 255), is made as the past is seized “as an image which flashes up at the instant when it can be recognized and is never seen again”. As the ‘flash’ is recalled, memories are made and stored and then transferred “from generation to generation” allowing for the past to be retained in the present (Benjamin, 1968/2007: 98). When personal connections are made with the evoked past, an act of “reminiscing” occurs as memories are stimulated (Urry, 1996: 54). Sociologist John Urry (1996: 54) asserts that reminiscing is in itself performative. I argue that through performance in museums, reminiscing around the past, as stimulated by personal connections to the exhibition or narrative, allows the actors and audience to work together to create new memories in a process of sharing, between past and present and with each other. Effectively, old memories are evoked which in turn encourages the creation of new memories. The revisiting and making of memories will be explored within my PAR piece, specifically through a mnemonic device³⁵, a Map of Memories, which will offer the opportunity for visitors to make personal connections with the performance and exhibitions.

³⁵ Mnemonic refers to “assisting or intended to assist memory” (Website 7) and is focused on the process of remembrance. The Map of Memories is further elaborated on in Chapters 4, 6 and 8.

In addition to personal connections to the narratives of the past being important, memory, and the process of thinking related to memory, is significant, as political theorist Hannah Arendt (1961&1971) notes, in promoting and maintaining change. Arendt (1961: 6) argues the revolution cannot be sustained if it is forgotten, and suggests that the “activity of knowing”, which involves “the need to think can be satisfied only through thinking”; the evocation of such thoughts is only possible through viewing what is recollected “anew” (Arendt, 1971: 422). Through the encouragement of an interactive museum that utilises performance, the past is brought into the present through looking at and thinking about things ‘anew’. The process of collective forgetting is thus discouraged as people engage with the past and create new memories in the present. The evocation of memories and past thoughts is necessary to evaluate the relationship between the present and the past, and specifically how the past has influenced the present.

2.6. Museum theatre

A definition for museum theatre is difficult to produce due to the variety of performances that are included under the term. However, in terms of a broad definition, museum theatre encapsulates a large number of different kinds of performances that occur in places that are dedicated to remembering and telling of the past. These include spaces where the site is part of the historical attraction, such as castles, houses, battle sites, grave sites and other locations, as well as museum buildings. The director of the Science Discovery Theatre for the Lawrence Hall of Science, Gigi Dornfest, notes two aspects that she believes are necessary for classifying productions of museum theatre; the piece needs to “evoke a different time and place” and “tell a story” (in Bridal, 2004: 2). Therefore, for Dornfest(in Bridal, 2004: 2), a narrative that encourages visitors to encounter another time, usually in the past, is necessary. While the past is prioritised in museum theatre, we should not ignore the present. Some works place little focus on the present as their main goal is to present a piece of the past as it was.³⁶ While Dornfest (in Bridal, 2004: 2) also notes the need to evoke a different place, I do not believe this is necessary in all works of museum theatre. When museum theatre takes place in a castle, for example, the audience is not necessarily encouraged to see a different place, but rather is persuaded to see the site in a different time.

³⁶ An example of such works include some of those found in living history museums which use interpreters who dress up as characters from the past and who speak in the first person and do not break character to create a “mimetic” portrayal of the past (Magelssen, 2007: xvii). These actors only answer questions that are pertinent to the character and the time in which the character was ‘alive’ (Magelssen, 2007: 17). The museum theatre I am interested in researching and creating, links the past with the present and also looks to the future instead of remaining fixed in the past.

Types of museum theatre range from scripted performances which employ professional actors to performances that are improvised using trained volunteers (Bridal, 2004: 2). Tessa Bridal, director of Public Programs at the Science Museum of Minnesota and museum theatre practitioner, notes the importance of museum theatre being “educational” and “interactive” (2004: 6) so that those who ‘watch’ the performance go through a process of learning through participation. Museum theatre is often more interactive than theatre that employs the fourth wall³⁷ and, depending on the nature of the performance, visitors are encouraged to ask questions, participate in activities and sometimes dress up.

Museum theatre has increased in popularity since the first recorded museum theatre performance in 1961, especially in America and the United Kingdom (Bridal, 2004: 15; Magelssen, 2007). However, museum theatre in the South African context has relatively little written about it. South African writing tends to focus on history-related performance in communities rather than in museums (Fleishman, 2011 & Durden & Du Plessis, 2011) and the writing about South African museums tends to focus on the nature of exhibitions and heritage rather than performance (Witz, 2007 & Davison, 2004).

Museum theatre allows the practitioner to combine the analysis of museum’s content with theatrical performance in order to facilitate an understanding of the multiple narratives present in museum exhibitions and to bring them ‘to life’. Many museum theatre practitioners and scholars, such as South African academic and director of Magnet Theatre Company, Mark Fleishman, desire to make commemorating history an “event” which seeks to remember “the past for our present purposes” (2011: 237). Museum theatre scholars include theatre professor, Scott Magelssen (2007), who specifically engages with and critiques living history museums³⁸ as a way of performing the past. Other practitioners range from people who work for museums to those who have more of a theatrical background and go into museums and create performance. In terms of my chosen case studies, the practitioners who created them have different foci informing their work: Anthony Jackson is an academic within the field of performance with a specific focus on educational theatre; Jenny Kidd is an academic in the

³⁷ The fourth wall refers to the imaginary line across the front of the proscenium arch stage that was employed mainly in Realism, where the audience and actors are both physically and metaphorically separated. In museum theatre the ‘line’ between audience and actor is usually blurred as they are encouraged to interact with one another.

³⁸ Living history museums use re-enactment which involves dressing up in period-specific clothing and recreating the environment of the chosen historical era as accurately as possible. While living history museums are not my primary focus, as I agree with Magelssen’s (2007) concerns about the manner in which history is presented by some living history museums (which will be explored further in Chapter 8 with regard to narration), I note that they use performance as a means to recreate and engage with the past.

fields of journalism, media and cultural studies; Richard Talbot is the Joint Artistic Director of Triangle Theatre Company which makes museum theatre; Norwood Andrews is an historian; and Brett Bailey is a writer and director of theatre works. I am a theatre practitioner who is passionate about museums and history. The above are mentioned in order to highlight the diversity of fields that inform museum theatre. However, it is important to note that museum theatre is created with research, requiring careful study into the museum in which the performance is taking place and the performance's historical subject matter regardless of the field in which the practitioner specialises. Such practitioners explore museum theatre as both a tool for teaching as well as a mode for creating an “‘encounter’ with a past that is ‘brought to life’” (Jackson & Kidd, 2011: 1).

In terms of museum theatre already taking place in South Africa the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg (Website 8), the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town (Website 9) and the Holocaust Museum in Durban (Website 10) have elements of interaction and re-enactment that attempt to integrate participation into historical exhibitions. Upon arrival to the Apartheid Museum, the visitor is ‘racially classified’ as either ‘native’, ‘coloured’, ‘Asian’ or white’ and only once this sorting has occurred is the visitor allowed to gain entrance into the museum (Website 8). While the physical ‘sorting’ of visitors is not a performance with a narrative, the visitor is encouraged to engage a different time through the process of participation informed by apartheid legislation. The Castle of Good Hope has daily ceremonies³⁹ which are performed to re-enact past rituals specific to the castle (Website 9). The Holocaust Museum is not specifically interactive but has a replica of Anne Frank’s⁴⁰ room which the museum visitor is able to enter. The replicated room is also hidden from sight and needs to be ‘discovered’ by the visitor, similar to the idea of the Frank family being in hiding.

While the above museums have integrated elements of participation, it is noted that scripted performance pieces in museums with actors that engage a narrative are not regularly taking place in South Africa. Projects in South Africa that have used storytelling and performance tend to take place in communities and not museums.⁴¹ In addition to these community projects

³⁹ These ceremonies include the key ceremony which involves the “unlocking of the van der Stel entrance by the ceremonial guard” and the “Firing of the Signal Cannon” which was a means to relay messages to sea (Website 9).

⁴⁰ Anne Frank was a Jewish girl who recorded her experiences of hiding in Holland from the Nazis in a diary which has been widely published after her untimely death.

⁴¹ Such community projects include the iSimangaliso Wetland Park initiative (Du Plessis & Durden, 2006/2007) and the Clanwilliam Arts Project (held annually from 2001). The Durban Local History Museums have also introduced a Passbook initiative encouraging learners to visit museums around the city to collect stamps. One Passbook event called Abasha Bash!, for which I was privileged to act as a judge in 2017, encourages learners to create and perform pieces that deal with a historically relevant

Shakaland in Kwa-Zulu Natal might be classified as an example of living history, which attempts to recreate an authentic Zulu experience through costumed performers who encourage tourists to participate in various Zulu traditions (Website 11).⁴² The above museum and heritage projects are noted for the purpose of illustrating some of the ventures that have been implemented in South Africa whilst recognising the space that exists for more works that engage performance within historical institutions.

In the next chapter, I will explore discourse analysis as theory, Goffman's (1975) frame analysis as a way to explore my case studies' creation and depiction, and Bakhtin's (1981/1994) theory of heteroglossia as part of my theoretical framework in the exploration of multivocality in performance.

issue or person. The 2017 theme was Steve Biko's "I write what I like" to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Biko's death. While the performances took place in a community hall and not a museum, this initiative might be classified as a type of museum theatre.

⁴² While I do not see Shakaland as a place encouraging discursive thinking about historical narratives, as it can be argued that it encourages "exoticism" (Durden & Du Plessis, 2011: 115), it is an attraction that uses performance as a means to look at and experience the past, though somewhat distorted, and therefore is noted.

Chapter 3

Exploring the Theory

“Prior to the moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language [...] but rather it exists in other people’s mouths, in other people’s contexts, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one’s own.”

Mikhail Bakhtin (1981/1994: 77)

In this dissertation, I am exploring how historical narratives can be portrayed in performances created for museums. In order to conduct my analysis, I will engage the theoretical framework outlined below in relation to historical meaning, its construction, and its depiction within museums. To do so, I will adopt a constructionist epistemological position. This approach “argues that knowledge arises from social process and interactions” (Miller & Brewer, 2003: 41), thus arguing that ‘reality’ is shaped by experience. The way people create, record, represent and view history is influenced by the social conditions that have influenced their perception of ‘reality’. The constructionist position “encourages reflexivity” (Miller & Brewer, 2003: 43) which seeks to challenge the notion of one truth and acknowledges that interpretation influences the way a narrative, in the case of both museums and performances, is read. Through my research, I aim to explore the nature of historical narratives, and the manner in which they are presented in both the museum and in performance. I want to interrogate how the historical narratives, are constructed and how the manner of that construction influences their potential reading/s. My position is that the meaning of such stories is mediated through the way they are represented (Hall, 1997: 3), and I will examine this mediation using the constructivist or interpretive lens.

To explore the construction and framing of historical narratives put on display in institutions of history, I employ a number of different theoretical concepts, outlined in this chapter, that together frame my study and my analysis. I will firstly discuss discourse analysis and its role in encouraging the acknowledgement of subjectivity when ‘reading’ texts. The second theory I will consider is Goffman’s (1975) frame analysis and how it will be employed to analyse my chosen case studies in terms of their ‘framing’. Finally, I will engage with Bakhtin’s (1981/1994) notion of heteroglossia and multivocality.

3.1. Discourse and textual analysis as theory

Discourse analysis and textual analysis, which form part of critical discourse analysis and engage with language, are useful in analysing the construction of narrative/s, and examining the subjectivity/ies revealed within texts. Texts, for the purpose of this dissertation, include historical documents, performance texts and other narratives. I have included discourse analysis in my dissertation as the reading of texts is pertinent in the discussion around historical narratives and their portrayal in museums. Written documentation is often the main source for recording the past and the way these texts are interpreted influences the way museums portray their artefacts and narratives. Reading of texts therefore becomes an important part of the museum theatre practitioner's devising process and the way the narratives are staged.

English professor Brian Paltridge (2012: 3) notes that discourse analysis' "primary purpose, as Chimombo and Roseberry (1998) argue, is to provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of texts and how they become meaningful to their users" specifically in relation to the context in which the text is used. Context influences the way texts are interpreted. In his argument, historian Georg Iggers (1997: 9) states that the text "exists independently of the author", and the author, thus, does not have control over how the text is interpreted. Philosopher and semiotician, Jacques Derrida (1976/2016: 158), proposed that "there is nothing outside of the text", emphasising the importance of context when reading 'meaning' associated with a text. Derrida's words in the above statement have often been misinterpreted and contested by critics (such as philosopher John Searle, – who debated many of Derrida's theories (Moati, 2014:1)), as some have understood the English translation to imply that nothing can be factually determined leaving the reader in a state of "indeterminate relativity"⁴³ (Website 12). A more accurate and nuanced view holds that Derrida is highlighting how context, which changes depending on the subject position of the 'reader' of the text, influences the comprehension of a text. As historian and discourse analysis scholar Hayden White (1989: ix) asserts, the telling of history "entails ontological and epistemic choices with distinct ideological and even specifically political implications", which influence how the narrative is told and in turn interpreted by those examining the texts. An author's context thus influences how a text is written and furthermore,

⁴³ Relativity, specifically cultural relativity, has been critiqued. Cultural relativity proposes that "all cultures and the ideas of all cultures have an equal value" (Buckley, 1999: 42). Relativism denies any belief in an absolute truth which "implies that all theories are equally true" and, if this is the case, then they are all by default "equally false" (Buckley, 1999: 45). While I support the challenging of absolute truth, I note that relativism is potentially problematic. I agree with anthropologist and philosopher Anthony D. Buckley's (1999: 44) suggestion that a dialectic conversation between cultures, instead of a blanket agreement that all are 'equal', encourages the viewing of another person's ontology from their perspective. As explored in Chapter 6, I propose that we do not need to agree with everything another person promotes in their ontology but a dialogue between perspectives should be encouraged.

the individual perspective of each reader influences their understanding of the text. Indeed, each time it is 'read', a new interpretation may emerge.

The acknowledgement of subjectivity has become more mainstream in academia as trends in historical scholarship have evolved since the 1960s, particularly in terms of challenging the grand narrative and rejecting the notion of complete objectivity (Iggers, 1997: 7; Poster, 1997: 3). While discourse analysis and subjectivity may have gained traction and appeal, they have also had their critiques. One such critique, as outlined by historian Keith Windshuttle (1997: 219), is that historians do not "construct the evidence for [the] case; rather they discover it"; thus discovery is premised on the facts that are situated within the records and artefacts being uncovered. The argument suggests, therefore, that historians can suggest with "some certainty" (Windshuttle, 1997: 219) what the facts of historical events might be, based on their analysis of the existing records and material. Morgan A. Brown further critiques discourse analysis, specifically Derridean deconstruction, stating that subjective interpretation makes it difficult to "pin Derrida's thoughts to something definite" (2017: viii), and as a result making discourse analysis ambiguous. For these critics, the concern is that historical facts may be undermined by discourse analysis since, in theory, they can be interpreted in any way that the reader sees fit. While I agree that facts are important when analysing history, and that research needs to be conducted when exploring the past, interpretation does not necessarily imply the careless treatment of evidence. Instead, the acknowledgement that the manner in which facts are interpreted influences the way a historical event or person is depicted is an important factor in understanding the past. As Iggers (1997: 119) maintains:

There is therefore a difference between a theory that denies any claim to reality in historical accounts and a historiography that is fully conscious of the complexity of historical knowledge but still assumes that real people had real thoughts and feelings that led to real actions that, within limits, can be known and reconstructed.

I agree with the above assertion that we cannot deny that past events did happen and were experienced by actual people, and thus, the treating of texts as if they have no factual basis is problematic. However, I see the self-reflexivity present in discourse analysis highlighting the subjectivity of interpretation as critical in the analysis and depiction of historical narratives. When such narratives are depicted in museums, an acknowledgement of the subjectivity involved in the recording and presentation of the narratives is necessary to discourage singular, one sided accounts from being presented.

While I am analysing texts and employing a discourse analysis lens in order to explore museums, their exhibits, and performance depicting history, I am not primarily conducting a close reading of my chosen case studies or focusing on their linguistic make-up. The close

reading of language choices and the social implications of these choices is not my primary focus. Instead, the texts are being viewed and analysed in terms of their stylistic choices, and approaches to portraying and performing historical narratives. I will be concentrating on the way the practitioners have chosen to display the historical narratives, in terms of staging and technical decisions. These choices and approaches have inspired and been incorporated into my own work as I have explored the creation and staging of a museum theatre piece. My aim in this work is to challenge fixed histories, explore multiple perspectives and examine the way ‘truths’ are constructed, through performance in museums.

It must be noted that a number of theories in my theoretical framework are predominately concerned with language, its construction and the meaning derived from it. However, for the purpose of my study, language is not limited to verbal interactions, but is extended to include visual, auditory and written signs employed both by museums in their exhibitions as well as theatre makers in the production of performance/s of history. The concepts that are predominantly associated with language in my research are being used and transformed into theatrical devices, to be utilised within performance, and are thus not limited to their linguistic origins.

3.2. Frame analysis as theory

Alongside discourse analysis, I will be utilising aspects of Erving Goffman’s frame analysis (1975; Manning, 1992; Scott, 2007; Pollock, 2007 & Jackson, 2011), which explores the reading of meaning through the way an event, or for the purpose of this research – performance, is ‘framed’.⁴⁴ While Goffman’s (1975) research is focused on social events,⁴⁵ of which story telling is a part, I am extending this theory to explore framing within a theatrical and historical context. Framing within performance is usually more conscious than in everyday events, as it is usually predetermined by the director and actors, and I am specifically looking at the active construction of meaning which, like the process of rehearsal, usually is planned beforehand and often prearranged. Expanding on Goffman’s analysis, Griselda Pollock (2007) uses Suzanne Oberhardt’s (2001) study of framing in art museums as a model for identifying cultural meaning assigned to art. Oberhardt’s frames include: frame one which positions artwork apart from daily existence as a sacred item; frame two which “advocates the

⁴⁴ Framing can be explored both literally and figuratively. Museum artefacts are literally framed within their exhibits and theatre performances are often framed by the proscenium arch. Metaphorically, framing looks at how people position themselves in relation to other people, objects and circumstances which influence the roles they adopt and the manner in which meaning is generated from this positioning.

⁴⁵ Social events include conversation between people and behaviour in public settings.

interrogatory practises of critique [...] [and] supports the cultural role of contention”; frame 3 locates art within popular culture and current discussion; and the last frame is “a state of mind” which acknowledges that there are multiple frames that overlap allowing art and museums to be viewed in numerous ways (2001: 120-122).

I argue that this extension of frame analysis, as well as Anthony Jackson’s (2011) three frames of museum theatre, can be applied to museums in general. Jackson’s (2011: 17) three frames include, firstly the “institutional” frame which notes the space, style, location and marketing of the museum as an institution in which the performance is taking place. The second frame is the “outer performance frame” which “marks out the theatrical event itself as theatre” influencing audience position in relation to the performance (Jackson, 2011: 17). The last frame is the “inner performance frame” which involves the devices employed within the performance itself (Jackson, 2011: 17).

In conducting my analysis, therefore, I will employ Goffman’s (1975) frame analysis as a base from which to explore my case studies, and, their framing in terms of stylistic choices and depiction and portrayal of narrative. In *Exhibits A and B* (Bailey, 2012 & 2013) the manner in which people are displayed and framed is challenged by complicating the notion of who is watching and who is being watched. Frame analysis is used to explore the adjustment and reverting of the gaze⁴⁶ and, in turn, the meaning generated through Bailey’s re-creation of a museum that ‘displays’ human beings. In *This Accursed Thing* (Jackson & Kidd, 2007), I am examining the process in which physical movement on behalf of the audience and the unsettlement of audience expectations influences the framing of the narratives depicted in the performance. In the third case study, Triangle’s presentation (Talbot & Andrews, 2008), the framing of the piece is influenced by the changing of roles assumed by both the actors and the audience, which effectively alters the frames each time the shift occurs through slippage. Framing will thus be used to explore the case studies, and highlight the stylistic choices highlighted, which have informed my own work, *Our Footprints*, and the way I, as the writer and director, have framed the performance.

While frame analysis is useful in the exploration of historical narratives and their presentation through performance, Peter Manning (1980: 129-130) notes that Goffman (1975) has been critiqued for focusing too much on “the structure of situations”, rather than on how people themselves see their actions as meaningful. Pamela Oliver and Hank Johnston (2000: 37)

⁴⁶ Gazing involves a process of looking. The person who is doing the gazing usually holds more power than the one who is being looked at. In *Exhibits A and B* Bailey challenges the notion of power invested in the gaze, and I will elaborate on this further in Chapter 6.

observe that framing is often used “uncritically as a synonym for ideology” and is therefore sometimes treated simplistically, thus making the relationship between ideology and what frames ideology indistinct (Oliver & Johnston, 2000: 37). I acknowledge the above critiques but as a researcher and practitioner, I still find Goffman’s analysis helpful in looking at how I am framing my theatre work as well as how other museum theatre practitioners have framed theirs, whether consciously or not. Museums, like Goffman (1975), are often more concerned with structure, i.e. how exhibitions are created, over how people read into the exhibitions. As the ‘new’ museum has gained traction, the desire to understand the visitor, their expectations, and what they take from the exhibitions has increased as the exhibits are not treated as static and separate entities. Goffman’s frames, in relation to museums and performance, can be multiplied to reflect the changing narratives and how they are represented.

3.3. Heteroglossia as theory

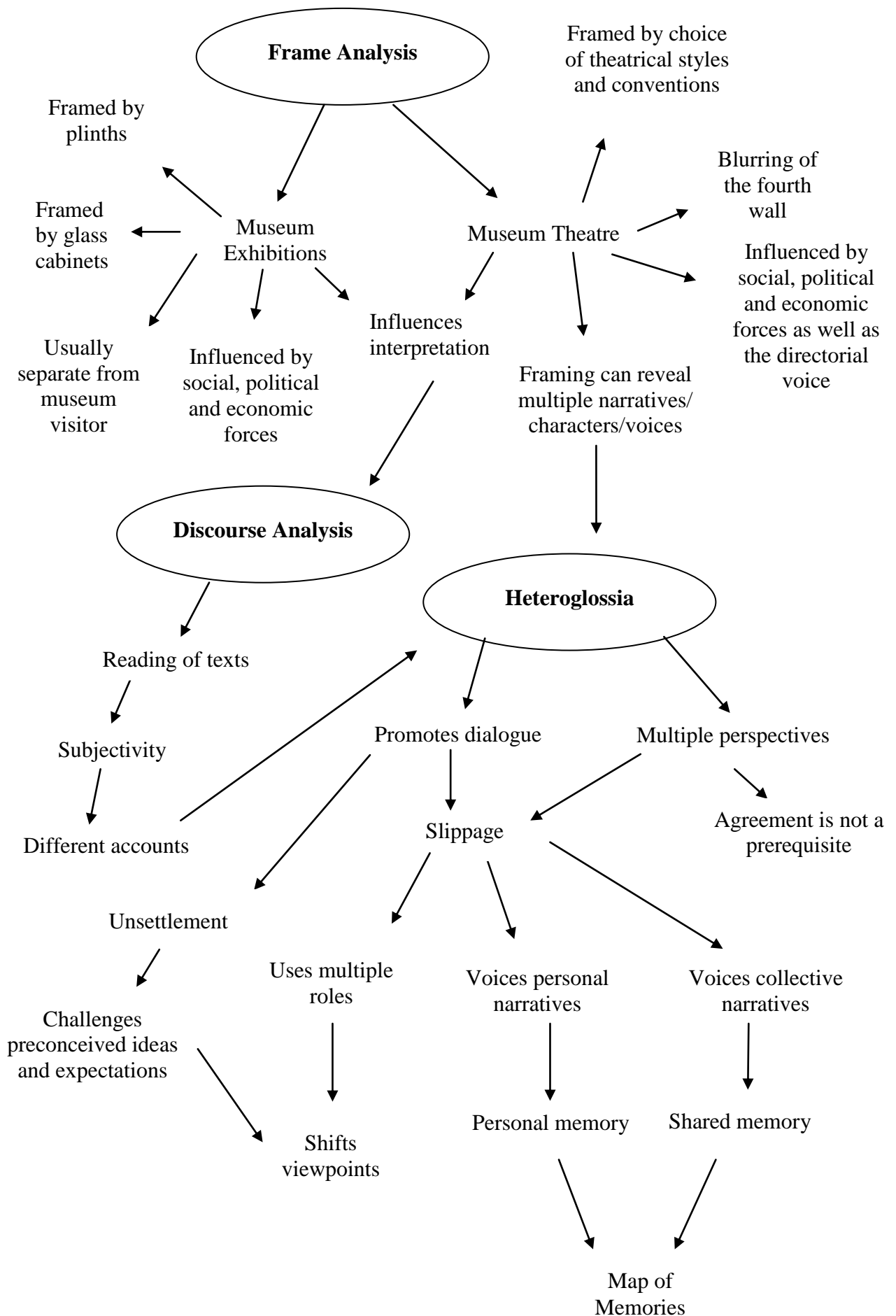
The third theoretical concept I am employing is the notion of heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981/1994), which is influential in the exploration of multiple perspectives in relation to historical events. Heteroglossia was initially used to explore narration in novels and is focused on language. Bakhtin (1981/1994: 75) labels language as “socio-ideological” so as not to limit language to “linguistic dialects”. While my study does not focus on novels, the process of analysing the ideological and social implications of meaning found in people’s stories is critical to my research. Heteroglossia, therefore, becomes a useful tool in exploring multiple versions of history as well as opening up historical narratives to multiple perspectives. The process of dialogue is thus encouraged. Dialogue is also of special interest to Bakhtin who notes that within heteroglossia, not only is a dialogue of languages present but also “a dialogue of special forces” (1981/1994: 119). When these forces, including “different times, epoch and days”, are placed in dialogue with each other, they provide the space for “contradictory, multi-speeched and heterogeneous” (Bakhtin, 1981: 119) entities to come into contact with one another. One voice is discouraged with multiple sides engaging with one another.

In terms of my case studies, heteroglossia is employed to explore how more than one perspective is made available to the audience. While not all of the case studies use verbal communication, (*Exhibits A and B*, for example, are conducted in complete silence except for background singing), the challenging of a singular authority is present. Slippage, as employed by Triangle’s presentation, is a device that emerges out of heteroglossia which I have also implemented in *Our Footprints* to permit the inclusion of multiple narratives in the performance. Slippage aids in the facilitation of multivocality as it is based on the premise of

including multiple viewpoints and voices to come into contact with one another in dialogue which Bakhtin notes (1981/1994) prevents absolute conclusion/s. This shifting of roles, evident in Triangle's presentation, is also present in *Exhibits A and B* and *This Accursed Thing* as the audience-actor relationship is challenged and both are prompted to re-evaluate the roles they assume and the way they are 'framed'. Using the theory of heteroglossia, I will explore how the audience is encouraged to negotiate their own perspective as they come into contact with other accounts. In the next chapter I will explore the methods I used to conduct my research in order to create and stage *Our Footprints*.

3.4. Mapping the theoretical concepts

I have created a visual map of my three key theories (see on next page), showing how they link in relation to creating, interpreting and performing museum theatre and fostering of memories while promoting multivocality.



Chapter 4

A Voyage through the Methodology

“The performance way of knowing is, [...] close, active, immediate, on the move, embodied, sensual, fluid, interactional and affectively engaged.”

Mark Fleishman (2012: 30)

This chapter will explore how I have conducted my research and developed my museum theatre production. My methodological approach includes case studies, discourse analysis and Performance-as-Research (PAR), and is framed by the notion of a journey. Since I am referencing my own work, I am employing a self-reflexive lens. The key component of my research is my production, *Our Footprints*, and as part of the methodology I will discuss how the performance was created and staged.

I am conducting qualitative research within the interpretive paradigm. Qualitative research seeks to explore research findings “from the point of view of the people who participate” (Flick *et al.*, 2004: 3). The focus is placed on “a better understanding of social realities and to draw attention to processes, meaning patterns and structural features” (Flick *et al.*, 2004: 3). Qualitative research’s goal is not to show reality as ‘it really is’; instead, it attempts to encourage reflection and promote “(self-)recognition” (Flick *et al.*, 2004: 3). Through an acknowledgement of the researcher and the researched subject’s positions, the data collected is viewed from an awareness that meaning is constructed. By acknowledging the subject position or place in which the individual, both researcher and researched, is situated within the ‘world’, a framework that openly recognises the manner in which the political, social and economic context has influenced the individual’s ontology, is established from which to interpret and locate the research. This acknowledgement of subjectivity and self-awareness challenges the notion of complete objectivity within the perspectives presented. Instead, the research becomes contextually situated and can therefore be understood and critiqued from within the established framework.

The interpretive paradigm is rooted in the assumption that “knowledge is subjective because it is socially constructed” (Chilisa & Preece, 2005: 29), and this concept is foundational to my research. Reality is thus viewed as “mind-dependent and a personal or social construct” (Chilisa & Preece, 2005: 29). Given that interpretivism posits that people’s world views are personally and socially shaped, interpretivist research seeks to “understand people’s experiences” (Chilisa & Preece, 2005: 29). I extend this frame to include a self-awareness of my own experiences as a

researcher and theatre maker. My aim is to unpack the potential subjectivity present in historical narratives, their depiction in museum theatre and the meaning derived from such works of performance with specific focus on my own piece, *Our Footprints*.

4.1. Self-reflexivity

Self-awareness and self-recognition are important to my methodological approach in this research. I am using self-reflexive journaling, which promotes “transparency in the research process” (Ortlipp, 2008: 697), specifically in relation to the creation of *Our Footprints* as well as engaging with self-reflection in writing the dissertation in order to consider my own process of viewing, interpreting and assembling historical narratives into performance. I recorded my thoughts, concerns and ideas that emerged as I was writing the script of *Our Footprints* from 22 May to 3 July 2017 (see Appendix 9). The journal includes thoughts on how I explored the promotion of multivocality in the writing of the piece, the metaphor of the journey, whether or not to cast myself as an actor-guide, and the challenges of staging a production in a museum building. I am reflecting on my stylistic choices in both writing and directing and noting their effectiveness in promoting multivocality through performance. Reflexivity as a methodology suggests that, “looking inward can lead to a more intelligent and useful *outward gaze*” (Mitchell & Weber; 2005: 4; original italics). Through looking at the self, the external social and political forces are not divorced from the internal. Instead the internal findings of self-reflexivity shed new light on the external influences and how they affect the research (Mitchell & Weber; 2005: 4).

I openly acknowledge my subject position as a white female South African who is exploring German settler history and museum tensions that exist in post-apartheid South Africa. In the attempt to avoid a singular voice, I acknowledge the presence of the directorial voice in shaping the content and performance of *Our Footprints*. My own ontology affects my reading of the narratives and in turn how I depict them in performance. I, therefore, note my subjectivity’s bearing on the way I interpret, reflect on, and create museum theatre works. Through the way I have written and directed the narratives, I have framed the historical characters in a certain way which in turn influences the way I have interpreted the history and how the audience reads the performance themselves. Therefore, the framing and interpretation of the texts plays an important role in their depiction and dialogue with other narratives. It is for this reason that I, as the researcher, am employing frame analysis and discourse analysis as I interpret and create museum theatre. My process of data analysis, which is filtered through self-reflexivity, therefore, involves unpacking the way history, meaning and narratives are created and as well as the manner in which they are interpreted, framed and portrayed.

4.2. Case study approach

Within the interpretivist paradigm, I am adopting a case study approach with my performance piece, *Our Footprints*, as the primary case study. A case study is a useful research approach for my dissertation as it allows for the “investiga[tion] [of] a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context [...] concerned with how and why things happen” (Noor, 2008: 1602). My discussion around museum theatre and its encouragement of multivocality is explored in practice through the creation, staging and analysis of a self-devised performance piece, *Our Footprints*, as my central case study. My focus on how museum theatre can be created, as influenced by other already made museum theatre pieces, and why performance in museums can act as an alternate way of representing and viewing history, is explored through the analysis of case studies. The four case studies’ creation and staging are used to analyse how concepts, such as slippage, can encourage the presence of multiple voices within the historical narratives presented in the museum through performance.

4.3. Discourse analysis as methodology

My exploration of case studies employs an interdisciplinary methodological approach by combining both textual and discourse analysis as well as practice-based research or PAR. Firstly, discourse analysis is used as it facilitates “reflection on the manifold functions and practices of communication and the analysis of verbal, written and visual communication” (Chilton & Wodak, 2005: xvi). Language, meaning and their construction within texts are critical in the analysis of historical texts and the manner in which they are presented to the public as ‘truth’. Extending the analysis of language, I am also exploring my case studies as performance texts which employ visual, auditory and physical signs that go beyond words on a page. My primary focus in the textual reading of the case studies is to explore how the performance pieces utilise various stylistic choices in their creation and staging within museums and platforms that deal with history. Instead, discourse analysis as methodology is influential in exploring how texts and their framing are influenced by social and political factors. Some of the texts I am interpreting include historical letters and reminiscences, secondary texts written about past events, scholarly works and performance pieces which have all been influenced by the contexts of their times, as well as my perspective as researcher.

4.4. Performance-as-Research

I am also employing PAR, which is described as “research that is carried out through or by means of performance” (Fleishman, 2012: 28). PAR offers an alternate method of “intellectual

enquiry” through “creative production” (Riley & Hunter, 2009: xv). It provides tangible connections between people “through the interactional relationship of bodies” instead of relying only on written research (Fleishman, 2012: 30). My museum theatre piece is constructed from my research, and is influenced by my analysis of other already staged performances as case studies; I make the performance as a practical case study so as to explore my findings through practice and to implement them in performance form. Through the active creation of the piece, the theoretical component is put into practice and I, as the researcher and museum theatre maker, am able to explore the process of creation by observing the stages of practice as they unfold. The stages of creation include preparation and research, writing the script, rehearsal, staging the production and reflection. I, therefore, am not divorcing myself as practitioner and researcher from the work but am instead immersing myself in the creation and staging processes, and reflecting on how I have created the work. Through the active engagement of the stages of creation, with the involvement of other people at various points in the journey, including the actor-guides and the audience members, the creation of the piece is shared between people in creative practice.

4.5. My metaphorical journey

As I explore the creation and implementation of museum theatre, I am implementing the metaphor of a journey, both literal and metaphorical, as part of the framework of my research. This journey through the past forms part of my structure within the dissertation as well as being the metaphoric device used in my performance project. A ‘journey’ – a concept which I am using both literally and metaphorically – involves going from one place to another. Extending the metaphor of a journey, each visitor is given a ‘Map of Memories’ (Appendix 2) to record associations and memories evoked by the theatrical journey. The Map is a blueprint of the Bergtheil House and each ‘stop’ or station visited by the audience under the direction of the actor-guides, is marked by a number. At each station the recording of a memory is encouraged. The Map is used as a device for both participation and the active storing of personal memories which the visitors will be able to take away with them. The audiences’ Maps are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9. Therefore, the use of the metaphor is central to my framework as I go on a journey as a researcher in addition to creating the opportunity for others to embark on a journey to explore the past.

4.6. Our Footprints

The scripting, executing and facilitation of a museum theatre experience, *Our Footprints*, at the Bergtheil Museum has evolved out of an exploration of the various components of my research

and my chosen case studies. The aim of the performance piece is to challenge one sided historical narratives and offer alternative ways of viewing history specifically through performance. Concepts such as slippage, multivocality, unsettlement and archival research have informed the writing process as well as the manner in which it is staged and performed. The above concepts are explored in the written dissertation as well as implemented in the form of theatrical devices in the performed piece. These devices include the negotiation of roles⁴⁷ played by both actors and audiences, and the engagement of the body and its senses. Such devices make it possible for *Our Footprints* to explore German settler history, as well as the history of Westville, (the primary focus of the Bergtheil Museum), from a variety of angles. This museum was chosen primarily for its location as it is a Durban museum close to Howard College Campus, UKZN. In addition, the building housing the museum, which is an old settler house, is also historically relevant as one of the oldest houses in Westville. Such a location provides an opportunity to explore the idea of a literal journey through the rooms of a house as well as a metaphoric journey through historical narratives.



Image 1: Nosipho Sikhakhane performing as Florrie Rigby in the kitchen. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

The scripting of the piece occurred between May and July 2017. I visited the museum before the scripting process to experience the museum as a visitor and begin the brainstorming process

⁴⁷ 'Roles' refer to the different positions that a person assumes in relation to what is expected of them in the performance. Actors change roles when they move from one character to the next and the audience adjust roles when they find themselves involved in the action and/or separated from it. The nature of the performance influences the roles assumed by the individual at various stages of the piece. Negotiation of roles is further discussed in Chapter8. *Our Footprints* purposefully encourages the negotiation of multiple roles and viewpoints.

around the kinds of stories I might focus on in the performance and how they could be told. At this early stage, I knew I wanted to incorporate the character of Florrie Rigby (see Image 1) in the kitchen area, station 3, and Jonas Bergtheil⁴⁸ into the piece. The other characters, however, were only realised after I visited the Bergtheil archive, which is situated on the Museum property. I read copies of letters, newspaper articles, published books, Bergtheil Museum meeting agendas, and looked at pictures of some of the family members who lived in the house at different stages. The archival research I conducted was then incorporated into the script.

I purposefully cast two actors – one male, Sfundo Sosibo⁴⁹, and one female, Nosipho Sikhakhane⁵⁰, – to play the parts of various characters relevant to the museum. I did not hold auditions but rather asked the actors if they were willing to participate in this venture.⁵¹ I was specifically looking for actor-guides who were open to exploring a ‘new’ way of performing in a setting different to a traditional proscenium arch theatre. Another criterion used to select performers was an evidence of a readiness on behalf of the actor-guide to learn and impart factual data with an awareness of the responsibility that comes with discussing and exploring the past.

Before we began rehearsing, I took the actor-guides to see the museum, paralleling my own visit before writing the script, so that they could see the space and type of narratives on display. We then proceeded to rehearse in a studio for about four weeks, familiarising ourselves with the characters, historical data and the script. Before the final performance, we again went to the museum to rehearse with scripts down so that we could experiment in the space and with actual artefacts present. During the dress rehearsal in the museum, we had to negotiate the echo present in the rooms, move around delicate artefacts and work around exhibits situated in the

⁴⁸ Jonas Bergtheil was a Bavarian man who was influential in bringing German settlers to the area of New Germany (which includes current Pinetown) in Durban, South Africa in 1847. The Bergtheil Museum is named after him as it is believed he built and lived in the house in which the museum is currently housed.

⁴⁹ Sosibo was not involved in the project from the beginning. Another male actor was initially cast but due to unforeseen personal circumstances he had to withdraw from the performance during early stages of rehearsal. Sosibo kindly stepped in to play the part of the second actor-guide.

⁵⁰ The actor-guides consented to appear in the performance and not to remain anonymous in the DVD and dissertation.

⁵¹ I did not hold open auditions for *Our Footprints* as I was not only focused on sourcing acting ability – which is primarily conducted in a traditional acting audition through reciting monologues from play texts. While acting skill is important in museum theatre, I was also looking for the actor-guide’s ability to interpret historical narratives, interact with people in the museum, and learn and impart factual information, in addition to play various historical characters (which is not easily revealed through a monologue). I specifically wanted actor-guides who would be interested in learning about the history of the museum as well as engaging with the performance part of the piece. Therefore, instead of holding open auditions, I spoke to actors who were interested in history and open to a different way of performing and then invited them to be part of *Our Footprints*.

centre of the room which blocked sight lines, such as those found in the Iron and Stone Age room, station 4 (see Image 2).



Image 2: Sikhakhane interacting with audience members in front of a glass exhibit in the Iron and Stone Age room. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

My museum theatre piece concluded with a question-and-answer session allowing the audience to ask me – the director and researcher – the actor-guides, and the museum expert, questions pertaining to the performance and the museum. While I have not conducted individual interviews with audience members⁵², the content of the question-and-answer session after the first performance has been incorporated into my research in Chapter 9. The performance has also been video recorded twice for reference purposes. The video recording has been edited, merging the two recordings. The videographer focused mostly on one actor-guide in one recording and concentrated on the second actor-guide in the other recording. Due to combining the two recordings, the final edit cuts between two different audiences, joining the two performances into one. Some silences, such as long periods of recording memories on the Map and the audience moving from one room to the next, have been edited out. The chronology of the narrative has not been altered in the editing process. The question-and-answer session from the first performance has been recorded and follows the performance on the DVD. I invited drama and performance studies and media academics from UKZN, fellow postgraduate students from the UKZN Howard College Drama and Performance Studies Department, and interested

⁵² I chose not to conduct individual interviews with audience members because I wanted to focus more on the creative process of making museum theatre. Due to the limited length of the dissertation, I made the choice not to focus on empirical data – which is still needed in future research – but instead focused on setting the groundwork for possible future museum theatre works by creating a museum theatre piece and analysing its creation.

friends and family. Due to the small size of the museum and the limited number of performances, I did not open up the performance to the general public. In the future, however, I would like to create work to be seen by the general public.

I have conducted an in-depth analysis of performance in museum spaces exploring how museum theatre is created. This exploration consisted of analysing pre-existing museum theatre case studies and creating and analysing my own piece in relation to the research I conducted. I have provided thick description⁵³ (Geertz, 1994) of my process of creation and staging my museum theatre piece, including keeping a research journal (a extract from the journal can be found in Appendix 9). A DVD recording of the performance and the audience question-and-answer session has been included with the dissertation. The script of *Our Footprints* has also been added (see Appendix 1). A copy of a review of *Our Footprints* written by Dawn Haynes for the ArtSmart blog – on which Kwa-Zulu Natal art news is regularly posted – can be found in Appendix 8 (Website 13).

The above methodologies are applied to my dissertation as I explore the creation of performance in museums. The next chapter will explore the ‘reframing’ of the traditional archive and the ‘older’ museum informed by a focus on long-standing recorded history. This reframing involves the search for greater access to a variety of histories and accounts filtered through the lens of performance.

⁵³ “Thick description” is a term used to describe the detailed recording and analysis of the process a researcher has undertaken in the collection and interpretation of data, as opposed to “thin description” which only provides a brief account of the researcher’s practice (Geertz, 1994: 215).

Chapter 5

Journey through Recorded History

"You can't understand someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes."

Unknown

5.1. Walking in someone else's shoes

When I was seven, we had an athletics day at school which involved a number of running races. One race, in which I ran, required me to wear my mother's pyjamas and my father's size ten shoes. The biggest challenge was not to fall on my face as my little feet stumbled around the enormous shoe cavity. His shoes were not made for someone of my size and while the race was enjoyable and memorable, such a clothing choice was largely impractical.

The concept of walking in someone else's shoes has been integrated into the well known adage that opens this chapter. Used in this way, a comparison is drawn between walking in someone else's shoes and experiencing true empathy. In addition though, when a person, like myself, walks, or runs in my case, in a foreign shoe, terrain that was once familiar becomes strange. Even though the environment does not change, the wearer's experience does. Shoes often protect feet from the ground on which a person walks. Yet anyone who has worn ill-fitting shoes, such as my seven-year-old-self, is well aware of the difficulties present when the shoe fails to fit the foot. The shoe became an interesting image for me as I began to explore the idea of a journey in my research. Before embarking on a journey, whether walked or run, proper planning, including the choice of correct shoes, is necessary. While exploring this idea of a journey and the necessity of selecting the 'right' shoes, I noted in my research journal, "If the shoes do not fit, our journey is stunted" (Research Journal; 22/05/17). A pair of shoes too big or too small can make the journey unpleasant and may halt the person's progress.

As I began thinking further about the idea of shoes, which form an extended metaphor in this chapter, I decided to compare the idea of wearing shoes on a journey to the paradigms we adopt when viewing recorded history. In engaging with and making sense of history, empathy is necessary in order to establish a connection with events that occurred in the past. These events were usually not experienced firsthand and therefore are made accessible only through recordings of history. In viewing these recordings, and seeking to understand their meanings, a metaphorical putting on of someone else's 'shoes' is necessary if we are to attempt to walk their journey as their history is relived. How easy is it, though, for people to walk in someone else's shoes? In places such as museums, are these metaphorical shoes made available to the visitor to

facilitate developing a connection between past and present? If they are made available, is it enough simply 'to put them on' for a brief moment and can one then claim to understand another person or a group of people through our present experience of their history? At what point does *their* history become *our* history? Such questions are complex and multi-layered. Through an exploration of my own creation of a journey through a museum theatre piece, *Our Footprints*, as well as through other practitioners' case studies, I will attempt to unpack the place and role of these metaphorical shoes that mediate between the past and the present.

5.2. Historian and curator as 'guide' and the archive as 'map'

History means different things for different people. For some it is a school subject focused on the extensive memorising of dates; others might see history (which is often tied to heritage) more personally, as a means to understand where they came from, to seek out their roots; for some, history is a warning, since knowing what has gone before might prevent history repeating itself; and for others, history can be a weapon, manipulated to serve a particular agenda. What is certain is that history is present in our lives in many varied and complex ways. It is useful to look at the definitions of history according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, which include among others: "tale, story"; "a chronological record of significant events (such as those affecting a nation or an institution) often including an explanation of their cause" and "a branch of knowledge that records and explains past events" (Website 14).⁵⁴ These definitions offer insight into some of the multiple functions of history that are significant for my research: it recounts a story or a narrative; it records events, specifically those that impact a nation's identity as well as acting as a repository for knowledge that sheds light on the past. These functions will be further elaborated on in this chapter as well as throughout this dissertation.

One of the main 'explorers' of history is the historian who is generally considered as, "a student or writer of history; *especially*: one who produces scholarly synthesis" (Merriam-Webster, Website 15; original italics). It is usually the historian who tells the narrative of the past and stores this knowledge for future access. When this knowledge is put on display, it is usually presented in museums by curators who organise the historical narratives for public consumption. The material that is exhibited is also often profoundly personal so that the broader historical record might be juxtaposed with the stories belonging to the individual lives that are

⁵⁴ It should be noted that I am not suggesting the study of history can be captured fully by a dictionary definition. I acknowledge that the field is complex and multifaceted. I have chosen, however, to use the dictionary definition as a starting point in my discussion around portraying history through performance. I am primarily a theatre practitioner, and while I do consider myself to be a historian, I am not conducting this research from solely a historical perspective. I am conducting my research primarily from a performance lens.

present (or indeed absent in some cases) in that record. History, thus, as discovered and recorded by the historian and then displayed by the curator, is both a broad field documenting the narratives of large groups of people (at times prioritising certain groups), as well as a repository of personal records and individuals' memories of past events.

I have identified three players in the researching, recording and displaying of historical narratives: the historian, the museum curator and the public. In continuing my metaphor of the journey, I assign to the first two players, the historian and museum curator, the term 'guide'. The guides, adopting a stance of authority in the discovery and recording of history, assemble the narratives of the past and communicate them to the third player, the public, whom I label the 'tourists of history'. These tourists learn both actively and indirectly from the guides who document and organise history. The learning takes place through a 'map', constructed by the guides through their interpretation and recording of the history stored in the archive. The archive contains the collected narratives which are used to compose the map which in turn guides the tourist. This map, with the help of the guides, leads the tourists to the destination of presumed knowledge.

The particular journey I have described makes the tourists reliant on the map, drawn up by the guide, to reach their destination. While a map is an important and necessary part of a journey, it is often presented by the guide in such a way that only one set of directions is given to the tourists to follow. Going off the prescribed trail is discouraged, leaving much terrain undiscovered. Such a journey, while informative and even occasionally encouraging an active engagement with the past, is largely static in its exploration of history. If the historian and curator as the guides are given too much power, the tourists lack the opportunity actively to connect with issues presented in, or omitted from, the archival map. As a theatre practitioner exploring historical narratives, I want to challenge the idea of the journey following such a single pathway by using performance to highlight new trails the tourists may take should they choose. Of course, the historian does occupy an important position in remembering and recording the past and I do not propose that the historian should be eliminated from the recording of history. I am, however, challenging the notion of the all-knowing historian ordained with the authority to determine what is – and what is not – to be included as accepted history. Where such authority is unyielding, the tourist's potential to interact with the past is limited, since the choices in relation to which 'paths' on the map may be taken are restricted.

5.3. 'Correct' shoes: the search for objectivity

The past has indeed 'passed', and, as such, it is no longer accessible in the present. However, 'accessibility' in the present is not limited to direct and tangible access. Instead, 'accessing' the past is achievable through the researching, recording and unpacking of past events mainly through the efforts of historians. According to Leopold Ranke, a 19th century historian whose sentiments established the prevailing view of historical scholarship during his time, the duty of the "historian was to refrain from 'judging the past' and limit himself [*sic*] to 'showing how things actually happened'" (in Iggers, 1997: 25). In Ranke's conceptualisation, the accessing of past events can only be accomplished by qualified people – historians – operating from an objective standpoint in order to show those in the present what really happened. From such a mindset, the search for objectivity is connected to the attempt to reveal the 'truth' about the past, (a perspective which has since been challenged particularly by the post-modern critique of notions of one 'truth'). The historian, in accordance with Ranke's notions of recording the past, thus becomes a powerful figure, a guide who holds the right, with the concomitant responsibility, through purported scientific research, to ensure that the past is recorded and presented with accuracy.⁵⁵ Museums, which are used to house artefacts and pieces of history, also tend to see "accuracy as an achievable aim" (Magelssen, 2007: xvii). The traditional goal, therefore, of the historian and the museum is to research, record and present history as truthfully as possible.

In order for historical findings to be taken seriously, and be regarded as accurate, they need to be carefully documented so that those in the future can conduct analysis and "build on" the research (Reason, 2003: 84). Most often, such historical documentation is stored in what has become widely acknowledged as the archive, which, as Reason (2003: 84) describes it, is seen "as [a] repository of accuracy and objectivity", ordered and collected by the guide who then uses the archive to create a map to guide the tourists in their reading of the documented past. The way the past is 'organised' influences how the map is drawn and thus influences the way the past is depicted. Despite the search for 'accuracy and objectivity' the archive is actually "made from selected and consciously chosen documentation from the past and from the mad fragmentation⁵⁶ that no one intended to preserve that just ended up there" (Steedman, 1998: 67).

⁵⁵ The notion of accuracy is problematic as, like records, accounts and other texts, it is influenced by the subject position of the author of such accounts, and this has significant impact on their 'accuracy'. What is important for my research, though, is the recognition that human experience affects the way history is presented and interpreted, making complete, objectively obtained accuracy unfeasible.

⁵⁶ Steedman's (1998: 67) use of "mad fragmentation" refers to various pieces of documentation that were not purposefully included in the archive but slipped in and joined the other carefully chosen

Steedman's (1998) position is that the map is created by people and is not a 'natural' product of the past. Additionally, the archive, which tends to follow a western tradition of record keeping, privileging the written word, places less value on oral communication and performance (Dean, Meerzan & Prince: 2015: 12). Therefore, it is evident that the process of recording and storing is a highly selective process. What is chosen to be remembered influences how people think about the past and in turn themselves. The archival map therefore cannot be seen as purely objective as it is assembled by human beings with their own agendas, experiences and interests. Because of these subjective aspects, the traditional archive, while still holding valuable knowledge, is not the first and last stop for gaining access to the past.

One of the main reasons accuracy and objectivity are prioritised by historians and museums is to provide their findings with credibility so that what is presented is given the "status of 'real' histories" and not simply 'made-up stories' (Magelssen, 2007: 90). The integrity of historical artefacts and records that are displayed and stored in museums is further reinforced by the reputation of each particular museum as the meaning assigned to the artefacts and records is influenced by the "museum setting" (Johnson, 2011: 54). The simple 'framing' of the artefact by the museum building gives the historical narrative the support of an institution that is recognised for what is assumed to be rigorous and thorough research into the past. The same artefact, no less 'real' or authentic, may not hold the same value and respect if it is stored and displayed in another setting (Vergo, 1989/2000: 46). Therefore, museums themselves contribute to the meaning/s gleaned from their exhibitions. Visitor expectations and their reading of the displays are influenced by the construction of the museum as an institution. The fact that museums are believed to depict the past accurately, gives the impression that the histories on display are 'true' and show how 'it really happened'. As a result museums, as guides, hold a great amount of power to shape the public's perception about the past and consequently their own cultural, social and national identities.

5.4. Walking in triangles: 'multidimensional' time

Many cultural, social and national identities represented in museums, and the histories they reflect, are built on the desire to display the past as accurately as possible. Accuracy here refers to re-creating and displaying the past through careful research in a manner as closely connected to how it happened in the past as possible, in line with Ranke's sentiments noted earlier. It is not possible, however, to produce true accuracy; historians and museum curators, as human beings, necessarily view the past filtered through their own personal judgements and this affects how

accounts. Due to these records not being specifically selected for the archive, a 'mad fragmentation' occurs as they do not necessarily connect neatly within the overarching framework of the archive.

the events of the past are represented, and in turn, framed in the museum. The way one person might see a narrative is different from another's conceptualisation of it and, therefore, the way each would depict any given narrative will be different, revealing that an 'accurate' depiction is not possible. Subjectivities will always influence how history is portrayed. The subjectivities of those assembling and presenting the histories tend to privilege certain narratives and groups of people, granting them power over others. The privileged narratives are often western, not least because written historical records, which are generally the most readily available sources, tend to reflect the western perspective, a perspective that has been afforded superior status by some historians and museums. The consequence of this pattern is that the history of certain groups is visible and accessible, while that of other groups is often left out.

The western treatment of time has supported the tendency of some museums and historians to prioritise the narratives of certain groups over others. Time is typically seen as a "precise and homogeneous continuum of instants, [...] a success of absolute, memorable 'nows' in a continuous abstract progress" (Magelssen, 2007: 22). By seeing time as linear, and usually causal, with events occurring in succession, alternate and multiple accounts can be ignored. The focus is placed on the dominant recollections of an event which become 'fixed' in the time line. Museums which prioritise linear time, such as some ethnographic museum exhibitions including the /Xam exhibit in the South African Museum (SAM), (about which I will elaborate later in Chapter 6), sometimes place their subject matter, such as indigenous peoples and their practices in a static, stereotypical light because 'now' and 'us' is portrayed as better than 'then' and 'them'.⁵⁷ This rigidity of time, accompanied by the desire for accuracy, limits the portrayal of the historical narratives because the depiction is onesided and 'stuck' in time.

Magelssen (2007: 44) claims that authenticity and complete accuracy when depicting history are in fact impossible (Magelssen, 2007: 44). The main factor that prevents such accuracy is that time is not limited to a linear trajectory. White (1989: 51) argues that time has "three degrees of organisation" – "within-time-ness", "historicality" and "deep temporality". He applies the above degrees of organisation (I am focusing on the first two, which are briefly explored below) to historical texts, but I extend them to include museum displays as well as performance. The reader of historical texts or the spectator of a historical performance begins by "reckoning with" time, which involves the first degree of organisation, "within-time", which evokes the past event in the present (White, 1989: 51). The time presented in the historical text or performance involves an account of what happened in the past which cannot physically be relived in the same time in which it occurred in the past. Instead, the 'reliving' of the moment

⁵⁷ I acknowledge that not all ethnographic museums and displays see their exhibits in a stereotypical light or reduce all subjects to 'us' and 'them'.

occurs in a new degree of time which is apparent in the second degree of organisation, “historicality”, which involves “recollecting” time, where the person reading or watching the text has the privilege of “retrospect” (White, 1989: 51, 52). Retrospect connects the “endings” or outcomes of the history to the “beginnings” of the events, while still remaining in the present time in which the reader is situated (White, 1989: 52). The recollection of time, which is what historians and museum curators do, can “never be represented directly” as what has occurred has passed (White, 1989: 52, 53). Instead, time is ‘multidimensional’ as we, as historians and observers of history, are experiencing the past (‘then’), in the present (‘now’), and looking towards the future in one particular moment of recollection (Tonkin, 1992: 67). Therefore, it becomes unfeasible to recreate the past authentically because both the actual time and event have passed. Additionally, authenticity itself is contested as it is also socially and politically determined. For example, a simulation of a past event, such as a re-enactment of a battle, may not be deemed ‘authentic’ as the people ‘playing’ the soldiers are from the present, wearing replicated clothing and using ‘props’ as weapons, and yet it can feel authentic to those participating. Authenticity and accuracy, thus, is determined by perception. The act of retrospection needs to be acknowledged as it connects the readers/viewers and their perceptions through the degrees of time, thus enabling a dialogue between the past and the present.

5.5. Interpreting shoes: discourse analysis

One approach to analysing, interpreting and depicting the past is discourse analysis which “examines patterns of language across texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used” (Partridge, 2012: 2). Furthermore, discourse analysis “also considers the ways that the use of language presents different views of the world and different understandings” (Partridge, 2012: 2). The focus on multiple viewpoints and ways of understanding is pertinent to my research on multivocality in museums. Texts are not fixed entities; just as the archive is constructed, so are the texts which make up the archive.

In exploring the archive, White suggests that the process of recording history involves “a mixture of adequately and inadequately explained events, a congeries of established and inferred facts” which are “at once a representation that is an interpretation and an interpretation that passes for an explanation of the whole process mirrored in the narrative” (1978/1990: 51). He highlights the fact that the records of history are an assortment of texts, some more thoroughly ‘researched’ than others, which are used to represent an event/s of the past. For White, interpretation of the representation is at the core of an historical text, as he argues, “If we can say with some certitude ‘what happened’; we cannot always say, on the basis of appeal to the record, ‘why’ it happened as it did” (1978/1990: 53). Historians impose their own subjective

judgements onto the text/s they read, often to explain ‘why’ things happen as they do. This subjective deduction filters into other subsequent texts written by other historians in response to what is read. The historian thus *interprets* what is read in order to *explain* what s/he believes occurred, which is, in turn, *represented* in the recorded documents situated in the archive. The way the records in the archive are represented then influence the way narrative/s are displayed in museums.

According to White, the reasons behind events as well as the relationships drawn between events, events and people and people to each other are not “immanent in the events themselves; they exist only in the mind of the historian reflecting them” (1978/1990: 94). The point is that subjectivity and interpretation are linked, as White (1978/1990: 85; original emphasis) notes, “*How* a given historical situation is to be configured depends on the historian’s subtlety in matching up a specific plot structure with the set of historical events that he [*sic*] wishes to endow with meaning of a particular kind”. Such an act, White (1978/1990: 85, 91; original italics) argues, is a “literary” act which makes use of “symbolic structures” to record historical events. What White (1978/1990: 91; original italics) calls the “images” of the text are not within the text but are rather “*call[ed] to mind*” when the text is read. The meaning in the text, therefore, is not intrinsic to the text but is rather placed onto the text by the person who is reading it.

Discourse analysis has been critiqued by some theorists, such as Windshuttle (1997), Brown (2017) and Searle (in Moati, 2014), who believe that it removes the credibility of the record. The notion of subjectivity, in which no one ‘truth’ exists unchallenged since perception influences how different people view an event, can create the impression that no truth exists at all. Facts, derived from evidence, lose their authority if they hold ‘no truth’ and are at the will of any interpretation. Windshuttle argues that discourse analysis as a method, prevents historians from “access[ing] the past” as “we have no proper grounds for believing that a past independent from ourselves ever took place” (1997: 36); this is the case because subjectivity and its corresponding questioning of truth is at the core of discourse analysis. The argument against discourse analysis suggests that there are facts which are objective in historical scholarship such as dates, names and numbers which are independent of interpretation (Windshuttle, 1997: 220).⁵⁸ When scholars, such as White (1978/1990&1989), compare historical texts to literary texts, critics of discourse analysis like Windshuttle (1997), claim that

⁵⁸ I agree with Windshuttle’s (1997) argument that there are facts, such as dates, names and numbers, which do not change with interpretation; for example, it is accepted that the first South African democratic election took place on 27 April 1994. Such facts are necessary for the telling of historical narratives. However, the context/s around these facts, such as different people’s experiences of the election, are open to interpretation, which is the basis of discourse analysis.

discourse analysis reduces history to fiction, a process which strips history of its credibility in offering truth/s about the past.

In the search for credibility, Windshuttle highlights the necessity for “facts” when recording history because “[w]ithout facts, we would lack one of the most important grounds for debate, for contesting someone else’s version of history” (1997: 90). I agree with Windshuttle (1997) about the need for the ‘facts’ of the past to be afforded some authority or else denial of past events such as the Holocaust, apartheid and many other episodes in history can occur. In *Our Footprints*, I have used historical and archival facts as a basis on which to create the performance piece. Some of the characters in the performance, such as Bavarian pioneer Jonas Bergtheil and German missionary Karl Willem Posselt, are based on real people who existed in the past. Material such as letters, diaries, records of birth, death and family trees are all stored in the Bergtheil archive documenting these people’s lives. However, such facts are not the definitive voice in what and why things happened as they did. Instead, such facts need to be *interpreted*, as highlighted by White (1978/1990). Discourse analysts’ use of literature as a way to describe narratives is not intended to deny the need for facts and truth, but is instead proposing that like in fiction, the way a text is written, linguistically, affects the way it is read.

In terms of facts and the recorded texts about the German settler history in Westville, Durban, the manner in which they have been recorded, how the people (in this case mainly settler men) are portrayed, and which sections are prioritised, and which omitted, all influence the interpretation of the facts. I do not deny that they existed, lived and influenced the area of Westville in Durban, but such records cannot be taken as the complete picture about who these people were. Instead, as I have attempted to highlight in the performance of *Our Footprints*, about which I will elaborate further in subsequent chapters, the meaning drawn from the facts is created through the way they are assembled and framed. Therefore, discourse analysis’ focus on subjectivity and interpretation is a helpful tool in viewing history from multiple perspectives.

5.6 Shoes that fit: presenting accessible histories

I have established that interpretation influences the way meaning is located in historical narratives. Interpretation is also influenced by other forces, such as decisions around which people are given the opportunity to provide their interpretations. Historical narratives often reflect the values of the dominant group in power – or the “victors” –leading to the prioritisation of the victor/s’ narratives (Rokem, 2000: 8). Such interpretations of history are often used to influence national and cultural identities as well as provide “[h]istorical ‘explanations’” which serve to justify the aims of “the prevailing state and economic system” (Poster, 1997: 54, 7).

Such histories are often singular and fail to take into account the multiple possible ways of looking at any given event. In my journaling while I was brainstorming about my self-devised piece, I compared the concept of fixed histories with a pair of shoes, as I explained at the beginning of this chapter, noting that shoes “are created for specific people and the rest, the majority, are expected to make do with the myth of the one-size-fits-all they have been given. History has often been exclusive and has sometimes written out the voices of the disempowered” (Research Journal; 22/05/17). In the attempt to generate a national identity in South Africa through the presentation of history, for example, certain people have been excluded and side lined because they could not fit into the metaphorical pair of shoes provided at the start of the journey. The aim of my research –and my performance piece –is to negotiate the presentation of specific histories and in so doing, propose the active engagement of multivocality in museums as a way to create dialogue, or (to extend the metaphor) offer multiple pairs of shoes, about the both the past and the present.

The image of shoes is one I have incorporated practically into my museum theatre piece, *Our Footprints*. To begin a journey one usually dons a pair of shoes. Therefore, all participants in my museum theatre piece are encouraged to place their feet in a clay cast of feet placed at the entrance to the Bergtheil Museum (see Image 4). My intention behind the cast is firstly to mark the entrance of the participant into the museum (like the act of putting on shoes) as well as to create a symbolic and visual metaphor that challenges the exclusionary status of some histories. The fact that the feet inside the cast are fixed, as the clay has dried, does not stop the participants from placing their own feet, of different shapes and sizes, over the cast to gain access into the house. It is an act of stepping onto, as well as into, the footprints, regardless of the participants own foot size, to gain entry. The act of walking in somebody else’s footprints, no longer shoes, even if the feet are vastly different, becomes symbolically significant. The footprints are adaptable allowing whoever stands on/in them the opportunity to see the past and the museum, and the past it represents, from a different angle. The footprints, therefore, are not limiting like a very small pair of shoes but rather a starting point for the rest of the expedition, both literally and metaphorically.



Image 3: Cast of footprints at entrance of Bergtheil Museum. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

The next chapter focuses on Brett Bailey's *Exhibits A* and *B* and the reframing of the 'gaze' and the one who is 'gazing'. Ethnographic displays, such as the /Xam exhibition, will be discussed as a point of comparison with Bailey's work in the exploration of the display of the 'other'.

Chapter 6

Journey through Repositioning History

"Do any of us really want to live in a society in which expression is suppressed, banned, silenced, denied a platform? My work has been shut down today, whose will be closed down tomorrow?"

Brett Bailey (Website 16)

6.1. No shoes: the 'other' on display

Putting things on display is something people do regularly. We put ornaments on view in our homes, stand on podiums when receiving awards (medals and trophies themselves are also items of display that symbolise triumph and winning), and even the jewellery we wear can be seen as a form of demonstration. Display is integral to both museums and in performance. Actors standing on some form of stage are presenting themselves to those watching just as artefacts are collected and exhibited in museum cases. However, how do we negotiate the idea of people being exhibited as artefacts? What are the politics of putting live bodies on display? Does consent given from those on display make such a 'show' acceptable? To what extent is museum theatre an exhibition of human beings?

Finding 'shoes that fit' in my own performance piece is partially a response to some of the exhibitions that have displayed people in museums around the world. While my museum piece is not dealing with ethnographic displays, I note that the presence of people, both live and as casts, in museums has often been conducted in a manner that devalued certain cultures. It is interesting to note that museum theatre also uses live people, actors, who are also then on 'display' in museums. However, there is a distinction between ethnographic museums and performance in museums. Museum theatre uses actors or volunteers who participate in the performance. The intention behind most museum theatre is to interrogate and explore the past through a visceral response. This experience often challenges simplistic and stereotypical depictions of the past through various techniques, such as slippage.⁵⁹ The performers and the audience are often active in their engagement of the past offering a challenge to the static depictions of 'other' cultural groups that are often found in ethnographic exhibits. I believe that museum theatre is a powerful tool for opposing this kind of positioning, and for exploring some of the inequalities that may be presented in museums.

⁵⁹ Not all museum theatre works are active in challenging stereotypes and encouraging dynamic engagement with the past. Some productions have been criticised for attempting to be too naturalistic in portrayal and ignoring the relationship between past and present by focusing too much on the past and ignoring some of the present consequences and critiques (Magelssen, 2007: 124).

One example of a kind of museum theatre that has challenged inequalities through performance is Brett Bailey's *Exhibits A and B* (2012 & 2013). These performance pieces were not created specifically for a museum about its contents, which is often the agenda of museum theatre. Instead, *Exhibits A and B* are independent theatrical pieces which mimic the human zoos of the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe and America that displayed black people, as well as other human 'monsters'⁶⁰ considered to be exotic or an oddity, as "scientific curiosities" at which white people would look (Bailey, 2013: Website 17). The purpose of these exhibitions is different, therefore, to that of a museum theatre piece in that museum theatre is often created to highlight, discuss and evoke the narratives presented in the museum building. *Exhibits A and B* are not trying to build on the narratives of history on display but are rather creating a provocative re-enactment of colonial history by recreating a type of human zoo using actors.

Museums in countries that were once colonised can be argued to have strong colonial links, and during colonial times usually had a dual function. In occupied territories, museums often served to legitimise and establish the settler culture, and formed a strong link to the culture of the home country (Durrans, 2001: 147). On the other hand, museums also acted as places for the display of those conquered (Durrans, 2001: 147). In the colonial power's home country, artefacts from the occupied countries, which sometimes included human body parts or humans themselves, would often be brought home to display the exotic culture of the subjects of colonial rule. Those who had never travelled to the colonial occupancies, as well as those who had returned, would be able to gaze at the people over whom their country ruled. Such displays portrayed the beauty of the foreign items but also presented the indigenous peoples as 'other'.

In the South African Museum (SAM) in Cape Town an example of an ethnographic display of the 'other' was presented and, although it has since been taken down⁶¹, it offers a point of comparison. This exhibition focused on the /Xam people "who were living near Prieska in 1912" (Davison, 2005: 203). Unlike the human zoos of Europe and America, it did not use live humans but rather displayed plaster casts that replicated the /Xam people and claimed to portray

⁶⁰ Human 'monsters' were people who were considered to be 'different' often as a result of physical abnormalities. The European public were fascinated with such people, specifically in the 19th century, and they were often put on display for entertainment purposes. Such display involved a mixture of curiosity, wonder and the desire to "defin[e] what is human" (Guerrini, 2010: 113), and thus 'normal', through the viewing and attempted classification of such people as 'abnormal'.

⁶¹ The exhibition consisted of thirteen plaster casts representing the /Xam people which were cast in 1912 (Davison, 2005: 203). The casts were repositioned in the 1950s in a diorama mimicking the surroundings of "a nineteenth-century hunter gather encampment in the Karoo" (Davison, 2005: 203). In 1989, an additional exhibit was placed around the diorama "to draw attention of the history of the people" (Davison, 2005: 203). The exhibition was taken down in 2001 after much protest about the problematic way the /Xam people were displayed.

them in their 'natural environment'. In fact, the whole exhibit was unnatural as the /Xam people no longer wore the clothes or lived in the same manner depicted in the exhibit (Davison, 2005: 203). Even though no live people were used, Davison argues that the display still depicted the /Xam people as "quintessential museum specimens, dehumanized objects of scientific enquiry, exhibited for the public gaze" (2005: 203). Their anatomy was of particular focus, and they were "exhibited unclothed, except for small aprons and loin-covering, as examples of a primitive race" (Davison, 2005: 203). Such a description evokes comparison with people such as Saartjie Baartman, the famous so-called 'Hottentot Venus', who was also displayed for her 'unusual' anatomical features in human-like zoos.⁶²

The /Xam display can be argued to be problematic as its framing encouraged people to ogle at the bodies on display. While western culture is also put on display in museums, sometimes also using plaster casts of the people involved, they are often framed differently from those who were colonised. The colonised are often 'framed' in similar ways to animals or natural history displays in museums, while westerners are 'framed' differently (Davison, 2005: 203). This difference in framing creates a sense of superiority of the westerner over the 'other'. In the case of the /Xam people in the old SAM exhibition, a limited narrative was depicted. Who the people were, their triumphs, hardships and "their history of resistance and subordination", all were ignored in the exhibition (Davison, 2005: 203). Instead, the casts of the /Xam were just that, casts, hollowed entities, empty where the people once were. As argued by Davison (2005), a holistic version of the people was absent and the group of people, displayed in a similar fashion to animals, were made out to be inferior.

The notion of the 'other' is an important concept in Bailey's *Exhibits A and B*. 'Other' usually implies a separation between the one looking and the one being looked at. This separation is intensified in museum spaces where the visitor is physically disconnected from the exhibition by not being allowed to touch the artefacts, or enter into the space occupied by the displayed peoples or items (Riegel, 1996: 86). This removal of the spectator from the display emphasises the differentiation between the one watching and the one being watched, leading potentially to a lack of identification. While difference should not be ignored, nor viewed as a negative, the display of difference must be consciously conducted to prevent one group from assuming an apparently 'natural' superior position.

⁶² Baartman was presented to the European public as the "prototype of 'an anomaly, a freak, oversexed and subhuman'" (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011: 7). Her enlarged genitalia and buttocks were 'fascinating' to European scientists and doctors, which were different to European notions of normalised sexuality (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011: 7). She has now become a symbol of resistance to colonialism and her narrative continues to 'speak' against oppression, even after her death. Her body was finally brought back to South Africa in 2002 to be buried.

Furthermore, the fact that the museum visitor traditionally moves from one display to the next when viewing exhibits, allows the viewer to be active and the displayed figure passive (Riegel, 1996: 86). The viewer, who is able physically to move, can assume any position around the exhibition itself and is able to progress to the next point of interest while the exhibition is unchanging and “lifeless” (Riegel, 1996: 86). The stasis of such displays is not limited to the ethnographic. Other exhibitions in museums, whether they deal with animals, artefacts or people, are also showcased in a manner which encourages division between the visitor and the narratives. I, therefore, argue as a theatre practitioner that performance in museums – and not only those that deal with human subjects – can, challenge this distancing between the viewer and the displayed. Instead, through performance the viewer is integrated into the exhibition and its narrative, and a connection can be established. The role of performance in encouraging such a connection will be elaborated further in subsequent chapters.

6.2. Adjusting the shoe size: reframing the ‘other’

Difference, the ‘other’, and idea of active engagement of both viewers and those on display, are pertinent concepts in Bailey’s work. In his live exhibitions, the construction of the notion of ‘viewer’ is shifted as ideas around the ‘gaze’ are challenged. The installations, *Exhibit A* (2012), which was presented in South Africa, and *Exhibit B* (2013)⁶³, which toured Europe, consist of twelve tableaux each featuring live black actors; Bailey’s intention here is “really [to] unpack certain stories about [...] these various phenomena, slavery, racism, genocide in Africa, colonial atrocities and this, [...] phenomenon of human zoo where white people are looking at black people” (Bailey, 2013: Website 17). The audience are expected to view the installation in absolute silence and individually, entering at two minute intervals, but once inside the audience could choose to stay longer in any particular room (Sack, 2013: Website 18). Each person is given a number by which they are called to gain entry into the exhibition (Sack, 2013: Website 18). No names are uttered, establishing a kind of anonymity that strips the spectator of their own identity, similar to that of slaves being forced to forgo their names. Thus, before even entering the space, the positioning of power is challenged as the viewer is rendered vulnerable by being alone, unable to speak, and reduced to a number.

The exhibition attempts to create both the atmosphere and the style of a museum by placing the actors into designated areas which are physically framed by walls and pedestals separating the

⁶³ I am mainly focusing on *Exhibit B*, which toured Europe, in this Chapter. The European reception, which was at times hostile, is of interest in my discussion around dialogue between contesting viewpoints.

viewer from the actor. Panels, typical of many museums are also used, one of which states “Origin of the Species” referring to the two people on display (Sack, 2013: Website 18).⁶⁴ The use of panels both simulates museum practice as well as providing a means to use language without using sound. The only sound in the performance is a choir of four Namibian singers who sing songs of lamentation drawing on the Namibian genocide during German occupancy (Bailey, 2013: Website 17).

In addition to a lack of sound is the lack of movement. The actors remain completely still playing on the static nature of ethnographic exhibitions similar to that of the /Xam exhibit at the SAM (Sack, 2013: Website 18). However, the separation between viewer and viewed, as noted earlier, is treated differently by Bailey in his re-enactment. The conventional unequal power relationship where the one looking occupies a superior position by virtue of being in control of deriving meaning from what is being viewed, is shifted. Instead of the displayed being subject to the will of the viewer’s gaze, Bailey has adjusted the gaze by making the actors on display look back (Krueger, 2013: 3). The gaze is unyielding; at no point do the actors break away from looking into the eyes of each person passing through (Sack, 2013: Website 18).

Additionally, in writing about Bailey’s work Daniel Sack (2013: Website 18) noted that during his experience of *Exhibit B*, not only are the actors looking back but the other spectators, who may have remained in the room, are all observing each others’ reactions. The viewer is thus further made vulnerable by being watched from multiple angles. S/he is also put on display which alters the dynamic of the power relations. The frame/s are disrupted by the fact that the gaze is no longer coming from one vantage point. The framing of the exhibition is transformed, or what Goffman (1975) refers to as “key[ed]”, as the nature of the gaze shifts. Keying occurs when one activity, such as a display of an enslaved indigenous inhabitant, “is transformed into something patterned on this activity but seen by the participants to be something else” (Goffman, 1975: 44). New meaning is thus created because the original significance of the event is altered when viewed differently.

On the surface, Bailey’s installations appear to be exact replicas of an ethnographic display, like that in the SAM. However, by applying what I argue is a form of keying, Bailey transforms the human zoo into a place to re-evaluate accepted historical narratives as well as perceptions around these narratives. By challenging the position of viewer and the gaze, the spectator encounters different frames from what they would encounter in a real ethnographic display. In this case, a duality in role occurs as spectator and performer merge. As the spectator negotiates

⁶⁴ A photograph of the “Origin of the Species” tableau from *Exhibit B* can be found at Website 19. Photographs of some of the other tableaux can be found at Website 21.

this duality, multiple keyings occur. The frames are transformed each time the role is altered. This transformation offers the one being viewed the opportunity to challenge the power of the gazer by shifting roles, and as a result, shifting frames. The gazer has to re-evaluate what is presented, and their interpretation of this framing, on multiple occasions. Stereotypes, which entrench the concept of “otherness”, are challenged (Hall, 1996: 225). The notion of “us” and “them” is altered as performer and spectator look into each other’s eyes; ensuring that the “binary oppositions”⁶⁵ are no longer fixed (Hall, 1996: 235). In the performance, a sharing without words occurs as each one looks at the other. Even though no one speaks, multiple voices emerge as multiple frames are encountered.

In contesting the conventional role delineations, Bailey challenges the boundaries denoting the ‘performer’. He suggests “that the real performers of this piece [*Exhibit A*] are actually the audience moving through, and that they [the actors] are the audience sitting and watching a lot of people moving through the space” (Krueger, 2013: 5-6). The process the performers encounter during, and in preparation for, the installations are as important as the viewers’ experiences. The performers are encouraged to look at their own personal encounters with racism in their response to the question “how do they process that” (Bailey, 2014: Website 20); these are recorded and put on display at the end of the exhibition (*Guardian Stage*, 2014). Here is an example of one such response from one of the actors, Rania Modi (in *Guardian Stage*, 2014), in the staging of *Exhibit B* at the Edinburgh Festival:

Exhibit B was not made to make anyone feel guilty but to teach them. People are familiar with slavery in America and the Holocaust but *Exhibit B* tells the stories of those who are not recognised for what they went through. *Exhibit B* has changed my life! Not only has it educated me, but it also gave me the chance to educate others.

The installation is thus not only created to provoke audience reaction but is also used by Bailey to encourage self-reflection by the actors around prejudice and injustice. Like the eliciting of the actors’ responses, the audience is encouraged to write down their responses about what they experienced in the exhibition (*Guardian Stage*, 2014). The performance thus takes on multiple functions as the different people involved, including both audience and actors, are encouraged

⁶⁵ Binary oppositions are used for classification; they delineate between one thing and another e.g. black and white (Hall, 1996: 235, 236). Derrida explored binaries in his study of deconstruction (which explores meaning and interpretation of texts) noting that the one half of the binary is reliant on the other to determine meaning (in Namaste, 1994: 223). For example, the way ‘black’ is interpreted is influenced by its binary – ‘white’s’ – associations, and how black is treated in relation to white. While binaries are intrinsically connected, as they are often dependent on one another, they establish “a clear difference between things in order to classify them” (Hall, 1996: 236), i.e. black is ‘different’ from white. Even though binary oppositions in themselves are not negative, they tend to classify one end of the spectrum as dominant and the other as inferior (Hall, 1996: 235). Therefore, I argue Bailey’s work and other works of performance are critical in challenging rigid binaries and instead encourage a re-evaluation and a re-framing of them.

to go on a journey probing the history of colonialism, one that explores personal experiences, prejudices and expectations, as well as a shared journey alongside others with whom they may not have had a previous connection.

I argue that *Exhibits A* and *B* are about making connections between human beings. Both sets of participants – performers and spectators – are forced to encounter one another by looking into the other’s eyes, while both experience a state of vulnerability, something that was not present in the human zoos of the past and is often absent in many contemporary museums. The “subject-positions” of the viewer and the viewed are challenged as the displayed individuals are not the only ones “subject to someone else’s control” or definition of identity (Hall, 1996: 55, 56). Instead, all those involved are dependent upon another’s perceptions, observations and reactions in that particular moment.

6.3. Multiple shoes, multiple sizes: disagreement is not dialogue’s enemy

While I see Bailey’s work as challenging dominant narratives and shifting the positioning of power, many people have critiqued and boycotted the installations. *Exhibit B*, which travelled around Europe, particularly was met with resistance. During the run at the Barbican Theatre in England, the piece was accused of “complicit racism” by protester Sara Myers who launched a petition to stop the performance (Holloway, 2014). The protest action was in fact ‘successful’ as some of the performances were shut down. Myers argued that black people were once again being treated like “guinea pigs” by putting them on display (in Holloway, 2014). She believes that it is a contradiction that the government allowed the exhibition in England but has still not offered an official apology for slavery (in Holloway, 2014).

In my response to Myers and other protesters of the installation, I firstly acknowledge that like Bailey, I am a white South African. My perceptions about the production, which I have not had the privilege of personally seeing, are coloured by my race, gender, upbringing, world view and many other factors. I cannot really know what it is like to be black and therefore my observations are restricted. However, I can empathise with others who are different from myself and learn from, and with, them. The process of empathy is necessary as difference is evident in all aspects of life and as humans, we have continually to negotiate this difference. Performance is one method that allows us to connect with others and their experiences through empathy. For this very reason, works like Bailey’s installations are necessary for people to encounter different perspectives about a tragic history, even if they do not agree with the way they encounter these perspectives. It is a history that needs to be spoken about. As stated by British journalist and academic Kenan Malik (2014: Website 21) in response to the closing down of *Exhibit B*,

If we want to have a proper discussion about racism, art and institutions we need also resolutely to defend freedom of expression. [...] Brett Bailey has every right to explore the issues as he sees fit, the Barbican has every right to stage that exploration, and critics have every right to protest about it. What the critics don't have is the right to shut the show down because they feel offended by it.

Shutting the performance down ensures that no one is given the opportunity to enter into a discussion about what is presented because they are not allowed to view it. Limiting the potential dialogues, in fact, entrenches dominant narratives further. Bailey references this notion of significant dialogue when he suggests that in South Africa we talk about race, noting that by contrast in Germany, for example, where *Exhibit B* also toured and was also met with some hostility, "it seethes and festers in silence. I'm happy to make art that provokes discussion, debate – brings things out into the open" (in Vlachos, n.d.: 5). The protesters of *Exhibit B* wanted to make a statement regarding the display of black bodies, which they did, but they prevented an active engagement between different perspectives about the history presented when they shut the installation down; in doing so, they unwittingly derailed their own campaign. Many black people's stories were silenced under colonial rule and by shutting down the installation, more stories were again stifled instead of debated and discussed. Censorship becomes perpetual if people refuse to allow the presence of conversation that offends.

In Bakhtin's theorising, he notes that dialogue, which forms the basis of heteroglossia "bring[s] about the destruction of any absolute bonding of ideological meaning to language" (Morris, 1994: 16). When he refers to language, he is not restricting the term only to spoken and written words but expanding it to include different expressions of ideology (Bakhtin, 1989/1994: 74). Without dialogue, "[a] person enclosed in a totally unitary language [or point of view] cannot perceive an image of that language since they cannot get outside it" (Bakhtin, 1981/1994: 113). The person is unable to look beyond themselves because they refuse to engage with dissenting views possibly out of ignorance or fear of offense. To overcome a "unitary language", or one-sided perspective, the person needs to engage with another 'language'; as Bakhtin (1981/1994: 113) asserts, "[o]nly a relativising of one language against the outlines of another allows one to construct the image of a language and so break the bonds of any language's absolute authority". Dialogue challenges the authoritative word but in the case of the *Exhibit B* protesters, their act of stopping the performance was in fact promoting a singular account. One viewpoint – their disagreement with the installation – won, but in doing so, other perspectives were prevented from engaging in the battle. The narratives in history, performance and museums will not be allowed to speak if people are allowed to censor any topic that might offend. Instead, dialogue needs to be promoted so that various 'languages', or points of view, can come into contact allowing people to negotiate their own prejudices and world view.

Tiffany Jenkins, who attended the performance of *Exhibit B* in Edinburgh, argues that the problems identified by the protesters about the installation, specifically issues around it being racist, are unfounded (in Malik, 2014: Website 21). Instead, while she sees many positives in the production, she feels that *Exhibit B* places too much focus on the individual watching, and their feelings, noting that “the finger-pointing prevents the production from engaging with history and present-day problems” (in Malik, 2014: Website 21). In Jenkins’ view, not enough attention is placed on the historical narratives with too much emphasis on the spectator’s emotional reaction. While I agree with Jenkins that the feelings of the spectator are at the forefront of the production, and that such emotions can overwhelm the greater historical narrative, a personal connection with both the performance and the history is important. This view is supported by Kavanagh (1999: xiii) who argues that, “history in museums is at least as much about the present as it is about the past, as much about how people feel as it is about what they know about facts”. Kavanagh’s (1999) sentiments can be extended to performance in general as well as to Bailey’s work. If the audience response and feeling is divorced from the historical narratives presented, the impact of negotiating their perceptions from a personal perspective is reduced. Through feeling, the audience is forced to confront not only the historical narratives presented but also their own ‘language’ or world view to which they may have been oblivious.

I recognise that the spectator does need to be careful of becoming too involved in their own feelings which can lead to not being able to look beyond their own experience. This overwhelming emotional response is what theatre practitioner Bertolt Brecht (1964/1997) wanted to prevent in his own work. The focus on the audience’s reason rather on feelings was Brecht’s priority (Brecht, 1964/1997: 23). His approach, nevertheless, does not ignore an emotional engagement as he notes, “it would be quite wrong to try and deny emotion to this kind of theatre [epic theatre]” (Brecht, 1964/1997: 23). He wants the audience to think about what is portrayed, but not at the expense of feeling. Central to Brecht’s (1964/1997: 86) work is the belief that “attitudes” adopted by people “toward one another” are “socio-historically significant”; this is also the case with Bailey’s performances. *Exhibits A* and *B* challenge people’s attitudes and encourage them to encounter these attitudes for themselves. Due to the fact that Bailey so aptly manipulates the roles in which the spectator finds him/herself, multiple perspectives and attitudes are highlighted when encountering the presented colonial history.

In the exhibition, Bailey not only wanted to highlight colonial atrocities but he also sought to connect the representation of the past to present issues. For example, the current refugee crisis in which victims are seeking asylum particularly in Europe was of interest to Bailey when making the work (Krueger, 2013: 4). I argue that Bailey approached colonial history from

multiple angles to encourage the spectator to encounter both the past and the present, both the 'other' and themselves, as well as prejudice on both a general and a personal level.

6.4. Reclaiming shoes

While I am not specifically looking at ethnographic museums and the display of culture in museums, it is pertinent briefly to discuss alternatives to the problematic displays of some museums. Marilena Alivizatou (2011: 84), a writer who explores museums and heritage, proposes that when the culture of indigenous people is portrayed in places such as museums it should be engaged with as a living entity. This approach, called "intangible cultural heritage" (Alivizatou, 200: 82, 85), uses practices, ceremonies and oral history as a way to engage with the culture. Such an approach is dynamic as it does not restrict a culture to static presentation, which is the case in many ethnographic museums. Instead, it promotes what Alivizatou refers to as "native agency", because the indigenous people are the active force behind the exploration of the culture, which allows them "to reclaim their traditions and reaffirm their place in the world" (2011: 93). When native agency is implemented in the creation of museum exhibits, the members of the communities whose narratives are on display are viewed as "authorities on their own cultures and material heritage" (Peers & Brown, 2003: 1). The community is directly involved in the creation of, and research into, the exhibits effectively making the creation of museum displays a communal event. Multiple accounts are included because a number of people, many of whom have connections to the narratives, are active in the depiction of their history/ies. The voices of those 'displayed' are included in the creation process blurring the boundaries between the one who creates and the one who receives.

Curator, Brian Durrans (2001: 162) further suggests that museums should openly draw attention to the way they acquire culturally significant artefacts and display them, highlighting that what is exhibited is not 'natural' but framed within the museum context as well as by other social, economic and political factors. The open display of museum practice will be elaborated on in further chapters with specific reference to performance. Revealing that the people and cultures on display are presented from a specific viewpoint curbs the notion that a culture portrayed in an exhibition is unchanging and lacking in progress. Instead, by encouraging the merging and clashing of multiple viewpoints, specifically that of the indigenous people themselves, a more holistic exhibition of a culture is offered.

6.5. New Shoes

Through native agency, provocative performance, like Bailey's work, as well as museum displays that consciously reveal their 'framing', the public have greater access to different shoes and different experiences. When the shapes and sizes of the available shoes are expanded, they are no longer as stiff and uncomfortable to wear. Additionally, the traditional map, or archive, is also extended, allowing the wearer of the shoes to take different trails to new sites. Linear narratives are discouraged and, as in the case of *Exhibits A* and *B*, people encounter new perspectives through dialogue, debate and a sharing between different humans gathered together in an act of performance. They are given the chance to walk in another pair of shoes and share in different historical narratives.

The next chapter explores how personal connections between historical narratives and the lives of museum visitors can be made through performance. The case study of *This Accursed Thing* is placed in dialogue with *Our Footprints* as personal memory and the unsettling of expectations are discussed.

Chapter 7

Journey through Personal History

“Remembrance is a way of holding the past in tension with our present.”

Robert Gibbs (2005: 208 – 209)

“[M]emory acts as a shared crucible of discovery and a distorted lens through which history and theatre engage with the past.”

David Dean, Yana Meerzan & Kathryn Prince (2015: 1)

7.1. Making a connection

How much of who we are is linked to those who have gone before us? This is a question I ask at the beginning of *Our Footprints*, “How much of what we can consider to be *our* history is based on our DNA?” (Jenkins, 2017: 1⁶⁶; original italics). In my exploration of the history presented in the Bergtheil Museum, I was struck with the dilemma of how to negotiate narratives that are not linked to my own ‘heritage’. The narratives on display in the museum are predominantly related to German settler history in the area of Westville, Durban. As I state in the introduction to the performance, “I am not German. My surname, Jenkins, is actually Welsh although I don’t really know much about my Welsh ancestry. German settler history is not my history and some of these people recorded her are not my ancestors” (Jenkins, 2017: 1). The question arose as to how I, as a theatre practitioner and researcher, could depict narratives to which I do not have an ancestral link.⁶⁷ This conundrum, however, provided an interesting point from which to navigate the journey. Many of those coming to the museum themselves may have no direct connection to the histories on display, particularly in a country like South Africa where so many cultures and historical narratives are present. Nevertheless it is possible to find an association/s with a narrative or a group of people that are not necessarily part of our own cultural, religious or racial background. Connections are not reliant on a direct ancestral link.

In my interrogation of *This Accursed Thing* (Jackson & Kidd, 2007) as one of my case studies, I found that the devisers of this piece had a similar predicament to navigate, given its focus on the

⁶⁶ The referenced page numbers are the original numbers from the *Our Footprints* script. The page numbers in the upper right hand corner of Appendix 1 refer to these original numbers.

⁶⁷ Even though I am not of German decent, I acknowledge that I have more connection as a white South African to histories of white settlement, as depicted by Bergtheil Museum, than some other visitors may have.

slave trade. How could all the different people who visit the Manchester Museum⁶⁸ make a connection to such a vast and complex narrative? The slave trade (and the many facets that make up the trade) forms a significant part of the history taught in many schools and universities in many different contexts. I myself have studied it on numerous occasions, mainly in historical and literature studies, at various stages of my academic career. The slave trade has been analysed, studied, discussed, critiqued, and written about in many different contexts, with the result that the narrative has become complex and multilayered. And yet, even with all that discussion and engagement, some stories remain unspoken. *Exhibits A* and *B* attempt to explore and address some of these silences, as noted in Chapter 6. However, it can be difficult to negotiate the ‘grand treatment’ of the slave trade as well as the many smaller narratives that form part of this history/s. Museum theatre makers then need to navigate the possibility that some audience members may feel removed from the narrative/s. The Manchester Museum, in which the performance of *This Accursed Thing* took place, was specifically commemorating the 200th anniversary of the “abolition of the Slave Trade Act”⁶⁹ when the piece was performed in 2007 (Jackson, 2011: 13). The city of Manchester has a direct connection to both the slave trade as well as its abolition⁷⁰ and the performance piece provided an opportunity to explore some of the narratives through performance. Those present at the performance were exposed to multiple perspectives regarding the slave trade so that no one ‘voice’ was privileged (Jackson, 2011: 21). This chapter will explore, through specific focus on memory and its representation, how museums and theatre makers can encourage audience members to make personal connections with past narratives. The case studies of *Our Footprints* and *This Accursed Thing* will be drawn upon in this discussion.

7.2. Museums, performance and memory

Museums may be seen as places of remembrance, making the museum a “site of memory” (Winter, 2010: 312). A site of memory is a place where people “[inherit] earlier meanings” through learning about and remembering the past (Winter, 2010: 312). These earlier meanings

⁶⁸ The museum is in the industrial city of Manchester which is situated in the north-western England. The city was involved in the slave trade mainly through buying cotton from West Indian plantations worked by slaves and then trading the cloth made from the slave-grown cotton for more slaves in Africa (Website 22). The city was also prominent in abolition movements in the late 1700s and early 1800s (Website 22).

⁶⁹ The Abolition of the Slave Trade Act was passed in 1807 by the British government, making it illegal to transport and trade in human beings (Website 22). However, the use of slaves as ‘workers’ in British colonies was only prohibited in 1833 (Website 22).

⁷⁰ Manchester’s role in campaigning against the slave trade was influential in putting pressure on the government to pass the Act of 1807. Abolitionist Thomas Clarkson, who is a character in *This Accursed Thing*, addressed the people of Manchester on the issue in 1787, which was a significant moment that increased support for the anti-slave trade movement (Website 22).

then influence how the person creates new meaning in the present (Winter, 2010: 312). According to anthropologist Stephen Feuchtwang (2010: 285), “societies don’t remember”, rather it is institutions, such as museums, that act as places of “transmission”, bringing the past into the present. Collective remembering is often strongly influenced by institutions and while individuals do not simply ‘stop remembering’ in the absence of these institutions, collective memory is largely maintained through the presence and preservation of sites of memory. According to Feuchtwang’s argument, it is the people⁷¹ who “ac[t] in and through these institutions” that remember and “feed them [the stories and memories] into their particular experience” (2010: 285). Memories are thus sustained when they are commemorated beyond those who had “direct experience of events” (Winter, 2010: 313). Sites of memory become places to “remember the memories of others, those who survived the events marked there” (Winter, 2010: 313), but who are no longer present to remember for themselves. Even though those who are directly connected to the remembered events have passed, people who remember through what American historian Jay Winter (2010: 313) calls “second-order memory”⁷², are able to make “associations with stories and objects external” (Feuchtwang, 2010: 285) to the narratives presented in sites of memories. Through highlighting memory in museums, people can recall and remember the past through personal, present associations even if they are not directly linked to the original memories.

On the other hand, the notion of memory as history has at times been challenged by scholars. Memory, which is personal and subjective, is often viewed as problematic by historians who believe the traditional archive, with its supposedly objective facts and artefacts, is the authoritative source for authentic historical insight (Reason, 2003: 85). While memories are shaped by multiple factors⁷³, they are integral in making personal connections with the histories on display in museums. These personal connections, and the memories evoked, are explored through the device of the Map of Memories in *Our Footprints* which is elaborated further in this chapter.

⁷¹ The people to whom Feuchtwang (2010) refers to here are not limited to those who work in and/or create sites of memories; rather, all the people who engage with these sites, including the general public, are also involved in sustaining the act of societal remembrance.

⁷² Second-order memory is a process in which a person who has not directly experienced an event ‘remembers’ it through the “memories of others” (Winter, 2010: 313). In order for the memories to be sustained, they need to be transferred to the next group of people who will continue to commemorate them. Sites of memories are places where this transmission of memories often occurs. However, sites of memories change as the memories themselves, and the way they are perceived, change.

⁷³ Some of these factors include emotional connections to memory, the passing of time, and the context/s in which the memory was made and later recalled.

7.3. The maker of memories

New memories are made every day; some are remembered long after the events they recall and others are quickly forgotten. One explanation for the process of making memories has been outlined in the “modal model of memory” (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 212). In this construction, an event or information is firstly perceived “in great detail and richness” in the “sensory memory” (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 212); this retention is usually brief and is often forgotten once the moment has passed. However, some of the information is not lost and is moved to “short-term memory” (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 212). Short-term memory, however, cannot hold many memories and therefore, much of what is stored here also lapses after about fifteen to twenty seconds (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 213). In order to remember something beyond the short-term, it must be moved to “long-term memory”, where memories are “permanently, organized by reference to its meaning rather than randomly, and available for retrieval when needed” (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 213). The distinguishing factor in determining whether a memory is retained or not is rooted in how it “captures our *attention*” (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 212; own italics). Attention is necessary in order to create a lasting memory. This factor is one of which both museum officials and theatre makers need to take note. How do we capture a museum visitor’s attention so that they remember what they have seen, heard, felt and deduced?

One way to maintain audience attention is to explore and evoke “personal experience and emotional material” (Sutton *et al.*, 2010: 213) as the personal affects the way memories are stored. Therefore, to make a connection between a series of facts in a museum, a person’s attention firstly needs to be captured and held and secondly, a personal response should be forged in response to the facts displayed. When the personal is promoted, the historical information ceases to be simply distant events but becomes meaningful within the visitor’s own life. In thinking about personal response to a museum visit, Kavanagh (1992: 2) suggests that when people go to museums they “can do no other but bring their life histories and memories with them, maybe not ostentatiously nor even consciously, yet within reach”. These memories form the basis for the visitor’s interpretation of other people’s memories included and depicted in the exhibits. The way the visitor sees the world, and in turn the museum displays, is influenced by his/her own experiences which are filtered through his/her memories. As s/he engages with the narratives and artefacts presented, s/he connects, often unknowingly, with his/her own memories in relation to what is being viewed. Museum visitors’ are, therefore, not neutral in their knowledge of the past. Though the visitor may be unaware of many historical happenings or narratives, s/he carries a series of narratives stored in his/her memory which form part of his/her own past. As a museum theatre maker, I find this connection between the

individual's own personal experiences and the histories on display an exciting one, which, when utilised, can change the way people remember and encounter history.

7.4. The 'Map' as a site for memories

In *Our Footprints*, to explore the connection between the personal and the historical, I employed a participatory and mnemonic device called a 'Map of Memories'. The Map of Memories is tri-functional. It acts firstly as a catalyst to evoke memories. Secondly, it acts as a space to store memories. Thirdly, it helps establish a connection between past memories and current memories, creating the opportunity to make future memories that can be evoked in response to the historical subject matter on display. I use the Map to facilitate a connection between audience members' own lives, memories and experiences and a 'thematic concept' that I have engaged in each room of the museum.

In the initial stages of preparation for *Our Footprints*, the Map of Memories was different from the one finally used in the performance. In my research journal I noted:

My initial idea was to commemorate some of the historical figures of the Bergtheil Museum, those we know the names of and those we do not, in the 'Map of Memories'. However, after thinking about it, I was concerned this would memorialise the past instead of being in dialogue with it. Secondly, the fact that not all people visiting the museum have 'ties' to the people being spoken about can make the connection meaningless. I want each person to think about the history in a way that is relevant to them and possibly in a new light especially when the history does not have a direct connection to them. Therefore, my idea changed to focus on present and personal memories evoked by the historical narratives rather than focus only on the past figures in the Map of Memories. (Research Journal, 29/06/17)

I decided that the Map would be more effective if the audience was encouraged to use it to connect their own lives, the present, to the histories on display, the past, instead of placing the majority of the focus on what went before them. Each audience member is encouraged by the actors during the performance to record a personal memory, person or event on the Map in response to the material presented.

When visiting a museum, the visitor may not be immediately aware of the personal connections they might have with the narratives on display. Through drawing his/her attention to "the images, objects or words" as well as the characters and dialogue in the performance personal memories may be "stirred" (Kavanagh, 1999: 2). A historical event or person can seem detached from our own lives, and yet while it must be acknowledged that historical people lived different lives to us, they also shared our 'space' (if in a different time), performing actions that

affect us (though often indirectly) today. When a personal connection is achieved, emotions are evoked and a different kind of memory to that of factual remembrance is formed. This alternate memory, that of personal connection, “may dominate over any ‘formal’ history offered” (Kavanagh, 1999: 2) and ultimately be what stays with the visitor. While this may be of concern to some as the personal may deviate from the ‘formal’ display of the past, in order for relevance to be achieved, we in the present need to connect the past to ourselves in the *present*. History in museums has become just “as much about the present as it is about the past, as much about how people *feel* as it is about what they know, as much about *responses* as it is about facts” (Kavanagh, 1999: xiii; own italics). The Map of Memories is a device developed specifically to look at feelings and responses to what has been presented in the museum through the performance.

The Map used in *Our Footprints* opens with the following quote: “An event lived is finished, bound within experience. But an event *remembered* is boundless because it is the key to all that happened before and after it” (Tonkin, 1992: 67; own italics). Through the act of remembrance, initiated by the Map, the museum visitor who is simultaneously an audience member, is able ‘boundlessly’ to access the past as his/her experience of that past is not circumscribed by actual ‘lived’ experience.

An example of how the Map of Memories was used in *Our Footprints* to foster recollection of personal memories can be observed in what I have dubbed the ‘missionary room’. The performance in this room focuses on the theme of ‘passing too soon’. One of the main ‘players’ in the missionary room is Carl Wilhelm Posselt, a German missionary who came to what was then Natal to minister to the settlers and the Zulu and Xhosa people in the area. My attention while conducting research in the archive, however, was drawn to another figure. Looking through the material I discovered information about Posselt’s first wife, Christiane Schonheit, which was of particular interest to me. A book of Posselt’s own recorded thoughts has been published by the Bergtheil Museum entitled *Wilhelm Posselt: The Story of his labours among Xhosa and Zulu 1815 – 1885* (n.d.). In this book, Schonheit is only briefly mentioned. She and her son died journeying over the mountains before they could get to Posselt’s missionary destination in Natal (Schwegman, n.d.: 1). Despite the paucity of information about her, I found that she, rather than Posselt, became influential in choosing the thematic concept for station 5, the missionary room, on the Map. While her death was what sparked my focus on her, I wanted to extend her narrative beyond the loss of a historical figure, and therefore used the Map as a means to encourage the audience to explore bereavement in a broader sense. Her tombstone engraving was written on each audience member’s Map of Memories (see Appendix 2). To connect her passing to the personal, the audience is asked by the actor-guide to “fill in the name

of a person or an event in your life that passed on too soon, that you would like to commemorate” (Jenkins, 2017: 9).

Of course, I chose this woman as the focus for the performance in the missionary room because she interested me personally. The fact that she is only briefly mentioned in the recollections of Posselt is what made me curious. Her own words are not recorded. Her identity has been limited to her association with the man she married. This is not uncommon for women of her time. We do at least know her name and when she was born and died. I made the choice as the writer to take Posselt’s translated words and transform them into Schonheit’s expression which in turn, is then spoken through the actor-guide playing her:

The children and I [Schonheit] left with my husband to act as missionaries in a new place. ‘The descent of the heavy wagons over a steep road, broken up by steps of sandstone, was indeed frightening. We skirted sheer precipices; the abrupt incline made it necessary at times to impede both rear wheels by means of chains.’ I was very frightened. I didn’t know if we would ever get our destination. (Jenkins, 2017: 9; Posselt, n.d.: 60)

The fact that Schonheit may have embarked on a journey out of a sense of duty to her husband only to meet her death, stuck with me. The missionary room contains many other names that could have been the focus for the performance rather than this woman who, due to her untimely death, did not even make it to the area of New Germany. However, from my own subject position as a young woman, I chose her as the person to highlight, re-enact and remember. In my research journal while writing the piece I noted, “I am also trying to be transparent about the fact that the narratives I am telling and the history I am highlighting is what I have chosen because it is interesting to me” (Research Journal, 3/07/17). I was curious about what it must have been like to go into a new environment, through very difficult circumstances, because it was expected for the woman to follow her husband. I wanted to explore what she might have thought and felt about the new possibilities and the journey, particularly because so little is documented. Schonheit’s was a ‘voice’ that is largely sidelined by history not only due to her premature death but also because she was a woman in a time when women’s stories often remained untold or deliberately silenced. Including her in *Our Footprints* offered the opportunity to investigate what she might have thought, and in so doing, resonate with other unspoken narratives. While I have focused on Schonheit’s story, many others exist; Schonheit and Posselt are just two of the possible voices in this room.

7.5. Unsettlement: challenging perceptions

In continuing the discussion of Christiane Schonheit, I, as the director, had to consider how she was to be portrayed. The historical figure was a white German woman, but I made the

conscious decision to have a black actress play her (see Image 5). In terms of casting according to ethnicity when dealing with “historical accuracy and race”, Bridal warns against casting in opposition to race-type as it can cause confusion (2004: 89). However, through the employment of the devices of “unsettlement” and “slippage”, ‘straightforward’ story-telling may be challenged by shifting between multiple perspectives (Jackson, 2011; Talbot & Norwood, 2011). When using these devices, casting against type can be effective as it “subvert[s] stereotypes and challenge[s] the audience’s perceptions. People’s words become all the more resonant when they are coming from the mouths of a person you would never expect to be saying them” (Wake, 2013: 327). In my own work, I want to encourage the audience continually to negotiate the personas they encounter, as well as their own response/s to the historical characters’ narratives, in order to challenge preconceived notions. The actors do not remain in character throughout the whole piece, as is often done in living history, but negotiate multiple perspectives, thus discouraging the audience from seeing them as the ‘real’ historical people. As the writer/director, I purposely made the decision to use two actors of different genders. I settled on using one black female and one black male.⁷⁴ It is important to note that I am not equating Schonheit (who was white) with the actor playing her (who is black); I do not propose to suggest that they are one and the same, and indeed, want rather to highlight difference. By having one woman, very different from the historical character she is portraying, play the role, new insights into a life we know very little about can be produced in the present.



Image 4: Sikhakhane performing as Christiane Schonheit in the missionary room. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

⁷⁴ While I chose not to racially type-cast, I did maintain gender types. In the performance, the female actor-guide played the female characters and the male actor-guide played the male characters. While casting against gender-type can also be effective, I personally felt that swapping both races and genders in *Our Footprints* may cause greater confusion and therefore could hamper the understanding and recollection of the historical narratives presented.

One manner of encouraging new insight into past events is through the device of “unsettlement” (Jackson, 2011), which is defined as “having expectations overturned, assumptions about the subject matter challenged, of finding that they [audience] were personally being confronted with strong emotion or were expected to participate verbally or even physically” (Jackson, 2011: 18). This device alters the way both the performance and the narrative are framed. As expectations are ‘overturned’, keying occurs, as noted in Chapter 6, transforming the presented event as well as the audience response into something new and different (Goffman, 1975).

Such unsettlement can be positive in terms of challenging preconceived notions but has also to be treated with care so as not ‘trap’ the audience (Jackson, 2011: 18). In *This Accursed Thing*, unsettlement is used when the actor playing a white slave trader, accompanied by his black slave trader counterpart, directly challenges the audience “to tell him what he’s doing wrong” (Jackson, 2011: 19). The audience reactions differed; some immediately called out in protest and others averted their eyes (Jackson, 2011: 19). The audience, did not expect, firstly to come into contact with two slave traders (the fact that one was black also unsettles the notion that the traders were only white), and secondly, to have the traders engage directly with them. This forced audience members to re-evaluate the narrative as well as their own position in relation to that narrative. The frame shifts as the audience realise they are now part of the slave auction and that the way they respond (both verbally and physically) to the action before them, although happening on a ‘stage’, determines their own involvement in this particular incident of trading slaves. A strong emotional response is produced which stayed with the audience long after the event, as confirmed by a follow up study (Jackson, 2011: 19-20). One audience member noted in the follow-up study that the confrontation with the slave traders “opened my eyes about slavery, I mean I have never given it much thought because I obviously wasn’t born in that time, you just get on with life don’t you. But it made me ponder a bit about it” (in Jackson, 2011: 20). Significantly, though, in order for unsettlement to be successful, the audience must not be alienated or disempowered; the challenge is “how to unsettle *and* take your audience with you” (Jackson, 2011: 20, original italics).

While *Our Footprints* does not employ direct audience participation, such as asking an audience member to question verbally the motives of a character, the piece does engage with elements of unsettlement. As in the case of *This Accursed Thing*, the audience of *Our Footprints* is “expected to follow the performance to other spaces in the museum” (Jackson, 2011: 19). The physical movement from one room to the next challenges possible expectations that an audience member in a conventional theatrical space typically may have. The audience does not watch the performance from the vantage point of a chair; instead, they are involved in the action as they

move through the rooms. In fact, no chairs are present at all forcing a different kind of relationship to the performance space. The piece also challenges the expectation of a museum visitor who may be expecting to read panels and look at artefacts, or to take guided tours. Instead, by combining performance with the historical narratives in the museum, an overarching narrative of a journey is created on which the visitor is encouraged to embark. The audience member – who is both the audience member of a theatrical event as well as a visitor to the museum – is confronted with a new situation which they may not expect from either a conventional performance or a traditional museum visit.

A black actor playing a white character is also a form of unsettlement. The audience has to negotiate the physical appearance of the actor, which includes race, age and gender, and the narrative that she is recounting. It is explicitly stated from the start of the performance that the actor-guides are actors and that the characters they portray are not ‘real’. The facilitator states in the introduction that, “These are your actor-guides, (*gives the names of actors*) who will be taking you on this journey” (Jenkins, 2017: 1). The actor-guides, like the audience, assume multiple roles which they play at various stages of the performance. This device known as slippage will be elaborated on further in Chapter 8. Through slippage, the actor-guide changes from character to character, and these characters are from different times and eras, including our own; because the characters are played by the same person, the audience is prompted to reassess further their perceptions and expectations about the narratives. A single perspective representing one person’s version of history is not present.

7.6. Engaging the senses to evoke and forge memories

Memory is linked to a number of factors. As noted earlier, attention-grabbing incidents and emotional connections influence the creation and retention of memories. The senses also play a role in the evocation of memories. Sensory stimuli can assist in the conjuring of memories as well as influence how a memory is recalled. Additionally, “[m]emory enables us to envisage colors [*sic*] even in the dark, to taste in the absence of food, to hear in the absence of sound” (Rose, 2010: 199). ‘Traditional’ museums typically rely on sight through written panels, objects on pedestals, and lighting to encourage an engagement with the historical narratives presented. Sound can also be employed through audio guides and general ambiance. At times touch is also promoted, but is usually discouraged in order to preserve the artefacts on display. However, when performance is integrated into a museum space, more than one sense can be utilised, especially with the involvement of the audience member’s body as part of the experience. The audience member is encouraged to look at the action, listen to the dialogue as well as *experience* it.

The nature of museum theatre performances and the engagement of the audience differ depending on the chosen mode of performance as well as the boundaries negotiated by the practitioner/s. Such logistics include the size and layout of the museum building, budget, and the nature of the historical narratives chosen to be performed. Some museum theatre pieces, such as *The Gunner's Tale* (2005/6, Performance, Learning and Heritage (PLH))⁷⁵ use a demarcated stage space around which chairs are arranged for the seating of audience members; in discussing such a context Jackson and Kidd (2008: 32) observe that, "at no point during the performance do the boundaries [between actor and audience] become blurred". The framing of such a performance, with a clear separation between the stage and the audience (represented by the chairs), suggests that the audience will watch and the actor will do. While such an arrangement might limit the bodily engagement of the audience, it can still bring the narratives alive in a new and dynamic manner, filtered through the actor. The 'liveness' of museum theatre is something which static exhibitions cannot provide to the same extent.

The spatial arrangement of my own museum theatre piece differs from that used in *The Gunner's Tale*. Instead of placing the audience in a separate, demarcated section, they are encouraged to follow the actors from room to room in the museum. The separation between the actor-guides and audience is not prevented completely as the audience makes room around the actor-guides to see the action unfolding before them. However, similarly to the format of *This Accursed Thing*, the audience of *Our Footprints* are encouraged to use their bodies, not only their eyes and ears, to move through the narratives by physically walking from one station to the next. As stated earlier in Chapter 6, movement makes the individual active, allowing them to choose which position to assume in relation to the narrative being presented (Riegel, 1996: 86). Unlike with static ethnographic displays, the actor-guides *and* the audience are moving which drives both groups to adjust the frames around the event or performance, they are encountering. Each participant is compelled to alter both their physical position and the role they are assuming. Each 'role' or frame is modified according to what the other participants and actors are doing (Jackson, 2011: 14). The actor-guides change according to the audience reaction, as well as moving from character to character as dictated by the script. The audience adjusts to the changes of narrative as well as to the actor-guides' expectations of them, including the movement from room to room (Jackson, 2011: 14). If the audience chooses to engage actively with the performance, stasis is unlikely as the audience continually negotiates, using their body and their senses, the action unfolding before and around them.

⁷⁵ *The Gunner's Tale* was performed in the National Maritime Museum in London and was about Robert Bell who was "a seaman on board the Belleisle during the battle of Trafalgar" (Jackson & Kidd, 2008: 31).

The use of the audience members' bodies as a device in the performance can be extended beyond the movement between rooms. The audience can be encouraged to position themselves within the historical era presented by 'transporting' themselves metaphorically to the time period enacted by the actors. In *This Accursed Thing*, as the audience moved from room to room, they were encouraged to assume different historical roles. In one example, the audience 'attended' the abolitionist Thomas Clarkson's political meeting in the early 19th century in one of the Manchester Museum's galleries (Jackson, 2011: 15-16). *Our Footprints* loosely makes use of this technique on occasion by encouraging the audience, for example, to 'board' the *Belvedere*, the ship which brought indentured Indians to Natal, as well as attending the opening of Posselt's new church built for his Zulu congregation in 1876 (Jenkins, 2017: 10; 8-9). Such negotiation of roles in *Our Footprints* does not involve calling audience members up to act before the rest of the audience. Instead, it encourages the audience to engage their bodies and minds in the space which they already occupy, but from a different perspective. The audience's negotiation of roles, in the case of *This Accursed Thing*, occurs because they have chosen to assume both the position of a 19th century person listening to Clarkson, whilst simultaneously retaining the persona of their 21st century self. Time merges as personas mix. The audience members negotiate their own feelings and responses to the simulated historical event they are 'experiencing'. The historical narratives in this kind of context are no longer separate and behind (real or metaphorical) glass. Instead, the audience becomes *part* of the narrative as they participate alongside the actors, the other audience members and the historical narrative itself.

In *Our Footprints*, the movement from room to room worked well in the Bergtheil Museum due to the nature of its layout, namely a house with a limited number of rooms. At times the rooms were crowded as they are small and not all audience members could see everything at all times. This meant that in each room both the actors and the audience had to adjust to the space and setting as much as was possible. Contrastingly, some museums are so vast that a journey around all the rooms would not be feasible. The age of the target audience, as well as various other possible factors, also affects the nature of the staging and therefore such a format, using movement from station to station, is not possible or necessary in all museum theatre works. Instead, the practitioner has to negotiate the given parameters as well as decide how to use both the actors' and audiences' bodies and senses most effectively for that specific performance.

In order to reinforce the making of memories in the Bergtheil Museum, I have purposely encouraged the audience to return to the exhibitions once the question-and-answer session has ended. The purpose of this is twofold. Firstly, due to the time constraints and small size of the rooms, not everything in each room would have been seen by the audience or covered within

the performance. The revisiting of the exhibitions allows the audience to move through the museum at their own pace, looking (and relooking) at the sections of the house that interests them the most. Secondly, the audience has had the opportunity to experience the narratives in a different way, through the performance, compared to what they might have come across had they simply come to visit the museum. This new ‘frame’, the performance frame, can enable the museum visitor to see the exhibitions in an alternate light, now that they have witnessed some of the historical figures speak, heard information not written on the panels, and have perhaps encountered something that was not expected. As they move through the house again, new memories, which may be affected by the personal connection hopefully established during the performance, can be forged with the histories on display. In this way, as Kavanagh (1999: 3) notes, “the museum becomes a site for explorations and discoveries, whether it be about oneself or some aspect of the past to which a personal connection might be made”.

The importance of generating memories in museums is part of the creation and nurturing of the “dream space”⁷⁶ (Annis, 2005: 20), which goes beyond the simple presentation and retention of facts. Instead a connection between the individual and the broader narratives is established by encouraging the visitor to allow themselves to enter this ‘state’. According to Sheldon Annis, the presence of a dream space in a museum “allows for lateral and creative thinking, for problem-solving and leaps of fantasy. It can open up feelings and thoughts long buried. It can lift the lid on our memories” (in Kavanagh, 1999: 4). It is in this space that “there is a flow of images and meanings – highly personal, sometimes lulling, sometimes surprising, more or less conscious” (Annis, 2005: 21). History becomes relevant when people see a connection between it, themselves, and their memories in relation to the narratives on display. When “little narratives” or personal stories are linked to the bigger narratives, what Rowe *et al.* (2002: 97) call “a sense of belonging that binds the individual into the culture while binding the culture into the individual’s mind” is created. Such a connection between the personal (or ‘little’) and the broader overarching narrative does not necessarily have to be a favourable one to the visitor.

⁷⁶ Dream space, as used by Sheldon Annis, is the third symbolic space that a visitor can experience when visiting a museum (in Kavanagh, 2000: 2). The three spaces are the pragmatic, cognitive and dream (Annis 2005). It is in the process of moving through these overlapping states, and reaching the dream space, that the museum visitor makes personal connections with what is seen in the museum (Kavanagh, 2000: 2). The first space, pragmatic, is focused primarily on “physical presence” in the museum (Annis, 2005: 21) where the “sharing of an experience” (Kavanagh, 2000: 3) occurs with those with whom the visitor is going to see the museum. In the second space, cognitive, the museum curator organises the space “to communicate an idea” to the visitor (Annis, 2005: 22) so that learning and knowledge can be gained from the museum exhibitions (Kavanagh, 2000: 2-3). The last space, the dream space, is situated “in the rich inner life of all of us” and often links the cognitive with the pragmatic (Kavanagh, 2000: 3). The dream space involves communication between the objects on display and “the viewer’s subrational consciousness” (Annis, 2005: 20). “Imaginations”, “memories” and “feelings” are evoked in the dream space with “personal recollection” (in the museum as well as after the visit) forming its basis (Kavanagh, 2000: 3).

The visitor may disagree with, or be critical of, the historical event or a person's actions, but significantly, no matter what the response might be, the visitor is encouraged to avoid being indifferent or closed off from the narratives. The museum then has to interrogate how the narratives are presented and whether or not the idea of a dream space and personal memory is being included into the framework of the museum.

7.7. Remembering through the witness, hyper-historian and eavesdropper

In order for memories to be preserved, people need to pass them along from one individual to the next. The 'handing over' of memories, and the recollection of them, can occur during a performance when both the actor/s and audience become what theatre professor Freddie Rokem (2000) calls a "witness". Firstly, the actor, through the evocation of a historical being, becomes a witness to the events unfolding on the 'stage' by being part of the action (Rokem, 2000: 9). The embodiment of a character involves an evoking of historical memories that are portrayed by, and mediated through, the actor in the present. In addition to acting as a witness, the actor may also fulfil the role of the "hyper-historian" who connects the "historical past and the 'fictional' performed *here and now* of the theatrical event" (Rokem, 2000: 13; original italics). The 'hyper-historian' perspective allows the actor to assume two identities, that of an actor in the present, as well as "something/somebody that has actually existed in the past" (Rokem, 2000: 13). The actor cannot divorce themselves from the present fully and therefore can never become "the historical figure themselves" (Rokem, 2000: 13). Thus, the separation between the past and the present, even when blurred, remains. The past is 'relived' through actors assuming a dual position as both an aspect of the past and a witness to it.

In *Our Footprints*, the actors bear witness⁷⁷ to the past by speaking the actual words of historical figures, using extracts from archival research in the performance. One example of verbalising the archive is when Sosibo embodies the character of Jonas Bergtheil, after whom the museum is named, by speaking his translated words taken from a letter he wrote in 1896 (see Image 5). As the actor-guide bears witness through playing the role of Bergtheil, the audience is also given the opportunity to 'witness' a recreation of Bergtheil's thoughts. The following is part of Bergtheil's dialogue in *Our Footprints*, in which he discusses the new settlers to the colony in 1846, evoked now in 2017:

⁷⁷ South African playwright Athol Fugard said that he has "always sensed for myself an obligation to bear witness to my time" (Website 23). The process of writing for theatre in response to political and social issues, for Fugard, acts as a form of bearing witness, by making others aware of such issues. Similarly, the re-creation of the past in the present through performance can encourage the engagement of history, allowing it to become part of present consciousness.

In 1846 I heard that the Cape Government expected some immigrants from Ireland, and I proceeded to the Cape to see if some of these immigrants could not be induced to go to Natal. [...] I was [...] convinced [...] [that] without immigration the Colony would never prosper. [...] I had several long interviews with the Colonial Office in London, but all my efforts proved of no avail, and unwilling I was thrown back as a last resource upon Germany (Jenkins, 2017: 3; Bergtheil, 1896/1930: 10).

While Bergtheil has long since passed away, and the colony of Natal as it was then no longer exists, the past, and the historical people who inhabited it, are still accessible to us in the present, allowing us to witness their narratives about who and what has gone before. Through performance the dead, such as Bergtheil, can be metaphorically reborn in another body and given the opportunity to speak once again.



Image 5: Sfundo Sosibo performing as Jonas Bergtheil in the bedroom. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

In addition to actor-guides acting as witnesses to the past, audience members also fulfil the role of witness, by observing the acted historical event, as it occurs in the present. A witness is described by theatre practitioner and academic Emma Willis (2014: 36) as “someone who is able to give testimony”. Despite the positive aspects of bearing witness, performing the role can be viewed as problematic as people viewing a representation of history might not be considered witnesses, with only the people who were part of the actual historical event can be regarded as such (Willis, 2014: 36). ‘True witnessing’ of actual past events is not possible. However, people in the present are able to witness through Winter’s (2010) notions of second-order memory, as discussed earlier, which transfers the original memories to the next group of people

who then can act as witnesses to what has gone before. As argued earlier by Kavanagh (1999: xiii), the present is just as important as the past in history and those in the present need to bear witness in order to keep the past alive.

It must be acknowledged that the audience's witnessing is "removed" from the actual event and is filtered through frames of the present (Willis, 2014: 37), thus altering the way the historical event may be interpreted and recalled. The way the present-day witness views the performed past affects the meaning/s placed on the narratives and in turn the understandings drawn from the representation/s. The person giving testimony in the present effectively becomes a "substitutive witness" whose role as witness has been "transfere[d]" from those gone before to those remembering in the present (Willis, 2014: 39). As transference occurs, those who are "absent" are given "vital presence" through the act of present witnessing (Willis, 2014: 39). Witnessing thus becomes an act of remembering as it is only possible through "a lived experience" (Crane 1997: 1382); in order to remember, we in the present who are alive, have to evoke the people who are dead to allow them to 'live' again. As we bear witness in the present about the past, those gone before us are given 'new', albeit different, life.

In addition to acting as a witness, Rokem (2000: 203) suggests that the audience can occupy the role of the "eavesdropper". This additional role positions the audience member "outside the direct action" (Rokem, 2000: 204). In this process, Rokem (2000: 204) argues that s/he "overhear[s] and secretly witness[es] the other characters" which allows the eavesdropper to acquire "some hidden knowledge and thus gain power". In *Our Footprints*, the eavesdropping is less obvious as the actor-guides and audience are clearly aware of one another given that audience-actor interaction is established from the outset. However, the audience still negotiates the fact that they are listening to other people speak, some from the present and many others from the past. As they bear witness to these voices, they are both part of the action, as travellers on the journey with the actor-guides, as well as outside of it, since firstly, they do not possess the actor-guides' 'insider' knowledge and secondly, are hearing the historical characters speak for the first time. The audience acts simultaneously as visitor, participant, witness, eavesdropper, and as a present figure engaged in negotiating the past. These roles are navigated throughout the performance as the frames shift.

The audience's role as eavesdropper can be argued to be at its strongest when the actors bear witness themselves by embodying historical characters in the performance. The audience member is given the opportunity to experience the past through another person/s (the actor-guide/s' eyes), who is/are voicing the historical person/s. Through the audience acting as eavesdroppers, the actor-witness in turn has the opportunity to witness possible silenced

histories reaching the ears of those ‘listening’ (Rokem, 2000: 205). As the audience eavesdrops, they also bear witness to the actor-guide’s testimony, thus creating a series of multiple witnessings. The witness may have begun as an individual, but as the testimony is shared, the witnessing becomes both a personal and a communal event.

Extending the notion of the museum visitor as a witness, Willis (2014: 8) explores the notion of the past as “always arriving and yet never present” which the visitor has to negotiate because s/he is in fact alive in the present. Those who have gone before us will never again set foot in the present, but through museums – and I would argue performance – they can be evoked. Through this evocation, we as the members of the present “acknowledge our responsibility towards the disappeared” and by being involved in recollecting the past, we also become “implicated” in the manner with which the memorial is conducted (Willis, 2014: 8).⁷⁸ The narratives explored in *Our Footprints* evoke the people of the past, through actor-guides and a written script, although the ‘real’ people have long since passed, never again to fully ‘arrive’. Instead, the present evokes them in a representational form through ‘new’ bodies and in the minds of those watching.

7.8. Personal memories forming part of the collective

The way people remember is complex, as evidenced in Freeman’s (2010: 274) question: how much of what we remember is “exclusively ‘mine?’”. Our memories are influenced by our personal experiences and how we respond to them. However, it cannot be ignored that our memories are also filtered through the social context/s (Freeman, 2010: 274) in which we “recall, recognize and localize [our] memories” (Halbwachs, 1941/1992: 38). Therefore, “what is ‘mine’ is always already permeated by otherness”, or what is outside of the personal ‘self’ (Freeman, 2010: 274). Our memories are influenced by, and combined with, other people’s memories creating an amalgamation of “‘firsthand’ material” with “‘secondhand’ material” (Freeman, 2010: 26) that becomes personal memory within a collective framework. It cannot be ignored that memories, while recounting the past, are in fact situated in the present, revealing that remembrance is mediated through the here and now (Freeman, 2010: 267; Tonkin, 1992: 12). In order fully to engage with the mediation of memory, the “actors [players, not actors in the sense of theatre] concerned” and their context need to be explored for the memories to have meaning as recorded history (Tonkin, 1992: 12). Personal memories are filtered through a

⁷⁸ This notion is explored by Willis (2014) in relation to ‘dark tourism’ which focuses on remembering and engaging with people’s past suffering. Although my own work is not specifically looking at historical instances of suffering, Willis’ ideas around evoking the past are pertinent to both Bergtheil and museum theatre in general.

collective context and the museum expert, the theatre practitioner, and the museum visitor all need to be aware of the relationship between the two. The personal and the collective are both important and ideally a dialogue, as promoted by Bakhtin (1981/1994), between many points of view (in this case, the personal and the collective), should be created so that multiple stories can be shared, discussed and remembered. Museums, through performance, can actively investigate the making, evoking and reliving of personal memories alongside the collective so that the voices of those who have gone before can be heard once again.

While the personal is important in the exploration of the past, the individual should also be encouraged to be in dialogue with other perspectives. Chapter 8 explores the role of multivocality in performance and museum spaces, with specific focus on the technique of slippage as used in the Triangle presentation and *Our Footprints*.

Chapter 8

Journey through Shared History

"[O]nly the one who is aware of the danger that there could be no history can write history."

Werner Hamacher (2005: 66)

"History is what some people choose to remember and what others may want to forget."

Shawn Rowe *et al.* (2002: 103)

8.1. Actor as guide and performance as map

I have established that museums hold and present historical narratives. In order for the narratives to have meaning and longevity, the public need first to encounter, and then to remember them. Narratives that are not presented often remain hidden or underdeveloped, and as a result fail to enter into mainstream memory. I argue that through techniques such as slippage, explored in this chapter through a presentation by Richard Talbot and Norwood Andrews at the Performing Heritage Conference in 2008 (hereafter referred to as Triangle's Presentation), narratives that are not part of the dominant recollections of the past can be discussed, presented and debated.

In South Africa, difference permeates many aspects of life and should not be ignored. While every narrative available cannot be presented in one museum all at once, the inclusion of several accounts, especially if they are contesting, provides a platform for discussion and debate. Although the necessity of nation building demands that we strive for a unified South African society, we must not shy away from the fact that people are different, that they do at times disagree, and that the present is inextricably linked to, and influenced by, the past. Viewing something from someone else's perspective, even if one disagrees with it, creates a greater understanding of their present lives as influenced by their past. Ignorance and fear are reduced when understanding, but not necessarily agreement, is experienced.

In Chapter 5 I explored ideas around the traditional storage, recording and representation of history that prioritise objectivity and accuracy. I employed the metaphor of a traveller, the museum visitor, and his/her map, informed by the archive, as established by the guide (in this case, the historian), in the discussion around the traditional archive and its recording of history. In this chapter, I want to continue the metaphor but change the players. I propose a new journey in which the museum tourist – or traveller – is directed by a map informed by *performance* and

led by an *actor-guide*. While performance and the actor-guide have a more central role in this journey, it should be noted that the historian and the material in the archive are not completely ignored. Instead, archival research is filtered through performance and the historian's voice is placed alongside multiple other accounts spoken through the actor-guide/s. This approach to the journey of uncovering the past through museum theatre prevents the "guidance of an all-seeing, authoritative, wise narrator" (Jackson, 2011: 21). Instead, the many historical utterances, often dissenting, are offered preventing the sole voice of the powerful historian as the only guide. The map, through performance, is opened up allowing the traveller to explore multiple paths and journeys.

8.2. Multiple narratives, multiple paths

In Chapter 7, personal memory, evoked and created about the past in the present specifically through performance, was discussed. While personal memory is an important aspect of exploring the past and in turn the present, the individual rarely exists in isolation and does not continually journey on his/her own. The collection of multiple personal memories thus leads to the creation of a collective or public memory. Public memory is understood to be "a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that helps a public of a society understand both its past, present and by implication, its future" (Rowe, *et al.*, 2002: 99).

It is noteworthy that public memory and personal remembrance are not always equally weighted; many personal stories are omitted or subsumed into the aim of creating a 'cohesive' memory of the past, one that often serves those in power (Zolberg, 1996: 70; Macdonald, 1996: 4; Rowe *et al.*, 2002: 99; Buckley, 1999: 51). Therefore, as Rowe *et al.* (2002: 99) conclude, "public memory is better understood as a site of contestation between competing voices than as a body of information that is somehow encoded, stored and retrieved". The notion of 'contestation between competing voices' should not be treated as a negative, as explored in Chapter 6, but instead, I suggest, should be utilised by museums to explore diversity in accounts. Dialogic tension encourages what Bakhtin calls the "word", or in the case of historical narratives the account, to "weav[e] in and out of complex interrelationships merg[ing] with some, recoil[ing] from others" (1981/1994: 76). Through disagreement and contesting viewpoints people are exposed to new perspectives, and are encouraged to explore new paths on the map that were perhaps obscured. Performance works which promote and acknowledge dissenting voices prevent the dissemination of one sided accounts; as Fenkel (2007: 125) observes, "by performing the museum, viewers challenge the museum's monologic practices through the discourse of their memories and cultural histories, thereby introducing narrative content that would otherwise remain ignored." Performance thus encourages both the museums

themselves, and the museum's visitors, to acknowledge that more than one side exists and to recognise that human subjectivity influences which stories are highlighted.

In order for singular narratives in museums to be challenged, it is necessary for the subject position of those assembling and presenting narratives to be acknowledged. Subjectivity – and its potential bias – is difficult to navigate and often occurs unnoticed and unintentionally. While I was writing *Our Footprints*, I formed a particular picture of Bergtheil's character while reading some of his letters. In directing my cast I had to be consciously careful not to impose my own perceptions onto the characterisation. I was concerned that my approach to the narrative and the character was becoming overly influenced by my personal feelings and interpretations. There is so much about the man I do not know. He was a real person, and while I can be critical of his actions, there is more to a person than a few words recorded on paper. Therefore, a dialogue, which can literally be achieved in performance, is useful exploring of the portrayal of historical events and people which can easily become stereotyped. When only one uncontested perspective is presented, certain groups can claim ownership of "particular versions of history" that "often [echo] their present needs" (Buckley, 1999: 51). Using museum theatre can assist in creating a platform for the 'little' and the 'big' narratives to come into contact with another, at times clashing, as the history is recreated – and therefore re-examined – through the act of performance and the presence of the performers.

Thinking about my subjectivity influencing the portrayal of characters in *Our Footprints*, I debated whether or not to cast myself in the piece. My apprehension around this decision concerned the potential narrowing of perspectives were I to involve myself as an actor-guide. In the planning stages for *Our Footprints* I noted:

If I include myself as an actor I will have to be careful to maintain balance between my own interpretations, the museum's presentation of the history, my fellow actor's subject position as well as the audience's potential perception. [...] I have to keep in mind that my objective is to explore and present multiple angles to historical narrative and not just one – which could easily become focused on my own interpretation. (Research Journal, 26/05/17)

I decided, therefore, not to cast myself and instead focused on framing the narratives through my directorial and writing position. My aim is to encourage the audience to form their own opinions about the performance, and the narratives it engages, without overly imposing my own viewpoint onto them. Simplistic judgements are thus hopefully discouraged.

It should be noted that while I have emphasised the importance of connecting the present to the past in order for memories and meaning to be forged and evoked, we should be mindful of manipulating the past to suit present needs. Reducing the past to mere stories for the purpose of

serving an individual or a group's contemporary ideology prevents a thorough dialogue from taking place. There is "no guarantee" that our present perception of historical events and people "really provides a full understanding of the past" (Rokem, 2015: 23) because the process of retrospection changes as time progresses and people adjust to the current circumstances. Post-apartheid perceptions of settler history, for example, are different to those during apartheid which, in turn, also differ from the way the settlers might have viewed their own history. The way the Bergtheil Museum depicts these histories today is likely very different from the way a museum dealing with similar narratives may have done so in previous years. By including performance as a means to explore our current retrospections, as Rokem (2015: 23) suggests, we "constantly question the validity of such retrospective understanding, because the past also 'changes' by being considered". Past and present, while linked, must be in conversation with one another so to negotiate the past's bearing on the present, and in turn, the present's influence on the reading of the past.

Our present reading of the past can be influenced by what Walter Benjamin argues is the current focus on the "non-actualized possibility" of happiness in the past (in Hamacher, 2005: 38-39). This unattained happiness leaves an "envy" that proposes that happiness can still be achieved in the future (Hamacher, 2005: 38-39). This argument links the past and the present through the desire to fulfil unrealised potential/s thus creating a need to record and remember history in Hamacher, 2005: 39). According to Benjamin, it is the opportunity available in the present to change what did or did not happen in the past – or at least our understanding of it –that connects contemporary beings with the people that went before (in Hamacher, 2005). Effectively, "the present is always present out of the past and present for the past" (Hamacher, 2005: 52). Therefore, present and past cannot be treated as completely separate entities. Instead, it is necessary to view them in relationship with one another and such a relationship in turn affects how each is perceived, and subsequently framed, in museums.

Museums, therefore, need to become active in framing the relationship between past and present. One manner of exploring such framing is through what Tony Bennett (2007: 46) describes as "differencing machines". Differencing machines promote "cross-cultural understanding, especially across divisions that have been racialized" (Bennett, 2007: 46, 59), through representing different communities. Using these 'machines' gives communities an opportunity to be active in telling their own stories in the museums, thus challenging dominant – often exclusionary – narratives that museums may have adopted in the past (Bennett, 2007: 59). Dialogue around difference is promoted and encouraged; instead of the narratives being told from "a clearly enunciated controlling position", they "are assembled so as to speak to one another, and to the spectator, in ways that allow a range of inferences to be drawn" (Bennett,

2007: 63). The way people are perceived, portrayed and exhibited in current museums can be discussed through a conversation around past and present differences which are being challenged and negotiated; as Kavanagh (1999: xiii) suggests:

the more we know, the more we recognize that there is never one simple story, nor one simple story, nor one solid narrative, but many. The histories thus shift to plural voices, contradictory accounts and discordance and in this is enrichment and possibly enlightenment.

One example of ‘plural voices’ in *Our Footprints* can be observed in the discussion around the ‘Zulu’ that Bergtheil took with him to Germany. This figure is first introduced by the actor-guide speaking Bergtheil’s own words, as recorded in a translated letter: “I took ‘a Zulu home with me, I believe the first that went to Europe, so that the people whom I intended to send out should for themselves see what class of Native they had to deal with’” (Jenkins, 2017: 4; Bergtheil, 1896/1930: 10). Stepping out of character, the actor-guides continue with a discussion around the unnamed Zulu’s trip:

ACTOR 2: (*out of character*) You know what I find interesting (*name of other actor*)? In his letter, Bergtheil only mentions that he took *a* Zulu. He never mentions the Zulu’s name.

ACTOR 1: Yes, or if the Zulu comes back home or what he thought about the trip.

ACTOR 2: Or what he thought of the Germans. (Jenkins, 2017: 4)

They proceed to imagine what the Zulu’s response may have been if his/her words could have been recorded:

Imagine if the Zulu wrote a letter home to his family that read: I took a Bavarian with me on holiday to Europe, so that the people whom this Bavarian intended to send out should for themselves see what class of people I have to deal with when I have outsiders visiting my home. (Jenkins, 2017: 4)

As a means of examining both people involved in this section of the narrative, Bergtheil and the ‘Zulu’, I decided to take Bergtheil’s words and alter them to highlight a different viewpoint. The Zulu’s account in the performance is, of course, fictionalised and is not proposed as fact; however, the intention behind including this ‘account’ is to encourage the audience to re-evaluate the actual historical narrative through offering alternate perspectives. Even if we do not know everything about each account, through performance, a dialogue between viewpoints is promoted.

8.3. Slippage: shifting between viewpoints and opening up the map

One way to encourage multivocality in museums is through making museum's "evidently self-conscious" which in turn "heighten[s] the spectator's awareness of the means of representation, involving the spectator in the process of display" (Saumarez Smith, 1989/2000: 20). The technique of slippage used in performance is one which encourages self-reflection and an open acknowledgement of the inner workings of the museum and performance. Slippage involves shifts between different "voices and perspectives" as narratives are told (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 172), and slippage "unsettle[s] the authoritative historical or protagonist voice" through the exploitation of multiple accounts converging into one (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 172). The performance, through slippage, purposefully attempts to look at history from multiple angles through the shifting between personas, accounts and perspectives.

The Triangle presentation (2008), the primary case study of this chapter, was a "partially improvised live performance-presentation" conducted by Talbot and Andrews that explored and discussed two works the company had previously made, *The Last Women* (Triangle, 2008/9)⁷⁹ and a series of improvised performances at Charlecote Park⁸⁰ (Triangle, 2008), that made use of slippage (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 172). The piece was presented at the Performing Heritage Conference to illustrate, through performance, aspects of museum theatre, specifically slippage, in relation to Triangle's own work. The production featured two people assuming the roles of a historical architect (played by Talbot) and a history academic (portrayed by Andrews)). The Triangle presentation drew on "the interactive methods" used in *The Last Women* and the Charlecote Park performances, and created a new performance piece, in the form of an acted presentation (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 172). Effectively, Triangle's presentation offered at the Performing Heritage Conference, which I am using as a case study in the exploration of slippage, used performance to discuss, illustrate and actively explore museum performance.

Slippage, as used in Triangle's presentation, was intended to be self-reflexive by allowing Triangle to speak to their own work through the involvement of the actor's voice interrupting the historical characters (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 172).⁸¹ The acknowledgement of the dual

⁷⁹ *The Last Women* is a theatre piece that explored the execution of seven women between 3000BC and 1955 AD in Britain (Website 24). It was originally performed at the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry. While *The Last Women* is not primarily a museum theatre work, as it was performed in a theatre, due to the historical content of the piece, the techniques employed (primarily slippage) and its inclusion in the Triangle presentation around museum theatre it is included in my research.

⁸⁰ Charlecote Park is a National Trust (a British organisation which seeks to conserve historical buildings and natural settings) 16th century Victorian country house near Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire.

⁸¹ The Triangle presentation's use of slippage is slightly different from my use of the device in *Our Footprints*, as one of the intentions of the Triangle presentation was to explore the technique in relation

presence of the actor and historical character creates the possibility for an “evidently self-conscious” museum proposed by Saumarez Smith (1989/2000: 20). The actor speaks directly to the audience at times, including them in the action, and the writer and director’s perspective/s are incorporated into the dialogue as well to reveal aspects of the process of creation. Multiple perspectives are thus presented and acknowledged. My own subjectivity as the writer of *Our Footprints* is present in the script, and while I assume the role as Facilitator and am able to speak my own words at the beginning and end of the piece, the actor-guides are the main vehicle through which the writer and director’s voice is filtered. Through slippage the actor-guides may assume historical characters and speak ‘their’ words as well as voice an alternate perspective/s by stepping out of character.

In the Triangle presentation, the two actors had to negotiate multiple roles, thus evidencing the slippage technique. These roles, juxtaposed with one another, included the roles of “actor/curator/researcher/academic and other research characters” (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 173). While the actors assumed various roles, they also each fulfilled what I call a ‘foundational’ role. I use the term to describe the main role assumed by the actor, and the one to which s/he often returns, once a shift of slippage has occurred. When slippage is used, the persona of the actor becomes the foundational role of the piece from which the other characters emerge in front of the audience. The constructed nature of the characters is thus highlighted and maintained throughout the performance.

In the Triangle presentation, the foundational roles were the actors-in-role: Talbot, who played “the nineteenth century architect of Charlecote, Charles Samuel Smith, and Dr Norwood Andrews, the academic, performing himself: the historian and advisor” (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 173). In *Our Footprints*, the foundational roles are those of the actor-guides. The historical characters, while important, are secondary to the personas of the actor-guides themselves. The actor-guides are able to add insight to the historical narratives, thus creating intersections between the historical characters and the foundational roles of actor-guides. This also prevents the audience from becoming too attached to one account. Instead, they have to negotiate the switch between the various positions.

The negotiation of roles is evident in the Triangle presentation through the manipulation of tenses and acknowledgement of the duality of roles. At the start of the performance, Talbot

to Triangle’s works for research purposes. The presentation was portrayed as a performance to illustrate the way slippage can be put into practice, through exploring sections of Triangle’s previous works as well as allowing the presence of the voices of the practitioner/s and museum to comment on the pieces. I have extended this form of commentary and used it in my own work to reveal subjectivity on behalf of the writer, director, museum and actor-guides.

speaks aloud, “I am – I am being – Charles Samuel Smith” which immediately indicates that the actor and character are not automatically one and the same (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 174). He then assumes the role of Smith, the architect, but challenges the use of tense. He does not position himself completely in the historical period of Smith; instead he openly acknowledges the fact that we in the present have the ability to be retrospective about the past. The architect speaks of the history of the house around which the performance is based: “Queen Elizabeth stayed here [Charlecote Park] for two nights in the late 1560s. [...] I *was* – I *am* – responsible for re-edifying the building and adding an extension” (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 174; own italics). The shift in tense subtly indicates that the adjustments to the building happened in the past but are being ‘re-created’ in the present by the enacted version of Smith.

While Talbot only assumes one historical character, Smith, he nevertheless includes the accounts of other historical people. As Smith, Talbot continues to speak about the house in character but he also speaks the words of other historical figures in between his own musings. One example includes Smith speaking the words of Sir Walter Scott who visited the park in 1828:

While we were surveying the antlered old hall with its painted glass and family pictures,
Mr Lucy came to welcome us in person, and to show the house, with the collection of
paintings, which seems valuable and to which he had made many valuable additions.
(Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 175)

It is noteworthy here that Smith is speaking Scott’s words but is not changing character. Instead, it is the actor, Talbot, who is playing the architect Smith, who recounts the various people, such as Scott, who have connections to the house.

Shifting perspectives is not limited to the shifting of characters. While one character may be dominant, multiple voices are intersected as a result of Smith’s inclusion of other commentary, which effectively challenges the notion of singular narration. After recounting a number of connections, Talbot’s performance shifts from Smith back to himself, the actor, “although the physicality and tone of the voice of Smith is weirdly sustained” (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 175). The resonances of the historical character thus linger alongside the voice of the actor, creating a duality of experience that promotes active engagement. In this way, the audience is forced to evaluate both what is being said and who is saying it, including recognising that the persona of the speaker affects the information received. The audience is thus discouraged from taking everything said at face value. Each shift, each frame that is altered, prompts the audience to look at the narrative differently and adjust accordingly in a similar fashion to Brecht’s (1964/1997) *verfremdungseffekt* which distances the audience from what is presented in order to encourage critical engagement.

8.4. Narration and perspective

In historical re-enactments, there are three main ways for an actor or interpreter⁸² to explore and present a narrative. These are first, second and third person narration. First person interpretation involves the actor performing a role “as if [s/he] were the subject on display”, therefore identifying his/her subject position with the character through the use of “I” and “me” (Magelssen, 2007: xxii), and using the present tense in language. When using the first person, the intention is to create the impression that the actor is the historical character⁸³, and the audience should believe completely in the fiction constructed. Second person interpretation is a “hands-on” approach where the visitors are encouraged to “try out various practices [...] through physical means”, such as grinding wheat, with the help of the interpreters (Magelssen, 2007: xxiv). It allows the visitors to experience life as it might have been in the past through participatory activity. This form of re-enactment is often used in living history museums which seek to re-create the environment and lifestyles of historic people such as the Plimoth Plantation, a replicated 1627 village in America⁸⁴. Lastly, third person, like first person, involves exploring and portraying historical characters through performers, but the third person and the past tense are used when speaking the narrative (Magelssen, 2007: xxii). The character is still evoked, but distance is created between the actor and the character through making the audience aware that the performer is part of the present but is speaking about the past. Furthermore, the use of the third person allows for “a multiplicity of historical narratives [to] exist in the same place” (Magelssen, 2007: 20), where the past and present are not treated as separate entities.

In the evaluation of narration, first person has been critiqued for its limitations, including restricting the performed character to the time period which s/he is ‘from’, preventing a dialogue between what happened then, afterwards and now (Magelssen, 2007: 17). The first

⁸² The term ‘interpreter’ is sometimes used to identify the person assuming the role of the historical person, especially in living history museums, as not all those involved in the installations are professional actors. Often, instead of learning a set script, which is associated with ‘theatre’, the performers ‘interpret’ the historical era and the persona they are portraying and are, therefore, called interpreters (Magelssen, 2007: 107). In *Our Footprints*, I have used the term ‘actor-guide’ as the performers are both acting and taking the visitors through the various rooms of the house, as well as the different narratives on display.

⁸³ It is not possible for the actor or interpreter to be the genuine historical character; therefore, ‘becoming the character’ in this sense refers to identifying with the character and encouraging the audience to suspend disbelief and ‘see’ the actor as the character during the performance.

⁸⁴ The Plimoth Plantation is a living history ‘museum’ taking on the form of a recreated village as it might have been in by 17th century. Interpreters in costume portray historical characters from the time period without breaking character. According to Magelssen (2007: 26) Plimoth “functions as the embodiment of memories that the ‘Pilgrim Fathers’ had chosen to remember by recoding them in diaries, mercantile recorded, ship logs and so forth” which have been used to create a village from the past accessible to people in the present.

person interpreter is usually not supposed to acknowledge present occurrences, ways of life or beliefs, and this can prevent a critical evaluation of the re-enacted time period as all that followed is ignored (Magelssen, 2007; 17, 18). First person re-enactment can, therefore, be fixed in the historical moment presented which encourages a static view of both history and time, as noted in Chapter 5.

In *Our Footprints* both first person and third person narration has been used. Second person interpretation, on the other hand, is absent due to the small space of the Bergtheil Museum, the nature of the piece, and the short duration of the performance. The limitations of first person have been noted, and I agree with the potential problems of this form; however, I would argue that through techniques such as slippage and unsettlement, first person narration can be used effectively as the audience is challenged to look beyond the character portrayed and see the greater context around the character, the museum, and the actor as well as the present audience participating in the performance. In *Our Footprints*, the personas of Bergtheil, Posselt, Schönheit and others have been portrayed by the actors using the first person. However, soon after the actor-guide assumes the character, they break character or are interrupted by the other actor-guide, allowing for the present to intersect the past. Rigidity of time is discouraged. An example of the actor-guides speaking from the present includes the following section framing the bedroom of the house in the present in relation to the past:

ACTOR 2: This is a room.

ACTOR 1: A room many people have moved through over the last 170 years or so.

ACTOR 2: A room we are moving through now.

ACTOR 1: At this moment it is part of a museum.

ACTOR 2: But it wasn't always a museum.

ACTOR 1: It was once lived in.

ACTOR 2: Now it serves a different function.

ACTOR 1: This room has been converted into a bedroom from the past.

ACTOR 2: But this room has been specifically placed in this way by people who did not live here, long after the house was lived in.

ACTOR 1: By professionals who worked in the museum.

ACTOR 2: Does that make this room any less real? Or any less relevant? (Jenkins, 2017: 2)

The piece is then followed by first person narration, as Sosibo assumes the role of Bergtheil in the bedroom that has now been situated as existing simultaneously in both the present and the past. The audience is encouraged to see the room as part of the 'past' through the evocation of the historical character in the first person, as well as a room that has been recreated by the

museum for present purposes. The third person is then integrated, allowing for the character to be spoken about in the present, using the past tense. One voice, that of the character, is not the only one heard; instead the character speaks alongside a number of other accounts, connecting the past with the present.

In the Triangle presentation, the intersection of multiple voices with that of the historical character, Smith, was also facilitated through the inclusion of video footage and additional “texts which the audience was encouraged to read out” (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 173). While only two actors were physically present in the performance, other voices were included through different media. The use of video footage to portray a character is illustrated through the figure of Miss Nicholls, the scullery maid at Charlecote, who speaks in the first person but whose narrative is mediated through a screen (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 177). One reason for the use of video footage was to illustrate examples of what had occurred in the performances at Charlecote Park without having the actors involved physically at the conference. However, I argue that the use of video clips can be used further as a distancing effect similar to that of Brecht’s (1997/1964) *vervremdungseffekt*, which was noted earlier in the chapter. The audience has to negotiate their relationship with the various characters, some physically present and others recorded making them both literally and metaphorically distant from those in the room. While the presence of real bodies in the room is generally more effective than video footage, a shift between different media can be useful in challenging perceptions and incorporating more perspectives.

Another distancing effect used in the Triangle presentation is the inclusion of an academic-figure-role as one of the voices in the piece. The academic character is in fact the actor Andrews, who is a real historian, playing himself, mainly through the presentation of concluding observations on the performance (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 173). This “non-actor”, identified as such by Talbot and Andrews (2011: 173), allows an additional voice, speaking from a present perspective, to comment on the characters, the museum, the performance and the historical narratives. As Talbot and Andrews (2011: 173, 183-184) explain:

The Last Women used historical accounts of several women, from different times and places, as searchlights to illuminate some of the darker aspects of women’s shared experiences and female identity. [...] Throughout the work, historical sources were invoked, but never in the most simple or direct ways.

The academic figure explicitly states the nature of the sources used which is intended to allow the audience to have insight into the creation of *The Last Women*. *Our Footprints* does not have an academic figure as such in the piece but does, through the actor-guides, invoke historical sources and comment on the museum and its narratives:

ACTOR 1: The information presented here in this performed news dialogue about Bergtheil's trip to Germany was actually recorded in *The Natal Mercury* in 1940, as portrayed by the Reporter, as well as a translated letter written and spoken by Jonas Bergtheil himself in 1896. The genuine translated words of Bergtheil were incorporated into the acted dialogue.

ACTOR 2: So we know what he actually thought because we have his real words?

ACTOR 1: Of a sort. We have to remember that he was writing for a certain audience, the letter was translated and just this year adapted into dramatic writing by our director.

(Jenkins, 2017: 5)

As the writer I wanted to draw audience attention both to the archival research and to the alteration of the sources into dramatic writing. Everything has been interpreted through various channels and what is seen by the audience is not intended to represent any ultimate 'truth'. Instead, the audience is encouraged to see and hear the characters speak, and then to look at what has been said critically. The actor-guides, thus, become historians, or Rokem's (2000) hyper-historians (as noted in Chapter 7), by evoking history through performance and, through slippage, commenting on the history that they have just called to mind.

Slippage, therefore, allows for the constructed nature of both museum exhibits and performance to be highlighted. In the Triangle presentation, Talbot, while shifting roles from Smith to actor, draws the audience's attention to the constructed nature of the performance. What is seen is not 'real' but a series of roles, as they explain:

An audience member who encounters a character on the stage is put in what performance scholar Nicholas Ridout has called a 'predicament' (Ridout 2006: 32). Ridout's predicament arises from disorientation. The audience asks who am I here and now? What am I supposed to say and do? [...] We [Triangle] are not encouraging the audience to pretend. We notice and comment when they [characters] stand on ballet toes or rock from side to side like Harlequin or a Pantomime Dame in anticipation of their 'role'. (Talbot & Andrews, 2011: 180)

Through the use of slippage, the audience is dissuaded from seeing the actor-guides as the 'real' historical characters but rather as contemporary evocations of them. The audience is thus encouraged to "see double" which allows them to negotiate multiple conceptualisations, such as "'actor', 'identity' and 'character'" (Hughes, 2011: 192, 199), that the performer has to negotiate during the performance. The audience is encouraged to use their imaginations but at the same time remain aware that the performance is a representation and not an actualisation (Hughes, 2011: 202).

It is important to acknowledge that the Triangle presentation was directed at a conference audience whose primary focus was discussions around performing history rather than an audience coming to a museum. However, many of the techniques used, particularly the focus on slippage, can be extended to museum theatre in general. Multiple roles and voices, the recognition and highlighting of the creation of exhibits and performance as well as challenging the notion of one historical account, are all useful aspects of slippage that I have attempted to integrate into *Our Footprints*.

8.5. Interaction in museums: audience as guide

Multivocality can be promoted by encouraging visitors to become part of the creation, framing and telling of the narrative, effectively including them in the journey. The notion of a visitor being an “outsider” and the museum workers acting as “insider[s]”, is challenged when the public’s participation inside the museum is encouraged (Graham & Yasin, 2007: 158). The boundaries become blurred, ensuring that both the museum officials and the visitors must negotiate multiple roles. The inclusion of the public in the creation of narratives, according to curator and art critic Judith Mastai, enables them to be agents in the creation of remembrance within the museum which in turn has “the potential to mirror, or even connect with, change occurring in the world outside its [the museum’s] walls” (in Graham & Yasin, 2007: 158).

In this ‘new’ kind of museum, the public are informed about museum practice and how exhibitions are created; they are also sometimes involved in the creation of exhibitions themselves (Durrans, 2001: 116). People are curious and at times the viewing of an exhibition in the process of its creation can be effective in enabling the public to see how narratives are framed and how museums work (Durrans, 2001: 116). The process is often as informative as the final product, debunking the notion that professionalism entails hiding the working process of a museum. Acknowledging that exhibitions do not come out of nowhere, and that human beings make the decisions that lead to particular presentations of the past, allows the narratives to be engaged in an active and open manner. In a dialogue performed in the Art Gallery of Ontario⁸⁵ in 2002, using a form of what I argue is slippage, Shadya Yasin, a worker in the museum, told gallery visitors:

Rather than solely disseminating object-based knowledge, we unpack the difficult knowledge that exists in all aspects of the museum, from the positioning of objects to the conceptual framing of the audience, bringing disparate things into relationship – in

⁸⁵ I have included the Art Gallery of Ontario in my discussion as art curators often follow similar procedures in the preservation of artefacts and creation of exhibits to museums (specifically with older art works). Art galleries, like museums, assign criteria to determine the ‘value’ of artefacts and generally do not allow visitors to touch the artefacts. The Art Gallery of Ontario contains many art works ranging from pieces from the first century to present works.

common celebration, uneasy juxtaposition, intimate conversation, and ferocious debate. (in Graham & Yasin, 2007: 167)

Using such a process ensures that the learning experience associated with attending a museum is not limited to the past, but is extended to include how the past is framed, allowing the museum visitor to become part of the evoking and remembering of that past. Placing the performer and the audience member in one space allows for connections between public, museum and narrative to become more concrete and accessible.

8.6. The repertoire: the body as archive

Access to historical narratives has often been limited to certain groups. As noted in Chapter 5, traditionally Western society has placed greater emphasis and value on “written and material documentation over performative representations of the past” (Dean *et al.*, 2015: 12). Such emphasis has led to the focus on narratives held by the archive which have been prioritised in the search for ‘truth’ so that “the way it really was”, as stipulated by Ranke, can be recorded (in Iggers, 1997: 25). However, as noted by Benjamin (1968/2007: 255), “To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it ‘the way it really was’ (Ranke)⁸⁶. It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger”. I believe that this ‘moment of danger’ is at the core of performance. Performance is ephemeral and, if that moment is not seized as it occurs, it is lost forever. The moment cannot be physically recreated but those watching the performance have an account – a memory – of what unfolded in their minds. If the performance grabbed and maintained the audience member’s attention (as discussed in Chapter 7) through personal connection, the evocation of the senses and a process of learning, the memory/ies can be called to mind from the long-term memory. As the memory is recalled, the moment that has since passed can be ‘recreated’ and ‘experienced’ again in the present. Therefore, I see the merit of using performance to foster a sharing of both individual and collective memory between people. This alternative to the traditional archive may be termed the “repertoire” which is the “embodied performance of memory” (Dean *et al.*, 2015: 12). Through the audience and actors ‘embodying’ the performance as it is occurring they are using the physicality of the body which, through the senses, is able to experience the moment before it disappears. This act of experiencing, which is rooted in the body (and not necessarily recorded on a piece of paper, for example, as is typical of the archive), is preserved as an experience in the minds of those present. The memory of the events, while intangible and subjective, if it has made an impact, is stored in the repertoire or mind (which is part of the body). While not storing written and other tangible documented evidence, the repertoire acts as a kind of archive that stores narratives and accounts of the past. When evoked these memories can be shared

⁸⁶ Benjamin cites Ranke but does not specifically note the reference.

between groups and individuals and used to discuss, debate and learn about the past. The body and the mind thus become sites of remembrance as they convey and evoke the past. Instead of written documentation forming the primary location of the historical record, the body and mind become archives of their own as “a container of collective and personal memories and a vehicle to convey one’s history” (Dean *et al.*, 2015: 13).

The body has significance on two main levels in museum theatre. Firstly, performance employs live human beings to act as characters from the past. The past is effectively made in the present through the act of performance (Dean *et al.*, 2015: 7). The body takes on meaning as the past narratives are associated with the actor whose performance evokes the past. The actor endows his/her body with historical significance through the costumes they wear, the words they speak, the situations they claim to be part of and the personas they adopt. The actor becomes a carrier of meaning using his/her body to create an encounter through which the audience is able to hear, see, feel, and experience the ‘re-created’ past. Secondly, the body becomes a site for memories from the past through the playing of a historic persona, as well as for new memories made by the audience, about the historic representation. During the performance, the audience’s bodies (through the engagement of their senses and imaginations), become invested with the new memories created and evoked through the action. Through performance, thus, “the past comes alive for both participants/performers and observers/audience” allowing for them ‘physically’ to experience the past in the present (Dean *et al.*, 2015: 9).

In Chapter 7, I noted the role the senses play in the evocation of memories, given that, as Johnson (2015: 50) observes, “humans are sensory beings. Hence, we often connect more with something we can see and hear because it makes the experience more real for us by bringing it closer to our own.” Performance enables the audience to be ‘physically’ present in a historical narrative. The terminology I have used when addressing ‘physicality’, is not, of course, intended to suggest a literal travelling back in time. Instead, I use the notion of physicality to refer to the presence of the audience member’s body within the performance. Such physicality is particularly pertinent in a piece such as *Our Footprints* which engages literal movement, enabling the body to be engaged physically. The body thus becomes a site for memory making as the audience act as witnesses to the event. Through their memories, made from the experiences of the body and mind, history is recorded by the community and stored in the minds of the people, thus becoming the repertoire. These memories can be evoked through performance which is then used to explore and share the contents of the repertoire so that people can challenge, discuss and mediate history. The repertoire, consisting of memories, therefore, becomes an effective means of providing counter narratives as it “has the capacity to challenge, even if it sometimes works with or alongside, the archive” (Dean *et al.*, 2015: 12).

The repertoire connects people as their bodies and minds link, allowing for a sharing to take place, and encouraging them to learn about and discuss varied histories.

As noted through the relationship between mind and body, the traditional archive does not have to be in opposition to memory and performance; instead, it can become a place to remember (Steedman, 1998: 78). When the content of the archive is treated as “experience” rather than cold facts, it can be transformative as each time it is revisited it is re-evaluated (Reason, 2003: 88). Performance focuses on experience by involving people in an immediate sensory reaction to a present encounter of a past event. During the writing of *Our Footprints*, I made use of the archive to research the Bergtheil Museum’s past. I did not dismiss written evidence and documentation but rather used it in conjunction with other performative modes of recording. Through combining performance with archival research, the ‘facts’ may be encountered through real people, the actor-guides, engaging with other real people, the audience, in an immediate setting. The fact the actor-guides can speak provides the opportunity for ‘facts’ to be interpreted, re-evaluated and discussed from multiple angles. The words are no longer static on a page but framed through performance that allows people to *see* and *hear* and *feel* the history.

I maintain that it is critical for museum theatre practitioners to acknowledge the subject positions they have adopted. What ‘really occurred’ can never be reproduced ‘as it was’ and an audience should not be encouraged to see the performance as ‘real’. This is not to say that authenticity and believable performances should not be promoted. However, framing the narratives as complete ‘truth’ is problematic and hampers the search for multivocality. It should be noted that, while one historical ‘truth’ should not be imposed, I agree with Buckley’s (1999: 49) observation that “there is a responsibility to present the past accurately so that people do not learn blindly from representations of the past and issues of identity and rights. [...] The past is too valuable to be allowed to become a matter of mere opinion.” There is a responsibility on behalf of museum theatre practitioners to acknowledge the basis for their interpretations and inform the public about the past to promote learning and a critical engagement with historical narratives. Therefore, in museum theatre the archive can be used in conjunction with performance, to promote the evocation and creation of memories and discussion around various historical narratives through a relationship between mind and body.

The next chapter explores slippage in practice through an evaluation of the staging of *Our Footprints*. I also go into further detail about the audience members’ Map of Memories and the personal connections made during the actual performance.

Chapter 9

Assessing the Journey

“Giving the past back its own present is one of the singular achievements of performed history and it can produce new ways of understanding the past.”

David Dean; Yana Meerzan & Kathryn Prince (2015: 7)

In December 2017 two performances of *Our Footprints* were staged at the Bergtheil Museum. During each performance, a group of audience members/museum visitors were taken through the rooms of the house where they met “various historical people, artefacts and memories” (Jenkins, 2017: 1). In this chapter I will reflect firstly on the roles adopted by the actor-guides in performance. My second focus is the Map of Memories as used in the staging of *Our Footprints*. Thirdly, I will discuss and evaluate my production, as an example of museum theatre practice, and its staging, as well as note some of the feedback given by the audience during the question-and-answer session. The last section will look towards future and further research into the field of museum theatre in South Africa.

9.1. The transformation of the actor-guides

One of the main foci of my research and work in practice, as noted in earlier chapters, is how the actor-guides negotiate different roles in the performance through slippage. These roles include guide, character, teacher, actor and historian. The different roles are critical to exploring the use of multiple perspectives in performing some of the narratives portrayed in the museum. After seeing the performance in practice, I believe the moving from one role to the next was effective in allowing commentary, questions and alternative viewpoints to intersect the historical characters’ recollections. The use of the actor-guide as a theatrical device, in terms of being able to move in-and-out of character, allowed me as director subtly to challenge and question some of the narratives. I was not seeking to be overtly political by explicitly focusing on issues such as race and gender, although these issues were present; I chose, rather to explore the narratives through humour, satire and the negotiation of roles to encourage people to see the performance’s content in a new light. In adopting this approach, I am not suggesting that political matters should be ignored; however, in my theatre making, I prefer to use subtle techniques, such as the changing of roles through slippage, to highlight issues instead of speaking directly about politics throughout the piece. I did not want people to be bombarded with facts and political issues but instead encouraged to consider the issues raised from different perspectives while learning and having fun.

It is important for the audience to be emotionally engaged with the histories presented as the connection that results aids the audience better to remember the narratives. For this reason, I attempted to evoke different emotions at the various stations of the performance. I used a more light-hearted feel in the bedroom in which a South African reporter-figure from 1940 (Sikhakhane – see Image 6), interviews Bergtheil (Sosibo) who is from the late 1800s, now in present-day 2017, which is part of present day reality for both the actor-guides and the audience. The purposeful juxtaposition of three time periods allowed me to ‘play’ with the characters and highlight how perceptions about bringing settlers to Natal change in different eras and contexts. This dialogue was not meant to be realistic; instead, through the use of distancing devices, different, and at times conflicting, perspectives were brought together in one piece. These distancing devices included a funny radio news jingle that indicated the shift from actor-guides in the present to the characters from the ‘past’ and a blond wig that was worn by a black actor-guide who played a woman from the 1940s excited about the growth of the settler nation. The intention behind the inclusion of various distancing devices was to reframe the narrative/s so that Bergtheil’s involvement in the introduction of German settlers to Natal could be viewed possibly in a different ‘frame’ and unsettle audience expectations. The black actor-guide reporter, in a blond wig, interviewing a ‘black’ Bergtheil in different eras and contexts, provides other possible way/s of looking and thinking about a documented historical person and event.



Image 6: Sikhakhane performing as the Reporter in blond wig the bedroom. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

The more humorous approach used in the bedroom, however, was not employed in all the rooms. When the audience moved later into the missionary room, station 5, the mood shifted to a more serious and sombre feeling. The deaths of Schonheit and her son, Nathanael, are highlighted as she speaks about the treacherous and frightening journey through the Drakensberg Mountains. The thematic concept in this room was about making a personal connection to grief and loss that the audience members may have had in their own lives. The use of different emotional tones in the two rooms – the bedroom and missionary room – is linked to the idea of memories being evoked and made through associations with the senses (which are connected to emotions), and creating instances that get the memory maker's attention. Different emotions are associated with different facets of life and, therefore, different memories. I chose to encourage the employment of multiple emotions in the rooms to encourage a variety of connections, that could then be reflected on in the Map of Memories, which was intended for people to make various connections to different parts of their life.

In the rehearsal process, I observed that it was difficult at times for the actor-guides to find a balance between the various roles they had to embody in the performance. The personality of the actor-guide needed to emerge in between the personas of the historical characters when character was broken and commentary was given. Therefore, the characters needed to have a different energy from the actor-guides' own personalities⁸⁷ (see Image 7) to distinguish clearly between the different roles played. Energy levels, personality, characterisation and identification had to be negotiated to help the audience follow the narratives as well as to challenge dominant accepted version/s of history by introducing other accounts, such as Schonheit's (even though it is largely based on her husband's observations), that are not often prioritised.

⁸⁷ I acknowledge that the 'personalities' that the actor-guides revealed to the audience are also performed. While they were using their own names and were speaking as themselves, they were still reciting lines and performing to a group of people who were watching them. The process of looking, as noted in earlier chapters, influences the way the person who is watched is framed and viewed by the person looking. Therefore, while I wanted the actor-guides to reveal parts of themselves to the audience between playing the historical characters, they were nevertheless performing a role.



Image 7: Sikhakhane (left) and Sosibo (right) taking on the role of actor-guides on the porch of the Bergtheil Museum. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

In commenting on the process of identification with different characters, Sosibo, actor-guide 2, stated in the question-and-answer session (2017) held after the performance that, “as the script says, we don’t need to have a direct relation with someone to identify with them and there were some stories I could identify with as well” (*Our Footprints* DVD, 2017). Both the actor-guides, who are Zulu and myself, a South African hybrid of various European bloodlines, learnt a lot about a museum and a group of people we may not have previously known that much about. We undertook a rigorous process in order to explore different historical people and their narratives, and how to identify with them (albeit the process of identification for each person was different) so that through the historical characters’ portrayal the audience members could also learn about and identify with, the histories presented. I did not want simply to condemn the settlers for what might be considered an ‘intrusion’ into a land that was not their own. However, at the same time, I did not want to glorify them. Rather, I wanted to explore aspects of their lives including their travels, mission work and their settlement, while at the same time critically viewing the settler histories on display. *Our Footprints* explores people and heritages that are far too complex to over simplify. It is up to the audience members to make up their minds about the feelings and thoughts evoked in response to the history presented in the performance.

The manner in which the historical narratives were presented, the feelings evoked and the roles the actor-guides negotiated were influenced by the way the various components of the performance were framed. Firstly, the building in which the performance took place, an old

German settler house, was a literal framing of the characters as they came to life in each room. The impression of domesticity present in the kitchen and bedroom was different from the more typical museum-like feel of the exhibits presented in glass cabinets, as seen in the Iron-age room. Therefore, the way the characters were framed by the room in which their narrative was performed, affected the way their story was framed and how the actor-guides would negotiate their roles. The literal walls of the rooms thus become part of the process of framing the people and their narratives.

In addition to the literal framing of the museum building, the choice of costume and prop items, such as a wig or a Bible, helped frame the character/s in their social and historical context/s as well as assisted the audience in following which characters were present as the actor-guides negotiated roles at different stages of the play. The framing and interpretation of the performance was also influenced by the order in which the narratives were presented and the process of the audience physically moving from one room to the next ‘following’ the narratives. By using movement and direct audience address, the audience/actor-guide relationship was altered from the conventional separation in a proscenium arch theatre. Therefore, the manner in which *Our Footprints* was framed by the chosen theatrical and stylistic conventions and the museum building itself influenced the way the histories were performed and the manner in which the actor-guides negotiated their various roles.

9.2. Including the personal: Map of Memories

Every person who attended a performance of *Our Footprints* was given a Map of Memories (Appendix 2) at the start of the performance.⁸⁸ In each room they were encouraged to fill in the “names of people, some you may personally know or others you may have never met but mean something to you, as well other aspects of your life that you find meaningful” (Jenkins, 2017: 4) in the space provided. Each person’s answers were personal to them and were related to the thematic concept that was the focus in each room. I collected the Maps after the performance and four examples (Appendix 3-6) have been included in the thesis as a way to analyse the personal associations with the rooms and record the memories generated during the performance. The Maps recorded a variety of personal memories and associations including names of people, such as Michael, who died at 18 years old (Appendix 4), the character of Sipho from South African playwright John Kani’s *Nothing but the Truth* (Appendix 5), as well

⁸⁸ Each Map given to the audience consisted of two pieces of paper placed on top of each other. The audience wrote on the upper page which was given to me at the end of the performance. The bottom page, or carbon sheet, copied the memories written on the upper page so that the audience members could take a copy home with them after the performance.

as other memories of importance, such as cherishing a ring given as a 21st birthday present (Appendix 6).

As I looked at the Maps after the performance, I noticed a wide variety of memories recorded and all the Maps that were given to me were completed in full by the audience members. The Maps fulfilled my intention of encouraging people to think beyond the historical narratives and connect them to the present. I do acknowledge, however, that data on the audience's individual personal responses to the effectiveness of the Maps was not collected. Therefore, my deductions from, and analysis of, the Maps is based on what has been written on the Maps and the audience question-and-answer session that took place after the performance. More research into audience response to museum theatre and the making of personal connections to the historical narratives is needed in the future.

The memories on the Maps were not just recorded for research purposes. The collection of Maps have been used both as a way of for me as the researcher to explore them as a mnemonic museum theatre device, as well as a tangible reminder of the memories evoked during the performance for the audience members to take home with them. Taking the Maps (and, hopefully, the evoked memories) home with them, encourages the audience members to retain the memories in their own lives rather than remaining in the museum. The Maps act as a 'bridge' between past and present and help to solidify a possible relationship between what is presented in the museum and what is experienced in current life. I, therefore, believe that a device like the Map has a place in future museum theatre performances in order to bring the personal and the present in contact with history.

These audience's memories, taken at face value, have little to do with the Bergtheil Museum since they reference people, events and items from different times and places not necessarily represented in the museum. And yet they are closely, if sometimes indirectly, related to the narratives presented in the production. Through the Maps, I wanted to encourage people to connect the present with the past. For example, at station 6, the Indian wedding attire room, in response to the thematic concept of "something that you want to change, leave behind or start anew" (Jenkins, 2017: 12), one audience member recorded that s/he would "start – travel; change – racism; start anew – education" (Appendix 3). While the room focused primarily on the Indian indentured labourers and the caste system, the above mentioned audience member found a personal connection to his/her present context involving new travels and educational prospects as well as the desire to challenge racism. These issues – racism, prejudice and education – are pertinent to current life as well as being connected to the past. Education, like racism, has issues of power associated with it, as some people have greater access to it than

others. In the past, for example, (and this is still a factor today in various parts of the world, including South Africa), women could not access education as readily as men. Therefore, the above personal association recorded on the Map, reveals a desire to challenge present issues through an engagement with the past. This challenging of the past to change the present is an important aspect of learning about history through museum theatre. The past and the present are not separate entities but are connected and through learning about the past we can critically evaluate the present and alter the future. The Map is therefore used to heighten the connection between past and present by connecting memories and associations with the historical focus of the room.

I note that the memories recorded on the Maps are highly personal and most readers, who do not know the person writing, will not necessarily know why that person recorded that specific memory. The person who recorded the memory knows what that memory really means in their personal context. Therefore, the purpose of keeping the Maps is not to quantify the memories but rather to highlight the personal and present connections we can make to the past. The Maps also reveal that people can access and learn from the past, as well as apply it to their present context in order to challenge issues from both the past and the present. The past does not have to be treated as a separate entity. Instead, by noting the connection/s between the past and the present, we can be active in the attempt to prevent the repetition of the past in the present. The people who have gone before us have a lot to teach us here and now.

The recording of personal memories was not only documented by the audience members. In the rehearsal process, we also explored some of the actor-guides' personal memories in relation to the thematic concept at each station. These personal accounts were integrated into the performance as a means to further personalise the connection between past and present. Additionally, the actor-guides' memories were used as examples for the audience to help spark off memories of their own. At station 3, the kitchen, where a treasured gift is the thematic concept, Sikhakhane, actor-guide 1, said that she cherished the 21st/graduation party that her mother threw for her. Her example was used as a catalyst for the audience then to record their own personal memory of a gift on their Maps.

In addition to the actor-guides and audience recording memories, I wrote my recollections on a Map during one of the performances (Appendix 7). Of course, my memories are filtered through the process of creating the production and the concept of the Map, and, therefore, I knew the Map intimately when I recorded my memories. However, because I am writing a self-reflexive thesis, I am further exploring the idea of connecting the personal to the past through my personal remembrance/s. It is interesting to note that I found it difficult to fill in the Map. I

think this was partially due to the fact that I had become so immersed in exploring the history of the Bergtheil Museum that it had ‘become part’ of my present. At station 5, the missionary room where the thematic concept is recording the “name of a person or an event in your life that passed on too soon” (Jenkins, 2017: 9), I wrote “my history teacher who passed away from cancer” (Appendix 7). My History teacher, Mrs Frank, is one of the reasons why I love history. She showed me that it is possible for history to come alive in the present. I remember when she made us stand on our chairs and shout out ‘*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*’ when we were learning about the French revolution. She, like Schönheit and Nathanael, passed on too soon. I was part of her last class of Matriculants. This memory did not come to me until we were quite close to staging the production in the museum. While the memory remained buried for a while I am not surprised that Mrs Frank, who inspired some of my love for history, would have connections to my current work. I know she would have loved to see my museum theatre production and because she could not come to the performance it is likely that I felt her loss when exploring my own memories through the Map. Loss is not something I generally like to consider, but through the Map, after some time, I was able to explore bereavement in both a historical and a personal context.

The Map of Memories is an effective device in connecting the personal and the present with the past in museums. However, the nature of the Map, should it be used in other performances, will depend on the audience’s age and level of education. The thematic concepts on the Map, used in *Our Footprints*, are probably too difficult for young school children, for example, to answer. Additionally, people who are threatened by audience participation, or are unsure of the etiquette of museum theatre, may need to be eased into the concept of the Map and have its function sufficiently explained. I note that it is sometimes difficult to think on the spot and some people may not be able to come up with memories for all the stations. However, the intention of the Map is for the audience to take the memories back into their own lives, not simply as words written on paper. Therefore, someone may not have filled in an answer but may continue to think about it later on, away from the museum. The Map is not prescriptive but rather should be adapted to the needs of each production.

9.3. Practitioner’s assessment and audience feedback

It was interesting to observe the written script come alive inside the museum rooms with live bodies to embody the various historical characters. The audience responded favourably to a new and different way of viewing museums which many had not previously encountered. In the question-and-answer session following the performance, one audience member stated that museum guides who are also actors should be implemented in more museums (*Our Footprints*

DVD, 2017). Highlighting the dynamic nature of performance, another audience member stated that “you brought it [the history of the museum] alive for us” (*Our Footprints* DVD, 2017).

In addition to bringing history to life, the Map of Memories elicited comments in the question-and-answer session. In response to the Maps and their role in recording personal memories, an audience member commented that maybe museums “do not necessarily have to be about facts. Maybe they do need to be about a gut-level sort-of-thing” (*Our Footprints* DVD, 2017). The ‘gut-level sort-of-thing’, references an emotional connection to the narratives, and can aid in the remembering of, and identifying with, the histories presented. Another audience member noted that through the Maps the personal was reinforced, showing that “our own personal history is something to be remembered” (*Our Footprints* DVD, 2017) in conjunction with, and not in spite of, the historical narratives on display in the museum. The audience comments highlight that through historical characters ‘coming to life’, and the making of personal connections to the narratives, many audience members were able to experience visiting a museum in a new way. They were possibly able to consider different aspects of their lives and make a connection to the narratives on display encouraging production of a number of perspectives.

Different people who had come together to watch and participate in the performance brought their personal stories with them and recorded some of them. While some people shared similarities in experience, many differences can be observed revealing a diversity in accounts. In station 6, where audience members were encouraged to think of starting something anew or making a change, one audience member desired to learn Gaelic (Appendix 6), while another wanted to learn to speak Zulu (Appendix 4). While these two answers are connected as they both involve learning a language, a difference in perspective can be observed. One audience member is interested in learning an uncommon European language not readily spoken in South Africa, while another is interested in learning the most widely spoken South African mother-tongue language. Both are about communication but there are possibly different associations, intentions and meanings behind the desire to learn that specific language. The Maps, therefore, encourage the recording of different accounts thereby promoting multivocality in the museum spaces.

As I reflect on *Our Footprints*, and while I note the positive audience feedback, one of my concerns is that my script is very factually based and that some of the rooms had less emphasis placed on the historical characters than others. Facts are important in museums and are a necessary component to the exploration of narratives; however, when the information is treated simply as facts, it can often appear boring and separate from the lived reality of the museum visitor. Using the theatrical frame allows the museum visitor to see people in ‘action’ rather

than simply reading or listening to someone else talk about the past. The past effectively is 'recreated' in the present. Hearing people 'speak' who are no longer living (or are not directly present, such as the original Bergtheil Museum curator Alvine Calboutin), creates a different perspective from just reading or hearing about them. For this reason, I think more characterisation in *Our Footprints* would have made some of the narratives more interesting as it would have added more 'action' and less didactic speaking of facts. Particularly in the Indian wedding room, more attention to historical Indian characters and their embodiment may have further enhanced the history of the room.



Image 8: Sosibo performing as George Muthukistna in the Indian wedding attire room. Film Still. Taken by James Whittaker.

I do note, however, that due to the small size of the rooms, I did not want to make the performance too long by including too many characters or lengthy monologues. Therefore, I intentionally limited the performance to about thirty minutes to prevent people having to stand for too long in a position where they possibly could not always see everything. Additionally, too many facts can bore people. Therefore, a balance between facts, performance and characterisation needs to be achieved in order for people's attention to be grabbed while at the same time learning from and remembering what is being presented.

9.4. Future research possibilities

In terms of future performance works, I plan to create more productions in museums in Durban, and possibly in other areas of the country. I am interested in researching museum theatre's role

in assisting school learners in studying history at school. However, the aim of museum theatre in connection with the history syllabus would be to highlight that history does not only have to be studied but can be experienced too. Museum theatre provides an alternate way of presenting and viewing history which can be used as an alternative – and addition – to book learning, to bring the past to life for learners.⁸⁹ Additionally, exploring how learners can find personal connections to some of the histories they encounter is important in making history relevant, easier to remember and connected to the present.

I believe the concept of the Map of Memories can be used in further research and future museum theatre productions to connect the past to the present. A piece of paper with a printed blueprint of a house is not necessarily the way the Map will be used in the future. The Map is more than a piece of paper and does not need to be restricted to the form in which it was used in *Our Footprints*. It can be treated as a symbol which can be redesigned in any way with the intention of connecting the personal to the past. The possibilities of this device and concept warrant more study and further implementation in other works of performance in museums.

Museum theatre, as observed through the implementation of *Our Footprints*, creates a new and alternate way of looking at history in museums. There is a need for more performance works to be introduced into South African museums in the future so that the public can explore and engage with the past through performance in museums. South Africa is a diverse country with many different stories that need to be explored, discussed, debated, re-evaluated and remembered. Performance is an effective method for providing a space for people to ‘speak’ to the narratives, through actors and participation, as well as to make personal present connections to the narratives on display in museums. The past, which was filled with many injustices, affects the way South Africans live today and, therefore, it is critical for people to talk and learn about the past to change the present and the future.

⁸⁹ While my future research focus is possibly on school children, museum theatre should not be restricted to children. Making history accessible to the general public is a priority of museum theatre. More research in putting this into practice in South Africa is needed so that more productions can be created and implemented effectively in museums around the country.

Conclusion

Final Destination?

“The need to think can be satisfied only through thinking, and the thoughts which I had yesterday will be satisfying this need today only to the extent that I can think of them anew.”

Hannah Arendt (1971: 422)

We cannot learn from the past if we do not remember it. In order to do that, as Arendt (1971) notes in the opening quote above, we need to think through ‘yesterday’s’ thoughts again today in a new light. There is a need for re-evaluation, new connections and new thoughts that stem from the old ones. Museum theatre is influential in the exploration of ‘yesterday’ (which can range from a few hours to centuries ago) and how it impacts us today. The narratives of ‘yesterday’ are brought alive through performance allowing those who have long since passed to ‘speak’ again in the present. As these voices are heard in the performance, the museum visitor/audience member is encouraged to reconsider their own position in relation to the history/ies on display. As the audience position is re-examined, the past can be seen anew through multiple perspectives; the way the present is viewed can be revised and change can be encouraged in the present when the past (and its connection to the present) is viewed critically.

In this dissertation, I have explored the re-evaluation of the past through museum theatre as outlined in my key research objectives. These objectives involved firstly, to explore how museum theatre is constructed through the examination of three case studies made by other practitioners; secondly, working within the PAR frame, I used this research to script and stage my own piece, *Our Footprints*, in the Bergtheil Museum in 2017. In my examination of the case studies’ creation and staging, I investigated my third objective which explored performance’s role in promoting multivocality in museums spaces bringing a number of perspectives and narratives together with the aim of promoting dialogue between them.

In addition to the key objectives, I investigated three research questions in my exploration of the construction of museum theatre. Firstly, I proposed that a relationship can be fostered between the traditional archive, museums, and performance to create an alternate approach to viewing and experiencing the past. The traditional archive, which is reliant mainly on written and other material documentation, is often treated in a rigid fashion that prioritises certain narratives while ignoring others. While I note the limitations of the archive, I do not suggest that the archive should be dismissed as a source of knowledge and memory. Instead, it can be used in conjunction with performance and other interactive methods to encourage a dynamic

engagement with the past. I have used the archive in my research through reading and viewing documents and photographs about some of the histories on display in the Bergtheil Museum. However, I have combined the archival research with the bodies and voices of actors to create a repertoire. This repertoire uses the body and mind as an archive (and utilises the memories that belong to that body) to store and record information related to the past, and connect that past to the present. In framing this repertoire, the performance, creates an alternate way of experiencing history compared to the traditional sight of exhibitions behind glass, explained and contextualised by written panels or audio tours. When all three facets are combined – the traditional archive, performance and the museum – the past can be brought to life in the present as well as connected to the personal. Through the inclusion of performance in museums, the traditional archive can be expanded, the senses engaged, memories evoked, new learning encouraged and the inclusion of multiple perspectives can take place.

The second research question specifically focused on how museum theatre is made and was explored through the analysis of pre-existing museum theatre works and the creation of a new piece. Traditional museums often separate the visitor from the artefacts and exhibitions, a practice which sometimes promotes a disjunction between ‘insider’ (the museum, its workers and the narratives) and ‘outsider’ (the museum visitor and their memories). This dichotomy is challenged when performance is introduced into museums, blurring the line between insider and outsider. In the first case study, Bailey’s work in *Exhibits A and B*, while not taking place in a museum space, is specifically conscious of challenging notions around what (or who) is on display and who is looking at the exhibit. By using live actors in the performance, Bailey re-frames the human ‘zoos’ of the 1900s, reversing the original roles by having the people on display look back at those observing the installation. The controversy surrounding Bailey’s work reveals the complexities and challenges around exhibiting and exploring silenced and neglected histories. However, through promoting dialogue– an essential part of Bakhtin’s (1981/1994) argument on challenging the authoritative word, even when people do not agree – multiple versions maybe provided, grappled with, negotiated and re-evaluated so that the past can be experienced from multiple angles and sides. In order for the past to be seen anew, new insights, alternate viewpoints and various voices need to be included. While *Our Footprints* does not explore human zoos, the process of including ‘forgotten’ names and ‘unspoken’ histories into the performance was a focus of mine as I explored the bigger ‘players’ of German settler history in Durban, such as Bergtheil and Posselt, as well as those only briefly mentioned, such as the ‘Zulu’ and *Schonheit*.

Our Footprints’ form was influenced by the second case study, *This Accursed Thing*, which employed the movement of both the actor-guides and the audience through the Manchester

Museum. In the creation of my piece I wanted to focus on how audience members could physically engage with the performance by using their senses and moving from one station to the next. The process of movement from room to room creates the opportunity for a re-framing of the displays through changing the audience member's literal position in relation to the exhibit, and figuratively through alerted perspectives. The visitor is encouraged to 'see' the exhibition in a new frame, the performance frame, which unsettles the audience's expectations of what to encounter at a museum. The audience is encouraged to negotiate multiple roles as they encounter historical people and situations in the present. By contrast, they are discouraged from statically viewing the displays and instead become part of the 'journey' through the narratives.

The journey through the past is also influenced by the audience members' personal experiences, memories and insights. The mnemonic device, the Map of Memories, as used in *Our Footprints*, was influential in the exploration of evoking, storing and creating memories in – and from – museum spaces. This device provides a vehicle for connecting the past to the present and the personal to the overarching historical narrative. One of the ways to include multiple perspectives into museums is to include the memories of the community. It is for this reason that I wanted people to encounter themselves and their histories while they explored a range of other narratives to which they may or may not have had previous connections. I contend that, the personal should not be ignored when creating museum exhibits; instead through museum theatre works and mnemonic devices, such as the Map, the personal can be included and promoted alongside the process of learning about, depicting and challenging the past.

Slippage, as evidenced in Triangle's research presentation staged at the Performing Heritage Conference in 2008 (and a number of other works), is a key technique for challenging and exploring the past in performance. I employed slippage in *Our Footprints* through the two actor-guides moving in and out of character, playing ten historical characters, and speaking as 'themselves' in between performing the various roles. In this way, offering only one account of any given narrative was avoided as multiple historical characters spoke and were interrupted and questioned by the persona of the actor-guide who provided commentary on an historical person or event from a present perspective. In addition, the audience was encouraged to provide their own 'voice' through the activation of their memories in relation to the thematic concept given in each room. The past was hopefully, thus, not treated as a fixed entity, but rather as something to be debated, discussed and experienced.

One of the advantages of using performance in museums is that it creates many possibilities to allow for multiple perspectives to be present, as explored in my third research question which considered why multiple perspectives in museums are essential. By having an actor or multiple actors involved in the performance piece, the artefacts, narratives, exhibits and facts can be 'spoken' to and framed in different ways. The museum exhibitions, therefore, do not stand alone but are placed in 'dialogue' with another person/people, and by extension with other artefacts and narratives. This idea around dialogue allows the actors to play characters from the past in connection with the exhibits in the present. The exhibits are often included in the performance, reducing the separation between audience, actor and narrative. When the separation between exhibit and visitor is decreased, a more direct involvement with the narrative and an evocation of personal memories can occur. Actors, therefore, assist in bringing together multiple accounts, which may include additional historical characters, present-day commentary, museum ideology and procedure, personal connections and differing perspectives, and in so doing create dialogue in – and with – the museum.

Multivocality is necessary when approaching and exhibiting the past in order to address the tendency to prioritise single perspectives and viewpoints. In *Our Footprints* slippage was specifically employed to discourage such singular narratives. Instead, through the presence of multiple accounts, different perspectives (not always in agreement) are presented allowing the audience to reach their own conclusions in response to the material presented. South Africa is a diverse country filled with many different heritages, cultures, religions and race groups. Many of these differences are fraught with tension. The aim of museum theatre is not to ignore such tensions, but to explore them and place them in conversation with one another. As people engage with different individuals and their viewpoints, a better understanding of the past, the way it has affected us – both directly and indirectly – and possible ways to change the injustices of the past in the present may emerge.

In my evaluation of *Our Footprints*, I noted the success of using action and actor-guides in the telling of the historical narratives in a museum, as evidenced in the responses of audience members. They were able to encounter the historical figures 'in front' of them as the actor-guides played various characters. To prevent the audience from becoming too attached to one perspective, the technique of slippage proved effective in creating a distancing effect preventing one voice from becoming dominant. In addition to the voices of the past having an opportunity to 'speak', the audience members of the present were given the opportunity to connect the personal to the historical through the Map of Memories. This device connects the past to the present and encourages an additional perspective, that of the personal. *Our Footprints* used

performance as a different way of exploring and presenting multiple historical perspectives, while bringing history ‘to life’ and making it relevant to the present.

The creation of *Our Footprints* was a journey that involved a process of self-discovery for me as a researcher and a theatre practitioner. Paralleling my earlier analysis of Huberta’s journey along the coast into the Eastern Cape, I have also encountered new phenomena and engaged with different territory in my research process. The past has come ‘to life’ for me as I have explored it through performance. History is not straightforward and means many things to different people making it difficult to portray and discuss. Through my observations of museum theatre through PAR, performance in museums can openly acknowledge the complexities that come with the past while at the same time hopefully making it relevant to contemporary issues. The past was explored in *Our Footprints* through encouraging multiple ‘voices’ - both historical and present-day voices – to ‘speak’; in addition the subjectivities of the actor-guides, audience members, and me as the researcher/director were filtered into the history/ies and given their own expression. Through my research and the process of creating a performance in practice, I had the opportunity to go on my own journey through the histories presented in the Bergtheil Museum. My journey intersected with other people’s journeys – some historical and others current, some familiar and others unknown, some by choice and others incidentally – and a process of sharing occurred as I researched and wrote, as I worked with the actor-guides during rehearsals, and through interaction with audience members during the performance. *Our Footprints* provided me with the opportunity to explore the past in a new way and then share this with others as they experienced it through the performance. This journey has only just begun; there is still so much more about the past in museums and its relationship to performance that is still to be discovered and experienced.

Museum theatre has gained greater popularity since its beginnings in 1961 at the Old Sturbridge Village in America with more museums, mainly in America and Europe, implementing performance as a method of telling the narratives of the past. The use of performance in museum spaces, however, is new and uncommon in South Africa. *Our Footprints* was created to explore the creation and use of performance in a South African museum – the Bergtheil Museum – and performance’s role in encouraging multivocality. The purpose of the piece was to offer multiple viewpoints as well as encourage people to learn about the past through experiencing historical characters in action. Performance in museums is an exciting form which can assist in making the past more accessible and relevant to the present. My study of museum theatre has not reached its final destination as there is a need for more performance works in museums and more research about museum theatre and audience learning and response. As Arendt (1971: 422) notes in the opening quote, we need to think about ‘yesterday’ to see

‘today’ anew. Museum theatre is an effective way of exploring and discussing the past to re-evaluate the present in order to change the future. By bringing the past to life in the present in museums, history and heritage can be viewed and experienced in a new light.

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Appendix 1:
***Our Footprints* Script**

Our Footprints

By
Stephanie Jenkins

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The visitors assemble on the porch outside the front door of the Bergtheil House. They are each in possession of a printed map, the Map of Memories, of the 'journey' they will undertake through the museum. They are greeted by the FACILITATOR (Stephanie Jenkins).

FACILITATOR: My name is Stephanie Jenkins and I am a Masters student in Drama and Performance Studies at UKZN. I am not German. My surname, Jenkins, is actually Welsh although I don't really know much about my Welsh ancestry. German settler history is not my history and some of these people recorded here are not my ancestors. However, how much of what we can consider to be *our* history is based on our DNA? Can we identify with groups of people that are not directly related to us?

Welcome to this performance of *Our Footprints*. I am the writer and director of this piece and I invite you to embark on a journey with us through this house, the Bergtheil Museum. The idea of a journey is an important metaphor that I have been implementing in my Master's research regarding the relationship between performance and the past. The journey has thus been incorporated into this practical piece.

You have each been given a map and a pen to take with you as you embark on this journey. It is a Map of Memories to which your actor-guides will bring your attention throughout the piece. They will be taking you through the various rooms of the museum where you will meet various historical people, artefacts and memories. At the end of the journey there will be a question and answer session followed by an opportunity to go through the museum again at your own leisure. These are your actor-guides, (*gives the names of actors*) who will be taking you on this journey.

ACTOR 1: Welcome. My name is (*give name*). And I'm not German either. In fact I am (*gives a brief account of ancestry*).

ACTOR 2: And my name is (*gives name*). I am (*gives a brief account of ancestry*). We are your actor-guides.

ACTOR 1: This house before us is named after Jonas Bergtheil who we will be meeting shortly. Before you enter the house, please take note that there is a cast of foot prints at the entrance.

ACTOR 2: This is the first mark of the journey. To begin it, you must take the first step. These feet symbolically belong to those who journeyed before us, those whose names we remember.

ACTOR 1: And those we don't.

ACTOR 2: They now become your footprints as you also start a journey.

ACTOR 1: Please will you each stand on the footprint cast at the doorway before going in. Our first stop is the bedroom to your right. Follow me.

Each visitor is encouraged to step on the cement footprints cast that is placed at the front door. ACTOR 1 steps into the cast first and then guides those following into the bedroom. ACTOR 2 enters last.

ACTOR 2: This is a room.

ACTOR 1: A room many people have moved through over the last 170 years or so.

ACTOR 2: A room we are moving through now.

ACTOR 1: At this moment it is part of a museum.

ACTOR 2: But it wasn't always a museum.

ACTOR 1: It was once lived in.

ACTOR 2: Now it serves a different function.

ACTOR 1: This room has been converted into a bedroom from the past.

ACTOR 2: But this room has been specifically placed in this way by people who did not live here, long after the house was lived in.

ACTOR 1: By professionals who worked in the museum.

ACTOR 2: Does that make this room any less real? Or any less relevant?

ACTOR 1: The original curator of the Bergtheil Museum was Alvine Calboutin. She took up the position in September 1987 to start the museum.

ACTOR 2: This house is believed to have been built in the 1840s.

ACTOR 1: But the original house has had various alterations throughout its lifetime so what we are standing in has changed since its inception.

ACTOR 2: Not only has the house changed but so has its purpose. It is now a place to remember the past.

ACTOR 1: But whose past are we remembering?

ACTOR 2: Whose stories are we telling?

ACTOR 1: How are they being told?

ACTOR 2: Who is included and who is left out?

ACTOR 1: It is believed that Jonas Bergtheil built the house, although some have disputed this, and that he and his family lived here.

ACTOR 2: The coming of Bergtheil had greater ramifications than the simple building of a house as we can see recorded in *The Natal Mercury* in 1940.

ACTOR 1 assumes the role of a NEWS REPORTER and ACTOR 2 becomes JONAS BERGTHEIL in the first person.

REPORTER: Good evening and welcome to the 7 o'clock news. Today is the 24th of May 1940 and we have a great feat to commemorate. "The little village of New Germany, 20 miles from Durban, has celebrated its centenary a few days ago and is a living example of true pioneering. In its time it demonstrated the possibilities of development in an unknown corner of the Empire and for that reason alone its story is worth a brief retelling. It all came about through the vision and enterprise of a young Bavarian, Jonas Bergtheil", who we have in studio.⁹⁰ He is "a man of considerable enterprise and ability" who after much opposition from various European governments brought German settlers to Durban.⁹¹ Now I have Mr Bergtheil himself with me. Please would you tell us how the search for immigrants started?

BERGTHEIL: "In 1846 I heard that the Cape Government expected some immigrants from Ireland, and I proceeded to the Cape to see if some of these immigrants could not be introduced to go to Natal. [...] I was [...] convinced [...] [that] without immigration the Colony would never prosper. [...] I had several long interviews with the Colonial Office in London, but all my efforts proved of no avail, and unwilling I was thrown back as a last resource upon Germany".⁹²

REPORTER: So Germany was not the first choice?

BERGTHEIL: No and the German Government threw "great difficulties in my way" as "almost all of their geographical books and publications described the Colony of Natal as a country inhabited mostly by Kaffirs, Bushmen, tigers and lions, and other wild beasts".⁹³

⁹⁰ *The Natal Mercury*, 24 May 1940.

Due to the nature of a performance script written to be acted and not read, as well as the aim for coherent reading and learning of lines for the actors, I have used footnote referencing in the script.

⁹¹ *The Natal Mercury*, 24 May 1940.

⁹² Bergtheil, 1896/1930: 10.

⁹³ Bergtheil, 1896/1930: 10.

ACTOR 1: (*out of character*) You know (*says name of actor*), it is rather funny that they thought we had tigers here in South Africa.

ACTOR 2: (*out of character*) Indeed, but what about the fact that the Kaffirs and Bushmen, as Bergtheil calls them, are spoken about in the same sentence as wild beasts?

ACTOR 1: Well people who you have never met can be very scary.

ACTOR 2: Yes, imagine seeing a white person for the first time!

ACTOR 1: True! (*as REPORTER*) Now, Mr Bergtheil, how did you convince the German Government and the people of Germany to take the trip to Natal?

BERGTHEIL: I took “a Zulu home with me, I believe the first that went to Europe, so that the people whom I intended to send out should for themselves see what class of Native they had to deal with”.⁹⁴

REPORTER: A live Zulu! That must have created quite a stir.

ACTOR 2: (*out of character*) You know what I find interesting (*name of other actor*)? In his letter, Bergtheil only mentions that he took a Zulu. He never mentions the Zulu’s name.

ACTOR 1: Yes, or if the Zulu comes back home or what he thought about the trip.

ACTOR 2: Or what he thought of the Germans.

ACTOR 1: Imagine if the Zulu wrote a letter home to his family that read: I took a Bavarian with me on holiday to Europe, so that the people whom this Bavarian intended to send out should for themselves see what class of people I have to deal with when I have outsiders visiting my home.

ACTOR 2: But we don’t know what the Zulu would have written. His thoughts and name are absent.

ACTOR 1: But that doesn’t mean this person didn’t exist. (*Addressing the audience*) Please will you take out your Map of Memories given to you at the start of this journey. The idea behind this map is to record names of people, some you may personally know or others you may have never met but mean something to you, as well other aspects of your life that you find meaningful. We will indicate at which stage to fill in what.

⁹⁴ Bergtheil, 1896/1930: 10.

Firstly we will fill in the bedroom section marked with a number 2. In the indicated space, we encourage you to record the name of someone that you can think of that is afraid of being forgotten or who was left out of a narrative.

ACTOR 2: While we do not know much more about the Zulu Bergtheil took with him overseas, we do know Bergtheil returned with 47 German families who settled in a place in Durban called New Germany.⁹⁵

ACTOR 1: Not very original if you ask me.

ACTOR 2: No, you would have thought they would have come up with a new name.

ACTOR 1: The information presented here in this performed news dialogue about Bergtheil's trip to Germany was actually recorded in *The Natal Mercury* in 1940, as portrayed by the Reporter, as well as a translated letter written and spoken by Jonas Bergtheil himself in 1896. The genuine translated words of Bergtheil were incorporated into the acted dialogue.

ACTOR 2: So we know what he actually thought because we have his real words?

ACTOR 1: Of a sort. We have to remember that he was writing for a certain audience, the letter was translated and just this year adapted into dramatic writing by our director.

ACTOR 2: So while we may get some insight into his life, we may never know what he really thought.

ACTOR 1: Do we ever know what someone is really thinking? Now let's journey on into our third stop, as recorded here on the Map of Memories, the kitchen.

The ACTORS take the visitors in to the kitchen.

ACTOR 2: This is the kitchen area of the house. One item of interest is this machine, a kind of loom used for making socks, as it has close links with a documented person who once used it. No not a Bergtheil, but rather a Miss Florrie Rigby.

ACTOR 1 assumes the role of FLORRIE RIGBY in the first person.

FLORRIE: My name is Florrie Rigby and I worked as a young apprentice that used this machine to make socks. I sent some of the socks to King Edward, the seventh, and his wife Alexandra.

⁹⁵ *The Natal Mercury*, 24 May 1940.

ACTOR 2: Would you believe it but the King, through various channels, replied to Florrie's gift in this letter written in 1902.

FLORRIE: (*reading the letter*) This is the letter I received. It reads, "Miss Knollys is commanded by The Queen to thank Miss Florrie Rigby for her kind intentions, but at the same time to return the enclosed contained in her letter, as Their Majesties have been obliged to make it a rule never to accept presents of this nature from anyone with whom they have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance".⁹⁶

ACTOR 2: Well that's a pity to have your gift sent back to you, but Florrie Rigby was probably thrilled to receive a letter from the king of all people.

ACTOR 1: On your map marked with a number 3, would you please fill in a gift you have given or received, not necessarily material, that was very important to you.

ACTOR 2: Now that we have explored a part of the house as it might have looked all those years ago, let us now proceed to the other half of the house.

The ACTORS guide the visitors to the Stone and Iron Age room.

ACTOR 2: Welcome to a room a bit different from what you have just seen on the other side of the house.

ACTOR 1: Both are about people living 'here' in Durban, just not necessarily at the same time.

ACTOR 2: It is interesting to note that the original curator who we spoke about earlier, Calboutin, received a complaint that the Museum did not cater to all people in the area.

ACTOR 1: Because it dealt mainly with German settler history?

ACTOR 2: Likely. This was her response noted in a letter that she wrote in 1997. Welcome Mrs Calboutin, please address us.

ACTOR 1 becomes the curator CALBOUTIN.

CALBOUTIN: "[T]he choice of themes for this Museum was not an arbitrary decision made by the Curator alone, but was the result of careful research in co-operation with Museum Services Staff. A unique and extremely interesting aspect of Natal history was identified and used as the central focus of the Museum. [...] The Museum does, in fact, contain relevant information on other cultural groups and no visitor is given the

⁹⁶ Letter in Bergtheil Museum kitchen exhibition.

impression that the history of the area began with arrival of the Natal Cotton Company Settlers.”⁹⁷

ACTOR 2: Whether or not you agree with Mrs Calboutin, this particular exhibition does not focus on the German settlers but instead highlights that those who lived in this house were not the first people here in this part of the country.

CALBOUTIN: An excavation was conducted here on the Bergtheil property where items such as china and glass were found, as well as the presence of pre-colonial artefacts such as an Iron Age potsherd. This discovery either indicates that this site on which the house is built may have been occupied in pre-colonial times or that the excavated objects were incorporated into the building rubble.⁹⁸

ACTOR 2: The presence of other people on this property before the Germans might not be conclusive, but an excavation conducted at the iGwalagwala cliff in Palmiet Nature Reserve in Durban, from 2004 to 2006, revealed beyond question that this area has been inhabited by many different people.⁹⁹

CALBOUTIN: The evidence unearthed in the dig revealed the presence of hunter-gathers during the Middle Stone Age and Late Stone Age.¹⁰⁰

ACTOR 2: Other evidence revealed that Early African Farmers, people involved in the Anglo-Boer War as well as Indian market gardeners were all present at different stages in this area.¹⁰¹

ACTOR 1: (*out of character*) It is quite something to imagine that people so many years ago may have been standing in this area speaking to each other in a language that likely wasn't English.

ACTOR 2: I wonder what they would have said to one another. They didn't really write letters like Bergtheil.

ACTOR 1: No, but it doesn't mean they didn't speak about issues that were relevant to them.

ACTOR 1: (*as person from the Stone Age*) You hungry?

ACTOR 2: (*as person from the Stone Age*) Yes, you?

⁹⁷ Calboutin, 1997: 3.

⁹⁸ From “Archaeological Research at the Westville Historical Museum”, n.d.: 3.

⁹⁹ Lange & Ngema, 2016: 26.

¹⁰⁰ Lange & Ngema, 2016: 26.

¹⁰¹ Lange & Ngema, 2016: 26.

ACTOR 1: (*as person from the Stone Age*) Yes. You thirsty?

ACTOR 2: (*as person from the Stone Age*) Yes. Let's make a meal of it.

ACTOR 1: They probably did talk about issues regarding survival. Current issues may be considered more complicated, structured around technology and making money. But at the root of it all, we have to eat. All those people, living in this area at different times, span thousands of years; from over 350 000 years ago.¹⁰² Now that's a long time.

ACTOR 2: What diversity in one area, of which we have a piece in this exhibition here at Bergtheil.

ACTOR 1: Just goes to show you don't need specific ancestry to find a piece of heritage here.

ACTOR 2: If you dig far enough down into the ground you begin to realise just how many other people walked on it before you.

ACTOR 1: And just how many more are going to walk on it after us.

ACTOR 2: Please will you record on your Map of Memories, next to the number 4, a part of the legacy you want to leave in the strata to join the collected evidence of those gone before. A legacy does not have to be a great and famous feat but something you want to be remembered for.

ACTOR 1: What is your unique footprint?

ACTOR 2: Now we are off to church.

The ACTORS move the visitors along to the missionary room.

ACTOR 2: Once the German settlers were established they needed a place to worship and a person to lead them as well as act as a missionary to the local people.

ACTOR 1: That person was Karl Wilhelm Posselt who was a missionary in South Africa from 1838 to 1885. You are welcomed as part of his congregation.

ACTOR 2: Before they could get to Natal, Posselt and his wife, Christiane Schonheit, and their children had to travel through the Drakensberg Mountains by wagon before getting to New Germany. This is Christiane Schonheit's account, adapted from the recorded words of her husband, of the trip through the mountains. We do not know

¹⁰² Lange & Ngema, 2016: 26.

what she really thought as her thoughts were not recorded; instead she speaks her husband's observations.

ACTOR 1 assumes the role of CHRISTIANE SCHONHEIT holding a baby in her arms.

CHRISTIANE: The children and I left with my husband to act as missionaries in a new place. "The descent of the heavy wagons over a steep road, broken up by steps of sandstone, was indeed frightening. We skirted sheer precipices; the abrupt incline made it necessary at times to impede both rear wheels by means of chains."¹⁰³ I was very frightened. I didn't know if we would ever get our destination.

ACTOR 2: This treacherous journey was not kind to the family. Christiane, and their newly born child, Nathanael, "were injured during the journey when the wagon capsized in the crossing of yet another river".¹⁰⁴ Both died a few days apart in 1848. Neither made it to the final destination.

ACTOR 1: Imagine travelling by wagon over several mountains.

ACTOR 2: Do you recall seeing that wagon wheel outside on the stoep? If not, have a look when you go outside at the end of our journey. If you think how big the wheel is, it's no wonder the whole vehicle was so difficult and dangerous to drive on uneven terrain.

ACTOR 1: In 1969, a man named Waldy requested the preservation of Christiane and Nathanael's grave stone stipulating that it was to be taken to a place of safe-keeping.

ACTOR 2: The actual inscription on the grave stone has been written in your Map of Memories.

ACTOR 1: Next to station 5 on your Map, please will you fill in the name of a person or an event in your life that passed on too soon, that you would like to commemorate.

ACTOR 2: Despite the tragedy occurring on the way to Natal, Posselt established his congregation ministering to both Germans and Zulus.

ACTOR 1: This cross in the centre of the room had significance for the Zulu congregants that were in Posselt's church. They did not have their own church building until 1876, nearly thirty years after Posselt's arrival.

ACTOR 2 assumes the role of POSSELT.

¹⁰³ Posselt, n.d.: 60.

¹⁰⁴ Schwegman, n.d.: 1.

POSSELT: “At the beginning of 1876, by the grace of God, this modest church stood completed; its well-built walls, fully covered with cement plaster, carried a galvanised iron roof, and this cast-iron cross stood by its side. [...] The opening service in the new church was planned for 13 February. My daughter Sophie and many Zulu girls had decorated the Church inside out with wreaths and palm leaves”.¹⁰⁵

ACTOR 1: If you look closely at the cross from that very church, you can see it has gold inscriptions on both sides: “Inhlu yenkosi nesangu lezulu. 1 Moses 28,17” - meaning “House of God and doorway to heaven”; and on the other side “Der Gemeinde zu Christenburg von der Missionsgemeinde in Frankfurt 9.O” – “For the Congregation of Christenburg from the mission congregation in Frankfurt-on-O”.¹⁰⁶

ACTOR 2: Posselt felt such a connection to this country that in his reminiscings he asked to die and be buried here.¹⁰⁷ He died in 1885 in the country he claimed he had so completely identified with.

ACTOR 1: My question is did the country identify with him?

ACTOR 2: Now for the last leg of our journey. Please board the *Belverdere* as we travel with the indentured Indians to the coast of Natal.

The ACTORS guide the visitors to the Indian wedding attire room.

ACTOR 1: You know (*says other actor's name*), we probably shouldn't board the *Belverdere* as on that particular ship an outbreak of cholera occurred killing 24 people.¹⁰⁸

ACTOR 2: Good to know.

ACTOR 1: Welcome to the last room of our journey. This is the room of Indian wedding attire.

ACTOR 2: Just as we have a settler history in KZN as well as the rich heritage of the Zulu nation, we also have the Indian community whose ancestors first arrived in November 1860 to form part of the indentured labour force mainly on sugar cane fields in Durban.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Posselt, n.d.: 142.

¹⁰⁶ Posselt, n.d.: 142.

¹⁰⁷ Posselt, n.d.: 135.

¹⁰⁸ Munsamy, 1999: 12.

¹⁰⁹ Freund, 1995: 3.

ACTOR 1: Do you think that our South African Indians' ancestors that came to Natal all those years ago really left India behind?

ACTOR 2: What do you mean?

ACTOR 1: Well, have you noticed many contemporary South African Indians still perform many cultural and religious practices that originated from India?

ACTOR 2: Yes, well something like weddings, which are often regarded as a rite of passage, are often tied up in culture and religion.

ACTOR 1: But since culture is not static, rituals and cultural rites adapt to the new situation, with some things changing a lot and others not as much.

ACTOR 2: So actually we have a hub of new and old and somewhere in between.

ACTOR 1: In terms of the 'old', do you think the issue of caste is still prevalent in South Africa today?

ACTOR 2: You mean the evaluation and exclusion of people according to 'class'?¹¹⁰

ACTOR 1: Yes, this is what George Muthukistna, an ex-indentured labourer in the 1880s thought about it:

ACTOR 2 assumes the role of GEORGE.

GEORGE: "I think the caste feeling has disappeared in Natal; this disappearance commences immediately the Indians get on board ship. The little feeling of caste, which exists in Natal, is kept up by the Mauritian Indian merchants, who think themselves apart from the Natal Indian people [...] I have taken my caste and left it with the Port Officer."¹¹¹

ACTOR 1: This recollection is in fact a combination of two different historical people's perspectives about the caste system. The question is how much does class dictate our perceptions of others today?

ACTOR 2: Have we left these differences with the port officer?

ACTOR 1: Should we leave them there?

ACTOR 2: I guess it is about how we negotiate all this difference.

¹¹⁰ Naidoo, 2012: Website 25.

¹¹¹ Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2000: 13.

ACTOR 1: Yes, we have such diverse heritage, but how to make a connection to it all? Please will you all take out your Map of Memories and record something that you want to change, leave behind or start anew at station 6.

ACTOR 2: Let's return to the porch where we began this journey.

The ACTORS take the visitors back onto the porch.

ACTOR 2: Maybe you had an encounter with a person or group of people that are associated with your ancestry.

ACTOR 1: Maybe you encountered yourself. Or maybe your encounter was not as direct.

ACTOR 2: But you don't need a direct encounter to go on a new journey.

ACTOR 1: This is the end of this particular voyage.

ACTOR 2: This is not our last.

ACTOR 1: We all have more footprints to leave behind.

ACTOR 2: Where will yours go?

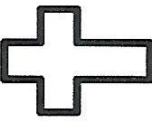
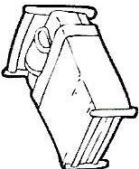

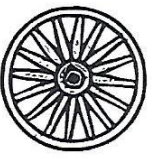
ACTOR 1: Who will they walk beside?

ACTOR 2: How easily will it be to unearth them in years to come?


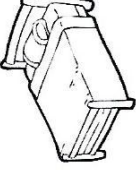

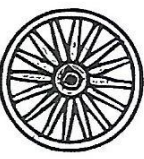
ACTOR 1 & 2: This is *Our Footprints*.

FACILITATOR: Thank you for sharing in this journey with our actor-guides, myself and the Bergtheil Museum. This particular museum theatre piece is only part of the history presented in this museum, in these archives and in the area. This is not the whole truth. Most of what was presented here today in this journey was what I found interesting; what struck a chord with me. There are more stories which have not been highlighted. There are more angles to discuss and more footprints to be unearthed. I would now like to open up the space for any questions you might have for me as the writer and director, and the actors, regarding the performance and/or the museum professionals about the exhibits and the Museum itself. Please feel free to return to the museum after the question and answer session to look at the exhibitions again.

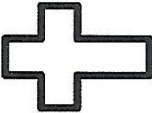
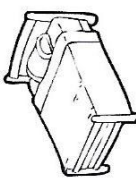

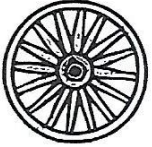
Appendix 2:
Blank Map of Memories

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>6. Indian Wedding Attire</p> <p>----- (Something to change, leave behind or start anew)</p> | <p>5. Missionary</p> <p></p> <p>----- (Person or event that passed too soon)</p> | <p>Hier Ruht Meine Theure Ehefrau Christine Gest. 7 April 1848 Und Neben IHR Mein Sohn Nathanael Gest. 22 Marz 1848 Offenb. VII. 17. C. W. Posselt</p> | <p>Map of Memories <i>Our Footprints</i> By Stephanie Jenkins Bergtheil Museum 2017</p> <p>----- <i>"An event lived is finished, bound within experience. But an event remembered is boundless because it is the key to all that happened before and after it".</i> Tonkin, E. 1992. <i>Narrating Our Past</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p67.</p> |
| <p>4. Stone and Iron Age</p> <p>----- (A legacy)</p> | <p>Foyer</p> <p>=====</p> | <p>2. Bedroom</p> <p></p> <p>----- (A person afraid of being forgotten or left out of a narrative)</p> | <p>3. Kitchen</p> <p>----- (A gift)</p> |
| <p>1&7 - Porch</p> <p></p> | | <p></p> | |

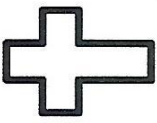
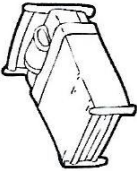

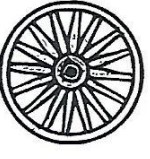
Appendix 3:
Audience Map of Memories
Example 1

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>6. Indian Wedding Attire <i>start - Travel</i> <i>Change - Reason</i> <i>start anew - Education</i> <small>(Something to change, leave behind or start anew)</small></p> | <p>Missionary</p> <p>5. </p> <p><i>Muzi Mashini - Uncle</i> <small>(Person or event that passed too soon)</small></p> | <p>Hier Ruht Meine Theure Ehefrau Christine Gest. 7 April 1848 Und Neben IHR Mein Sohn Nathanael Gest. 22 Marz 1848 Offenb. VII. 17. C. W. Posselt</p> | <p>Map of Memories Our Footprints By Stephanie Jenkins Bergtheil Museum 2017</p> <p><i>"An event lived is finished, bound within experience. But an event remembered is boundless because it is the key to all that happened before and after it".</i> Tonkin, E. 1992. <i>Narrating Our Past</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p67.</p> |
| <p>4. Stone and Iron Age</p> <p><i>Children's Quality Education</i> <i>Regardless of Creed or Colour</i> <small>(A legacy)</small></p> | <p>Foyer</p> | <p>3. Kitchen</p> <p><i>Grandparents</i> <small>(A gift)</small></p> <p>2. Bedroom</p> <p></p> <p><i>Howard Nause</i> <small>(A person afraid of being forgotten or left out of a narrative)</small></p> | |
| <p>1&7 - Porch</p> | <p></p> | <p></p> | |

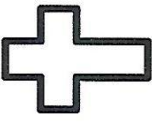
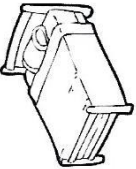

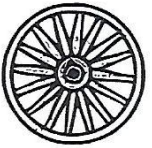
Appendix 4:
Audience Map of Memories
Example 2

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>6. Indian Wedding Attire</p> <p><u>Learn Zulu</u></p> <p>(Something to change, leave behind or start anew)</p> | <p>5. Missionary</p> <p></p> <p><u>Michael (diease 18)</u></p> <p>(Person or event that passed too soon)</p> | <p>Map of Memories Our Footprints By Stephanie Jenkins Bergtheil Museum 2017</p> <p><i>"An event lived is finished, bound within experience. But an event remembered is boundless because it is the key to all that happened before and after it".</i> Tonkin, E. 1992. <i>Narrating Our Past</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p67.</p> | <p>3. Kitchen</p> <p><u>Car</u></p> <p>(A gift)</p> |
| <p>4. Stone and Iron Age</p> <p><u>Pleasant memories</u></p> <p>(A legacy)</p> | <p>2. Bedroom</p> <p></p> <p><u>Thomas Baynes</u></p> <p>(A person afraid of being forgotten or left out of a narrative)</p> | | |
| <p>1&7 – Porch</p> <p></p> | | <p></p> | |


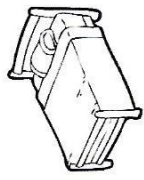
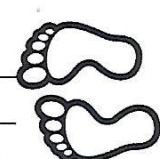
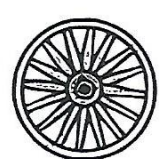
Appendix 5:
Audience Map of Memories
Example 3

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>6. Indian Wedding Attire</p> <p><u>The Patriarchy</u>----- (Something to change, leave behind or start anew)</p> | <p>5. Missionary</p> <p></p> <p>Suren Chetty (1976 - 2013) ----- (Person or event that passed too soon)</p> | <p>Hier Ruht Meine Theure Ehefrau Christine Gest. 7 April 1848 Und Neben IHR Mein Sohn Nathanael Gest. 22 Marz 1848 Offenb. VII. 17. C. W. Posselt</p> | <p>Map of Memories Our Footprints By Stephanie Jenkins Bergtheil Museum 2017</p> <p>“An event lived is finished, bound within experience. But an event remembered is boundless because it is the key to all that happened before and after it.” Tonkin, E. 1992. <i>Narrating Our Past</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p67.</p> |
| <p>4. Stone and Iron Age</p> <p>1. Someone who contributed to the work and recognition of South African Indian Women Playwrights</p> <p>2. Importance of Family (A legacy)</p> | <p>Foyer</p> | <p>2.</p> <p></p> <p>Bedroom</p> <p>3.</p> <p>Kitchen</p> <p>21st Party and Guest with my name on it. (from my parents) (A gift)</p> <p>Sigro (character in nothing) but the Truth by John Kan (A person afraid of being forgotten or left out of a narrative)</p> | |
| <p>1&7 - Porch</p> <p></p> | | <p></p> | |

Appendix 6:
Audience Map of Memories
Example 4

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>6. Indian Wedding Attire</p> <p><i>dean Gaelic</i></p> <p>(Something to change, leave behind or start anew)</p> | <p>5. Missionary</p> <p></p> <p><i>ouple</i></p> <p>(Person or event that passed too soon)</p> | <p>Hier Ruht Meine Theure Ehefrau Christine Gest. 7 April 1848 Und Neben IHR Mein Sohn Nathanael Gest. 22 Marz 1848 Offenb. VII. 17. C. W. Posselt</p> | <p>Map of Memories Our Footprints By Stephanie Jenkins Bergtheil Museum 2017</p> <p><i>"An event lived is finished, bound within experience. But an event remembered is boundless because it is the key to all that happened before and after it".</i> Tonkin, E. 1992. <i>Narrating Our Past</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p67.</p> |
| <p>4. Stone and Iron Age</p> <p><i>Amman who loved God</i></p> <p>(A legacy)</p> | <p>Foyer</p> | <p>2. Bedroom</p> <p></p> <p><i>Nandi (Shaka's mother)</i></p> <p>(A person afraid of being forgotten or left out of a narrative)</p> | <p>3. Kitchen</p> <p><i>my 21st King</i></p> <p>(A gift)</p> |
| <p>1 & 7 – Porch</p> <p></p> | | <p></p> | |

Appendix 7:
Stephanie Jenkins's
Map of Memories

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>6. Indian Wedding Attire <i>I would like to wear less + live more in the moment</i> (Something to change, leave behind or start anew)</p> | <p>Hier Ruht Meine Theure Ehefrau Christine Gest. 7 April 1848 Und Neben IHR Mein Sohn Nathanael Gest. 22 März 1848 Offenb. VII. 17. C. W. Posselt</p> | <p>Map of Memories Our Footprints By Stephanie Jenkins Bergtheil Museum 2017</p> <p><i>"An event lived is finished, bound within experience. But an event remembered is boundless because it is the key to all that happened before and after it".</i> Tonkin, E. 1992. Narrating Our Past. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p67.</p> |
| <p>5. Missionary  <i>My History Teacher who passed away from cancer.</i> (Person or event that passed too soon)</p> | <p>3. Kitchen <i>Letters written from my mom throughout my childhood.</i> (A gift)</p> | <p>2. Bedroom  <i>Elderly people living in Retirement Homes</i> (A person afraid of being forgotten or left out of a narrative)</p> |
| <p>4. Stone and Iron Age <i>A questioning individual who never stopped learning.</i> (A legacy)</p> | <p>Foyer </p> | <p>1 & 7 - Porch </p> |

Appendix 8:
‘Bergtheil Museum Experience’
ArtSmart Article by Dawn Haynes
(Website 13)

ARTSMART

arts news from kwazulu-natal

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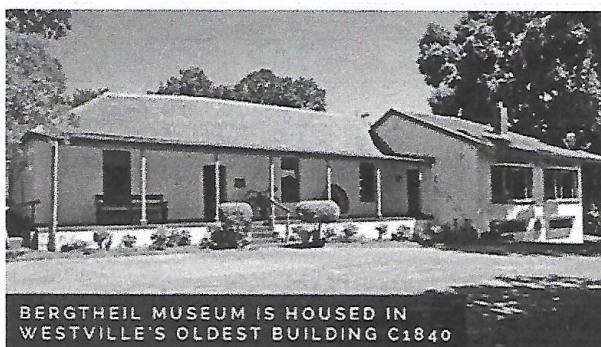
Presented by....



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2017

BERGTHEIL MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

BOOKING:
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(Report by Dawn Haynes)

I recently visited The Bergtheil Museum in Westville. This museum is housed in the oldest building in Westville, just off King's Road.

The house still has most of the original walls and yellowwood flooring and has been well preserved. It was occupied by Jonas Bergtheil who arrived in the 1840's and was instrumental in bringing more than 200 German settlers to Westville. They settled on the banks of the Palmiet River and established farms there. Recent excavations have unearthed many valuable and interesting artefacts from the banks of the Palmiet, and these are on view in the Museum.

Having visited this museum before, I was thrilled to experience the museum in an interesting and innovative way! This is thanks to Stephanie Jenkins who is a Masters student and UKZN specialising in Museum Drama. We were welcomed at the entrance by two Drama students, Nosipho Sikhakane and Sfundu Sosibo. Standing in two large footprints painted on an entrance mat, we began our exploration of the museum by literally "walking in the footprints" of the early Settlers.

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12/23/2017

artSMart: BERGTHEIL MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

There are seven main areas in this museum and each of us was given a "Map of Memories" to recall a significant personal memory relating to each main room. In this way we were totally involved and participating throughout.

Nospipo and Sfundu used simple props and costumes in each room to become characters from the past and act out simple, relevant scenes which highlighted some of the main stories associated with this museum. They had us enthralled as they led us through the museum giving interesting facts and making the history of the area and its early Settlers such fun!

We went from the foyer to the bedroom, kitchen, Stone and Iron Age room, Church room and finally the Indian wedding room. Each room became a living piece of history as these talented performers brought the past to life.

Museum Drama is new in South Africa and I can honestly say that it is the best way to learn, experience and appreciate history. Stephanie Jenkins obviously has a love for history and her research was excellent. The final script was exciting and meaningful. It was well interpreted by the two performers and the *Map of Memories* had every one of us totally involved throughout.

I do hope this performance will be repeated at the Bergtheil so that many more locals, especially young students, can benefit from this Museum Experience.

Well done and thank you for including me in this original experience. - Dawn Haynes

POSTED BY ARTSMART AT 4:33 PM 

LABELS: DRAMA, LEISURESMART, MISCELLANEOUS

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NEW SUMMER COLLECTION

Appendix 9:
Extract of Playwriting
and
Research Journal

22 May 2017 – Going on a journey

The notion of the journey has fascinated me in my research. Journeys involve movement from place to place, seeing both known and new things. A new perspective will be gained at the end of the journey, even if the same journey has been walked before; something new often occurs when a journey is taken again but may not always be noticed. Through my exploration of history and its portrayal I am interested in making history – including looking at the ‘same’ well-known history in a new light – as a journey worth taking.

As we ‘journey’ we have to consider various aspects of the process. In literal journeys items of travel are required to make the journey easier and more comfortable. The image of shoes stuck with me. After completing the ECR Big Walk in 2017 I noticed how important the right shoes are. I would not have completed the race in the time I did without wearing comfortable shoes.

I would like to extend this idea of proper fitting shoes as necessity for a journey. If the shoes do not fit, our journey is stunted. Yet too often the shoes we have been given to walk the ‘journey of history’ are ill-fitting and clearly not designed for us. They are created for specific people and the rest, the majority, are expected to make do with the myth of the one-size-fits-all they have been given. History has often been exclusive and has written out the voices of the disempowered.

I want to use the image of an ‘exclusive’ shoe in my museum theatre piece. At this stage I can see a pair of large, old men’s shoes placed at the door step of the house with the instruction “to gain entry, you must fit perfectly into the shoes”. Too bad for people with small feet or feet that are too big, this history is inaccessible. And then the shoes will be removed and all can enter. I hope to elaborate more on this.

26 May 2017 – To act or not to act?

What is my practical piece going to look like? In my planning so far I want to use two actors that play multiple characters and take people on a journey through the rooms of the house to explore both the history of the exhibitions as well as the area. This inspiration is partially taken from the format of *The Accursed Thing* (Jackson & Kidd, 2007) which also uses two actors that move through multiple rooms of the Manchester museum.

I am yet undecided about who the actors are – in terms of race and gender. At the moment I am considering two different races, e.g. one black and one white to create an opportunity for

dialogue between the different races that settled in the Westville area. However, race is not prescriptive as they will likely play a historical character that is not of their race, e.g. if two German settlers are in conversation then at least one actor will have to pretend to be white. I want to play with this device of slippage as it prevents the narrative from being straight forward and it forces the audience to re-evaluate possible past perceptions. However, I need to be careful of creating confusion. The moving in and out of different characters needs to be clear and should not detract from the history that is represented.

I have a similar idea about gender roles. I would like to have one woman and one man as actor-guides as a way to open up discussion on issues like the woman's 'role' in the house. The actor-guides also will likely move between playing male and female characters; the establishment of one male and one female figure creates an interesting balance with which to work.

The other decision I have to make is to what role I want to play within the museum piece. I definitely want to be involved to some extent as this is my version of events and I want to make this subject position known from the outset. Therefore, my involvement can range from facilitator who gives a brief introduction and then removes myself from the action until the conclusion, or I can cast myself as one of the actors and include my process of making the piece as part of the action as actor-within-the-performance, as well as facilitation.

Both ideas around my involvement are plausible and both have potential problems. If I remain detached during the performance I am leaving much of the historical interpretation (though scripted by me) to the student actors who have not directly researched the history of the institution. This is not to say that they cannot provide insight into the working of the museum and encourage discussion around the script and the histories present, but the reality is that they are volunteers who are likely not interested in the process or the outcome to the same extent as I am. I also have to consider how to include their subject positions into the piece. This angle will however create an opportunity for me to have more of an external eye to the workings, rehearsal and performance than if I am involved as an actor.

If I include myself as an actor I will have to be careful to maintain balance between my own interpretations, the museum's presentation of the history, my fellow actor's subject position as well as the audience's potential perception. This can be negotiated and is part of the process of being a practitioner. I would need to request assistance from my supervisor to give an alternate perspective to my own development of the piece to help me from becoming overly immersed in the piece. I have to keep in mind that my objective is to explore and present multiple angles to historical narratives and not just one – which could easily become focused on my own

interpretation. This is not to say my interpretation will be not be important as I am interested in writing sections that express my own viewpoints, my fellow actor's subject position as well as the museum's intention within the piece as a means to illustrate the subjectivity of history and its construction. Therefore, being involved as an actor may be an interesting dimension to include in the piece. I will continue to deliberate.

Appendix 10:
***Our Footprints* DVD**

