WHOSE HERITAGE
MATTERS
mapping ● making ● mobilising

Mapping, Making and Mobilising Cultural Heritage in Cape Town and Kisumu

A GRAPHIC REPORT FROM THE WHOSE HERITAGE MATTERS PROJECT

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THE STORY OF
the project under COVID

Project overview

The Whose Heritage Matters project was designed to understand whether, and if so how, cultural heritage could be mobilised to support more sustainable and just urban futures in Cape Town and Kisumu.

Our goal was to co-produce the project with local partners through:

mapping tangible and intangible cultural heritage meanings and values

enabling the **making** of cultural heritage through active interventions

mobilising knowledge and partnerships to support local community organisations and actors in navigating contested values and uses for cultural heritage
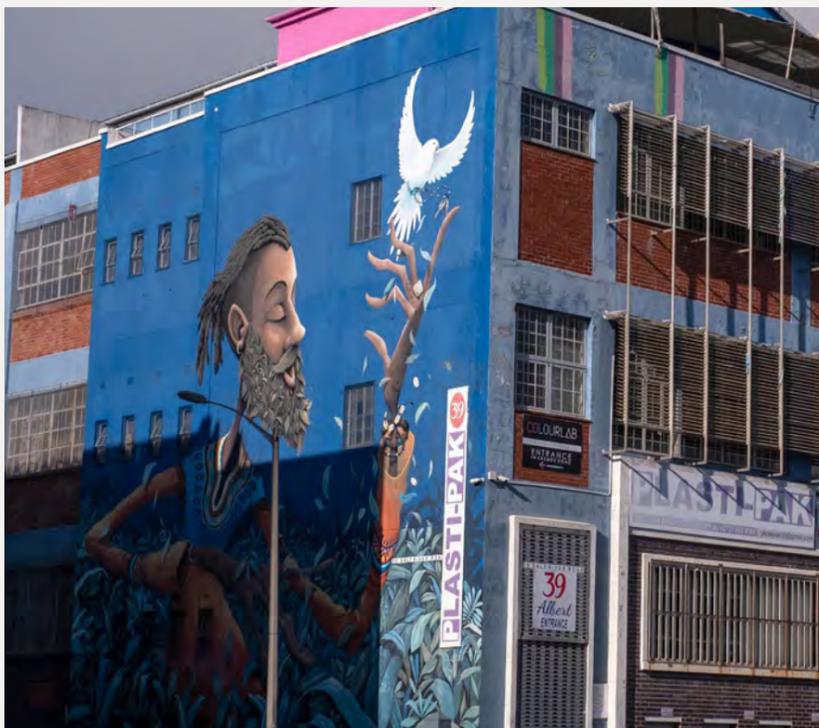
Top to bottom: Fred Odede interviewing site representative; Woodstock, Cape Town [credit: Barry Christianson]

Our action-oriented approach meant grounding the project
in locally-produced understandings of critical challenges and
opportunities to mobilise cultural heritage for sustainable futures.

A central aim was to critically explore what **international targets and agendas** for cultural heritage and sustainable development mean in the context of entrenched and everyday urban challenges.

The collaboration underpinning the project was supported by the Mistra Urban Futures network which enabled **researchers in the UK, South Africa and Kenya**, working on the intersections between culture, justice and the city, to form and test partnerships.
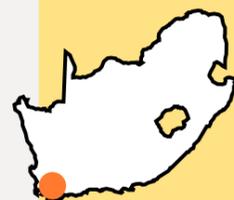
The project was launched at an inception meeting in **Cape Town in 2018**, and the full team met again in Sheffield in 2019 – for what was, to date, the last time. The project was dramatically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We re-oriented work to support our partners in Cape Town and Kisumu, led by what mattered most to them at this time of deep trauma and disruption.

Co-production and comparison

We centred a commitment to co-production in our research design, working with creative, community and policy partners to integrate different forms of expertise.

Co-production meant:
- aligning the work with local priorities
- a decentralised approach to decision-making
- creating spaces for participating and active shaping of the project
- valuing and synergising expertise
- de-colonising research wherever possible

Comparison meant:
- shared matters of concern and care
- dissimilar cases and contexts
- differentiated designs
- focus on learning above generalisation
- collective strategies for mobilisation and agenda-setting

This approach was crucial in helping to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. It meant we could be adaptive, flexible and creative in finding ways to deliver the project.

REFLECTIVE

REITERATIVE

RELATIONAL

RESPONSIVE

REFLEXIVE

CO-PRODUCTIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES INFORMING THE PROJECT

Shared matters of concern

Polyvalency:
there are multiple meanings and values of and for cultural heritage which requires a holistic approach

Entanglements:
cultural heritage is mobilised and shaped by intersecting geographies, scales, sectors, interests and temporalities

Heritagization:
cultural heritage is fluid and not fixed; it is made and re-made, processual and progressive

Plurality and contestation:
there are multiple claims and sites of authority in determining whose heritage matters
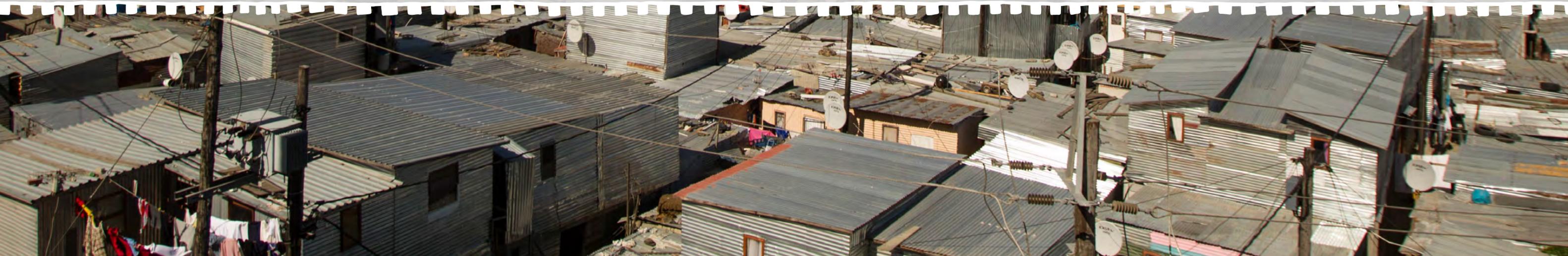
Cape Town

Cape Town remains stubbornly divided and socio-economically unequal. Of the approximately **3,8 million people**, around 24% are unemployed. The **spatial legacy of colonialism and apartheid** still shapes the urban form, where the majority of residents live in **precarious conditions** due to poverty, gang violence and natural hazards. 12% of residents live in informal dwellings and in slum conditions.

Cape Town has explicitly prioritised culture and heritage as key to its identity and branding strategy and has a **rich and varied cultural heritage sector**. Instrumentalising heritage in cities has had unintended consequences, such as essentialising culture and imposing nationalist agendas, resulting in **elite-centric urban development** and neglect of the intangible, relational and fluid nature of cultural heritage.

Although the importance of intangible heritage is recognised in the creative sector, it is less well acknowledged in urban and spatial development. In addition, it is unsurprising that unequal power dynamics play out in all realms of society, and particular kinds of heritage seem to matter more than others.
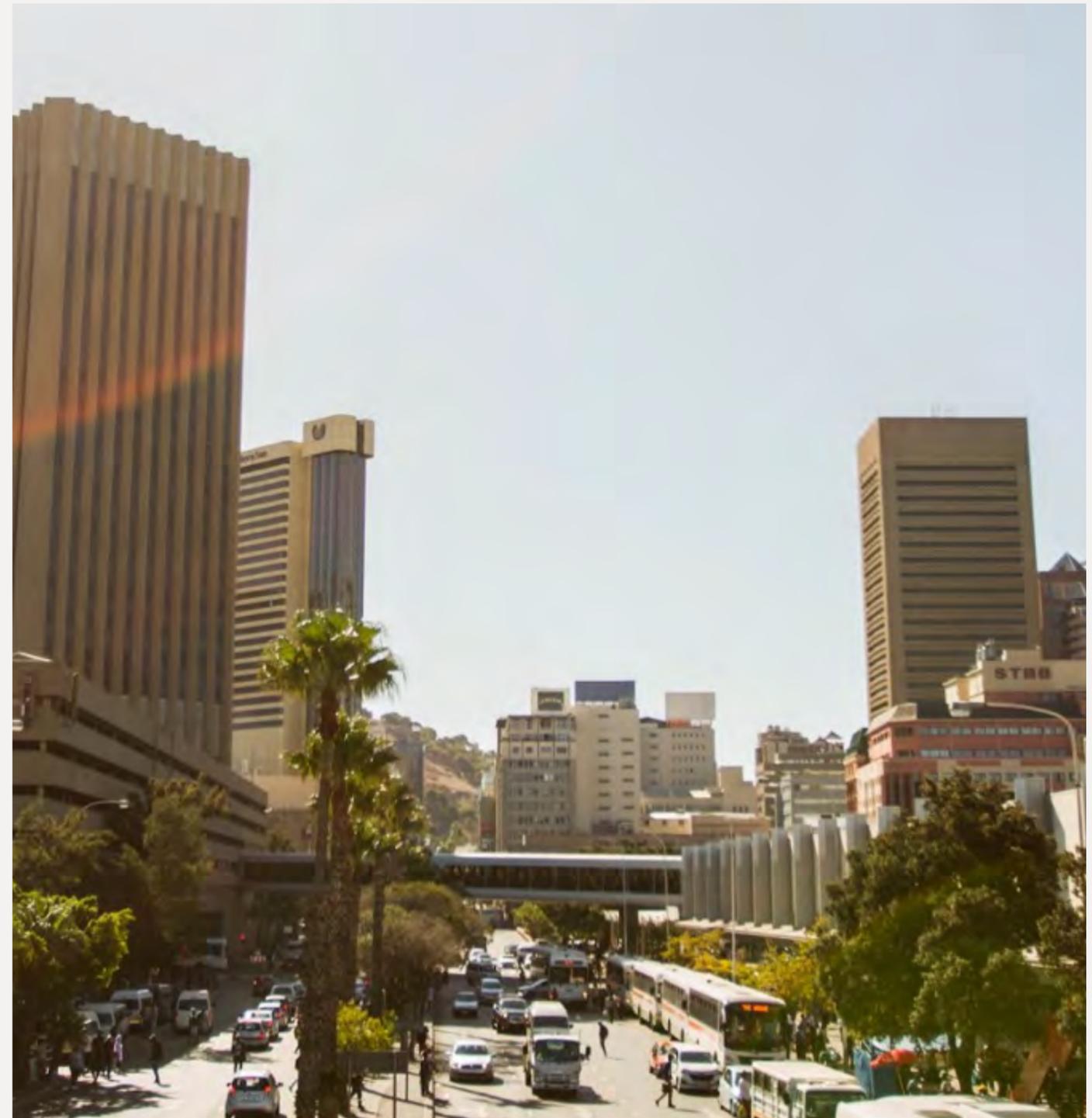
Strand Street [credit: Andy Mkosi]

WHOSE HERITAGE MATTERS IN CAPE TOWN

Whose Heritage Matters aligned with existing research at the African Centre for Cities focusing on the role of arts, culture and heritage. It built on collaboration with the City of Cape Town through its Knowledge Transfer Programme with the Arts & Culture Branch and Heritage Branch, and existing relationships with heritage practitioners in civil society.

Mapping the terrain, paying attention to different heritage actors and values that shape their engagement with Cape Town

Experimenting with creative heritage interventions to explore the role of heritage in researching and reckoning with the past in conflicted places, with an eye to just urban futures

Leveraging knowledge, action and networks to shape public discourse and identify strategies to strengthen policy and implementation in Cape Town

METHODS OF MAPPING, MAKING AND MOBILISING

- Desk review of policies and state mandates
- Reflective interviews and interviews with policy officials, academics, artists, activists
- Scan of heritage sector organisations
- Creative research

- Values, power and situational mapping with project partners
- Performance, calligraffiti, video, painting, mosaic
- Policy co-production

- Co-production workshops at Greatmore Studios (pictured)
- Conference panels and proceedings
- Curriculum design
- Network development

Kisumu

Kisumu is located on the Winam Gulf on the eastern shores of Lake Victoria, the world's largest freshwater lake. Kisumu is the primary lake port and **Kenya's third largest city**. 60% of the population reside on 5% of the land within the city, which has high levels of **poverty, food insecurity and low employment**, particularly for young people and women.

Kisumu boasts **diverse cultural heritage resources** that are uniquely and spatially distributed on the landscape, laced with scenic landforms that traverse the city and its environs.

How such resources can be mobilised in support of wider development goals, including poverty reduction and economic growth, whilst protecting natural and cultural heritage, are key concerns. This is particularly important as **local people around cultural and sacred sites have sought to secure their livelihoods through unsustainable practices** – such as quarrying, deforestation or sand harvesting. Environmental challenges include indiscriminate bush and vegetation clearances for agriculture, and over-extraction of natural resources for fuel, medicine or building materials.

Boats at Dunga Beach

WHOSE HERITAGE MATTERS IN KISUMU

Whose Heritage Matters aligned with existing research at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology to develop viable, community-managed cultural heritage sites, foster local empowerment, and contribute to poverty reduction through ecotourism, as an alternative to unsustainable economic practices.

Mapping the terrain, paying attention to values around **four cultural heritage sites** in Kisumu, policy and organisational contexts, and tensions and contradictions

Evidencing the role of community-based organisations in making heritage, through negotiations around values, uses and strategies

Working with community researchers to visibilise the impacts of COVID-19 on the lives and livelihoods of residents around the cultural heritage sites

METHODS OF MAPPING, MAKING AND MOBILISING

- A collaborative community workshop, using drawings to represent cultural heritage in Kisumu: 46 people from 11 organisations
- Site visits and bilateral discussions
- Interviews with policy officials, academics and community members, including focus groups
- Desk-based policy review and literature review
- Panel discussion with Elders at the Got Ramogi festival
- WhatsApp group for sharing experiences and challenges during COVID
- Community researcher interviews, with County Assembly, chiefs, clan heads, sub-chiefs, village elders, businessmen, clergy, residents
- Consultative discussions at the sites

Cape Town

Cape Town

The collaboration built on a shared interest in identifying ways to tackle siloed approaches to heritage, and to see how heritage can be better leveraged for sustainability, justice and place-making.

Greatmore Studios: an artist-led studio space established in 1988, one of the few non-commercial art studios and exhibition spaces in Cape Town. It has a long history of supporting emerging, critical, and radical Black artists and holds an important position in the arts sector in South Africa. It is in Greatmore Street in the historic suburb of Woodstock.

African Centre for Cities: an action-oriented applied research centre based at the University of Cape Town. ACC's research focuses on collaborative research and developing imaginative policy discourses and practices to promote vibrant, just and sustainable cities. ACC's work is geared towards being both critical and propositional, placing emphasis on systemic responses to African challenges.

City of Cape Town Heritage Branch: The CCT Heritage Branch is responsible for heritage management in the city. Although much of the mandate is linked to the built environment, there is a desire to deepen the way tangible and intangible heritage is valued. An opportunity to collaborate was recognised with the intention of strengthening the way policy is informed, engaged with and operationalised.

Actor mapping

Cape Town's heritage sector has a wide range of actors and operators, making it a complex terrain to navigate.

There are different public institutions at national, provincial and local scales, often with very diverse mandates. There are also private and civic entities operating across these multiple scales, with varied intensities within the city – from a city-wide focus to deeply local site- or neighbourhood-specific interests.

Mapping at Greatmore Studios
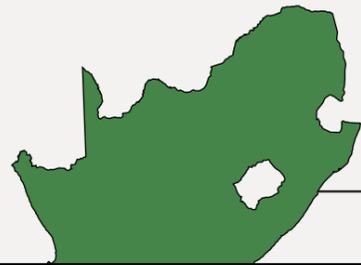
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

- Department of Sports, Arts and Culture
- National Heritage Council
- South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and the SAHRA council
- National Archives Advisory Council
- Geographical Names Council
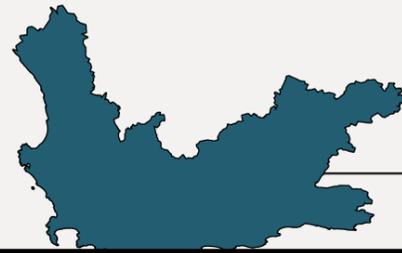
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

- Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport - Heritage Western Cape

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Heritage Branch in the Environment and Heritage Department, Spatial Planning and Environment Directorate
- Arts and Culture Branch in the Social Development Directorate

UNIVERSITIES

- University of Cape Town
- University of the Western Cape
- Cape Town University of Technology
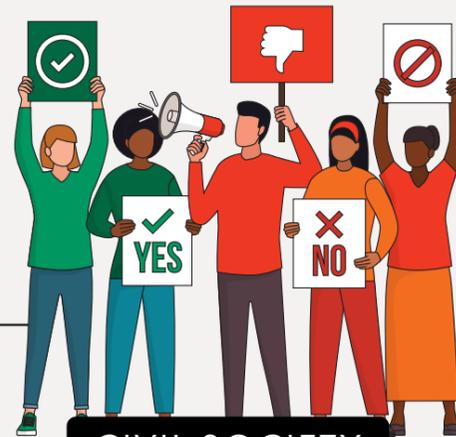
CIVIL SOCIETY

- Trusts
- Non-profit organisations (NPOs)
- Civic and residents associations
- Activist organisations and social movements
- Heritage and conservation societies
- Museums

PRIVATE

- Private development companies
- Social housing development companies
- Built environment firms including architects and town planners
- Developers and property speculators
- Arts and culture organisations: private theatres, galleries, privately run museums

Policy and governance

SPATIAL PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT ACT 2013

NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ACT 25 1999

PROVINCIAL LAWS

MUNICIPAL PLANNING BY-LAWS

LOCAL SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ORGANS OF STATE: HERITAGE AREAS, INVENTORIES BUILDING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT

MUNICIPAL SYSTEMS ACT: IDP AND MSDF
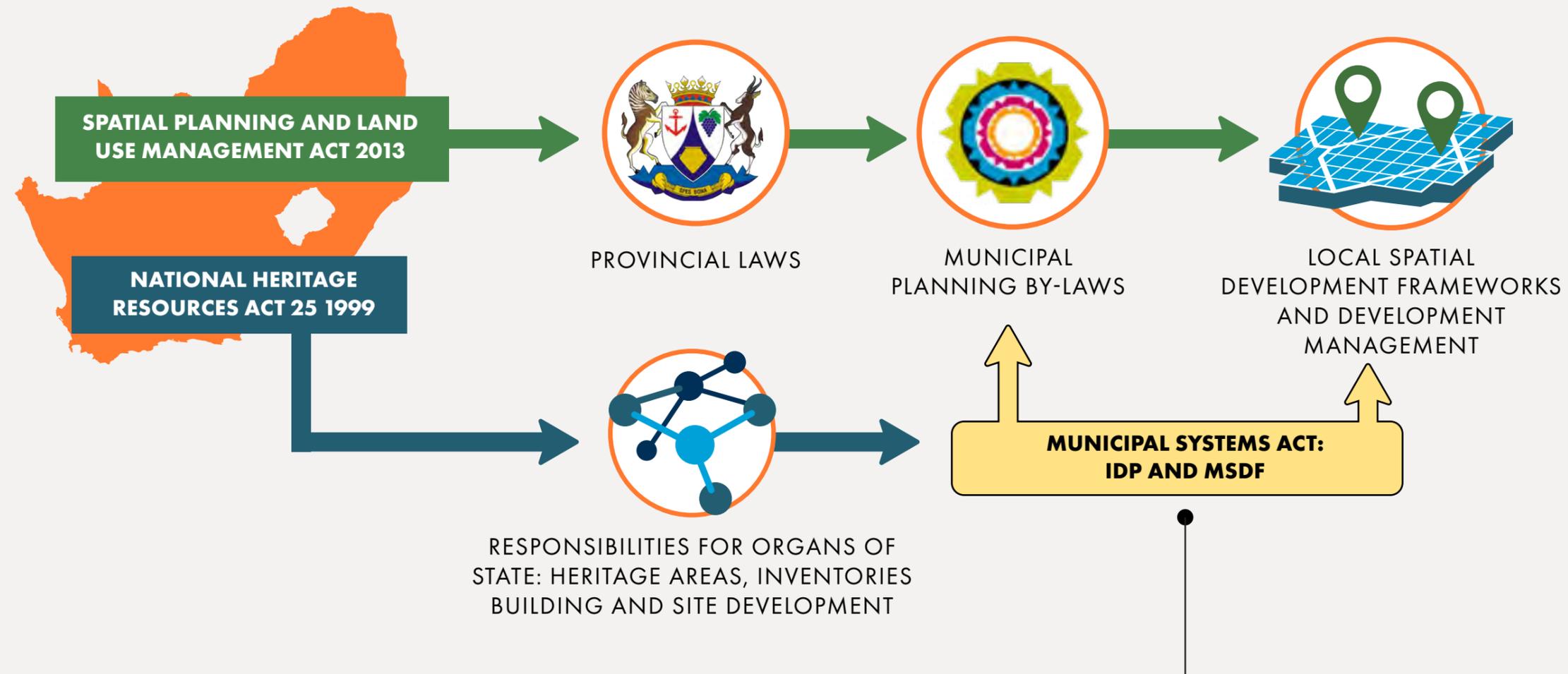
Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

- Links strategic goals to SDGs and international best practice
- Strategic high level policies for the City, multi-sectoral

Spatial frameworks
Cape Town Municipal Development Framework, district frameworks and local frameworks

- Create policy statements for heritage and sustainability
- Identify places for interventions and pilots
- Long-term forward planning, including heritage mechanisms, processes and legal obligations

Sector strategies
2017 Environmental Strategy (includes Cultural Heritage Framework), links to SDGs, Agenda 21

- Strategies
- Programmes
- Budgets
- Timeframes

Dynamics, tensions and value conflicts

Our research showed how these multiple actors, interests and policies give rise to intersecting challenges which shape how heritage is valued in Cape Town.

Heritage is often misunderstood
"Our heritage has always been mixed, it's such a fluid thing, in fact. History is fluid, it's not something that just happened way back when, it's something that happened yesterday. And much like culture and identity, heritage is a constant moving thing"
– Shamila Rahim

Heritage is contested
"Heritage is always a political issue because it depends who is at the helm of power. Those that are at the helm of power want to articulate their own heritage, their own interests… each administration that comes in wants to mark its territory by some development and the approaches to marking it are usually linked to heritage" *– Luvuyo Ndzuzo*

Heritage can be violent
"How do we actually claim our heritage when our heritage is overlaid by the psychic damage that has been done to us by our heritage? What have we inherited? We've inherited significant intergenerational trauma. We've inherited significant direct trauma, exercised on us and our parents"*– Heritage Practitioner*

Du Noon Library [credit: Andy Mkosi]

Heritage economies can be limiting

"We see the same master/servant relationships again: black people will be sweeping the floors and pouring the tea, white people will be running the tour companies and there will be an overseas tour company that has the wherewithal as to whether they bring or don't bring people in...Heritage is not ever going to soak up unemployment. I do wish this government would not say these kinds of things. It doesn't. And when it does, what you get is low skilled jobs" – *Shahid Vawda*

Heritage is not adequately connected to urban sustainability

"Cultural heritage is as much about culture, as it is about nature, as it is about buildings, places, parks and every green space in our city" – *Resident*

Heritage is seen as an obstacle and heritage governance is siloed

"So much of our time is taken up with legal compliance" – *Maurietta Stewart*

Making meaning, making heritage

Heritage that can be turned into something tangible is easier to manage than the ephemeral emotions, messy memories, lingering traumas and aspirational fantasies so necessary for imagining the future. Creative forms of enquiry can trouble the status quo. Our pandemic research design led to eight creative commissions from artists at Greatmore Studios.

Woodstock graffiti [credit: Barry Christianson]

Artful inquiry

8 CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS

Used creative tactics to deepen conversation, tempt thought and leave behind different traces

ANCHORED IN GREATMORE STUDIOS

The purpose of the creative research projects was to use experimental approaches to urban research as a way to challenge dominant heritagization practices – bringing practices closer to the ground

The activities radiated within and outside the Greatmore Studios, connecting with different parts of the city

RESPONDED TO FOUR QUESTIONS

- What is the role of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in realising more just cities?
- What kinds of social solidarities are enabled by tangible and intangible cultural heritage?
- How do COVID-19 and crisis more generally intersect with tangible and intangible cultural heritage?
- How can creative practice contribute to valuing cultural heritage in cities?

MEET THE MAKERS
ADIEL JACOBS

Adiel lives in Woodstock and combines graffiti and calligraphy – calligraffiti – in his creative work. He hand carves his own calligraphy pens, and graffitis walls as pathways of heritage for future generations.

Adiel used the question 'Whose Heritage Matters' as a provocation to further his existing **calligraffiti work**. His interventions were based on conversations he had with neighbours and women in his calligraphy network. The project resulted in a calligraffiti mural, a garment, performances and a series of videos reflecting on the personal as political.

"

ART IS VERY PERSONAL. IT SHAPES YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND ARTIST AND IT GIVES FORM TO A FORMLESS EMOTION. THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT. IT IS BENEFICIAL. ART IS SOMETHING THAT IS BENEFICIAL AND CAN AFFECT MYSELF, MY ENVIRONMENT AND MY FUTURE POSITIVELY.

"

Top: Adiel Jacobs [credit: Rosca van Rooyen]

MEET THE MAKERS
CHRISTIE VAN ZYL

Activist, sangoma, writer, speaker and poet, originally from KwaZulu-Natal, Christie is passionate about understanding the human condition. She grapples with the role of Indigenous sources of wellness and disrupts simplistic understandings of pre-colonial and post-colonial heritage on the body, mind and spirit of all people.

Christie **mapped religious sites and spaces in and around Woodstock**, making visible the spaces of ritual and spirituality that exist on the pavement and in public spaces. She developed an audio-visual performance as a marker for that which cannot be mapped. Her performance involved a provocation to developers, warning against erasing cultural practice through gentrification.

THERE IS A NEED TO UNDERSTAND HOW WE SEE OURSELVES OUTSIDE OF OPPRESSION, AND HOW DO WE SEE OURSELVES OUTSIDE OF TRAUMA? ... WE NEED TO LIVE AS MENDED BEINGS NOT CONSTANTLY TRIGGERED BY THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OR PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE.
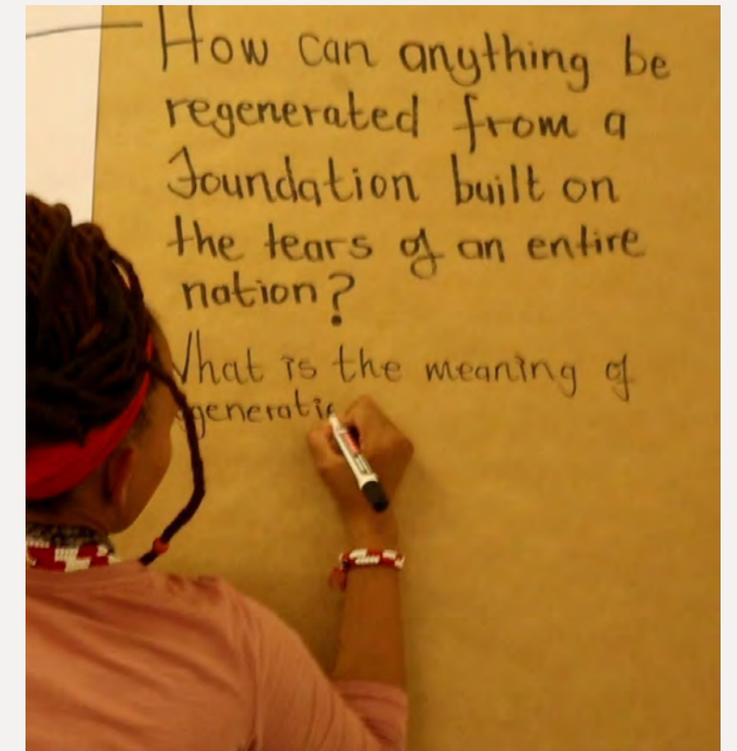
Sacrifical lamb [stills from video piece]

Eddie Thompson [credit: Rosca van Rooyen]

MEET THE MAKERS
EDDIE THOMPSON

Eddie grew up in Hout Bay and Woodstock. He became an activist at the age of 17 in order to make a pathway for the freedom he states he still cannot see. He owns an iconic rustic frames shop opened in the 1980s, and his Upliftment Project NPO seeks to feed and create a space for the hungry and the homeless in the city.

Eddie used his research grant to support the work of the Upliftment Project and collaborated with Rosca van Rooyen, a doctoral student from ACC on a series of videos. Viewing Eddie as **a living archive**, Rosca captured his stories about the neighbourhood, overlaying past and living heritage stories which documented places in the neighbourhood in a video piece challenging the growing 'White-ism' in Woodstock.

"
WE NEED TO MOVE FROM FEELINGS, TO WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THOSE FEELINGS, AND THEN DO IT, AND AFTER THAT, THERE SHOULD BE A POSITIVE OUTCOME.
"

MEET THE MAKERS
FENI CHULUMANCO

Feni Chulumanco was born in 1994 and was inspired by art and culture from an early age. Based in Langa, he works with mixed medium and oil paintings and captures the real and surreal of everyday life.

Feni's project involved **exploring and documenting the story of his high school art teacher in Langa**, who played a crucial role in the lives of many artists who then built prominent careers in art. His research argues that we need to recognise the important role of **living heritage makers** – people who are shaping the cultural heritage of the future in quiet ways. His work culminated in a story and a painted portrait.

Feni Chulumanco with his painting of Miss Nkunzi [credit: Barry Christianson]

MEET THE MAKERS
LWANDO SCOTT

Dr Lwando Scott is a writer and academic, Port Elizabeth born whose work and passion focus on reimagining gender and gender relations in South African queer studies.

Lwando's project was a written and recorded intervention focused on a heritage that **includes the marginal** within the margins, where the complexities of marginality, here particularly gender (and by extension sexuality), are not a political afterthought.

Dr Lwando Scott [credit: Rosca van Rooyen]

"
WE NEED TO THINK CRITICALLY AND EXPANSIVELY ABOUT HERITAGE. WHAT IS THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN HERITAGE? WHAT ARE WE TO THINK OF THE HERITAGES OF THOSE WHOSE GENDERS DO NOT ALIGN WITH THE NORMATIVE STANDARDS? WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE VERY HERITAGES WE ARE FIGHTING FOR, IN OPPRESSING OTHERS ON THE MARGINS, OTHERS LIKE TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS? WHAT WOULD IT MEAN FOR US AS A SOCIETY TO START THINKING ABOUT WAYS OF HONOURING, REMEMBERING, AND PLACING AT THE CENTRE THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE RENDERED INSIGNIFICANT?
"

Sethembile Msezane - Portrait

MEET THE MAKERS
SETHEMBILE MSEZANE

Sethembile was born in 1991 in KwaZulu-Natal and now lives and works in Cape Town.

She is an inter-disciplinary artist using performance, photography, film, sculpture and drawing to explore processes of mythmaking which are used to construct history, calling attention to the absence of the black female body in both the narratives and physical spaces of historical commemoration.

„

I USE DREAMS AS A MEDIUM THROUGH A LENS OF THE PLURALITY OF EXISTENCE ACROSS SPACE AND TIME, ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE REMEMBRANCE OF ANCESTRY.

„

MEET THE MAKERS
UKHONA MLANDU

Ukhona, director of Greatmore Studios Trust, originally from the Eastern Cape, has a passion for creating space for the marginalised and displaced to find acceptance.

For this project, Ukhona **researched changing lived food practices in response to the pandemic.** She became keen on acting on her FOMO – watching how food heritage was playing out in delicious ways, but also asking what this means for lived heritage in places outside and between neighbourhoods not centrally located in the City Bowl. Ukhona documented her research through Instagram. Creating space for collective reflection with creatives, while supporting local businesses, became a way to reckon with the past, the pandemic, and what may be possible.

Instagram handle: sbwl_kos
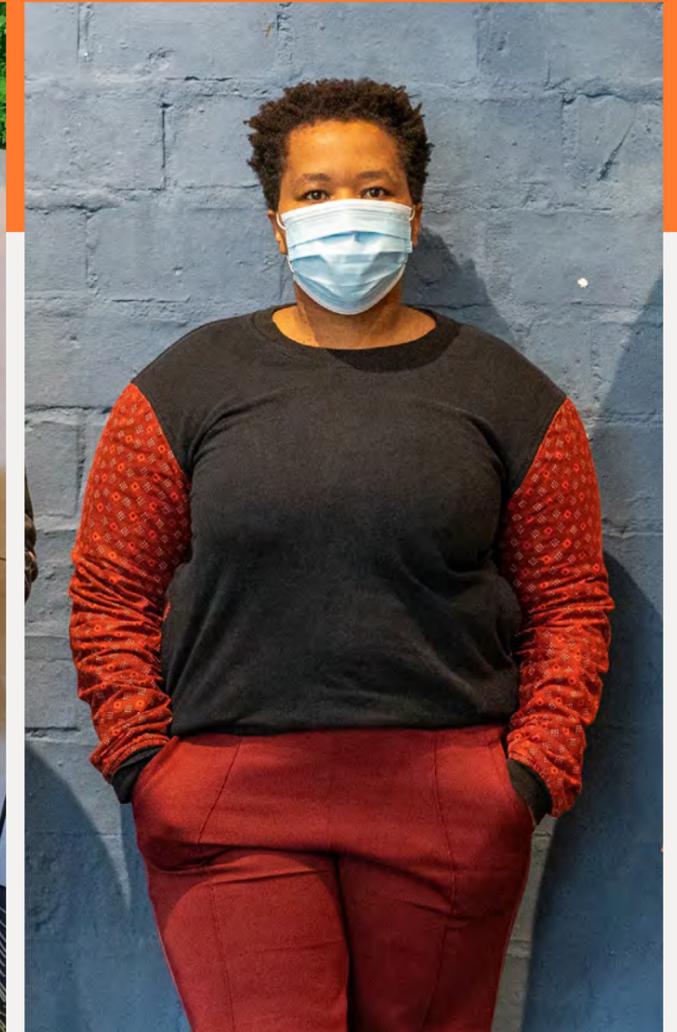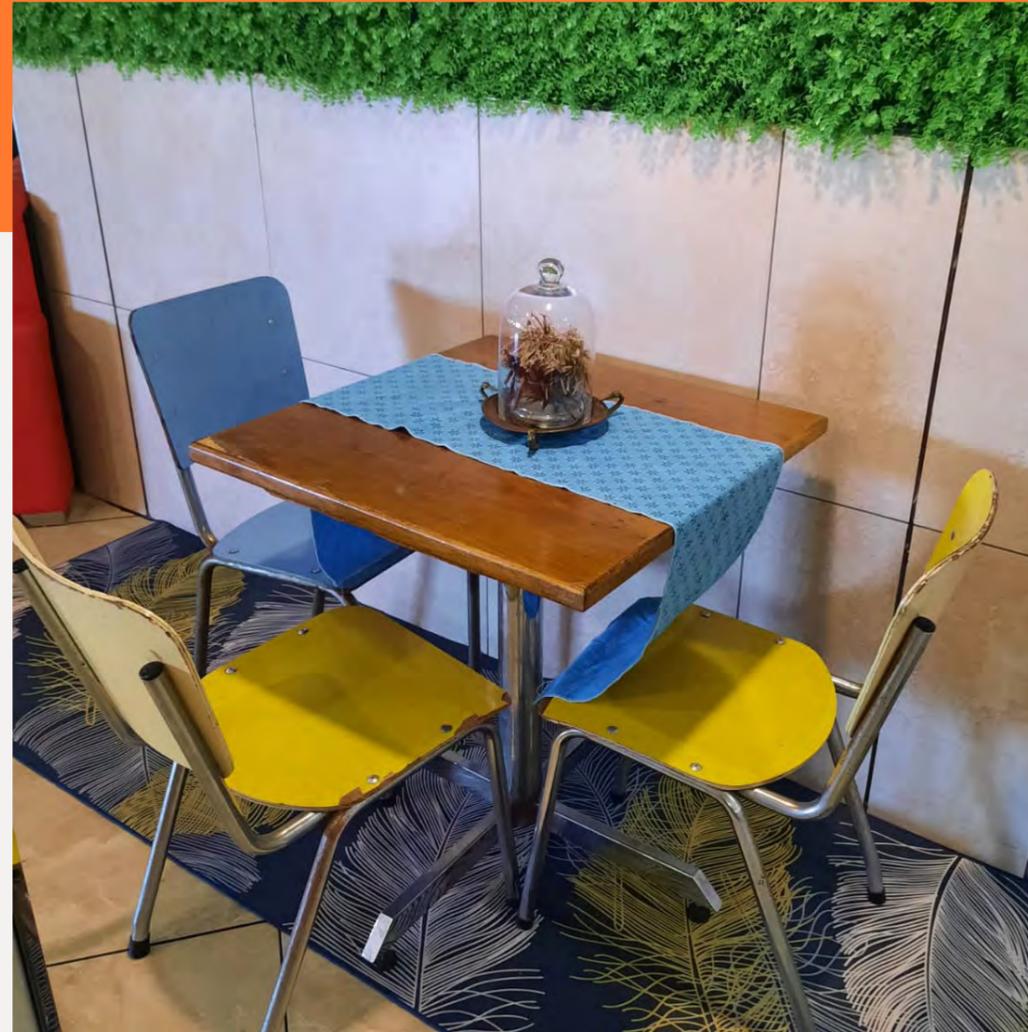
I AM FOR EVERYTHING THAT DISRUPTS AND COMPLICATES. THE PEOPLE WE INVITE INTO THE ROOM SHOULD COMPLICATE PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS. BECAUSE THESE PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS ARE PROBLEMATIC... WE HAVE GOT TO REPRESENT THE COMPLEXITIES OF OUR IDENTITIES AND, REJECT THE STEREOTYPICAL WAYS OF BEING.

sbwl_kos [credit: Ukhona Mlandu]

MEET THE MAKERS
ZIYANDA MAJOZI

Ziyanda is originally from Eastern Cape and studied Graphic Design but fell in love with mosaics at the Spier Art Academy. Ziyanda's passion is to work with communities to discover what will make them feel appreciated and bring about togetherness through conversations or laughter.

The question of whose heritage matters really struck Ziyanda as an important one to project into public space. Her mosaic piece is intended as a permanent provocation to the neighbourhood.

"

AT THIS POINT I AM HONOURING MYSELF, HONOURING MY PARENTS AND THE PEOPLE BEFORE THEM.

"

Top to bottom: Ziyanda Majozi [credit: Rosca van Rooyen]; Ziyanda's mosaic [credit: Ukhona Mlandu]

Heritage values in action

The co-researchers leveraged the project to mobilise their creative practice towards what felt urgent and relevant, and challenged normative ways of understanding heritage values in urban development.

Aesthetic values:
The projects argued for a situated and stretched notion of urban beauty. Adiel's tactic of drawing a close parallel between calligraphy and graffiti celebrates alternative urban typographies. Feni's unique techniques celebrate ordinary people whose actions in the now shape possible cultural futures.

Cultural values:
Ziyanda and Feni assert the importance of ordinary lives and everyday cultural heritage, inheritances and legacies. Lwando reminds us that cultural heritage can be violent and violating and this is not only interpersonal but built into the urban form. He calls for amplifying queer stories and lives if we want liveable cities.

Economic values:
Ukhona's focus on local cuisine is as much about socio-cultural connection, as it is about creative-based livelihoods. It decentres focus from the central city, putting a spotlight on cultural practice in Cape Town's townships.

Environmental values:
Drawing on her practices as a sangoma, Christie's work brings indigenous approaches to socio-ecological wellness, and firmly connects environmental concerns with access to land. Ukhona's project used food as a tactic for linking social and ecological resilience – connecting local food systems to community building under COVID-19.

HERITAGE VALUES IN ACTION (CONTINUED)

Historic values:
Woodstock's gentrification suggests that the value of the area is in the buildings and not the socio-cultural fabric. Eddie's work asserts the importance of lived and living history and heritage as crucial to the identity of a city.

Political values:
All the creative research projects saw the importance of instrumentalizing cultural heritage for urban justice: recognizing queer voices and lives (Lwando); everyday stories and ordinary heroes (Feni and Ziyanda); and challenging elite-centric urban development (Uncle Eddie and Christie).

Social values:
Eddie argues for the preservation of the social fabric in relation to the material form of the city. Ukhona foregrounds valuing living heritage as important for social connection – especially in the response to and recovery from COVID-19.

Spiritual values:
Sethembile and Christie argue that the spiritual is always side-by-side with the spatial and therefore cities cannot be seen without spirituality. They show how, in cities traumatized by brutal pasts and brutalizing presents, ritual is important in both reckoning and repair.

Mobilising alliances, scholarship and policy

Our research in Cape Town revealed the importance of political mobilization over economic instrumentalisation of cultural heritage, in a context of trauma, violence and a city grappling with its past, present and future.

The focus on mobilising in Cape Town was a tactical move to **build alliances and leverage scholarship** to shape public discourse and open up different imaginaries and spaces for policy-making:

Mobilising alliances for heritage, justice and belonging

Mobilising scholarship and public discourse

Mobilising policy coalitions and collaboration

DAILY MAVERICK

HOME | SCORPIO   OPINIONISTA   ZAPIRO   SECTIONS   DECLASSIFIED UK   DONATE   NEWSLETTER

OP-ED

Braai, the beloved country: The impossible burden of heritage

By Naomi Roux, Rike Sitas and Maurietta Stewart   •   22 September 2020

Bo-Kaap, Cape Town, residents clash with police during protests in 2018 against gentrification in the area. (Phot...

Heritage is not only our identity: It is also our politics, our complex histories, and our memories. Heritage shapes the way we live, eat, pray, raise our children and interact with each other. Cultural heritage can bring people together, but it can also be used to keep people apart — as the rise of the right wing all over the world is worryingly demonstrating.

Naomi Roux, Rike Sitas and Maurietta Stewart

As we approach Heritage Day, people are dusting off their beaded headgear and wax-print shirts, and ads for boerewors and briquette combos call us to unite around a fire. Debates about whether to braai or not to braai pop up every year around this time, reminding us that even the most seemingly straightforward ideas around heritage are contested. These aren't just arguments about braaiing: they are about how our diverse cultures and complicated histories should be celebrated and conserved in the present, cutting to the core of questions around identity, belonging, restitution and justice.

Through these different mobilisations, Whose Heritage Matters in Cape Town worked practically to understand how the challenges identified through the interviews, mapping and making exercises might be addressed. This resulted in a series of recommendations:

CHALLENGE	RECOMMENDATION
Heritage is often misunderstood	✅ Communicate diverse heritage values clearly ✅ Collaborate with Arts & Culture Branch
Heritage is contested	✅ Build relationships and partnerships ✅ Build capacity
Heritage can be violent	✅ Value diversity and advocate for cultural rights ✅ Recognise and dismantle material and non-material forms of violence
Heritage economies can be limiting	✅ Build stronger economic arguments ✅ Re-think public finance systems ✅ Leverage common budgets
Heritage is not adequately connected to urban sustainability	✅ Advocate for heritage as a driver for sustainable development ✅ Strengthen evidence-based decision-making
Heritage is seen as an obstacle	✅ Review and reform policy

Mobilising heritage
FOR URBAN JUSTICE

Reckoning:
facing head on complex, violent and traumatic pasts

Redressing:
tackling injustices of the past – particularly linked to the dispossession of land and fragmentation of communities

Redistributing:
restructuring and reallocation of power, agency and voice – which can also involve the redistribution of material resources

Repairing:
working to repair the socio-cultural and material fabric of the city to take plural values into account

MAPPING, MAKING AND MOBILISING IN

Kisumu

Kisumu

ABINDU CAVES

SEME KAILA

**KIT MIKAYI**

DUNGA BEACH

## ADDED VALUE OF WHOSE HERITAGE MATTERS

Understanding the values and conflicts that arise through competing cultural heritage values

Supporting community-based organisations at four cultural heritage sites in developing their roles and plans

ALIGNING WITH LOCAL TRAJECTORIES

Researchers at **Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology** had been working on questions of cultural heritage and urban development for years. They were particularly concerned about:

- how to mobilise cultural heritage resources in support of wider development goals, including poverty reduction and economic growth, whilst protecting natural and cultural heritage
- how to reduce unsustainable economic practices such as quarrying and deforestation around cultural and sacred sites and secure sustainable livelihoods

Previous projects focusing on eco-tourism were funded by Mistra Urban Futures via the Kisumu Local Interaction Platform, and a wide array of international research and development agencies.
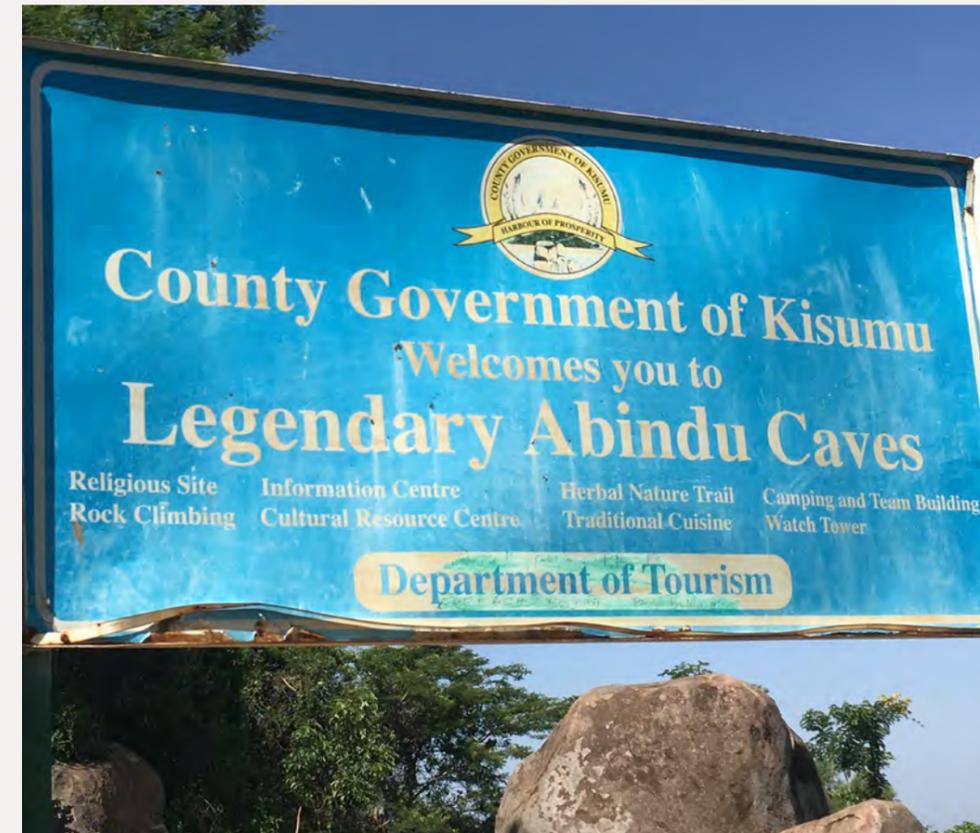
Left to right: Inscription in the rocks at Abindu; '12 Loaves of Bread' rock engravings at Abindu; Signage for Abindu Caves

Abindu Caves

Abindu caves is a huge rock formation composed of 12 rock shelters, used primarily for different religious or sacred purposes. As well as engraved rock art, the caves are the source of community narratives and are seen to have supernatural powers, resulting in visits from witchdoctors and herbalists. Springs surround the site as well as indigenous plants, medicinal herbs and wild animals.

Abindu was formally recognised in 2008 by the Department for Culture for Kisumu City. The process of forming a community-based organisation was initiated in 2009.

Left to right: The boardwalk at Dunga Beach; The Dunga Ecotourism and Environmental Group; By the shores of Lake Victoria

Dunga Beach

Dunga Beach is on the shores of Lake Victoria, dominated by rocky surfaces, wetlands, hills, cliffs and springs. The area is popular for fishing, touring and sports such as kayaking. The cultural centre and boardwalk lead to the lake shore and provide information on the history and activities of the area. Stalls sell cultural products, and activities such as fish festivals or Sitatunga boat races take place. Dunga Wetland is also marketed as an important bird area by Nature Kenya and Birdlife International.

Community management was established at Dunga Beach in 1997 with the formation of a Beach Management Unit. The Dunga Ecotourism and Environmental Community Tourism Association was created in 2003.

Left to right: A natural rock formation; Demonstrating traditional activities in the museum; Signage at Kit Mikayi

Kit Mikayi

Kit Mikayi is a rock formation, made of uniquely layered graphite stones, with underground bat-dwelling caves, and a shrine used by religious groups. The rocks have inspired many narratives, myths and legends and have become known as sources of visions, with healing powers. Groups using the site include the Kangeso traditional dancers, Kadol widows group, a co-op and a youth group and there is a creative arts centre and museum. Kit Mikayi was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2019.

Kit Mikayi Co-operative Society was formed in 2009 by local landowners and their families. A community-based organisation was formed in 2014 with a Board of Management to extend ownership of the site and spread the benefits of site development to the community.

Left to right: An ancient human settlement; Bee-keeping at Seme Kaila [credit: Seme Kaila CBO]; Landscape at Seme Kaila [credit: Seme Kaila CBO]

Seme Kaila

Seme Kaila is an ancient hillfort settlement, comprising stone-walled enclosures, used by early Luo ancestors as defensive mechanisms. Inside the enclosures are potsherds, house platforms and human burials which signify the internal spatial organization or the various activity areas. Cultural activities take place around the site such as dancing and bee-keeping.

Seme Kaila is the youngest community-based organisation and least developed cultural heritage site. A community-based organisation was formed following a site visit from Whose Heritage Matters in 2019.

Mapping values for cultural heritage

Our research revealed the diverse ways in which the sites contribute to the lives and livelihoods of residents, and a plurality of values for cultural heritage. We held a collaborative workshop with community organisations to draw what cultural heritage means to them.
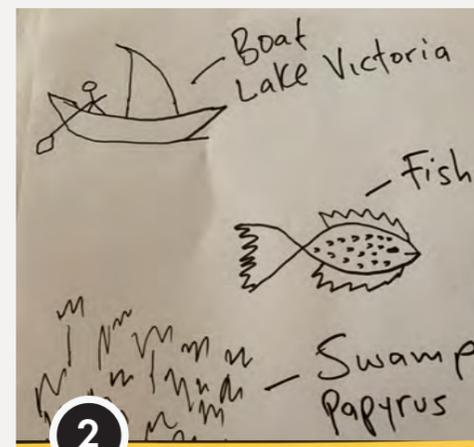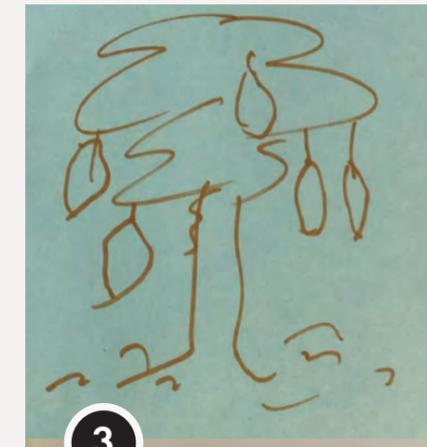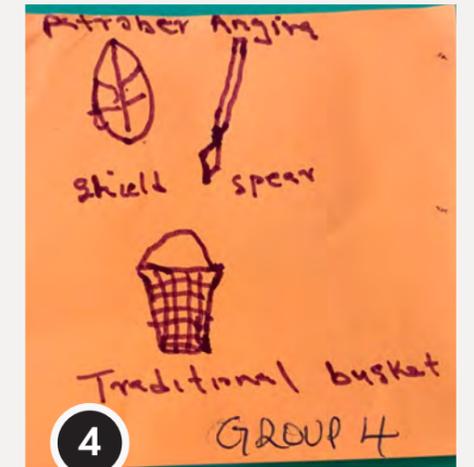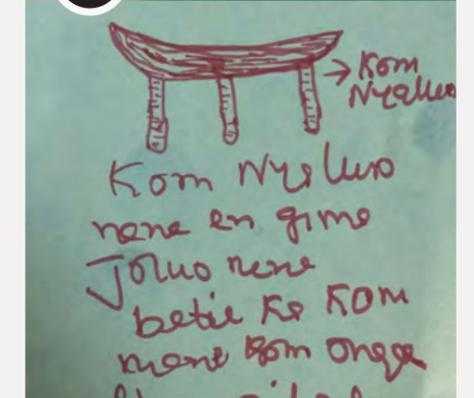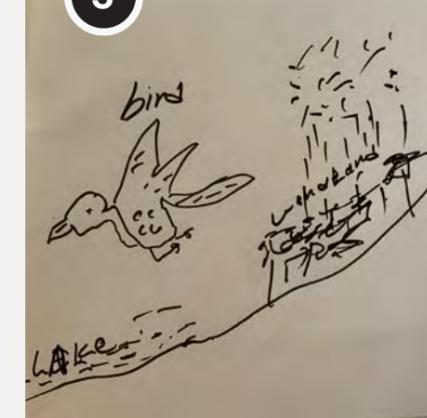
WHAT DOES CULTURAL HERITAGE MEAN TO YOU?
"Cultural heritage is our way of life"

1. Inception workshop at KLIP House
2. Practices of everyday life   **3.** Natural heritage
**4.** Tangible artefacts   **5.** Spaces of dwelling

Heritage values in action

We identified different heritage values in and for the cultural heritage sites.
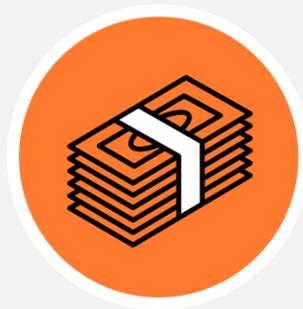
Economic value:
Tourist-focused activities at the sites create employment opportunities and generate income for local people, through gate fees, sales of products and cultural activities, such as dancing, basketry, fishing, boat trips and tour guiding.
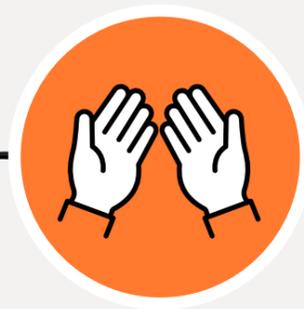
Spiritual and religious value:
Rocks and caves are used by religious groups for meditation, worship and fasting, and baptisms, weddings and funerals take place at the sites. The landscapes are associated with myths and legends, and are used to make offerings or for political rituals.

Cultural value:
A range of intangible practices take place at the sites, including fishing, boat racing, competitions, weaving, pottery and dancing. At Dunga and Kit Mikayi, there are craft centres and museum displays.

Social value:
A range of welfare interventions are supported through income generated by the sites, for instance, paying school fees, donating to charitable groups, food donations, tree donations, purchasing blankets for the elderly, or relationship-counselling.

HERITAGE VALUES IN ACTION (CONTINUED)

Medicinal value:
The sites attract herbalists and local people who gather plants to treat various human ailments.
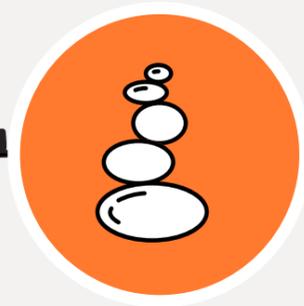
Environmental and geological value:
The sites have distinct environmental value through their natural rock formations, vegetation and habitats for wild animals and birds. There are environmental awareness programmes at Dunga Beach such as waste management or wetland conservation.

Aesthetic value:
The vantage points of the rocks and viewing points of Lake Victoria provide unparalleled views of Kisumu's scenic landscape and are sites of natural beauty.

Pedagogical and scientific value:
Local primary and secondary schools visit the sites to learn about history, religious values and practices and environmental awareness. Researchers and archaeologists are frequent visitors to undertake scientific surveys and studies. Capacity-building and training is also delivered.

Mapping policy and governance issues

The management of cultural heritage takes place in a multi-scale and multi-actor context. Policies have become entangled between different sectors and scales since devolution in 2010 which strengthened the responsibilities of county governments. There is a complex of actors, with different priorities and values:

"Culture is quite dynamic and keeps on changing"
– Representative, Department of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sports

"Tourism is the most significant activity linked to cultural heritage" *– Tour Guide, Dunga Beach*

"There is a void...there is something lacking"
– Representative, Western Tourism Circuit Association

"The purpose is to enable local communities to realise the values of these heritage properties by earning a living from them, and at the same time, helping us to achieve the goal of conservation"
– Representative, Western Tourism Circuit Association

"We need to have a bottom-up policy where people on the ground...set the agenda"
– Lecturer, JOOUST

"Culture helps in development – in infrastructure, establishment of education centres and even playgrounds for children"
– Tour Guide, Dunga Beach

"We had our culture since the dawn of history" *– Luo Elder*

"The local community, they're the owners of the knowledge. They are the ones who take the driver seat" *– Representative, Department of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sports*

The burning of wax candles by religious groups has left wax scarring on the rocks at Kit Mikayi

Stones for sale, quarried from the historic ancient settlements at Seme Kaila

Managing tensions and conflicts

Tensions arise when there are multiple values for cultural heritage, and actors involved in legislating what and whose heritage matters. Local management is a key strategy for the making of heritage in everyday life, where cultural heritage is made and remade, negotiated and contested. When this works well, CBOs help address tensions, but are not disinterested actors.

TENSIONS EXIST BETWEEN:

Preservation and modernisation
e.g. Hotel development at Dunga Beach encroaches on riparian land and displaces wildlife

Economic and other values – spiritual, environmental, aesthetic
e.g. Tensions between religious groups and tourists, in terms of cultural dress and behaviour or religious groups and site management
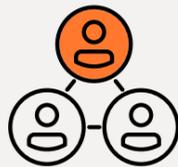
National, county and community-based organisations
e.g. Concerns about political interference from other actors

Elders and young people
e.g. Myths and legends are guarded by elder men; westernisation is seen by elders as a threat which erodes young people's understanding of the past

Community management, and users and visitors to the sites
e.g. High visitor numbers lead to degradation of the sites and increased waste

Land owners and wider community
e.g. Land owners sell rocks from ancient settlement sites for individual income generation

Different spatial communities involved in site management
e.g. Some landowners at Kit Mikayi do not feel they were adequately compensated for their land

Male and female roles in site-based management
e.g. Women perform and sell food and young people clean the site

MAKING HERITAGE:

Why community-based organisations matter

Community-based organisations seek to ensure that local communities benefit from the recognition of these landscapes as heritage. They can also protect people from land dispossession and appropriation, play a key role in community mobilisation, income generation and advocacy, and preserve traditional tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

WHY THEY MATTER

- Authority, recognition and **safeguarding** of diverse cultural heritage values within and outside the sites
- **Community ownership** of the sites and participation in their management
- Local **sharing of income** and wealth redistribution
- **Protecting** local rights and interests

WHAT THEY DO

- Mobilise for infrastructural improvements and **maintain** the sites
- **Market and promote** the sites through coalition-building
- Provide **training and technical skills development**, such as tour-guiding
- **Hold outside agencies to account**, such as government or larger tourism organizations

Patrick Hayombe
Good morning members it would be good if each site member narrate the following details; A brief history of site, how is it managed, what are challenges and opportunities and what were number average of visitation before Covid and now after Covid. Let's engage on these then we ddaft way forward
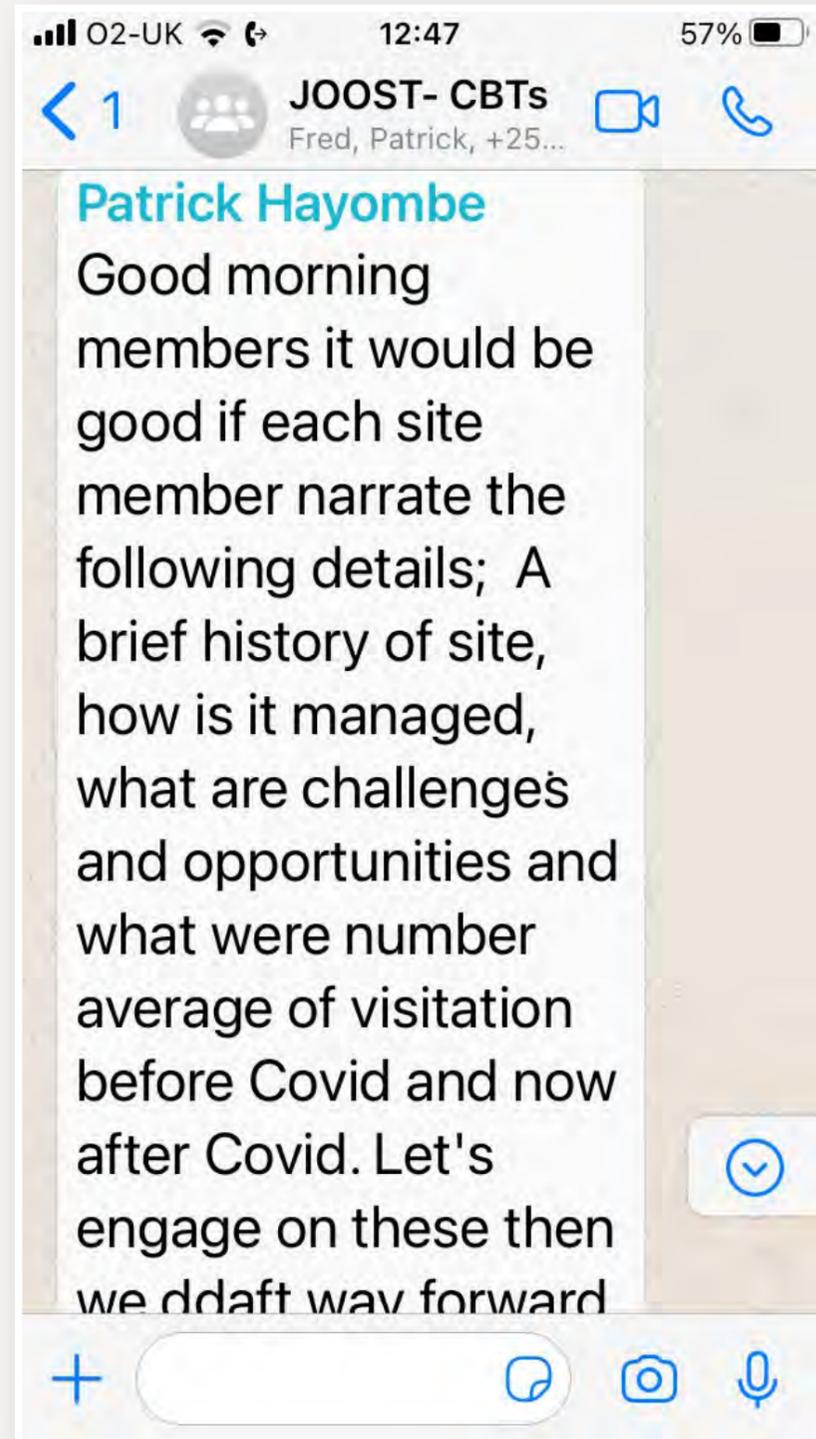
Mobilising
IN A TIME OF COVID-19

March 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic swept across the globe. International and domestic travel was banned. Markets, gatherings, crowds dispersed. Tourism ground to a halt. We redesigned the project and reallocated budgets to support community researchers who documented the impacts and implications of the pandemic on lives and livelihoods at the sites and the roles of community-based management.

The impact of COVID-19 on cultural heritage sites in Kisumu:

- no cultural activities
- collapse of income-generating activities
- unemployment, hunger and poverty
- migrations from the sites in search of alternative employment
- impact on youth participation and gender equality
- rise in petty crime, sexual abuse and gender-based violence
- diminishing social cohesion
- reduction in collective bargaining power
- depression and poor mental health
- loss of faith, spirituality and feelings of abandonment
- degradation of the sites and land clearing for cultivation
- resort to unsustainable economic practices

"Artists have suffered a major blow"
–ABINDU RESPONDENT

METHOD NOTES:

Two phases of data collection in October to November 2020 and May to June 2021

Undertaken by paid community researchers trained by JOOUST with virtual supervision from university researchers

Oral interviews using common guides, observations and photography

WhatsApp group data collection

Community-building supported via payment of registration fees

Consultative dialogues with site representatives and forward planning

"Storytelling was affected since social distance was not observable during such activity"
–SEME KAILA RESPONDENT

Our community consultations focused on how the pandemic affected the roles of CBOs and what short- and long-term strategies could be put in place.

FIVE KEY FACTORS SHAPING MITIGATION RESPONSES:

1 CBOs need to ensure **COVID-compliance for site re-opening**

2 The ability to organise has been severely compromised by **physical distancing and low technological provision**

3 The loss of organising and leveraging power has multiple effects and **diminishes partnership-building**

4 There have been variable and diminishing levels of **support** throughout the pandemic

5 Short-term mitigation has focused on planning for normality; **longer-term**, the assumptions underpinning **ecotourism** have been questioned

Recovery strategies

COMMON PRIORITIES IDENITIFIED ACROSS THE SITES

- **Improve access** to the sites
- **Repair sites** through clean-up operations and maintenance
- Obtain **relief and restoration funds**

Restore

Rethink

Resume

Examples of priorities at the sites:

- Abindu Caves - improve the road to the site; build offices and cultural resource centre
- Dunga Beach - extend the boardwalk and install a roof
- Seme Kaila - install site signage and fencing; establish cultural centre

- **Train young people** and encourage entrepreneurship
- **Attract visitors back** to the site by reducing charges for local tourists
- **Leverage and rebuild partnerships** with different governmental and non-governmental organisations
- **Craft and cultural activities** such as basket, pottery and boat making
- **Market and promote sites**, and strengthen networks

Restore

Rethink

Resume

Examples of priorities at the sites:

- Dunga Beach - build independence for fishermen through boat ownership; certification for tour guides
- Kit Mikayi - support cooperative society; create partnership with larger tourism organisations

Examples of priorities at the sites:

- Abindu Caves - secure internet connections; purchase church for site expansion
- Dunga Beach - enforce laws preventing unsustainable economic practices; develop site specific infrastructure plan

Restore

Rethink

Resume

- **Reduce dependence on foreign tourists** by promoting local visitors
- **Increase small businesses** and invest in small-scale farming, such as vegetable growing, to avoid monopolies
- **Explore alternative income** and resource mobilisation opportunities
- **Promote digital literacy**, such as M-PESA for bill payments
- **Adopt more digital technologies**, including laptops, websites and blogs
- **Engage in digital marketing** and branding

Recommendations

Short-term relief and **strategic investment**

An **integrated plan** for cultural heritage and development policy and implementation

Institutional strengthening of community-based organisations

Site-specific **integrated ecotourism** development plans

Strong **co-production partnerships** to mobilise resources and leverage assets

Project impacts

IN CAPE TOWN AND KISUMU

Impacts realised

Direct contribution to **local incomes** at a time of crisis

Local ownership of forward plans

Cultural making activities supported and creative output produced

Reframing values of and for cultural heritage in support of a wider range of practices to be recognised in urban development strategies

Indirect contribution to **protection and safeguarding** of tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage (SDG Goal 11, target 4)

Tactics deployed

Mobilisation of **academics** as active intermediaries

Co-production of a **collective vision and set of responsibilities** to act and collaborate beyond the grant

Generation of **evidence base and communication of research** to inform and shape local policy

Documentation as a form of mobilisation to make impacts visible

Development of **policy briefs** and **community-owned site plans**

EXAMPLES

In Cape Town, **strong policy engagement and tactical coalition-building** across sectors and communities in the context of city strategy and implementation plans.
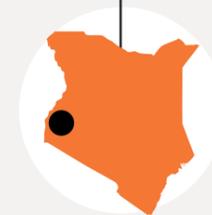
In Kisumu, **peer learning** and development of platforms for **collective political and social action**.
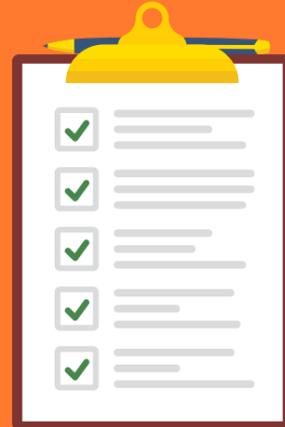
Conclusions

Mobilising cultural heritage
THROUGH MAPPING AND MAKING

The central question for this work was whether, and if so how, cultural heritage could be mobilised to support more sustainable and just urban futures in Kisumu and Cape Town.

We undertook an action-oriented project intended to co-produce mapping, making and mobilising heritage activities in Cape Town and Kisumu. The design and structure of the project reflected local circumstances and spaces for action, and therefore aligned with existing research and practice trajectories.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?
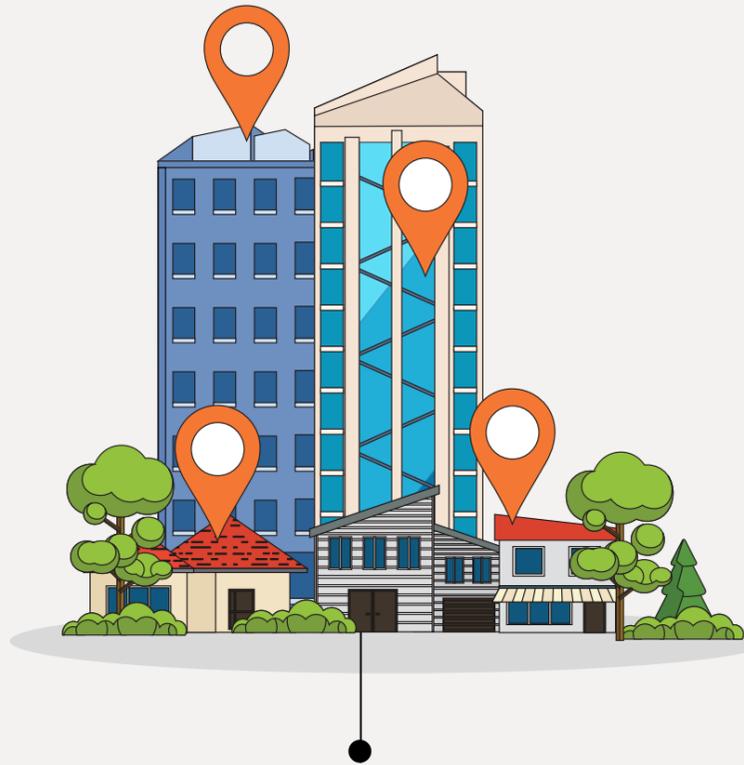
Mapping is a political act that can reveal actors and power relations on the ground. Mapping **unveils complexity and the spaces of resistance and possibility** that frame action.

In the making of heritage we see **tensions in and contestations over** the values of and for cultural heritage.
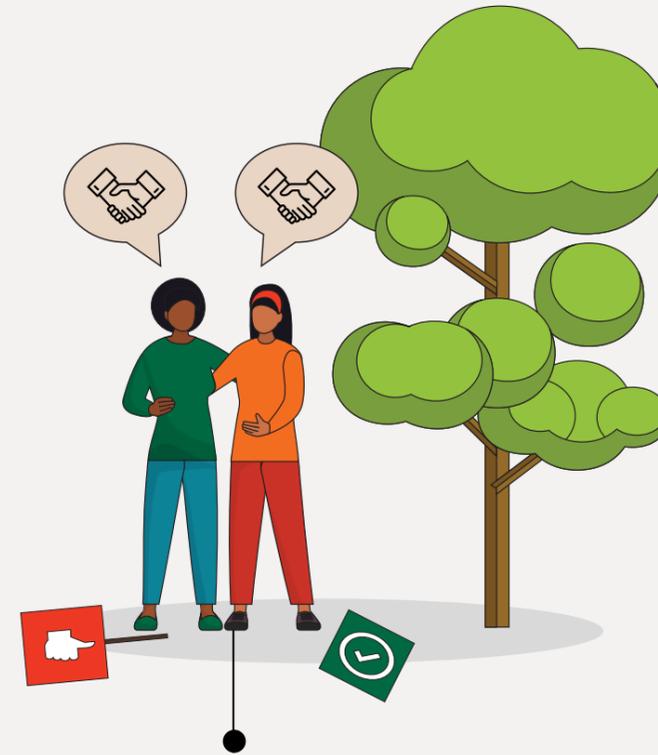
Understanding that cultural heritage is **polyvalent, fluid, contested and processual** is key to its mobilisation for more sustainable and just urban futures. This mobilisation requires **co-production and intermediation** between different actors.

Whether cultural heritage can be mobilised depends on how we define heritage and who is mobilising what and for whom. **There is no simple answer** – rather, it involves tensions, trade-offs and tactics.

Challenging international frameworks

These grounded understandings of cultural heritage and its potential mobilisation challenge the assumption of international frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals. The SDG framework suggests linear and unproblematic relationships between fixed types of cultural heritage and the wider sustainability agenda.

CULTURAL HERITAGE TYPE	ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS	CHALLENGE FROM WHOSE HERITAGE MATTERS
Protect and safeguard cultural and natural heritage: Goal 11	Emphasises fixing and preserving what can be officially designated as 'heritage'. Risks reinforcing external designations of heritage and neo-colonial visions	Heritage is contested, unsettled and processual – whose heritage is protected? Who determines what heritage is?
Promote and sell local culture/ produce/ products: Goals 8 and 12	Existence of markets for the consumption of culture. Sees cultural heritage as a product not a process. Risks favouring instrumental over intrinsic values.	The making of heritage is a process, which is integrated into everyday lives. It is not only about what is marketable for a tourist gaze. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the unsustainability of a market model of cultural heritage production, dependent on international tourism.

Our work highlights the need for not only economic instrumentalisation but also **political and social mobilisation of cultural heritage** for wider urban sustainability goals.

Boardwalk at Dunga Beach

International frameworks presume an unproblematic and linear relationship between cultural heritage and sustainable livelihoods. Our research shows what hangs in the balance between culture, heritage, sustainability and justice in the city. A different language is needed to understand how these issues play out in respective contexts. This is the language of **land**, **livelihoods**, **lives**, **liveability**, and **legislation**.

Re-framing the intersections

BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE, SUSTAINABILITY, SPATIAL JUSTICE AND THE CITY

Cultural heritage can create critical spaces for engagement between people, places and the planet through an emphasis on negotiating the politics and plural values connected to **land**.

Cultural heritage plays an important role in the **liveability** of cities, impacting on questions of movement, settlement and belonging, and enabling thriving over surviving.

Cultural heritage involves labour and can contribute to **livelihoods**, conceived of as decent work, social connection, strong networks and wellbeing.

Cultural heritage is governed through laws and legislation that need to provide an **enabling environment for sustainability and justice**.

Cultural heritage shapes the **urban lives** of people; recognising and valuing everyday forms of cultural heritage can build solidarities and improve quality of life.

Urban justice in the balance

REVEALING TENSIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN:

Land
ownership and dispossession;
access and exclusion;
density and sprawl; natural
and built form

Liveability
preservation and modernisation;
alienation and belonging;
material and emotional needs;
landscape and land

Livelihoods
sustainability and precarity; local and international
dependencies; formality and informality

Lives
objects and processes; individuals
and collectives; endangered and
engendered; past, present and future

Legislation
obstacles and opportunities;
centralised and distributed;
constrained or enabled

EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

Livelihoods:

Kisumu: The language of livelihoods draws attention to the complexity of economic considerations, for instance, the double-bind for local people between unsustainable local economic practices (quarrying, sand harvesting, deforestation) and unsustainable dependencies on international tourism

Liveability:

Cape Town: The language of liveability draws attention to the challenges of gentrification and the affective atmospheres of inclusion and exclusion

Land:

Kisumu: The language of land draws attention to how land ownership is gendered, contested and mediates individual and collective interests

Lives:

Cape Town: The language of lives draws attention to the everyday and ordinary practices of heritage such as eating, cooking and forms of citizenship and solidarity

Kisumu: The language of lives draws attention to how cultural heritage sites are integrated into people's everyday practices and are not only sources of economic income

Legislation:

Cape Town: The language of legislation draws attention to the limits of technical and regulatory frameworks and the implications of how culture and heritage are governed in terms of what is – or is not – prioritised

Summary

1 Mapping and making reveal different values for cultural heritage and its plural, contested and unsettled dynamics

2 On the ground, cultural heritage is mobilised by many people for different reasons; it is contingent on who is mobilising what and for whom

3 International frameworks do not recognise how cultural heritage is intertwined with people's lives. There is too much focus on economic instrumentalisation to the detriment of political and social mobilisation

4 Land, livelihoods, lives, liveability and legislation offer an alternative language for revealing how cultural heritage, justice, sustainability and the city intersect

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
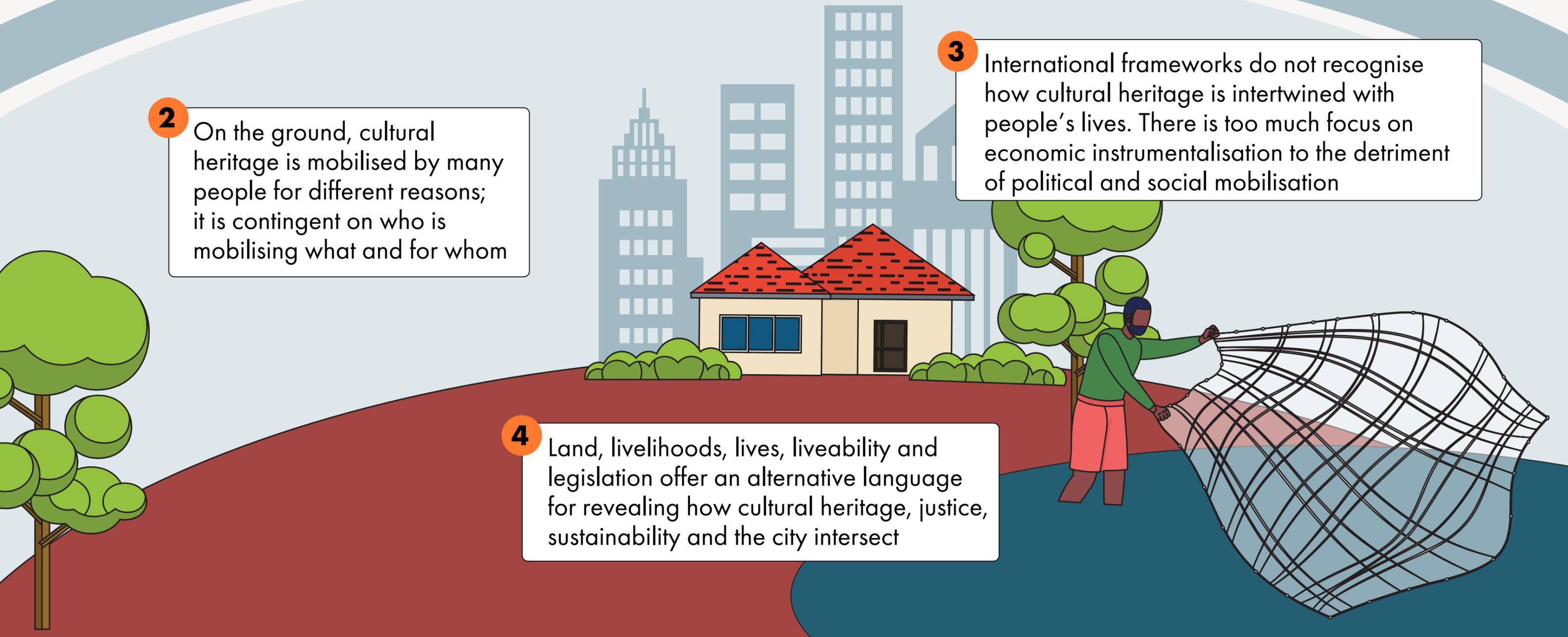
METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS:
the impact of Covid-19

Rethinking scholarship and activism

Redesigning approaches and methods

Rescaling distance and proximity

Recasting roles and responsibilities

PERFORMANCE: we played different roles as scholars and activists

PRACTICE: we worked off-plan and off-grid to make the project work

PARTNERSHIPS: we strengthened existing and built new partnerships

POSITIONING: different team members stepped back, stepped aside or stepped up

POWER: we sought to use the pandemic to further de-stabilise power dynamics between North and South

PURPOSE: we aligned the work with existing trajectories to mobilise narratives and coalitions for forward change

Thanks

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WHOSE HERITAGE MATTERS

mapping ■ making ■ mobilising

For further information, or if you are interested in reading the full
Cape Town and Kisumu reports, please contact Beth Perry (b.perry@sheffield.ac.uk),
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