hostels · homes · museum

Memorialising migrant labour pasts in Lwandle, South Africa

by

Noëleen Murray and Leslie Witz

hostels, homes, museum: Memorialising migrant labour pasts in Lwandle, South Africa

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Cover photograph: Interior Hostel 33, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum by Paul Grendon

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This book has been independently peer-reviewed by academics who are experts in the field.

Contents

Figure 1: In August 2007 the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum was able to secure hostel 33 for museum purposes. The museum's Women Ambassadors, directed by Kholiswa Ncane, took occupation of hostel 33, and used the occasion to recall and perform features of their lives in Lwandle's hostels in the 1980s and 1990s. *Photograph: Leslie Witz, 18 August 2007*.

Preface

Come to Lwandle

Visit the first township-based museum in the Western Cape.
Find out about the migrant labour system in South Africa.
(Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Brochure)

There is a word in isiXhosa, *ubugagu*, which is difficult to translate into English. As a descriptive term its meanings are: boldness, courage, daring, self-confidence and recklessness. This reminds us of a Yiddish expression, which has become commonly used in English — *chutzpah.* Similarly, this word eludes easy translation and is used in its Yiddish form in English as a noun in phrases such as 'what a chutzpah!' The meaning is simultaneously disparaging and expresses envious admiration. Loosely expressing shameless audacity, we have mobilised the term *ubugagu* to do the work of *chutzpah*, with which we are familiar.

Not only does the term *ubugagu* capture a sense of the 'chanciness' of the project of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, the central subject of this book, but it also reflects on the boldness of the idea to start an unlikely institution. Our story is about a place that was created to be invisible, was designated to be destroyed and yet, surprisingly, became the site of the first township-based museum in the Western Cape province of South Africa after the formal end of apartheid in 1994. In 1998, when the museum started, it had few financial resources, not much to display, very little local or national support, and was located in a place called Lwandle with a history that was almost unknown. The museum's brochure proclaims this chance emergence on the local landscape of the province, far from the industrial centres of the mining system more regularly associated with the histories and patterns of labour history in and around Johannesburg, the 'city of gold'. The story of this book is one of a museum as a *chutzpah.*

The people who made this bold move and took a chance were Charmian Plummer, from the town of Somerset West in the foothills of the Helderberg mountains, and Bongani Mgijima, then a student at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), who was living nearby in what was originally designated under apartheid as the 'native location' of Lwandle. They took a chance by provisionally naming and claiming a museum by turning the opportunity of a promise of post-apartheid urban reconstruction and development into heritage resources. Without their initiative there would be no museum in Lwandle and,

as a consequence, no reason for a book about a museum that should never have existed.

Over time Charmian and Bongani and others lured, bullied, gently persuaded and enticed many, including us, into their dream of building a local museum. Charmian Plummer, Christine Makhabane, Ephraim Nyongwana, Minenkulu Robert Molo, Cynthia Galada, Masa Soko, Andiswa Mhlongo, Siboniwe Tyeku, Chris Meje, Xolani Sotashe, Xolani Ndingaye, Beaulla Stofile, Mpumelelo Nocezo, Jongidumo Justice Maxheke, Isaac Matlakeng, Karen Agricola, Colleen Stevens, Rita Hilcher, Sipokazi Sambumbu, Vusi Buthelezi and us, all served, at various times, as board members. Vusi was one of the many who joined the Lwandle Museum as staff members. Bongani Mgijima, Mbulelo Mrubata, Bonke Tyhulu, Kutala Vuba, Lunga Smile, Lundi Mama, Charlene Houston, Leon Vorster, Lungiswa Teka, Noyiso Mhlati, Mphumzi Nzuzo, Nobungcwalisa Ngcani, Nombongo Cynthia Majeke, Sandisiwe Sulani, Masa Soko, Thembisile Mathew Nxosha, Thuliswa Zono, Zanele Tshapile, Thulani Nxumalo, Simphiwe Khonono, Vumile Nkalitshana and Asandiswa Manatha were all employed at the museum, at times even volunteering to keep the museum's doors open. Others publicised, contributed their memories, possessions and stories, and enthused about the new museum.

There are many possible stories of the emergence, routes forward (and backwards), struggles and hard work of museum-making, which over the years since 1998 took many turns. *Hostels, homes, museum* reflects on our many journeys along Settlers Way, the road that leads out of Cape Town and becomes part of the national road that snakes its way east, adjacent to the coastline. Just before reaching the Hottentots Holland Mountains there is a generic, tourism direction sign pointing to a police station and a museum announced by an internationally accepted tourist icon for museums — that of the Greek temple front. Very soon, at the next traffic light, a right turn leads one past a roundabout with a rusting scrap-metal statue of a standing figure next to a bright red enlarged HIV/AIDS ribbon attached to the fence that encircles a large electric pylon. Veering left past a makeshift police station housed in shipping containers, old trailers and wooden bungalows, a mini-bus taxi rank, an astroturf football pitch and a landscaped forecourt, the road leads into what is billed as the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum. Made material by apartheid, manifest in the conditions of life and labour in the setting of the modernist planning located in the labour camp, is a place unrecognisable in the classical register of museumness. The image of a face-brick hall, with its open 'breeze-block' front façade inspired by fashionable styles of modern architecture in the tropics, signals a place far from the temples of the Dionysian hills.

Dislocated and detached from urban and labour history in the city of Cape Town, the story of this journey has other co-ordinates. One migrant labour hostel unit, bearing the name hostel 33, had been designated as a memorial

site for the museum. By 2007, the museum feared that this hostel, which was its key artefact, might be disappearing. The responsibility to conserve, maintain, remember and rehabilitate the space became the major anxiety of those involved with the museum project. With funds awarded by the United States Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, the South African National Lottery Board and the National Heritage Council, a process began of eliciting professional assistance, researching 'storied lives', and recovering and restoring an archaeology of township. As the project for the restoration of the hostel space took shape, the journey to the museum became an almost daily commute for Noëleen Murray. Coming to know the fabric of the building and its makeshift additions demanded more than the weekly professional 'site visit'. As the conventions of restoration turned into those of rehabilitation, improvisation and contingency became the way of knowing. Rehabilitation required rethinking expert knowledge and methods as contractual obligations of client and professional relations had to be reconfigured. The road to restoration from hostel 33 in the labour compound to Hostel 33 as part of the museum was an uncharted course.

Mapping out this practice was supported significantly by the generous, two-year, Faculty of Arts Post-Doctoral Fellowship awarded to Noëleen Murray at the Centre for Humanities Research at UWC from 2010. Intended to enable support for the museum through 'deepening of the intellectual project of the museum' and to facilitate the writing of a book, this was to be an unusual deployment of scholarly skills. In addition to the conventions of archival research, reading and academic production, the passage of time spent in the fellowship saw a continuation of the collaborative engagements with public history that had been central to the work of the History Department at UWC since the mid-1990s. Initially enabled by the National Research Foundation-funded Project on Public Pasts and the Heritage Disciplines Project and subsequently supported by the UWC Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Ramesh Bharuthram, this work sought to reconfigure history as critical, engaged and produced in a multiplicity of sites and genres. Leslie Witz's role as a public historian at UWC and chair of the board of the museum forced him into unanticipated ways of doing history. Thrown together into the space between expert uncertainty and asset management, the journey Leslie Witz had first taken in 1998 to visit his student's new heritage and tourism project, was to become the many, many hours we have spent behind a computer writing this book.

This book is dedicated to those who have and continue to participate in the *chutzpah* and who show *ubugagu*. We wish to thank you all. Abdulcadir Ahmed Said, Adele Bannister, Akhona Malangeni, Alan Middleton, Alan Wilcox, Alex Lichtenstein, Alistair Berg, Allistair Cloete, Amy Bell-Muluadzi, Andiswa Chiloane, Andiswa Mhlongo, Andre Penz, Andrew Berman, Andrew Dolkart, Andrew Hall, Angela Tuck, Anne-Katrin Bicher, Apryl Walker, Asandiswa Alex

Manatha, Ayanda Booi, Barbara Benjamin, Beaulla Stofile, Bengt Lundberg, Bevel Lucas, Beverley Thomas, Bjarne Sverkeli, Bongani Mgijima, Bonita Bennett, Bonke Thyulu, Bradley Plaatjies, Bridget Thompson, Calyn Witz, Cameron Dugmore, Carohn Cornell, Carol Low, Carolyn Hamilton, Cecyl Esau, Charlene Houston, Charmian Plummer, Chrischene Julius, Christina Luke, Christine Jikela, Ciraj Rassool, Colleen Stevens, Colleen Thorne, Corinne Kratz, Craig Carbutt, Crain Soudien, Cynthia Brown, Cynthia Galada, Cynthia Kros, Danie Botha, Dave van Wyk, David Cohen, David Favaloro, David Goldblatt, David Mellem, David Worth, Deirdre Prins-Solani, Denver Damons, Derya Golpinar, Dondrea Thompson, Douw Briers, Duncan Brown, Elzana Ritter, Engela Nel, Eric Miller, Errol Hendricks, Eureka Barnard, Everisto Mangwiro, Farzanah Badsha, Fidelis Tabe, Frank Kronenberg, Garth Erasmus, Gary Abrahams, Gary Minkley, Gavin Younge, Hannetjie du Preez, Hayley Hayes-Roberts, Helena Pohlandt-McCormick, Ilze Damon, Isaac Matlakeng, Ivan Karp, Ivan Meyer, Ivette Perez Vega, Jade Gibson, Jane Smidt, Janine Brandt, Japie Pretorius, Jean Brundritt, Jerry Rogers, Jessica Rawson Getz, Johan van Wyk, John Coetzee, John 'Max' Malgarte, Jonathan Kocks, Jongidumo Justice Maxheke, Jos Thorne, Josephine Frater, Julia Mhambi, Julian Cooke, Kadephi Mtiya, Karen Agricola, Katarina Pierre, Ken Salo, Khalied Jacobs, Kholiswa Ncane, Kirsti Mathiesen Hjemdahl, Kitty Dorje, Kjell Engman Lundberg, Kurt Ackermann, Kutala Vuba, Laings Koti, Lameez Lalkhen, Laura Davies, Laurine Platzky, Lebohane Kingely Ramosie, Landiswa Mapundu, Lenie Peter, Leon Vorster, Lindeka Qampi, Lionel Davis, Lisa Foale, Louise Green, Loyiso Gumede, Lundi Mama, Lunga Smile, Lungiswa Teka, Luvuyo Dondolo, Luyolo Mbengo, Lynn Meskell, Madla Mnyakama, Makhosenke Peter, Malcolm Campbell, Mandy Sanger, Manuel Raemy, Margot van Heerden, Maria Björkroth, Marion Ellis, Mark Canning, Masa Soko, Matthew Cooke, Mbulelo Mrubata, Megan O'Brien, Melanie Attwell, Michael Jonas, Mphumzi Nzuzo, Mpumelelo Nocezo, Mxolisi Dlamuka, Nobungcwalisa Ngcani, Noel Solani, Nombongo Cynthia Majeke, Nomilile Sokeyi, Nonkululeko Gogo, Noyiso Mhlati, Nqabakazi Ntoni, Nungu Nungu, Olusegun Morakinyo, Patricia Hayes, Patrick Khanye, Paul Faber, Paul Grendon, Peter Clarke, Peter Cole, Philiswa Mhlaba, Pia Bombardella, Piet Claassen, Premesh Lalu, Rameshwar Bharuthram, Rebecca Smart, Renchius van der Merwe, Renee Kistemaker, Richard Baartman, Rita Hilcher, Roger van Wyk, Roxana (Mildred) Fontanez, Sandile Dikeni, Sandisiwe Sulani, Sandy Prosalendis, Sandy Shepherd, Sarah Pharaon, Sarah Ward, Sean Field, Seelan Naidoo, Senewa Kinaiyia, Shehnaaz Moosa, Siboniwe Tyeku, Simon Nehonde, Simpiwe Khonono, Sipokazi Sambumbu, Sisa Ngondo, Stella Ndhlazi, Suleiman Thornton, Susan Pennybacker, Svea Josephy, Tahirih Michot, Terry Barnes, Tessa Dowling, Thabo Manetsi, Thembelihle Yose, Thembisile Mathew Nxosha, Theo Bernhardt, Thulani Nxumalo, Tina Smith, Tom Kula, Tony Meintjes, Trevor Getz, Valdi van Reenen-Le Roux, Valmont Layne, Virgil Slade, Vivienne

Gray, Vusi Buthelezi, Wallace Mgoqi, William Martinson, Xhanti Mpakama, Zanele Tshapile, Zayd Minty and Zolisa Pakade. We also wish to acknowledge the many others who, over the years, made personal donations of time, money and expertise. There would be no museum without you.

When we came to the end of writing this book and we thought about including a preface, there was the question of what more we could say that would, in effect, become a beginning. So, to begin and end this book we wanted to reflect on how Lwandle remains, to a large extent, off the well-trodden tourist routes. On the road to the Garden Route, the little sign on the national road is easy to miss as the signposting of a museum. Our book thinks about the history of the place named for being at the seaside, beyond the planned invisibility of the labour compound and the intended visibility of the museum of chance. *Hostels, homes, museum* does not easily direct one to a destination in the *Rough Guide* or the *Lonely Planet*. It describes the troubled passage of becoming a small museum that its founders thought would put Lwandle on the tourist map of Africa.

A major part of the making of this book about the museum at Lwandle has been a visual story. Unsettled and unlikely in the lexicons of tourism and heritage practice, the sighting of the museum was made possible by many people who believed that the stories it told were an important part of the post-apartheid 'dreaming of a beautiful Lwandle'. The contributions and permissions granted by the substantial number of photographers, as well as those photographed and interviewed, have enriched our text enormously. Our thanks go to Paul Grendon and Thulani Nxumalo for their selection and composition in the two photographic essays contained in the book and to Andrew Berman, Andy Lord, Corinne Kratz, Leon Lestrade, Independent Newspapers, Kurt Ackermann, Malcolm Campbell, Piet Claassen, Premesh Lalu, Sarah Ward, Svea Josephy and William Martinson for permissions to use their images and artwork. We are also indebted to the insights and the comments of the three anonymous reviewers of this book in the blind peer-review process facilitated by UCT Press. Special thanks also go to Sandy Shepherd, the publisher at UCT Press, and Glenda Younge, the editor and project manager.

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Lastly, thanks to our families for journeying with us to the elusive seaside and back for more than a decade—'We love you Josi, Matthew, Gerard and Rohan!'

About the authors

Noëleen Murray and **Leslie Witz** are academics at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in Cape Town, South Africa. As an architect and historian, respectively, they were recruited to the board of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum by its founders, Bongani Mgijima and Charmian Plummer, and became intensely involved in a set of hands-on collaborations with other board members, museum staff, residents and the appointed professionals in the making of the museum. In this book, they situate their association with the museum within formulations of public history across sites in the Western Cape. For the past 14 years the authors have collaborated on various interdisciplinary projects.

Noëleen Murray is an architect and academic in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at UWC. In 2010–2011 she held a Faculty of Arts post-doctoral fellowship at the Centre for Humanities Research, during which time ideas for this book took shape. Her research over many years offers a reading of architecture and urban planning under and after apartheid in which she considers conjunctions between architectural modernism and apartheid modernity. Noëleen is principal editor of *Desire Lines: Space, Memory and Identity in the Post-apartheid City*, 2007, Routledge Architecture Series, and co-editor, with Premesh Lalu, of *Becoming UWC: Reflections, Pathways and Unmaking of Apartheid's Legacy*, 2012, Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape.

Leslie Witz is a professor in the History Department at UWC and was leader of the National Research Foundation-funded Project on Public Pasts and the Heritage Disciplines Project. His major research centres on how different histories are created and represented in the public domain through memorials, museums, festivals and tourism. He is the author of *Write Your Own History*, 1998, SACHED, Ravan, *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Pasts* 2003, Indiana University Press, and co-author, with Ciraj Rassool and Paul Faber, of *South African Family Stories: Reflections on an Experiment in Exhibition Making*, 2007, KIT Tropenmuseum.

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Chapter 1

Dislocation
Making a museum at the seaside

In South Africa's public calendar, remade after the demise of apartheid, 1 May was officially inscribed as Workers' Day. Drawing on a genealogy of worker strikes and boycotts in the 1970s and 1980s and widespread international practices of commemoration, the day was selected to evoke a memory of labour struggles in resistance to apartheid and an ongoing commitment to a post-apartheid future of solidarity. In 2000, some six years after the introduction of universal adult franchise in 1994, a small ad hoc convening committee in the settlement of Lwandle, 40 kilometres north-east of Cape Town, decided to make use of the public holiday to launch a museum 'to commemorate the Migrant Labour System and the history of hostel life in South Africa'.[1]

It was an audacious move. Lwandle is small, seemingly insignificant and hardly known. Also known as eLwandle, literally translated from isiXhosa meaning 'at the sea', it is wedged between the towns of Strand and Somerset West and close to Gordon's Bay (Figure 1.1).[2] Established in 1958, in an area which fell under the divisional council of Stellenbosch, it was intended to consist of nothing more than a series of barrack-like structures, which would accommodate low-paid male labourers in the nearby industries, municipalities and farmlands.[3] By 2000 there were approximately 40 000 people living in Lwandle, some in informal settlements, some in new housing and others in migrant labour hostels which had been converted into family units.

Very little scholarly attention had been paid to emaHolweni (referring to Lwandle as 'the place of hostels').[4] There were only two ethnographic studies, one concerned with the effects of migrancy on childhood and family life, and the other with patterns of criminality in Lwandle (Jones, 1993; Sloth-Nielsen et al., 1992). During struggles against apartheid there were virtually no events

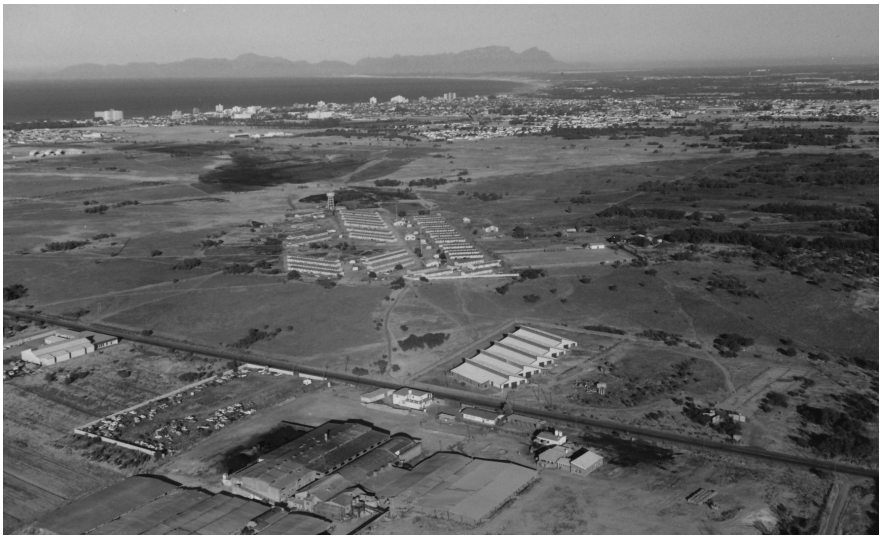

Figure1.1: 'Aerial far', a photograph taken by Andrew Berman for the Urban Foundation report on the future of Lwandle in 1987. Although taken from the air, this photograph was not the flattened out, corrected and planar view provided by the official aerial photography. The image shows the hidden landscape of the compound beyond Broadlands Road in the foreground and the town of Strand and False Bay in the background. By elevating the line of sight through the 'bird's-eye view', Berman is able to illustrate the isolation, the regional zoning with buffer areas, industrial sheds, the seaside resort and the layout of the compound. *Photograph: Andrew Berman.*

reported about the place originally planned as a 'location' and a 'native village'.[5] Almost totally invisible from the national road, history seemed to have passed Lwandle by.

Moreover, in the Western Cape province of South Africa there were no museums in any of the areas designated under apartheid as 'native locations' or 'townships' on the edges of segregated cities and towns. There was little prospect of funding and, most significantly, those living in Lwandle were, at best, ambivalent about the scheme for a museum, some claiming in the local press that they had 'not yet been informed of the plans' (Staff reporter, 15 May 1998).[6] Nonetheless, Charmian Plummer, a former teacher and resident of Somerset West, who was helping to establish a crèche in Lwandle, and Bongani Mgijima, a resident of Lwandle and a former history student of the University of the Western Cape, were determined to turn 'a museum in theory' into practice. They had a fantasy of a museum in a township, which would act as an apartheid memorial and a tourist attraction. Opportunistically drawing on a series of local connections, and applying some gentle persuasion to generate support and interest, they installed a temporary photographic exhibition in the Old Community Hall in Lwandle. On 1 May 2000 the hall was packed to witness the

official opening of, and to affirm support for, what was 'hailed as a major victory for transformation', the first township museum in the Western Cape (Mgijima, 2010; 2013).

Attended largely by museum and tourism officials, academics and students from universities in the region, women from the Lwandle Arts and Crafts Centre, a few residents of Somerset West, and the mayoral couple from Stellenbosch (Mr and Mrs William Kalazana) as 'honoured guests', the ceremony was imbued with significance. Sandile Dikeni, the poet, journalist and ex-resident of Lwandle's migrant labour hostels, was the guest speaker. In a symbolic gesture he dramatically broke apart a replica of slave shackles, aligning the envisaged museum (and Lwandle) with an emancipatory future and an anti-apartheid past (Bennett, 1995: 130–153; Staff reporter, 12 May 2000).

Following the ceremony, guests were divided into small groups and taken on a tour by young residents of Lwandle. The prime destination was hostel 33. As all the other hostels were being upgraded into houses for family accommodation, this hostel building had been selected for preservation by the Hostels-to-Homes Joint Committee, championed by Charmian Plummer, with support from the local Helderberg Municipality, 'for the purpose of the establishment of a museum'.[7] Unbeknown to the organisers, while the festivities were underway, some of those living in hostel 33 had made a makeshift protest

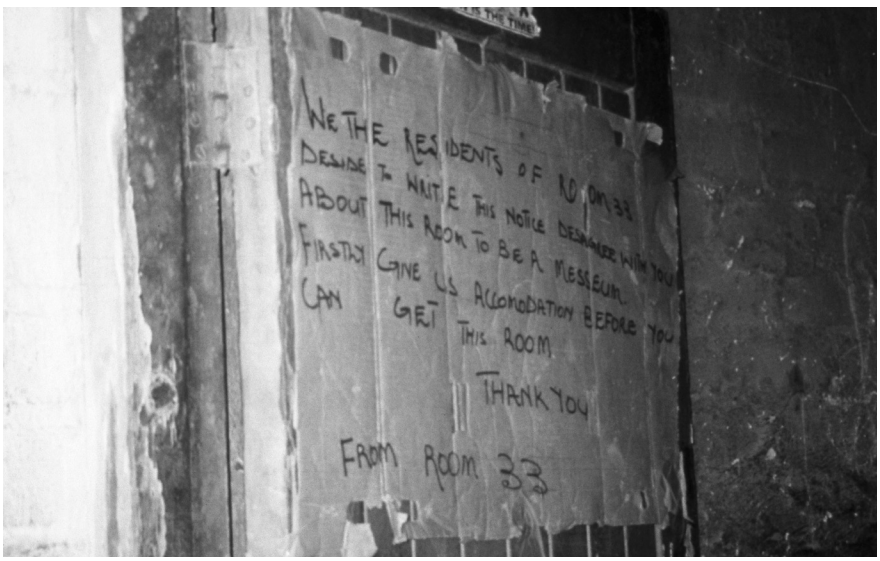

Figure 1.2: Originally a photographic print, and later digitised, this image of the sign on the door of hostel 33 is the last remnant of the protest at the opening of the museum on 1 May 2000. Above the sign was a 1999 election campaign sticker for the African National Congress. On display in the museum is a framed and fast fading list of signatories of those who attended the opening. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

notice written onto the side of a used cardboard box and fixed it to the door with packaging tape. When guests arrived at the single entrance to the hostel they were confronted by the notice, which claimed that the residents did not want their rooms turned into a museum until they were provided with alternative accommodation (Figure 1.2).

The tour guides gave reassurances that most of the residents supported the museum and welcomed the visitors to view the interior of hostel 33. Yet a few guests were very uncomfortable and decided to abandon the tour. It was not a good beginning, and in spite of the energy and commitment that was evident on the day the prospects for a migrant labour museum in Lwandle appeared bleak.

Somewhat surprisingly, 10 years later, an institution officially called the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, with its administrative and exhibitionary operations based in the nearby Old Community Hall, was still in existence. A series of ad hoc grants from provincial museum authorities and government agencies, commitment from staff who at times worked without remuneration, and increasing engagement by the local residents with the concept and project of the museum, all contributed to keeping the museum's doors open. Within a changing cultural landscape in post-apartheid South Africa, the museum that should not have been there had become an awkward, accepted presence (Witz, 2010b). Hostel 33, which had been the object of contestation when the museum

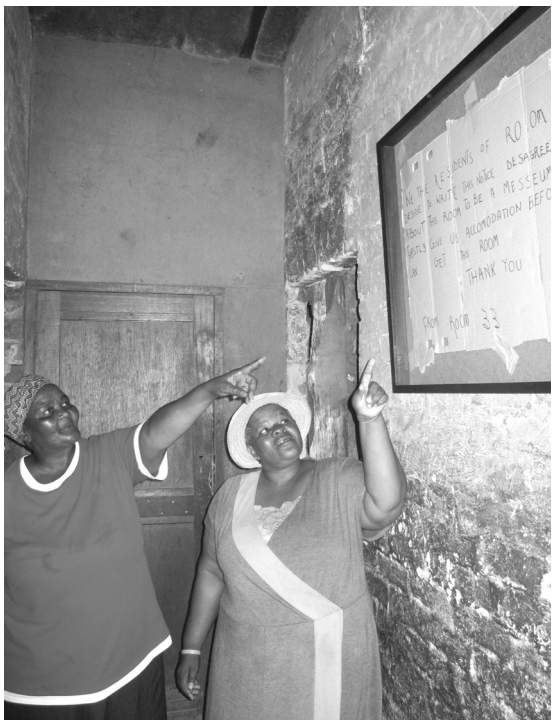

Figure 1.3: Kholiswa Ncane and Sylvia Monqo reading the text on the reconstructed protest sign on display in the entrance passage of Hostel 33 the day before the 10th birthday celebration. In debating ways to restore Hostel 33, it emerged as extremely important that the struggle for the museum was somehow recorded in the exhibition at the hostel. But the original sign had long since disappeared and all we had was Leslie Witz's photograph. In this instance, the team decided to remake the sign as an artefact and artist Vivienne Gray was commissioned to do this. Using the photograph she carefully remade the sign, using similar materials — an old cardboard box — and slowly and meticulously copied the handwritten lettering using a koki pen (felt-tip marker). *Photograph: Noëleen Murray.*

opened, had become its most important artefact. After 'a long and tedious struggle with many broken promises', the remaining residents in hostel 33 were allocated houses and the building was restored and curated as a memorial space exploring the experiences and lives of hostel dwellers (Plummer, 22 May 2011). The bucket-latrine area adjacent to the hostel, which had been in place until the mid-1990s, was recreated. The interiors were refurnished in keeping with ex-residents' reminiscences and the sign that had appeared outside the hostel at the museum's official opening on 1 May 2000 was replicated as an artefact, framed and hung on the wall in the entrance corridor (Figure 1.3).[8]

In writing this story in this book, we have decided to signal the importance of this name change directly. We have chosen to use lower case for hostel 33 when we refer to the period before the hostel was restored and incorporated into the museum. We use the upper case, Hostel 33, when we are referring to both the process of restoration and to the period from 2010 onwards, when it was formally marked as part of the museum. This is a story of the evolution of hostel 33 in an apartheid compound to Hostel 33 as part of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum.

Invited guests attending the museum's 10th birthday celebrations were welcomed into the newly restored space by tour guides, who gave vivid accounts of how people had lived in the hostel and how the museum was reinhabiting the space to give effect to and perform the memories of life in Lwandle. What the guides somewhat conveniently ignored in their accounts was a cracked window pane in one of the rooms. As part of the restoration project, windows had been reglazed with toughened safety glass to avoid vandalism. When the museum staff entered the hostel on the morning of 1 May 2010 in preparation for the day's celebrations, there were small pieces of broken glass on the floor. Neighbours told of a group of youth who had disturbed their sleep the previous night and, in all likelihood, had been responsible for the unsuccessful attempt to shatter the window completely. The hastily swept-away fragments of glass upset the narrative of progress in the history of the museum. For all the feelings of celebration, joy and achievement, this was a reminder that the trajectory of past and future processes of museum-making was out of alignment. The multiple and contending interests and stakeholders ensured that the museum's histories were uneven, sometimes disillusioning and, above all, unpredictable.

A museum at the seaside

This book is predominantly situated between these two moments of initial inauguration and celebration, and then disappointment and continuously uncertain futures. It tracks moments in the making and remaking of a museum in a place formally established over 40 years earlier under apartheid as a 'native location'.

Lwandle was conceptualised as a temporary encampment specifically sited and deliberately laid out in a formation of diagonal, parallel blocks around

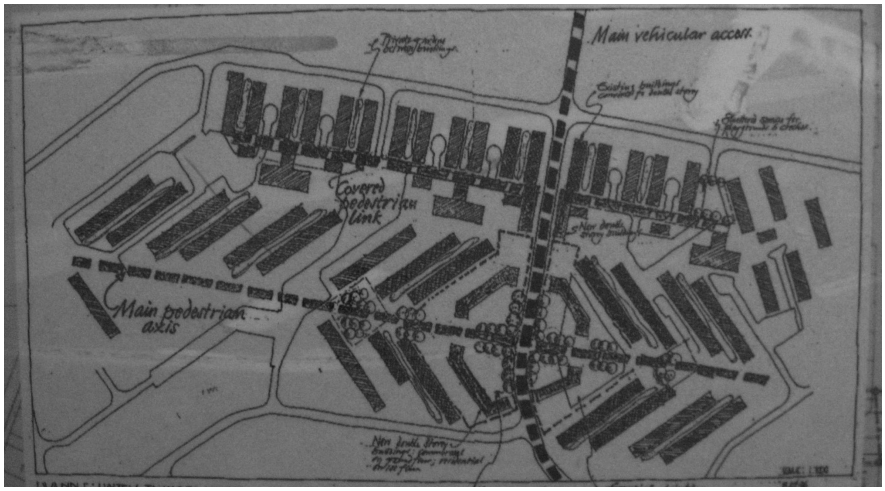

Figure 1.4: A drawing on display at the museum, entitled Lwandle: Hostels-to-Homes Project, 1996. This is a process drawing by consultants ACG Architects and Development Planners. Overlaid on the compound plan, it shows proposed changes to the alienating landscape at the urban-design level. New insertions into the space include ideas for a 'main pedestrian axis', a covered pedestrian link, new double-storey buildings in the central square, private gardens between buildings and a landscape plan for the planting of trees. *Photograph: ACG Architects and Development Planners, LMLM collection.*

a central open space. Administered as a compound, the lives of its residents were policed through the constellation of apartheid legislation around influx control, which regulated the movement into cities of people racially designated as 'native' and later 'bantu', and the pass system, which provided the apartheid state with the mechanism of identification to give effect to this system. In addition, in the Cape Province of South Africa, a policy of Coloured Labour Preference was implemented. Jobs were allocated firstly to those categorised as 'white', then those classified as 'coloured', and only in instances of what were seen as labour shortages to 'natives'. 'In a bizarre twist people called "natives" were considered as "foreign" to the western part of the Cape Province, to be controlled and gradually removed from the region, and only when absolutely necessary, employed as migrant labourers who would return "home" when they were "no longer required in the Western Province"' (Witz, 2011: 374; Jones, 1993: 11; IJR & LMLM, 2008: 17). The idea of a museum, in 1998, challenged the spatial typology of Lwandle as a planned, transitory location. In its place, the creation of an institution that called itself a museum asserted the possibility of a public citizenry with a recognisable and recoverable past called history.

While the museum was profoundly dislocating apartheid's ideological formation (Figure 1.4), and there were undoubtedly attempts to align its historical productions with an emerging post-apartheid present, its claims to be important and significant were continually disrupted. The events at its official

opening and at the celebrations a decade later were moments in a continuum of disputed authority. In 2006, when residents of hostel 33 moved out to take up accommodation in newly built houses in Lwandle, and it seemed that the museum could formally take occupation of the space, a group of youth moved in and took over the hostel as headquarters for their criminal activities.[9] In the same year, the museum played a major role in negotiating with the Urban Design Branch of the City of Cape Town to create a public precinct in its environs by taking down the fencing between the museum, the adjacent Hector Peterson Library and the municipal offices. Yet, within a few years, the library unilaterally decided to refence the area so as to secure its property, physically separating itself from the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum (Witz, 2010a: 10; Murray, 2007: 32). An international football match, organised by the museum early in 2008 and hailed as a sign of transformative tourism, was followed barely a month later by attacks on residents of Lwandle who were identified as 'foreigners' (Peters et al., 24 May 2008). Such reversals meant that the shape, content and presence of the museum were indeterminate, never stable and always contested.

This might appear as an overly bleak and negative way to embark upon a reflection of the processes of museum-making. But this is not our intention. As long-time champions of the museum and Board Members since 2001, we think that, despite all these setbacks, it is more than remarkable that the museum has managed to remain open. Slowly building community relations, continually redeveloping its exhibitionary practices and, in the process, garnering awards, it has established itself as a substantial presence on the post-apartheid museum landscape. Our decision to focus on moments of celebration and dislocation enables a productive engagement with what Kratz and Karp have called 'museum frictions'. These encompass the conjunction of a range of 'roles, definitions and cross-institutional relations'. It is the 'disparate constituencies, interests, goals and perspectives' that 'produce debates, tensions, collaborations, contests, and conflicts of many sorts, at many levels — *museum frictions* that have both positive and negative outcomes' (Kratz & Karp, 2006: 2). The identification of these moments enables us to explore the lives of these unfolding contradictions, as well as disrupt a linear narrative of oppression, struggle and progress. In Lwandle, this narrative strategy counters the all-too-tidy, transformative story of hostels becoming homes.

In the name of community

The story of development is often found in the ways that some museums either claim to be and/or are identified as community-based institutions. The idea of a museum defined within a locality is not a new one. When the public museum emerged in the nineteenth century it was a site of universalising knowledge and making a nationalised citizenry who could see and be seen. Through the collection and display of objects in what Bennett (1995) calls the 'exhibitionary

complex', publics were no longer constituted as subjects of power but became audiences in a relationship of viewing and knowing the objects. This process of knowledge and citizen formation was transposed into localities through personalised and localised renditions of nationalist narratives. Objects became signifiers of place and identity, tying a specific locality and its pasts to the nation.

In the South African context of the 1960s and 1970s, the local history museum became one of the most conservative institutions. Settler pasts were mobilised through the collection of implements of the household, which were then transformed into artefacts and placed into sites such as the house museum (Du Preez, 1982; Witz, 2012). The community museum movement from the 1980s set itself apart from such reproductions and claimed radical potential. Seeking to use, adapt and manipulate the institutional power of the museum, these new institutions asserted culture, history, locality and indigeneity. Deliberately established to counter exclusions embedded in national museums and their reproductions at a local level, particularly in former colonial settler societies in Australia, North America and New Zealand, these new museums were sites of recovery, deploying museum-type practices to create a sense of community, ownership and identity (Fuller, 1992; Tchen, 1992; Polet, 1995; Simpson, 2006; Simpson, 2007).

By the beginning of the twenty-first century though, instead of reflecting their spatial, ethnicised and class localities, it was the adaptations that new museums were making, their strategic moves, associations and positionings that, it was contended, were making them unique (Kistemaker et al., 2012). Writing about the Reyum Institute of Arts and Culture in Phnom Penh, the Micromuseum in Lima, the District Six Museum in Cape Town and the Oaxacan Union of Community Museums in Mexico, Buntinx and Karp (2006: 207–218) assert that it was these 'tactical museologies' that made community museums appear alternative. In contrast to both the universalising museum and the developmental state, new museums were conceived of as more a social space than a site of collection; a place in which to mobilise and organise interactions between publics rather than a didactic environment; a site for transformation rather than sameness; an institution which challenges rather than accepts modernisation and progress as the road to development. The idea of the museum becomes a 'critical agent of public citizenry', producing 'an alternative sense of modernity itself'. While the community museum very often is conceived of as alternative, it simultaneously relies on the 'symbolic capital associated with the idea of the museum' (Simpson, 2007) and draws on the globalising development networks that it seeks to disavow. What emerges is a new museum that may not seem to be a museum at all, but at the same time is constantly legitimated through its museumising intentions, formations and associations. These manoeuvres within and against the museum are sometimes seen to contain the foundations of what has been called the 'post-museum' (Simpson, 2007).

At stake here is not merely the institution of the museum but its very claims to be representing a specific, bounded community. Buntinx and Karp (2006: 213) assert that in the examples that appear in the edited book *Museum Frictions*, there is an active engagement 'in the (re)construction of the very idea of community, no matter how prospective or even utopian it might in some cases seem to be'. This assertion, though, is belied by some of the essays in the book. In the piece by Camarena and Morales (2006: 326–327) on community museums in Oaxaca, Mexico, although they recognise that 'community' might be a romantic and sometimes conservative construction, it can be a central unifying structure which brings together 'grassroots' 'popular' struggle through small but important, localised campaigns. Thus a community is defined as 'a group that shares a territory, a common history and a memory of its history'. Rassool's (2006: 286–321) arguments about the District Six Museum in Cape Town are much closer to the ideas of Buntinx and Karp in relation to community. Critiquing the idea of a museum defined by size, locality and positioning within hierarchies of association, he poses the possibility that community does not exist as an independent given structure. Instead, community is made and remade in the museum as 'process', and through the museum's political engagements it attempts to reconstruct places and memories destroyed by apartheid. The District Six Museum, he maintains, was not merely putting together that particular community but reshaping it through its engaged work of representation. Yet even in this formulation there is some ambivalence. He refers to the District Six Museum as a 'hybrid' space combining expertise with 'community forms of governance and accountability', which brought on board 'community-connected academics, some of whom saw themselves as activist intellectuals but who often bore the restrictive mark of the academy'. The community museum thus appears somewhat idealised as a cultural broker and knowledge mediator, 'blending these interactions into the riffs and rhythms of its work' (Rassool, 2006: 296).

While Buntinx and Karp (2006) warn against utopianism, which accepts the concept of the community museum defined as bounded and different to the conventional museum, the persistent narrative framing in many of these writings is that of romance. By paying attention to 'modes of emplotment', the way by which 'a sequence of events are fashioned into a story is gradually revealed to be a story of a particular kind' (White, 1973: 7), the story of the community museum appears as a romance. In romance the narrative is one of overcoming the forces of the world and achieving a state of liberation. Referring to the dramatic narratives of the Grail legend and the resurrection of Christ, White (1973: 8–9) maintains that romance is ultimately 'a drama of the triumph of good over evil, of virtue over vice, of light over darkness, and the ultimate transcendence of man [sic] over the world in which he [sic] was imprisoned by the Fall'. Stories written about community museums fit into this romantic

emplotment. Their size, marginality and tactics are characterised as their distinguishing features, 'struggling against the odds, bringing in the community, speaking to local issues and innovating new museum methodologies' (Witz, 2010b: 7).

This view aligns the community museum with what Minkley, drawing upon Scott, has identified as a post anti-apartheid heritage discourse in which struggle over adversity leads to liberation and an emancipatory present (Minkley, 2008: 28; Scott, 2004: 47). Romance facilitates a smooth narrative that glosses over the difficult processes, multiple voices and continual negotiations over the construction of museum communities (Karp, 1992: 11–15). The first two curators of the Lwandle Museum, Bongani Mgijima and Vusi Buthelezi, draw upon their experiences to dispel this notion (2006: 795–806). It was not so easy in those early years, they contend, to attract local members of the Lwandle community to engage with its programmes. Diverse interests and little agreement over the museum's purpose led to a deep ambivalence over its presence. There was little romance in the continual labour of managing 'museum–community relations' in Lwandle.

Yet notions of a bounded community, to which the museum needed to appeal, are core to the argument of Mgijima and Buthelezi. There is almost a desire to become part of a post anti-apartheid narrative of oppression and

Figure 1.5: Vusi Buthelezi, the museum's second curator following the departure of Bongani Mgijima, takes students from the Postgraduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies on a walking tour of Lwandle (Friday, 31 October 2003). Outside hostel 33 (also labelled Block 6), the old bucket toilet area stands as the sole remnant of this rudimentary system of sanitation in Lwandle. The shopkeeper opposite the hostel later built a storage shed adjacent to the back wall, obliterating the view of the Block 6 signage. A transport trailer parked in the background is already evident in this photograph. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

resistance (Minkley, Witz & Rassool, 2009). The story they tell us is one of the 'struggles over the creation and early history of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum' (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 798). The narrative thread starts with overcrowding in the hostels of Lwandle in the 1980s, moves to the development of family accommodation as a transformative move in the post-apartheid city, along with the associated decision of museum formation, advances through the peaks and troughs of sustaining the museum and culminates in the award of the Western Cape Museum of the Year in 2009. The nomination for the award replicates the romantic narrative of becoming:

> This is a museum which, despite recurring financial crises and constant threats of closure, has through its committed staff and board, built an institution which has redefined the traditional role and immediate tasks of a museum. It has made a substantial contribution in turning a place which under apartheid was only officially recognized as a place of hostels for male migrant labourers into a community.[10]

Over the years, this biographical story was renarrated almost daily as visitors were taken on the museum tour, beginning at the displays in the Old Community Hall followed by a walk through the streets of Lwandle (Figure 1.5). There might not be a formal, published history of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, but its history has already been told in many ways. In nearly all the biographies of the museum (Rassool, 2004), from its own publicity, exhibitionary and archival practices through to conference papers, project reports, funding applications and few reflective articles and books, the developmental dream of the 'Hostels-to-Homes' project finds fulfilment in the Migrant Labour Museum.

Our account seeks to unpack this apparent cohesiveness and to quite self-consciously explore the museum's active involvement in the ways in which it constitutes its communities. We are not denying that there are identifiable formations in Lwandle that speak for and identify themselves as community structures. What we want to assert rather is that these configurations, much like the museum, are themselves continually making and remaking, sustaining and addressing shifting publics. Underlying this proposition is the provocation that the community does not exist independently of the museum. This implies that what we want to present is not about the making of a community museum but a 'broken series of paradoxes and reversals' that are 'ever open to unaccountable contingencies' in the making of a museum community (Scott, 2004: 13).

This suggests to us that a tragic narration might then be an appropriate strategy 'to honour the contingent, the ambiguous, the paradoxical and the unyielding' (Scott, 2004: 13). In a qualification to the romantic parable (White, 1973: 10), the tragic opens up the productive possibilities of uneven pasts and layered formations where origins are always shifting and ends are never secure (Brown, 2001). The archetypal form of dramatic tragedy begins with

a calamitous deed and ends in death. Our story of Lwandle does not follow this trajectory directly, as we start and end with the festive occasions of its celebratory events. But through the unfolding story we tell, the festivity proves to be 'illusory', much like it is in all tragic narrations the ends are 'sombre' reflections on limits and possibilities for the museum (White, 1973: 9). There might not be a heightened 'gain in consciousness' at the completion of this tragic narrative but by 'emplotting the processes of reality' it is the uncertainties of the museum's future that regularly create strain between moments of openness and closure (White, 1973: 9). Stories of sustainability and development are persistently interrupted by threats of death, signalling 'a distance from closure in the construction of the historical record' and a sense of uncertainty, which 'draws attention to the unfinished status of knowledge' (Cohen, 2004: 258). Making a museum constantly contains the possibilities of its unmaking.

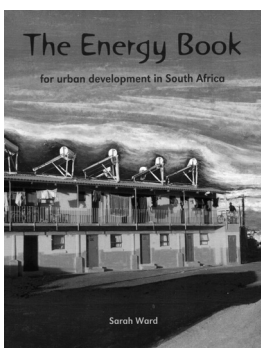

Figure 1.6: View from the museum grounds looking south towards the renovated hostel homes in 2007 (above). The image of Lwandle's converted hostels with solar water-heating structures on their roofs became an icon of sustainable development. The front cover of *The Energy Book for Urban Development in South Africa* by Sarah Ward shows an artist's rendering of the Lwandle homes (left). In this book, Ward (2002: 54) gave an account of the project and its reception in Lwandle: 'The solar water heaters are mounted on stands on the existing roofs in order to get the best (north) orientation for the heating panels, thus creating a powerful visual impact which some people love and others do not!' *Photograph (top): Leslie Witz; illustration (left): Andy Lord; photograph: Sarah Ward.*

Museum memoirs

This book begins after the appearance of happy endings, presented through the completion of the Hostels-to-Homes project, which saw the delivery of family accommodation to residents and the happenstance of a museum. From the late 1980s, when Lwandle was the subject of planned destruction by the apartheid authorities, a number of legal, philanthropic, church and development organisations stepped in to identify conditions of poverty and provide professional services to improve residents' lives. These organisations included the Black Sash, a local inter-church group, the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, the Development Action Group and the Urban Foundation. In the Hostels-to-Homes schemes of the early 1990s, hostels were converted into housing with solar water heaters and water-borne sewerage, and crèches, schools, roads, a clinic, a gymnasium and a library were constructed. As we narrate in the following chapter, although the idea of a museum as a memorial to an apartheid past in Lwandle was not originally envisaged as part of this process, the idea started to germinate among a few individuals as the housing project neared completion. In the dreams of a beautiful Lwandle, the museum was to be the foundation of a recovered past (Figure 1.6). Our initial association with the project of establishing a museum emerged within this landscape of social transformation as the housing project was completed and a hostel was identified to tell a story of Lwandle's past.

Our work with the museum began at a moment when we were already questioning philanthropic, trickle-down models of knowledge production**.** In these models, the expertise and knowledge of academia are brought in to provide professional assistance to communities. Academic critiques (Minkley et al., 1996; Rousseau, 1995) have questioned the hierarchies of knowledge, the modes of translation, and the concealment of relations of power in these applied practices, which are very often couched as outreach. When we were invited to become part of this museum project by Bongani Mgijima, a graduate of the Postgraduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies then offered jointly by the University of the Western Cape, University of Cape Town and the Robben Island Museum, we were excited by the prospect of a new museum which would contain 'no single master narrative' (Mgijima, 12 June 1998).[11] Instead of conveying a set of prescribed ideas and practices, this project seemed to offer a distinct possibility that we might be able to 'negotiate the past' (Nuttall & Coetzee, 1998) in what was promoted as the 'first township-based museum in the Western Cape'.[12]

In this book, we also want to situate our association with the museum within the formulations of public history that emerged out of the Department of History at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). In this approach, the category of history is produced in a range of sites, by multiple authors and in a variety of genres. Part of the practice of public history is to understand these processes of historical production and who the authors are, the practices they

bring and the contestation over authority. But more than this, public history pertains to 'engaging in the practice' with historians in the public domain and how, through these ongoing encounters, expert knowledge is negotiated and constantly reformulated (Minkley et al., 2009: 32). Witz and Rassool (2008: 12–13), reflecting on over 15 years of their own work in public history, have extended Kratz and Karp's formulation of the idea of 'museum frictions' into what they call 'history frictions':

> This notion of engagement with the public … forces a rethink of our practices as historians and history educators. It is no longer useful to think of teaching and writing history as a scientific enterprise. A more productive concept we want to propose is that of 'history frictions' … Historical practices within the public domain give rise to a similar set of frictions as the claims to knowledge are asserted, substantiated and articulated across an ever increasing wider-range of communities and institutions.

One the one hand, we were invited to participate in the Lwandle Museum because of our disciplinary backgrounds in history and architecture, which meant we would bring research and design skills to the project. On the other hand, we would like to believe that our cautious approach to the applications of these skills widened and complicated the possibilities for thinking the museum beyond outreach. While, of course, the context of philanthropy and the issue of creating relations of dependency were always present, creating discomfort and causing us to hesitate and question, the 'history frictions' unsettled our involvement as board members, researchers, writers and exhibition designers.

It is precisely this unease with our own disciplinary positioning that lies at the heart of this book. In circumstances described by Handler and Gable (1997) in their research at Colonial Williamsburg in the USA, by Sally Price (2007) studying the Musée du quai Branly in Paris, and by Leslie Witz and Ciraj Rassool (2007) looking at the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, it was their observations in the field, discussions with groups and individuals, and their access to selected documents about museum operations and readings of exhibitions that enabled them to analyse social interactions and the making of meanings in museums.

We have at our disposal, arguably, a much more extensive archive about the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum. Some of it is in the museum's own records, to which we have access, and a substantial amount is contained in what we have collected ourselves over the years of our involvement. Of course this archive includes our own shifting and contested memories of what happened, how decisions were taken and who participated in and influenced directions. In addition, both of us have a large set of photographs of the museum from its inception to the time of writing. This is both a unique and highly privileged position to be in. At the same time, it fills us with a sense of trepidation. In writing

this book we are naturally representing the museum from our perspective, yet we feel a strong sense of responsibility to the museum and those who have been part of it over the years. It is not just important to us that we have the permission of the board of the museum to research and write this book but also that we recognise that we 'occupy the same … public sphere' (Meskell & Pels, 2005: 23). We have been part of the debates, disagreements and discussions over the museum's futures and its pasts. Far from asserting that this establishes equivalence, our position has always been one that takes 'responsibility for our enabling practices' and that is situationally aware of operations of power (Harraway, 1998: 587). We are in a position of power, not only because of our disciplinary positioning but also because of our access to knowledge and resources through our intimate relationship with the museum.

In both our museum work in Lwandle and in writing this book, we have attempted to bring ethics and method together, what Meskell and Pels (2005) call 'embedding ethics' in practice. For this there is no formula for how to proceed and no standardised ethics form to complete.[13] One of these ethical challenges was in relation to the photographs we selected to publish in this book. As a final stage, we set about contacting photographers, people who appear in the photographs and those who were interviewed over the years by the museum. Release forms were printed, along with colour copies of photographs of those who were to appear in the book. Acquiring the photographers' permission was pretty straightforward, but obtaining permissions from those in the photographs was daunting and time consuming. It involved contacting people who, in some cases, were photographed over a decade ago. But in discussion with colleagues and thinking through our involvement with the museum, it became clear to us that embarking on the process of gathering permissions would be a meaningful way of renewing contact and connecting the friends of the museum with the story we had written. To explain the making of the book, we arranged a gathering in Lwandle where we could discuss permissions and distribute copies of photographs to each person. Although several could not make it to the occasion, and some were sadly no longer alive or had distanced themselves from the museum, those who did come on the day were enthusiastic about a book that would tell the museum's story and they wished to contribute towards its publication. Many were pleased to secure photographs of themselves, while others asked questions to ensure that we had represented individuals and events appropriately. The difficult process of obtaining permissions was turned into a nostalgic reunion of sorts and an intimate reminder to us of the responsibilities we carry in narrating stories of Lwandle's museum-in-the-making.

It is because of this combination of 'possibilities and difficulties' (Meskell & Pels, 2005: 24) that instead of providing a manual, or a case study, we have chosen to bring our memoirs and those collected through the records of the museum project to this book and write a biography of the Lwandle Migrant

Labour Museum. We are drawing on the way in which an architectural history of 77 Orchard Street on New York City's Lower East Side was produced as the *Biography of a Tenement House* (Dolkart, 2007). By connecting to what is described as a process of rehabilitation, rather than an 'as-built' account of the restoration, construction and development, storied lives are integrated into a history of the building. The book is an account of how the built fabric was appropriated, mobilised and made artefactual in the project of explicitly 'creating the Lower East Side Tenement Museum' (Dolkart, 2007: 114). Relating the strata of the building's materiality to the social lives of immigrant communities in New York City was a key concern, which provided inscriptions of the past for the museum setting. The project was focused on neither aesthetic intervention nor material reconstruction but rather on sensitivity to the ways in which the dilapidation revealed traces of the everyday. The work of biography in this instance is the story of researching the building, the plans uncovered, the changing patterns of occupation and how space was continually adapted and inhabited. It is a biography of accommodation and occupation behind a facade of the building's uniformity — it could still be almost any building in the city.

Yet in many ways this insightful account retains the aura of being largely a celebration of the project, stripping away the layers of decay in order to provide an unfolding narrative of becoming a museum. Seamlessly linked to the process of restoration, and because of its intention, the making of a museum is still primarily told through uncovering an architectural past. In our book we wanted, instead, to generate a series of biographies around the processes of museum-making, the politics of production and the articulation of the museum's various forms. Much like *Recalling Community* (Rassool & Prosalendis, 2001), which gives an account of the early years of the District Six Museum in Cape Town — a museum which was produced almost incidentally around the post-apartheid invocation of communities around forced removals from the heart of Cape Town — our story about the establishment of the Lwandle Museum is one of multiple narratives and insider memories of how the museum was made. The thread of *Recalling Community* traces the District Six Museum's achievements, shortcomings, 'interjections', methodologies and 'challenges' it made to 'museum practice' in a South Africa under transition from apartheid (Rassool, 2001). Two of the key areas of the book are the collection and display of oral histories and photographs and the methods employed to think through how a museum might incorporate these into the on-going 'memory work' that reflects upon processes of positioning authority, voice and image (Layne & Rassool, 2001; Smith & Rassool, 2001). Similarly, this book picks up on this area of praxis and the multiple ways in which these became institutionally inscribed and reformed into 'the museum as concept' (Prosalendis, 2001: v). Our museum recollections are situated within these debates over meaning, production, imaging and materialisation.

Figure 1.7: Two views on arrival at the museum after the City of Cape Town's urban greening project. The image on the top shows a plethora of signs with the name of the museum overshadowed by the advertising billboard. Below, the newly completed forecourt shows the transformed museum landscape after completion on 7 March 2007. *Photographs: Leslie Witz.*

In a subsequent edited volume by staff and board members of the District Six Museum, *City · Site · Museum*, spatial considerations are central. Many of the essays are about the museum within the city as it is being reshaped, and how the museum claims the District as a site of urban presence, lived experience, memory and aspirations of a collective return. Practices, claimed as 'grounded and visionary', 'people-centred', 'inspiring and exemplary' are placed within the symbolic register of return through connecting the 'city, site, museum' (Bennett, 2008: 4–5). In writing about Lwandle we needed to think about the museum, the buildings it inhabits, and its location in a township where the imprint of compound planning remains physically present. The stories that we tell about Lwandle are about the institution of the museum and the ways it is positioned within a post-apartheid landscape of township and development (Figure 1.7). Whereas the space in District Six is residual and memories are, at best, inscribed into a palimpsest of a district erased, in Lwandle, after Hostels-to-Homes, the museum draws upon recollections of a compound presence.

Conceiving of Lwandle as a site that is neither the field of research nor the remnants of an archaeological dig (Bennett & Julius, 2008: 52–67), the museum makes use of the landscape of the compound as the remnant of the labour camp to evoke memories of suffering under apartheid (Murray & Witz, 2013). By employing this strategy of remembrance, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum functions like many 'memorial museums' that have flourished since the mid-1990s (Williams, 2007: 8). Situated in localities of repression, killing and torture, such as concentration camp sites in Germany, Italy and Poland, prisons in the former Soviet Union, cemeteries of genocide victims in Bosnia, Rwanda and Cambodia, and places of terror attacks in the United States of America, they do not have a conventional collection of artefacts as their conceptual foundation. Instead, they rely largely upon a 'surviving object', be it in the form of a camp, a prison, a cemetery or an emptied landscape to give them an identity as a museum. Often associated with constructing nations in societies that have undergone violent pasts, these museums are often pedagogic in nature, providing historical interpretations as a series of lessons to be learnt for an envisaged future of tolerance and democracy (Sodaro, 2011: 73; Caplan, 2007). Although they have the power of the artefactual trace in situ, it is the collection, evocation and display of memories as the present of a past that constitutes the museum. Through the generation and exhibition of oral testimonies, and the production, archiving, exhibition and circulation of photographs, a time becomes inscribed as a past, spatialised and institutionalised within the memorial museum as an imperative to be remembered (Williams, 2007: 25–50; Pamuk, 2010).

In this book we use the motivations, strategies and practices of memorial museums as a way to structure the story we tell of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum. Rather than providing a linear chronological narrative, which would give an account of emergence, we explore the museum's makings within the spatial residue of emaHolweni: its production of images, its creation of histories, the restoration of its structures and its staging of events. Chapter 2, 'Rehabilitation' looks at an account of the process by which hostel 33 was restored by the museum into Hostel 33. The story of the Hostel 33 restoration project effectively begins in 2008 when funding proposals were drawn up and plans set in place. But the rescuing of the hostel to be made into a memorial artefact, 10 years before that, signalled the start of the museum. From this beginning there were constant conflicts and negotiations over the occupation of the hostel and whether and how it could be used as a museum space. In Chapter 3, 'Museumisation', we discuss the ways that were sought to construct an institution that could be labelled as a museum. Experimenting with the form and design of exhibitions in the Old Community Hall and Hostel 33, constituting publics through tourism and cultural and educational programming, and establishing formal operational structures were all part of inventing a museum. In Chapters 4 and 5 we focus on two of the key elements that make up memorial

museums and which were also important to *Recalling Community* (Rassool & Prosalendis, 2001) in the District Six Museum: photography and oral histories. Chapter 4, 'Revisioning', is not only about how photographs and visual images have been key to the museum in all its iterations but also reflects on the various photographers, the ways in which their images are used in exhibitions and the making of collections, turning Lwandle into a visual rendition of itself. Finally, in Chapter 5, 'Retelling', we bring together orality and museum-making to think about how the oral is curated as a non-aural artefact by producing it as exhibition and text. This chapter shows how individuals are selected by museum staff to speak for Lwandle, and how their voices are visualised, designed and then taken on tour through the streets. On this tour we end up where the museum began, at Hostel 33, where the possibilities of representing a local, individuated past is constantly circumscribed by a national memorial complex (Werbner, 1998).

Making dislocation

Lwandle's history, as thoroughly narrated through the museum experience, is primarily one of displacement and dislocation. Workers originally recruited from rural bantustans to work in South African cities found themselves living disjointed lives, separated from their homes and families as migrant labourers, displaced in apartheid's 'townships' or 'locations'. This dislocation took on many forms: social, racial, legal, physical and spatial. In the process of naming spaces as part of apartheid's lexicon of urban planning terms, 'locations', 'townships' and labour compounds were somehow imagined as outside the city, yet not in the countryside, precariously perched, hidden even, between buffer areas as a form of planned temporary encampment. It is in this extended sense of the word 'dislocation' that we have purposefully chosen to position our thinking around the making of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, an institution which — as we argue in this book — remains displaced within South Africa's emergent post-apartheid museum landscape.

From 2005, the Lwandle Museum attempted to become formalised as a museum within the structures of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport in the Western Cape province of South Africa. Only in 2009 did the Western Cape Provincial Cabinet decide to approve this application, pending the museum securing the lease of its buildings from the City of Cape Town.[14] The lease was signed in November 2010, but there was still reluctance from the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport to proceed with the implementation of the 2009 decision. One of the reasons stated was that new legislation was pending and it was claimed that a much more appropriate category should be found for the Lwandle Museum — instead of being province-aided it would, in all likelihood, be classified as a community museum. In a draft discussion paper outlining new policies for museums in the Western Cape 'two key elements'

are identified as constituting this new category: service to and 'a solid base of support … from that specific community'.[15]

We are arguing that placing the Lwandle Museum in such a location is inappropriate. Whereas apartheid sought to make Lwandle as a 'native location', the categorisation of the museum as 'community' fixes its past and future into a narrow frame that denies the profoundly dislocating and uneven processes of making museum communities. A history of what became called a museum in Lwandle is necessarily one of displacement, unease and the oscillating pressures of constructing an institution situated between the effects of apartheid — the migrant labour system and the remnants of the labour camp — and post-apartheid discourses of development as hostels were reconfigured as homes.

By pausing to think about museum-making in relation to the dislocations of township experience that persist well into the present, we hope to open up a mode of thinking about how the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum figures in the interstices of effect and development. It is a book which is deliberately set in the past, ending a little beyond the celebration, trepidation and discomfort of the museum's 10th birthday in 2010. Of course, since then there have been events and dilemmas that have amplified the uncertainty of the museum's past and future. In this biography of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, we present an account which deliberately foregrounds this uncertainty. It is a story of Lwandle and the museum which is fixed and temporary, planned and providential, seen and unseen, settled and unsettled.

End notes

1 'Museum Policy Document, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum', 7 December 2004, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Collection. Unless otherwise stated, all the documents we cite are in this collection of the museum. See also notices on the wall of the museum, 'The Mission statement of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum' and 'The aims of the Migrant Labour Museum', photographed by Leslie Witz, 10 June 1999.

2 The official name of Lwandle is derived from the shortening of the expression of place in isiXhosa with the vowel 'e' as in eLwandle.

3 'Divisional Council of Stellenbosch — Establishment of a Location and a Native Village', Government Notice No. 71 of 1958. The designated local authorities charged with the administration of Lwandle have changed over the time since its inception in 1958. Variously these included: from 1958 the Divisional Council of Stellenbosch; in the 1990s Lwandle shifted from the divisional authority in the Stellenbosch area to become part of the newly formed Helderberg Municipality, which incorporated the towns of Somerset West, Strand and Gordon's Bay; and in 2000 it was included as part of the City of Cape Town. This is the current municipal entity (formed in December 2000) following the amalgamation of seven former municipalities to create one 'unicity'.

4 Literally 'in the hostels' but commonly used to refer to 'the place of hostels'.

5 Government Notice No. 71, 17 January 1958, 'Divisional Council of Stellenbosch — Establishment of a location and a native village'.

6 Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006: 799–800) argue that such claims were incorrect. They cite

an undated letter to residents of hostel 33 from the Lwandle Museum Committee: 'We, hostel number 33 residents hereby approve our unit be converted to the hostel museum as long as we are still the residents of the hostel and catered for into the hostel to homes project. This idea was clearly explained to us by members of the committee, we are aware that this has the blessings of the community and we also want to fully support the idea of making history of our background and we are also proud that our community is developing gradually and effectively. We also thank you for your care and ambition to make this happen.'

7 Helderberg Municipality Memorandum, 1 July 1998, 'Proposed Museum in Lwandle', 17/18/1.

8 'We the residents', notice photographed by Leslie Witz, 1 May 2000.

9 Minutes of Board Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 29 January 2007.

10 Nomination of Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum for 10th Western Cape Arts and Culture, Language, Library, Museum, Heritage and Archive Awards, 2009.

11 The Postgraduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies was begun in 1998 to train a cohort of new museum and heritage professionals in a transforming South Africa. In 2005 it received funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, was rebranded as the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies and specifically focused on attracting museum professionals from other parts of the continent. In 2008 the University of Cape Town withdrew from the programme.

12 See the range of Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum brochures from 2000 to 2010 where, on the front cover, visitors are welcomed to 'visit the first township-based museum in the Western Cape'.

13 This is not to play down the importance of obtaining ethics clearance but to indicate that for all the provisions and protection of human and animal subjects, and the contractual obligations implied, it is in the process of research that issues of accountability play themselves out and become real.

14 Western Cape Provincial Government, Cabinet Meeting, 1 April 2009, 'Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum: Proclamation as a Province-Aided Museum', Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Minute 95/2009. File C13/2/1/5.

15 Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Provincial Government of the Western Cape. 'Discussion paper: Towards a new provincial museum policy for the Western Cape', March 2011, 62.

Chapter 2

Rehabilitation
Restoring a migrant labour hostel

Our biography of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum begins quite unexpectedly in 2008. In that year a proposal was submitted to the United States Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation for the restoration of the building which had originally sparked the ideas for a memorial institution: hostel 33, block 6, Lwandle. In 1988, because the residents had still not vacated the hostel, Charmian Plummer and the museum's first curator, Bongani Mgijima, appropriated the nearby Old Community Hall for the first exhibitions and events. Instead of being the sole site of the museum, the hostel became a remnant within the changing landscape, a key artefact of the past that the museum needed to retain, preserve and interpret for visitors to Lwandle. Hostel 33 became a central signifying space of the museum (Figure 2.1).

Some eight years after its official opening, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum embarked on the restoration of the hostel as an integral component of its activities, 'as a tourist site, educational resource and as a memorial to the migrant labour system which underpinned apartheid.'[1] The biography of the project described in this book focuses on the ways in which a process of re-enactment radically altered the approach to restoration. In place of the centrality of the building as object, the work shifted to how the hostel could function most effectively as a stage, prop and destination for the museum's narrations of the past. Intimate readings and detailed recordings of the space and its usages constituted the building's materiality. In this way, the process of restoring Hostel 33 challenged the material limits of conservation architecture. Retaining and maintaining Hostel 33, as proposed in 2008, was less about the built fabric as an empirical fact of the past than its projection into an envisaged future for 'museum purposes' (Murray, 2010).[2]

From farm to museum

Hostel 33 was one of the blocks in the compound built on farmland that had been purchased by the government alongside the national road leading to the north-east between Somerset West and Sir Lowry's Pass (Figure 2.2).

The owner, C.P.J. van Vuuren, who sold the farm to the state, maintained that when he had initially bought the farm in 1943 it was '*kaal, soos natuur dit gelaat het*' ('naked, like nature left it') and that he had initiated substantial improvements by installing boreholes, building a farmhouse, planting fruit trees and putting up fences and windbreaks. Whether the farm was as desolate as Van Vuuren described it is difficult to tell because, at the time, he was negotiating the selling price with the Ministry of Native Affairs and the Stellenbosch Divisional Council. Van Vuuren's farm was eminently suitable for the construction of Lwandle. Not only was it within easy reach of the towns of Somerset West, Strand and to a lesser extent Gordon's Bay, but it was far enough away to be a spatially distinct, separate, perhaps even rural, locality. The windswept, harsh environment near to the sea also made it a marginal farming area. Van Vuuren's property had formed part of the larger farm Gustrouw, which had been subdivided in the mid-nineteenth century into a series of smaller plots (Heap 1977, 60–66). It had been used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Figure 2.1: Recovering hostel 33 for museum purposes mid-way through the rehabilitation process. Grounds are being cleared, windowpanes replaced and walls rebuilt. This photograph was taken the morning before the museum's 10th birthday celebrations. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray, 30 April 2010.*

Figure 2.2: 'Aerial near'. This is another aerial photograph of Lwandle taken by Andrew Berman for the Urban Foundation report on the future of Lwandle in 1987. Four ablution blocks and two communal kitchens are located between the hostel rows. The photograph is taken from a close-up oblique angle and the engine of the aircraft is evident in the bottom right corner of the photograph. *Photograph: Andrew Berman.*

largely for cattle farming and although Van Vuuren had attempted to grow fruit trees, when contrasted with the protected prime agricultural lands on the slopes of the nearby Helderberg range, this was far from an ideal farming environment. In spite of Van Vuuren's efforts to inflate the price by appealing directly to the Minister of Native Affairs, Hendrik Verwoerd, 19 morgen (40 acres) of the farm called Gustrouw was purchased by the Stellenbosch Divisional Council for £14 000 and Lwandle was established and officially proclaimed as a 'location and native village' in Government Notice No. 71 of 17 January 1958.[3]

The divisional council made use of the underlying cadastral boundaries and built 22 hostels for single men, eating halls, kitchens, and shower and laundry blocks. They set land aside for a communal hall, beer hall and sports field, and turned Van Vuuren's farmhouse into a police station (which was known by the locals as the 'Withuis' or 'White House'). Surrounding Lwandle was an approximately 200-metre wide 'buffer zone' to the boundary with the national road. The converted farmhouse, alongside a single access road, provided the checkpoint to monitor entry and exit to the compound. The hostels were designed as linear blocks. Configured in parallel rows of double- and single-storey structures, they were laid out around a central space in a chevron-type pattern, which allowed for clear lines of sight along the rows. In each row

there were a number of units. Each unit had a single entrance and was divided into two rooms, both of which were further subdivided into four, confined compartments with two to four beds in each. The hostel block housed up to 32 men and their lives were effectively reduced to a 'bedhold' (Ramphele, 1993: 22). Each hostel unit had an outside latrinal block with six open cubicles that made use of the bucket system, and in close proximity were communal kitchen and shower structures. The visual paradox of the Lwandle hostels was that they were created to be unseen, as if they did not exist, yet they were so eminently observable by compound managers and police that there was no sense of privacy.

Through the 1960s and 1970s these regimes of control and surveillance operated to supply and regulate labour in the Helderberg region. From the 1980s onwards, these systems of high apartheid began to crumble as women and children moved into the hostels in defiance of the system of influx control. The idea of Lwandle as a site of a managed population was no longer enforceable by the local authorities. Many residents of Strand, the 'extensive seaside resort with its specially set aside residential, dining, beach and recreational facilities for people who were racially classified as white under apartheid', called for the closure of what they termed the 'migrant labourers' quarters' and the removal of all Lwandle's inhabitants to Khayelitsha.[4] The local Hostel Dwellers' Association, non-governmental organisations and some industry representatives, on the other hand, advocated for the conversion of the hostels to family housing (Witz, 2011: 373; Urban Design Services, 1987: 66). For several years there were intense and often acrimonious negotiations over Lwandle's future. In the early 1990s, as violent conflicts surfaced across the country between hostel residents and local township dwellers, the apartheid state was also beginning to succumb to a view that hostels would have to be significantly upgraded (Thurman, 1997: 48). Lwandle was declared a township, rescued from its imminent demise and recast as one of the first sites of the Hostels-to-Homes projects that sought to unsettle the labour camp.

In 1993 local authorities embarked on remaking Lwandle. The Hostels-to-Homes project saw single-male hostel accommodation converted into family units. In response to a request from the Hostel Dwellers' Association, the Development Action Group, in association with ACG Architects and engineers Liebenberg and Stander, started the process of work on the project of transforming the camp from 'open barracks' into private family accommodation. A long consultative process began: families were identified; homes were allocated; and space was re-envisioned to transform the labour camp (Figure 2.3).

The interior of the hostels was reconfigured with new separate entrances, ceilings, and hot-water showers, toilets and basins shared between two family units.[5] Homes were created in the camp-like arrangement of the barracks along the newly created and named streets. The first homes, completed in 1998, boasted

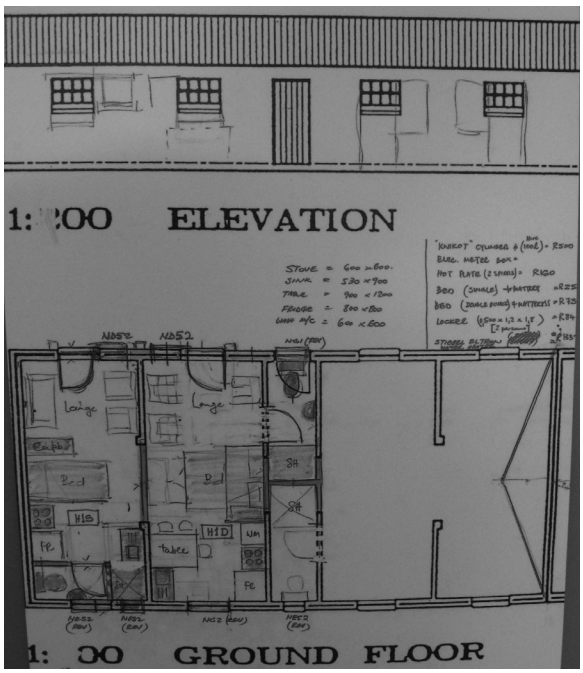

Figure 2.3: Consultants and residents sat poring over plans of the old compounds and began sketching configurations for new units and slowly a new place began to emerge as internal arrangements were manipulated on plan. (Above) Doors, rooms, roads, pavements and solar water-heating panels were added to open these units to new possibilities and make the camp into homes (Hildebrand, 2008: 33–37). Illustration (left): Liebenberg and Stander project files, circa 1996, sourced as part of the research for the exhibition, *Do you Have a Map/Unayo na Impehu* in 2001. *Photograph (above): William Martinson, 13 March 2010.*

a roofscape of gleaming solar panels. It was at this moment that the Helderberg Municipality made a decision that one of the existing unreconstructed hostel blocks be retained. Situated among the new homes that were taking shape, this old hostel structure was to become a key signifier and artefactual presence of an envisaged museum in Lwandle.[6]

The decision to set aside a hostel for the purposes of a museum was a different approach to the ways in which many migrant-labour hostels were being reconfigured elsewhere in post-apartheid South Africa by engineers, architects, town planners and heritage practitioners. Some had been converted into family accommodation, as most were in Lwandle, or torn down to make way for new housing developments (Cooke le Fèvre, 2009). In other instances they were either refurbished or used unaltered as dormitories, mainly for male workers. Sometimes they were abandoned and left as hidden landscapes of the past, such as Zwelihle, the AECI Labour Compound adjacent to Somerset Mall in Somerset West (Attwell, 2011). When they were made into museum pieces, they were either recreated as dioramas, such as at the KwaMuhle Museum in Durban and MuseumAfrica in Johannesburg, or painstakingly restored to become museums of themselves, such as the municipal compound building at the Newtown Cultural Precinct in Johannesburg, which was renamed the 'Worker's Library and Museum'. Despite being protected as a declared national monument in 1996, the Newtown compound building was vandalised and was only successfully secured as a museum in 2008. The building was restored again, a new visitors' centre was constructed and an exhibition installed that made extensive use of filmed oral histories and photographs (Martinson & Leger, 1992; Byala, 2013; Krige, 2010; Murray & Witz, 2013). In Newtown, the idea was that the old compound would remain on the inner-city landscape as a marker of a past within the extensive urban regeneration of the area. Yet in Lwandle, the reconfiguration of the compound to homes took place in the name of social reconstruction. Remaindering hostel 33 as heritage was an awkward fit within the discourse of township development.

Hostel 33 was a difficult space for the museum. On the walking tour of Lwandle, which Mgijima set up soon after the opening in 2000 as part of the museum experience, the encounter with a past of migrant labour confronted the present reality of a continuing shortage of suitable housing (Harrison et al., 2003: 14). The temporary solution, as people were allocated houses and hostel 33 became partially vacated, was to install a security gate inside the hostel, effectively dividing the building into residential and museum spaces on either side of the shared entrance corridor. Vusi Buthelezi (2005: 103), who became the museum manager after Mgijima, was far from happy with this arrangement. 'When the museum brings tourists to view the historical building there is always cooperation but this not always voluntary and willingly', he wrote. The 'occupants of hostel 33', he believed, had 'become living museum objects'.

For several years this situation persisted and the temporary gate became a permanent fixture as the museum continued to be a broker between the local authority and the construction company in the on-going struggles for housing in Lwandle. As accommodation was found for the residents of hostel 33 in 2006, others simply moved in, set up home and opened a shebeen (tavern) that

disrupted the neighbourhood. The museum, determined at this stage to make hostel 33 survive, called on the local ward councillor, Xolani Sotashe, to assist it and the neighbours to negotiate with the newcomers. After a series of difficult and lengthy meetings, those who had taken residence in the hostel moved out. The museum moved in, removed the interior divide, installed another security gate on the entrance door and commissioned Simon Nehonde, a local graphic artist, to put up a sign: 'Hostel 33: Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Purposes ONLY'.

Securing the hostel opened up possibilities for the re-curation of the space as an integral component of the museum and its activities. There were intense debates around the representational possibilities for the space among museum board members. Some proposed going back to a time when the hostels were policed as male-only zones; others wanted to depict the 1980s when women and children defied the influx control laws and came to live in the hostels; while a third suggestion was to portray a more comprehensive image from the 1960s to the present. Appropriating the moment, Lunga Smile, the museum curator, and Nungu Nungu, an intern in the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies, worked with a group of women in Lwandle who supported the museum to imagine, depict and perform aspects of hostel life in the 1980s. They collected stories, gathered artefacts of daily life, and styled and dressed up the hostel rooms. On 18 August 2007, in the middle of what was officially proclaimed as Women's Month, hostel 33 became a stage for storied lives, positioning dramatic re-enactment of hostel life as a possible museum future.[7] This possibility was articulated in the project to restore Hostel 33 as the museum's central artefact.

Making hostel 33 into Hostel 33

It is not an exaggeration to describe hostel 33 in Lwandle as an ugly building. Designed by planners and engineers, and laid out by surveyors, it was built to be purely functional, in keeping with the housing compound typology that had emerged in the lexicon of apartheid space-making. In addition to the dehumanising and unhygienic living conditions and the monotonous planning, the hostel was constructed using building materials of the lowest specifications: cheap stock bricks, low-pitched asbestos roofing, with neither insulation nor ceilings, and ungalvanised steel windows that warped and rusted. The walls were built without cavities so they became damp and developed structural cracks. There is no redeeming aesthetic.

The hostel is also not very old, having been built in 1958/59. By the time the Lwandle museum opened, the hostel fell well short of the mandatory '60-year clause' 34(1) in South Africa's new National Heritage Resources Act (1999). This clause, which defines the limits and possibilities of heritage proclamation, regulates additions, modifications and erasure of buildings. It specifies that 'no person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which

is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority'.[8] At the very moment of implementation of the new Act the structures of apartheid were not historical enough. In order to be considered 'heritage worthy', a building or object had to 'trigger' (a phrase commonly used by heritage practitioners when submitting plans for scrutiny by local authorities) other provisions in the Act to become heritage (Townsend, 2007: 11). To extend the metaphor, for hostel 33 in Lwandle to be officially inscribed as heritage it needed to be targeted as being, within the very broad ambit of the Act, 'culturally significant'.[9]

To locate this significance was immensely difficult. There appeared to be no national or local narratives that singled it out as being a site of any specific event, a place where people of some import had lived or the last remaining example of the hostel typology of building beyond Lwandle. Even within Lwandle it had no specific meaning. It was simply one of many anonymous numbered hostel structures, identified only by the large, black, stencilled lettering on the walls at the end of each block (Hayes-Roberts, 2010). Within a block, another number was assigned to each hostel unit. Hostel 33, Block 6, on a street with no name in Lwandle was the residential address.

If hostel 33, as a form of apartheid housing, was to become assigned the status of a building with cultural significance, it would involve much work. In a national narrative of migrant labour, hostels are 'the core locus of perhaps the most destructive social engineering of the country's history' (Cooke, 2007: 64). They are represented as examples of 'how colonial and apartheid regimes used the spatial devices of jails or concentration camps to keep labour present and subservient, and in tandem with social regulation created a divided and violent land' (Cooke, 2007: 64). In this trajectory, where it was suggested that hostels be preserved as museum sites, a space of seeming anonymity was named and claimed as Hostel 33, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum. It became exemplified as 'the most typical' of the remaining migrant labour hostels that still had its bucket-latrine area intact. In addition, it had 'excellent parking and access for residents and visitors'.[10] Typicality, artefactual presence and visitability became the markers of significance.

Not a monument in its own right, the hostel as Hostel 33 could exist only through the museum. Although the space was emptied and later a lease was signed in 2010 signifying its legal restoration into the museum's custody, the building itself appeared to be deteriorating alarmingly. Visitors to the hostel were constantly pointed to a stepped masonry crack and told that the building's collapse was imminent. Furthermore, although the hostel had been part of the museum's tours, it had never been curated into the museum's collection. So when it came to restoring the building from 2009, attention needed to be paid to the built fabric and its materiality and finding ways to restore the hostel to the museum. Rather than making old, the movement of hostel 33 to the

museum involved a process of rehabilitating and reinhabiting the site. This is the restoration we want to talk about: how this mobility was made along the running cracks and fissures that troubled the surface of the museum's Hostel 33.

From the inception of the idea of a museum in Lwandle, the physical conditions at hostel 33 produced anxiety. Increasingly on the walking tour through Lwandle's upgraded hostel landscape, hostel 33 stood out as a remnant of the hostel 'type' in its original, older form — that of the single-men's dormitory unit. Since 1999, the building stood flanked by the other hostel buildings that had been transformed into family accommodation through the Hostels-to-Homes project. These upgraded spaces, in contrast to hostel 33, were newly painted, had verandah-like structures added to their facades, solar panels placed on their roofs and internal waterborne facilities installed. These new homes were allocated numbers on streets which were named out of the wasteland of the old compound.

A visit to hostel 33, as the museum intended, served as a reminder of living conditions under the migrant labour system. The narratives presented to visitors by the museum's tour guides intensified the experience of entering into the confined space. On these tours, up to 12 people were asked to crowd into one of the hostel's rooms behind a dividing curtain and were told stories of overcrowding and a lack of privacy. The museum's focus on the narration of stories of life in the hostels made the experience of being in the physical space of an original hostel even more vivid. The feelings of shock and unease experienced by the visitors, who learnt about the life of migrant workers under apartheid, were entirely an intention of the visit to the hostel space. Physicality performed the role of authenticating the historical narratives of migrant labour, refabricating hostel life.

Increasingly, the physical state of the hostel was deteriorating. The harsh seaside conditions at Lwandle, the driving rain, fierce winds and strong sun affected the building, which was no longer fully occupied. No maintenance had been done on the building since 1999 and signs of dilapidation were patently evident. The state of the museum's most precious artefact became something visitors were told about and the physical evidence reinforced this sense. Was it safe to continue to take visitors into a space that was roofed in potentially harmful asbestos? Were we compromising the fabric of the building's interior by taking an increasing number of people through its space? What were the impacts of the weather conditions on a building that had clearly been built to low specifications? Could the hostel be preserved for the museum? In its application to the South African National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund (NLDTF) in 2005, the museum proclaimed, 'we will have to clean and restore the building in and out'.[11] Asbestos roofing, broken windowpanes, rusty protruding nails, sagging beams, crumbling internal partitions, rotten doors, accumulating refuse, together with the large masonry cracks all did the work of worry.

By chance, ideas to start remaking hostel 33 coincided with a recrafting of the United States' cultural policy into what Christina Luke has referred to as 'cultural diplomacy' (Luke, 2013: 351). She maintains that the preservation of monuments and objects was 'an effort to communicate a softer image abroad' by the United States Department of State. Compared to military spending, she argues, such an approach was 'inexpensive' and had the 'potential to be extremely positive, especially if recognition of an historic structure garners political prestige and fosters economic opportunities, most often through tourism' (Luke, 2011: 3). What cultural preservation offered was:

> an opportunity to show a different American face to other countries, one that is non-commercial, non-political, and non-military. By taking a leading role in efforts to preserve cultural heritage, we show our respect for other cultures by protecting their traditions. (US Department of State, 2004)

This policy materialised in the establishment of the United States Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation that sought to support 'a wide range of projects to preserve cultural heritage, such as the restoration of historic buildings, assessment and conservation of museum collections, archaeological site preservation, documentation of vanishing traditional craft techniques' as an indicator of 'the depth of ... respect for the cultural heritage of other countries' (US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, 2012). Mark Canning, the public diplomacy officer at the United States Consulate in Cape Town, encouraged the museum to apply for this competitive international award around a project to restore Hostel 33. Although neither a monumental project nor a treasured antiquity, hostel 33 appeared to fit the categories of situation, marginality and the potential for generating local economic development. The museum's application was successful and, in 2009, Hostel 33 was listed in the United States Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation Awards as a project that was given the inflection of a camp: 'Restoration of a mid-20th-century hostel at the Lwandle Migrant Labour Camp Museum' (US Department of State, 2010).

What Hostel 33's 'restoration' as a project of 'cultural preservation' would entail was still very tentative. Although the proposal to the United States Ambassadors Fund stated that the process of restoration would require that 'careful attention be paid to securing the structure while preserving a sense of the very conditions of poverty that it represents', the process that would be undertaken remained a concern. An itemised list of the anticipated and specified works envisaged was included in the project proposal. This comprised: masonry work to treat and repair walls that were damp and rebuild sections of a wall that were collapsing; the replacement of broken roof sheeting and some timber roof beams, which appeared to be rotten as a result of leaks; site works to the areas adjacent to the building, including the repair of the broken sidewalk, steps and outside plinth, and any

underpinning of the structure where necessary; and the reglazing of 16 windows (250 x 300 millimetre panes) with safety glass, as per specialist specifications. Already designated and defined, these works were more provisional than they appeared. The project required 'intervention and conservation approaches' that avoided the 'sanitisation of the space'.[12] The sense of alienation that pervaded the structure needed to be both maintained and revealed.

Embarking on this restoration project was unlike most others previously completed. The hostel building did not fit into any historical categories of 'architecture of the Cape', which is recognisable by its binaries of 'high style and vernacular' (Rapoport, 1992; Fransen & Cook, 1980; Shepherd & Murray 2007: 2–3). Post-apartheid South Africa has seen new forms of heritage practice emerge in the spatial disciplines, alongside these older forms of the preservation, restoration and conservation of buildings and urban spaces (Murray, 2012: 65). Since the 1990s, international heritage groupings such as the International Council on Museums and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Working Party for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement (DOCOMOMO) have begun to address the incorporation of modernist architecture into a new category of heritage significance (Fischer et al., 2003: 69). These groups view modern architecture as historical and representative of a particular period of building. Restoration and adaptive reuse projects have been encouraged as a means of conserving these buildings. To a large extent, these preservation projects have been successful in the economically buoyant centres of Western Europe and North America where benevolent benefactors have contributed towards their restoration. Much like 'high' modern art, these buildings have been celebrated for their avant-garde qualities and their adherence to the heroic aspects of the project of modernism. Hostel 33, while clearly a product of a modernist vision, could not in any way be regarded as either a monument to the avant-garde or as 'an exemplary' work of 'an international architectural design standard' (Murray, 2012: 66; Murray, 2010: 11).

Both the fabric of hostel 33 and the multiple and contested histories indicated the complexity of attempting to secure a past through restoration. Although until now we have talked about a project of restoring the memory of the camp through the individual hostel, what came into play can better be termed 'rehabilitation'. The idea was that the hostel had a biography and this needed to be made manifest in how the project was carried out. That the hostel had a biography referred to its cultural redefinitions and its various usages, traces of inhabitation through different periods, its multiple authors, and its position in relation to surrounding buildings and spaces (Kopytoff, 1986: 66–67; Murray, 2012: 62). But while biographic moments could be represented as multiple, diverse and constantly changing, the physical structure of the building had to be made secure for the museum. The philosophy of rehabilitation

conveyed by the Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in the United States, and followed by the architects involved in the restoration of 97 Orchard Street for the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City, provided the Lwandle Museum with such a direction: 'the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, and architectural values' (Li/Saltzman, 2002: 2). The aim was not to create an illusion of authenticity but to intervene as little as possible in the existing structure, make repairs where necessary and make it completely apparent where there had been recent interventions. 'Stabilization, restoration, and public access' (Dolkart, 2007: 119) were the key principles proposed so that the almost anonymous, ordinary example of hostel dormitories at hostel 33 could be made into Hostel 33 for 'museum purposes'.[13]

Communities of knowledge

To accomplish such a sensitive intervention, the proposal specified that 'appropriate materials … in keeping with original building materials' be used, original methods be applied, the 'restoration be conducted by suitably trained contractors and conservation architects', and that 'local people' be employed. Finding such expertise was difficult. There were many conservation architects and heritage practitioners but most of their experience was in sites and structures conventionally viewed as having architectural significance. Another group of architects and planners asserted a legacy of opposition to apartheid. Their work has been in township spaces as an 'act of resistance' and a continuation of these practices in post-apartheid South Africa through planning housing projects, new libraries, public spaces, transport and shopping nodes, and community facilities more broadly (Murray, 2007a: 53). Sometimes known as 'community architects', these practitioners had little experience of restoration. Although the museum's requirement was 'to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced architect/s to provide professional services for the restoration of the Hostel',[14] there was no suitable candidate whose knowledge and expertise could cross these modes of practice.

When Jakupa Architects and Urban Designers were appointed to the project, after a process of expression of interest and presentations, it was their enthusiasm, youthfulness and innovation that appealed to the subcommittee of the museum. Although by their own admission they had little experience of conservation projects, they were constituted 'through the energy of the revitalised political context', asserted a '100% HDI [Historically Disadvantaged Individual] status'. They promoted themselves through a selection of urban design and architectural projects which included working with teams involved in the new Cape Town Stadium, the redevelopment of the city's railway station, a post-tsunami resettlement project in Somalia and, closer to Lwandle, the Harmony

Flats Environmental Centre and Potting Shed in an area between Gordon's Bay and Strand (Jakupa, n.d). But, above all, it was their consultative approach that was attractive to a museum that was seeking to establish community. This was expressed in the architect's intention to run a series of what they called 'charettes' with neighbours of hostel 33. They explained that a charette could be described as a gathering together of ideas, concerns and challenges in quite an open-ended manner and from there, honing in on specific issues that emerged from discussion related to the envisaged project. The word charette means a cart or barrow and, quite literally, the concept is to throw the ideas into the cart to work out a design solution. The idea was that the architectural brief would be developed from the charettes. This opened up the possibility of the close involvement of those living in Lwandle and near to hostel 33 in the museum's activities and the remaking as Hostel 33.[15]

At the time of the appointment of the architects to the restoration project, the idea of the charette had become a popular method in local urban process work. But the museum, through its own structures and networks, had already begun to establish a community of memory that placed the stories of hostel life at the centre of the remaking of the hostel. The intention of the museum, concretely manifested in the title of a workshop held in March 2009, *Intlalo yase maHolweni/ziNkomponi* (Living in a hostel compound), was to begin thinking about what it would mean for those living in Lwandle at that time to make 'a hostel among homes'. Facilitated by the museum and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) History Department, the workshop was attended by about 60 residents of Lwandle, several of whom had lived in the hostels but had never actually been to the museum before. The workshop invoked and explored the tensions of remaking a past in a place in which the material history of migrancy had been deliberately erased in the story of development, progress and post-apartheid urban transformation. In this moment of museum-making it became clear that if there were to be any memorial process it could not merely resuscitate hostel 33 into a marker of a past. As the chair of the workshop, Ciraj Rassool continually emphasised that re-enactment, storied lives and performance needed to be made present in the material past.

The charette was intended to bring together the requirements of building restoration and the museum's process of producing storied lives. Lunga Smile, the museum's manager, spent days speaking to the neighbours of hostel 33, explaining what was being envisaged around the restoration and how it was essential that they become part of the process. He answered questions, carefully and in detail, about how the museum wanted the residents to become stakeholders in the future of the hostel as a proposed heritage site. The results of his efforts were evident when the charette, held in the restaurant annex to the museum (a converted large shipping container) on 12 November 2009, was attended by approximately 40 people from Lwandle. The charette was

Figure 2.4: (Top) The charette, November 2009: curator Lunga Smile and architect Khalied Jacobs announce responses from neighbours to ideas for the restoration of hostel 33. (Bottom) Siziwe Zililo and Dalihlanga Nozihamba debate details for an envisaged restored Hostel 33. *Photographs: Leslie Witz, 12 November 2009.*

facilitated by Khalied Jacobs and Renchius van der Merwe (the project architect for the hostel restoration project), with Lunga Smile and Masa Soko (a board member) from the museum's side (Figure 2.4). Each participant was given three small cards on which they were asked to write briefly and anonymously what they perceived to be the problems or challenges associated with the proposed development of hostel 33. The responses pinned on the wall for all to see and discuss were less about storied lives than about the preservation of a museum space in their neighbourhood. What the process of preservation might entail was ambiguous. Some saw it as keeping the hostel as it had been before and not rebuilding it, while others wanted it cleaned, tidied and beautified. Preservation was seen as involving painting, clearing up the litter, repairing the door, installing electricity, fixing the ceilings, and putting up pictures and curtains. Major issues were expressed around employment and security. A concern was that those living in Lwandle should benefit from the project, especially in terms of job creation, both while the restoration was taking place and when tourists visited the hostel.[16] Many ideas were put forward to secure the building, ranging from ensuring that children did not throw stones and break the windows, to putting up a fence and installing burglar guards. This was expressively summed up in one response card which simply read: 'iburglar'.

It was only when participants were divided into two groups to discuss and draw their visions for Hostel 33 on large sheets of paper that memories were sketched into reconstructing the hostel's past. In both cases, what the groups tried to do was represent diagrammatically what they thought the hostels had looked like: the divisions into compartments (one group drew eight, the other twelve); the heights of the dividing walls; the location of beds, tables and cupboards; the outdoor bucket-latrines and the position of the two single light bulbs in each hostel unit. One group indicated that the hostels had changed over time, showing how initially there had been no separation between the compartments, then later how residents had installed self-made curtains for privacy, which became more permanent as partitions were hammered together using a variety of boarding and wood off-cuts, assembled into timber frames. With claims to accuracy being paramount and almost inevitably highly contested, the discussions around what to include in the diagrams of the past were heated and energetic. At the end of the charette no firm decisions had been made, but the neighbours of hostel 33 had been informed about the process of restoration and had presented their visions of a past and present for the envisaged restoration of Hostel 33. The day's proceedings were summed up by Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane, a museum board member and property developer in Lwandle, who saw optimistic possibilities in the restoration process. 'Arise and Shine Hostel 33 After Apartheid', she wrote in her contribution to the charette.

Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane's words echo the optimism of 1994 — 'After Apartheid' — where the transformative promises of reconstruction

and development seemed possible. Yet, in the case of the creation of Lwandle's homes out of hostels, and its memory in the restoration of Hostel 33, the reiteration of calls for security and employment signalled fault lines that would become evident in the restoration process. Although the original hostel had a very basic and rudimentary structure, and restoring it appeared to be a simple job, the complexities of negotiating the past in the present meant that the norms of a building process, where a contractor hires a series of subcontractors, had to be abandoned. Instead the museum management insisted that local contractors in Lwandle and neighbouring Nomzamo be approached for quotations to carry out specific parts of the work. One decision was to employ the services of Laings Koti, a builder based nearby in Nomzamo, who had 30 years' experience and seemed to be ideally suited for the works.[17] Koti had come to Lwandle as a migrant labourer himself in the 1970s and had been a hostel dweller at Lwandle and elsewhere in the western Cape, where he had worked in the local construction industry. Without a principal contractor in place, the architects

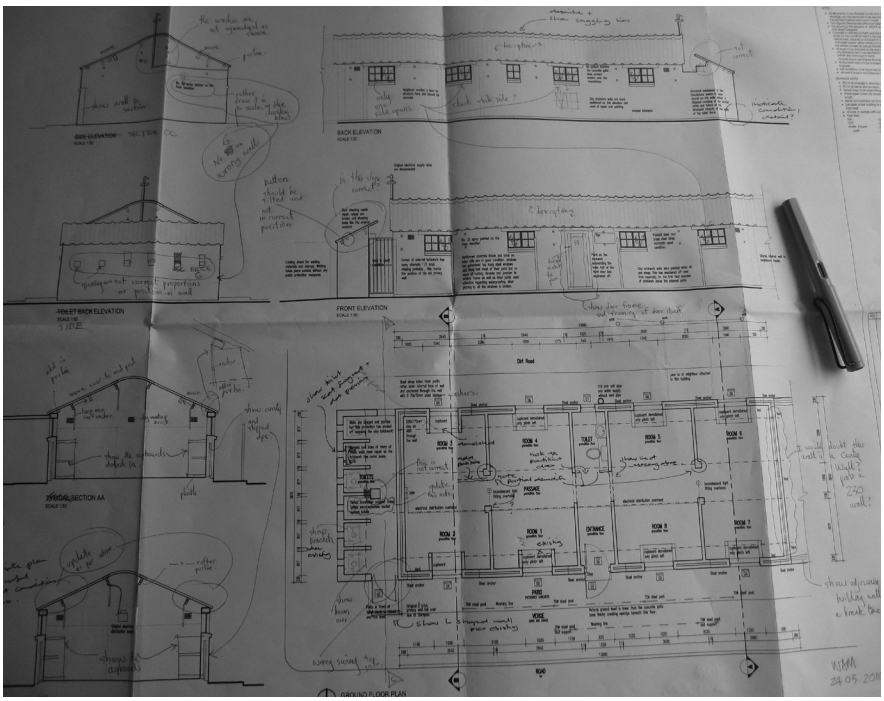

Figure 2.5: The first step towards considering the brief for the work was for the architects to measure up the building and produce accurate drawings of hostel 33. There were no plans on record in the local authority offices from which reliable, as-built measurements could be sourced. For such a simple structure there was, surprisingly, a great deal that needed to be captured in the detail, which required revisions of the drawings after checking on site. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray, 9 April 2010*

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had no intermediary to whom they could issue a set of site instructions specifying measurements, materials, fittings, fixtures and positioning. Instead a series of on-site, ad hoc decisions had to be made. Museum staff and board members played the roles of interlocutors, mediating between the language of professional contractual instruction and its in-situ implementation.

There was no easy architectural precedent for this detailed, time-consuming and hands-on intervention. What patently looked like a small, straightforward contract, that could be carried out swiftly, turned out to require sensitivity and complexity around the terms of engagement. A relatively small project in contractual terms required considerable methodological innovation. Without precedent, there were few drawing-board solutions and a sense of knowing the building much more intimately was required (Figure 2.5).

As the project evolved it became evident that the attention the project increasingly demanded could not be adequately fulfilled. Pressures from the recession had meant staff rationalisation at Jakupa, and Renchius van der Merwe, the project architect, left the practice. Another architect, Alan Middleton, was asked to take over at short notice, adding to his already considerable workload. As a consequence of the relatively small size of the appointment, the demands of an alternative restoration approach and the time frames, the project could not get the hands-on attention it required.

This dissonance between the architects wanting to involve communities through the consultation process and the implications of what this actually involved when intense on-site presence was required, played itself out in the restoration project. Laings Koti, the builder, immediately related to the hostel space and made useful suggestions about how to go about the proposed work and provided insights and accounts of hostel life. He also had extensive experience of construction, maintenance and repairing structures effectively so as to make them usable, habitable and aesthetically pleasing. Of course, in this instance, such useful skills had to be deployed for museum purposes where it was much more about the layers of history and usage contained in the fabric than a polished finished product. A central aim of the restoration project was to work along the lines of a conservation philosophy of favouring 'doing less to the fabric [of any heritage resource] … rather than more. The fabric of the place should be allowed to tell its own story, even if some of the physical evidence of that story has gone. Keeping change to a minimum protects the evidence of history' (Marquis-Kyle & Walker, 1996).

Outside of the ambit of a conventional architectural service, the responsibility for the implementation of this restoration fell increasingly on members of the museum's staff and board. Yet it was not always possible to be present and Koti enthusiastically made some decisions based on his extensive experience. At times, what the museum wanted to maintain as an artefact of history, appeared to be confusingly dysfunctional and derelict to Koti.

So what do we do with a broken toilet?

This tension played itself out most pointedly in the process of the restoration of the bucket-latrine area adjacent to hostel 33. The latrine system was the only remaining structure of its type following the Hostels-to-Homes housing project of the 1990s. Once the project was completed, residents of Lwandle's converted hostels received waterborne sewerage, which effectively eradicated the bucket-latrine system from the old hostels. The small lean-to structures at the ends of alternate buildings were removed and, in their place, units were added to the ends of each hostel building to extend the accommodation in the new homes. Hostel 33's bucket-latrine area seemed hugely significant in its potential to tell stories of living conditions prior to the housing project. Derelict, filled with garbage and inaccessible, the building was, in effect, slowly disappearing from the landscape as walls were being dismantled brick by brick. So the question was: what do we do with the broken toilet building?

A first step to answering this question from a museum exhibition design perspective was to embark on a process of researching what the toilet cubicles looked like: the shape and form of the seats; how they were fixed to angle-iron supports and the conditions in these spaces when the bucket toilet system was in use. Photographs from the report on the possibility of family housing in Lwandle, undertaken for the Urban Foundation in the 1980s, provided images of the bucket toilet system when it was in use. These photographs and access to the cubicles on site indicated quite clearly how individual toilet cubicles were fitted with rudimentary wooden seats, which broke over time, and were supported by steel angle-irons and serviced with the standard issue buckets. These visual clues prompted a search for broader histories of the bucket-latrine system in South Africa. Former hostel residents, together with engineers and officials who had been responsible for the decommissioning of the bucket system toilets, provided information about the type of buckets most commonly used. It appeared that the first buckets were made of zinc, after which black rubber buckets were used. Subsequently blue plastic buckets with ribs down the sides became standard issue (Jones, 1993: 99). Some residents said that the zinc buckets were for urine only, while the rubber and plastic ones were for excrement. To retain a strong sense of the history of the space, its materiality and previous usage required that the conditions under which the toilets were used be communicated in a restored and unavoidably sanitised space of heritage. There was no way that the restoration project could consider replicating the bucket-toilet system conditions that Sean Jones (1993: 37) described in Lwandle in the late 1980s, 'where the plastic buckets which served as toilets … overflowed onto the floors'.

As Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) has suggested, many contemporary museums are becoming increasingly more themed in order to provide visitors with a more experiential encounter than traditional exhibits have permitted. In these, the tactile, aural, olfactory, visual and even taste sensations are evoked.

Figure 2.6: (Above) 8.30 am, 15 June 2010. Noëleen Murray arrives on site to find that Laings Koti's construction team had demolished the connecting wall between the bucket-toilet area and hostel dormitory. (Left) By mid-afternoon, the wall was rebuilt, reinforced and the crisis in the rehabilitation process somewhat averted. *Photographs: Noëleen Murray.*

At Hostel 33, turning the bucket-toilet area into such an experience was never considered. Even though the hostel interior did prompt a reinhabitation of pastness, in the bucket-toilet area such a recreation would have been bizarre and distasteful. In fact, none of the residents, staff, museum board members or professionals even suggested it. Instead, in the restoration process, it was the detail of the structure over time that was emphasised. The team decided to sensitively repair and maintain the six cubicle divisions. While the first two

cubicles were left untouched, respecting the way in which the building had aged, three toilet seats made from old Oregon pine, similar to the originals, were installed as part of a new exhibition. Along with the buckets, this would go some way to communicate the conditions under which the toilets were used. It was envisaged that the fourth cubicle in the row would remain unchanged, containing the fragment of an old toilet seat. Rubble was removed, matching bricks were sourced from and donated by local manufacturer Corobrik, the screen wall that had entirely disappeared over the years at the entrance to the toilet area was rebuilt, steel supports were manufactured and installed, erosion from years of flooding was left visible and buckets from the Theewaterskloof Municipality were installed to match those originally used in the space. Recreating the bucket-latrine system as a ruin rather than as an experience was intended to serve as a reminder of a past.

But this space was almost lost to the museum. In their eagerness to get on with the job, the builders took the decision to partially demolish one of the side walls connecting the hostel to the bucket-latrine area, which was in a state of collapse. The wall, which had been exposed to the harsh environmental elements for years, had been constructed with no bracing or steel 'brickforce' ties to maintain lateral stability. Its removal was a logical builder's decision, and although the removal was dramatic, within a few hours the wall was reconstructed, reusing the original bricks, this time with the necessary steel ties needed for lateral stability (Figure 2.6). Several months later, when the last touches were being made on the restoration and the new timber toilet seats were being installed, the original fragment that had given clues to a past was removed in error. Rendered intangible, the missing fragment speaks to a reconstructed history of living in hostel 33, as well as a restoration process with all the associated difficulties and intricate understandings of making sensitivity, inclusivity and community that confronts the 'rule of experts' (Mitchell, 2002).

Much more was required than an architect's list of works providing updates on the progress of the project. Itemised as a breakdown of construction components, this list of works generally circulates between the client and the architect and specifies building materials, options of various suppliers and cost estimates. Instead, rehabilitation requires substantial research and detailed documentation of the building, paying attention to the materiality of the structure on site. The particular demands of rehabilitation at hostel 33 were less easy to inventorise than a conventional construction process and these tended to be overlooked and accorded much less priority by the architects. In July 2008, a group of students who were part of the Global Issues Honors Consortium (GIHC), a study abroad programme organised by the University of Minnesota's International Centre for Global Change to provide mentorship around research and writing, had begun this process by taking many photographs and mapping the hostel interior (Pohlandt-McCormick, 20 July 2008). These were a useful

starting point but more research and precise architectural drawings of the space, as built, were required for the rehabilitation process to proceed.

In this vacuum and in consultation with the architects, the museum decided to employ Renchius van der Merwe on a short contract as project manager. Noëleen Murray, who had been awarded a fellowship at UWC's Centre for Humanities Research to reflect upon processes of museum-making in Lwandle, also took the decision that more on-site care and sensitivity were required to give the project momentum. Process and research were positioned much more centrally in developing a restoration methodology of 'doing less' at hostel 33. On site consultation with heritage architects, an industrial archaeologist and an experienced building contractor indicated that conservation of the existing fabric, consultation with neighbours and meticulous, directed research were the priorities. The standard condition report, which the architects offered, provided only a schema of the formal structure. Renchius van der Merwe augmented this with detailed drawings, annotated photographs of each subsection and a record of alterations made by residents over time. Noëleen Murray drove the restoration process, acting as client and specialist at the same time, identifying works to be undertaken, debating the approaches to be applied and developing a blog that sought 'to record the process and debates around the current project for the restoration of Hostel 33 in Lwandle' (Murray, 2010). She became the formal on-site presence, liaised with the architects and ensured that the project was being restored into the museum. The museum manager, Lunga Smile, together with his staff, kept up a continual engagement with the neighbours, explaining the implications and negotiating new sets of relations as the hostel landscape was being prepared for the museum. As the project took shape and the hostel was remade, the professional model of consultancy that drives most architectural projects appeared to be inadequate. With multiple and dispersed sites of knowledge and power, the project eluded the conventions of singular authorship that is routinely archived and profiled in a portfolio of practice.

Removals

Despite the charette, the use of local contractors and the consultations with neighbours, the most challenging items on the list of works were not about building but about removal. Since the hostel had been partially occupied from about 2005, and with the transition of Lwandle from a controlled migrant hostel environment to a settled township-like space, neighbours had built new structures abutting and adjacent to the external walls. A washing line was installed in front of the hostel. A lean-to carport structure was opportunistically affixed to the back wall on the western side. A corrugated-iron storage facility, known colloquially as a 'bungalo', was assembled by a neighbouring shopkeeper against the outside wall of the, then derelict, bucket-toilet structure. The latter effectively blocked the entire southern wall with its small openings at cubicle

divisions and obscured the characteristic stencilled signage. In keeping with the philosophy of 'doing less', careful decisions had to be made about the removal or otherwise of what the museum and professional team ultimately saw as encroachments on the site. These decisions around museum-making had to be weighed up against the ways in which the space had been put to daily use. Could one, for instance, leave the makeshift carport roof in place, as it was out of sight from the street approach to the hostel? Or did its presence, affixed to the masonry, affect the integrity of the hostel building?

Lengthy negotiations around all these aspects were anticipated as the museum set out to foster good neighbourliness, which had been so evident in the enthusiasm for the project at the charette. With the assistance of Kadephi Mtiya, who lived across the road and watched over hostel 33 while the construction took place, discussions around making these changes proceeded smoothly in two of the three instances. In all cases, the approach was one of exchange, to make good for what might be lost in the removal of the structures. The owners of the carport happily accepted the offer of a new, free-standing, covered structure at the back of hostel 33, where three vehicles could be parked in tandem instead of one. The washing lines were taken down, the poles were donated to a nearby crèche and the wire was used to fix other nearby washing lines. The owner of the shop was similarly offered several options around relocating his storage bungalo, but he rejected these offers, raised the stakes and disappeared for long periods of time, thereby confounding the museum's restoration schedule. He chose not to follow the strategy of negotiating a replacement but, instead, began bargaining for what he claimed was market-related monetary compensation. The local authority had advised the museum that the structure in question had been illegally built, so it could, technically and within its rights, have requested its demolition, but this was not a route the museum desired to take. It would have run contrary to the intentions of good neighbourliness. At the same time, members of the museum board felt that the matter had gone too far and that the shopkeeper was taking advantage of the situation for material gain. Eventually the museum purchased the bungalo, disassembled and moved it into storage, pending a discussion over its future as a museum asset. The shopkeeper left Lwandle for the Eastern Cape. Not only had the spaces now been cleared but the neighbours on Khayalethu Street had also, through some robust bargaining and negotiation, been included in the hostel's passage to becoming part of the museum.

Khayelethu Street was further museumised through the removal of the concrete apron and poles for a stoep-like structure at the entrance to hostel 33, which had been part of the general improvements made to the area during the Hostels-to-Homes process. In its stead, the area in front of the hostel was resurfaced using a loose-aggregate gravel which sought to approximate the original roughly-graded areas between the compound blocks. The demolition

of the apron resulted in a disparity in the levels between the hostel and the adjacent converted family units, formerly hostel 34. To resolve this problem of unevenness at the junction, a concrete plinth was built and a new bench designed (Figure 2.7). Of course, in the strict sense of restoration, the new bench would not have been there. It neither authenticates the space nor does it represent a past. Instead, the bench, embellished with 'Hostel 33 — LMLM' in relief lettering, completes and makes the restored space in front of the hostel into a museum. Used daily by children playing in the street, weary tourists and passersby just looking for a place to rest, the bench has made the hostel's presence more visible in and on the museum landscape of Lwandle.

Ruptures

Given the success of the marked bench at Hostel 33, the museum decided to replicate this concept in the grounds of the museum precinct at the nearby Old Community Hall. Two new benches were commissioned from specialist contractors, Stoneform, and placed on site. After much deliberation, one was situated with a view of Hostel 33 at the end of Khayelethu Street and the other at the entrance to the museum overlooking the converted hostel blocks

Figure 2.7: A view of the bench installed at Hostel 33 showing the museum exhibition designer, Jos Thorne, resting, while Lunga Smile takes tourists on the walking tour and Lundi Mama is on site to record aspects of the building as the museum embarked on the restoration of the interior. By 4 May 2011 the exterior of the hostel had been fully restored and the bench had been in place since December 2010. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray.*

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more generally. Like the bench outside Hostel 33, these proved very popular, especially on pension day as the elderly queued to receive their monthly payouts from the Department of Social Welfare at the museum premises. But in this instance the benches collapsed. At the request of the museum, the architect, Alan Middleton conducted an investigation to try and ascertain reasons for the failure. He convened a meeting at the museum with Laings Koti, Mich Dunn (the representative from Stoneform) and Lunga Smile, together with other members of staff from the museum. The investigation involved inspecting the two broken benches and comparing these to the first one adjacent to Hostel 33. Middleton's report listed 'four scenarios … that may have caused the failure': (1) design failure; (2) delivery damage; (3) installation damage, and (4) vandalism. Providing a detailed history of 'broken benches' he outlined a 'chronology of implementation', the process of in-situ inspection, arguments around the four scenarios and the methodology he employed to support his findings. The last involved oral testimony from the contractor and the museum staff, a written statement from Stoneform and an evaluation of installation and construction integrity. By drawing a comparison with the first bench, the manufacturers were absolved of any liability for replacement. The architect related how 'during the inspection seven men including myself stood on this bench without any failure. The first bench remains intact.' He was therefore '100% satisfied that there are no structural defects inherent in the design or manufacture of the benches'. After having ruled out this scenario, and going through the other possibilities with the staff and the building contractor, he could not reach a firm conclusion as to how the extensive damage had occurred. Resorting to notions of possibilities and probabilities, he indicated that he could 'only determine that the damage was probably caused by vandalism that initiated the failure of the two benches in question'.[18] Brand new and broken, the benches awaiting restoration lie at the fault line between the museum, its restored futures and its pasts.

Figure 2.8: *Photograph: Noëleen Murray, 30 March 2011.*

The irony of the restoration project of Hostel 33 is that with all its innovations and successes, setbacks and fissures, the masonry crack, which was constantly reiterated as the point of anxiety around the structure's safety, turned out to be going nowhere. This technical point was confirmed by the heritage architects, industrial archaeologists, experienced building contractors and structural engineers who visited the building.[19] They pointed out that the cracks had been there for a long time, had settled and presented no current risk to the integrity of the hostel structure.[20] Rather than filling in the cracks or papering over them, leaving them in place allowed for narrative opportunities to tell the story of the building, the lives lived within its walls and the slow, awkward processes of turning hostel rooms into a museum of sorts.

End notes

1 LMLM Application to USA Ambassadors Cultural Fund for Cultural Preservation Restoration of Hostel 33, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Cape Town, South Africa, 27 November 2008. LMLM collection.

2 As we have written in Murray and Witz (2013: 53), the choice of the word fabric makes reference to the materiality of the building as it is used in technical jargon in the process of building construction, in the sense of 'built fabric'. But it is also intended to place the hostel in a tension between the industrial notion of 'fabrication' (and by extension replication, standardisation and machine-made) and the flimsiness of the actual fabrics used by those who modified and personalised the interior spaces through the use of hessian for ceilings, remnants of cloth for curtain dividers and an assortment of wooden planks as room partitions. The hostel had been fabricated as much by its bricks and mortar as by its inhabitants.

3 Letter from C.P.J. van Vuuren to the Minister of Native Affairs, H.F. Verwoerd, 9 November 1955; letter from Divisional Council of Stellenbosch to Provincial Secretary, 'Acquisition of land for a Native Location', 23 December 1955. Van Vuuren had originally asked £20 000 for the farm and then revised it downwards to £18 000 before settling on £14 000.

4 Petition from ratepayers of Strand to the Mayor of Strand, 20 June 1988.

5 LMLM Application to USA Ambassadors Cultural Fund, 27 November 2008.

6 Helderberg Municipality Memorandum, Director Executive Office, ref: 17/18/1, 1 July 1998: 'Proposed museum in Lwandle'.

7 2007/08 Progress Report for the Department of Cultural Affairs, Sports and Recreation from Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, prepared by Lunga Smile, acting curator of the museum and Leslie Witz, chair of the museum board, 5 November 2008.

8 National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, *Government Gazette* vol 406, No. 19974, (1999), 59.

9 National Heritage Resources Act, 8–9, 13–14, 48, 52.

10 Brett Myrdal, 'Memorandum sent to the LNG executive, Masakhane owners, museum facilitators and Charmian Plummer', cited in Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006: 799).

11 Mbulelo Mrubata, 'Make heritage alleviate poverty in Lwandle', NLTDF application, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 14 November 2005.

12 LMLM Application to US Ambassadors Fund.

13 The reference here is to a sign that the manager of the Lwandle Museum, Lunga Smile,

placed at the entrance of hostel 33 in June 2007: 'Hostel 33 Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Purposes ONLY.'

14 Draft briefing document for the appointment of architects, Hostel 33 restoration project, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 16 September 2009.

15 The charette method has recently gained wider use and interest internationally, beyond the design disciplines, as a way of rethinking fieldwork, deconstructing research findings and conceptually remapping these. See, for instance, the experimental use of the charette. (Marcus & Murphy, 2011).

16 Progress Report for the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs, Sports and Recreation, from Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 by Lunga Smile, acting curator of the museum and Leslie Witz, chair of the museum board.

17 Koti was recommended, along with other local contractors, by staff and board members of the Lwandle Museum who are residents in Lwandle.

18 Letter Re: Broken benches, Alan Middleton to Noëleen Murray, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 4 June 2011.

19 A group of experts visited the hostel site to inspect the structure on 12 March 2010. See: Murray, 'Restoring', http://hostel33.blogspot.com/2010/03/experts-visit-hostel-33-on-saturday-12.html.

20 Instead of making interventions an approach was suggested of a 'watching brief' and Jakupa and Associates recommended structural engineer Bradley Plaatjies to do this.

Photographic essay

by Paul Grendon

Dormitory accommodation

In 2011 the restoration process at hostel 33 moved inwards to consider the precarious interior linings of the compound dormitories. Additions layered into and onto the formal structure of the building became the locus of preservation of hostel life. Artist, photographer and curator Paul Grendon was appointed to rehabilitate the improvised inner fabric. Grendon's work across the genres of art making and museum curating is delicate, thoughtful and insightful. Instead of destroying the modifications to make way for a backdated installation, his form of restoration involved inhabiting the space of hostel 33. Over months he meticulously identified areas of deterioration and structural instability, carefully repairing and steadying the randomly accumulated interior fittings and documenting the detail of their manufacture. His images unpack the technologies of innovation in the built improvisations that personalised uniform accommodation. Saturated with invisibility, Grendon's photographs are not about detachment and looking. His hand and his eye have made the makeshift interiors into precious museum artefacts.

Following in the footsteps of the fumigator, Grendon's images move in, out and around the curated spaces of Hostel 33. The photographic essay starts at the door to the room that Lenie and Makosonke Peters and their family of four shared, in which the detail and layers of existence are framed — the magazine page pasted on the wall sits alongside the line drawing of a miner and the Mandela election poster. Other bedholds are embellished with remnants used for interior decoration — plasticised tablecloths, hessian-bag ceilings, lengths of Sunlight-soap wallpaper. The empty hangers, the single shirt, the red industrial overcoat, the brick cupboards and steel-wire lockers all accentuate the curated, minimal markers of existence. The final image looks out from the dark interior through the small window at the gleaming solar-heatered roofscape of the Hostels-to-Homes project.


FOR
ENT
ANC
CHOICE!


17


Sunlight
RAINBOW CHICKEN

Chapter 3

Museumisation
Inventing an institution

In November 2005 the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum submitted a proposal to the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport in the Western Cape province of South Africa to become a province-aided museum. The aspiration for such a status under section 12 of Museum Ordinance No. 8 of 1975 was that it would enable the museum to become sustainable, with regular salaried positions budgeted for in the provincial purse. Much like any other museum, the application was motivated primarily through its acquisition and development of a unique collection. The museum maintained that its establishment was 'based on conservation and preservation of the history of the migrant labour system and hostel life in the Western Cape and in South Africa in general'. Yet, there was some anxiety over what province-aided status might bring in terms of governance, cultural activities and its attempts to establish a museum community in Lwandle. So the museum requested that 'it would like to retain its independence on certain situations' while 'working closely and cooperatively with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports of the Province of the Western Cape'.[1] Becoming a museum in Lwandle entailed sustaining both a collection and a community in formation.

Although by 2010 the Lwandle Museum had not yet acquired province-aided status it had been working constantly at the threshold of differing museum possibilities, playing out the tensions between its desire to conserve and its impetus to become a venue for community. Being a museum in Lwandle involved designing exhibitions, restoring artefacts, running educational programmes, cataloguing collections, providing a site for social welfare payments, organising football games, offering a typing service, running photography, art and video workshops, and hosting poetry recitals, fashion shows, a cappella groups,

gospel singers and ballroom dancing. In a formal definition of museums, these eclectic activities may be read as being core or peripheral. The danger of functioning across such a broad range of activities is that the latter ones may eclipse the others, thus undermining the museum's very claims to institutional status. Instead of conceptualising these activities hierarchically though, we want to suggest that they all jostled for prominence at differing times, leading to uneven, incomplete and, indeed, compelling processes of imagining and making a museum. These struggles became apparent as the museum attempted to establish a sense of permanence, secure a convincing collection, animate and solicit new and different publics, and institutionalise itself as a 'museum of the Cape' (Du Preez, 1982).

Home-making

From the museum's inception and in its early years, the notion of creating a permanent home in Lwandle was intimately related to its desires for exhibition and display. Although, as we discuss in Chapter 4, Bongani Mgijima wanted to establish the museum on the foundations of a collection consisting primarily of interviews, the initiating moment was around creating exhibitions, and energy was directed towards the styling of the space into a museum. Public institutions had been prohibited in Lwandle in keeping with the notion that it was never supposed to be a place of permanence under apartheid. The appearance of a new public institution that called itself a museum required a substantial makeover. In a landscape marked by apartheid, which had confined the concept of home to a temporary bedhold, not only had the hostels to be upgraded but the museum had to come home.

The crowded and confined rooms of hostel 33 were, of course, the key visual marker for the museum. The hostel was the signifier of the museum's connections to its past and its artefactual presence, performing the work of authentication. But while the struggles over the possession and future of hostel 33 were being played out, the Old Community Hall, which was once a standard issue public works structure, was made over as the central site for the exhibition and collection for a prospective museum. This hall had fallen into disrepair since the New Community Hall was opened in 1997. The *District Mail* on 5 September 1997, reporting on the opening of the new hall at the end of August, enthusiastically proclaimed in its headline 'Lwandle rejoices'. With its original purpose replaced by the new facility, the Old Community Hall continued to be used in an ad hoc manner for funeral services, church gatherings and small meetings. The cavernous interior of the old hall, overlooked by a raised stage complete with a proscenium arch, provided the Lwandle Museum Steering Committee with a place in which to begin making a home (Figure 3.1).

In contrast to the cramped scale of hostel 33, the Old Community Hall in which the museum had made its home echoed with emptiness — it needed an

Figure 3.1: (Above) The new hall, constructed and secured, was meant to replace the old hall as a facility for meetings and social services. (Left) Bongani Mgijima outside the Old Community Hall in June 1999 — using it for a new museum in Lwandle. *Photographs: Corinne A. Kratz, 15 April 2014; Leslie Witz, 10 June 1999.*

exhibition of some sort in order to envisage it as a museum. The hall was both an opportune and a burdensome inheritance. This large unfurnished venue provided refuge, shelter and a space to carry out museum work, but it also meant that the museum was set apart from the hostel and Lwandle. The small entrance lobby obscured even the slightest glimpse into the hall beyond. In the hall itself, the vast volume, high walls and clearstorey windows muted the surrounds, amplified the interior sounds and created a sense of utter alienation — visitors were sensorially disconnected from the streets.

To establish its existence and set up home, the museum needed to display signs of occupation. The curator commissioned photographs depicting contemporary life in Lwandle and displayed these on the large wall surfaces in an arbitrary and rather makeshift manner. A group of women from the nearby craft centre sat around a table stringing beads to sell to visitors. Museum-making,

as first practised in Lwandle, was about fixing photographs, photocopies and notices to available wall surfaces with reusable putty and bringing in craftwork to sell to visitors. Mgijima's ideas for the first exhibition at the museum were inspired by the hostel dwellers' informal use of fabric to partition the rooms to create privacy. Rather ambitiously he accorded the photographs on the walls the status of an exhibition, which he optimistically entitled *Raising the Curtain*. Photographic montage, which attempted to overlay the stippled, shiny, enamelled, cream walls, was staking a claim for Lwandle in the past.

A future of the 'museum outdoors' was meanwhile envisaged through a walking tour that Mgijima had developed earlier as a 'safe guided walk' through the township-in-transformation, visiting selected sites, including the adjacent library, a nearby crèche and hostel 33, and meeting the residents. In this move to what might appear as 'spaces external to the museum' as the exhibition started to take shape inside the Old Community Hall, the process of museumisation was 'exteriorized and recontextualized' as Lwandle was made into a 'collecting zone' and a 'field site' for 'display and audience instruction' (Bunn, 2006: 258). If the interior of the Old Community Hall was inhospitable to the museum, the move outdoors set up a home that existed precariously between the dream space (Robinson, 1997) of a refurbished hall and the settlement of Lwandle.

Working between interior and exterior, the exhibition that the museum initiated in 2001 to design the space as home was entitled *Do You Have a Map?/ Unayo na Impehu?* Whereas other new museums, such as District Six in Cape Town and South End in Port Elizabeth, were using maps on the floor as a way to recall lost communities and trace their geographies, Lwandle used the metaphor to refer to the compound's past in apartheid's spatial lexicon, as well as its future, expressed as a desire to create an exhibitionary aesthetic. The map was intended to localise sites in Lwandle to start giving each a history, which complicates the notion of the township as an informal space, and to connect people to a narrative alongside the very planning that determines much of everyday life.

For the first time the museum set out to find evidence of the establishment of Lwandle in topographical maps, aerial photographs, compound plans, title deeds, official correspondence and survey diagrams. Through gathering and photocopying documents from the Helderberg Municipality, the engineers of the Hostels-to-Homes project, Liebenberg and Stander, and the Office of the Surveyor General, an archive of origin was found for Lwandle. It is debatable whether the original documents would have been suitable for an exhibition, but in their hastily photocopied form, sometimes crudely taped together, this material most certainly was fragmented and unsightly, cumbersome and awkward to display. The methodological challenge was to find ways in which to incorporate elements of this material into a display that had some visual appeal and was substantial and archival enough to authenticate stories of the hostels in a place that was labelled as being 'at the sea'.

As eventually realised in this exhibition, this displayed research was also intended to put Lwandle onto the museum map. Planning and control were juxtaposed with personal stories and images and installed in the hall, which was reconfigured to look more like a museum (Figure 3.2). Using the simple technique of collage, together with the emerging technology of digital graphic methods such as Photoshop, a series of printed panels were produced with titles such as: 'Black spots and buffer zones', 'Deeds of segregation', 'Land for a location', '*Ukuhlala ehostele*' (Staying in a hostel) and KwaJabulani (The place of Jabulani — the Lwandle Beer Hall). The photographs, which had been placed on the walls using reusable putty at the opening of the museum, were removed and replaced by these graphic panels, which were carefully arranged to transform the hall into an exhibition space and venue capable of hosting programmes and international visitors. Although the building clearly remained, in essence, a community hall, it was being reshaped into a museum space. When the exhibition was opened in August 2001 as part of the Atlanta–Cape Town Institutions of Public Culture's conference entitled Museums, Local Knowledge and Performance in an Age of Globalization, the space remained removed and dislocated but was being mapped to face outwards (Center for the Study of Public Scholarship, 2001).

Design was beginning to be established as the favoured technique to make the museum. Of course all museums use design as a mode to become convincing,

Figure 3.2: Noëleen Murray, Leslie Witz and Bongani Mgijima preparing the Old Community Hall for the installation of the exhibition *Do You Have a Map?* in August 2001. New boards were fixed to the back wall, lines painted on the vinyl floor and exhibition pedestals acquired. *Photograph: Premesh Lalu.*

alluring and to display value. In most cases, design interventions are made at the site of the museum to interpret, emphasise and advertise the institution's areas of focus by showing off its significance, imposing buildings and precious or extensive collections. These conventional museum assets were all but absent at Lwandle. Instead, all that was available initially were aspirations. Creating value was about converting the initially haphazardly pasted images into museum capital. The storyboards and the spatial rearrangement of *Do You Have a Map?* lent an aura of professional design to the display, invoked a substantial archive that approached what might be called a collection, and devised a significant history to a place called Lwandle.

The culmination of this design drive came in 2004/05 when the City of Cape Town's Urban Design Branch was involved with spatial improvements for Lwandle. An urban precinct was created around the museum and the neighbouring buildings — the Hector Peterson Library and the municipal offices. Fences that once separated these institutions were removed, pathways were created around a new landscape layout and hardy indigenous trees were planted. The plan resulted in the museum's approach being reconfigured away from the axial entrance of the Old Community Hall to a new entrance on the north of the building facing land earmarked for a community garden. Two sets of double glass doors brought more natural light and warmth into the hall and an exhibition designated as permanent was set in place (Murray, 2007: 32–33).

In line with these changes, the museum's next major exhibition was designed around these new configurations. *Stories of Home/Iimbali zeKhaya*, designated as the museum's permanent exhibition, was deliberately arranged to extend the display space beyond the building's walls into the floor area of the hall. Large-format colour photographs, vinyl stencilled text and excerpts from interviews were placed in lightweight aluminium frames to create a biographical gallery. By imagining the space in three rather than two dimensions, the community hall was designed and spatialised as a museum (Figure 3.3).

This exhibition was a turn towards generalising and, at the same time, personalising the hostel experience in Lwandle. The major problem encountered in constructing such an exhibitionary past was that some of the important museum activities such as growing a collection had, at times, taken a back seat because the museum had been battling to secure the necessary finances to survive. Jos Thorne (2008: 155), who designed *Stories of Home*, recalls that 'there was no museum collection to speak of in the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum' and that 'much' had to be made 'out of a little'.

The first exhibitionary move was to make context. Social history, much of it by academics associated with the History Workshop at the University of the Witwatersrand in the 1980s and 1990s, was an accessible resource known to both the board members and the staff of the museum. This scholarship drew upon similar international theoretical and methodological initiatives taking

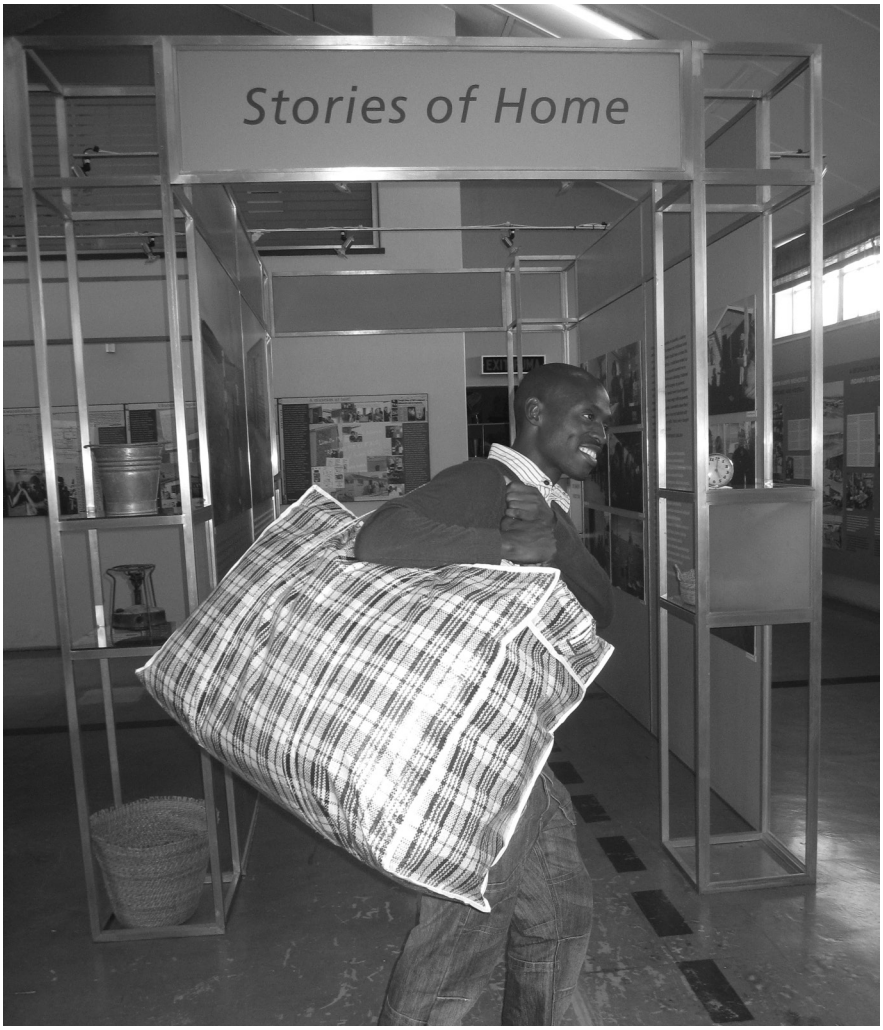

Figure 3.3: Tour guide, Mphumzi Nzuzo, brings a collection of new artefacts into the museum on 28 April 2010 in a *unomgchana*, a checked, sacking travel bag commonly used by long-haul taxi commuters on journeys to and from the Eastern Cape. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray.*

place at that time. These advocated a historical materialist approach that was inflected with the recovery of experience and of the ordinary — the idea was to encourage communities to write their own local histories. Reading official documents against the grain and pursuing oral histories were the preferred methods used to construct these pasts. 'History from below', the catchphrase derived from the British History Workshop movement, neatly summed up this approach. When applied to the South African context of industrialisation, the material conditions on the diamond mines of Kimberley and the gold fields of

the Witwatersrand in the second half of the nineteenth century were used to explain the origin of the system of migrant labour. These beginnings provided the museum with a way in which to associate Lwandle's history of migrant labour with a narrative of nation.

It is therefore no accident that the opening text in the exhibition *Stories of Home*, which at the time of writing is still on display, draws extensively on the popular histories of the Witwatersrand by Luli Callinicos, namely *Gold and Workers 1886–1924* (1981) and *Working Life 1886–1940* (1987), for the History Workshop. The content of her work revolves around how the system of migrant labour developed on the mines from a voluntary system to one of compulsion 'through the imposition of taxes and land dispossession'. It is illustrated with a photograph of the offices of the mine labour recruitment agency by Leon Levson, photocopied letters from mine workers complaining about conditions at the beginning of the twentieth century, a photograph of a trade union meeting and a map showing routes taken to the mines. The map entitled *Sources of Mine Native Labour* was originally produced by the Native Recruitment Company and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association. It has subsequently been reproduced several times as a contextualising device to show the migratory routes to the mines of the Witwatersrand. It appears in Luli Callinicos's book, *The World that Made Mandela* (2000), and was displayed in *Democracy X* at the Castle of Good Hope in 2004 (Oliphant et al., 2004), and at the Workers Museum in Newtown, Johannesburg, to indicate how important the 'foreign workers' were 'in the development of the economy'. Exhibited since 2006 in Lwandle, it shows 'the regions that mine owners tapped for labour'. Although the routes to Lwandle do not feature on that map, the museum uses it to assert a historical path for the migrant labour in Lwandle that led to the gold mines of the Witwatersrand.

These stories are carried forward into the next panel dealing with hostels and compounds, where the systems of control, derived from Kimberley and the Witwatersrand, are highlighted through photographs from the UWC/Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Archive. Lwandle enters the narrative with the museum curator's story of miners' lives in the compounds of northern KwaZulu-Natal and an extract from an interview about the conditions in the Lwandle hostels. But the overwhelming impression is that the map, the photographs, the letters and the accompanying text all combine to situate Lwandle's *Stories of Home* at the genesis of social history on the Witwatersrand.

In a narrative hierarchy, the stories then move from the national to the city level as the title of Mamphela Ramphele's ethnographic study of hostel life in Cape Town, *A Bed Called Home* (1993), is invoked to depict hostel life in the townships of Langa, Nyanga and Gugulethu. Quotations and photographs from the book are used to illustrate the centrality of the bed in the life of hostel dwellers:

> The common denominator of space allocation in the hostels is a bed. Every aspect of life revolves around a bed. Access to this humble environment depends upon one's access to a bed; it is the basis for relationships within the hostels, between different hostels, and between hostels and places of employment. One's very identity and legal existence depend upon one's attachment to a bed. (Ramphele, 1993: 22)

While, as described earlier, Lwandle appears in a context of a national past situated on the mines, initially it was not represented as being in the city of Cape Town in the exhibition. Established in the late 1950s, for most of its existence Lwandle was delineated outside of the bounds of the city. It was incorporated only once a metropolitan council was established in Cape Town under the Municipal Structure Act of 1998 (Nyalunga, 2006). In the exhibition, the exclusion of locality enables a comparison, setting up Lwandle as a place of both sameness and difference.

When Lwandle appears in the panels that follow, it is precisely this relative positioning that is highlighted. The very first lines read:

> Unlike Langa, Gugulethu and Nyanga, Lwandle was not established as a township. It was solely a place of hostel accommodation for African male migrant workers in the Helderberg basin. This was in accordance with the declaration, by the National Party government in 1955, of the western Cape as a Coloured Labour Preference area.

Lwandle's hostels are also identified as being different as 'there were no places indoors for washing and ablution'. Yet, once the locality is established as a site of difference (thus providing an explanation for the presence of the museum), most of what follows are examples of how Lwandle forms part of the broader national narratives that had already been well established. As alluded to in another context, 'what the historian dealing with "the local" does is find the appropriate category for the period and fits the history into this "national past", either through comparison or by taking the "national" as given' (Minkley & Witz, 1994).

The story of Lwandle makes use of extracts from interviews conducted by the museum staff, ethnographies carried out by Sean Jones (1993) and Julia Sloth-Nielsen et al. (1992), the engineers' report on the Hostels-to-Homes scheme (Liebenberg & Stander), newspaper clippings, architectural drawings and some local photographs (from Mgijima's initial exhibition, the museum's small collection, Jones's book and the engineer's documentation). These become a means to translate class, measure change and constitute the 'broader historical process of material transformation at the local level' (Minkley & Witz, 1994; Witz, 2003).[2] It starts with repression through pass laws and conditions in the hostels ('Charged for being here'), followed by resistance in the form of

hostel dwellers organising ('Unite Families, Away with Apartheid'), struggles, victories and defeats, and leads ultimately to a post-1994 somewhat triumphalist assertion about how what was once intended only as a place for male migrant workers living in isolated barrack-type accommodation has been turned into a community with its own museum ('Dreaming of a beautiful Lwandle'). In Lwandle, the broad frameworks of social history have been employed to localise the nation and nationalise the local (Minkley & Witz, 1994; Witz, 2003).

At the same time, the museum's exhibitions attempted to challenge stereotypical notions of the people of Lwandle that rely upon depictions of an essentially rural, timeless Africanness in an urban setting, often cast as ethnicity. This was evident in *Stories of Home* when the exhibition moved from generalised accounts of migrant labour in a national past to Lwandle as the locality, and then on to depicting individual life stories of Lwandle's residents. Making use of oral histories and photographs collected by museum staff, the ambiguity and meanings attached to the concept of home by the residents of Lwandle were depicted.

Home, as it appeared in the exhibition, was not a reference to a designated ethnic rural space where the planners of apartheid sought to place the migrant worker. Accounts of ambivalence on display in the museum made home a site of mobility and exchange in a place by the sea (eLwandle), where hostels had been reconfigured into basic one-roomed units imagined as family homes. For the museum though, the process of developing the exhibition and making effective use of what little there was in its possession had set in place processes of collection for display. After six years, and through an association with stability, *Stories of Home* inaugurated a permanent settlement in the Old Community Hall.

Dressing a hostel

When Bongani Mgijima (12 June 1998) initiated the project of developing what he called 'a cultural history museum' in Lwandle in 1998, he deliberately situated collecting as its major activity. In so doing, he aligned the prospective institution with the archival processes and definitions that for at least a century and a half have bestowed upon museums their claims to authenticity, that is, their holdings of artefacts (Knell, 2004). Several years later, Vusi Buthelezi, who replaced Mgijima, drafted a collections policy as part of the museum's business plan in which he formally articulated the desire to collect:

> This is a migrant labour museum. It strives to keep that theme alive through its collection policy. The collections of the museum shall take into cognizance the fact that the migrant labour system has also been a physical confrontation. The collections shall take the form of both tangible and intangible material.[3]

Yet as the museum grew in the following years, it became apparent that it was not so much displays arising out of collections that would constitute the

museum, but rather that the research required for exhibitions would provide the impetus for the growth of the collection. Collecting in Lwandle was not about establishing a representative thematic for its own sake. It was ultimately about display as a utilitarian device and legitimating its museumness.

The *Lwandle Designers*/*Abavelisi Bengingqi yaseLwandle* exhibition, which opened in December 2009, and the reinhabitation of parts of Hostel 33 for the museum's 10th birthday celebrations the following year became opportunities for major collection drives. *Lwandle Designers* drew on one the most popular and conventional signs of the cultural history museum, that of the clothing exhibition, to flaunt the semiotics and conventions of legitimacy. Drawing on the school fashion show, which was hugely popular in Lwandle, tourist pressures to market crafts, and questioning accepted notions of design as the apotheosis of creative individualism, the exhibition highlighted the work of four clothing makers in Lwandle: Petronella Chamunoro, Nolusindiso Gwantshu, Dumisani Molo and Nolindile Molo. They were proclaimed designers and examples of their work were purchased and assimilated into the museum collection. Selected garments were showcased in large-format, high-resolution fashion photographs, displayed on stylised mannequins made by Streetwire, a Cape Town manufacturer of street-inspired wire sculptures, or simply hung on clothes hangers. Collecting these artefacts entailed going shopping in Lwandle. There are many clothing makers who operate small businesses, often from their homes. The curator, Lunga Smile, developed a shopping list for the envisaged exhibition and sought out garments that were both unique and typical (Figure 3.4). He purchased ball gowns for matric dances, *isishweshwe* print outfits that invoked a notion of Xhosa tradition, *voorskote* (aprons) for everyday domestic use and one-off creations bearing interpretive individual motifs. *Lwandle Designers* provided the museum with the opportunity to expand its holdings substantially by profiling the locality beyond tourist craft and the traumatic histories of the experience of migrant labour.

The making of Hostel 33 became a moment to reassert a process of acquisition, a way of showing and classifying the museum's collection. If the creation of permanence at the Old Community Hall took place through designing exhibitions, then the reinhabitation of Hostel 33 became about securing the museum's collection. Hostel 33, it was always insisted, was the museum's major artefact, yet its artefactual content around lives was not evident. Storied lives, which drove the restoration process, required storied things (Appadurai, 1986). Women's Month of 2007 provided the ideal opportunity for the museum to formally mark its possession of hostel 33. In choosing this moment, the museum was signifying that, despite the fact that under apartheid these hostels had been established as male spaces, from their inception women had stayed in the hostels. They had been subject to considerable harassment because under the laws and regulations of apartheid these women were

Figure 3.4: (Above) On 17 March 2007, Lunga Smile, museum curator, discusses fabrics and fashion with Nolindile Molo in the container that she uses both as a workshop and a boutique. (Left) Jos Thorne, exhibition designer, seeks opinions about the suitability of some garments for display on 29 October 2007. *Photographs: Leslie Witz.*

considered to be illegally in Lwandle. It was also fortunate that at the time, in 2007, Nungu Nungu, a student from the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies, was doing his internship at the museum. He came up with the idea of combining two events — the celebration of Women's Month and the securing of hostel 33. Nungu Nungu entitled the celebrations *Ubomi booMama emaHolweni* (Women's life in hostels). The Women Ambassadors, who had been selected by the museum the previous year to publicise the activities of the museum to the community, were asked to decorate hostel 33 in the way they remembered it. Lockers, beds, bedding, pictures from magazines, photographs, coat hangers and cooking utensils were borrowed in an attempt to reinhabit the hostel and depict their lives as they remembered them. On Saturday, 18 August 2007, the group of women formally opened the doors to hostel 33 and re-enacted elements of their lives. This included showing how a shebeen had operated in the hostel, how they made their lives around a bedstead and the ways in which they tried to deceive the police, who were constantly raiding the hostels. Kholiswa Ncane, for instance, showed everyone how she used to hide away from police in the four-door cupboard that was meant for luggage. One of the Women Ambassadors carried a small poster bearing words that reflected on their current conditions compared to those they had endured in the past. It read: 'Lwandle today: a taste of freedom'.

Borrowing and performing, which sparked the collection of objects embedded in lives for Hostel 33, gave way to archaeological imperatives as the restoration process was begun in the following years. Getting to know the building in its most intimate detail was the methodology employed to uncover the artefactual layers of building and inhabitation.[4] Although there was no literal excavation, this was perhaps the very first archaeological dig in a South African township. The team worked on the identification of material remains and drew diagrams of the site, which documented in detail the positions of objects in situ at the hostel rather than boxing them for preservation and analysis. In this process of observing and documenting rather than gathering, there were three moments of collecting. The first involved bringing and borrowing, where ex-residents of the hostel recalled their memories by placing objects into the building in an act of recreating lived space. The second was unearthing the layers of the building's fabric, which were revealed and understood down to the smallest, seemingly meaningless details. Thirdly, the museum and exhibition designers purchased everyday and special items identified as props for telling the stories of Hostel 33. 'Fashioned by human agency', these artefacts were not 'treasures of the past', 'stone tools' or 'pottery vessels' (Hall, 1996: 7–8), but through their presences on site and the creative work of their assemblages, they performed the work of making an archaeology in Lwandle.

As an archaeology of artefacts developed through identification, borrowing and purchasing, which subverted long-held conventions of discovery, the museum was

confronted with the difficulty of classification outside the value normally attributed to a find. The process of peeling away the building's interior fabric revealed room dividers made from identification revealed cardboard panels made from Rainbow Chicken cardboard boxes, which had been flattened out and covered with wallpaper made from strips of Sunlight Soap wrappers, and fixed onto a timber superstructure with the 'bottle top' method to secure the nails in place. Traces of more recent inhabitation of the hostel, post 1994, included election stickers for the African National Congress (ANC) from Nelson Mandela's time as head of the party. There were many pages from popular magazines from the 1990s pasted onto the walls inside the hostel rooms. In all likelihood, workers residing in the hostels brought home materials from their places of work in nearby industries, such as heavy-duty sacks commonly used in the construction industry, with which to create privacy in the hostel and insulate the ceilingless roof. Some remnants can be dated easily. For example, a box that formed part of a screen wall is stamped, showing that it originated in the Gants canning factory, a major employer of labour from Lwandle. Overlooked and in the background, these materials were not identified as artefacts when the museum's curator was cataloguing an inventory. Instead, the objects that had been purchased for the exhibition constituted the major 'finds', alongside the photographs and oral histories in the museum's collection. What was reflected in the catalogue as being artefacts related to Hostel 33 was neither the materiality of the hostel nor its signs of occupation, but purchases on the exhibition prop shopping list.[5]

The shopping expeditions became more intense in preparation for the museum's 10th birthday on 1 May 2010. Various options were open for exhibitionary direction. One possibility was to create a diorama-type display, as had been done at the KwaMuhle Museum in Durban. Another option was the precedent set by the Workers' Museum in Newtown, Johannesburg, in which the curators stylised and inhabited the compound space using film and still images, together with some artefacts. In both instances the museums had used images of people in settings of the past, using wax models or monochrome photographs to depict inhabitation. Another option, which was more attuned to the Lwandle Museum's direction of creating storied lives, was New York's Lower East Side Tenement Museum strategy of inhabiting spaces in which the tenement itself is the vehicle to relate life stories, and display architecture and interior arrangements. Through the process of dressing spaces and relating narratives, the museum is effectively curated as a tour. Following on from this example, and after a video conference held with curators Sarah Pharaon and Derya Golpinar from the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in February 2010, the approach that was adopted at Lwandle was not to have props of migrant labourers but to let the space tell the story of inhabitation at Hostel 33. The intention was to recreate three living spaces in sections of the hostel as part of the visitors' experience.[6] As well as collecting oral histories from previous

residents, the museum staff and the exhibition team led by designer Jos Thorne went out and purchased old beds, blankets or *irugis*, magazines from the 1970s and 1980s, sheets, pots, pans, cutlery, curtains, clothes, overalls, hard hats, trunks, plastic basins, candle sticks and portable radios. These items, identified after studying photographs and in consultation with people who had lived in hostels in Lwandle, were specially purchased for exhibition purposes. Bulging shopping bags were unpacked, and their contents laid out and catalogued by museum staff, Simphiwe Khonono and Mphumzi Nzuzo, in preparation for fashioning the stories of Lwandle's past.

Creating the look of the hostel interior required that items be selected from among those that had been bought and arranged in such a manner so as to reflect habitation. Visual clues of how to style the rooms were contained in photographs in the museum's archive, those in Sean Jones's book, *Assaulting Childhood* (1993), and those collected for the Urban Foundation's report on housing in Lwandle in 1988. These sources were scrutinised for the purpose of informing the arrangement of artefacts, supplemented by the knowledge brokers who had lived in the hostels, who were enthusiastic to correct the museum's representations of the past. Siboniwe Tyeku, Kholiswa Ncane and Christine Makhabane, who had been Women Ambassadors for three years, took ownership of the dressing process and presented, in an authoritative and didactic manner, their instructions for the domestic rearrangement. Surfaces were dusted, mopped and cleaned out to claim and create a clean living space in what had been an overcrowded, heavily over-used, confined environment. The beds were elevated using stacked bricks or empty five-litre paint tins so as to ensure that trunks and suitcases could fit underneath them. Beds were made with immaculately ironed sheets and checked rugs, transforming the thin, sparse mattresses and steel bed frames into sociable, respectable spaces of rest. Crockery and cooking implements were stacked neatly in the single communal cupboard at the centre of each room. The display sought to replicate the management and organisation of what Mamphela Ramphele (1993) has called the 'bedhold', depicting the living arrangements of sleeping, cooking and eating around each bed in a shared cubicle. A new curtain demarcated the boundaries of these compartments, limiting access and signalling an impossible aspiration for privacy, and also evoked Mgijima's first exhibition, *Raising the Curtain*. The women were not just museum ambassadors. Through their insistence on the placement of items, the extent of cleanliness and the use and purpose of goods, they transformed household items into artefacts for display.

As Hostel 33, the museum's primary and most valued artefact, was restored and redressed, it generated the creation of a collection by association. Sometimes bought, at other times donated or exchanged, these things provided the exhibitionary resources employed to recreate hostel lives. The collection curated for display became accessories to the archaeological remains, retained,

excavated, revealed and preserved on the site. Their typology was not unique and their ordinariness invites comparisons with cultural history museums and their scenes of everyday life. Instead of aligning the hostel with a dominant notion of culture and heritage in post-apartheid South Africa, where ethnicity provides the essentialised characteristic (Minkley, 2008: 27–29), in this exhibition photographs, stories and artefacts told of individual lives. Mobilised as culture and heritage, they provided an experience and history of migrant labour rather than a dominant ethnic culture.

Tourism and football, new publics

While the exhibition became a visual marker of permanence, and its collections established artefactual presence, the museum needed to mobilise its publics. From its very inception, one of the museum's concerns was to situate itself on routes into South African pasts, with tourists as a primary audience. The first two curators of the museum, Bongani Mgijima and Vusi Buthelezi (2006: 800), have written that embracing tourism was a reluctant move on the part of the museum when prospects of funding from other quarters seemed bleak, with no hint of support from either the provincial or national government departments of arts and culture. Given the poverty and unemployment in Lwandle, taking up tourism seemed a 'pragmatic' solution. Whether the initiators were quite so reluctant is unclear but the first successful funding application was to the Western Cape Tourist Board in 1999, in which the hope was expressed that the museum would become 'an extremely popular tourist venue'.

There was some concern that in prioritising tourism, the museum might have to compromise one of its core principles, which was to reject apartheid notions of community based upon racial and/or ethnic identities. The tourism industry in South Africa has thrived and continues to thrive on these ethnic depictions (Rassool & Witz, 1996; Witz, Rassool & Minkley, 2000). The local tourist authorities' visions for the museum at Lwandle foregrounded an ethnicised concept, reproducing the features and rhythms of the nearby cultural village constructed at Broadlands. Within these parameters, Hostel 33 could have become a place constructed around notions of a timeless ethnic homeland identity, located in the eastern Cape and forever Xhosa.

Reservations that Bongani Mgijima might have had about using racial and/or ethnic categories were initially cast aside, and the museum presented itself in its advertising material as seeking to depict 'the life of the local Xhosa people, their past and their present culture', providing a 'WHOLE African experience for a tourist … an opportunity to see glimpses of the past, a comparison with the present, dancing, singing, arts and crafts and a taste of Xhosa cuisine and fashion' (LMLM brochure, circa 2000). Placed in an extremely vulnerable position with little or no possibility of funding on the immediate horizon, the museum found that it 'had to dance to the tune of tourism' in order to establish

itself. In what Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006: 800) call a 'discursive shift in the way the museum was represented', the museum moved 'from a preservationist to tourist rhetoric'.

Although the museum flirted with this pervasive notion of ethnicised culture, it was extremely uncomfortable with this approach. While international tourism (as an industry) continues to offer a 'safe haven' for 'marketing a troubled history that glorifies colonial adventure and a repudiated anthropology of primitivism' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 136), the Lwandle Museum negotiated ways in which to alter the foundational images and narratives of tourism. It attempted to alter both the tourist experience of the sites and encounters with the people of Lwandle by situating its offerings as part of a township-tour route. Township tours, particularly those in Cape Town, are based on the premise of making the 'real city' visible and there is no doubt that township-tour companies and their guides are presenting, through their routes and destinations, parts of the city that stretch beyond the usual scenic sites and historical trails (Witz, 2007).

The museum was, in effect, both the exhibitions in the community hall and the interpretive walk it offered around Lwandle. On the tour the museum attempted to present a narrative that inscribed a history of migrant labour, together with selected destinations in Lwandle, as a vision of contemporary South Africa. So, as Cape Town Tourism describes on its website (2013), a visit to the museum offers the opportunity to 'learn more about the migrant labour system that shaped many of the social problems South Africa has today'.

But township tourism did not necessarily offer the museum a way out of representing a timeless Africa. In the stories that are presented, the sites that are visited and the people who are called upon, the townships almost take on the aura of hidden places, where there is a 'maze of dwellings, customs and traditions' and 'it is peremptory [sic] to go with a guide'. And more than anything, the routes along which tourists are guided take them into an almost essentialised Africa, where key stops are the craft shop, the 'witch doctor's store' and a 'shack where a few elderly men sit on the floor [and] conversate [sic] and drink Mqombotie [sic]'. In this world of tradition, the township tour remains an encounter where the West meets Africa through 'music, dancing, mysticism, hospitality, joy, laughter, hope ... beauty ... and friendliness of the people', (Grassroutes Tours, 1999; *Event Magazine* reporter, 1998: 7; Grassroutes Tours, 2013; Cape Rainbow Tours, 2000 and 2010).

So when the Lwandle museum initially endeavoured to offer a 'safe guided walk' through the 'whole township' with an excursion through 'an original historic hostel', it found that it had to represent itself as an African place. The walk was presented as an opportunity to 'learn more about the migrant labour system (1958–1994)' (LMLM brochure, circa 2000). But this legacy of repression under apartheid was placed within an internationalised, tourist representation of traditional Africa as a place of essentialised ethnic rhythms, tastes and crafts.

The result was that the intention to portray the political and economic history of migrancy slipped 'almost magically' into tourist expectations of 'authentic Africa', where migrant histories might be exoticised to fit in with tourist expectations, long conditioned by histories of travel (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 805). As with other township tours in Cape Town, the tavern, the craft shop and the crèche were initially key destinations on the walk. In its promotional material, the museum included images of 'traditional dress', claiming that it is a site of 'cultural activities' and offering, among other items, 'beadwork and other locally produced souvenirs' (LMLM brochure, circa 2000).

In an attempt to shift its tourism narrative from stereotypical ahistorical representations of an African essence to lives in the migrant labour hostels, from 2003 the museum invoked notions of personal experience. An important part of the walking tour became a visit to people's homes, not to see and gaze upon the residents, but to talk with them and hear stories about their lives and histories. The house of Minenkulu Molo, a member of the museum board who had worked in hostels in the region and had arrived in Lwandle in 1961, became an almost permanent destination. As his story was mapped onto the museum's itinerary, Molo told endless streams of visitors about his life in the hostels, about being arrested for not having the documentation required to work in Cape Town, the negotiations about a sewing machine that led to his marriage, and his role in establishing the first school in Lwandle. In addition, hostel 33 became a more sustained focus in the tour, where the guide made use of interviews by local school learners of those who had lived in the hostel. Whereas previously guides had tended to give a generalised account of life in the hostels under apartheid, now they used one or two particular life stories associated with particular rooms in the hostel to form the basis of the narrations. Old photographs and documents were reproduced and passed around to visitors as 'visual and tangible remnants' associated with the structure in which they were standing. The oral histories, together with the selected and crafted artefacts, made it possible for the museum to 'imagine, image and represent lives for visitors to Hostel 33' (Witz, 2010).

The struggle for the museum today still revolves around it being a destination that memorialises apartheid, provokes visitors and questions assumptions rather than one that provides the predetermined 'exotic' place of difference for which the tourist industry and several heritage authorities have persistently called. Ultimately, the ongoing question over the museum's future is the essence of the struggle for development: how to construct an institution which strives to create a questioning public citizenry by recalling the memories of apartheid, while at the same time being constrained by the cultural and structural legacies of the system that had established Lwandle in 1958 for people who were cast as migrant labourers and whose home was represented as a 'Xhosa' place in the eastern Cape.

The football match that took place on a hot summer's afternoon on 5 February 2008, on a dusty, uneven pitch in Lwandle, between Killester United from Dublin and the local team, Transkei (TK) Lions, was a further attempt by the museum to link people 'through cultural associations rather than depicting stereotypes' (Witz, 2008) (Figure 3.5). Although the visitors were not used to the conditions, their physical strength and the presence of David Lacey, the Football Association of Ireland's Junior International Player of the Year, ensured that Killester United were the comfortable winners, the 2–1 score line reflecting their dominance. But what was highlighted by media reports as more significant than the result was that the organisation and outcome of the match signalled a moment in the development of what was termed 'transformative tourism' (Witz, 2011).

Reports on what the museum billed as an 'international friendly' gives some indication of what this transformation in tourism entailed. The Irish tabloid, the *Daily Star*, featured an interview with the president of the Irish Athletic Union League (AUL), Tony Martin, who enthused that it had been 'fantastic to give something back to football more than taking' (Kavanagh, 12 February

Figure 3.5: A large banner, produced on 5 February 2008 by the game's co-organisers — the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Shades of Black Works (SOBW), a Cape Town-based social responsibility company and the tour company, Springbok Atlas Safaris — was draped over the fence surrounding the football pitch. *Photograph: Kurt Ackermann.*

2008). On the day after the match, South African television's *Morning Live* programme interviewed the museum's manager and curator, Lunga Smile. He saw the match as having been an important event, not merely as a tourism activity for the Irish, but also an opportunity for the visitors to engage with the community and the realities that he described 'they are facing daily' (SABC, 2008). For Kurt Ackermann (2008), writing on the Afrika Tourism blogsite, the match represented the coming together of two working-class cultures:

> 25 working-class Irish blokes seeing reflections of themselves in the faces and places of an African township half a world away. An entire community seeing the power of their culture and history reflected in the interest — and, yes, the money — coming from foreign whities who paid to come play a game with their local boys on their home pitch. Connections were made. Friendships kindled. Shirts exchanged. Pap, wors and Castle Lager compared to braai culture Killester style.

According to Ackermann, this was a signifier and 'promise of authentic travel, the possibility to go elsewhere and come back different — kinder, humbler, more connected, more grounded in your own identity because of what you've shared with others'. The football match and associated events, which some Lwandle residents claimed was a 'restoration of dignity' and which some of the Irish visitors saw as a 'deeply humbling experience', was signalled as an ur moment in the development of Ubuntourism (Kronenberg & Ramugondo, 2010).

While there were some euphoric moments, such as those described above, there were residual tensions between the differing expectations and intentions of the tourism industry and a museum in a township that displays and memorialises pasts of planned and enforced racial separation. Between these two, the museum constantly negotiates its representations, encountering a series of signs on the way that seek to redirect it along specified tourist routes. Sometimes the signs are observed, in other instances they are flouted, and then (which is mostly the case) ways are found to negotiate detours into tourist imaginaries. Yet, with many of Lwandle's residents envisaging a museum merely as a space for tourists, the potential remained for the triumph of the ethnic singular.

What counted against such an impetus was the ways in which the institution's museumness became appropriated as a space of community centredness. From the time Mgijima opened the museum's doors, he had constantly asserted and sought community buy-in. In those early years, convincing residents of Lwandle of the worth and value of the museum had been difficult. 'The majority of people in Lwandle had never been to a museum', write Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006: 804). 'Those who had done so, had gone with school groups and their impression of a museum was of a place where stuffed animals are kept, or a place specially staged for tourists or an encounter with "Bushmen".'[7] Slowly, through

making its presence known, embarking upon research projects, working with local schools, hosting events, and identifying and selecting appropriate individuals for the museum's board, such efforts began to pay off. What made this interest even larger was that increasingly the Old Community Hall became a setting and backdrop for a range of functions and dances (Figure 3.6).

When Plummer and Mgijima had taken over the building on Vulindlela Street for the museum, the ample hall, which could accommodate over 100 people, was not disturbed. Exhibitions were displayed largely on the walls and seating provided the flexibility to the setting where regular church events, funerals and even conferences were held. In contrast, *Stories of Home* transformed the hall significantly. The installation, in 2006, of the permanent aluminium frame-structure in an L-shaped configuration encroached on the venue's available space. The exhibition might have asserted the hall as a museum, but for those who made use of the space the new layout restricted their various activities. Complaints about this realignment of the place filtered through to the board and when *Lwandle Designers* was installed in 2009, the aluminium exhibition frame was set back to allow for a more ample audience space beneath the stage.

With the nearby New Community Hall charging what was perceived to be excessive rates for hire, several groups approached the museum to make use of its hall. An arrangement was made with the Department of Social Welfare to allow it to locate its monthly payout of grants and pensions at the museum.

Figure 3.6: Ballroom dancing classes in the container attached to the museum hall, 20 October 2009. *Photograph: Corinne A. Kratz.*

Several performance collectives applied to the museum to make use of the space after hours. The museum's website reported that in the evenings 'young and upcoming artists from the community' were given 'a platform by the museum to polish their skills in Hip Hop, Ragga Spaza music and poetry'. An invitation was issued to 'come and see and listen to the likes of BK for Big King, Pro Sono, F2 from Amathemba Omboko, Levi, and Isa', and even 'see a performance from the museum manager himself'. Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm, members of the Siluncedo Arts Production rehearsed their ballroom dancing techniques at the museum and, on alternate days, Lwandle's 'sensations', the a cappella group, the Red Dazzlers, took over (Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 2008). The community hall might have been decommissioned officially and replaced by the newer multipurpose facility up the road, but its transformation into a museum incorporated its older communityness.

It was not only the spatial rearrangements and adaptations to the new exhibitions that configured the museum's publics in Lwandle but also the appropriation of the idea of museum ambassadors as agents of activism. The notion of museum ambassadors had been introduced to Cape Town, via the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, through the work of Damon Rice at the District Six Museum. The District Six Museum Ambassador Programme's objective was to train 'Grade 11 volunteers from schools in communities in and around Cape Town to teach other young people, using knowledge they themselves have only recently acquired, about the museum and its collections' (Rice, 2001; Sanger, 2008: 105–106). This initiative was intended to generate a group who would have a direct stake in the museum and its future and would promote it more broadly as ambassadors. When the Lwandle Museum first used the term in 2006, it was not specifically applied to school learners but to a group of older women who were identified by the then education officer, Lunga Smile, to promote the museum activities and presence. A year later, Lwandle, together with the District Six Museum, submitted a successful funding application to the National Heritage Council to embark upon an ambassadors' project with selected schools in Cape Town. The application drew on approaches that the museum manager, Mbulelo Mrubata, had made around instituting an educational programme in the museum and working much more closely with schools in the Somerset West–Strand–Lwandle area to generate interest in the museum and to make effective use of its educational resources. It was envisaged that learners from Grades 9, 10 and 11 would be recruited and trained in photography, interviewing, exhibition design, presentation and basic computer skills and that they would work towards an exhibition linking the shared themes of the two museums — 'forced removals' and 'migrant labour'. With half of the learners for the programme coming from schools in Lwandle and its immediate surrounds — Khanyolwethu, Simunyene and Rusthof — there was the 'prospect of developing a museum community in Lwandle'.[8]

In an ongoing process of making residents of Lwandle active, democratic, engaged citizens, 18 learners in the programme participated in the opening of the exhibition *Youth Perspectives on Migrant Labour System and Forced Removal in the Western Cape,* which was held at the Lwandle Museum on 19 April 2008 and a month later at the District Six Museum. Songs and poems written by the ambassadors, offering perspectives on the migrant labour system and forced removals in the Western Cape, were performed to an audience of teachers, pupils, parents and friends (Figure 3.7). The exhibition was the culmination of training in the protocols of heritage practice, as well as a signifier of the creation of younger museum publics that intersected with the formal educational processes. Museum Ambassadors were drawn into the work of the museum — some did part-time work as receptionists and volunteers, and others became board members. Ultimately the Ambassadors Programme initiated a network between schools in Lwandle and the museum, with the museum providing an after-school homework resource. At 3.00 pm the museum became a destination for learners as they were assisted with their homework in reading, writing, mathematics and the sciences. The space was busy as these young people completed their projects, composed essays and poetry, transforming the museum into a study environment. Made into museum publics through the Ambassadors Programme, the learners came to be at home in the museum when, according to its official opening times, its doors should have been closed.

Beyond the buildings, the scripted tour and the ambassadors, the museum started to move into the broader landscape of Lwandle and began to assert its interests in the present, beyond the histories of migrancy. The *Lwandle Designers* exhibition had appropriated the popular annual high-school fashion show and turned it into a museum event that collected the contemporary. The football match with Killester United furthered the curation of the everyday in the township. With national energy directed towards the 2010 FIFA World Cup®, the museum energetically shifted its attention to the idea of hosting local football tournaments and setting in place scripted accoutrements: the fixtures, kit, venues, adjudicators, spectators, players, trophies and medals. In an almost museum-like fashion, Lunga Smile, the museum manager, categorised people as police, teachers, taxi drivers, and others to play in opposing teams. As with *Lwandle Designers*, the idea was to draw football into the archive of the museum by contacting clubs, collecting oral histories, sourcing old photographs and gathering examples of soccer shirts and memorabilia. But despite attempts to make the interest in sport into a collection, it was the organisation of the event, the catering arrangements and the results of the actual games that were the main museum draw-cards on the day. The public holiday provided by Workers' Day, which coincided with the museum's birthday, inaugurated these commemorative games for Lwandle's festive publics — the residents were organised into team players and spectators (Minkley, Witz & Rassool, 2009).

Figure 3.7: On stage at the Old Community Hall in April 2008, youth ambassadors bring together the key narratives of the Lwandle and District Six museums — migrant labour and forced removals. Among the ambassadors for the Lwandle Museum were Andiswa Mhlongo and Masa Soko who later became museum board members. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

Yet the influence of the sporting occasion on museumisation did not merely produce an ephemeral public, which immediately disappeared. Once the final whistle had been blown, a network of sporting interest was established that made the museum into a sports centre. Arrangements were made for boxing bouts and ringside training at the museum. Football teams would gather for meetings and team talks. Interviews recording individual sporting prowess and achievement were edited into biographical films. And when the 2010 FIFA World Cup® came about, the museum hosted a three-month-long temporary exhibition centred on local football teams and their stars. Elevated on the old stage, this exhibition curated by Everisto Mangwiro, a student in the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies, depicted an imaginary pitch with a goalkeeper surrounded by vuvuzelas, trophies, shirts and old photographs. The exhibition celebrated TK Lions, a team named after the Transkei as the space of origin of Lwandle's migrant workers in the eastern Cape.

In post-apartheid South Africa, where new museums have emerged and older ones are being challenged to develop new publics, the work of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum does not appear out of place. On tourist routes, in schools and on the pitch, programmes have been developed that have sought to establish parity with the work of exhibiting and collecting in

transforming museums. Intended as the main means to reconstitute publics, there is not always consensus among museum staff, board members, community organisations and administrative officials as to where these programmes are placed in the range of museum activities. In the efforts to constitute publics at Lwandle, multiple visions and trajectories of museum-making have coexisted. The practice has been that different activities compete for attention and that, increasingly, programming and collection have come to stand in opposition. The imperatives of destination-making, coupled with the willingness to attract and involve a localised public meant that the institutionalising desire of the museum often had to give way.

Provincialising Lwandle

Becoming a museum in Lwandle was also about becoming an institution. On the surface there were a variety of options as to how this process might be undertaken. Funding imperatives were always closely aligned to the possibilities. Initially the support from city and tourism authorities suggested that making the museum into a destination was the most viable option, providing guiding services and refreshment facilities. When funding was secured for an oral history project from the South African Heritage Resources Agency in 2002, the option of being a site of heritage worthiness and 'not a museum per se' was reinforced.[9] The implications of taking this route were an emphasis on site conservation and its declaration as heritage. In 1998, when the idea of conserving hostel 33 had been proposed as part of the Hostels-to-Homes scheme, the formal memorandum from the Helderberg Municipality indicated that the hostel space had been designated for a museum. It was as though preserving the site would automatically turn it into the museum that was envisaged as being developed under the guidance of a steering committee.

There were several museum possibilities available for consideration. In Cape Town there had been a few museums managed by the municipality but these were gradually being phased out and placed in the hands of private trusts. National museums were being established and restructured in the city. Robben Island Museum opened its doors in 1997 as the first national museum of the new South Africa. Two years later a flagship institution, along the lines of the Smithsonian and bearing the name of Iziko, brought together former national museums and galleries in Cape Town. It was entirely inappropriate for Lwandle to be part of Robben Island Museum and, although approaches had been made to Iziko, there appeared to be little enthusiasm to add to what was already a somewhat unwieldy structure. Of course, on the basis of a narrative of migrant labour, Lwandle could have claimed national status. But with museums in other parts of the country invoking similar themes, it seemed unlikely that this township-based museum would be able to claim such significance. At the same time, independent museums relying on foreign, corporate or private

funding were staking an alternative claim to the city. In some ways Lwandle could have positioned itself to make applications for these forms of funding but without an obvious champion with connections to these worlds, this route was never seriously pursued. What was attractive about some of these independent museum initiatives, in particular the District Six Museum's alignment with the forced removal narrative, was the notion that Lwandle's story of migrant labour could be made important and placed into broader themes claiming both regional and national contexts.

The institutional arrangement to turn this concept into practice, eagerly pursued by the museum since 2005, was the option of becoming part of the Western Cape Provincial Museums structure. Operating under Ordinance 8 of 1975, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport in the province had a three-tier system of provincial museums in place. Those defined as provincial were funded and controlled by the provincial administration; province-aided museums received a subsidy and had a semblance of autonomy through their boards of trustees; and local museums were categorised as not being in a position to becoming province-aided but they could receive a small grant for running costs (Du Preez, 1982: 9). Despite differences in scales and themes, ranging from the large maritime Dias Museum complex in Mossel Bay and the Kleinplasie Living Open-Air Museum in Worcester, to the house museum and church and village museums in small towns such as Stellenbosch, Montagu, Tulbagh, Paarl and Swellendam, what draws these together as a collection of museums is the character of their conceptualisation as cultural history museums. Emerging mainly in the 1960s and 1970s at the height of apartheid South Africa, these museums, which were designated as provincial, largely celebrated and displayed settler lifestyles and households as the artefacts of history (Witz, 2012). Patently, Lwandle, especially the living space of hostel 33, did not fit into this narrative. Despite this obvious misfit, province-aided status was an optimistic prospect that would give the museum a degree of autonomy, fit it into a network of museums beyond the city and across the province, and enable it to become financially sustainable with a basic annual budget. In a time of social transformation nationally, the Lwandle Museum also envisaged that the provincial museum structure would welcome this new addition to its offerings with open arms as a sign of transformation.

Accompanied by newspaper clippings and a business plan, the application by the board of trustees in April 2005 for the museum to become province-aided under section 12 of the Museum Ordinance No. 8 of 1975 was motivated by claims to its uniqueness: 'The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum is the only museum dedicated to the history of black workers in the province. It is also the first township museum in the Western Cape and has the potential to contribute to the transformation of the heritage sector in our province.' It also asserted the importance of collecting and displaying national and local

history of the 'migrant labour system and hostel life in the Western Cape and in South Africa in general'. Declaring that it already had an established tourist route and 'tremendous community support', the application in consideration for long-term departmental support was presented as merit-worthy.[10] Once implicated in a prospect of transformation, Lwandle presented the possibilities of destabilising the settlement of museums and securing its own presence in a provincial past.

The hopes around acquiring formal status did not materialise in the form envisaged, despite the best efforts of Eureka Barnard, the deputy director of the museum service. Instead of an official response to the application, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport granted the museum a discretionary sum from its annual savings on an ad hoc basis at the end of every financial year from 2006/07 to 2009/10. This annual allocation enabled the museum to keep its doors open, retain its staff and apply for funding from alternative sources such as the National Lotteries Board and the National Heritage Council. But with no official response to the application, despite numerous enquiries, meetings, emails and telephonic contact, it was unclear what the museum could expect. In this moment of anxiety, rumours circulated about the lack of available funds in the provincial budget and claims that the museumness of Lwandle was being brought into question by department officials. There appeared to be no enthusiasm for a museum in Lwandle, particularly when it did not conform to the conventions of an artefactual collection and its cataloguing remained somewhat haphazard. This was a museum that through its collection could neither visibly offer a 'glimpse' of nostalgic pasts in the 'lifestyle of bygone times' nor 'trace the origin and development of peoples' (Morsbach, 1982: 6).

The seemingly perpetual cycle of crisis was briefly interrupted when the museum did secure funding from the National Lotteries Board and the National Heritage Council for project-related work, and the then provincial Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Cameron Dugmore, decided to take a personal interest in the museum project. While the possibility of changing provincial museum legislation was being invoked as the justification for a further delay of the museum's provincial status, Dugmore was keen to secure a commitment as soon as possible. He saw the impending legislation as no obstacle to the department's response to the request that had been in the system for four years. He was also very keen that the department recognise Lwandle for its pioneer status as Cape Town's only township-based museum. With national and provincial elections imminent, the Western Cape Provincial Cabinet made an in-principle decision on 1 April 2009 to proclaim the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum a province-aided museum as defined in section 12(3) of the Museum Ordinance No. 8 (1975). In line with the Museum Ordinance, the board of Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum was required to reach a 'formal agreement

with the City of Cape Town' regarding the long-term use of the properties in which the museum operates — a community hall and an ex-migrant labourers' hostel — before such a decision could be effectively implemented.[11] The Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport conveyed this decision to the Lwandle community at a meeting in the Lwandle Methodist Church on 13 April 2009. There was celebration that at last, after many years of struggling to maintain itself, the museum would be on a secure footing.

The announcement set in process administrative regimes of museumisation, including the production of policies, a staffing structure and procurement documents. A series of meetings between the museum and officials from the department took place, which gave effect to the proclamation. The department stressed the urgency for the museum to secure a lease for the buildings it occupied from the City of Cape Town. The Deputy-Director of Museum Services, Mxolisi Dlamuka, then met with the museum staff and board and meticulously went through the procedures and implications of becoming a province-aided museum. The possibilities of size and status were discussed, the forms of governance stressed, the staff allocation specified and conversation around the financial parameters started. What was clear was that museumisation would require much more managerial functionality than the established curatorship model.

Suddenly the museum that had been established as a fantasy by Bongani Mgijima and Charmian Plummer was on the verge of becoming institutionalised. The managerial models being suggested ran in tandem with growing visibility, as the museum garnered two provincial awards in successive years: in 2008 it received the award for 'best community tourism project' and a year later it was honoured as 'museum of the year' in the province. Along with the recognition of its position as an established museum, it was acknowledged for 'providing a resource for schools, universities, research institutions and the community at large in developing oral history projects, artistic productions, photography and performance activities'.[12] While the managerial model set Lwandle in place as a museum, these awards and increasing visibility meant that it was being typecast in the category of community. Aided and abetted by the discourses of development, the Lwandle Museum was battling to escape its location.

But even within these categories, securing museumness was elusive. The lease agreement between the City of Cape Town and the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum was signed only in November 2010.[13] This was too late for the museum to be included in the provincial budgetary planning. Moreover the new legislation regarding museums was proceeding, if somewhat haltingly, and the museum was once again asked to be patient with the delays in the implementation of the provincial Cabinet decision of 2009.[14] By February 2011, the future of the museum was still uncertain. The department was reluctant to proclaim new museums while it was still in the process of drafting and implementing the new legislation for rationalising the museum landscape

in the Western Cape. This continuous cycle of uncertainty was accompanied within the Lwandle Museum by other instabilities, tensions and discontinuities around strategic planning, setting policies in place, and prioritising practices as the managerial demands of museumisation were asserted. In between the hope and the void, Lwandle appeared as an ever-pending museum.

End notes

1 Letter from Curator Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum to the Director, Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports: Museum Services, Cape Town, Application for Affiliation: Provincial-Aided Museum, 2 April 2005.
2 Minkley and Witz are making reference to Samuel (1976: 192).
3 Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Business Plan, 16 March 2005.
4 This is a form of 'archaeology' of the site that shows how through research and continuous reflection, buildings give many clues to the stories of lives in spaces. One example of this is the project for the restoration of the Tenement Building at 97 Orchard Street, New York City (Dolkart, 2007).
5 'Hostel 33 Oral History Research, Education and Exhibition Programme, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Cape Town, South Africa: Report on Phase 2: Design of exhibition for Hostel 33'. Prepared by Mr Lundi Mama, Education Officer, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum and Prof. Leslie Witz, Chair of Museum Board, 23 December 2010.
6 'Progress report for the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs, Sports and Recreation, from Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010'. By Lunga Smile, Acting Curator of the Museum and Leslie Witz, Chair of Museum Board.
7 The reference to 'Bushmen' is to the infamous 'Bushman diorama' in Iziko South African Museum in Cape Town. It was criticised for the casting project of people identified as indigenous at the beginning of the twentieth century, its location in a museum largely devoted to natural history and its depictions, which constantly evoked stereotyping groupings of people according to physical attributes.
8 'Progress report for the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs, Sports and Recreation, from Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009'. By Lunga Smile, Acting Curator of the Museum and Leslie Witz, Chair of Museum Board.
9 The Research and Documentation Programme of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, proposal to the South African Heritage Resources Agency, 23 June 2002.
10 Application for Affiliation: Provincial-Aided Museum, 2 April 2005.
11 Minutes of the Western Cape Provincial Cabinet, 95/2009: Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Proclamation as a Provincial-aided Museum.
12 P. Lalu, Nomination of Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum as Museum of the Year, 10th Western Cape Arts and Culture, Language, Library, Museum, Heritage and Archive Awards, 16 November 2009.
13 Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Lease of Municipal Buildings and Old Community Hall and Hostel 33: Situated on a portion of Erf 13600, Strand H-14/2/2/1/2/41, 11 Khayalethu Street, Lwandle, Strand.
14 Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Provincial Government of the Western Cape. Discussion paper: 'Towards a new provincial museum policy for the Western Cape', March 2011.

Chapter 4

Revisioning
Images, photography and exhibition

The remaking of hostel 33 into Hostel 33 and the institutionalisation of a very vague and provisional idea into what might be called a museum was far from a cohesive and planned vision. Instead, there were a number of different and competing initiatives around museum-making, from it being a site museum of the landscape of apartheid and an authentic object of remembrance, to it being a tourist destination, a venue for cultural events and an exhibition gallery. But what was always key from the outset was the question of how to visualise the museum. This involved dealing with the materiality of its buildings, its location in a compound, which became a township called Lwandle, and what to put on display. What the museum wanted to set in place was 'ways of seeing' (Berger, 1972). These visual resources, placed within, alongside and in tandem with one another sometimes recreated reality and, in other instances, opened up and questioned the meanings of the migrant labour narratives and the space labelled Lwandle.

From the museum's very inception, when Bongani Mgijima and Charmian Plummer pasted the first set of images on the interior walls of the Old Community Hall, photographs have been integral to the making of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum (Figure 4.1). Shortly thereafter, Mgijima selected photographs from the UWC-Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Archives and pinned them on free-standing, green felt exhibition boards to depict a national narrative of migrant labour, from poverty in the rural areas to urban influx control and resistance (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 801–804). Both *Do You Have a Map?/ Unayo na Impehu?* and *Stories of Home/Iimbali zeKhaya* exhibitions made extensive use of photographs. Some of these were from previous displays, but they were supplemented by images taken from the local press, the Helderberg's

Figure 4.1: Leslie Witz's first visit on 10 June 1999 to what Bongani Mgijima was crafting as the Migrant Labour Museum. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

District Mail, the anthropological study of childhood in Lwandle by Sean Jones *Assaulting Childhood* (1993), a range of books that dealt with migrant labour in South Africa, most notably Mamphela Ramphele's *A Bed Called Home* (1993), the Liebenberg and Stander office files from the Hostels-to-Homes development project, personal albums of Lwandle residents, Roger van Wyk's commissioned work on Lwandle for the Dutch exhibition *Familieverhalen uit Zuid-Afrika* and museum staff members' photographs of interviewees in their homes (Faber, 2003; Faber et al., 2007).

Separate exhibitions highlighted the work of individual photographers. David Goldblatt's 1984 portfolio, *The Transported of KwaNdebele*, which portrayed interior images of daily migrants travelling from apartheid's ethnic homeland of KwaNdebele to work in Pretoria, was donated to the museum by the photographer, reprinted by Tony Meintjes and displayed on the walls of the stage of the Old Community Hall. Cape Town-based photographer Svea Josephy's large, saturated-colour images from a fashion shoot held in Lwandle, which she described as 'Lolo Veleko meets *Face* [magazine]', formed the basis of the exhibition *Lwandle Designers/Abavelisi Bengingqi yaseLwandle,* which opened at the end of 2009. Museum curator Lunga Smile, who went around Lwandle with a camera, intent on providing what he saw as a record of daily life, added images of some of the clothing designers at work in their homes to this exhibition. He also pinned up on the notice board scenes from a major fire, which he entitled 'Lwandle through Lunga's Lenz'. In nearly all these contexts of collecting and exhibiting, photographs were deployed to create meaning, treated 'as having a basic, transparent representativeness' (Williams, 2007: 53), to display Lwandle as the vista of migrant labour pasts and the contemporary prospects of post-apartheid futures.

This extensive use of photographs in Lwandle acted against orthodox museum practice. Although museums emerged alongside the technology of photography in the nineteenth century, and they made extensive use of photographs for research, these photographs remained largely in museum

collections. On display there were artefacts in glass cases, life scenes in dioramas, recreated living rooms and typological assemblages. When photographs did appear they tended to appear as artefacts, completing a room in a biographical manner, illustrative of what had happened around a historic event such as a battle, or to show scenes of technological achievement or disaster such as railway bridges, construction of dams and floods. The bulk of photographs though, rather than being central to the display, performed the role of footnotes to the visual exhibitions, signalling their evidentiary legitimacy. It is telling that in the official *Museums of the Cape* publication, all the museums are depicted through their buildings, artefacts and staged dioramas. In fact, one has to look purposefully to find any trace of photographs in the carefully curated images of these museums. It is the 'suitable building' and the 'nucleus collection' of three-dimensional objects that were presented as the primary ingredients of the 'aspiring museum' (Du Preez, 1982: 9).

Towards the latter part of the twentieth century, photographs began to be employed on an extensive scale in museums. In ethnographic museums, photographic exhibitions were widely used as illustrations of culture, performance and context (Edwards, 2001). The memorial museum movement of the 1990s engaged with 'the senses, emotions and imagination' (Kirshenblatt-

Figure 4.2: At the event to celebrate the securing of hostel 33 for the museum on 18 August 2007, personal photographs were used to illustrate autobiographies. Kholiswa Ncane used a studio photograph of herself and her husband in matching men's clothing to regale the audience with stories about their romance. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

Gimblett, 1998: 38) through the visual image. In the post-apartheid moment, those institutions that have aspired to become museums have relied almost exclusively on photographs. The Apartheid, District Six, Robben Island, Luthuli, Nelson Mandela, KwaMuhle, Red Location, Hector Pietersen, South End and the Workers' museums have depended upon curating the photographic image for display. Used as blow-up portraits, projected on banks of television monitors and large LCD screens, incorporated into storyboards with quotations and captions, transferred onto walls and fabric, photographs have come to stand for the museum (Newbury, 2009; Smith & Rassool, 2001). Newbury (2009: 275) suggests that this overwhelming presence of photographs in post-apartheid museums is not merely a matter of numeric volume but also signifies a metaphoric framework of 'transparency' and 'visual truth'. Much like memorial museum practice elsewhere, it is the combination of photograph and story that make up the artefactual effect in Lwandle (Williams, 2007) (Figure 4.2).

Controlling visions

When the Lwandle museum opened its doors in May 2000 and invited visitors into the Old Community Hall where it had taken up residence, visitors could not see into the interior of the hall from the main entrance. The functionalist spatial arrangement of the community hall controlled the eye. The entrance to the building was along its main axis, which was broken visually by a screen wall that separated the entrance foyer from the hall. In a dark alcove below the old projection room, a makeshift front desk served as the reception from which to welcome visitors and direct them into the exhibition hall behind the screen wall.

The standard layout of the township hall assumed this form of delayed arrival. When visitors passed reception and entered into the naturally lit auditorium, augmented by florescent lighting arranged in rows on the ceiling of the open truss roof space, they encountered an exhibition displayed in a bright hall. There was no directed lighting. An installation, placed axially on the stage at the far end of the hall, commanded attention. Here, juxtaposed below a 'WHITES ONLY' sign, originally from the beach at nearby Strand, was a large-scale reproduction of pages from an open passbook. On stage, hyper-visible, this pocket-size passbook made gigantic stood in an equal scale-relation to the beach notice, magnifying the forms of subjection and control. These images are *the* signs of apartheid (Figure 4.3).

The enlarged passbook and the 'WHITES ONLY' sign on the hall's stage overlooked 10 wheelbarrows lined up on the floor. This installation of wheelbarrows by Cape Town sculptor Gavin Younge, entitled *Workmen's Compensation II*, contained a variety of personal items used by migrant labourers, such as shoes, coins, enamelled mugs and plates, ceramic sculptures, letters and their passbooks. Younge had created the original work, exhibited at the

Figure 4.3: On 5 December 2009 *The Weekend Argus*, in its 'Then and Now' feature, published 'two pictures of the Strand beach area looking towards Gordon's Bay'. One of the photographs, shown above, was by Piet Claassen, and 'was taken around 1978'. It showed 'the signage that proclaimed the beach for "WHITES ONLY"'. The caption in the newspaper noted that the more recent photograph, which they placed alongside that of Claassen's, had been 'taken at a different spot because the original position is now home to the municipal pool'. What the new photograph showed was 'an open beach and a much more built up beachfront'. *(Photographic Weekly Review, 5 December 2009.)*

Market Theatre Gallery in 1980, by collecting personal belongings of workers at African Oxygen Limited (Afrox), an 'active sponsor of the arts' but who Younge felt was paying its workers 'near slave-labour wages'. Younge visited the Afrox workers in their hostels in the townships of Langa and Gugulethu to collect their stories and the objects they used daily, and he placed the objects in three wheelbarrows covered with glass. *Workmen's Compensation II*, a reconstruction and elaboration of the original, was commissioned for *Les Champs de la Sculpture 2000* in Paris. This installation was extended to 10 wheelbarrows to signify moments of fragmented memories 'of a disjointed society', and was placed in a circle-like formation on the Champs Elysées to resemble a laager (Codjia-Miltat, 2007). On display in Lwandle, after being on exhibition in Paris, the wheelbarrows created a museum effect, asserting value and interest through their bullet-proof glass covers. Filled with 'objects of workers' daily lives', the wheelbarrows contained the signs of control and signalled the potential for the museum's collection to become a site for the recovery of artefactual biographic pasts (Williamson, 2004: 66).

Five years later the entrance to the museum was shifted. A set of doors was inserted on the north side of the hall and visitors encountered the exhibition space immediately on entry. The 'WHITES ONLY' beach notice, which was originally on stage, was moved and suspended from a structural I-beam. Alongside, a dry-wall partition displayed a series of aerial photographs depicting Lwandle from farmland to the growth of the settlement in 2006. Writ large on the wall was a stylised and diagrammatic map identifying the itinerary and sites along the

route of the tour of Lwandle offered by the museum. Beyond the beach sign and the wall of maps there was a hint of the hall beyond, offering an initial glimpse of the *Stories of Home* exhibition and the wheelbarrows, which had been curated and set on a raised platform just below the stage to give them more prominence.

The new entrance façade, with its glass doors and lofty interior, invited visitors to a much more open space where the exhibition and tour beckoned. Yet, as had been the case earlier, it was the images of control and apartness that were accentuated. The gigantic passbook was no longer there, but the flattened landscape of aerial photographs from the 1950s through to 2006 along the partition wall and behind the relocated reception desk had become the images of Lwandle. Whereas the passbook had used enlargement and giganticism to evoke apartheid's effect, the aerial photograph encapsulated Lwandle as an orthographic image, scaled, contained and mappable. On display were the very images of centralised authoritative control where Lwandle could be observed and controlled from above. When these images of purposeful planning and isolation amidst a vast open landscape were placed alongside one another, they created a diagrammatic flow that became history, where the altered form of surveillance from above had become, in its installation in the museum, the chronology of growth (Figure 4.4).

The 'WHITES ONLY' notice adjacent to the aerial photographs confronted visitors as they entered the reconfigured Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum. This sign of prohibition had been removed from the beach at the Strand in 1990 when the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act 49 of 1953 was scrapped and Theo Bernhardt, a local beachfront shopkeeper, donated it to the museum (Mgijima, pers comm.). The beach sign reappeared as an artefact, a remnant of apartheid and one of the museum's key signifiers. Once one of many, in a mass-produced production of exclusivity, here the sign was recontextualised. The original intention of exclusion contained in the old, rusty-red, steel sign with its legislative fiat was subverted. Now a remnant of rarity and much sought-after by international collectors, the sign was turned into a memorial to apartheid's past, indoors at the Old Community Hall. Through its re-siting, it laid claim to an anticipated inclusive future welcoming visitors to apartheid's past 'on the beach' at Lwandle.

Beyond the beach sign and the aerial photographs a series of images of control appeared on exhibition. These had originally appeared in *Do You Have a Map?* the exhibition that had been installed in 2001 by UWC's Project on Public Pasts, which involved an interdisciplinary group of student researchers from UWC, UCT and Brown University in the United States. From 2006 a selection of panels from this exhibition were placed in the permanent exhibition. These included the surveyor's diagrams demarcating the subdivision of land for a '*naturelle lokasi*' ('native location'), the blueprints of the original planning layout of Lwandle and the working drawings of a 'Proposed building for the sale

Figure 4.4: Minenkulu Molo, a long-serving board member, ex-migrant labourer and narrator of stories to visitors about Lwandle's past, poses beneath the 'WHITES ONLY' beach sign that was donated to the museum by Theo Bernhardt and hung over the threshold to the permanent exhibition in 2005. *Photograph: Leslie Witz, 22 February 2007*.

of KB & European Beer to the Bantu = Lwandle Hostels'. These drawings from the 1950s, at the impersonal scale of planned bureaucratic documentation, were used to show the systematic ordering of spatial arrangements, the chevron-like pattern that enabled the effective administration of the compound, the insidious provisions for the controlled consumption and production of alcohol, presented as leisure, and the envisaged isolation of Lwandle as a racially designated 'native place'. In the act of making a permanent exhibition, the drafts of bureaucracy repositioned Lwandle in a narrative of apartness.

What was missing from these drawings was any attention to the detail of the hostel barracks and rooms. These were not designed — they were merely envisaged as engineered structures for the containment of human bodies in blocks. It was only in the 1990s, as the Development Action Group and ACG Architects began reimaging the hostels as homes, that they explored the existing interiors of the barrack-blocks. Reimagining the specifications of the original, they made three-dimensional graphic projections reconstructing the limited confines of the shared hostel rooms. For the first time attention was given to the quality, shape and organisation of the original space assigned to men in the past as a prospect to redesign the future. The earliest space of the

past — as the baseline for the future — became part of the exhibition panel entitled 'Dreaming of a better Lwandle'. But it was also projected into the past. Juxtaposed against photographs from the hostel interiors in the late 1980s and early 1990s taken from Sean Jones's ethnographic study, *Assaulting Childhood* (1993), and newspaper cuttings from the Helderberg's *District Mail*, these hostel interiors are presented as emblematic of the conditions of confinement in a six-and-a-half square metre cubicle, divided into a zone of living space just large enough to accommodate a single bed, a shared cupboard and a small, top-hung window. The architects' drawings of the past, drafted in the 1990s as the foundation for subverting control through the redesign of space, became the document of that past.

By mobilising the passbook, the beach sign, aerial photographs, surveyors' diagrams and the planners' and architects' visions into images of control, the Lwandle Museum homogenised migrant labour as the essence of apartheid and magnified Lwandle as exemplary of its origins and operations. This was quite a remarkable shift. Lwandle, previously virtually unknown and largely unseen, was being made visible by the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum by placing its residents into a visual history of repression. Yet the magnification that made Lwandle into a site of significance simultaneously flattened its past into a 'plane projection', where history is reduced to a time and space which is over-determined by the 'nowhen' of apartheid. This is the contradiction of the visual history on display in the museum. The synchronic ordering of the past makes Lwandle important, universal and also anonymous (De Certeau, 1984: 159).

Reproducing conditions

The images used by the museum from its inception were those that magnified control and authority, but it was very difficult to display the conditions in Lwandle. In the late 1950s Lwandle had been created as a labour compound, to be out of sight and visible only for the purposes of surveillance. This was referred to by the government as a 'black spot' within the nation they conceived of as white and derived from European settlement (Witz, 2003). Indeed, one of the imperatives behind the establishment of the hostels was that workers from parts of the eastern Cape were living in the backyards of houses in the towns of Somerset West and Strand, and their presence was noticeable (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 798). Thus, the regional Urban Areas Commissioner in the Cape Province, C.J. van Schalkwyk, was willing to accede to the demands from industries and municipal services to provide some sort of basic accommodation in hostels for migrant workers in the Helderberg region, but he was concerned that this would create another 'black spot'. Van Schalkwyk wanted the Stellenbosch Divisional Council to ensure that the provision of hostels would help to 'eliminate' these black spots and that publicity around the construction of the hostels would emphasise that this was the intention and not the converse,

which some might assume to be the case.[1] The development of Lwandle was punted by both the Department of Native Affairs and the Divisional Council of Stellenbosch as being a matter of extreme urgency in the 1950s,[2] but its presence and future would depend on it being as invisible as possible.

This invisibility is reflected in the lack of a photographic archive for almost the first 30 years of Lwandle's existence. The museum has been unable to acquire either private or official collections of hostel life in Lwandle prior to the 1980s. The only images are the aerial photographs that were placed on display at the entrance of the museum in the Old Community Hall from 2005. One of these, dated 1977, shows the vast 'buffer zone' that in effect spatially and visually isolated Lwandle. Access to Lwandle was along a single, narrow strip, leading off from the national road, where no other form of construction was permitted.[3]

The first set of photographs of life in the Lwandle hostels, which the museum has in its collection and on display, is dated 1986. The photographs had accompanied a report in the local suburban newspaper, the *District Mail* (25 April 1986), on living conditions in Lwandle. A set of three photographs appeared: a resident turning the tap of a cold shower, a toilet seat in the bucket-latrine area, and the inside of a hostel, referred to as a 'cubicle', with an array of personal items squeezed into a small space, conveying a sense of crowdedness. The photographs and writing referred to Lwandle as 'our concentration camp', labelled those who lived there as '***inmates***' and called the area a '**greenhouse for disease**' (the emphases and italics are in the original). The headline for the article was the question, 'Spend the night in Lwandle?' and the answer it gave, by implication, was firmly in the negative.

The appearance of these photographs in the articles provided, for the first time, visual evidence of people's living conditions in the hostels in the 1980s. Beyond the spatial determinism of the labour camp, the photographs of what was represented as everyday life were mobilised as part of a politics for relocating Lwandle's future. A combination of limited apartheid reforms, which eased restrictions on urban residence, and increasing poverty in rural areas had combined to increase the numbers of women and children who were coming to live in the hostels (Sloth-Nielsen et al., 1992: 86–87). The buffer zone was also beginning to dissolve. An aerial photograph of Lwandle taken in the late 1980s, enlarged and displayed to the right of the entrance door to the Old Community Hall, showed that the buffer zone had become criss-crossed with multiple self-made paths as those who lived in Lwandle sought out the shortest and most convenient routes to places of employment, residence and the surrounding towns. As Lwandle became increasingly visible, proposals about its future started to emerge from local government authorities and residents of the surrounding towns. These ranged from the development of family housing as a more effective way to maintain a settled and productive workforce to upgrading and building more hostels, to the vigorous assertion that Lwandle was now an

unsightly 'black spot' on the landscape that needed to be wiped off the map (Urban Design Services, 1987: 55–64).

Campaigns were organised around these various positions. In October 1986 the Strand Municipality passed a resolution calling for the residents of Lwandle to be removed to another area, as it maintained that there were insufficient facilities for families, which was creating a 'social' problem. They maintained that the area was being earmarked for the future expansion of the Strand and that there were many unemployed 'white and coloured youngsters' in the area who needed jobs. Two years later, when there were again reports that the people of Lwandle would not be removed, the council of Strand unanimously reiterated its previous resolution. In this instance it was supported by a meeting of about 350 Strand ratepayers, who circulated a petition among residents of Strand objecting to any further development of family housing in Lwandle.[4] There were voices of opposition to the idea of removal from local commercial and industrial concerns in the region though. Both the local Chamber of Commerce and Gants, a food and canning company and one of the largest employers in the area, called for family housing to be developed in Lwandle. Franco Inches, the chair of the Hottentots Holland Chamber of Commerce, again invoked the concentration camp metaphor and argued that Lwandle should not become a Belsen. Instead, he articulated a view of control through social cohesion. 'There was no better guarantee against crime and social unrest', he said 'than house ownership' (Staff reporter, *District Mail*, 24 June 1988 & 24 June 1988a).

A copy of the petition and its signatories is in the archives of the museum but it is not on display. The article 'Spend the night in Lwandle' and the accompanying photographs of the conditions in the hostels from the *District Mail* are on exhibition. These form part of a panel entitled '*Ukuhlala ehostele*' that was originally part of *Do You Have a Map?* and later incorporated into the permanent exhibition. There is another article on this panel headlined 'Uncertain future for 5 000 in Lwandle' from *The Argus* dated 10 February 1987, which refers to the debate around possibilities for new housing or upgrading hostels or removals. The photographs in *The Argus* are not about the conditions in the hostels but depict life on the streets of Lwandle and attempts to maintain a semblance of dignity. These images have the following captions: 'RELAXING', 'LIVESTOCK' and 'DRAIN CLEANER'. The individuals who appear in the photographs accompanying both articles in *The Argus* are not named, except for two children who are referred to as Mkhuseli and Sandile. The text of both articles names the officials who are part of the debate on Lwandle's future but they are not photographed. In the non-naming of the residents in the photographs, Lwandle comes across as an urban predicament for officials from Somerset West, Gordon's Bay and Strand to solve. These illustrated articles, together with architects' imagined interior layouts, are all presented in the museum as a collage to depict evidence of Lwandle's past conditions. The panel

is headed 'The Hostel System' and the accompanying text refers to life in the hostels as a 'struggle because of overcrowding, lack of privacy, poor sanitation and lack of amenities'. By framing, assembling and juxtaposing the architects' and planners' sterile drawings with the animated newspaper stories, the lived space of Lwandle is made visible. This was the first time that Lwandle had been represented beyond the controlling visions. Yet, as these conditions appear in the museum, they may reproduce Lwandle as a 'condition'.

In the arguments for imagining Lwandle's future, the Urban Foundation commissioned a report from Urban Design Services to outline housing scenarios. The Urban Foundation was established in 1976 as a 'private-sector think tank', which sought to 'develop solutions to the urban crisis' by urging the apartheid state to 'accept the reality of urbanization' and to promote 'individual ownership of housing, self-help housing, and informal settlement upgrading' (Harrison et al., 2008: 42). Envisioning itself as both a 'change' and 'development agent', the Urban Foundation worked to eradicate apartheid in the area of 'urbanisation and housing' through non-state interventions and the fiscal support generated from the workings of the market (Smit, 1992: 36–37). The Urban Foundation report contains probably the most extensive image archive of Lwandle in the late 1980s. Members of the Hostel Dwellers' Association, an organisation formed to fight for the rights of hostel dwellers and to campaign for turning the hostels into family-style accommodation, took the architects and planners involved in the research around Lwandle. The delegation was addressed in the Old Community Hall, after which they were taken on a walk to the individual hostels where people stayed, the communal kitchens, the ablution blocks and the dining hall, all of which were photographed by a member of the delegation, Andrew Berman. He took another set of images of Lwandle from a private plane. Berman's images are perspectival, more like a momentary snapshot of the compound camp from a position that was intended to document the extent and form and to provide a sense of the scale of the settlement that was 'hidden' from the national road. A few of these images were included in the Urban Foundation report and were used to motivate against the removal of Lwandle. They document conditions in Lwandle in 1987, where faeces-filled buckets overflowed, alcohol consumption was encouraged, and living spaces were cramped and provisional. In the report, these were juxtaposed with an imagined future for Lwandle where housing, libraries and clinics could provide 'a far more effective method of providing barriers and controlling access' (Urban Design Services, 1987: 45–46).

Berman donated his images to the museum in 2010 when his practice, Urban Design Services, was one of a number approached by the museum board to be interviewed for the possible commission of the restoration of hostel 33.[5] This momentary and incomplete set of photographs, received after the main exhibitions had been installed, has become part of the museum's collection,

performing the work of visual history. In the museum's weblog created by Noëleen Murray to document progress and process in the rehabilitation of Hostel 33, these images are used to narrate the debates that ensued around how to approach the spaces, which had been partially renovated in the early stages of the Hostels-to-Homes project. On the one hand, there was the notion of leaving in place all the layers of historical intervention over time. Another possibility was to identify key spaces that were of importance in hostel life before the Hostels-to-Homes project began.

In the story on the weblog, Berman's photographs from a day in 1987 are used to indicate support for the removal of some of the interventions of the mid-1990s. This included the decision to demolish the interior water-borne sewerage, which Berman's photographs showed had been used as a storage space in the 1980s, and concentrate instead on recreating the only remaining bucket-latrine space in the hostels in Lwandle (Murray, 2010). Berman's photographs of the bucket system showed an exposed doorway, soiled floor and a bucket overflowing with excrement. The Hostel 33 project restoration team had considered displaying the image on the wall in the old bucket-latrine area. Yet this would have broken with the curatorial decisions to take a rehabilitation approach rather than use a didactic or exhibitionary mode of representation. The image was considered to be inappropriate for display on the walls of the exhibition hall or in the actual hostel building, and it was decided that it would be used as one of the props for interpretation on the museum tour. As one of a number of images, sealed in protective plastic, the photograph was enlarged from postcard size to A4 and used by tour guides to pass around to visitors to Hostel 33. With the bucket-latrine system eradicated from the urban landscape of contemporary Lwandle, the image of the unemptied pail standing in the recognisable cubicle space was the only graphic evidence of accounts of 'mud and filth and the constant stench of human excrement' (Jones, 1993: 39). It was as if the experience of looking at the photograph enabled a sensory affect of what had been the Lwandle latrines. The chance events of that day became evidence in constructing a longer past and turned into a visual resource for museum purposes. Instructive in the rehabilitation of the fabric of Hostel 33, they were employed to represent the private, everyday ordinariness of hostel life under apartheid (Murray, 2010) (Figure 4.5). [6]

The photographs from Sean Jones's book, *Assaulting Childhood* (a revision of his Master's dissertation), stand in contrast to those of Berman's in the museum. Derived from an extended eight-month ethnographic study into childhood, carried out in 1989 when Jones was a Master's student at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and teaching assistant at a primary school in Lwandle, they consist mainly of groups of children in the hostels and on the streets. These images were placed in various exhibition panels in the Old Community Hall and were also used on the tour to Hostel 33. In Jones's book the photographs appeared

Figure 4.5: Drawing on the inspiration of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City, the Lwandle Museum used laminated photographs to illustrate actual living conditions in the hostel. This enabled the museum to provide photographic prompts while ensuring that the walls of the hostel were not used for exhibition. *Photograph: Leslie Witz, 14 June 2011.*

mainly as plates, at the beginning of each chapter. They were not captioned and although the introductory chapter of the book contains an extensive account of Jones's methodology, including his sampling, gathering of oral testimonies and techniques of observation, there is nothing about the photographs other than an acknowledgement in the 'Preface' of the photographer, Emile Boonzaier, an anthropology lecturer at UCT. In their appearance, the photographs are largely illustrative of the various sections of the book: what appears to be a family scene in a hostel is opposite the beginning of a chapter on 'children's domestic relationships over time'; the chapter entitled 'the physical and social parameters of hostel life' is faced by a landscape scene of the hostels with the Helderberg Mountains in the background; opposite a chapter entitled 'Child of apartheid' is a photograph of a child collecting water in an old, rusty can from a puddle in the street (Jones, 1993: 30–31, 50–51, 86–87). The photographs in the hostels and streets of Lwandle reinforce Jones's argument that 'whether in countryside, in hostel, or in limbo somewhere between, all these children are victims' (Jones, 1993: 199).

Jones's portrayal of life in Lwandle in the late 1980s — depicting a continuous 'assault' and state of 'victimhood' — is faithfully reproduced on the walls of the

Lwandle Museum. Much like the chapter openings in his book, the photographs are placed alongside quotations from Jones's interviews with children or descriptive extracts from his text. As a montage on a single board rather than interspersed in the pages of the book, the effect is enhanced. The quotations from the children tell of terrible sanitation, smoke-filled environments, rubbish on the streets, endemic diseases and a total lack of privacy. The accompanying photographs depict crowded living conditions, children playing in streets filled with piles of garbage and stagnant water, and life confined to a single bed in a hostel. This is an overwhelming depiction of Lwandle where, as one displayed quotation from Jones's (1990) Master's dissertation asserts, 'even the dogs … are thin' and, as the images portray, it was a life devoid of parks, playgrounds, trees and grass.[7]

Accentuating this portrayal of victimhood, the museum moves from the interior to the compressed space of the 'bedhold' by making use of a pair of iconic images of hostel life that are not of Lwandle. The one is by photographer Roger Meintjes and appears on the front cover and the frontispiece of *A Bed Called Home* by Mamphela Ramphele (1993). It isolates the bed into a frame that reinforces a diminished notion of living space. Zooming in, the image is one of cramped conditions showing the lives of families and couples reduced to a single bed in the stacked double bunk. The other image is by photographer Leon Levson but is credited in the museum only as being sourced from the UWC-Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Archives. Although the image is one of cleanliness, neatness and order in the hostels, it is circulated widely in publications and museums as a depiction of harsh and crowded conditions in mining compounds on the Witwatersrand (Minkley & Rassool, 2005: 189). In the foreground, a single figure sits on a stool, eating from a bowl on top of a centralised coal-burning stove. Behind him is a long line of precast concrete, double-bunk, shelf-like, dormitory beds, with some fellow hostel residents looking down from them at the scene (and perhaps at the photographer) below. Both these photographs, much reproduced, place Lwandle in a typology of hostel conditions in Cape Town and nationally. Meintjes's arresting image of life in Khikhi, the Gugulethu hostels, is enlarged to A3 size and placed on the wall in a panel entitled 'A bedhold in Cape Town'. It is pointed to frequently in the tour narrative and reproduced, unacknowledged, in the museum's publication with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), *Community on the Move* (2008: 99) where it is captioned: 'One of the photographs exhibited in the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum'. Originally published as illustrative of conditions in the hostels of Cape Town in a publication in which Lwandle hardly featured, it has come to perform the work of depicting life in Lwandle in the 1980s. The mine compound image provides a genealogy of type that enables the museum to locate itself within a sequential past in a panel dealing with a generalised history of hostels and compounds. These reproduced and overstated scenes

place Lwandle within a national visual history from the scale and the system of the compound to the individual subjugated body in the bedhold.

But while these images assert the museum's claim to the national narrative by affiliation, they also serve to fill in the gaps in the limited visual history of Lwandle. Inserted into the exhibitionary frame alongside a range of other images, these photographs provide evidentiary histories in the panels and on the walls in the Old Community Hall. Acting like documents, these accredited photographs somehow provide glimpses of 'proof' from archives and research. In positioning the story of Lwandle within a broader national narrative of hostels and migrant labour, the museum positions itself beyond the space of the local settlement and beyond the marginality of its compound presence. Countering images of a site as being merely a location of planning and development, the museum determinedly suggests that a place such as Lwandle has a history.

A specific space in the museum is allocated to the series of images entitled *The Transported of KwaNdebele,* donated by the photographer David Goldblatt. Each photograph is purpose-printed for exhibition, mostly in a landscape format, block-mounted and arranged sequentially. They are hung individually on the gallery-like space of the white walls (rather than as part of a larger narrative panel) surrounding the stage of the Old Community Hall. Each is captioned as per the instructions of the documentary photographer: '4:00 am, Marabastad–Waterval bus'; '2:30 am, bus driver collects tickets from first passengers of the day'; '2:45 am, first bus of the day pulls in at Mathysloop. Bus will reach Marabastad terminus at 5:15 am'; and '2:30 am, three hours still to go, Wolwekraal–Marabastad bus'. Originally part of a photographic contribution by Goldblatt to the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in 1984, these images are presented as evidence, documents of the poverty and repression under apartheid, which the commission set out to expose (Badsha, 1986: xv–xvi). Over 20 years later (and having being published and exhibited extensively elsewhere), they appear to counter the 'didactic certainty' (Edwards, 2001: 83, 85) of the narrative panels in the Lwandle Museum, where photographs appear in an illustrative, largely realist and contextual mode. The KwaNdebele photographs depicting the daily bus journey of workers to the terminus in Marabastad, Pretoria, are displayed as works of art by an internationally acclaimed photographer. At the same time, they come to stand for another narrative of migrancy, analogically insisting upon the museum's raison d'être as the repository and memory of migrant labour.

These sets of photographs from newspaper stories, the Urban Foundation's report on housing, Sean Jones's book on childhood, the cover photograph for *A Bed Called Home* and David Goldblatt's series on the road to and from KwaNdebele were all gathered and used to illustrate life in Lwandle and the lives of migrant labourers. Debated for their evidentiary use, they were activated, mobilised and reproduced to become part of what was called the

Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum. As the didactics of display, the images evoked experience, visualised labour history and created an affect of the past, reproducing 'the primitive and exploitative conditions' (Martinson & Leger, 1992: 6) of hostel life as signifiers that undergirded apartheid.[8]

Curation, creators and commissions

Instead of being obliterated in the late 1980s, Lwandle became a site for experimentation and the implementation of new models of urban housing in post-apartheid South Africa, reimaged as an illustration of where reconstruction and development 'projects [were], alive, well, [and] working'. The start of the Community Based Public Works Programme in Lwandle in 1995 was associated by the local press with 'memories of Limestone quarries on Robben Island'. A photograph accompanying the story, in the business and property section of the *District Mail*, showed the Minister of Public Works, Jeff Radebe, swinging a pick. By 'symbolically … digging the first trench' a photographic future was being produced that associated Lwandle with emancipation from a past of incarceration (Staff reporter, *District Mail*, 10 November 1995: 1–2).[9]

The museum, which opened unofficially as a direct consequence of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), became the primary vehicle for revisioning Lwandle and creating a photographic frenzy: Mgijima and Plummer commissioned the street photographs to launch the museum; a series of photographic workshops were held in greater Lwandle; there were regular student visits; tourists frequented the museum and took home snapshots; specialist visitors turned their lenses on details of the settlement; and the museum team documented the on-site changes and rehabilitation process during the Hostel 33 project. The museum staff and board members were enthusiastic documenters of events and photographs were commissioned for specific, themed exhibitions (Figure 4.6). In the production of these images, across a range of technologies, certain tropes began to emerge. Some were about activities on the street, while others showed interior lives. Many showed cultural activities and events, but there were also depictions of daily life, commercial activity and poverty. In some way the multiplicity of images, enhanced by digital photography, repeated and reproduced the tropes of condition set up in the late 1980s. At times the photographs challenged conventions, were inventive, and created a new and different Lwandle. Among the images were some that were startling and destabilising, 'incongruous images' (Hirsch & Spitzer, 2009) that contested visions of documenting poverty and development.

The first time the curators put photographs on exhibition in 1998, they sought to establish the concept of museum and audience in the space of the Old Community Hall. The founding committee's decision to use studio photographers from Somerset West — who voluntarily donated their images of street scenes — sought to impart a sense of professionalism that would, in turn,

Figure 4.6: A week before the museum's 10th birthday on 22 April 2010, academic and photographer Svea Josephy photographed the interiors of hostel 33 in detail as part of the museum's on-going documentation process. Equipped with studio lights, tripods, cables and other high-spec photographic equipment, Josephy was able to capture a series of photographs that reveal the interiors of the hostel in detail. Hours were spent in this process, carefully working in the cramped conditions. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray.*

enable the popularisation of the concept of the museum both within Lwandle and beyond for visiting tourists. Responses to the intended popularisation of the new museum through the photographs were mixed. Children enjoyed seeing themselves and their friends on the walls, but others were suspicious that the museum was profiting from their personal portraits. And the photographs of seemingly arbitrary township scenes were of little attraction to tourists (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 802).

In their display on the stippled plaster walls, the photographs, some postcard size and others blown up to A4, appeared provisional and awkwardly arranged. Affixed with reusable putty, the mostly colour images, professionally processed by the studios in the towns nearby, hugged the walls unevenly. Some, embossed with the logo of Nani Studios in Somerset West, were mounted on photographic card, while the museum mounted others on lightweight, white and colour surrounds. Most of the images were hung on the two interior longitudinal walls of the hall above the defined dado line, the professionally mounted ones on one wall and those on lightweight card on the wall opposite. Set at varying heights, the photographs from Nani Studios, containing both individual images and some vertical triptych-style assemblies, were ordered in a linear sequence, although there was no systematic progression. The assemblages created by the

museum from the other photographers were grouped on different colour card. All the photographs of *Raising the Curtain*, which papered the walls of the Old Community Hall as it was being made into 'a semi-permanent museum space' (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 802), were dwarfed by the cavernous interior, which contained little more than a couple of tables with chairs.

The photographs in the exhibition did the performative work of gesturing towards a museum emerging from behind the metaphoric curtain — at once a theatrical image and a reference to the hostel interior. The content of that performance, as indicated in the subtitle of the exhibition, claimed to be *Images of Hostel Life*. But in looking back at the images on display from a record of Leslie Witz's first visit to the museum in July 1999, most of the photographs appear to be of people gathered on the streets, often posing joyously in groups or as couples for the camera. Others were of building work nearing completion. Almost 10 years prior to this, Berman and Jones had documented the conditions of overcrowding, lack of hygiene and regimentation in Lwandle. The photographs from the late 1990s were taken when the process of hostel conversion to homes was well underway and were primarily not about hostel life. Instead Lwandle was under construction and the photographs were no longer of Lwandle as a compound. *Raising the Curtain: Images of Hostel Life* contained possibilities for the future, imaging Lwandle into a township and the museum labelling itself the Centre for Memory and Hope.

Six years after *Raising the Curtain*, a permanent exhibition was installed at the museum. Photographs were again central. In *Stories of Home*, images of the lives of individuals in Lwandle were selected and enlarged to create a series of portraits that were set alongside extracts from interviews to create biographies. The series of interviews, which had been conducted as part of a project funded by the South African Heritage Resources Agency, appeared bitty, incoherent and slight. As pointed out earlier, 'much' had to be made 'out of a little' (Thorne 2008: 155). A large part of the exhibition came to be about 'exhibiting the interview'. These edited extracts, with a focus on 'home', were placed alongside 'big and very loud' photographs of the interviewees. The interviewers were instructed by the designer of the exhibition to return to the interviewees with a photographer and to take full-body, high-resolution images in home settings. This would enable large reproductions for display, situated in the theme of the exhibition, and give the appearance of speaking through the self of the full body rather than through the head and shoulders image so often used for purposes of identification.

Silva Mkhwambi's portraits of Nontuthuzelo Makahabane, Minenkulu Molo, Nolindile Molo and Ephraim Nyongwana were placed into an aluminium frame structure in the centre of the hall, rather than on the periphery. With text and photograph placed alongside each other as an image, portraiture and biography were coupled as the rendition of life (Rassool, 2004). Through the exaggeration

of scale, singular moments, selected portrayals and particular perspectives peopled Lwandle and the museum. More than an illustration of township life, portraiture as biography situated the museum's collection of individual lives as being representative of personal experience of the history of Lwandle.

One set of photographs, specially selected for the exhibition, did not emerge from Jos Thorne's direct instructions to the museum's interviewers. These were photographer Roger van Wyk's images depicting Lwandle resident, Cynthia Galada and her family, which were originally commissioned for the *Familieverhalen uit Zuid-Afrika: Een Groepsportret* exhibition (translated literally as 'Family Stories from South Africa: A Group Portrait' but in the English title of the exhibition, *Group Portrait South Africa: Nine Family Histories*), at the Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (KIT) or Tropenmuseum (Museum of the Royal Tropical Institute) in Amsterdam in 2002/03. There were very few artefacts from the Galada family available for exhibition, so Roger van Wyk, as leader of the research team, decided to accompany Cynthia Galada and Bongani Mgijima on a journey to the Eastern Cape (Mgijima & Cornell, 2003). Van Wyk's photographs from this journey formed a large component of the 6 x 9 metre space allocated to the Galada family unit in the floor plan of the exhibition at the Tropenmuseum (Witz & Rassool, 2007). *Familieverhalen uit Zuid-Afrika* moved from Amsterdam to the Africa Window of the Northern Flagship Museums in Pretoria in 2004. When it was finally dismantled the following year, it was boxed and freighted to Cynthia Galada care of the Lwandle Museum. A selection of Van Wyk's photographs was placed in *Stories of Home* to depict Cynthia Galada's life as a journey between Lwandle and the Eastern Cape. No longer part of *Familieverhalen*, Roger van Wyk's visual narrative of Cynthia Galada for the Tropenmuseum became part of the group portrait of Lwandle.

It was not only the photographs from the Galada component of the Dutch home of the exhibition that found their way into display at the Old Community Hall. In the crates that arrived at the museum there were a number of accessories also available to the curatorial team. These included a variety of artefacts, many associated with an ethnic Xhosa identity such as an *isishweshwe* outfit, a traditional pipe, a decorated knife sheath, an animal skin and beadwork. In the Netherlands these 'allowed for stories of rural cultural expression and associated artefacts to be depicted in part as Xhosa ethnicity' (Witz & Rassool, 2007: 79). In Lwandle, where the museum consistently works against the pressure to depict an essentialised ethnic aesthetic, these artefacts remained in their crates in the museum's storeroom.

The curators of *Stories of Home* commissioned photographs to compensate for the lack of a potential exhibitionary archive, whereas for *Lwandle Designers*, which opened in 2008, the museum had substantial visual resources at its disposal. These were in the form of a set of fashion photographs commissioned to visually mobilise a set of artefacts that the museum had purposely acquired.

The museum manager, Lunga Smile, had proposed to the museum board the possibility of staging a beauty pageant along the lines of those hosted by the nearby high school. This initiative was part of his efforts to bring the museum closer to the contemporary community in Lwandle, especially the youth. While the board was supportive of his efforts to popularise the museum, the pageant was considered to be inappropriate because it bore no relation to other themes of the museum or its collection. Instead, Smile was encouraged to pursue his interest in pageantry through research and the acquisition of garments created by local dressmakers and tailors. There are many of these in Lwandle, who work in individual ways to produce outfits for special occasions such as weddings and matric dances, daily wear and the tourist market. Smile identified and purchased many examples of these creations for the museum, growing the collection in the process. But rather than merely storing and cataloguing the garments as acquisitions, the museum staff and several board members decided that it would be better to assemble them as items of high fashion. Dressing up and photographing the collection would deliberately reposition these items as fashion and their makers as designers.

Svea Josephy, based at UCT's Michaelis School of Fine Art, whose photographic work has been concerned with relooking at how urban spaces and architecture are conceptualised, named and formed across the globe,[10] was asked by the museum to choreograph the collection. Josephy took a series of photographs of museum staff and friends dressed up in the garments and posed, intentionally as a fashion shoot, in outdoor settings at a number of recognisable sites in and around the museum (the water tower, a mural depicting Steve Biko and the shipping container adjacent to the Old Community Hall), using a fill-in flash, shortened focal length and saturated colour — what Josephy called 'studio photography on the street'. This resulted in striking images in which Lwandle was not only the location for the photographs but was imaged as a centre of glossy fashion and high design (Figure 4.7).

Making Lwandle into a fashion location and the models and garments as gorgeous, this exhibition proclaimed that Lwandle designers were 'much more than clothing makers'. With Josephy's photographs the idea of the exhibition was developed. Celebrated for their aesthetic quality, several of her photographs were enlarged and layered, in relief, onto the charcoal backing boards of the exhibition, the dark background exaggerating their colour. These photographs were interspersed with text panels containing extracts of transcribed interviews by Lunga Smile and Leslie Witz with four designers in Lwandle: Dumisani Molo (aka Dumza), Nolusindiso Gwantshu, Nolindile Molo and Petronella Chamunoro. These panels of white text were overlaid on the charcoal background to simulate a dressmaker's pattern. Smaller photographs accompanied these texts. Some were from the fashion shoot and others depicted the designers at work. In the latter, taken by Lunga Smile as he procured the garments as artefacts and

went about conducting the interviews, the designers were posed in their working environments, always with sewing machines signifying the creative space.

Stepped back from the walls of the exhibition were three wire mannequins produced by StreetWires, dressed in a range of the artefact-outfits represented in the photographs. Functioning as both props for the collection and a foil for the photographs on the wall, these wire mannequins were the first sustained attempt by the museum to move beyond the two-dimensional, panel-type display that

Figure 4.7: On location in Lwandle, 22 June 2007, fashion shoot for *Lwandle Designers*. (Above left) Bongani Gqomo in Dumza Wear designed by Dumisani Molo; (above right) Lungiswa Teka and Zukiswa Madolo wearing matric dance ball gowns designed by Nolusindiso Gwantshu. (Left) Sindile Mazinyo sporting a tunic designed by Nolindile Molo. *Photographs: Svea Josephy.*

characterised its early exhibitionary initiatives. An old Singer sewing machine donated by Colleen Thorne, the mother of the exhibition's designer, and placed in a glass cabinet in a corner of the exhibition, took the object display further. It asserted not merely a recent creation as the clothes on display had done, but a past of production that could be read through the artefact — it was an older version of the machines depicted in the photographs of the clothing workshops of Lwandle. By bringing together fashion and in situ photographs, artefacts old and new, and interviews designed as text, the exhibition asserted that the garment workers of Lwandle, 'through using their talent and design flare', had 'variously created, interpreted, mimicked and reinvented styles and traditions'. They were, in effect, to be seen as 'makers of fashion'.[11]

It was appropriate that the exhibition *Lwandle Designers* opened with a fashion show performed by the Rise 'n Shine Dance Academy. This group had been using the museum as a venue for their practices during the year and they used dance routines to show off the clothing. Choreographed with the assistance of Jade Gibson, a postdoctoral fellow at UWC, and opened by Mxolisi Dlamuka, Deputy Director, Museum Services, Western Cape Provincial Government, the show, far from being a beauty pageant, was a celebration of the creativity of the clothing designers and of the dancers from Lwandle (Figure 4.8). The performances on the stage of the Old Community Hall resonated with the visual displays on the walls, in the cabinet and on the mannequins, declaring an intention of museumness.

Although the initial and consistent movement in revisioning the museum was through exhibition, this was not the only driving force for reproducing Lwandle through photographs. Various initiatives, co-hosted by the museum, sought to impart photographic skills to staff members and interested participants, some of whom were attached to local art groups in Lwandle. One of the first of these was conducted through the IJR. It was intended to foster a sense of commonality and cohesion among youth from Lwandle, Langa and Bonteheuwel, Grassy Park, Pinelands and Retreat through a joint project that involved researching migrancy and working on ways to depict these findings through images. The project began in April 2006 with an oral history workshop held at the museum, after which the young people conducted interviews with the elderly in Lwandle. Several training sessions were held, which included screen painting, drawing techniques, photography and photographic analysis. In the last, the aim was to stitch together photographic narratives from images acquired by using 'candid photography ... with a disposable camera'. Under the auspices of Faizel Brooks, participants were instructed on how to keep a steady hand when photographing and to think carefully about composition and detail. Importantly, the photographs had to be related to narratives, so participants not only had to familiarise themselves with existing stories and accompanying photographs, but they also had to imaginatively create their own accounts.

Figure 4.8: Fashion-maker, Nolindile Molo (centre) with models on the catwalk at the *Lwandle Designers* opening fashion show, 16 December 2009. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray.*

Through this technique it was envisaged that 'new photographs' would emerge that would 'develop the story further' (IJR & Lwandle Museum, 2008: 78).

Two sets of photographs were published in *A Community on the Move*, a co-publication between the IJR and the museum. Intended as a research guide, the photographs were accompanied by two narratives in different forms. Making use of somewhat limited resources, in the one case the text provided the backdrop for the photographs, while in the other the photographs were the accessories for the life stories told through text. But the extent of the newness being ascribed to the images produced through 'candid photography' was limited by their reproduction in the publication. The first set of images by Mzvukile Eric Silolo, a participant in the workshop who was employed by the Fuji Image Centre in Tokai, had nothing directly to do with Lwandle. In the text accompanying his photographs, he related a personal narrative of his childhood and schooling near Cofimvaba in the Eastern Cape, his move to Cape Town where he completed his high school education and found employment, and his subsequent search for his parents back in the Eastern Cape. As reproduced in the book, his 'photographic narrative' using rural landscape images serves the purpose of illustrating the story of his urban experience: 'Sunrise in Gqwarhu', 'Getting water from the river', 'Looking after the family livestock', 'The fields', and 'Two hours walk to my mother's home' (IJR & Lwandle Museum, 2008: 79–84).

The second set, entitled 'When tragedy strikes: The story of migrant worker Kholiswa Gcani', takes its text from a life-story interview conducted by Helen Malgas. It narrates a time under apartheid and focuses on Kholiswa Gcani's husband, a migrant worker who had lived in Lwandle since 1968. In this set, unaccredited images of street scenes in Lwandle in 2005, of the 'shacks' and the

hostels converted to homes are used to illustrate day-to-day struggles under apartheid (IJR & Lwandle Museum, 2008: 84–94).

The two photo-stories, compiled in different ways by the author-photographer and the illustrator-narrator, are located in the space in the book devoted to 'developing photographic narratives' even though their connections to the stories are tenuous. Set alongside each other, they reinforce the photograph as a rubric of the rural and the urban in the common narration of circular migration, two poles in the tropes of township and homeland, modernity and tradition.

The images and the processes in *A Community on the Move* reproduced many of the conventions of popular documentary photography as being illustrative of time and place, potentially allowing for their easy insertion, circulation and repetition in the life of the museum. Yet, the photographs that emerged from the project were often generic, frequently unaccredited, erroneously repeated, incorrectly captioned and, at times, out of focus. Even further distorted renditions were graphically assembled onto the promotional banners that were produced for a story-telling imbizo. The layout of the banners was poor, the text and photographs were stretched and the lack of contrast with the black background made the images difficult to read. Nonetheless, these pop-up scrolls remained in place in the museum as temporary screens to route visitors through the space of the Old Community Hall. The provisional became semi-permanent, a placeholder for *A Community on the Move*.

The most visible artefact of the project was the set of drawings and paintings by participants in the art workshops conducted by Garth Erasmus, a South African artist and teacher. Transcripts of interviews were intended to be the basis of these activities and participants were required to produce their visual response to these stories. In what was envisaged as a 'creative process', the 'driving idea was that the stories should be expressed through a variety of art media'. The artists were to be 'enabled to understand the stories and think through them not as objective outsiders, but as respectful participants'. In this way 20 paintings were produced, which were hung in the museum under the title *Inginqgi eya Phambili* (*A Community on the Move*), 'as a permanent tribute to the workers' (IJR Lwandle Museum, 2008: 4). The artwork that emerged was not a visual interpretation of the stories told. Instead, in many instances the artists merely reproduced the images in the photographs hanging on the walls and frames of the museum. The depiction and representation of the narratives were already given in the photographs, and the drawings and paintings involved their creative rerenderings. The exhibition of artists' work used *Stories of Home* as still life.

A Community on the Move consistently worked with and mobilised images in the museum to produce visual representations of Lwandle. Iliso Labantu (The Eye of the People), in contrast, organised a 'flash photograph' weekend, hosted by the museum, which was more about moving through Lwandle in order to generate a set of images as documents to 'daily life' (Iliso Labantu, 2010a).

According to David Goldblatt, who is quoted on the organisation's website, Iliso Labantu (2010) had the potential to make a 'meaningful contribution' to 'understanding of each others' lives in a post-apartheid present'. A team of 'professional photographers and photographic teachers' turned the museum into a laboratory in order to produce a moment in contemporary Lwandle, rather than create images of a history. In this instance, photography was conceptualised as a skilled pursuit and a group of local enthusiasts were trained to develop an educated eye, use single-lens reflex cameras, edit digital images and print photographs. The objectives were to 'document lives and communities' and, through the training, start the process of making 'sustainable careers' for the local participants as photographers (Iliso Labantu, 2010). The exhibitionary context was provided the following weekend when the images were displayed on a fence surrounding the museum. Large crowds gathered to look for themselves in the images, and to identify and comment on the photographs. In a move that sought to conflate empowerment with authenticity, the eyes of the people were intended to be indistinguishable from the eyes of the photographers who were named on the website in a portfolio of images developed at the '9th Flash photo weekend' (Iliso Labantu, 2010a).

One of those photographers was Lundi Mama, the museum's education officer. He and the museum manager, Lunga Smile, had become major photographers of Lwandle. Almost always with camera in hand, they documented museum activities and events across greater Lwandle. Smile had been a student of Visual History at UWC, a course coordinated and run by historian Patricia Hayes, and some of the classes took place in the museum. Here Smile had acquired basic skills from leading documentary photographer and a former member of the Afrapix collective, Eric Miller (Figure 4.9). For his project on this course, Smile had drawn inspiration from Goldblatt's *The Transported of KwaNdebele* and produced a series of photographs of the train journeys that residents of Lwandle took to work in the early morning. In a bold move that anticipated the power of the photographic record, he had taken the initiative to photograph the xenophobic violence and looting of shops in Lwandle in 2008, which is discussed at the end of this chapter. An exhibition, *Lwandle Through Lunga's Lenz*, highlighted his passion for local concerns and included striking images of a major fire that had swept through this informal housing settlement.

Lundi Mama's images were fewer, more personalised and intimate. Three of his photographs are on the Iliso Labantu portfolio of images from the 'flash weekend' in Lwandle. One shows the construction of a wood-and-iron structure, a second is an almost studio-like portrait of a mother and child, and the third is of a man sitting alone on a bed surrounded by what appear to be his meagre possessions. The bare-chested elderly man is in a sparse, newly built room with his heavy-duty yellow raincoat hanging suspended from a nail in the background. He sits with a bandaged, supposedly injured foot crossed and

resting on his other foot and his face has an almost whimsical expression. This image is remarkable and unique.

We know nothing about the man and the location of the photograph but it is far from the expected conventions of Lwandle photographs that we have come to know over the years, dominated as they are by images of overcrowding, unsanitary conditions or street scenes. The image is doubly striking because it invokes a genre of photographs like those published by David Goldblatt in *On the Mines* (1973) and in *Some Afrikaners Photographed* (1975) in which individuals or small groups of subjects are depicted in work, living and cultural spaces. Mama makes use of the genre to create an image of exceptional quality, both conceptually and technically, and his understanding of composition, light and the framing of the photograph give it an enigmatic aura. Who is this person? Where does he live? Why is he there? How did he come to be photographed? Instead of illustrating the answers, Mama's photograph makes us ask more and more questions. It is a photograph that has 'transgressive potential' (Edwards, 2001: 206). It is not on display in the museum.

While these photographs are singular and aesthetically astute, the far more pervasive and mass-produced images of Lwandle are those enabled by the proliferation of the digital camera and the museum as the conduit and director of image-making. From 1998, as the museum guides took visitors through its

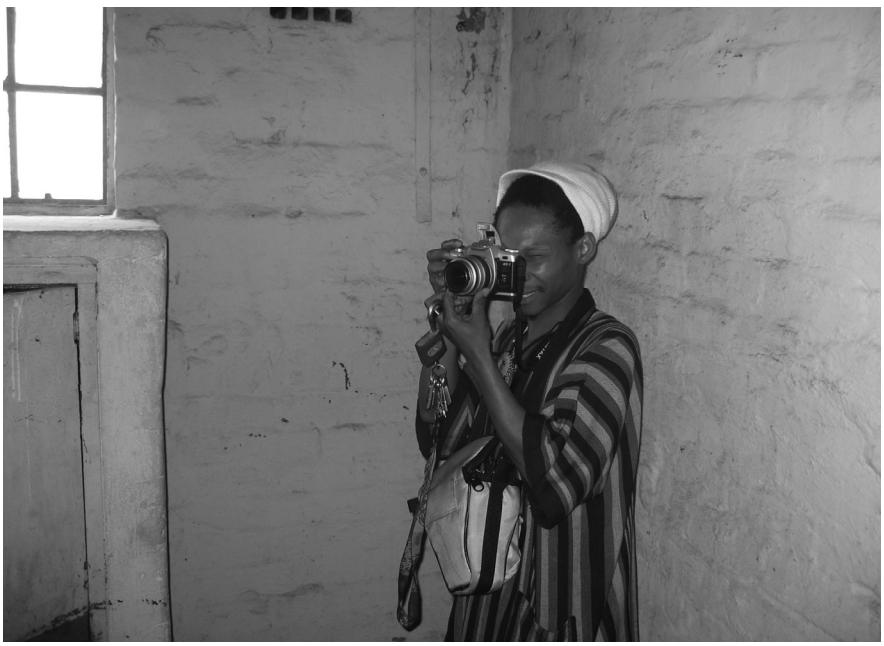

Figure 4.9: Lunga Smile, the museum curator, focuses his lens on visitors to hostel 33, 21 September 2007. *Photo: Leslie Witz.*

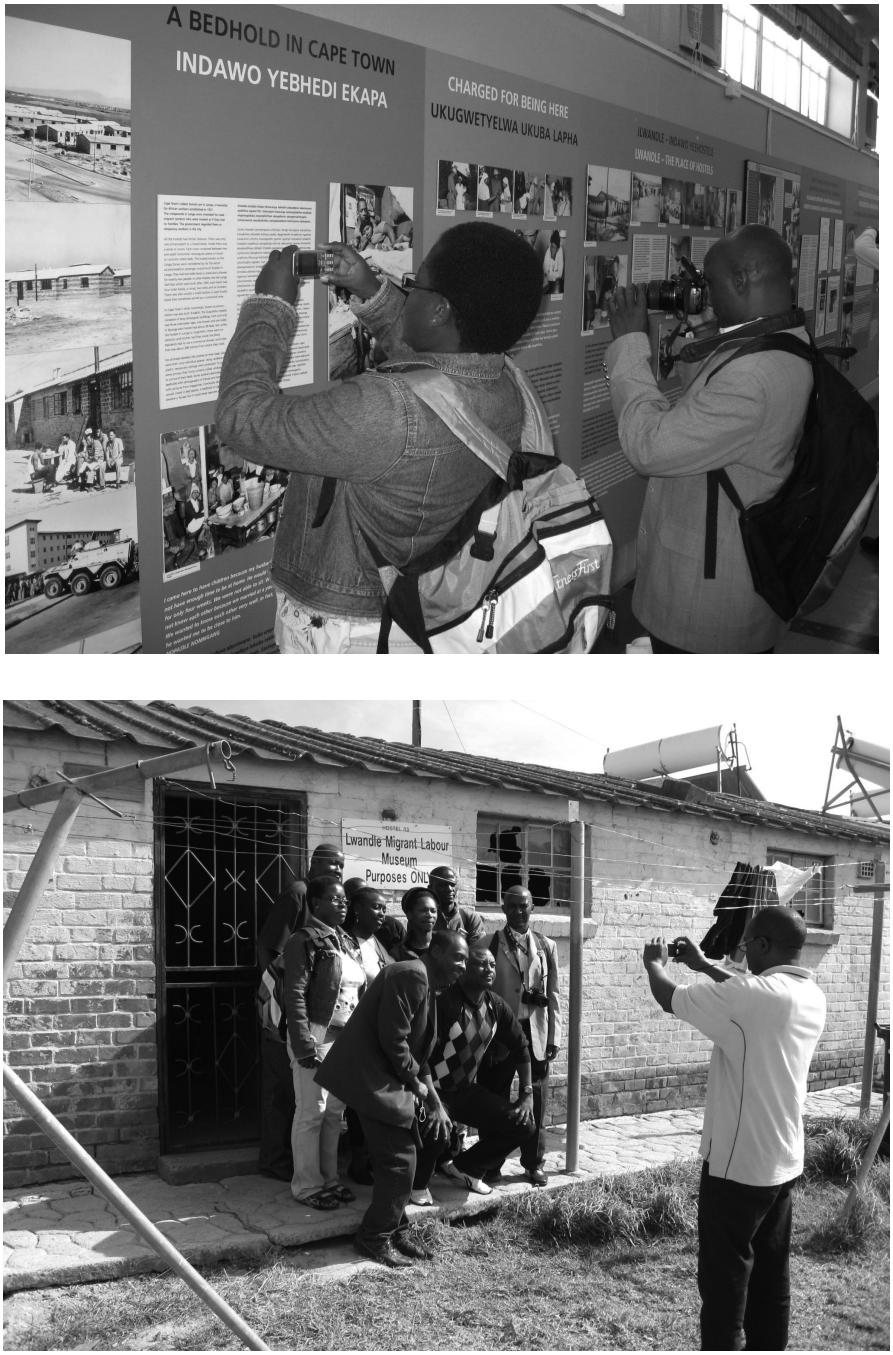

Figure 4.10: Research fellows at UWC's Centre for Humanities Research and students of the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies photograph Lwandle for personal memories, 16 April 2010. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

display spaces and the streets, and digital technology moved from a camera with a disc-drive to the mobile phone, the photographs on exhibition provided cues to locate and reproduce imprints of Lwandle. The routes traversed and the sites selected provided photographic opportunities on a tour of a compound's past and a township's present. The itinerary connecting sites to sights reiterated Lwandle as the place to discover conditions of apartheid and after, where the dark, cramped interior of the rehabilitated hostel provided the setting for the former and the street, the backdrop for the imaging of contemporary daily township life. Overwhelmingly through Hostel 33, Lwandle was reproduced again and again as the site of apartheid authenticity and its streets as image and evidence of the potential for post-apartheid development and liberation.

Collection

Through the museum Lwandle had become intensely visualised. The results were multiple photographic archives and we are not aware of all of these (Figure 4.10). Some of those with which we are acquainted resulted from art, video and photographic workshops held at the museum and these became part of various exhibitions.[12]

The museum itself has a vast collection of photographs taken by visitors, staff and board members. Although in some cases these are accessioned, the provenance of many of the photographs and their subjects are unknown. Various attempts have been made to catalogue this collection but the extent of the task has meant that these have been ad hoc, and photographs have simply been labelled and stored in envelopes, or digital images have been downloaded into random files. We, as board members, have our own archive dating back to 1999 when Leslie Witz first visited Lwandle. Many photographs taken at events by museum staff have been posted on the museum's Facebook page, 'We Love Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum'.

The process of rehabilitating Hostel 33 brought together many experts in the fields of architecture, engineering and heritage. They all documented the site down to the minutest detail as they offered advice on how to reconstruct a past through the hostel. Jakupa Architects and Urban Designers archived and displayed some of their images on their website as an indication of their 'completed work', while Noëleen Murray's weblog on the restoration process presented a collection of these photographs as a means to illustrate debates over the methodologies being pursued (Jakupa, 2013; Murray, 2010). It would not be an exaggeration to claim that Hostel 33 has become the most photographed hostel in South Africa. Lwandle, and Hostel 33 in particular, became eminently reproducible, with all the attendant risks that the 'archaeology of the everyday' in the photographic image that was meant to uncover the past, may, indeed, work towards commodifying it, constructing a history of victimhood and turning residents of Lwandle into subjects of development (Cohen, 2001: 301–302).

When the museum opened its doors in 1998 there was hardly an archive that could be called upon. By 2010 the number of images and collections of Lwandle was indeterminate as visitors traversed the location and the museum provided a resource for acquisition and accumulation. This would have been unimaginable when Lwandle was set up as a transient camp-like space to be unseen and unremembered. The large number of photographs collected, starting with the documentation around the planned disappearance of *emaHolweni* in the late 1980s, ironically turned Lwandle into a place of a permanent past. Through the museum's project of display, assemblage and direction, Lwandle was visualised as a home to be collectively remembered as an exemplar of apartheid's bedhold in the city.

Yet in visualising Lwandle through an apartheid past, a history was settled by the museum that made it difficult to imagine counter-pasts and narratives. In the transformative story of the Hostels-to-Homes project, which lies at the core of the museum, the very idea of home exposed the limits of transgression. On 24 May 2008, a large colour photograph appeared across the front page of the local newspaper, the *Weekend Argus*, which unsettled the story of apartheid and resistance, reconstruction and development. Below a bold banner headline, 'Looters run riot', there was a photograph depicting a group of men running down a street carrying a fridge. A man and a woman can be seen following this group, also leaving the scene, carrying a mattress. In the background is a larger group, facing away from the camera, who appear to be heading in the

Figure 4.11: The photograph by Leon Lestrade, which appeared in *The Argus* on 24 May 2008, is captioned 'FREE-FOR-ALL: Looters in Lwandle make off with a freezer from a spaza shop after violence erupted in the township near Strand.' (*Peters et al., 24 May 2008.*)

opposite direction to those with the fridge and mattress, possibly towards the source of these items. The expressions on the few faces that are shown are a mixture of exuberance and trepidation. Below the photograph is a subheading in bold, capital, red lettering, fading to black: 'TERROR on the streets'. This photograph and headline accompanied reports from the previous day's events in the Western Cape when foreign nationals were attacked and their belongings looted by members of certain communities. Lwandle was one of the centres of these attacks and, in the report, mention is made of how 'during a tense moment in Lwandle, two looters, one armed with a rock and another with a knife, turned on two *Weekend Argus* photographers' (Peters et al., 24 May 2008) (Figure 4.11).

These assaults on people envisaged as 'outsiders' had major implications for the museum's vision because almost all of the former Lwandle community members were once regarded as 'foreigners' under the system of apartheid. Moreover, a sign writer and printer, who had produced the museum's signage, installed exhibitions and created T-shirts and banners for a range of events, was attacked in this time and injured. The museum's administrator had to take refuge with her child in a home in Stellenbosch, while the curator decided that his responsibility was to document what was happening and he photographed some of the incidents that took place.[13] The chair of the museum board, together with the chair of the District Six Museum Board of Trustees, in an attempt to create associations with a narrative of migrant labour and removals under apartheid, issued a joint statement 'unreservedly' condemning the 'spate of indiscriminate violence against members of our communities' (Soudien & Witz, 29 May 2008).

Although the violence subsided in the weeks that followed and the shopkeeper from Somalia, whose shop was opposite the museum, was able to reopen for business, tensions remained high and feelings of antagonism towards people labelled as 'foreigners' re-emerged in Lwandle. An example of this was evident in the differences of opinion expressed in difficult discussions around the events at the museum's board meetings. Some drew on Lwandle's past in the system of migrant labour and a history of African liberation struggle to condemn the attacks and argued against labelling and identifying some residents of Lwandle as outsiders. Other members of the board resorted to the term 'foreigners', and deemed them responsible for nearly all of society's ills: unemployment, the lack of housing, insufficient business opportunities, limited marriage prospects and even the dropping standard of education in the local high school. The events of May 2008, the images in the press and these expressions of xenophobia, disrupted the cohesive post-apartheid vision of Lwandle's journey from compound to community.

End notes

1 Urban Areas Commissioner, Cape Western Area to Secretary, Divisional Council of Stellenbosch, 21 October 1954.
2 Secretary, Divisional Council of Stellenbosch to C.P.J. van Vuuren, 22 August 1956.
3 The Divisional Council of Stellenbosch: Layout of Lwandle Native Location Near the Strand, Drawing No. 1189c (revised May 1959), Drawn by FHS.
4 Petition and extract of Minutes of Strand Municipality, 7 June 1988.
5 Briefing document for Berman and Penz, Restoration of Hostel 33, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 16 September 2009.
6 Indeed, at the time he handed over the photographs, Berman cautioned that they should not be seen to be a comprehensive documentation of Lwandle as it had been a quick visit to select places (Murray, 2010).
7 Story of Nolandela, 11 August 1989, in Jones (1990: 193): Exhibition panel LMLM, '*Ibhodi yobomi basehostele*'.
8 'Didactic certainty' and 'analogical insistence' are notions derived from Edwards (2001: 185, 183).
9 The Reconstruction and Development Programme, known as 'the RDP', was the ANC's economic programme for a post-apartheid South Africa and used extensively in its 1994 election campaign. According to the ANC, the programme recognised 'the need to break down apartheid geography through land reform, more compact cities, decent public transport, and the development of industries and services that use local resources and/or meet local needs' (African National Congress, 1994: 83).
10 See, for example, *Better Cities, Better Lives* (curated with Noëleen Murray), 1 June to 30 June 2010, South African Pavilion, Shanghai Exposition; Third Worlds: Model Cities with contributions by Noëleen Murray, Carson Smuts, Tessa Dowling and Harry Garuba, 19 February to 19 March 2010, Michaelis Gallery, UCT.
11 *Lwandle Designers*, exhibition text.
12 See, for example, the photographs by Abdulcadir Ahmed Said of art workshops held at the Lwandle Museum which formed part of the 'Exhibition of photographs of the Ernest Mancoba Education Poster Project' at Iziko South African National Gallery Annex from 27 August to 30 September 2012. Art and Ubuntu Trust, 'Lwandle Report: Ernest Mancoba Education Poster Project', no date; (Iziko Museums of South Africa, 23 August 2012).
13 Lwandle Museum: 'Progress report for the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs, Sports and Recreation 2008/09'.

Chapter 5

Retelling
From oral histories to textual pasts

In August 2004 staff of the Lwandle Museum were in the process of doing research for a new exhibition that would take on the aura of being constituted as permanent. Part of the process included seeking out older residents and conducting biographic type interviews with them about coming to Lwandle and their subsequent life stories. One of the people the museum contacted was Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane, who had arrived in the Helderberg region in the 1970s. In the 1990s she became a housing developer in Lwandle. A translated transcript of the interview from the museum's archives contains a brief interchange between Bonke Tyhulu, the museum's senior researcher, and Christine Makhabane over whether she had any artefacts to donate to the collection:

Bonke Tyhulu (B.T.): Mama for today we can stop here. I appreciate your time before the pressure rises.

Christine Makhabane (C.M): It is rising.

B.T.: What things that you used that you could donate at the museum, maybe photographs or old dishes that you used or clothes that you used at work in the kitchens at Somerset West?

C.M: For that matter give me a time to bring these mamas.

B.T.: Come with them.

C.M: Give me time to bring these mamas of Lwandle's struggle, they are not many. As you can see each one talking there and there. They do not know the Lwandle's issues, how it was. All these people that are here are new. I am repeating it, they are new. They arrived when we have cleaned everything shining. No wonder they talk what they like. Even on that we

> do not take too much of it because a person just talked what they liked, we do not take notice of it. Wait my brother till I bring you these mamas and you can listen when talking with them, those who made us to be here.[1]

Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane's notion of Lwandle and its ancestry in the 'mamas ... who made us to be here' coalesced with the stated objectives of the museum and its formation in words, voices and memories. From the outset, Bongani Mgijima (12 June 1998) wanted the envisaged museum in Lwandle to move beyond objects and for the primary modus operandi to be the gathering of stories. 'The memory of Lwandle people is recorded in its buildings, street names and their hearts and minds', he wrote. These memories, he maintained, were the basis of a 'rich variety of stories' that residents of Lwandle told 'about their lives, their experiences and their environment'. He pleaded that 'for history's sake people's testimonies have to be collected and recorded'. This process of gathering and documenting, 'the powerful "museums of the mind"', would, he imagined, become the foundation of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum.

What was crucial for Mgijima at the time, apart from developing a collection, was that the multitude and range of stories available in Lwandle would mean that the museum would be able to create uniqueness and difference. Using the metaphor of storytelling he made claims that the memory of Lwandle was 'collective'. He was implying that there were many and dispersed memories, which were varied, plural and continually challenged (Mgijima, 12 June 1998). In this environment, where history appeared to be available but as yet uncovered, the museum was to become the site where 'township-bred fundis' would, metaphorically, be turned into archaeological excavators, discovering and recording, so as 'to piece together fragments of Lwandle's ignored yet rich public history'. Hostel 33, together with the oral histories, would constitute the remnants of the past and the basis of a museum. According to Oom Raymond Ntako, an elderly Lwandle resident whom Mgijima interviewed as a means to promote the museum project in the local press, these historical foundations would enable 'our children' to 'know where they are coming from' (Mgijima, 26 June 1998).

Mgijima planned that oral history-collecting would be the moving force of the museum and that exhibitions would either be the mechanism to gather more and diverse recollections, or else be the almost natural outcomes of the research. Taking a somewhat minimalist approach to design, he claimed that the lack of texts in his initial display of photographs in *Raising the Curtain* was a deliberate ploy to elicit reminiscences. In an interview with the press a couple of years later, he reflected that 'the idea was that residents of Lwandle would be prompted to narrate stories about their experiences' (Staff reporter, *District Mail*, 30 November 2001). Once Mgijima departed and Vusi Buthelezi assumed the title of 'programme coordinator' at the museum in 2002, an oral history

programme, 'Lifting the Lid off Lives', funded by the South African Heritage Resources Agency, was initiated. Working together with Bonke Tyhulu, the aim was to draw out 'thoughts and experiences' of migrant workers, and women and children in Lwandle in 'an attempt to expose the wounds of the past in order to heal and replace the hardships with hope'. The processes that Mgijima had wanted to initiate were elaborated upon and an exhibition was seen as the product of the research. Readers of the Helderberg's *District Mail* were alerted that, at the end of the year, the programme's 'results', 'findings, statistics and artefacts' would go on display at the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum (Staff reporter, 19 April 2002).

Yet as the museum grew in the following years, it became apparent that it was not so much displays arising out of oral histories that would constitute the museum, but rather the research required for exhibitions would provide the impetus for the growth of the collection. This was an important shift in the museum's methodology as exhibitionary imperatives came to constitute the voices of Lwandle. Once an exhibition theme was identified, museum staff selected interviewees, conducted conversations, then transcribed and translated

Figure 5.1: The museum used the opportunity of the gathering of museum ambassadors during Women's Month, on 18 August 2007, when hostel 33 was formally incorporated into the museum, to record memories of life in the hostels. Lunga Smile and Pumla Skunana-Kamulu, local cultural activist and poet, carried out an interview with Cynthia Dingi. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

these. Parts of the interviews were selected from the transcript, edited and retranslated so as to fit into planned sub-themes, and then they were made exhibitable. Inscribed into the museum's exhibition, these selected, translated, edited and condensed conversations became what William Khanuka, who had arrived in Lwandle in 1981, described in his interview with Bonke Tyhule as reminders of 'how it was then'.[2]

In this chapter we consider how this inversion from exhibition arising out of the results of collection to display as the driving force for collecting oral history, had a bearing on the variety and difference that Mgijima had sought at the outset (Figure 5.1). Much of the work on oral history has dealt with issues of performance, memory, orality and literate forms in the constitution of interviews and their multiple reinscriptions as audio, visual and textual narratives. There is consideration of the specificity of what appears as 'voice' and how genres work with and against each other in the ongoing processes of telling and retelling (Minkley & Rassool, 1998; Hofmeyr, 1993; Tonkin, 1992; Barber, 2007; White, Miescher & Cohen, 2001). All these mediations counter any sense of a readily available, pure, authentic 'voice' that can be recovered and easily slotted in as evidence of experience or as sociological data. In museum contexts, the collection and display of oral histories is always about not merely establishing and reproducing provenance but remaking these already produced voices as objects that are classifiable and exhibitable.

Beyond the pros and cons of the technologies of how to use oral histories in museums — television monitors, sound bells, audio wands, headsets, telephone hand-sets, mobile phones and so on — there is very little written on processes of meaning-making in museum productions of oral histories. Kratz's work (2002: 158) on a set of Okiek photographic portraits approached the subject in relation to the construction of captions for the exhibition. Here she had to think through how captions could be displayed to convey a 'conversational sense' without having access to 'the gestures, intonation, voice quality, timing, and stress' that accompanies speech. In her reflections on creating an exhibition around the Frankton Junction oral history project in New Zealand, Anna Green (2006: 412–413) meditated on the decision to assert representativeness. By this she meant selecting themes and perspectives that were dominant in the interviews for display. This may stereotype certain experiences, yet the decision to go this route, she maintains, was that it enabled a more 'faithful' depiction of the oral testimonies. Layne and Rassool (2001), in their reflections on the curatorial work of the District Six Museum, showed how the museum employed the concept of a 'sound archive' as a means to show both the work of memory-making and the porous boundaries of orality beyond the voice in an interview. Chrischené Julius has carried this analysis further to show how there was a substantial shift in approach to oral history collection and display from the District Six Museum's beginnings in the mid-1990s to when it started to become institutionalised at

the turn of the century. Much like Mgijima's aspirations for Lwandle, she notes how the initial encounters with narratives and memory came through what has, in retrospect, been constituted as the District Six Museum's first exhibition, *Streets*. She argues that the artefacts — largely constituted through a street map on the floor, an arrangement of street signs and a memory cloth — accompanied by minimalist text allowed for the evocation of memory and the emergence of a series of uncoordinated, fragmentary narratives (Julius, 2008: 108, 112). With the setting up of a sound archive and District Six Museum's *Digging Deeper* exhibition in 1997 and 2000, respectively, there was an institutionalisation of oral histories through systematic facilitation, collection and display. It then became a museum which mediated and facilitated 'the process of inscription (and the making of meaning) ... to a broader public' (Julius, 2008: 132). Through this change in approach, she suggests, 'people were *made to speak for themselves* and a District Six history'. In collection and display a multiplicity of voices was encouraged but, she emphasises, these were '*allowed* to come to the fore' and the museum was, in effect, becoming 'the narrator' (Julius, 2008: 116, 132, 138; emphasis in the original). The implications of *Raising the Curtain* for Lwandle was that, after the first act of exhibition, it was the museum that was making 'us to be here'.[3]

Mapping voices

Mgijima's aspirations for the museum to inaugurate a major project of storytelling began when *Do You Have a Map?/Unayo na Imephu?* was installed in 2001. When oral history appeared in the new exhibition, it was almost as if it was an illustration in itself, designed onto the panel in blocks in bite-size pieces, in inverted commas in an italicised font, accompanied by the name of the interviewee, the date of the interview and surrounded by photographs, plans and an extensive explanation of the context in English and isiXhosa. From our recollections of the process, much of the discussion for the exhibition was around the decision to provide the text in two languages to enable accessibility, and the most appropriate wording for such translations. Terms such as 'migrant labour' and 'trade union' were among those debated, especially when a formal translation service provided by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) presented these terms literally so that, for instance, 'trade' and 'union' were translated separately rather than as a single concept. As a result, all the translations were scrutinised and retranslated by two members of the exhibition team, Mbulelo Mrubata and Vusi Buthelezi, so as to provide a sense of meaning in the worlds and words of labour.

The few interviews that made their way into the exhibition were all presented in English and written into a form that appeared to provide a coherent explanation of events for the reader in relation to Lwandle's physical markers. The most extensive extract was from an interview with Captain Zama from the police. His account of the burning of the old beerhall in 1993 was related to

Vusi Buthelezi in an interview conducted in isiXhosa. Referring to a recording of the interview and notes taken, Buthelezi and the project team scripted the following account and included it as a textual accompaniment on the panel '*Ukubumba ngokutsha*' (making new from the broken pieces):

> The two men were held hostage in Room 25. The police support was brought to Lwandle. On 10 April police fired warning shots in the air. The people became wild. Looting started in the beerhall and eventually the beerhall was burnt down. The people associated the beerhall as one of the apartheid government's institutions. In my opinion that is why they burnt it down on that day.

An unprecedented number of people, men and women, were arrested that day mostly not for burning the beerhall, but instead for looting the liquor from the beerhall.

Captain Zama's story appears on the panel with images of the burnt-out beerhall, plans of the original hall, the official government document declaring and licensing the site and a photograph of the new Arts and Crafts Centre built out of the burnt shell. In the text, his voice coheres to become the story of the beerhall, an artefact of the present that enables a story of transformation in Lwandle, from the destruction of the building to an Arts and Crafts Centre as a sign of progress and development.

Visualising voice

The first extensive use of oral histories by the museum in exhibition came several years later when *Stories of Home* was installed. Extracts from the oral histories conducted by museum staff were used to depict an overarching narrative of ambivalence surrounding the concept of home (Figure 5.2).

The stories on display narrated how, for some, Lwandle was viewed as a permanent home where they wanted to be buried.

> Today I see Lwandle as my home. Because at that side there are no jobs even though I am already a pensioner, there are no … there are few opportunities for one to live to make money normally as I do here. I would be buried here

Figure 5.2: Nolindile Molo inspects her story of home on display at the opening of the exhibition on 15 October 2005. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray.*

> because I am known here and I made everything here because even the establishment of this area.[4]

For others, Lwandle was considered as one of two (and sometimes even three) homes.

> My home is at Herschel, the Manxego. Lwandle is the place of work. I have a home in the rural areas. We go home every December. At home you rest there because mostly you do not work unless you work to make your home beautiful. When you want to stop you do. In the rural areas when the neighbour has a feast you say today I cannot work. I will go to the neighbour's feast, you see just social life. There are such things in Lwandle but they are very seldom such feasts here because people of those homes are from here. Even though I stay in Lwandle my home is at Herschel. It is where I stay just like a person who could say his home is in America, like a person saying my home is in Transkei. I am here to work, I have a house here and through that way you create two homes.[5]

But for Christine Makhabane, Lwandle was not a home but merely a place of work.

> My home is there at home, where I was born. I am only staying here. My home is at Ngqamakhwe. I only work here. But my future where I would die is at Ngqamakhwe. I am only staying since it is like at home, but now I have a Ngqamakhwe background where I came from. Where my forefathers' graves are. I am hoping that everything will not just end here. I am hoping I would end where I came from. I cannot end here.[6]

On exhibition in *Stories of Home,* the above text, based on Christine Makhabane's interview, appears below an autobiographical account of her arrival in Lwandle.

> I am Christine Nontuthuzelo Makhabane coming from Ngqamakhwe. I arrived here at Lwandle in 1972. What brought me here at Lwandle is that I wanted to settle, have my own property. Stop residing in white's property. I arrived exactly when Lwandle was resided by males only. Males stayed here. It was a scrappy place when I arrived, the place that was called '*emaholweni*' [place of hostels]. Only males stayed here. If a man invited his wife it was a terrible time, oh it would be difficult because it was not allowed for someone who did not have passbook that exactly stated that you are now here.

This exhibited narrative is a composite drawn from two interviews that Bonke Tyhulu conducted with Christine Makhabane. This last paragraph is from a 2004 interview, when there was an exhibition in mind but its theme was loose and somewhat provisional. What is apparent is that there was another person who accompanied Christine Makhabane to the interview but who is written out of the exhibition and, apart from a brief moment, appears as a silent presence in the transcript.

Bonke Tyhulu (B.T.): Can you please introduce yourselves?
Christine Makhabane (C.M.): I am Christine Nontuthuzelo Makhabane.
B.T.: You can continue, ma.
C.M.: coming from Ngqamakhwe.
B.T.: who is the other mama?
C.M.: is Madlamini Grace Sibali who is from Butterworth.
B.T.: Grace Sibali.
Grace Sibali: Nomzi Sibali.
B.T.: Nomzi, when did you arrive at Lwandle mama Makhabane?
C.M.: here at Lwandle I arrived in 1972.
B.T.: you arrived in 1972.
C.M.: 1972.
B.T.: Coming from Ngqamakhwe.
C.M.: Coming from Ngqamakhwe.
B.T.: What brought you to Lwandle?
C.M.: What brought me here at Lwandle is that I wanted to settle, have my own property. Stop residing in white's property.
B.T.: Are you saying you stayed in white's property at Ngqamakhwe?
C.M.: I stayed in white's property at Somerset West on my arrival.
B.T.: you were a Somerset West resident ...

The second interview took place several months later in April 2005, when the exhibition theme of *Stories of Home* was more concrete and the researcher was soliciting different understandings of the concept of 'home'. In this instance there was also another presence named only as 'Irene' and referred to as 'a family friend' who attended 'church together'. Her only words recorded in the transcript are affirming that Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane arrived in Lwandle in 1971. From very early on in this short interview, Bonke Tyhulu shifts the conversation to the exhibitionary imperative:

Bonke Tyhulu (B.T.): Who found you work?
Christine Makhabane (C.M.): It was my aunt's daughter, she had been here for quite some time.
B.T.: That means you came here with no hope of finding job.
C.M.: I did not; I came here with no hope of finding work and for that matter I came when pass arrests were rife. They would just say you could hide yourselves even up to my house. I would hide you because it takes time to have arrests in coloured areas. Then we would get piece jobs, and sympathetic white employers hid us.
B.T: And you stayed here, which place do you consider as your home or where do you see your home?
C.M.: My home is there at home, where I was born. I am only staying here, at Ngqamakhwe.

B.T: Oh, your home is at Ngqamakhwe.

C.M.: Yes, my home. My home is at Ngqamakhwe. I only work here. But my future where I would die is at Ngqamakhwe; I am not sure whether you can hear me.

B.T: I can hear you.

C.M.: I am only staying since it is like at home, but now I have a Ngqamakhwe background where I came from. Where my forefathers' graves are. I am hoping that everything would not just end here. I am hoping I would end where I came from. I cannot end here. Even when people say my forefathers' graves are bulls playing grounds I run like Nehemiah, I go home to see what it and be told fences have been damaged and I would say boys please bring poles, boys must bring poles to fence in them because even us we would lie there.

B.T: Where was your family by the time you stayed at Loswell?

C.M.: Mine was at home; my family was at home.

B.T: When did your family join you here?

C.M.: It came me when I had been here for some time, when I already got my own place.

These interviews were originally carried out in isiXhosa, but the only transcripts that were available as sources for use in the exhibition were in English. The museum did not have the money to display either audio or audio-visual renditions of the interviews and the only way it could incorporate these was to make them text for display. Yet, as with all oral histories, the conversational tone, the interruptions, the pauses, the repetitions and the on-going interrogative mode made the interchange fragmented and unsuitable for exhibition. A selection of extracts, made by the designer for exhibition purposes, were stitched together through deleting the interviewer, removing the repetition, cleaning up the colloquialisms (while still trying to retain the narrative integrity), and grafting together clauses to produce narrative flow. Oral histories, transcribed into English, scripted into text, were made readable for display as stories of home.

The extracts from the interviews were presented to accompany large photographic prints of individuals to give the appearance of voice. The edited extracts, made coherent using an English script as template, appeared in italics and inverted commas, in English and isiXhosa. The text was positioned below a large photograph of the interviewee, which took up almost two-thirds of each frame. The photographed interviewee, who sometimes faced the camera full on, gave the impression of telling a story without any form of mediation. The name of the interviewer was omitted and each story began with the phrase, 'I am …' before launching on to a succinct biographical narrative of a life that tells of journeys, occupation and home. At other times the interviewee appeared as animated and in conversation with others in the room, although once again the

interviewer was absent. And at still other times the script was made to appear as a conversation between two interviewees: two separate photographs were placed side by side to create an impression of a dialogue that was created in the text (Figure 5.3). The photographs and the lack of acknowledgment of the interviewer enabled a telling from what appeared to be an individuated source that could be identified as the speaker and the bearer of Lwandle's history.

The words ascribed to those who spoke to the interviewers were presented on display in English and isiXhosa. Assuming the museum's publics as literate in isiXhosa and/or English, audiences were constructed around these two poles — of the universal and the mother tongue. While Afrikaans was a possibility and one of the three official home languages in the Western Cape, in Lwandle it tended to be the language of labour relations. Vusi Buthelezi (2005: 77) maintains that through its use of isiXhosa, the museum was pioneering, challenging notions of language superiority and claiming 'an identity as a museum that speaks to the local community, most of whom are more at ease with the Xhosa language'.

Presuming English as the common language in the design team, existing interviews in the museum's collection that had originally been conducted and transcribed in isiXhosa were not made use of in the scripting of the exhibition text for *Stories of Home*. Instead, the English transcript was edited and scripted and, once this was done, selected extracts were translated into isiXhosa — this was done by using scripted text and seeking appropriate words and phrases to

Figure 5.3: Creating a conversation between Nolindile and Minenkulu Molo by juxtaposing two different photographs with an edited transcription of an interview with them by Bonke Tyhulu. This photograph is from the exhibition *Stories of Home*, 14 June 2011. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

make an associated meaning. These translations were carried out by the Ilwimi Centre at UWC, checked by the museum manager, Mbulelo Mrubata, who as a graduate student had done the translations for *Do You Have a Map?* and then sent to the designer, Jos Thorne. She then requested that the passages be shortened so that they would fit onto the exhibition boards. While the English version might have conformed to the requisite number of words, the translated version exceeded the maximum on the design template. Words were excised, the remainder translated, the text remade as multilingual and then typeset alongside the large photographs of the interviewees as the voice of the image, making the oral non-aural (Witz, 2012a).

According to Thorne (2008: 155), the idea was that these interviews on display would not become representative of 'the voice of the people'. Rather, by 'creating a presence of people in a museum', the intention was that they would provide an impetus for others to come forward and tell their stories. This would accord with Mgijima's initial notion of the museum making use of an oral history methodology to become the site of multiple and contradictory histories. The issue is whether the narrative frameworks became set by the museum through its exhibitionary imperatives and practices, so that, in effect, the same series of stories were repeated again and again, the plot remaining largely the same and only the characters changing. In the book produced as a result of the Memory Art and Culture project, which the museum carried out with the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation, the claim is made that oral histories provide for the 'voices of the marginalised to be heard' and enable a comprehension of 'the past and the present through the eyes of ordinary people' (IJR & Lwandle Museum, 2008: 35). Such an assertion resonates with the affirmation of oral histories made by social historians in the 1980s: 'to give another view of history', 'to find out about the lives of ordinary people, whose stories are hardly ever written down', 'to uncover stories ... which had been ignored or suppressed' and to give an opportunity for 'people' to 'tell about how they felt and what they thought' (Witz, 1988: 11, 14, 37). Yet, by and large, the interviews on display were set as Lwandle's past. There were many interviews, although quite frequently it was the same people who were interviewed again and again, and who, with the assistance of the museum's researchers, designer, staff and board members, became Lwandle's 'important people'.

Designing voices

Lwandle Designers/Abavelisi Bengingqi yaseLwandle, which opened in December 2008, once again made extensive use of an oral history methodology for exhibition but was much more reflexive about its representation of voice. This exhibition had not started out as an oral history project. Much like the cultural history museums of the past, the Lwandle Museum was gathering garments rather than stories. Along with the fashion photographs by Svea

Josephy, the evening dresses, denim wear, kitchen aprons and the *isishwheshwe* garments (usually invoked as a marker of Xhosa identity) were intended to highlight the creative abilities and design initiatives of clothing makers living in Lwandle and surrounds. The decision by the exhibition design team was to go out and collect oral histories to build biographical narratives of the clothing makers as designers with portfolios. Most of the questions were directed at eliciting responses around production and consumption: How did you learn to design clothes? How do you make them? Do you draw a pattern? How do you come up with the design? Are there any patterns you follow? What are your inspirations? Who buys your clothes? Where do you sell them? The resulting narratives, framed as responses, were not intended as life histories but rather as a means of providing a description of the individual creative processes behind the production of what was being displayed as fashion.

The choice of interviewees was based on the selection of garments for display. The staff had gone on shopping expeditions to some of the clothing makers in the area, who were known by Lunga Smile, and bought a collection for the museum. Laid out on the stage in the Old Community Hall were piles of assembled garments, including knitwear, machined items and dresses decorated with beadwork and ruffled edges. The stage was awash with red, green and yellow textiles in gingham, denim, tartan and indigo German print. Somewhat playfully, the museum staff, board members and the exhibition designer, Jos Thorne, admired the clothes, then tried them on and earmarked items for the planned exhibition. Sorted into categories according to type, a visually appealing exhibition could be imagined around the collection of matric dance dresses, the *isishwheshwe* ensembles and urban denim wear sporting the signature 'Africa pocket', inspired by an outline of the continent. Individuals were identified in each of these categories as Lwandle designers to be interviewed. The life of the garment was being imagined through the potential rendering and marking of a biographical tale of a designer in the making.

To show the making of a designer, the envisaged texts from the interviews were intended to perform a contextualising role and, hopefully, reveal the differing creative processes of the individuals selected. In four interviews, each approximately an hour long, the designers were asked fairly standard questions around their creative production, individual initiative, and personal tastes, flair and preferences. The team from the museum, comprising Lunga Smile and Leslie Witz who conducted the interviews, focused unwaveringly on gathering material for use in the exhibition as texts. Interviews were conducted in both isiXhosa and English to facilitate exchange. Conversations took place either in the more institutional space of the museum at the Old Community Hall or in the designer's personal work space, as a narrative of becoming was sought. In their interview with Nolindile Molo in the Old Community Hall in January 2008, Lunga Smile and Leslie Witz wanted to find out if she had had any formal training:

Lunga Smile (L.S.): *Uyile esikolweni mhlawumbi uthi uyokufundiswa?*

Nolindile Molo (N.M.): *Zange ndiye esikolweni kodwa ukhona umama wasengapha eGugulethu owakhe weza apha wazositreyina iinyanga ezintathu. Ngoyena mama wasitreyinayo ke umama uMsile.*

L.S: She never went to school for sewing.

Leslie Witz (L.W.): Mhh.

L.S.: But there was like a training she got with mama Msile who was from Gugulethu. They got three months' training.

N.M.: *Sasitreyinelwa apha eMuseum.*

L.S: It was here in the Museum.

L.W: Yes, here in Museum? Good!

N.M.: Yes.

L.S.: *Omnye umbuzo mama torho endifuna nje ndiwuve kuwe kukuba kwakutheni ukuze ube uyagqiba ngoku uthi 'Ndizakuqalisa ishishini ke ngoku'?*

L.S.: The question is why she decided to start a textile business.

N.M.: *Yayingumdla wabantu ukubana umntu azothenga izinto ndabona abantu ukuba banomdla, nam ke ndabe ndikuthanda ukuthunga. Enye into ndinenjongo zokuba andiphangeli sayancedisana akukho mali endlini. Nalo tata usebenzela imali encinci kunzima ebantwaneni, kunzima nokuba bafunde baye esikolweni so ndaqiniseka apha kumathsini ndabona apha umachine ingathi angandinceda kwizinto ezininzi.*

L.S.: The first reason or the mere fact was that the people saw her products loved what she was doing so that [was] why she said she must keep on doing. Because she also loved sewing. And the other reason was that she saw the money that tata was getting paid was not enough for many things. And therefore for looking for the children … then that's why she started a business.

L.W.: Oh ok.

A great deal of the time in the interview with Nolusindiso Gwantshu on 22 January 2008 at her home in Greenfields, Lwandle, was spent discussing how she became a designer and manufacturer of matric dance dresses.

Lunga Smile (L.S.): So with the first wages she bought a sewing machine.

Leslie Witz (L.W.): Can I see the photo?

Nolusindiso Gwantshu (N.G.): Yes.

L.W.: You as well.

L.S.: Now we gonna …

L.W.: Ya, ya, ya.

L.W.: This is the first machine you bought.

L.W.: Where did you get the machine?

N.G.: In Somerset West.
N.G.: It was a second-hand machine.
L.W.: So, you came here in 2001?
N.G.: 2001.
L.W.: And you are working here as a domestic worker?
N.G.: Yes.
L.W.: Yes, but you did not like it?
N.G.: Yes I did not like it because I wanted money to survive.
L.W.: So you work as a domestic for a while …

L.W.: So, on your first month's wages you went and bought this machine?
N.G.: Yes, I got this machine.
L.W.: On hire purchase?
N.G.: Four hundred and fifty.
L.W.: You paid cash?
N.G.: Yes.
N.G: And then after I bought this machine I started doing the alterations, maybe if somebody want to cut the trouser or something is broken I will sew it.
L.W.: And you were still working as a domestic worker?
N.G.: Yes I was working as a domestic worker.
N.G.: And then people started to recognise me. They started to order clothes.
L.S.: What was your first design?
N.G.: I don't have my first design, here this is my second design. This one.
L.W.: What is it?
N.G.: It's a dress and a top.
L.W.: Is this for the matric dance?
N.G: Yes, it's for the matric dance …

N.G: My first customer was Noxolo Mvunga-vunga. She was turning 21, so I made her dress, she chose this one.
L.W.: So because you have experience in design, did you design this yourself, in drawing, on paper, in your head or ...
N.G.: Yes, I designed it myself out of head.
L.W.: But you then did not draw.
N.G.: No I did not draw.
L.W.: Because obviously in the college you learnt to draw.
N.G.: Yes, I learnt. But I didn't draw.

In both instances the interviewers provided substantial prompts and directed questions to the interviewees in order to carry the narrative forward. The material required for exhibition was always in mind. Nolusindiso Gwanthsu, when she was interviewed, also provided Smile and Witz with considerable assistance to further the required conversation. Her photographs of the dresses she made and the equipment she used enabled the interviewers to track her story

through the album that served as her portfolio of design. All the interviews, originating in the garments purchased, produced ample material to develop a story of initiative, enterprise and a process of progress as the selected designers were refashioned to become museum subjects and the crafters of objects.

Voice was again rendered for exhibition in the textual form of edited extracts in isiXhosa and English to accompany photographs of the designers and their work. In this instance though, the interviews had, for the most part, been carried out in both isiXhosa and English depending on the preferences of the interviewee. At the beginning of their interview with Dumisani Molo (aka Dumza) on 22 January 2008, there was a brief and slightly awkward interchange with Lunga Smile and Leslie Witz around language usage. Dumza had somehow expected the interview to be a formal process (perhaps drawing upon notions of a job interview) and that he would be required to answer in English.

Lunga Smile (L.S.): *Ta Dumza ndizakuqala ngo-ngombuzo kuqala, ee ndifuna kuqala sivumelane sobabini akunangxaki xa sizakubuza ngalemibuzo sizakubuza ngayo mzekelo sithe sizakuthetha ngembali yakho ingakumbi, sizothi sivelele nakwindima yokuba uqale njani ukuthunga?*
Ta Dumza [Dumisani] I would like first to have an agreement between the two of us, you don't have a problem as we are going to ask you question, for example, we will talk about your history especially mentioning the point where you started sewing?

Dumisani Molo (D.M.): Ee.

L.S.: *So ingaba akunangxaki ngalonto?*
So you do not have a problem with that?

D.M.: *Ha a akukhongxaki.*
No … no problem.

L.S.: *Eee the first question endinayo Ta-Dumza for wena, ungasichazela nje kuqala ngawe, usixelele nje ukuba wena ungubani? Ukhulele phi?*
Ee the first question Ta Dumza for you, can you tell us first about yourself and us who you are? Where did you grow up?

D.M.: Ok e.

L.S.: *Uyaqonda? Njalo-njalo.*
Do you understand? And so on.

D.M.: Ok.

L.S.: *Iminyaka yakho?*
Your age?

D.M.: Ok, before I answer that question ne, I would like to apologise to you, because I just want to express myself ne, with with my mother tongue.

Leslie Witz (L.W.): That's fine. Absolutely fine.

D.M.: Ok.

L.W.: Lets just speak the language you know best, ya.

D.M.: *Ii ingama lam ndinguDumisani kaMolo, ee Umgxong' isiduko untsundu, yiclan name* they call it clan name *ya. Ndikhulele ndizalelwe ndakhulela kuGatyana kwilali eseTywaka.*
My name is Dumisani is Dumisani Molo, Mgxongo Ntsundu is my clan name, they call it clan name. I grew up. I was born and grew up in Gatyana, a rural area of Tywaka.

At times translation occurred during transcription to aid selection for display purposes, as was the case above. At other times it occurred in the space of the interview as Lunga Smile facilitated an exchange, where the essence of questions and responses was summarised.

D.M.: *So Emveni kokuba ndiye ndayenza icourse yam pha kwa Learn to earn ndayigqiba baye bandinika umsebenzi cause I was the top stu student there in that in that project.*
L.W.: Mmm mm
D.M: *Kwizi student ezazikhona phaya so bayebaqonda ok mabandithathe bandisebenzise kube khona umsetyenzana abandinika wona.*
L.S.: So every person that have been like work like I would say iii learning in that Learn to Earn project, he has been a top student.
LW: Mhm.
L.S.: So sawn by the teacher and then from there they sort of they sort gave him a sort of a job.
D.M.: *Ja ja it was a part-time job like maybe nge veki bendisiya kathathu, 3 times a week, so but ilady lalipha eli gama lingu Vanessa uye waqhubekeka waphinda wandikhangelela omnye umsebenzi kwakwenye iproject around ilantu iKhayelitsha ekuthiwa kukwaaa kwaZanzele.*
L.S.: A lady called Vanessa which was also also in that project ee Learn to Earn she felt to carry on basically looking for him another job and there was another project around whatyoumacall it Khayelitsha which was called, it was Zanzele.

But by the middle of the interview the conversation was taking place largely in English.

L.S.: What makes you, why when do you decide to be part and parcel of this industry, why did you feel to take side should I say why did you think that?
L.W.: Maybe you've got a story when you left?
D.M.: I think the influence to me was my mother. Secondly I realised that I have a potential in this industry.
L.W.: Mm …
D.M.: Because that was that time does but I didn't even think about going out

there looking for a job. Instead if I go out there looking for a job I have to it has to be the clothing industry. You know …

L.W.: Mm …

D.M.: That's what the … Something just happen to me, if I'm going out there looking for a job it must be clothing industry, whereby I knew that I'm gonna learn something because my mother was already I … I I'm living here you know.

L.W.: Ja …

D.M.: It's something she just gave to me you know because I remember the day we were just sitting on … on … at home she just said 'hey my children tell me if … if definitely one day I'm going to die do you think those machines will … what are you going to do with it? Are you going to sell … it?' You know it touches me as we standing around she just touching me but even that time … I've already involves in clothing industry but that time I did not take it seriously I was just doing it. But so some of her words you know influence me a lot in this industry.

L.W.: Mm …

D.M.: So I never look back after that I just tell myself I don't want to disappoint her.

L.W.: So … After you were working that factory you came back Lwandle?

D.M.: Ja … Lwandle.

L.W.: When you work in this factory you still living in Lwandle?

D.M.: No by that time I was not living in Lwandle i ... firstly I did live in Delft.

This extract was then crafted for display:

Lunga Smile (L.S.):

> Dumza, what made you decide what to be part and parcel of this industry?

Dumisani Molo (Dumza):

> I think what influenced me was my mother and I realised that I have potential. I remember the day we were just sitting at home one day when she said 'Hey my children tell me if definitely one day I'm going to die what are you going to do with those sewing machines? Are you going to sell them?' You know it touched me as we were standing around.

L.S.:

Do you still remember your first design?

Dumza:

Ja … It was a pants. I had bought one of the new jeans in the shop.

As had happened with *Stories of Home*, these edited, translated extracts were then translated into a conversation in isiXhosa for display alongside the English version:

Lunga Smile (L.S.):

Dumza, yintoni ekwenze ukuba uthabathe isigqibo sokuba yinkalenye yomzimveliso wokwenziwa kwempahla?

Dumza:

Ndicinga ukuba elona futhe lisuka kumama wam, kwaye ndingumntu onethemba lokuphumelela. Ndisalukhumbula usuku esasihleli ngalo endlini ngelinye ilanga esithi 'He bantwana bam ndixeleleni ukuba xa kuthe kwenzeka ngenye imini ndilishiye eli magada ahlabayo, niza kuyithini na la mitshini yokuthunga? Ingaba niza kuyithengisa na?' Uyazi oku kwandichukumisa nanjengoko sasimgqongile.

L.S:

Ingaba usawuhumbula na umthungo wakho wokuqala?

Dumza:

Ewe yayibhulukwe. Ndandizithengele enye yeJeans evenkileni.

Even when the interview was in English only, like the one that Lunga Smile conducted on 3 November 2009 with Petronella Chamunoro who had come to Lwandle from Zimbabwe, an isiXhosa translation was provided when the selected extract was displayed alongside photographs of herself at work.

Lunga Smile (L.S.):

> Mama I would love to talk with you about how you started making clothes and sewing and what influenced you. First can you me who is Mama ka Trish and where does she come from?

Petronella Chamunoro (P.C.):

> I am Petronella Chamunoro and I was born in Zimbabwe in 1983. I started sewing from a very young age. My mother used to sew bed spreads, dresses and seat covers and I helped her laying out the material when she started cutting and sewing.

L.S.:

> *Mama bendingathanda ukwazi ukuba waqala njani ukwenza iimpahla nokuthunga, iyintoni eyakunika ifuthe lokwenza oko? Phambi koko khawundixelele, ngubani umama ka Trish esuka phi?*

P.C.:

> *NdinguPetronella Chamunoro ndazalelwa eZimbabwe ngonyaka ka -1983. Ndaqala ukuthunga ndisemncinci kakhulu. Umama wayethunga amalaphu okugquma iibhedi, iilokhwe, namalaphu okugquma iisofa, mna ndandimncedisa ekubekeni amalaphu xa eqalisa ukusika nokuthunga.*

But what made *Lwandle Designers* different in its use of translated, transcribed and edited text from interviews was that instead of using photographs to substitute for aurality, it was the texts themselves that were designed as exchanges between the researchers and the interviewees, explicitly depicting what Grele (1991: 246) calls 'the active intervention of the historian' in the creation of oral history (Figure 5.4).

The interviewers did not appear in photographs on exhibition but were made visible by being named, and through incorporating questions, interjections and responses into the display by using speech bubbles. Reminiscent of the spatialising tactics of comic art, these graphic sequences enable transition, exchange and a simulation of personalised speech (McCloud, 1994). While this meant cutting down on some of the text in the responses, what it sought to highlight was the performative nature of oral histories. Graphically displayed, the interview process was opened up to show processes of construction. And even though it hid the practices of editing, selection and translation, through the design of voices as texts, the oral histories appeared as dialogic and made as conversation.

Touring voices

The use of photographic images and graphic devices to design text to illustrate and narrate a localised history in Lwandle worked alongside representations of personal accounts obtained and contained in the museum's oral history collection. Almost daily, the tour guides drew upon oral histories in their renditions to visitors. The main oral transaction was the interchange between guide and visitor in the frequent enactment of the walking tour. Yet the fragmented archive of the regular tour conversations and our and the museum's work of memory makes a notion of a history of the museum's oral transcript elusive. Rather than attempting to recover a memory of the tour, we draw upon the scripts that the tour guides used, and on our own recollections and photographs, to reflect selectively on renditions of the oral as oral telling.

Whereas on exhibition, orality was rendered visual through techniques of magnification, stylising text and juxtaposition, on tour it was the compression of time and space that framed the rendering of stories as history. Although the tour might be thought of as a manifestation of what Harvey (1990) calls (after Lyotard) *The Condition of Postmodernity*, fitting into an experiential economy of tourism, the compression of time and space in the historical narrative is one that literally shortens, punctuates and emphasises sites as markers of apartheid's modernities. From the outset, the tour that the Lwandle Museum created as its central experience of walking in the compound landscape and the township in development was structured around a 'relic set in the nowhen of projection' (De Certeau, 1984: 161). The relics — hostel 33, the adjacent Hector Peterson library, the crèches, the craft centre and business district — became the primary destinations. These were coordinates, nodes of projection for stories inserted into oral transcripts of migrancy, belonging and becoming in amorphous time, of what Bongani Mgijima marketed as a safe, visitable, walkable township (Figure 5.5).

In its original form, the narrative of the tour was crafted out of the ubiquitous township tour, which took one on a route without history from poverty to

Figure 5.4: *Lwandle Designers* exhibition, installed in the Old Community Hall at the end of 2009, comprised three main components: dressed mannequins placed on pedestals, photographs and graphic renderings of interviews with designers in conversation with Lunga Smile and Leslie Witz, 25 January 2010. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

development (Witz, 2007). What Bongani Mgijima wanted to include was both a sense of space as locality and a history aligned with the effects of and struggles against apartheid. He projected the library as the place of achievement, hostel 33 as the space of apartheid's incarceration and he identified the water tower as the landmark of Lwandle that, he explained, was known as the Eiffel Tower. He constructed the narrative to graft together the old and new international tourist discourses of South Africa — the 'World in One Country' and the journey through apartheid — while deliberately invoking the best-known signifier of a 'timeless romantic Paris' (Rassool & Witz, 1996; Urry, 2002: 3). The water tower as Eiffel Tower became the icon of the museum, embellishing its branding on its letterheads and brochures. Glamorising its functional presence, the tower stood between Lwandle's past and present as the point of embarkation to the world of international tourism, the concrete monument to the nowhen (De Certeau, 1984: 161).

Other than meeting residents of Lwandle on the street, there were few encounters with personalised narratives on the tour that Mgijima led. When Vusi Buthelezi took over as curator he deliberately sought out individuals for a

revised tour narrative. At the time, the oral history project, funded by the South African Heritage Resources Agency, was running concurrently and this enabled the process. By far the most prominent and welcoming person was Minenkulu Robert Molo, who opened his house first to the museum's researchers and then to tourists. He was mapped onto the tour after the visit to hostel 33 and before the walk through the town centre. In his living room he repeatedly related a story of employment at hotels and restaurants in the Strand, of living in Lwandle hostels, being subject to police harassment, being arrested for not having permission to be in the area, building a family home and his involvement in the development of educational facilities in Lwandle. Speaking as an elder, his story of transcendence and achievement runs parallel to the narrative of post-apartheid improvement. More than merely reflecting a generalised narrative of 'becoming' in Lwandle, Minenkulu Molo's story became *the* history of Lwandle on offer for tourists. On the tour of Lwandle, his living room replaced the Eiffel Tower as a destination.

As museum managers and guides came and went, the tour narrative, much like an oral tradition, was passed down from generation to generation. It was only in 2006 that the tour became much more formalised when Mbulelo Mrubata turned the oral tradition into a written script, which included instructions on how to approach visitors when they entered the museum.

Figure 5.5: Beyond Hostel 33, Lunga Smile tells visitors about housing development and contemporary everyday life in Lwandle, 16 April 2010. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

As a guide you must always wear a smile on your face when you are in front of visitors:

1. Greet the visitors.
2. Introduce yourself.
3. Ask where they are from and if they are from foreign countries ask them how do they feel about being in South Africa.
4. Tell them about the services that are rendered at Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum:
   (a) Guided or self-viewing of the *Stories of Home* exhibition
   (b) 15 minutes video watching
   (c) Township walking tour.
5. Welcome them to the museum and tell them that Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum is the only township-based museum in the whole Western Cape. In our museum we tell about the experiences of the community of Lwandle, many of whom firstly came here as migrant labourers. But we don't only want to concentrate on Lwandle. In our museum we want to tell you how the story of Lwandle fits into the broader history of South Africa during the days of apartheid and especially to the migrant labour system.
6. If they choose to be guided around through the exhibition, begin your story on your left-hand side of the front door.[7]

The story that followed, according to the script, was one of migrant labour and hostel life in general in South Africa with the advent of mining in the late nineteenth century presented as the ur moment. After this there was a description of hostels and compounds in the Cape, the establishment of Lwandle and life in the hostel compound:

> As there were no recreational facilities the Lwandle hostel dwellers spent their time after work in napping, playing cards and playing a stone arithmetic game. This boredom rendered some of them alcoholic as there was a white business person's owned beer hall close to their hostels. On weekends there were dances in the community hall. The beer hall now hosts our Arts and Craft Centre, the gym, office for taxi drivers, and the old age home. The old community hall hosts our museum. High consumption of alcohol and paying for accommodation by Lwandle hostel dwellers meant that they were left with little or no money to send home.
>
> … People spoke the same language, most of them came from the Transkei and generally shared a similar culture. This made life of the labourers easier as there was a greater sense of solidarity among them. There were some squabbles though amongst Lwandle hostel dwellers that were caused by food theft and cheating in games.
>
> Cultural homogeneity also eased the predicament of age difference among Lwandle hostel dwellers. Young workers had a culturally based respect for old workers although they were treated as the same by their employers.[8]

This claim of solidarity presented through the tour enabled a sense of carry through to an endpoint of Lwandle today.

> People are now running lots of crèches in their homes and in old migrant labourers' structures like communal kitchens. The library, museum and the municipality building were the unexpected facilities that were added later to Lwandle. The Lwandle community members started to enjoy freedom of ownership. Now they own stands and small shops where they sell meat, vegetables, fruits, basic groceries, products they sew, as well as alcohol. Some even own the expensive cell phone containers.
>
> Lwandle community still has social problems like a high rate of unemployment, poverty, lack of houses, as well as low income that is earned by its unskilled and semi-skilled members. Despite all this, Lwandle is a revitalised and friendly community which is always eager to welcome its guests.[9]

The visit to Minenkulu Molo's home was still woven into this, although the desire for a shortened tour often meant that this was excluded from the itinerary. The oral, which was formally scripted into the tour by Mrubata, provided context and fixed the accounts that had been handed down by the guides and interviewees. The voice of Lwandle spoke of struggle, achievement, a post-apartheid home and a tourist destination.

The restoration of Hostel 33, beginning in 2008, sought to adapt the script that Mrubata had written down by setting out to incorporate 'storied lives'. In the museum's heritage report on hostel 33, it argued that the restoration project would:

> … enable the space to be used more directly as a site that is an extension of the collection, exhibitionary and educational functions of the museum, offering the visitor an 'authentic' experience of the conditions of hostel life as well as sensitively inserted interpretation of this experience and its histories in Lwandle.[10]

The placing of authenticity in inverted commas signalled that the museum was not seeking out a real past to place on show but rather setting out to situate oral histories within the reconstruction of the hostel and its pasts. At the March 2009 workshop entitled *Intlalo yase amaHolweni/ziNkomponi*/Living in a Hostel Compound the main argument presented was that performance needed to be integrated into and become a major feature of the restoration and exhibition project. Stories were to be part of the material fabric of rehabilitation.

The eight cubicles of the hostel block contained the possibility of setting different narrations within each small compartment. As many people had lived in these cell-like rooms over the years of inhabitation, there could have been numerous and various accounts associated with each bed-space. But the setting also provided a series of stages for the rendition of discrete stories. Although this

approach may have isolated each telling — and represented parts rather than the multiple, changing and tangled lines of hostel lives — it also amplified and set apart voice and an associated image of hostel structure into the individuated biography. By going the route of singularity, the museum sought to portray intimate lives and personify space.

Obtaining sets of interviews that could be associated with individual rooms proved to be more difficult than anticipated. Many of those who had lived in the hostels, specifically hostel 33, which was the focus of the restoration, were no longer living in Lwandle. Those who were interviewed tended to speak more about conditions in the present, such as the lack of housing and unemployment, than reflect upon memories of past lives. With the FIFA World Cup® in 2010, Lundi Mama, the museum's educational officer, whose task it was to run the oral history project, shifted focus from Hostel 33 to individuals in Lwandle who participated in local and different sports codes. Football players, bowlers, boxers, weightlifters, managers and coaches were all interviewed about their experiences 'in sport during the apartheid era'. It was anticipated that this would build up a collection on 'the history of sports at Lwandle in both visual and transcribed' form. In this frenzy around 2010, 'the demand' of the 'main project Hostel 33' was placed on hold as the museum staff sought to 'dig' for the 'roots of sport in Lwandle'.[11]

When research on personal encounters with hostel life did resume, it was much more limited than had originally been envisaged. Lundi Mama and Lunga Smile collected life histories from Makhosonke Peter and Lenie van Wyk Peter, Nofezile Mjikelo and Buyelwa Sophia Mtshizana, mainly through a set of 'informal interviews'. Instead of the more personal details of life as experienced and narrated, what was replicated in these narratives to the museum's researchers was a national story of migrant labour under apartheid applied to Lwandle. Reduced to data, these interviews became a set of generalisations. The report of the museum's education officer for 2010 indicated how the stories exemplified 'how migrancy affected the lives for South African citizens, where men had to live in urban areas', how migration 'constituted social relations within hostel spaces (places)' where several men shared 'dormitory-style rooms' and how 'women managed to survive in these conditions'.[12] Rather than the specificity that was sought to turn the rehabilitated Hostel 33 into a place of biographic performance, the interviews provided personal moments that could slot with relative ease into a national past.

In the revised tour script, which was devised during and after the restoration process, the prospect of the individuated biography situated in the times and spaces of the hostel was thus at odds with the content to be used. So guides were encouraged to say to visitors that the rooms were 'filled with stories from former Lwandle residents who used to live in … Hostel 33'. 'Every room', the script reads, 'tells a story about a particular family that lived in that specific

room.' Visitors are informed that these stories were acquired 'through interviews done by the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Ambassadors'. But the stories themselves hardly appear. There is reference to Tata Mtshizana 'who was the first hostel resident to sell meat legally in the hostels during the apartheid era'; his wife Bulelwa Sophia Mtshizana who 'was born in Aberdeen in 1939', found employment in Strand and met her husband who worked as a petrol attendant; Makhosonke Peter who lived with his wife Lenie and their son Mabhuti in hostel 33; Getrud Hobosh who lived with Mr Bhunu in hostel 33; and Thembisile Nxosha, the museum gardener who 'was staying in hostel 33 as well'. Depending on their knowledge of the original interviews and what they had heard of the life stories in Lwandle, the guides could (and did) elaborate on these very small biographical snippets. Yet in the tour script for the performance of the oral, there is little to show and tell from the interviews with former hostel 33 residents, who, visitors are informed, were 'more than happy to share their story with both the local and international world'.[13]

This move to Hostel 33, as the central artefact for the recovery and performance of oral histories, had another impact. It further marginalised the story of Minenkulu Molo and his family, which had been so pivotal to the tour earlier on, and replaced it with that of the Peters family. Makhosonke Peter, who worked for Faure Engineering, had arrived in Lwandle in 1970, first living in hostel 14 and then hostel 33. He lived there first by himself and later with his wife and children, up to 1989 when they moved, first into Waterkloof across the N2 motorway and then into an informal temporary house in the new settlement of Nomzamo, which was expanding adjacent to Lwandle. At the time when he was interviewed by the museum, he had rejected the offer of a government-subsidised Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) house because it was too small and he was still trying to find a permanent place for his family. 'We will be very happy if you can find a way for government to build us a house', he told the museum's interviewers, 'we are old now, we will be happy if we can die with a house.'[14] The story of the Peters family provided the perfect fit with what the museum was looking for: there was the long duration of their life in the hostels; a specific association with hostel 33 over much of that period; many memories on which both Makhosonke and his wife Lenie could draw and perform; and then there was a link between past and present through their struggles for housing. The lure of their biographical renderings was irresistible.

More than their stories and their willingness and ability to narrate them, it was the coincidence of the arrival at the museum in 2010 of Senewa Kinaiyia, an African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies student, that further facilitated the research and display of the Peters family and made their story emblematic of Hostel 33. Kinaiyia was part of a small cohort of students who were required, as part of their module entitled Curatorship taught by Noëleen Murray, to produce an exhibition around Lwandle for the museum. Her contact

with the museum led her to the Peters family, who had already been approached and been in extensive discussion with Lundi Mama and Lunga Smile. Working closely together with Mama, who acted as both interlocutor and translator (Kinaiyia could understand neither isiXhosa nor Afrikaans), she spent time with the family, spoke to them about their histories, looked at their possessions and images, and created a collection as the basis of an exhibition that would recreate 'the space in which Mr Peter lived with his family'. She saw herself not as someone who was mining memories but rather constructing them through research and display. In response she created a script and performance entitled *'Molweni! Emaholweni!*: Journeying with Makhosonke Peter and his family to Hostel 33' (Figure 5.6).[15]

Kinaiyia's tour established connections to memory, history and performance and was highly sensitive to the ways in which the space worked to make associations between past and present. The script, written as a journey, begins in the contemporary moment of research when Kinaiyia visited the hostel with Lenie Peter two weeks earlier. Kinaiyia writes in her dramatic composition:

> Although she [Mama Peter] had visited the space previously her reaction gave the impression of one who was visiting the hostel for the first time since departing back in 1989. For close to 10 minutes while the curator

Figure 5.6: Senewa Kinaiyia invites Lenie and Makhosonke Peter into their old home, Hostel 33, Lwandle, to view the reconstruction of the room that they shared with their children in the 1980s, 14 October 2010. *Photo: Leslie Witz.*

> and I set up for an interview she was deeply engrossed in a walk about the hostel, continually greeting and murmuring to herself repeatedly *'Molweni! Emaholweni'* [Hello! Hostels] and uttered words and sentences in Afrikaans as if in conversation with unseen audiences. As much as I could not understand what she was saying I was deeply moved by her reactions and realised as she moved in a trance like manner from one end to the other that a flood of memories had engulfed her and had evidently a lot of feeling. As we settled down to our interview she assured us that these were foggy memories.[16]

With these words of recollection, Kinaiyia requested visitors to move into the room and sit on the bed on the one side, while others could sit on the small stool provided. The spatial configuration of visiting replicated the room's division — in the hostel the Peters family had been allocated one side of the cubicle-like room. Once those who could find a place in the confines of the room were seated, the tour continued with constant evocations that related space to memory. The story of the marriage between Makhosonke Peter, who lived in the hostels, and Lenie van Wyk, who was a domestic worker on the nearby Morkel farm, was one of subterfuge and subversion. Tata Peter had to 'hide in the ceiling boards when visiting Mama Peter at the farm,' Kinaiyia wrote in her script, 'while Mama Peter had to disguise herself in male clothing when she visited the hostel.' When their children were born they lived with their grandfather but when they were in the hostel together, Kinaiyia scripted, 'they had to make do with half the room'. Soon after the birth of their fourth child, their roommate left the hostel and 'they were left to share the room as a family'. Kinaiyia relates how this situation persisted until they left the hostels: 'Through good relations with the watch men, whom he bribed to ensure that they don't allocate the space to others, as well as the use of trick tactics during checks, Tata Peter was able to keep the room to himself and his family.' At this stage visitors were told that they could now move and 'feel comfortable' anywhere in the room and the radio played a song invoking an era of big-band music. On tour through Lwandle, the spatial past and present were thus brought together again through the stories being told as Hostel 33 was turned into the family home of Makhosonke and Lenie van Wyk Peter.[17]

Inadvertently the temporary exhibition and script emerging from the student project became established as the storied life told in the space of Hostel 33 by museum staff, long after the envisaged three-month period of display was over. Experimentation with the method of a storied life as museum experience became the permanent signifier of situated biographies in the hostel through the installation in the cubicle and on the tour. The exhibition envisaged by Kinaiyia added 'a new layer' to the unfolding story of Hostel 33 and became sedimented into the fabric of the museum as the 'living memory of migrant labour in Cape Town'.[18]

Performing the museum

Brought into being by telling, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum produced a set of performances as memory. Reflecting on these performances has meant thinking about orality as act, object and archive in the making of a museum history. Modes of storytelling, intonations of voice, gestures, aesthetic context, and real and imagined audiences are all increasingly the concerns of oral history practice and theory. In these analyses, performance has multiple manifestations of events, enactments, narrations, dialogues and conversations (Abrams, 2010: 130–152). Similarly, museum spaces are also analysed as 'theatres of memory', through ordering and classification, scenographic settings, interior architectures of display, ambient lighting, mapped routes and by producing publics as audience (Samuel, 1996; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; Kratz, 2002, 2011). Objects, settings and audiences are created in the museum as a showcase.

Staging the 'museum effect' in Lwandle brought the performance of orality and the showcase together. When Mgijima started the museum as an oral history project, he had used a common-sense notion of archaeology as a metaphor. Oral history, he maintained, was a process of uncovering hidden layers of Lwandle's past. The museum's task, as he saw it, was one of excavation, discovering the fragments and reconstituting them as an assemblage that would tell a story of Lwandle. What happened over the following 10 years was that memories were 'actively translated, managed and staged within a museum setting', not necessarily as pasts remembered but as pasts curated (Julius, 2008: 106).

Although the museum had initially begun oral history research to establish a collection, from very early on it was driven by the imperatives of display. In interviews, the conversation was directed towards securing material that might be appropriate for exhibitions. When transcriptions were made, they often elided the depths and subtleties of the temporal and uneven nature of conversations. Translations, both in situ and on paper, were abridged and extended, collated and revised, reframed and translated once again. And then the selections, edits and retranslations were made to fit in with the way in which the images and design were being conceived for display. The script of the interview, as the documentation of memories, was nearly always directed towards the need to perform as a museum.

In *Do You Have a Map?, Stories of Home* and *Lwandle Designers*, it was the design of 'voice as text and image' that turned the Old Community Hall into a museum exhibition. The scenes of enactment brought together enlarged photographs and bold lettering scripted in English and isiXhosa into a visual composition to create the presence of voice. In the act of exhibition-making, the graphically rendered voice was individuated into biography. Juxtaposing selected, edited, translated extracts alongside portraits made individuals speak. Through this visual strategy, the performance of the interview was re-enacted

on the museum stage and made 'the interviewees ... very important people' (Thorne, 2008: 155).

In contrast to the texts and photographs on boards in the Old Community Hall, the performance on the walking tour elicited voices that were authentic, personal and animated. It offered the prospect for the museum to represent additional, different, disparate and contending voices. As the oral histories on the walking tour shifted the central attraction from the Eiffel Tower to Minenkulu Molo's living room and then on to the cubicle in Hostel 33 assigned to the Peters family, the museum was able to imagine, image, narrate and represent lives for visitors. Yet the ability to re-enact the variety of pasts that had been envisaged through the performance of Hostel 33 was limited by the research process and the compilation of selected tales into a rehearsed script. The constant need to be alert to the time it takes to tell a tale, its cues within a larger drama, the availability of props and settings as artefacts and places, and the constant evocation of a national narrative as scene, controlled the performance of voice. In practice there was always the possibility that the individual account would be generalised and that the individual would come to stand for the whole. The destination-led itinerary of the tour route through the landscape of hostels to homes was the stage for the museum to enact migrant labour as the voice of a national past.

End notes

1 Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane interviewed by Bonke Tyhulu, Lwandle Museum, 24 August 2004. We have kept the transcriptions largely as they appear in the collection to show the process of oral history production in the museum.
2 Interview of William Khanuka by Bonke Tyhulu, 29 May 2002, Lwandle Museum.
3 Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane interviewed by Bonke Tyhulu, 24 August 2004.
4 Robert Mininkulu Molo and Nolindile Molo display, *Stories of Home* exhibition, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, based on an interview between Bonke Tyhulu and Minenkulu and Nolindile Molo, 19 April 2005.
5 Ephraim Nyongwana and Nosiphato Nyongwana, *Stories of Home* exhibition, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, based on interviews between Bonke Tyhulu and Ephraim, Disebo, Tebogo and Nosiphato Nyongwana, 16 April 2005; and between Bonke Tyhulu and Ephraim Nyongwana, 24 May 2002.
6 Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane display, *Stories of Home* exhibition, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, based on interviews between Bonke Tyhulu and Nontuthuzelo Makhabane, 16 April 2005; between Bonke Tyhulu and Nosapile Nomganga and Nontuthuzelo Makhabane, 22 February 2005; and Bonke Thyulu with Nontuthuzelo Christine Makhabane, 24 August 2004.
7 Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Tour script, 12 March 2006.
8 Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Tour script, 12 March 2006.
9 Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Tour script, 12 March 2006.
10 Draft Heritage Report, Hostel 33, Lwandle, Cape Town, South Africa. Portion of Erf 13600, 11 Khayalethu Street, Lwandle. Report prepared by Noëleen Murray, 21 July 2009.

11 Lundi Mama, 'Research in oral history', monthly report, 22 July 2010.
12 Lundi Mama, 'The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Educational Programme 2010'.
13 Lundi Mama, 'Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Tour Script', 2010.
14 Lundi Mama, 'The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Educational Programme 2010'.
15 Hostel 33 Oral History Research, Education and Exhibition Programme, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Cape Town, South Africa. Report on Phase 2 for the National Heritage Council: Design of exhibition for Hostel 33. Prepared by Lundi Mama, Education Officer Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum and Prof. Leslie Witz, Chair of Museum Board, 24 December 2010.
16 Senewa Kinaiyia, 'Sneak preview: *Molweni! Emaholweni!*: Journey with Makhosonke Peter and his family to Hostel 33'. In: Lundi Mama, 'The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum Educational Programme 2010'.
17 Senewa Kinaiyia, 'Sneak preview'.
18 Senewa Kinaiyia, 'Sneak preview'.

Photographic essay

by Thulani Nxumalo

On the beach

Thulani Nxumalo worked at Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum in 2012 and 2013 as a collections manager. He is a graduate of the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies and an experienced sound archivist, who worked previously for many years at the District Six Museum. Primarily tasked with sorting and cataloguing the material that had been accumulated over the years at the Lwandle Museum, he also used the time and his photographic interest in a more personal manner to document what he saw around him daily. Documenting, looking and being in Lwandle was to become part of Thulani's practice and presence as a member of staff. The photographs on the following pages are selected from his personal collection and show aspects of his interest in the materiality of Lwandle's structures and experiences in and around the museum. Looking anew at the much-photographed hostel, Thulani's eye takes us up beyond the street to survey the intersecting glimpses of Lwandle's roofscapes, edges, curb lines and signs. He takes us up close to the restored hostel façade, shifts our eye down to the gutter and to the painted street name, and takes one on the walking tour. Set against the Hottentots Holland mountain landscape his vantage points juxtapose and reposition the conventions of the picturesque and the aesthetic. All too often viewed through the lens of poverty and development, these images instead tell the story of Thulani's everyday in Lwandle on the beach beside the sea that cannot be seen.


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HOSTEL 33
LWANDLE MIGRANT LABOUR MUSEUM


HOSTEL 33


B

Postscript and conclusion

The end

On 7 December 2011, the website of the United States Diplomatic Mission to South Africa reported on a 'fun-filled event' held at the Lwandle Museum a few days before. The event celebrated the completion of the Hostel 33 restoration project in Lwandle. There were performances by the a cappella group, the Red Dazzlers, and the UZuko Gospel Choir, speeches by the chair of the museum board, Leslie Witz, the MEC in charge of Cultural Affairs and Sport in the Western Cape province, Ivan Meyer, and the United States Consulate's Public Diplomacy Officer, Cynthia Brown, and a ceremonial unveiling of the rehabilitated hostel (Figure P.1). The report on the day's events referred to the Lwandle Museum as 'a living museum in the community of Lwandle' that sought to tell 'members of the public from near and far about this part of South African history' and provide 'former hostel residents who return an opportunity to reflect on their personal experiences and share their stories with others'. Where previously 'monotonous rows of identical whitewashed hostel blocks' had stood 'perched on a sand-swept tract of land between the seaside resorts and lush Cape farmland', the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum had peeled back the 'layers of history' (US Diplomatic Mission to South Africa, 2011).

The tidy summary of progression from hostels to homes to museum, as a narrative of post-apartheid progress and becoming, belies the temporal mobilities of meaning, the interruptions and the constant interventions in the making of a museum in a township named as being at the sea. In writing about a project that memorialises migrant labour in South Africa at a most unlikely site, we have reflected on uneven processes in a precarious history. Not only has the existence of the museum been unpredictable and insecure but our reflections have also sought out the difficulties of constantly becoming, instead of taking a

Figure P.1: (Left to right) MEC Ivan Meyer, Lenie Peters and Sophia Mtshizana, former hostel residents, and Cynthia Brown, Public Diplomacy Officer, US Consulate Cape Town, applaud the unveiling of the plaque of the restored Hostel 33 by the chairperson of the board of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Leslie Witz, 3 December 2011. *Photograph: Noëleen Murray.*

chronological route. Seeing the museum as volatile, we have produced episodic reflections on museumisation through materiality, institutionalisation, visuality and orality. This is a 'history of uncertainty' and irregularity (Cohen, 2004). There was no simple move from hostels to homes to museum.

Taking the museum outside of the narrative of post-apartheid development, in which it seemed to be so securely placed, has meant searching for the inconsistencies. When hostel 33 was made into Hostel 33 we noted how there were always fractures between the intention of restoration and the daily demands of rehabilitation. The setting in place of the institutional arrangements was constantly thrown into disarray as the exhibitions and collections often did not measure up to the formal definitions of museum. The use of photographs and oral histories were intended to provide the museum-in-the-making with locality and difference. Yet, in both instances, it was difficult to escape the conventions and plots of national narratives already in place. The stories we have told unpacked the production of the museum in its multiple beginnings, commented on its representations through collection and display, and tried to

draw out an understanding of the ways in which the museum has sought to constitute publicness. In all these tales we have expressed this tension between accomplishment and frustration.

When we started to write this book we deliberately posed the narrative as a tragedy rather than a romance and we stated our dissatisfaction with easy closures and conclusions. Yet the events since the 10th birthday appear to have contradicted the way we have written the book. The second phase of the Hostel 33 rehabilitation project involved devoting attention to the interior. Strategies were developed to conserve the delicate interior additions that made up the unique quality of the modified space. Sagging hessian sacks, which acted as provisional ceilings, were refastened to roof beams, timber partitions that were created for privacy were stabilised, cardboard panelling from old package boxes and wallpaper from factory offcuts were documented and carefully left in place, and the original ceiling light in each hostel wing was rewired and reconnected. Sensitive housekeeping measures were put in place. These included fumigation, a light dusting and conforming to safety regulations. All the rooms were turned into exhibition spaces. Four of these recreated hostel bedholds and were associated with stories of individuals and families. Another was remade into a shebeen (tavern) because on-site evidence indicated this use in the period after the museum had been established in the 2000s. Adjacent to this a room was remade that had been used temporarily by youngsters involved in gangs. It was sparsely furnished and with fewer personal signs of occupation. Another room on the same side of the hostel was emptied of all furniture and artefacts, and exhibition panels were installed here showing conditions of life in the hostels and the Hostels-to-Homes scheme. A last room was left completely empty and its door padlocked. Visitors can peep through the cracks in the rough-cut wooden panels to view a room in the state in which it had been before rehabilitation into the museum (Murray & Witz, 2013). The result was that the 'structure and unique interior space of Hostel 33' was 'fully secured by the museum from the condition the building found itself in a few years back when its material presence was deteriorating'. The rehabilitated hostel 'sits amongst the homes in the old hostel landscape marked as a museum' (Murray & Witz, 2013).

The coming together of the province and the United States consulate at the reopening of the restored Hostel 33 appeared to be a culmination of achievement and invited a future prospect for the museum. This time there were no broken windowpanes and the hostel looked 'well dressed' to receive guests who would pass through its doors then and in the future. Notably absent were Kadephi Mtiya, who had acted as the neighbourhood security watch as the project was unfolding, and Ephraim Nyongwana, a board member, long-time resident and one of the movers behind the campaign from the 1980s to save Lwandle as a place where families could live together in their own homes. Mtiya had been

killed, while Nyongwana died as a result of complications arising from being knocked over by a local taxi. Their presence was missed as they had contributed so significantly to the museum and its making over the years. Lunga Smile's contract as museum manager had also come to an end but he attended in his capacity as a community member. Although there was some sadness on the day, the performances by the Red Dazzlers and the UZuko Gospel Choir, and the ululations and celebrations all contributed to a future prospect of the museum beyond the shards of glass of the previous year. According to the MEC, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum was 'a superb model' of 'where communities and stakeholders' could 'work together to build their heritage'.[1]

What many expected on the day was that the MEC would announce that the museum's application for province-aided status had been approved. Yet, in spite of the MEC's presence and the praises he heaped on the museum, the official announcement was not made. Since April 2009, when the Western Cape Cabinet had made an in-principle decision that the museum would be fully declared as province aided and that 'all arrangements be set in place to

Figure P.2: Abathandi Boxolo gospel choir led by Michael Xelelo perform on stage at the Old Community Hall in celebration of the Lwandle Museum's official 13th birthday (unofficially 15th) on 1 May 2013. The event was broadcast live from the museum on the local radio station, Radio Helderberg. *Photograph: Leslie Witz.*

give effect to such a decision', progress had been slow.[2] In February 2011 the chair of the board wrote to the MEC asking him to intervene directly and take 'immediate action' to implement the Cabinet decision.[3] Almost a year later, provincial status was finally confirmed by the Cabinet of the Western Cape government for a museum in Lwandle with 'the theme' of the 'Migrant Labour System and its effects on the people of the Western Cape'. The museum was officially named the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum and was declared 'a province-aided museum with effect from 24 February 2012'.[4] All those who had been involved with the museum since its beginnings, greeted the announcement with enthusiasm, relief and joy. The burden of becoming had seemingly been lifted, its pasts temporally and spatially located and its future secured within the official administrative circuits of museums in South Africa. Perhaps there was a happy ending (Figure P.2)?

We could easily end this book on these moments of what appear as museum accomplishments and our narrative strategy of a tragic life turned on its head. Nonetheless, the rehabilitation of Hostel 33 and the proclamation of the museum's province-aided status are not quite the conclusion of a romance that had begun in the developmental Hostels-to-Homes project. These are moments in an ongoing and unpredictable story line of housework where there were always anxieties about the future. What kind of museum would it be? How would its communities be reconstituted? Was there sufficient funding to enable the museum to operate effectively? What role would the museum play in the deeply contested landscape of local and national politics? How would project budgets be raised, allocated and spent? How would the museum be managed and curated? How would Hostel 33 be positioned? Should the tour be rerouted? Would visitors come? The endings are speculative and, unsurprisingly, always contain the possibilities of tragedy.

The newly acquired provincial status demanded that the museum had to ensure that there was good governance. With the aid of a consultant, Seelan Naidoo, the museum had previously identified significant problems in these areas. In the move to the province, the museum had to answer more questions, and provide documents and evidence of procedures and policy. In a number of instances these could not be found or were incomplete. As the province's officials investigated the financial records that were available, it became clear that there were irregularities that could not be explained. Accountability and management required immediate attention. At the very moment when the museum's future seemed to be more secure than ever before, some of these administrative practices jeopardised the story of the museum's achievements.

Most of the rest of 2012 was spent tidying up the museum's administration. A museum manager, Charlene Houston, was appointed by the province and she set about putting things straight: filing systems were reinstated; procurement policies and procedures were initiated; administrative space was allocated in

the Old Community Hall; reporting structures were streamlined; new staff were appointed; old contracts were reviewed and new ones set in place; IT and telephonic systems were upgraded; marketing material was reconsidered; management and networking workshops were attended; and safety and security measures prioritised. Initially, provincialising the museum was primarily about stabilisation and governmentality.

In the regularisation of daily practice, the museum's associations with community groups and organisations became far more formalised. Previously drama clubs, football teams, burial societies, homework groups, secretarial services, poetry societies, rap artists and ballroom-dancing classes had all made extensive use of the museum space for their activities. Contracts were now entered into and more conventional opening hours asserted. The value of these activities was subject to scrutiny in relation to the definition of a museum as a space for exhibition, collection and education. Instituting these new policies shifted the museum's communities. From being everything to everyone in Lwandle, the museum began to shift focus to publicity, working together with performance companies like Jazz Art, marketing its activities and attracting audiences from Lwandle and beyond.

The idea that the museum would be managed also signalled a shift in curatorial focus. In the structures of provincial museums in the Western Cape, research and exhibition is handled centrally by a group of 'scientific officers' who are based at offices in an old school building in the suburb of Ruyterwacht, Cape Town. As we have shown, the museum had always taken responsibility for its own curation, drawing upon the skills and resources of local residents, board members, staff, links with students and academics associated with research at the University of the Western Cape, and by employing design consultants to be part of the museum's team. In this model of making a museum without the in-house specialist resources that the province's department makes available to its museums, curation had become central and collaborative. In the process of conceptualising, researching and visualising successive exhibitions, appropriate design approaches and aesthetic were found. The move to Ruyterwacht enabled the museum to host events more efficiently and gave it access to a series of travelling exhibitions. To make way for these temporary displays, the museum shifted existing exhibitions. Some of the artefacts from *Lwandle Designers* were placed in storage, an office was partitioned off within the main exhibition space, the large aerial photograph showing the layout of Lwandle from the 1970s was taken down and several of the beds, which had been part of the museum's collection of hostel artefacts, were sold. The much-needed, substantial managerial and administrative structures that were being set in place meant that the museum's curatorial attention shifted largely to finding appropriate space to host the temporary displays, which were made available from the scientific offices at Ruyterwacht.

The front door of the museum was shifted. It had been moved to the north side of the building in 2005 to enable a new, more open, exhibition layout, but in 2012 it was returned to the old entrance foyer. The solid double doors that had once signalled entrance to the foyer were reopened, surveillance and security were prioritised, the visitor was once again separated from the exhibitions and the interior space was shut off from the landscape of Lwandle. The classical axial symmetry, which had been subverted in 2005, was initially reasserted and a managerial future as part of the provincial museum structure, prioritised.

We Love Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum

Since 1994 at least 40 new museums have been established in South Africa. Stories of origins, repression, resistance, transformation, community and the invocation of memory have become the templates for these new museums. There is an affection—if not a romance—for the museum as the institution that has the potential to make South Africa and its past new. These expectations for the museum are expressed in the narrative related on the Facebook page, 'We Love Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum':

> With the onset of democracy in South Africa, the ANC-led government turned the hostels of Lwandle into family-type accommodation. Residents of the area felt that at least one hostel should be preserved to sustain a memory of how the system of apartheid had operated and decided to establish a museum. On Workers' Day (1 May) 2000 the museum was officially opened by the poet and ex-Lwandle resident, Sandile Dikeni. The museum's exhibits commemorate the trials, tribulations and triumphs of migrant workers and hostel life in Southern Africa. According to William Khanuka, one of Lwandle's oldest residents, 'the museum is for people now as well as for the coming generations'.

Yet, as we have argued in this book, the content and form of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum were not produced through such an easy replicable process. Of course Lwandle tapped into and was enabled through both an official and popular 'museum movement', where the times and memories of apartheid, colonialism and indigeneity were spatially inscribed (Murray, 2007a; Minkley, 2008). Like many of the new museums, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum made extensive use of photographs to illustrate life, oral histories to render memory, artefacts to mark authentic experiences and the walking tour as the spatial representation of apartheid. But the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum was dislocated and did not replicate according to the template. The museum should never have come into existence — it struggled to assert communities of memory, its tourist narratives were at times unconventional, there were constant financial constraints and its main artefact was an insignificant hostel.

Although it was proclaimed as 'Museum of the Year' in the Western Cape in 2009, prided itself on being the 'first township-based museum' in the province

and was incorporated into official structures, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum remains, for many, unseen. Museums produced and constructed since 1994 in spaces previously designated as a 'native' location or township were architecturally driven projects to deliver visibility and were invariably defined through a narrative of resistance. In New Brighton, Alexandra and Soweto, expensive new buildings, such as the Red Location and Hector Pieterson museums directed the project of making and historicising the township as the experience of apartheid (Murray, 2013: 6). In Lwandle a set of ugly buildings in a place with hardly any claims to history became the museum. More than anything the Lwandle Museum and the history of its making was about curating an apartheid compound, which was intended to be hidden from view, into sight. Without substantial resources of a prominent history of liberation struggle and funds to design such a past, that vision was constantly out of sight. Tenuous, disjointed and fragile, Lwandle remains a location off the national road leading into and out of Cape Town. Yet in spite of and because of its inability to fit into the template of the apartheid museum, the Lwandle Museum was assembled and reassembled as a site of creative insecurity. It is in the unfolding and telling of this tragic story that our romance with the museum begins.

End notes

1 Speech delivered by Dr Ivan Meyer, Western Cape Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport at the opening of Hostel 33, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, 3 December 2011, Lwandle, Strand.
2 Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum: Proclamation as Provincial-Aided Museum, Western Cape, Minute 95/2009, 1 April 2009, Western Cape Provincial Cabinet.
3 Letter from Chair of the Board, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum to the Western Cape Provincial Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Dr Ivan Meyer, 4 February 2011.
4 Province of the Western Cape, *Provincial Gazette* 6961, 24 February 2012, 178.

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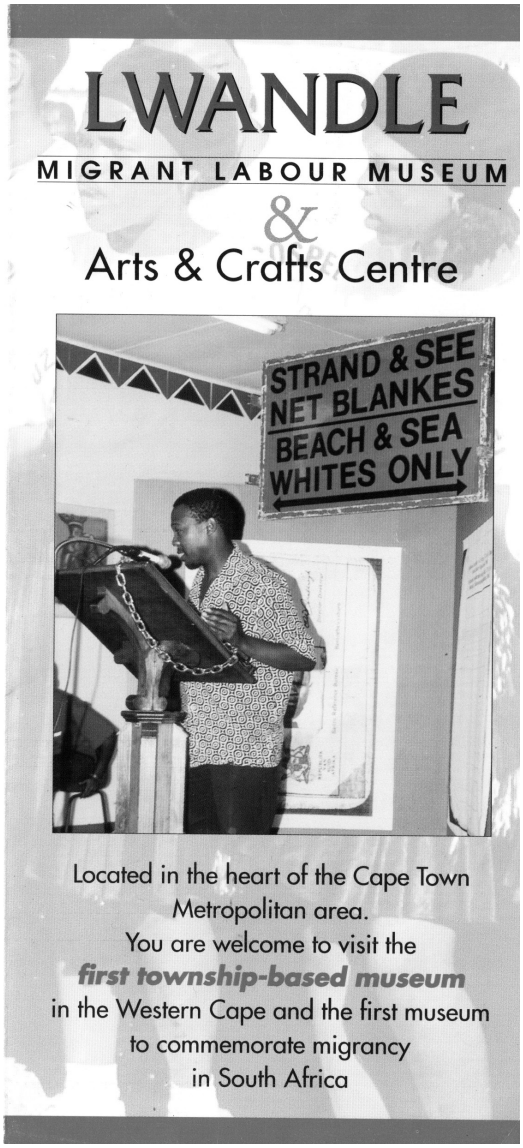

The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum's second brochure included an image of the opening ceremony. One of the contributors to the proceedings was Richard Baartman (pictured here) who worked at the Hector Peterson Library next door to the museum. The brochure also included a list of reasons why one should visit Lwandle, outlined a brief 'historical background', and indicated an Arts and Crafts Centre, a visit to an 'authentic' hostel, a viewing of the museum's exhibits, and a 'safe guided walk' through the township as the main attractions. It included what was then the museum's logo: an outline sketch of the Old Community Hall next to a sketch of a water tower in the middle of the township, which Lwandle residents refer to as the 'Eiffel Tower'.

Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, *Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum & Arts & Crafts Centre*, brochure (Somerset West: Lwandle Museum, circa 2002).

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