



Participants were asked to explore developments from the past to the present. The one approach of accessing ideas was akin to the cultural custom of story-telling, a spontaneous process of recall, memory and emotions. Participants were expected to draw on personal and family experiences and stories, and to record these events in both written and visual forms. Some of the stories were very personal experiences and some re-told the events recorded in history. The second approach was to conduct formal research by accessing information from publications and news reports. Those were given to the participants to interpret, simplify and then render as visual images. All these drawings were translated into more simplified images and designs and transferred through embroidery into narrative panels. The embroideries were documented at various stages of production and this information was used to create the projections for the choir's performances. Once the embroideries were completed they were collated into two wall hangings. Embroideries not used in the hangings were either framed or made up into conference bags and sold at all the performances and at the conference.

Community participation also validates the ordinary person in the street as well as empowerment for participants in following ways:

Personal experiences were made public and therefore recognized.

The process consisted of creative design, skills training – literacy, embroidery, drawing and collaboration.

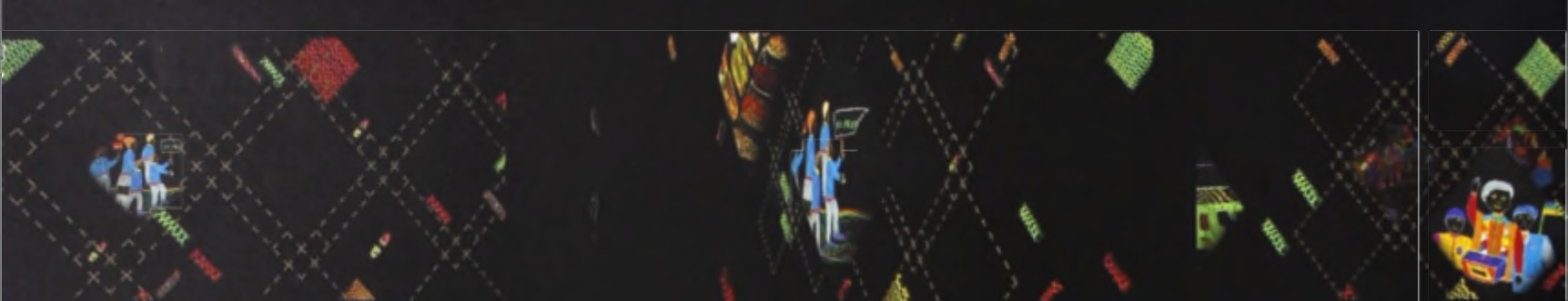
Gainful opportunities arose from the public awareness and recognition of the esteem-esteem, pride and experience hopefully provided the sewers with the confidence to venture further.

The embroidery project had several dimensions besides providing the imagery for the projections. While the overall project was concerned with the



ideas of reconciliation and the performances were a celebration of 'The Journey to Freedom', the incorporation of community participation actually became 'empowerment' by giving the participants a 'voice' to express their own ideas and experiences as well as interpreting the more known popular images. This created a reality that became a dialogue between the historical versus the personal.

South Africa has a rich tradition of embroidery projects and textile work that are all relatively well documented and debated, yet little research exists about the interrelation of embroidery and digital work in South Africa. *The Journey to Freedom Narratives* project is unique in this respect, as through its contextualization, the interrelation of craft and animation it exists in a conceptual, interdisciplinary cross-pollination arena into which few other embroidery projects have veered.



THE DIGITAL PROJECT:

Work-in-progress document by Gwenneth Miller

The term 'remediation' can be used to relate to the ways in which media draw on and incorporate other media and it is considered that remediation implicates an ethical code that things must be re-used. Intermedia practice and responsiveness to unusual combinations of the art forms of embroidering and digital animation are the cornerstones of this idea. The conceptual space between digital art and traditional art/craft is the terrain for exploration in this instance, highlighting the influence of constructive interaction and the enriching tensions that result from these processes. The project utilizes visual language as a tool to associate social and artistic contextual relationships by positioning itself in a particular niche of contemporary art making, and through this, rejuvenates a concept of reconciliation.

Both the Intuthuko and Boitumelo sewing groups are situated in Gauteng. Intuthuko is based in Etwatwa near Springs, in Eastern Gauteng. Boitumelo is based in the Johannesburg inner city, Hillbrow. Both groups have worked independently before this project and continue to produce work for various clients. UNISA, with the financial support from Dell computers and through the Journey to Freedom narratives project, are proud to have made a contribution to the empowerment of these groups.

The members of the Intuthuko Sewing Group and Boitumelo Sewing group are:

Intuthuko: Celia de Villiers, assisted by Sonja Barac (artists-facilitators)

Pinky Lubisi, Thembisile Mabizela, Zanele Mabuza, Angie Namaru, Lindo Mnguni, Julie Mokoena, Salaminha Motloun, Angelina Mucavele, Thabitha Nare, Nomsa Ndala, Maria Nkabinde, Cynthia Radebe, Sannah Sasebola, Rosinah Teffo, Lizzy Tsotetsi and Dorothy Xaba.

Boitumelo: Erica Luttich (artists-facilitator), D. Emmah Mphahlele, Lilian Mary Mawela, Ameliah M. Makhari, Martinah P. Mashabela, Naledzani R. Matshinge, Gloria Melula, Elisa D. Mahoma, Linda Mkhungo and Florah Raseala.

The embroideries were scanned and digitally animated by a small group of multimedia artists. The spirit of the project is entwined with storytelling and in a wider sense, related to the oral tradition of our continent. The authenticity of the embroideries and the tone, text and rhythm of the music were respected by the digital artists. These art-making devices were carefully considered as the conceptual foundation of the project. The resulting artistic dialogue between divergent groups developed as a sub-theme within the project.

The Journey to Freedom multimedia project was coordinated by Gwen Miller and Wendy Ross. Miller and Ross also selected and collated the work to be included in the embroidered murals and animation DVD.



The digital artists

Frikkie Eksteen: *Steal Away*, technical advisor

Sarah Fraser: *Land Act*, Vukani Mawethu, technical assistant

Kai Lossgott: *Bawo Thixo Somandla*

Greg Miller: *Nkosi Sikelela* (both versions), *When the Saints go marching in*, *Hymn to Freedom*, compilation of the final DVD, technical advisor

Gwenneth Miller: *We shall overcome*, *Bawo Thixo Somandla*, *Hymn to Freedom*, conceptual director

Reboile Motswasele: *Bawo Thixo Somandla*, *Toyitoyi* songs, translations and contextual interpretation of lyrics

Katty Vandenberghe: *Toyitoyi* songs, *Medley of two religious songs*, *Halala Bahumagadi*, (the women's march) technical advisor

Nicole Vinokur: *We shall overcome*, *Vukani Mawethu*, technical assistant

Wendy Ross: overall advisor

The digital artists' task was to produce the animations based on the embroideries to be synchronized with a musical performance. Of particular importance was the bridging of the realms of hand-craft (embroidery) and the digital (new media technology). The group of digital animators constituted mainly students and young artists for whom this was an opportunity to learn and work in a collaborative project. The project was a learning process for all involved. Not only were technical challenges overcome with the use of low-cost technology in a very short time-span, but on an intellectual level comprehension in terms of creating a dialogue of understanding and insight across social and cultural boundaries was achieved by all involved. One of the broader aims of the project was realized in this regard. All became aware of their limitations and stretched themselves to meet the demands on many levels. The animations were projected on a 9m screen above the performers during the concerts, extending the language of sound into a visual language in order to extend the meanings of songs, not as illustrations but to contextualise the songs historically. The thread's visual entanglement was used at times as a metaphor for chaos and at other times it was considered as a metaphor for



that which binds us together in reconciliation. The stitches that construct the images can be compared to the slow process of building our present national dynamic. The authenticity of the embroideries was respected by the digital artists. These art-making devices were carefully considered as the conceptual foundation of the project. The originality of the multimedia project lies in the relation between the stitch of the embroidered narration and the pixel of the digital animation. In itself, this relationship became a kind of reconciliation of opposites. As indicated, the spirit of this performance is entwined with storytelling and in a wider sense related to the oral tradition of our continent. This narrative line linking different times and cultures is symbolized in the threads of the embroideries in particular ways in the digital 'translation', evoking the thread of history in transparent layers, visual repetition and horizontal movement. In a related metaphor, the quilt has been used as a cross-reference to the tradition in the American South, as can be seen in the digital animation of *The Hymn to Freedom*.

The impact on the storyline became a pivotal point. The telling of the stories was seen as the threads of history, weaving a reality. In *The Journey to Freedom Narratives*, the succession of the songs and animations moved from simplicity, keeping as close to the original embroidery as possible, gradually increasing complexity in digital techniques, for example the animation of the original *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* which was sung either at funerals or at gatherings during the struggle years. Greg Miller's animation was similar to a collage of numerous embroideries that was 'panned' by a camera, creating a flow of images from left to right.

The animation to the song *Vukani Mawethu*, digitized principally by Sarah Fraser also made use of the illusion of a reel running by. The layers and the illusion of shadows created a sense of depth, overlapping and shifting the focus. The rules of atmospheric perspective generally used in traditional art making were applied.



When *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* was used a second time, it was presented as the National Anthem of South Africa. From a sea of cross-stitches the African continent slowly rises and turns on its side to reveal that the cross stitches are three-dimensional. This visual game of surprising the viewer is repeated a few times through the animation. Similar sophisticated visual methods are used in *Hymn to Freedom*. Greg Miller used software that creates the illusion of three-dimensionality to signify contemporary progression of technology.

In the animation by Kai Lossgott for the song *Bawo Thixo Somandla*, sequential movement is also used as a visual theme. In the words 'Oh Lord our God, what have we done to deserve this' the text flow over the screen, as if written by an unseen hand. Repeatedly the directional movement is re-enacted by figures: a women flees the whip of a policeman, a women runs away from a cruel dog. Patterns replace each other with dire consequences. The screen fills with red stitching, overwhelming all imagery. A weeping women replaces the killed individual – her throbbing heart completely overwhelms the screen, returning to the opening sequel of a beating heart.

Stories have been stitched since the earliest times, the Bayeux tapestries being a well-known example, communicating history and knowledge. As Johannes Gutenberg's Printing press (1440) replaced the 'mass media' (woven tapestries) of his time, digital media replaces traditional analogue systems of our times – at least as mass medium communication. All art methodologies are built on the foundations of art practices that precede them, and so too are many of the inscribed techniques of digital art. It is general knowledge that there is an infusion of the one into the other, in many cases transforming and re-invigorating them in fresh and unpredictable ways. The relationship is an engaging one, with a cross 'pollination' creating interesting hybrids within existing 'traditional' art forms.

The embroidery and digital projects are one at heart, but each section had its own creative processes of research and constructive planning. This position of the digital artist required an engagement with the language of embroidered images and the intention of songs.

Similarly, the process of understanding and reconciliation is constructed on the important foundation of these early days of our democracy. Consider 'Gcina Mhlophe's reading in the performance:

These are the threads that bind us to one another.

They remind us of the work still ahead of us. To keep stitching, building, healing, reconstructing and reconciling –

every day,

every hour,

every second.

Let the light shine on our futures.

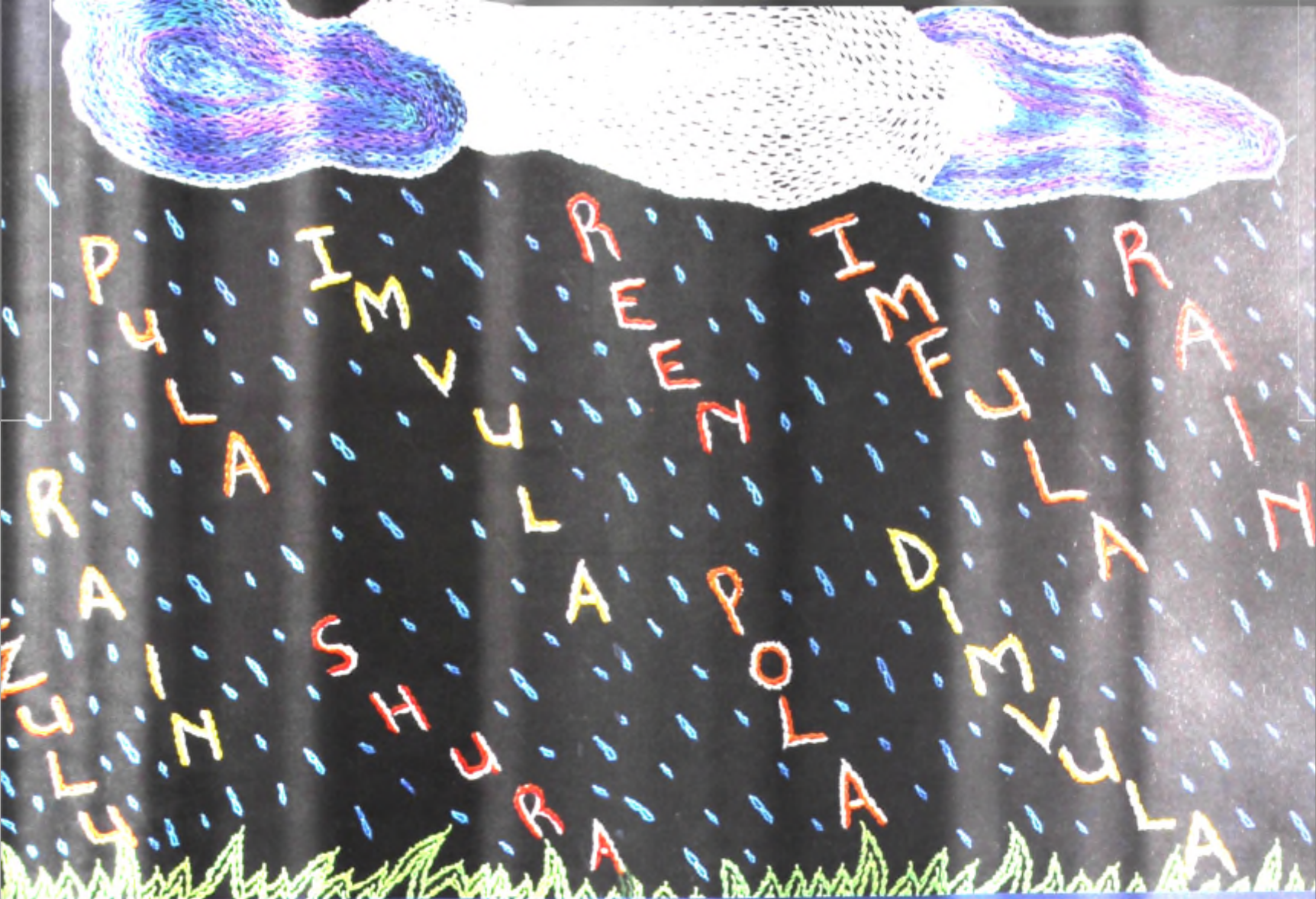
Whilst it was felt at times that the varying distances hampered the collaborative development, methods were devised to challenge the logistical demands. With the animation the idea of collaboration were retained in the working processes: whilst individuals were responsible for particular animations the whole group met once a week for three months, brainstorming and criticizing each others work. Fraser had the relentless task of continuously scanning the progress of the fronts and the backs of all embroideries and producing printouts. This was necessary for the animators to understand and follow work done in distant centers, the interpretive guidance from Reboile Motswasele in regard to translation and conceptual contextualization of the music added much to everybody's insight. Her interviews and conversations, as captured on video by Greg Miller, Katti Vandenberghe and Kai Lossgott, added a layer of understanding and contact that was also vital to the creation of the animations.

The almost impossible was achieved in the active working period of approximately five months: 64 embroideries were completed and combined in wall

hangings (approximately 30 additional images were sold as bags at the openings), and 17 animations of varying length were made in this limited period. When working in a collaborative project one needs to maintain a balance between working in a structured plan and being open to the valuable input received by all involved.

The documentary DVD, which was the last leg of the project, was completed in May 2007. Included in the back of this publication, this short documentary captures another dimension of the making of this multifaceted project. A selection of animations with a live recording of the evening's performance captures some of the energy of the event.

The project won gold at the FNB Craft Now 2004 awards. The Journey to Freedom narratives has also been part of the Weavings of War traveling exhibition, curated by Michigan State University Museum and has been on tour in the USA from beginning 2005 until end 2007. As part of the Weavings of War programme the animations were shown at an international film festival that was held in April 2005 at Middlebury College. In 2007 an extract of the animations with soundtracks were featured as part of the X-Cape art festival.



An embroidery finds its way home

"George and I work at Sizanani Village which has various different projects. One of these is a home for physically and mentally challenged children. The Department of Health organised for us to receive a donation of wheel chairs from the Tokyo Sekwale Foundation. Mrs Limpho Hani works for this foundation. After a ceremony to hand out wheel chairs which some of our kids and their carers attended, Mrs Hani offered to come out to Sizanani and present another 15 wheelchairs. She brought a crew of people who adapted the wheelchairs to the specific needs of the recipients. We wanted to thank her really from our hearts for their generosity so we presented her with one of the 4 framed embroideries we had previously purchased. We typed a bit of background onto paper and stuck it on the back of the picture and presented it to her at the little do we had. She was really moved and burst into tears. She and George were hugging and crying openly and in fact there were very few dry eyes. It was so wonderful to be able to give her something so rich in meaning. Nothing could have been better and we were so grateful to have been able to do it."

Julia Fraser

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Stories of the **embroiders**

Note: These stories are unedited and in the form submitted by the original writers.

The Story about **Aparthe**



During apartheid time, life was too tough to the Black people, because of the colour of their skins. If they come to Johannesburg they were make sure that they have Section ten in their dompass, because if they don't have it, the white police will put the stamp on their dompass which was 24 hours out of town.

They were entering in the kitchens to search the blacks and told them that they were not allowed to be in that place, they did such things during the night while the blacks fallen asleep. If the Blacks were in the bus the police followed the bus to every bustop and caught them and put them in their big car (Gumba-Gumba). And if they were two police, they said they want money to the blacks. But when they were busy working they found another police and caught them.

Even in the rural areas our parents were working in the Boere's farm without getting payment, but just to get place to sleep only. Even if it was raining with thunderstorms they were supposed to be at the farm. Nor matter they were sick that was nothing to the boere, because they said blacks were kaffirs.

But after we have democracy, life has changed a lot and we are all equal, because the colour of our skins doesn't mean nothing, but only the blood meant, because we all have red blood. And we are all God's creation.

The arrival of Jan van Riebeeck



When the white man come to S.A. they preferred to do the exchange of things. Most of them they settle in Cape Town and some of them they stay in Natal where they established sugar cane farms.

The black people they were surprised when they saw the knives and the mirror, the battering was done - blacks were given knives and in return they gave whites cattle.

Because of this system of battering blacks lost also their land and whites was discovering diamond in Kimberley. The whites started to stay all over and doing the research and taking the land from the blacks.

This resulted to lot of problems experienced between the blacks and whites. There were many jobs at the mines and blacks were killed and they were not suppose to complain.

All good jobs in mines were given to whites where they not killed. Discrimination started on mines - whites were superior and blacks who got chance of digging, were forced to give them back. There were no equal right in mines.

When the blacks think about the land and cattle it was to late.

The whites were having farms and rich with cattles. The black were started to ask the jobs from the whites. Some of the lacks were singing a song of the land and cattle.

The problem started - blacks now want to plough the field there was no space, and they want the cattle.

The problem was growing like that - the skin colour and the language again. All blacks and whites were hating each other. The whites taking the land and rule it as the owner.

In that time the brother kills his brother, because of the pressure of the whites. The blacks were suffering a lot. The blacks must stand at the queue where as the whites go straight to the tailor and talk any language.

Whites started to separate the family. The blacks they must stay in the township not in Suburbs, because they are the kaffir.

The struggle of the blacks was too tough because they were not using the gun, they were killed and they were holding the shield.

The woman who were working in the kitchen they must respect the food of the miesies. They were given the swartkoors. If there was the member of the family want to see them they must talk outside and go back some time. The whites children were called klein miesie and kleinbasie.

The blacks were suffering. If the whites want to kill people, they must kill the blacks. They look at the blacks they saw the animal. The blacks were working like slaves, they were killed. Tortured and injured. The child killed the whole family and friends because of land.

Blacks were fighting for their land and cattle only. But the whites want to be the leader in this land.

They want the blacks allegiance to them and they must do what ever they say. Many of the leaders of the organisation were killed.

The white people where killing the black children they pretend like they like you, at the end you must die.

They use the birds fire arms to kill the blacks and they use the horse to bite the blacks and if the horse want to bite the blacks they kick and kill the blacks.

In 1989 when we were closing our Sunday School at Louis Trichardt. The whites started to beat us and they were using kerie and dogs. Our pastor trying to tell them that we are the Sunday school children. The whites were not understand that from our pastor.



A WORKING MOT
BOTH WOMEN STRU
THEY USUALLY STAR
NO DAY OFF, THEY U



R'S STRUGGLE
LED TO MAKE ENDS MEET
HALF PAST SIX IN THE MORNING UP TO 7 P.M.
ED TO WORK ALL DAY

Arrested for selling



beers



Mary Mawela

It was in May 1984. I don't remember the exact day when the police van stopped in front of our gate. Three police men came out of the van into our two room tin house. They didn't greet us and one of them went straight and open a fridge. That Friday morning my mother went to the bottlestore to stock beers for the weekend. The fridge was full with beers and there were some crate with beers on the corner next to the fridge.

One policeman was unpacking the beers from the fridge and the other was taking the crate to the van. My mother was trying to explain to the third police but he was not interested. He handcuffed her like a criminal and she was eight months pregnant. I was left alone in a dark house, I was seven years old.

In a van there were about nine people with their crates of beer. It was full and my mother was put in the crowded van. The driver did care what happens to the passengers at the back and the only thing I could see was dust. It was like a dream and I could hear the neighbour saying; "Run and call your grandmother." I was running like there is no tomorrow. My grandmother was running following the trails and dust. The lady from next door keep on say, ' Tsotsoma (run), they are taking your child"

I was sitting alone outside waiting for my granny and my mother. They arrive late that night from the police station after walking hours because there was

no transport. She was release on bail and didn't get her beers bank but I was relieved to have my mother back because my father was working in Johannesburg and could come in a month.

1975 at Stoneyard at Boksburg arrested for pass

After a long and bumpy journey from the Kqwelakwela, that was the name of the police van, we were offloaded into one overcrowd room with one small window, we were separated from the white women.

We were sleeping with one bucket used as a toilet. We were checked every hour. Very early the morning at 03h00 am we were wake-up and go outside to lean against the cold winter wall. There was water on the floor and could stand there naked for hours. When the sun rise we were taken inside to have a cup of tea with a teaspoon of brown sugar and only they who worked at the kitchen could get old brown bread.

We were given a bucket of cold water and soap for cleaning without a mop or swap. We could use our underwear to mop the floor while waiting trial.

After when I was sentenced for three months labour. I worked at a farm for heavy different duties. There was a truck that collect us every morning to work and bring us back after dark. At a farm where I was working I was cleaning pig stall, bathing horse. Farming and sometimes cleaning the house.

After three months of hard labour I was discharge. They couldn't care whether you have a bus fare or not. On my way home I was re-arrested for pass and went to jail again. I spend that year in and out of prison for pass.

Prison Ghosts

At some police station at night there were ghosts. Those people who died, killed by fellow prisoners and some where beated to death by policeman.

The uniform of female warders was "red head cap", brown dress and two-red shoes. Those uniform were hand washed and iron by us. There was a very long coal stove designed to carry 40-45 steel iron, very heavy ones.

If one of your family could bring you bread and milk, they will not allow you to take anything from them. Only a small window was opened for you to see that person. There were days when we were not allowed to see visitors and after a month we were allowed to write a letter which they will not even post it.

At some prisons we were sold to work at farms. I f you could say you are tired you could be beaten to death. Some of our fellow brothers and sisters were killed by tractor during working time and no one could not say anything. You could be use as fertilizer to fertilize potatoes. "What have we done wrong and why are we dying like this."

In Soweto One

South Africa was having political and economical problems. The boers spend a lot of money buying weapons to kill blacks which were trying hard to get freedom. Many Africans were killed and Boers cared less about killing and arrest Africans even women with small children.

In the township we know when you see a police car we must run away. We didn't need the soldiers because they were not protecting us but killing us. When the children see a police van they could shoot to kill us.

In Soweto two

I was a student attending school in Soweto. It was very scary to attend classes. Our lunch break was only ten minutes. Many children were arrested by then and some were less then 16 years. The police could come to school daily to check if there are no children absent. If you were absent during school hours, you would get a beating saying you are a CO-

SAS. If you were a girl they could rape you and send arrest you for some days until your parents come.

In the townships

There were lot of boycotts in the townships. Children boycotts because they wanted freedom. We wanted equal right between black and white. We didn't want the SADF in the townships. It was not right to boycott because the people who suffered were the women. They didn't allow parents to buy in town because they said the money waisted in town is the one that buys the guns that kills the children in the township. And when they discovered they could make you drink cooking oil and eat soap. If you don't obey they could burn you alive.

Meadowlands 1950

We were forced from Sophia town and to leave and stay in Meadowlands. Sometimes you could go to work in the morning and when you come back in the afternoon you could find that your house has been moved. If you were lucky you could find someone to tell you where to find your family. The people at Meadowland started to sing. They were doing this as a way of defending themselves from the government. The government did not like it because they did not understand the meanings. We could sing meadowlands "sithandwa sami" (my beloved) and "natshi indoda emnya verwoerd". And that song made the boers very angry and there was hell to pay.





INHLAZANE
DOWN TO 16 September 1990
ON THE SUPPORTER HACKS
AT A BURNING LINDSAYE
Tshabalala 95 a young
Boy Flees the

My father killed by

It was on July 1993 when my father was attacked from the train by Inkatha. He was from the work. He was working at Germiston where as he stays in Katlehong. When the train arrives at the station where my father was to leave, then comes a group of men. They asked my father and other men where they came from; and which language are they using. We are from Pietersburg and we are Mopedi answered my father and other men. We don't care whether you are Mopedi or not; said the Inkathas. They pass with them to another station where they took them to a hostel which stays no one. There were only containers of petrol there. So they pour each of them petrol and burn them. From that day my father stayed at Natalspruit hospital. We (me and my three youngest sisters and brother) didn't know that our father was at the hospital. We suffered a lot from food because there was no one to look after us. My mother died on 1990. Then my father died on the 20th August 1993. Life was very, very difficult for four of us. We didn't have food, no one to pay for our school fees and no one to take care of us. And we also didn't get even one cent from his employers, up to now my brother and sisters are still suffering because they do not even a R.D.P. house to stay. The other one is there and the other is there because they don't have a place to stay and there is not one who will buy them food.

Inkatha

Elisa Mahoma



Martinah Pitjana Mashabela: My life story

Martinah Mashabela

Her Early Life

It was in 1971, first of January when Martinah Mashabela born. I born in the dusty village of Ga-Mashabela in Limpopo Province. I was the first daughter of nine children and the first born of Mrs Francina M and Piet Mashabela. I grew up looking after goats and cattle. I was finished most of my time in the veld with goats and cattle.

My Primary school

In 1977, I started my primary school at Mashabela Primary school. From Sub A to Std 5 in 1983.

Secondary School

I started my secondary level in 1984 at Nkgonyeletse Secondary ie. (std 6). At the end of that year, I didn't managed to pass, be cause I had many difficulties in my family. My father was no more working. My mother was also not working. I t was tough on my side going to school without foods in my stomach. That is why I didn't manage to pass my std. 6.

Difficulties

As I explained on the above paragraph. It was tough situation. As a big sister,(all the children in my family) it is me who have to go to work. I retired from school. The following year in 1995- I went Daveyton with my friends to look for a job. We found a job in the shop in Daveyton. I was 15 years on the time. But I could work. As a cashier. They pratice me two weeks. After that I started to work. I work there from 1985-1989. In 1988 I went to train as a permer in Johannesburg at Hillbrow. Unfortunately I did not manage

to complete my course because I had to financial problems. I left there without certificate but gained experience. In 1990 I fallen pregnant. On that time I was attending Mabuya High School in Daveyton in the evenings. 9 Evening School) I attended until std 8. I went home to deliver my baby.

At home Problems

I started new life at home with a child. I started to use my perm experience. I bought hair product to perm. I open small salon there. Looking after the child and make my job, sometimes no customers. In 1993 I went back to school to complete my studies.

At Secondary School Std 8

At Secondary I started at std 8 where I left in Daveyton. At the end of the year I passed to std 9, in 1994 I did my std 9 until std 10 in 1995. Unfortunately I didn't manage to pass my std 10. I repeated in 1996. Fortunate enough is that I managed to pass at the end of the year in 1996. I got my senior certificate and went back home.

Again at home after Matric

I stayed at home for the following years in 1997. In 1998 I worked in the shop for the whole year. In the beginning of 1999 I chased out of the shop by the owner accusing me of stealing some stock because he did not manage to pay my December wages. I cried and tried to commit suicide, because it was tough without foods in the house and my child was sick. People comfort me, priest guided and advise me and tell me that it is not the end of life. I pray and my heart healed.

Life in South (Gauteng Province) from 2000-2004 (now)

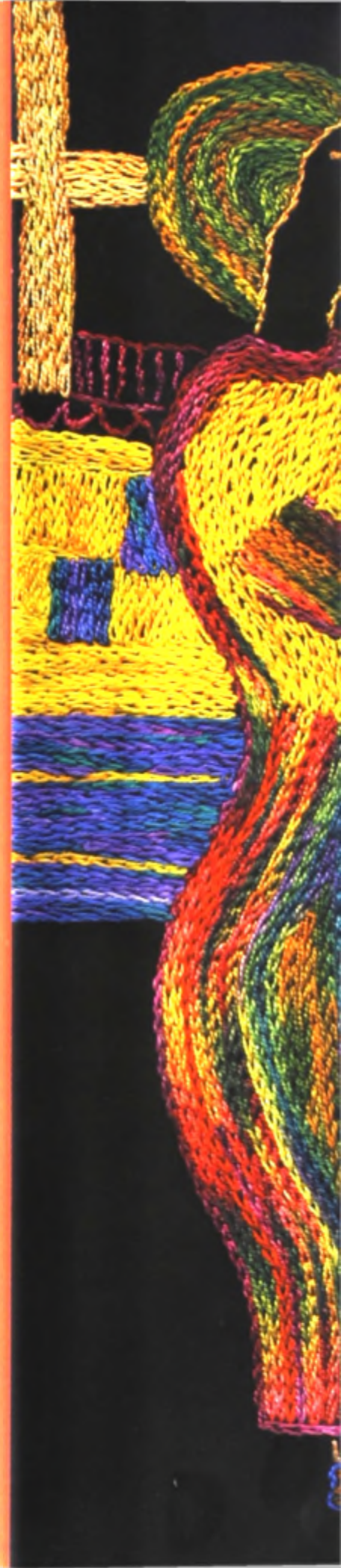
I went to Pretoria in Mamelodi in 2000, I arrived in my Uncle's house. He was living with his wife and children. My aim was to look for a job. They ask me to look after their children because I eat and sleep in their shack. When I refuse they chase me out. I went to my cousin where I stayed with his family for one month after I got the job at the farm where we were rolling green lawn(grass) for the gardens. They pay us R25 a day which is R500 per month. I worked there for three months. I leave there to Ga Rankuwa where I worked as a domestic for 8 months. They pay me R300 a month. I left there because the money is too small to survive. I left there to Johannesburg. Again I work in the house of another family they pay me R500 a month looking after children(three) 12 roomed house and garden. I get up in the morning at 4 am to 11pm sleeping with the little baby doing the washing. I left because even if you are sick no one help you. I went to Johannesburg Park Station.

Life in the Park Station Johannesburg

I went there in 2002 January. I arrived at the Universal Church there. They gave us foods(Bread) and vegetable. No place to stay. Sometimes in the buses waiting house, sometimes in front of the shops. Sometimes under the shelters. During the rainy times standing in front of the shops. Until I meet a certain woman who took me to her house. I slept there, helping her in the business because he was selling in the street. I wake up early in the morning to help her. Until last year 2003 in June when one of her children come with her friends to chase me out of the house. I left to find my room with the help of a certain Christian man. I started to attend a church in Hillbrow where I met one woman who told me about the Project in the yard of Outreach. I come and started to attend until now. I gained more skills there. But not full-time nowadays because of financial problem for kids school, rent and foods for me. I am still holding my standard 10 certificate, I do not know what I am going to do with, I didn't make any courses after Matric. I didn't work or gained anything with the certificate. Now I am looking for any loan bursary, work, even part-time job or full-time job not forgetting to study. I am still loving books. I like to read. I like to do anything which can help me and my kids and if there is anyone with help, I can make anything or try to work hard not to worry him or her.

Now

I am at Boitumelo for sometimes. More of my time I stayed in the street where I sell caps, crochet skirts and caps for women and tops both men, women. But there is not enough stock because business like more money too start.



OK BAZAARS BOYCOTS

Round about the year 1982 in Soweto,, the "comrades" who mostly were people regarded as freedom fighters were fighting against the community members who were buying from the big shops that were owned by whites.

All furniture, cars and bakery were hijacked and burned and they will later claim that it was a white man's property and they would say that was the time of black power.

People would sometimes sneak out and go to buy groceries at the OK Bazaars but should you be found by the comrades you had to drink all the stuff bought at the shops and if you did not want to, you were beaten up with shamboks.

A lot of people did not agree with the situation but they had no choice because the comrades owned the streets during that time and most of the comrades claimed that they were members of the Mkhonto We-sizwe.

People got sick from drinking fish oils, eating washing soaps and it was as shame cause they were only allowed to be home and sick because even doctors and ambulances were not allowed inside the townships.

But all of that changed, people have the right to make their own choices even if some of our choices do not please our comrades, it is all for our future and our children's.

ZANELE MABUZA

FUNERALS

In one of the most publicised incidents Bongani Khumalo, the secretary of the Soweto branch of COSAS, was shot dead by the police.

Thousands flocked to the funerals of their student leader carrying the prohibited COSAS banners. As a result, funerals became one of the most powerful expression of political solidarity in Soweto.

THEMBISIL EMABIZELA

THE STORY ABOUT MILO

The day of the riot, I was 6. My brother Vusi sees the looting. We run out to see and everybody grabs things from the spaza shop and run. The police shoot all over. The comrades stop the coco-cola truck, they get the driver out then push the truck it falls, glass everywhere. I liked milo but we are poor so my mother says we cannot have milo. I see the milo stand at the spaza shop, big tin. You know the very big tin, it is heavy, I start to run between the bullets and take the tin home. I hide it under my bed. We eat milo, Vusi and me. We eat and our stomachs are full. My mother is not home. She is a domestic. She is very late and we eat milo, I get so sick, and vomit. My mother is angry and ask what is wring. Vusi runs away with the comrades. I show her the milo, she shouts and shouts, she says I am a thief. I must take it back. I am so scared. The next day she cannot work, the comrades says she must stay away, they come to the house to check. I take my milo back, everything is burning, lots of police shooting and noise. Afterwards we have nothing to eat. I think of the Milo.

ROSE MAHAMBA

RDP HOUSES

Since the Democratic Government came to power 10 years ago we have seen so much changes in the lives of so many people, especially the ones who where for so many years being discriminated against.

Today we can see so many RDP houses being built by the government for people who could not afford to built themselves houses. Millions of people today have access to running tap water and many more, even in rural areas do have electricity into their houses.

Decent roads are being built everywhere for easy access to areas where people live.

Education has become a right to each and every child, not a privilage. There is also a free health care, so South Africa has all the reason to celebrate 10 years of democracy.

JULIE MOKOENA

Conversations

we had along the way

A selection of interviews held by Reboile Motswasele with the women and young ladies of the Intuthuka Project doing the embroidery for the Journey to Freedom narratives. (The text below is kept as close as possible to the actual words and expressions)

The first interview was with Thabitha Nare

Reboile (Rb): when did you become involved in this project?

Thabitha (Tb): from 2002

Rb: how difficult was it to join?

Tb: it was extremely difficult, when the project started people around here were sceptic of its sustainability. You see, many projects had been initiated before by black people but all of those went down to the drain. People also said that this white people will cheat us, use us and make money from our labour; but I am happy to say that the exact opposite has happened. I am actually very happy that I stuck around.

Rb: why, what is it that makes you happy about your decisions?

Tb: well firstly through this project I have discovered skills I never dreamed I had. When I joined I could not hold a needle, every time I needed my clothes to be mended I had to ask my friend and often I had no money to pay her. Now since acquiring these skills I can now do that myself. Also I have been taught a lot of embroidery techniques and that there can be many kinds of stitches one can use to make your work more beautiful.

Rb: that's really great!

Tb: yes it is, you know, I also become very proud when people see bags I have created and they tell me how wonderful they are, some even buy them. For me it's great thing because it helps me to afford life. The money I use to buy things around the home. We are also taught to business skills and how to produce products of good quality. We also have excellent team work here, young people working with older ones. Our minds are also broadened concerning thinking capacity, at the beginning I found it so difficult to

develop an idea but now ideas are always following into my head. The women here are also not stingy but other social problems we experience in the community.

Rb: it looks that this project has played a huge role in your life currently, what are your dreams towards the project.

Tb: mmh! I want this project to progress and grow because it is helping members of our community. When one has stress, once one starts embroidery the stories the stress goes away and when your bag get sold it's a bonus. Also, when one of us get a job outside, we invite other people to come fill-up their space. I love this project, it has changed my live positively and I want it to be around for a long time.

Rb: thanks sis Thabitha and goodluck

3rd interview with Zanele Mabuza

Rb: as you know we have four songs that we are working on , which one is the most polgant to you?

Zn: we shall Overcome

Rb: Ooh, that was an unexpected choice, but explain to me why?

Zn: I once watched a documentary-movie on Marthin Luther King Jnr and since that day this song has been part of me.

Rb: well that makes sense, I also saw that biography; it is amazing what music does to people, especially those involved in a struggle.

Zn: yes, I think it brings them a sense of unity and hope, and that's exactly what this song did for them.

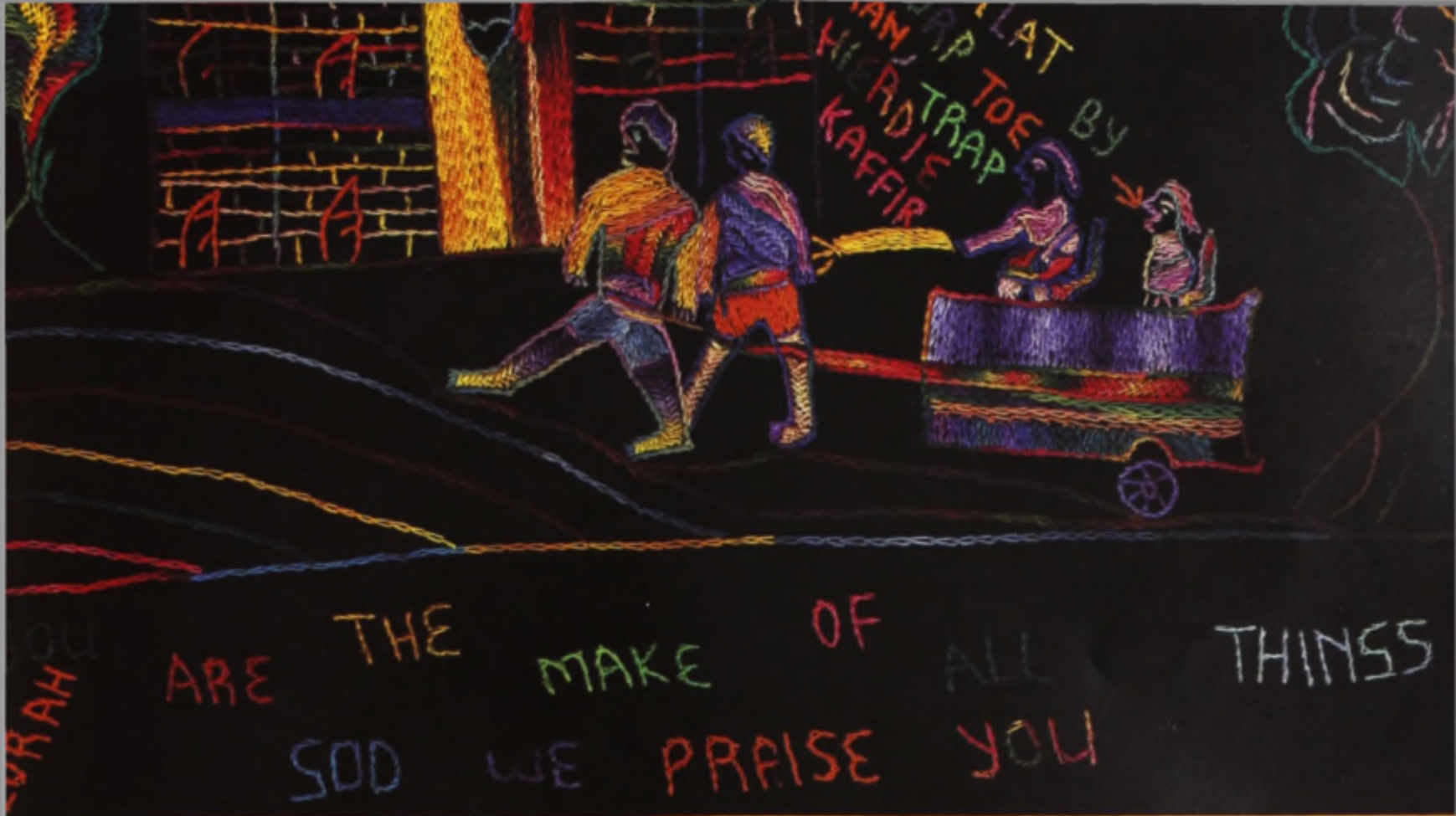
Rb: So do you thing that Utata Mandela is like Martin Luther King Jnr.

Zn: No, actually I think the struggle hero similar to king is Chris Hani.

Rb: mmhh! Why?

Zn: see uTata seems to have had this soft side to him, whilst Hani was an action man. And I also think King was like an action man.

Rb: so Chris Hani is your struggle hero?



Zn: yes he is.

Rb: now, ironic enough Hani died here in Benoni. What did that do to you?

Zn: yooh! I cried ne, I cried and cried; I remember watching his funeral crying and crying. I really cried hard that day, I'll never forget it.

Rb: So you watched his funeral on TV?

Zn: yes I did, I was still young to attend funeral.

Rb: thanks Zanele.

7th interview with Lizzy Tsotetsi

Rb: what can you tell me about your life experience?

Lz: huh, life was unfair, it was difficult. Everyday was a struggle.

Rb: can you explain your embroidery to me.

Lz: yes, this story happened in 1986. Comrades in Daveyton went around at night searching for boys & men to help them dig huge holes in the ground so that the soldiers' hippos fall into them when they try to pass by. It was scary times then. At nine in the evening everyone had to be in their homes, candles out. So, on this particular one night

the raid was made again, and our neighbour had two small boys ages around boys aged around 7 or 8 years.

We had put our lit candles under the tables so that these men wouldn't see the light. It was freezing cold winter's night. So these young boys were taken with into the cold, somehow they managed to run away from this comrades and they did under a train bridge. They were spotted by a young man and this young man brought them safely home. And from that day the young man been my hero, just because he returned these kids unharmed.


Rb: that's a very touching story. But, I am sure that you have also experienced some wonderful moments in your life.

Lz: Not really, my life has always been difficult. I have Lucky (who is a totally disabled). Lucky is 16 years old, he cannot do anything for himself. I have accepted him and his conditions, but because of the amount of attention he needs, life as been difficult. I am the breadwinner in my family. So this project is very important to me.


Rb: mmm! But what brings happiness in your heart?

Lz: (laughing) having some work (employment), getting a boyfriend. But at this moment my passion lies in this project, I give my embroideries my all and I have also gained a lot of skills from this project.






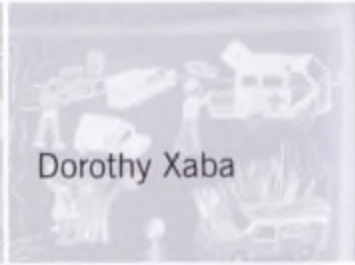
Lindo Mnguni



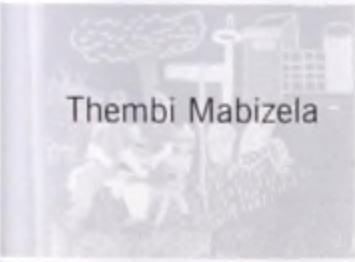
Lindo Mnguni




Selina Moshegoane




Dorothy Xaba




Thembi Mabizela




Rosina Teffo




Sannah Sasebola



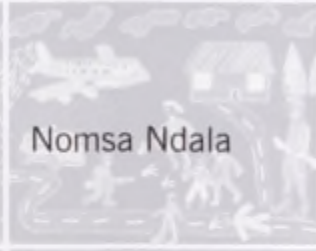
Maria Nkabinde




Sannah Sasebola




Martha Salamina



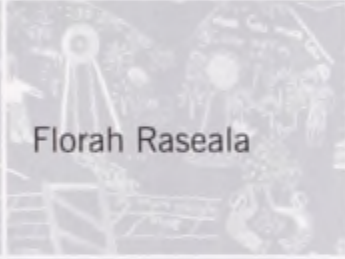
Nomsa Ndala




Lizzy Tsotetsi




Zanele Mabuza




Florah Raseala



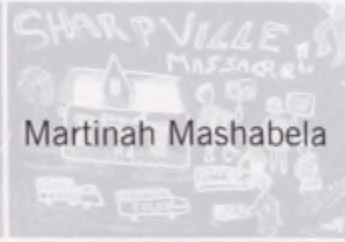
Zanele Mabuza




Julie Mokoena




Thembi Mabizela




Martinah Mashabela



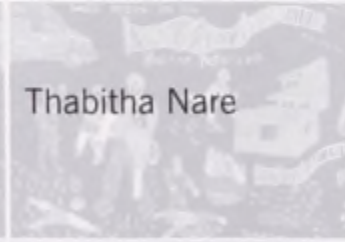
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Thembi Mabizela



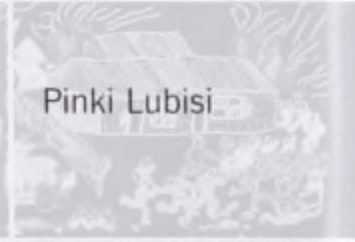
Rosina Teffo



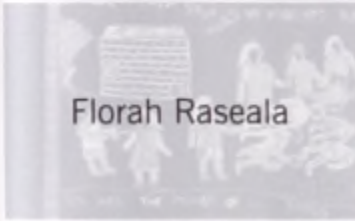
Thabitha Nare




Nomsa Ndala




Pinki Lubisi



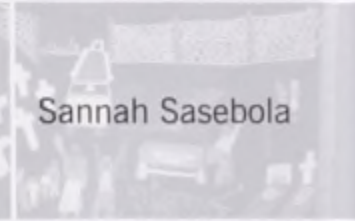
Florah Raseala




Julie Mokoena



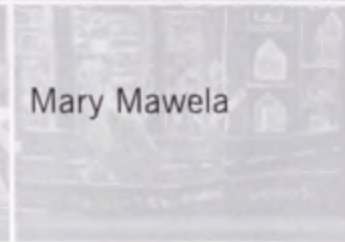
Thembi Mabizela



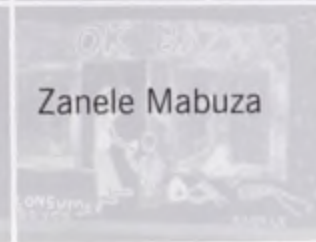
Sannah Sasebola




Florah Raseala



Mary Mawela



Zanele Mabuza



Lizzy Tsotetsi





afterword

by Mandla Makhanya



In June 1955 South Africans belonging to diverse but allied organizations gathered at the Congress of the People in Kliptown and adopted a document that was to become something of a blueprint for a future democracy: the Freedom Charter.

The same year saw the launch of the African American Civil Rights movement against the injustices of the southern 'Jim Crow' regime.

In both countries mass action, lobbying, boycotts, sit-ins, marches and freedom rides became the tools by which struggling black masses and small numbers of their white counterparts challenged the morality of white rulers and petitioned for the end of racism and segregation.

By the 1960s the US activists, primarily through their success in mobilizing churches and grassroots organizations, started to make breakthroughs in their campaign of civil disobedience, direct action and

mass resistance. One of the key figures in getting the voices of Martin Luther King and other leaders of the people 'heard' in this regard was the Rev. Dr James M Lawson, at that time deemed a heretic and communist for denouncing the Cold War. The Rev. Lawson was a tireless supporter of non-violent resistance, a figure not unlike our own beloved Archbishop Desmond Tutu. By 1964 the Civil Rights Act was signed – but not before many freedom fighters (albeit fighters by non-violent means) lost their lives.

That is where the similarities in the early struggle histories of the two nations end. In South Africa, the outlawing of the liberation movements and increased repression allowed no option other than an increase in the repertoire of resistance – the embracing of carefully waged armed struggle and heightened international pressure.

Although apartheid memory has now receded and we move together as almost indistinguishable members of a 'miracle' nation, those of us who were apartheid perpetrators and those of us who felt apartheid's blows, it is worthwhile remembering a difference in a particular site of struggle for the two 'souths'.

After the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy toured South Africa as a guest of the anti-apartheid movement. The year was 1966. It was two years after the signing of the Civil Rights Act in the US. Robert Kennedy recounted the following to a reporter from *Look* magazine:

At the University of Natal in Durban, I was told the church to which most of the white population belongs teaches apartheid as a

moral necessity. A questioner declared that few churches allow black Africans to pray with the whites because the Bible says that is the way it should be, because God created Negroes to serve. **"But suppose God is black"**, I replied. **"What if we go to Heaven and we, all our lives, have treated the Negro as an inferior, and God is there, and we look up and He is not white? What then is our response?"** There was no answer. Only silence."¹

Although churches, like the rest of society, have had to reinvent themselves and throw off their apartheid identities, it is sobering to reflect that in many small towns and big cities there are still enclaves where conflicting social visions exist – and I'm not referring here only to churches but to any institutions, even those of learning, struggling with change. What happens if such enclaves never open themselves to constitutional discourse, to re-visioning exercises or even to discussing the past and the present?

The year 2004, the date on which the *Journey to Freedom* project began, marked ten years of formal democracy in South Africa.

But beyond celebrating the dismantling of the formal apartheid system and its replacement by the creation of democratic socio-political structures, we have to consider soberly what this peaceful transition to democracy means.

To have a constitution is one thing, to redress the apartheid past is another. We are able to do it, but do we? We have a vibrant democracy and after more

than a decade of formal democracy we can see that it is possible for black and white middle classes to coexist. Yet a huge, vocal and predominantly black working class reminds us that while formal apartheid has ended, its legacy is still intact. The struggle for human rights was not simply a matter of reconstituting the middle classes, and it continues after more than fifty years of the Freedom Charter.

Presumably this, too, has been the experience of African Americans and progressive white people from the south of the US after nearly forty-five years of civil rights.

Nothing can be taken for granted. Rights are won and must be fought for to be retained. Civil rights are more than a product – signed, stamped and sealed. They are an ongoing process. They require commitment and recommitment.

Nor can we assume that the alliances in our diaspora will simply hold up forever because in virtually the same years we similarly battled oppression with

mass resistance. It is only through constant dialogue, putting to use our democratic institutions and places of learning for the purposes of exchange and sharing of knowledge, that we can ensure commonality and continued dialogue about resistance, culture and power.

In a global context we are witnessing a new Cold War, a retreat into the religions of exclusion, a re-shutting-out of 'others'.

Has the *Journey to Freedom* exercise provided us with a space to continue a dialogue in these new but old times? Do we have in place the relationships to rethink imperialism, the seminar rooms to hear the competing discourses around globalization and the ongoing narratives of slavery and freedom? Are the doors of learning and culture really open?

If the answer is 'Yes', then we have achieved the first step of what we strove for with the *Journey to Freedom* narratives. Let us immediately begin to plan the next step.

1 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_Rights_Movement_\(1955-1968\)#_note-8#_note-8](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_Rights_Movement_(1955-1968)#_note-8#_note-8)

Notes on the Contributors

(Mr) ME Fourie lectures in UNISA's Department of Psychology in Community Psychology. His interests are qualitative methodology; grounded theory; social constructionism; psychofortology; community and cultural studies; organisational cultures and the well-being of employees during mergers and related processes of change.

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(Mr) D Johan Kruger is a lecturer in UNISA's Department of Psychology. He teaches Research methodology, Social Psychology and Community Psychology. He is interested in the philosophy of Science, the Philosophy of Psychology, ontology, epistemology, paradigms, and worldviews while his research is into quantitative and qualitative methodologies; violence and injury; programme/outcome evaluation; critical psychology.

(Prof.) Mandla S Makhanya is the Executive Dean of UNISA's College of Human Sciences. He holds degrees in sociology from the University of Fort Hare and the University of KwaZulu Natal as well as a DPhil from the University of Pretoria and a DTE from UNISA. He specializes in Industrial Sociology, Educational Sociology and the Sociology of Social Problems. He worked in industry before he was recruited to join academia. His experience gained in industry has added value in his managerial and leadership skills. He has made a significant contribution in change management at Unisa, particularly as a Project Team Leader of Academic Programs, Structure and Research.

(Dr) Mogomme Alpheus Masoga previously headed the Historical Sciences School at the former University of the North where he founded the African Renaissance Centre. A former research manager at the Indigenous Knowledge Systems of South Africa Trust, he is a senior researcher at the CRL Rights Commission and a research fellow at UNISA's Department of Human Ecology.

(Ms) Gwen Miller is a lecturer in Visual Arts at the Department of Art History, Visual Arts and Musicology, UNISA. She was born in Messina in 1962. She specializes in contemporary painting and has worked in collaborative projects, nationally and internationally. Her work is represented in major art collections, such as Telkom, Sasol and UNISA.

(Prof.) Nyameko Barney Pityana is Principal and Vice Chancellor of UNISA. As a trained human rights attorney, theologian and educationist, he chairs Higher Education South Africa (HESA), the voice of the higher education vice chancellors and institutions; the African Council for Distance Education and the AU Commission's Steering Committee on African Intellectuals and the Diaspora. Prof. Pityana also works with UNESCO's International World Conference on Higher Education and the African Governance Institute and chairs. Previously chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission, he also served a six-year term as a member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

(Ms) Wendy Ross coordinates the Visual Arts section of UNISA's Department of Art History, Visual arts and Musicology. She specializes in ceramics, sculpture, collaborative public and community arts and ecological environmental art practices. Her current research is into collaborative ecological arts with emphasis on water, pollution, recycling and building community capacity.

(Ms) Puleng J Segalo is a lecturer in the Department of Psychology where she teaches Community Psychology and Social Psychology. Her research interests are in cross-cultural research in the workplace; attitude change and self-identity and emotional intelligence training - the process of self-awareness; child and youth development.

(Dr) Raymond Suttner is a senior researcher at the Walter and Albertina Sisulu Knowledge and Heritage Unit at UNISA's School for Graduate Studies, College of Human Sciences. One of South Africa's foremost political analysts, he is a former political prisoner, the author of *Inside Apartheid's Prison* (2001. University of Natal Press) and co-author with Jeremy Cronin of *50 Years of the Freedom Charter* (2007. UNISA Press). A prolific and well-published writer, he is also the editor of the UNISA Press Hidden Histories series.

(Prof) MJ Terre Blanche is Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology. His teaching disciplines are Community and Health Psychology and Research Methodology and his interests are in knowledge of politics; poststructuralism and postmodernism; collaborative learning; discourse analysis; critical psychology; sub-jugated, marginalized and fringe knowledges.

(Mr) Thembela Vokwana, conductor of the Melodia UNISA Chorale, lectures in Musicology at UNISA. He is interested in the role of music in advocacy campaigns in dealing with HIV/AIDS in South Africa and in exploring ways in which music acts as a site of new struggles to question, critique and draw attention to new forms of exclusion and inequality in the post apartheid dispensation. He is currently studying ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University, Connecticut, on a Fulbright scholarship.

DVD CREDITS

DOCUMENTARY

Kai Lossgott:	Script writer
Greg Miller:	Editor, interviews, camera
Gcina Mhlophe:	Voiceover
Gwen Miller:	In a supporting role

DVD

Greg Miller:	Producer
Kai Lossgott:	Text and language editor
Gwen Miller:	In a supporting role

DIGITAL ANIMATION

Gwenneth Miller and Wendy Ross; Frikkie Eksteen:	Project coordinators
Sarah Fraser:	technical advisor
Kai Lossgott:	Land Act, Vukani Mawethu, Bawo Thixo Somandla, Nkosi Sikele'i Afrika, When the Saints go marching in, Hymn to Freedom, Fly hat
Greg Miller:	Fly, Principal technical advisor
Gwenneth Miller:	We shall overcome, Bawo Thixo Somandla*, Hymn to Freedom*, conceptual director
Reboile Motswasele:	Bawo Thixo Somandla*, Toyi-toyi Songs*, Halala Mahumagadi*, translations and contextual interpretation of lyrics
Katty Vandenberghe:	Toyi-toyi Songs, Medley of two religious songs: Ha Ke Letje and Modimo, Re Boka Wena, Halala Mahumagadi, technical advisor
Nicole Vinokur:	We shall overcome, Vukani Mawethu*,
Gcina Mhlophe:	Voiceover "Fly hat fly"

EMBROIDERY PROJECT

Wendy Ross and Gwenneth Miller: Project coordinators, selection, composition and layout of wall hanging

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 Ameliah M. Mukhari
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 Thabitha Nare
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 Cynthia Radebe
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Choir Performance Co-ordinators: Puleng Segalo and Thembela Vokwana

Choir members:

Sopranos

Sophy Lerida
 Lethabo Mbungi
 Zelda Mokhutle
 Lerato Malaise
 Stephina Masango
 Bongwe Mdluli
 Tsholofelo Matlasedi
 Elizabeth Napo
 Dumazile Ndlovu
 Zamangwane Ngozi
 Whitey Ntsoane
 Nomzamo Qotho
 Hope Shibambo

Altos

Margaret Buys
 Sylvia Chokoe
 Nthabiseng Maboe
 Franscinah Motsepe
 Virginia Mophuting
 Nyameka Ndaba
 Millicent Mpholo
 Sonto Nkomo
 Puleng Segalo
 Sindi Tsotetsi
 Adelaide Skhosana
 Sibongile Zwane

Tenors

Elvis Aphane
 Mighty Gwabeni
 Serengwane Lethuba
 Wanda Mamba
 Meshack Mosotho
 Megga Mbethe
 Tebogo Moiloa
 Collins Mohlala
 Junior Makhubedu
 Phatudi Malope
 Thabo Mailula
 Solomon Khoza
 Tshepo Semanya
 Alex Mahlobogoane
 Thembela Vokwana
 Sam Masiya

Basses

Kgaugelo Bhoya
 Benjamin Disolokane
 Christopher Maimela
 Solomon Nkwe
 Mlungisi Thusi
 Shole Shole
 James Sithole
 Lebogang Thakadu
 Thepudi Marokane
 Themba Mashiya-Tshabalala
 Abram Ramokgaba
 Tshifhiwa Netshiukwi
 Titus Sebesho
 Itumeleng Namo
 Gontse Mabusela

This project was part of the larger UNISA-Mississippi Project coordinated by the Executive Dean of Human Sciences Prof Mandla Makhanya.

It also included an international conference with George King as administrative coordinator and Prof Zodwa Motsa as events manager.

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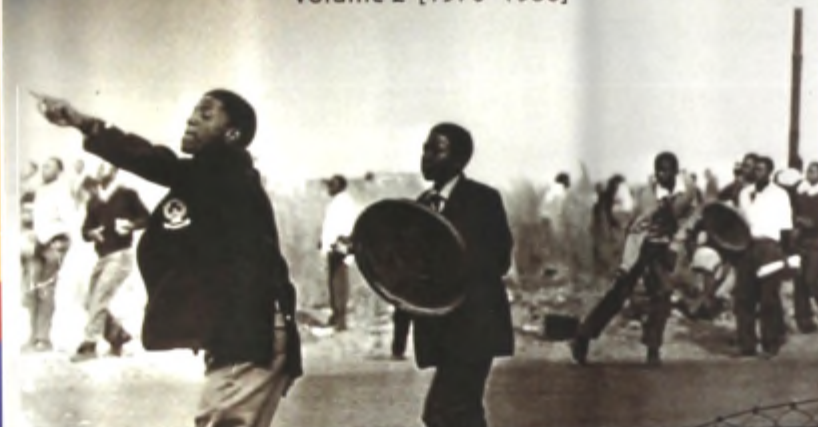
Technical compilation of final quilts: Celia de Villiers and Susan Suttich

CHOIR: MELODIA UNISA CHORALE (a live sound recording, 2004)

*In a supporting role

The Road to **DEMOCRACY** in South Africa

Volume 2 [1970-1980]



South African Democracy Education Trust

ISBN 1 86888 406 6, Hardcover, 970 pp

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This is a history that, quite simply, had to be written. Those who actively participated in the struggle for liberation are growing ever older; here they have related their experiences to trained historians, sociologists and political scientists, many of whom were themselves involved in the resistance movement. SADET has compiled and coordinated this remarkable book that weaves together the complex history of *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*.

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africleads

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"The best of the night was the Melodía Unisa Chorale co-ordinated by Puleng Segalo and Thembele Vokwana, combined with the sublime storytelling of Gcina Mhlope.

Because the choir sang songs that were highlighted by magnificent digital moving images of a sewing outreach programme, it became a story in itself.

The choir, brilliantly dressed and rehearsed, sang with such fervour, enthusiasm and energy, that the audience had to be swept along.

From their toyi-toyi entrance to their more traditional choir singing, they captivated in their approach, their singing and the way they embraced the music and the message."

— Diane de Beer, *Pretoria News*

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