

"By creating situations in which artists and communities can work together to perceive both the differences that separate them and the similarities that connect them ... France Morin:
"we discovered that it might be possible to reaffirm the dignity, beauty and sacredness of every member of society, including the disenfranchised and the excluded.
To reaffirm the social utility of art by reintegrating it with life and consequently to initiate the process of social transformation".

Curator : Sylvie Groschatau-Phillips

As a curator and art therapist, my aim is to promote art in all its forms of expression. I choose to live in South Africa. Here art is a necessity and the involvement of the arts in terms of therapy and tuition allows a unique opportunity to bring change, to share and propagate the seeds of Transformation.

The curator should be a cultural communicator (Gerardo Mosquera, Curator, Cuba). An exhibition is not only about putting up artworks : it is about creating an environment that shows a vision, has a flavour and gets a response.

Working as an Art Activist over the past 10 years, I have been involved in numerous collaborative projects acting as art therapist and curator.

The Voyage Ensemble project started in 2006 and 5 successive Visual Arts exhibitions were mounted together with the publication of films, brochure and the World Passport catalogue. Initiated by the Scalabrini Centre and funded by Pro Helvetia, Ifas and the Department of Arts&Culture in Cape Town, the Voyage Ensemble project combines media, initiates and develops networks between local and migrating African artists with the specific aim of integrating the displaced artists into the South African arts network and challenge xenophobia. I facilitate workshops prior each exhibitions to create works in common and realize short films, brochures and catalogues to promote the project and the artists. The project received extensive press and broadcast together with strong response from the audience and the Art network of Cape Town.

My aim is to create platforms of opportunities, interaction and creativity.

That the artists participate actively to the projects : brainstorm, create and share.
To articulate the importance of fluidity, performativeness and change as central to artist's activities.

To devise ways of getting more and more mixed audiences, to create quality exhibitions that get response, create waves, have a resonance. To inspire.
Exposure, active tuition, engagement, networking and accessibility are keys for the project : they create links for talents to emerge, for currents of thoughts to be shared.

In December 2006, I was invited to the VANSA Curators Workshops in Robben Island where I presented the Voyage Ensemble Project and in December 2007 to the AICA (International Art Critics association) conference guests at the Scalabrini Center where it received excellent feedbacks : one of the outcome is the invitation received from Heeten Bhagat, curator of the National gallery in Harare for Voyage to participate to the HIFA festival in Zimbabwe in April/May 2008.

We are currently working on the Voyage new project for 2008 : A research on Identity which combines series of workshops and exhibitions.

VOYAGE ENSEMBLE 2008 : DISPLACEMENT AND IDENTITY

To reflect on issues such as xenophobia and displacement through a series of visual art exhibitions that combine individual artworks and common imagery.

To organize and facilitate a series of workshops and lectures centred on Identity : Displacement/Relocation/Loss of identity/Discrimination boundaries stereotyping mapping cultural echoes

To envisage and propose art as a therapy for individuals and communities.

The series of workshops hosted by the Scalabrini Centre will culminate with a publication (brochure or catalogue) depicting three years of sustained works and a series of exhibitions illustrating the theme at the Iziko Slave Lodge in Cape Town, the HIFA in Harare, the Refugee World Day in June and, possibly, at the District Six museum and the Scalabrini Centre for the end of the year exhibition in November / December

Specific aims, outcomes and achievements:

- ✓ To present a series of exhibitions that interrogate and create awareness on the theme of identity and displacement and the plight of being a displaced person.
- ✓ To create words and works individually that will combine to present a reflexion on identity
- ✓ To initiate material towards a publication depicting three years of sustained works through intensive workshops run by guest facilitators, lecturers, curator and some of the participating artists.

Platform for emergent artists : To integrate the displaced artists in the local art world through their participation to an Intently successful project that brings Achievements collectively and individually.

The participating artists are offered a studio with computer and internet at the Scalabrini centre. Use of the Scalabrini conference room and the hall will be made to accomodate workshops and lectures.

The Voyage Ensemble is and should become more of a nursery : to fulfill its aim fully, Voyage Ensemble needs to focus and expand, teach and learn.

In the past two years the most active participating artists have been selected to partake in solo or collective exhibitions, seminars, residencies, workshops and two Voyage artists received international art awards.

The project is well received locally : art galleries, other curators, museums and organizations have shown a keen interest in both the quality of the artworks presented and the issues the project interrogates.

Thank you for your attention

Sylvie Groschatau-Phillips

Curator Voyage Ensemble

voyageensemble@gmail.com

+ 27(021) 448 59 81 / 076 788 40 38