Routes of creolisation: performing African urban space

Orli Bass
Routes of creolisation: performing African urban space

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“Extraordinary new things are happening in our cities – it’s our collective responsibility to address them”

(Mabin, 2007)

“We assert the centrality of people’s creative attempts to construct, contest and maintain a material and emotionally secure sense of place and identity”

(Field, Meyer & Swanson, 2007:7)
Theoretical Imperatives

Conversation between literatures

- Postcolonialism
- Creolisation
- Culture-led urban regeneration
- Inclusive cities

Creative activities transform space
Durban Context

Elaborate alternative postcolonial, urban tradition

- Iconic organic
- Durban as cultural archive
- Concrete, visual and physical strategies transform material and representational Durban
- African identity and how the city is sculpted (co-constituting relationship)
- Landscaping Durban as a creolised, African city
- Re-appropriate physical space & identity
- Attuned to cultural stories which shape urban life & form
- Engage with the performed, imagined, lived fabric of cities
Sounds Like Here

- *d*URBAN NOISE and scraps WORKS
  - Jürgen Bräuninger
- *Warwick* ∆
- Forges beyond stereotypes
- Forces juxtaposition & integration
- Creolised soundscape
- New senses of Durban’s representational space
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INTERSECTION
30 Sep 2005
DURBAN ART GALLERY
6 TILL LATE

RED EYE
TRANSFORM!
29 Sept
DURBAN ART
GALLERY
CITY HALL
18000
Organic Cultural Moments

- Recontextualise/ Invest with new meaning:
  - Urban space
  - Architecture
  - Statutes
  - Art

- Constructs cultural path

- Encountering, moving, dancing, playing = new paths of connection

- City experience = fluid, suggestive, inclusive, accessible

- Conveys possibilities of urban, African future
Towards Urban Inclusion

- Ordinary moments of possibility
  - Shared encounters, experiences, meaning, space
  - Powerful transformation
- Policy implications
  - Low investment
  - Culture-led urban regeneration
  - Social interaction