

THE MUSEUM OF TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

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614 THE (AFTER)LIFE OF OBJECTS

Mark Auslander's short article "Objects of Kinship" describes the discovery of an object referred to as "Ashley's Sack" at a Tennessee flea market. This cotton seed bag was found to be an heirloom passed from mother to daughter on the sale of the latter as a slave. On the front of the sack, the following message is embroidered:

My great grandmother Rose
mother of Ashley gave her this sack when
she was sold at age 9 in South Carolina
it held a tattered dress 3 handfulls of
pecans a braid of Roses hair. Told her
It be filled with my Love always
She never saw her again
Ashley is my grandmother
Ruth Middleton
1921 (Auslander 209)

This object, imbued with changing economies of value—emotional, spiritual, and more recently, financial—reaches out to us from the past, "across histories of love and violence" (Auslander 216), resurrecting itself in the present to convey a poignant story of both kinship and loss. Reactivating abandoned objects in a present conversation on loss and memory, the art event *Museum of Truth and Reconciliation* sought to do something similar in bringing new value to objects discarded as worthless. The Museum of Truth and Reconciliation was instituted first as an activity and later as a collection, a beta-museum curated by the group of participants who took part in the singular art event on October 19, 2016 at the Centre for Indigenous Studies

at the University of Toronto. In my hybrid role as artist-researcher, I conducted the event as an attempt at situating or materializing notions surrounding truth and reconciliation, particularly as drawn from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC), in aesthetic forms, those accessible in the everyday, normalized spaces of the present that still hold traces of the past, whether tangibly or transiently. If a commission set up to instigate “truth and reconciliation” is conceived of as “a space for the performance of history and the negotiation of both individual and collective memory in the passage to reconciliation” (Meskin and van der Walt 69), how is this performance or practice taken into normality or the everyday? How is it enacted on a day-to-day basis, as opposed to occupying an autonomous space in which it is performed as a cathartic, peacemaking act? This essay serves as a reflexive epilogue to the participatory art event, written as a compilation or *Wunderkammer* of thoughts and images that work around the idea of truth and reconciliation, a setting forth of ideas and activities through which an “end” is not prefigured. It seeks to set up connections between artistic practice and history through combinatory modes of thinking and doing. In this sense, the essay is not a definitive study and has not come to a conclusion or end, but should rather be read as an ongoing collection of thoughts, which could continuously be added to and reassembled.

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In the art event I asked participants to conduct explorations in which they would collect in small plastic “collector’s boxes,” of the type typically used for fishing tackle or for the storage of small delicate objects, items that they felt spoke to a specific chosen prompt from a set of cue cards each containing an image and a written proposal for action (see Figure 1). This posed the question of how a set of ideas or keywords could and would be imagined or envisaged aesthetically. The textual prompts included, each on a separate card, the phrases “Appearing/Vanishing,” “Monument to Lost People,” “Mapping Bodies,” “Moments/Monuments,” “Flotsam and Jetsam,” “Lost and Found,” “Placed/Displaced,” “Empty Shells,” “Replaced and Re-placed,” “Petrification and Mortification,” “Body Fragments,” “Burying/Covering,” “Remembering and Re-remembering,” “Trauma Imprints,” and the single words “Detritus,” “Debris,” and “Souvenir.” The pictures on the cards were a selection of ink drawings, rendered predominantly in black and white and muted colour, which evoked the human body or parts thereof.¹ This suite of cards sought to inspire “serious” or “studious” play,² in this case a moment of play that served as a thinking exercise around individualized notions of truth and reconciliation, a practice that, to some degree, attempted to mimic South African artist William Kentridge’s description of the TRC as a kind of “civic theatre”³ (IX) in which “individual narratives come to stand for the larger national narrative” in a process by which “[h]istory and autobiography merge” (Taylor, *Ubu and the Truth Commission* II). The “show and tell” nature of the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation exercise meant that found objects often become symbolic or metaphorical makers of a participant’s exploration, but it is perhaps the finding or searching itself that became the more significant aspect of the event, a “reconciliation” of the self with both human and object other through play.

The situating of the event/collection as a “museum” offers a means of making memory and voice material. The collection of objects is now housed within a small brown velour-covered suitcase, storing within it the proceedings of the event and the narratives that were built around ideas of truth and reconciliation and the past in this context. This travelling museum or “object library,” a library of the street, can be seen as a literal storage facility for a finding and showing, a show-and-tell of “truth.” The collection of discarded objects, akin to the investigative practice of exhumation, which Nicky Rousseau describes as “often sensorial, relying on an intimate interaction with the ground and the body” (209), is evocative of the objects that make up a “found” body, and conversely, parallels the treatment of bodies as objects. Here Rousseau’s detailed account of the exhumation of “five anti-apartheid activists⁴ recovered at Post Chalmers outside the rural Eastern Cape town of Cradock [South Africa] in July 2007 by the Missing Persons’ Task Team” (203)⁵ offers an anecdote that suggests that it is in fact objects or “things” that present more convincing evidence of the “human” than the physical human body itself:

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If recognising bone was central to identifying the human, artefacts assembled the idea of a more fleshed, corporeal body. A shoe or zipper fragment, shoelace, button, buckle, a door key, some coins: these were more agentive in assembling the human persons, just as tyre, diesel, bullets, beer bottles, summoned their killers, suggesting the human is held together less by physical body, but assembled through fragments, things or objects, sensorial and affective. (Rousseau 210)

There is an uncanny similarity in the suitcase of oddments collected during the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation event to a box of objects found by staff (see Figure 2) at the former Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School, now the Woodlands Cultural Centre in Brantford, Ontario. This school, open from 1928 to 1970, was run by an Anglican religious order and operated as a boarding school for native Canadian children taken from surrounding areas, predominantly from the Six Nations Reserve at Brantford, Ontario (The Mohawk Institute). The box contains such items as candy wrappers, combs, socks, and toys, all items left behind by children who were forced residents of the school. These reminders of the past lives of these children further convey the idea that objects hold within them an (after)life and power.

The Museum of Truth and Reconciliation event was derived from a wider project that, in very simple terms, looks to puppetry, specifically that of the South African Handspring Puppet Company,⁶ and its relation to the hand as a means of investigating touch or tactility through the form of the puppet or performative object and the power this relationship imbues and departs in differing contexts. It is a twofold exploration of object and body. My own investment in this essay thus started as a means of approaching the TRC through the body-as-object in the form of the puppet, an aesthetic form that is simultaneously human and object, but has led to a deeper engagement with the human body as it is manifested in examples derived from the TRC itself. Although not situated in broader theatre practices or conventions per se,



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Figure 1. A selection of prompt/cue cards and collector's boxes displayed on the floor at the Centre for Indigenous Studies, University of Toronto, 2016.

Photograph by Emma Minkley.



Figure 2. Detail of the box of items found at the Mohawk Residential School displayed at the Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford, Ontario, 2016.

Photograph by Emma Minkley.

the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation event responds specifically and appropriately to Handspring Puppet Company, William Kentridge and Jane Taylor's puppetry production *Ubu and the Truth Commission*,⁷ which moves the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission into an aesthetic space, but also highlights the performative, theatrical nature of the TRC processes themselves, bringing them continuously into the present with every enactment and reenactment of the play. *Ubu and the Truth Commission* follows the protagonist Pa Ubu, whose job involves "taking care of the affairs of the state" (*Ubu and the Truth Commission*), and his wife Ma Ubu as they navigate a post-Apartheid era landscape at the time of the TRC, a "commission to determine truths, distortions, and proportions" (*Ubu and the Truth Commission*). Pa Ubu is a villain of the Apartheid era who must decide whether to testify and tell the truth of the evil deeds he has committed as an agent of the state, which in the play appear on an animated backdrop screen as body parts, bones, and weapons, or deny any involvement and escape his dubious past unscathed.

618 The production brings the audience's attention to participants of the TRC by using script from the original South African hearings, spoken by puppet witnesses. Two puppeteers support the puppet occupants, "echoing the presence of two people alongside each witness at the hearings—one to translate, one to comfort" (Meskin and van der Walt 73). In the play, however, the translator stands in a confessional "shower booth," which also doubles as a site for Pa Ubu to "wipe clean" his conscience after he returns from his "evening strolls" smelling of "blood and dynamite" (*Ubu and the Truth Commission*). The puppets act as "emotional prostheses" (Taylor, "Omissions and Commissions") for the puppeteers, assisting them in dealing with issues addressed in the play as presented by the witnesses. The term *emotional prosthesis* describes the bond between puppets and their manipulators, who form a symbiotic relationship both physically and psychologically, forging what Mark Auslander might call a "link of kinship" (209). The puppet requires the manipulator's assistance to give it "life," while the puppeteer uses the puppet as a tool to process emotional trauma.

The professional "comforters" of the South African TRC, who could be seen to provide support via human contact, holding the hands of witnesses and "stroking them, holding them, providing them with tissues to dry their tears and glasses of water to help them recover" (Edelstein 92), show how integral the role of the hand itself is as an emotional prosthesis.⁸ It becomes a tool for comfort—the simple act of offering one's hand a source of reassurance. Contrastingly, however, the hand can also be figured in a history of violence in narratives surrounding reconciliation commissions; the hand of the state that controls and oppresses, and the hand that murders or perpetrates, the amalgamation of hand and weapon becoming a different sort of emotional prosthesis. This can be seen in Jillian Edelstein's closely cropped black and white 1997 portrait of Dirk Coetzee,⁹ the first commander of the covert Apartheid-era South African Security Police Unit at the Pretoria farm Vlakplaas, "whose actions" in overseeing the death and torture of multiple anti-Apartheid

activists “epitomised the atrocities of the apartheid regime” (Edelstein 13). In the photograph *Dirk Coetzee, Pretoria, 26 February 1997* (Edelstein 111), Coetzee’s right hand is posed with his handgun—which apparently did not ever leave his wrist, like a “little handbag” (Edelstein 110), even when he went to the toilet—aimed upwards, adjacent to his face, with his index finger poised on the trigger, while his left hand tightly grasps the wrist of the gun-wielding hand. This photograph was taken during the South African TRC proceedings, and in this context it feels as though his right hand is “alive,” a creature that Coetzee must himself restrain from repeating the evils of the past.

The effects of the emotional prosthesis can further be witnessed by an audience who experiences the puppeteers’ handling by extension, through visuality, as opposed to through touch. The audiences of repeat performances of *Ubu and the Truth Commission* can thus benefit doubly, bearing witness to the puppet-actors who bring confessions from the original hearings, and the reenactments of these hearings in contemporaneous spaces, thus extending the reach of the TRC into the present. The confessions included in the play appear to come predominantly from parents who speak of the death of their children at the hands of the Apartheid state and the task of having to identify their bodies in so many parts: nose, mouth, eyes, hands, legs, brains, blood. As one witness puts it, “They gave us the remains, but it wasn’t much” (*Ubu and the Truth Commission*). Repeated performances of these stories are important in preserving the evidence of past lives, conveying the “everlasting pain” (*Ubu and the Truth Commission*) of these witnesses. Theatre provides a means of “processing” emotions or thought, in that “within the narratives of trauma, there is always scope for dramatic re-enactment(s) that can then serve as way stations on the path to healing, through the (re)processing of such narratives in structured forms” (Meskin and van der Walt 70). This (re)processing is further made a collective process, a collective catharsis, in the communal setting of the theatre.

In *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, the suitcase or bag acts as a metaphor for concealing or revealing secrets. Here a crocodile puppet named Niles, which simultaneously serves as a repository and confidant for the protagonist Ubu’s secrets, as well as Ma Ubu’s handbag, is created through a conglomerate of a canvas and leather duffel bag and hand-carved wooden body parts which make up the head and segmented tail. The bag in its puppet form would thus play two roles, consuming “Ubu’s history but retain[ing] it in its secret belly so that it can emerge to damn him when necessary” (Meskin and van der Walt 72). The role that Niles plays is emblematic of what Kentridge calls a “battle between the paper shredders and the photostat machines” (VIII), that is, a conflict on “How to deal with a guilt for the past, a memory of it” (IX). In other words, it describes the “tension between history and memory and the creation of a new, and blank future” (Meskin and van der Walt 72). The Museum of Truth and Reconciliation takes its cue from the crocodile suitcase as an entity that stores and continuously conceals/reveals memory and history. The art event was meant to equip participants with the “emotional prosthesis” of collect-

ing, addressing the subject of truth and reconciliation through objects, extensions of ourselves which assist us in working through an issue. In other words, through collecting, through the hand, we produce a set of objects that become extensions of our thoughts and emotions. These can be seen as relational objects, which in this instance were used to translate, transfuse, or buffer the textual ideas presented as prompts. “Direct[ing] our energies to making new histories out of the old” (Meskin and van der Walt 75), the event asked how we enact or embody memory in the present; how we construct or imagine it. It used the motif of the suitcase as a repository that stores secrets and truths which may be unpacked and rearranged as a means of recalling stories through objects while simultaneously creating new meaning out of the old, a continuous (re)digesting.

620 Patricio Guzmán’s 2015 documentary film *The Pearl Button* (*El Botón de Nácar*) weaves the stories of two of what he refers to as “exterminations” (*The Pearl Button*) in South Chile through the motif of water, specifically the ocean, and its significance as a place of refuge, reassurance, connection, life, and ultimately death in its function as a mass graveyard for Indigenous people. The film is seen as a followup to Guzmán’s *Nostalgia for the Light* (*Nostalgia de la Luz*), which investigates the evidence of human remains in the Atacama Desert after Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship, in relation to the stars and astronomy. It follows a group of women who still search for any vestige of their relatives who were murdered and “disappeared” during Pinochet’s reign. *The Pearl Button* outlines the story of Jemmy Button, an Indigenous Yaghan man who in 1830 was “bought” by English Captain Robert FitzRoy¹⁰ with a single pearl button and transported to an “unknown planet” (*The Pearl Button*) as one of four native people to be taken to England to undergo the process of becoming “civilized.” The second layer of narrative that runs through Guzmán’s film also focuses on Chile at the time of Pinochet’s rule, specifically on how inmates from his concentration camps were disappeared in the Pacific Ocean; weighted by steel rails, their bodies placed in plastic bags and potato sacks and dropped from the air.¹¹ In the film, Chilean judge Juan Guzmán finds that the rails hold “messages” or “secrets” engraved by “water and its creatures” (*The Pearl Button*) when he discovers a button encrusted in one of the recovered rails, “the only trace of someone who had been there” (*The Pearl Button*), thus linking the story of Jemmy Button to Pinochet’s victims.

The analogies between human and button make clear how the body is made into an object to be purchased and commodified as a product or project, and also how a world can be represented or enclosed in a single seemingly insignificant object. It explains how an object takes on life, but also how, when applied to the subject of the human body, it takes away life. In simple terms, objects encapsulate worlds, as is evident in the box of small objects found at the Mohawk Residential School. The motif of the button and its close relationship with the fingers and hand is furthermore emblematic of the intimacy of certain kinds of objects with the human body, apparent in the objects found by Rousseau at Post Chalmers, which come to stand in for the body itself. Many of the TRC testimonies, such as those used in *Ubu*

and the *Truth Commission*, demonstrate the fragmentation of bodies; how victims of Apartheid crimes were systematically broken down into sometimes unrecognizable parts or objects. In another of Edelstein's photographs, *Joyce Mthimkulu*,¹² *Zwide, Port Elizabeth, February 1997*, a mother is shown holding a chunk of her deceased son Sipiwo's hair.¹³ This photograph calls "attention to the importance of physical remains" (Rousseau 214), but further highlights touch, particularly a mother's touch, which is also evident in Ashley's *Sack* (Auslander 213), revealing how objects are imbued with this sense of tactility, and in turn how it is charged with affect. Sipiwo Mthimkulu's hair was later buried by his mother as a substitute for his corpse, "the only remainder of her son's physical body" (Rousseau 209). Another mother, Joyce Manaki Seipei, describes with devastating intimacy how she identified her son's body in so many parts:

I looked at Stompie because I am his mother. I had a deep look at him. I saw the first sign. I said, "I know my son. He doesn't have hair at the back." His eyes were gouged, and I said, "This is Stompie." [...] He had a scar on his eye. I looked at him at the nose, and he had a birthmark. I looked at his chest and I could see a scar, because he fought with another boy in Tumahole. And I looked at his left hand. It was identical to mine. I looked at his thighs. Stompie was very fit, just like his mother. I looked at his private parts, and my sister just winked her eye. His left leg is similar to mine. Underneath the left leg there was a birthmark as well. (qtd. in Edelstein 44)

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One participant of the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation who received the prompt card "Petrification and Mortification" described the collector's boxes as "coffins," his collection consisting of objects of "death": cigarette butts, paper fragments, stray feathers, and broken shards of glass. In this way, the fragments in the "coffins" came to be of the human body, echoing the memories of broken bodies such as those Seipei describes.

The site of the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation event, structured around the Centre for Indigenous Studies, linked it to the study of the presence and absence of Indigenous people and cultures, which was noted by the group of participants who received the prompt "Detritus" (Figure 3). This group set off together to find items that initially came from the "old world," but were in constant, popularized, or normalized usage in the "new world." The image on this card, two contrasting heads shown in profile, was read by participants as the meeting of these two worlds, the "European" and the "Conquest," which in this context largely revolved around cuisine, this association triggered by the textual prompt and the way in which it could refer to the decomposition of food. Items collected included the sausage (pork) and the ketchup (tomatoes) from a hot dog, a popular fast food (for these items, the group asked a hot dog vendor on the street if he would give them scraps of the food he was selling), and chocolate (representative of cacao and sugar) and corn, foods from the old world that the group felt the new world had claimed ownership of. Another item emblematic of this meeting of worlds was a small Bible printed in Spanish, handed to them on the street by a Jehovah's Witness representative.



Figure 3. The picture prompt for the cue card “Detritus.” 2016. 15 x 10.5 cm.
Ink and bleach drawing on card by Emma Minkley.

The event may have extended physically beyond the reach of the Centre for Indigenous Studies, but as participants explored the surrounds of the University that spill over into the rest of the city, it remained grounded to the “classroom” or lecture theatre or hall and its close relationship with the university, as a kind of aesthetic education. Here is a noteworthy link to the TRC proceedings, which located their “non-fiction histories” in “church halls and schoolrooms all over the country” (Meskin and van der Walt 71), in its attempt to situate the event as an altered mode of “civic theatre” based in a similar setting. It presented a form of collective and communal exercise in which the classroom was extended and the roles or positions of teacher and student were blurred, in that the process of “learning” moved both ways. This was not necessarily a comfortable space; participants confronted people they did not know, risked embarrassment picking up what is usually considered rubbish, and got lost.

WALKING-SEEING-COLLECTING (LOST IN TORONTO)

Today I’m sending you out into the world to collect fragments. These might be made up of found objects, paper debris, organic matter, thoughts, languages or sounds, amongst a host of many other possibilities. They may focus on one specific space, or the move between spaces. There is an evocative resonance between this event and Joseph Boyden’s description of a postcolonial space as one hit by a tsunami which has now receded and left

behind myriad glittering fragments, which are gathered and reassembled or reimagined by beachcombers.¹⁴ In this aesthetic exercise you will act as beachcombers, performing movements which recover and save evidence. Although there may not necessarily be vast amounts of tangible evidence from the past immediately obvious; it perhaps more a practice in what is not there to be found, the art event is further a thinking exercise and an act of studious play. The tool kit provided for each participant consists of a small compartmentalized collector's box and a prompt card, each of which contains a visual and textual cue or call to action—a proposition to play. Use these tools to guide your exploration.

The above text, which I read out as verbal instruction to the participants of the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation, has particular significance in relation to the prompt card, which offered the phrase “flotsam and jetsam,” denoting that which comes from the ocean, thus creating a link to those who arrived via the sea in acts of colonialism. More disturbingly, the phrase could also refer to the bodies recovered from the Pacific Ocean that Patricio Guzmán investigates in *The Pearl Button*. Enacted as a communal activity, the Museum was actualized via the group's collecting and collating processes, which asked participants to act as “forensic archaeologists” who “re-member” and remember history, the subsequent itinerary of objects that made up the portable Museum of Truth and Reconciliation serving as an alternative to an anthropological or ethnographic museum. This preservation of objects resonates with the Woodland Cultural Centre's Save the Evidence campaign, initiated to encourage the active memory of the Indian Residential Schools and the psychological damage they inflicted on many pupils in order “to ensure that the physical evidence of this dark chapter in Canadian history is never forgotten” (Mush Hole Project), manifest here in the proposed restoration of the Mohawk Residential School.¹⁵ Recovered from various former Indian Residential Schools around Canada, a collection of seven wooden doors that had been decorated and transformed by a collaborative beadwork project were also on display in this space in an exhibition titled *Opening the Doors to Dialogue*.¹⁶ One particularly poignant example was the door from the first floor boys' bathroom at the Muscowequan Indian Residential School,¹⁷ the panels of which had been embellished with black and pink fabric adorned with beadwork of small white birds and a spiralling floral design. It spoke of removal and transition, the sturdy door complete with multiple locks, in contrast to the delicate beaded patterning, an emblem of captivity and oppression.

Both the campaign and the exhibition, and the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation, emphasize the significance of holding on to objects that remind one of the past,¹⁸ a process that echoes the attempted reconciliatory practices of the South African TRC in its reliance on the memory of participants in recalling stories from the past, in this way enabling them to subjectively convey their side of the story. The placement and/or displacement of objects within and between spaces resonates with the movement or displacement of bodies which the actions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada sought to rectify. These objects speak to the “imprint” of trauma that remains in certain spaces and the burying or covering (and uncovering)

of this trauma. The collection of the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation further resonates with the subject of “missingness,” and is related to forensics or archaeology, as well as to the exhumation of bodies, in the sense that these practices look to objects and bodies that are “lost” and found. These practices address how space is altered or modified over time, and how it embodies history in the present. How do we think it, use it, and remember it in the present? The picture prompt for the “Monument to Lost People” cue card (see Figure 4) was read not only as a brain by the participant who received it, but also as a settlement or forest, the trees described as living monuments or “mutant witnesses.” The forest, a site of stories or myths, was represented in this collector’s box by rough tree bark, soil, and a single leaf, and was experienced by this participant as a place of loss, erasure or displacement—described as “illegible,” where one “loses one’s compass”—of people and of entire settlements.¹⁹

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Figure 4. The picture prompt for the cue card “Monument to Lost People.”
2016. 15 x 10.5 cm. Ink and bleach drawing on card by Emma Minkley.

This collecting of objects may seem an arbitrary exercise, but is evidently connected to bodies and fragments of lives that were, as the pearl button exchanged for Jemmy Button’s life shows us. It addresses individual narratives that exist around truth and reconciliation and the refiguring of these narratives in the present, asking how we envisage these in daily life. We may contemplate the act of collecting in the manner European naturalists or ethnographers might have done while collecting specimens to add to their curiosity cabinets or *Wunderkammern*: living entities, both animal and human reduced to objects of study, their sentience removed; and here we may again

think of the pearl button exchange. But the collector can also be figured as *bricoleur*, ragpicker, or strandloper,²⁰ one who “gathers the refuse and debris, the ephemeral, rejected, and marginal, the no longer functional” (Hansen 33); in other words, one who seeks to explore “a collection of oddments left over from human endeavours” (Lévi-Strauss 19). In this regard, Miriam Hansen asserts that “a new shape cannot be lived unless the disintegrated particles are gathered and carried along” (23). It was in this vein that the group of event participants took up the task of collecting, bringing objects “back from the dead” through individual and collective discovery.

This exercise also served to foreground the act of walking. As a strandloper, one is implicated as a lone figure whose investment lies in walking itself, perhaps somewhat aimlessly, and without destination. The significance of the activity thus lies in what is discovered along the way.²¹ The combination of walking/collecting here occurred as an act of touch or tactility, a moment in which things had to be seen through their handling. In this space, a simple walk through the city was transformed into an act embedded with a certain weight, figured as it was as a moment tied to stories of the past. As Rebecca Solnit puts it, “Most of the time walking is merely practical, the unconsidered locomotive means between two sites. To make walking into an investigation, a ritual, a meditation, is a special subset of walking [...] Which is to say that the subject of walking is, in some sense, about how we invest universal acts with particular meanings” (11). Here a further resonance with the work of the Handspring Puppet Company can be noted in the annual Reconciliation Day parade and performance organized by the Handspring Trust for Puppetry Arts²² in the small rural South African town of Barrydale. The performances aim to tell stories of reconciliation, while the form of the parade brings together the two “sides” of Barrydale that are divided by a hill in a space in which the separation of races divided by Apartheid is still evident. Both aspects of the parade examine the displacement of people. Walking is significant in these events, as it is this act that brings people together, a role in which the audience plays an integral part, and in this way performs an act of reconciliation. Here the emphasis is not necessarily on reconciliation between people (of different races), but rather what Basil Jones calls “a reconciliation with the self” (*Die Name Wat Ons Gee*) and one’s own history; creating a space in which people develop and explore themselves, and create conversations and connections with one another.

NOTES

1. The textual and pictorial prompts are derived from various readings and images which include Barrette, Haylock, and Mortimer, *Trauma Imprints*; Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*; Hansen, *Cinema and Experience*; and the Fluxkits of the late Twentieth Century Fluxus art movement.
2. I take the phrase “studious play” from Agamben (64).
3. Kentridge further explains the notion of “civic theatre” as “a public hearing of private griefs which are

absorbed into the body politic as a part of a deeper understanding of how the society arrived at its present position” (IX).

4. “Topsy” Madaka and Siphiwo Mthimkulu, and Champion Galela, Qaqawuli Godolozzi, and Sipho Hashe (known as the “Pebco Three”). These two groups of men were “killed in April 1982 and May 1985 respectively by Port Elizabeth security police, who thereafter burnt the bodies” (Rousseau 203).
5. The Missing Persons’ Task Team (MPTT) is “a unit mandated by [South African] government to investigate the fate and whereabouts of missing persons cases from the TRC” (Rousseau 215).
6. Handspring Puppet Company was founded in 1981 by Basil Jones and Adrian Kohler (executive producer and artistic director of the company, respectively), initially with the intent to “produce new children’s theatre with puppets that reflected life on the continent on which we lived; and to stake a claim for puppet theatre as a legitimate part of our local theatre vocabulary” (Kohler 42). The company has always maintained a focus on the importance of telling localized stories, and in this regard Jane Taylor notes that “[t]heatre arts have been of tremendous significance during South Africa’s tempestuous transformation from an Apartheid state to a multi-party democracy, and Handspring’s archive gives insight into the complexity and wealth of theatrical creativity in this country during those important years” (*Handspring Puppet Company* 15).
- 626** 7. *Ubu and the Truth Commission* was directed by William Kentridge and written by Jane Taylor, adapted from Alfred Jarry’s play *Ubu Roi*, with source testimony from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Archives. The puppets were produced by Handspring Puppet Company with backdrop animations by William Kentridge.
8. This is expressed in Jillian Edelstein’s set of photographs of participants of the South African TRC, a portion of which use the comforters as subjects (92-97).
9. This photograph forms part of a documentary photographic series centred on the TRC in which Edelstein has photographed witnesses who have testified as agents or perpetrators, victims, and survivors of Apartheid. Coetzee’s portrait appears in the “Vlakplaas” section of the series.
10. FitzRoy’s mission was to draw the land and coastlines of Patagonia, creating maps of this area which “opened the doors to thousands of settlers” (*The Pearl Button*).
11. According to the film, judicial reports say that between 1200 and 1400 people were disposed of in this way by Chilean Armed Forces (*The Pearl Button*).
12. Edelstein spells Joyce Mthimkulu’s name as “Mtimkulu” (without the “h”) in the photograph title and in other discussion of her, but the correct spelling seems to include the “h.” As such, I have kept the title of the photograph as Edelstein has spelt it, but used the spelling “Mthimkulu” in all other instances in which I use the name in this essay.
13. According to Rousseau, Mthimkulu had kept this chunk of hair “as evidence of thallium poisoning during an earlier detention” (209).
14. This quotation is paraphrased from Joseph Boyden’s October 18, 2016 seminar “Truth and Reconciliation Today: Three Stories.”
15. In this campaign, visitors to the Woodland Cultural Centre were requested to contribute to a printed brick wall that was built up with each donation of both money and memory, initiated to restore the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School building. Each printed image of a brick contained a blank space in which the contributor could write his/her name, above the slogan “I helped save the evidence.”
16. This exhibit was displayed at the Woodlands Cultural Centre art gallery from September 2, 2016 until January 31, 2017.
17. This school operated from 1932 to 1981 in Lestock, Saskatchewan.

18. There is an interesting contrast here to the current *Fees Must Fall or Rhodes Must Fall* movement (whose members are referred to as Fallists) in South Africa, which emphasizes the need to start anew, preferring to destroy rather than save the evidence. One clear example is the defacing and subsequent removal of the bronze memorial statue of Cecil John Rhodes from the University of Cape Town's campus, where it formerly occupied a prime position looking out over the city of Cape Town. Fallists see the presence of this kind of memorial as a constant reminder or symbol of the epistemic violence that is continuously perpetuated on those oppressed by the Apartheid regime, and as such, seek to remove it from their everyday lives.
19. Here one could look to the erasure of settlements in the Apartheid Group Areas Act of 1950.
20. An Afrikaans word for beachcomber, which literally translates as "beachwalker."
21. Having partaken in the Museum of Truth and Reconciliation event myself, I let the "spirit of discovery" guide my path, in the process becoming separated from the rest of the group and after some time, quite lost. I embraced this "lostness," and in so doing, opened my thought and mode of play up to the world around me, witnessing strangers' interactions on the street, and passing by fleeting moments of curiosity. I came across crinkled and yellowed splinters of old layered posters and the residue of glue; lampposts studded with staples; dumpsters behind tall buildings filled with passages of insulation pipes, cardboard boxes, and old furniture; and discarded clothing, its wearer's touch still present in the empty sleeves; all contrasted against the glossy exteriors of the surrounding high-rise structures. I passed a man lying on his back on the pavement, trying to heat his body with warm air blown up from the subway grate below. When I was crossing the street, I witnessed another man approaching a woman in front of me, mumbling to himself and trying to get her attention. He first asked himself, "Who is this person? I gotta see who this person is!" before accosting the woman and asking her, "What are you doing?!" When she ignored him, he threw the beer can he was holding into the street. I should note that I borrowed the phrase "spirit of discovery" here from the title of a public sculpture I came across on my route, which was lit up by the light reflected off one of the large mirrored buildings in the area. The phrase could also cast me in the role of colonizer, ripe with the "spirit of discovery" while conquering the new world.
22. In collaboration with the Barrydale Non-Profit and Public Benefit Organisation Net vir Pret, and Ukwanda Design and Puppetry Company.

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