

CCAC Interview with Janina Masojada on 31 August 2022

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Interviewer name (and acronym): Francois Lion-Cachet (FLC)

Interviewee name (and acronym): Janina Masojada (JM)

Name of translator, if applicable: N/A

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List of acronyms:

CCAC (Constitutional Court Art Collection)

CCSA (Constitutional Court of South Africa)

DPW - Department of Public Works

NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation)

MIT - MIT Massachusetts Institute of Technology

TRC - Truth and Reconciliation Commission

START OF INTERVIEW: 00:00:06

FLC: You just sent through the consent form, didn't you? I saw an email from you.

JM: I did and I'll be sending through some other stuff as we talk. And to be honest, I looked at the questions when you first sent them through, and I haven't gone back to them. I haven't looked at them this morning. I was rushing around.

FLC: I do have them open in front of me. So I can just read them out to you. Please tell us about the architectural proposal and final design for the CCAC building. How did you come up with the concept? What would you say are the core ideas that the building seeks to communicate? And how is this done?

JM: I know why I opened them and I then dauntingly closed them - it's such an extended set of questions that could keep us busy for hours! It is a book, and to be honest, there are already a few

books. And, so you know, one of the things with which I developed difficulty over time —[Albie is very good at this] was the telling of the story of the court again, and again and again, and hearing myself on repeat, I lost my sense of authenticity. The Court became a story that was told more and more for the audience, and I began to lose touch with its reality. So I made a decision to stop talking about it, as it was being spoiled by a set of keywords and catchphrase descriptions.

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:03:22

FLC: Janina, I'm losing you a bit. I do think this interview is more focused on the sun screens. And that first question I know is very broad. So I think let's skip it for now. Because I think we will get to some of the thinking that went into the building speaking about the sunscreens. Yeah, the interview very much is focused on the sunscreens and some of the contextual background into the collaboration with other artists and people that you collaborate with.

JM: So as you say, it'll all become interwoven. I will sort of go back a bit. Tell me if you can't hear me because otherwise it's quite frustrating.

FLC: I'll let you know but I can hear you fine now.

JM: Okay, for us it started with the [release of the international architectural] competition document. There was great excitement across the whole professional community. There hadn't been [an anonymous, design-based call to architects for decades, and on such a highly impactful and important building, it was radical]. And the three of us who entered together— Actually, there were four of us, Andrew [Makin], Paul [Wygers], myself and Erik.

FLC: Erik who?

JM: Erik Orts Hansen. Erik didn't stay, he emigrated during the design process. You'll see Erik standing with us in the award photographs. So there were four of us who worked together, three of us were based in Durban. Andrew, myself, and Erik. I had returned to South Africa from studying for a Master's in architecture at MIT, Erik and I had been friends as undergraduates in Durban, and we set up a very informal collaborative office in Durban called DesignWorkshop. I was working predominantly in development work within previously marginalised communities, NGO funded projects. We were working as independents. And Paul was a friend of Andrew's living in Johannesburg, also recently returned to South Africa, after studying Urban Design in the UK. We had a very loose collaboration, like-minded friends, passionate about Architecture, working together, sharing overheads and sometimes projects..... and when the court document came out, we said, 'Okay, we're going to do this thing, and we're going to win it'. We were [thrilled by the new South African democratic prospect, we were committed to the cause, and full of anticipation].

FLC: Anticipation?

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:07:17

JM: Yeah, you know, we had recently returned to South Africa from being abroad, we were excited about being back here. And there was a feeling of jubilation and exuberance that filtered through every aspect of our lives and being able to contribute in the re-orientated, end user, community, participatory, development work. This was a new format. A lot of the work that we did was more 'facilitation' as opposed to 'Architecture'. We were involved with communities where project, or needs definition, was a fundamental part of the design development process. The inclusion and consultation with the end user from the very outset of a project, defining with them the project purpose beyond the accommodation brief, talking through meaning and role, how to better serve the community definitely, made the aesthetic emerge as opposed to define.

We were building community centres and sports centres, schools and clinics, and a lot of those works were funded by international donors and various other NGO bodies in South Africa. As a group [of unburdened young architects], we were very well placed to [respond to the broader value-based requirements of the new Constitutional Court brief]. And, you know, to win it! We didn't have an establishment directing us. We had no 'corporate office'. We had a whole lot of friends who, once we started working, supported and assisted us. The way we socialised was to work and to work collaboratively. We focused on [architecture and the possibilities of influence and voice in a new era].

Paul, based in Johannesburg had additional expertise in urban design and we in Durban were driving the building architecture, in collaboration. Constitution Hill then, was completely derelict, intentionally isolated, internalised and disconnected from the broader context of urban Johannesburg - [being a site of prison buildings and the Old Fort].

The primary differentiator of our competition submission concept [was the carving out of a public gathering space in the heart of the defensive site, and making physical connections of this public space and the existing prison buildings and the new Constitutional Court building, into the surrounding city landscape. The site was opened and made accessible to all as an expression of the new public-serving Constitution. A democratic approach to a new public building in a new South Africa].

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:13:40

FLC: We do have some pamphlets, I think there's a short- But it's not for the building, it's for the architectural artwork's element to the process

JM: The document that should be in the archive is the architectural competition document. It's an A4, quite substantial book, which came out as the competition project brief. And in that brief, they gave not only the accommodation and the performance requirements, but the brief that the building must be reflective of the new democracy in South Africa, describing in some detail what the architecture must achieve in respect of meaning and identity.

In the design of architecture, you can impact human behaviour and social relationships.

I recall one of your questions being 'How were we impacted by Charles Correa and Geoffrey Bawa and some of the other judges?'. Is that right?

FLC: Yes.

JM: Both these jury architects come from third world developing countries that have struggled with social inequalities. They are both architects that have in their work responded very particularly to this social context, their landscape and climate. [They were both architects of reference and influence during our years of study and later practice]. We grew up impacted by their ethos. If you look at some of the buildings that both Geoffrey Bawa and Charles Correa undertook, they built for their people, they were in an anti-hierarchical form, did not reference colonial architecture, [and their architecture was born of the place, climate and contemporary culture]. When the competition shortlist of architects was announced, it was interesting to see the range of what had been proposed by the four or five finalists, who were all Southern African, [all in their own ways searching for an architectural identity true to time and place].

Albie Sachs, also a jury member and representing the client body, kept on saying to us through the process: "Where's the Artist's impression? We need an image to show what the building will look like, " We explained why that went against the very nature of the building concept, and the design process..... that there was not a one statement elevation epitomising what the building would look like". And so, going back to the beginning story, of the scheme being generated from the idea of making the site accessible, the building would become one with the site; so integrated into the other existing buildings that were already located there, so as not to be a singular building.

Our first decision was to remove the Awaiting Trial [Block] prison, and by doing that, make in its place a public, open space. This first gesture of the architectural response was to make a place that invited people to gather. There is documentation of these rationales- connecting across the site and making the site accessible as a primary intention.

The second thing was integrating the new building into the existing built fabric, as said, by designing the building as a collection of legible smaller building blocks. As opposed to being a single 'Monument', which Colonial Court buildings are typically. So it was an integrated, aggregated building form.

With the next primary decision, that proved in the design development controversial, was placing the court foyer and the court chamber in the most easily accessible to the public location, on what has become named, Constitution Square.

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:19:40

On one of our first meetings –there was a lot of pressure on us to swap the position of the chamber and the library– the client thinking that the library had more public interest. Our argument, which we ended up convincing the court judges to embrace, was that the court chamber needed to be in the heart of what was the public space, incidentally accessible.

So this is obviously pre-all the current security concerns. A challenge of the building being how one builds for accessibility and security and privacy. The conceptual diagram of the building defines public space and private space. The spine of the admin wing became the connector and separator between the public [Gallery/Exhibition wing] face of the building, and the private courtyards of the judge's chambers.

The route up the Great African Steps, designed as a site pedestrian link north and south, [is a spatial and historical link] between Sections Four and Five prisons [our history] on the one side and the Court Exhibition Wing [our future] on the other side - which leads me into talking about the sunscreens on the West Elevation of the Court –with that journey up and down the Great African Steps as one moves up and down a [hillside, making associations with rural landscape hill-side paths], walking between and within the history from Apartheid to Democracy, [and the stories of time and place. These stories literally the stories illustrated on the panels of the West elevation]

The Great African Steps and the Exhibition Wing and hence the West Sunscreen elevation are the link between the Court Chamber and the Public Library, designed as a solid protecting container to learning, illuminated with shafts of light shifting through the openings across the times of the day. The library as a container for books informs its form, and the Court Chamber [in contrast as a formalised natural amphitheatre shape] the ground, invites people to pass incidentally from the bright harsh sunlight of Constitution Square, through into the [dappled shaded light of the Foyer to settle down into the containment and holding form of the Court Chamber].

The building follows the existing site topography, this gradual slope of landscape, following the stepping levels of the adjacent Section Four and Five Prisons. In that way, the building was designed to connect and to integrate spatially with what was. [These outside public faces of the building formed the enclosure to an interior private courtyard, into which the Judge's Chambers were positioned connecting via private bridges at the different levels to the Library and to the Court Chamber]

FLC: Janina, related to that, I think I'm just going to reorder the questions a bit. But I do have one here that says 'To what extent has court architecture locally and abroad influenced the thinking behind the CCSA's design? Were you mindful of not reproducing a certain kind of design or prioritising another style? Why?'

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:27:53

JM: [Debate around identity, shared and individual, was prevalent around the era of democratisation, what new flag? What new coat of arms? What new style/design/message. What visual and spatial

identities define a common cultural language to attract and hold us all - 11 official languages, in 9 provinces, a need for inclusivity and rebirth. The architectural brief was very clear around this challenge as related to an Architectural expression of the new court building]. And we wanted this building to have no associations with colonial courthouses or known institutional government buildings, typically colonnaded and pedimented, whether the Union Buildings, Houses of Parliament, the White House, they all have the same association of imposition and [euro-centric] classical origin.

From the competition submission at a conceptual level, and ongoing throughout the design development, from the Urban Design down to the detailing, we were focused on [an] appropriate architectural language, to place and people, that needed to come out of an understanding of meaning and association. It was an invention, design. We wanted to be a part of making an environment which held no preconceived formal responses but at the same time, visitors could find their own references, or familiarities.

The design responded, not to predetermined aesthetic conditions, but to site conditions, human behavioural conditions, opportunities of making and the materials. We wanted the building to be as transparent as possible, physically, and visually. It was without doubt that the building was going to be built within a contemporary, modern technology, hence the concrete, steel and glass. We sought authenticity, legibility [what you see is what is] so [the materials are raw, no decorative cladding]. It is an elemental building.

If there needed to be security bars there, we would build security bars [made with clear intention and visibility, but with consideration of making and meaning. The design language is intended to be one of clarity and clear direction] - no matter what your set of references, where is private, what is important, what is to be respected. So as you enter the court foyer, the way that the steps are made, seems incidental -with little formality, they are landscape. When the DPW asked for balustrades and safety rails we argued, when you're walking across the landscape, there are no balustrades. So with the court foyer, it is not a grand arrival, but it has gravitas and wonder. One can sit on the steps of different heights, there's variety in the way that they are laid out, as it would be if you were gathering in a natural landscape. The language of the architecture was constructed out of thinking. Example: We wanted light to come in through the roof in the way of a dappled in a forest canopy. Sun direction, sunrise and sunset east to west determined the angles of the roof lights.

How the building would look was going to arise out of architectural design development. [And the establishment at the outset, that we wanted broad participation in the making and experiential contributions, so that as many as possible visiting would come and find their own meaning]. This was achieved by many artists and crafts people working in collaboration, and no singular 'author'. The aesthetic language of the building was loosened in this way, with traditional and rural craft and art having a place of importance and influence integrated into the building.

The West elevation [artwork façade is one of the primary integrated collaborative building works] -West sun is in your face and inescapable; as you are now experiencing. None of us had any idea to the extent to which the loose artwork would become such a major part of the court environment.

FLC: I've also been marking the questions that you've been touching on. So yeah, you can continue, I'm just letting you know that I am marking the questions that you've already answered. And then I'll just go over into the sunscreens when we've addressed everything. I think Zoom is gonna kick us off in the next few seconds. [Meeting ends].[New meeting starts]. I'm here, you're speaking about the public gallery and the west elevation.

JM: [We had identified varying opportunities for collaborative art and craft interventions. The west elevation sunscreen being one of the primary sites. And a process of project definition, and procurement was undertaken. There was no precedent for this kind of sub-contract within a building process, but there was strong support from the client body and various additional funding sources identified to 'top-up' what would have been a traditional building element allowance, with the additional costs related to these specialised elements. We developed briefing documents which were mini competition documents which were circulated broadly. We targeted rural practitioners, previously marginalised as well as established art and craft makers, and particularly at a national level in order to engage involvement from across the country. The briefs identified and described the physical siting of the works, included performance and functional requirements [e.g., weather-proof, acoustic, structural as well as design intention briefing so as to align with the building conceptually e.g. filtering, movement of light, memory, heritage].

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:42:42

JM: [We have the briefs on file. Some of the calls were idea driven, others design only which we as architects then developed and detailed and implemented within the building contract, and some like the sunscreens design and build that operated as a subcontractor on site to the main builder. Varying degrees of collaboration across a broad range of skill contributions. The sunscreens were a collaboration between the two artists, and the fabricator, Donovan Dymond. Have you had any contact with him?

FLC: Yes, we've actually interviewed him as well.

JM: Okay, Donovan ended up popping up on quite a few components of the court, making different things for the project. [He made the large steel panels of the Court logo]. I'll send you the sunscreen conceptual brief; it talks about prison bars and the effects on prisoners and security. It talks about the Islamic world, carved decorative screen panels, that allow but limit visual access, and the light passing through screens. In our brief to the artists, we gave them keywords and ideas which would have been similar to what we would have been given in the architectural brief, giving a direction that they needed to think about in their submission. The brief also included budget, payments, contractual things, and some diagrams to describe the relationship between section four and five and the new West Elevation in order to understand their connectivity, [with elevations of each face- because at this stage, the new building was not yet built, where and how the sunscreens would fit in, had to be explained]. So the boring, pragmatic info, as well as the emotive form part of the brief.

I also found in the files, just as an aside, one of the competition reports. We got 20 submissions for that site. [We were required to report back to our clients and funders on the submissions and adjudication/selection process], in terms of how many people responded to each competition site, and where in the country they were from, the nature of the different submissions, because one of our undertakings was to get representation of artists across the country.

This particular report for this artwork site... it says "most entries for the West Elevation sunscreens seemed insufficient as security sunscreens and more suitable for security gates. A potential artwork has been identified although much discussion with the artist is still required. The architects liked the concept of the submission but felt that the design needed to be simplified and resolved" and so it went on... the chosen submissions from Lewis Levin and Patrick Rorke of Gauteng, "proposed a system of pivoting stainless steel panels". They also had coloured glass as part of the panels along with those etched with various motifs. At that stage, the storytelling from the people living around the site was a big part of the artwork. [We ended up extending the scope of the sunscreens as the elevation changed from the competition through our design development, initially only 8 bays, their work extended to match that of the architecture]. So as an aside, that's the kind of documents that I've got here sitting in files which I'm not quite sure who should be the caretaker and if they are of interest to anybody -

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:47:59

FLC: Definitely of interest to us.

JM: They are?, okay, so that's why I'm hoping to come up and have a session with you where I bring these three or four or five box files, and go through and just almost like scan and copy or leave behind with you, whatever you want. So we had a collection of artists' submissions. And I remember now some of the other submissions that we received, [we used in other parts of the building, working with those artists elsewhere, with adjustments to the proposals to make suitable to the varying conditions- example the tip-up slatted rough wooden screens at the administration public counter area, by the artist crafter from Mukondeni]. The West sunscreens was probably the biggest and most fundamental 'performance' building-art contribution of the building, thinking about it now in terms of its requirements, its level of integration, its impact on the elevation of the building, as you see it on the outside and as you experience them from inside. And then also, you know, the storytelling that exists within the panels really gives people the opportunity to become very directly and intimately involved with the side of the building. [The Great African Steps itself becomes a gallery/exhibition space to the images, invited closer to the building, to touch, and read the visual language, imagine, remember, reflect]. I haven't seen it for quite some time, so I don't know how they're wearing. How are they handling the weather?

FLC: They're still in very good condition. Almost no rust. We've cleaned them recently in consultation with Lewis and we worked with Donovan on that. And they've held up incredibly.

JM: It's amazing. So that was basically how that face came to be. As architects, we had more interaction with Donovan and with Lewis than we did with Patrick, because Patrick was busy almost as a third party in the process, busy with those conversations, doing the [drawings, translations, and the etching of the panels of the sunscreens. The imagery on the panels. Whereas Lewis was the project director holding all the parts and ensuring cohesion, the architect equivalent undertaking the conceptual and practical interface of the installation, ensuring it could work, the practical designer. Donovan obviously as engineer and fabricator had to work quite closely with the contractor, given hard contractual delivery time frames. I mean, technically, it was a very complex solution. [And a highly collaborative undertaking across a very broad range of skills, with us taking the role of both clients and architect, and artwork coordinators. All working together]. So anyway. Okay, next question.

FLC: Complex, yet simple.

JM: Yes, it's complex and simple. And also, it ends up integrating very well with other sort of elemental pieces of the building, even with the patterning, and the moving lights and the triangles. And the way that those moves across the foyer so, the animation that comes into the exhibition wing from that West Elevation is quite beautiful. [Conceptually, the recurring theme across the scales of the building and Constitution Hill, of smaller parts joining together to contribute to a larger cohesive element, in turn, collecting with other elements to form a part of a larger cohesive unit, etc. is so evident in this façade sunscreen. From the individual image to a collection that make a storyline, as a group now a panel, that as a group become a façade treatment, that together with the opposite stone wall is the spatial definition of the African Steps, that is the distinct public gallery, a clear building block to the Court, etc. Individuals making a collective, parts of a whole].

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:51:59

FLC: So we've gone through a lot of the questions, there's one here that speaks about how the sunscreens filter light, and you've told [me] a bit about how that was already in the brief. I'm interested in your thoughts on how it connects to that idea of justice under a tree and letting in dappled light. So in the foyer you've got the sunlight that lets through the light in different ways throughout the day. And the sunscreens also do that. I was interested in hearing your thoughts about that. But also, you mentioned the triangles just now. And when you enter the Constitutional Court through the main entrance to your right behind the security desk, there's also those triangles, integrated. So I'm also interested in the shape of a triangle because that's something that Lewis used as a very specific African geometric form. So I also want to hear your thoughts about that, and how it connects to the triangles that are at the entrance of the court.

JM: Well, it was quite an interesting thing at how those patterns recur with or without intention, because also if you look at the court chamber doors and the etchings onto those individual jewellery panels on the chamber doors, which are also made up a lot of the triangular form and shape. [And again, the recurring theme of collections making a whole] And, I'm sitting here at my desk and I'm looking at the samples I have for the stair nosing. You know, the patterning there is the ordering of

mark making so much inherent in traditional craftsmanship. The triangle comes out of weaving, fabrics, grasses, beading, etc..... when you weave things together you get a triangle because of that crossing over. And that triangle shape is then generated a lot into larger patterning formats. So the clay potters, the ceramicists, often use triangular motifs.

So it was just one of these things that became conscious [as we noticed its recurring across material and marking traditions in the small scale of handmade works, and we extended that patterning, subtly I hope, into building fabric, as detail, shafts of light, pixels]. And in the wavy entrance wall we thought to put the coloured glass, adding some gravitas/church-like, –deciding on the flag colours which might be a bit obscure to some but, they are jubilant jewels in the concrete wall - those triangles! These were small gestures, little glimpses of opportunity for light, colour, lightness. It was, you know, finding ways in every aspect where you could feel light moving through the building. On all the facades on that concrete wall and including the vertical of the concrete wall, the light coming through casts different kinds of shadow over the court foyer.

Nature, and making dappled light. A spark of colour in the shadow. On the roof of the court, we haven't got the triangles, we've got the long bar strips. They shift and move alongside each other, a recurring compositional method which comes into play around the building, the non-alignment of elements relative to each other– I'm thinking of other examples of that... When we placed the stair nosings, for example, we didn't put them in regular strips; they're put in an irregular manner because that's how light falls and gives structure. Even in the court chamber, if you see the way in which we coloured the chairs, colours are not aligned or neatly grouped; greens here, the blues there, the reds over there. There is an integration of things crossing each other almost like scanning bars that move backwards and forwards. As individuals, the concept of building justice under a tree became such a powerful symbol–there is the linocut of Sandile Goje of the tree with...

FLC: Yes, *Making Democracy Work*.

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:55:55

JM: Yes, *Making Democracy Work*. And it was one of those flukes which we came across this artwork early in our work. Because, you know, when we were doing the design work, there was a lot of conversation around meaning, [the translation of meaning into form and the meaning of form]. For instance, somebody in one of those early discussions presented that artwork *Making Democracy Work*, and it epitomised the brief for the court document - the people listening to the elders and, not a single elder, but a group [so diversity] of elders who could argue amongst themselves, so non-hierarchical, with the media being present, evidence transparent, making an accountable process.

FLC: As a side note, people have remarked how the image of Sandile Goje's *Making Democracy Work* resembles the setup of the TRC.

JM: That's interesting, yes.

FLC: And that he might have been influenced by seeing the TRC and then created that artwork. And then if that artwork also influenced your thinking, regarding the architecture, it's interesting to draw the parallel between the visuality of the TRC and the court.

JM: Yes, yes. I'm just looking at the image here, it was 1996 that this linocut was done. So yeah, it's amazing. Wonderful resonance.

FLC: I did want to ask you to speak a bit more about the actual artworks on the sunscreens, and how it almost resembles a visual oral history exercise that was conducted by Patrick, and the meaning of that to the court and for the court.

JM: So has he— You've interviewed him already, haven't you?

FLC: Yes.

JM: Has he still got those original drawings?

FLC: We have a number of his notes on file. But there's quite a few panels that we don't have the stories for, so we're trying to get that from him.

JM: Yeah. Okay. That's interesting, most of the stories I can't specifically remember but his visual image translations used to come through to us over the time of him making,— you could make your own stories by looking at the sketches, [which is very powerful standing alongside the building and having a sense of the personal experiences contained, not known, but there]. I don't even know if there was ever a record kept or made of whose individual stories and how they actually happened at the time. Do you know?

TIME ON RECORDING: 00:59:49

FLC: That's one of the questions. Can you hear me? It seems like we're breaking up a bit.

JM: Yes it's coming and going.

FLC: It's one of the questions we asked him about, why he didn't record the identities of the people. Sometimes in the notes, we do have a first name or something; but he did say that many of the people requested to stay anonymous, but he also wanted it to be more of a collective thing rather than portraying individual stories and making it the stories of individuals. He wanted to focus on the bigger picture. It's also interesting— Another one of our questions, which adds to what you were saying is how the stories remain open, or the sketches remain open to interpretation, that it might have been inspired by something, but you can almost come and look at the screens and make up your own stories.

JM: Some of those are the stories of images of people walking across the landscape, [journeying to the city, the mines live on very clearly for me. One's memory, or imagination takes over the image]. It is the same intent with the building, these associative references. A person enters the court building, they see a pattern on the floor which is a pattern that they can connect to - [Some time from their grannie's home, or shadows of leaves of a particular tree in a particular place and time]. The intent is that people bring their own memory and meaning to the place. The meaning is not imposed, and actually, you and I might have a completely different interpretation, of say, the way that the mosaics form on the foyer columns for example.

Well, we would do things quite differently now than what we did back then. Experience hindsight! And one of the things which we would do very differently now is document far more carefully the process, as we went along. [As an example, the stories and individual contribution to Patrick's drawings, where Patrick was going to, and what he was doing. We were so busy with a whole lot of other things. So the stories - we should have had a committed archiver documenting all these contributions]. As you can imagine, at the time, with the extent of what we were doing, we were completely under-resourced, and this was all a new way, and we were learning as we went along... dealing with and communicating with each of the artists undertaking each of the individual artwork components of the building... there are a lot of gaps. So much was done on the run, under huge pressure, due to this being a first time process for a lot of what we were doing. Just trying to extend the artwork competitions reach to enable the opportunity to a broad collection of artists - there were minimal networks at that time. And there was unfortunately no funding to employ a person to document, photograph, write about etc the artwork process. It's sad, much is lost.

I'm looking at these two little sample pieces still on my desk, one of the pieces of clay that one of the Nala sisters would have made. And next to it is a piece of the brass casting sample. And next to it, is a final stair nosing. Just that story illustrated, add one of the clay pots to show where a process originated, something generated from one form of craft/artwork and transformed into something else, in a new context, different time, other material, etc, an inherent and authentic heritage. That story in itself, is an exhibition. I remember going and meeting with Jabu Nala and explaining to her what it is that we were doing. There was no way to explain, across language, the context of place and material, use etc.

TIME ON RECORDING: 01:05:09

FLC: But it's good to gather these stories

JM: We were making it up as we went along, you know, and the artwork committee was also extremely haphazard as it was figuring out its role, relevance and potential of the collection. We had multiple funders, multiple client bodies. It was a tedious and bureaucratic process a lot of the time.

FLC: I'm hearing you say all of this, but I also realised that you, the collective effort got so much done and it's so incredible what's here today. And there's the benefit of hindsight and looking back and saying we could have, we should have. But also looking at the court environment today, and just

looking at how things happen, there would be endless meetings to get a single task done. It's part of the project of building the court, there were a thousand things that needed to be done and they got done. So I also still think it's a small miracle that the building did realise in the way that it did.

JM: What you are now able to achieve with the time and the resources to record, preserve, consider, with the caring is invaluable, because it reignites the energy of that time. And it's not too late, I mean, people can visit now and actually see and connect how that stair nosing came to be, and how it was generated, collaboratively, is a fascinating story, to me, you know. It's the same with the carpets, I have the folder here that's got all the wool colour samples. And remember that back in the day, it's hard for you to understand Francois, but even a colour photocopy machine and a colour printer were not typical to have in the office. So if you look at the quality of the digital printouts on file for the carpets, they're pixelated, smudged, all over the place prints. That's part of the loss as the project was [undertaken during the transition era from a hand drawn/hand written era, into the digital, an unstable new format of the day].

TIME ON RECORDING: 01:08:17

FLC: I want to ask you a follow up question on the carpets, just a short one, like I realised the carpets won't be able to be used indefinitely. At some point, the carpets will have to be replaced. And I know this is something that's been discussed at the artworks committee, and there's a huge cost involved. But I guess my question is less related to the logistics of that, but more to reproducing the artistic intent. If the carpets need to be reproduced at some point in time, do you make an exact copy or as close as possible? Or is there a bit more free range when it comes to artistic intent by mimicking the intent but not necessarily the visuality precisely?

JM: Yeah, that's very interesting. Yeah, I must get my head around that. Both would seem so strange and odd. It seems so strange to remake the same thing and not have some influence of time.

FLC: Because I presume that people in the future would feel that they don't have the artistic agency that you did at the time. And then it goes back to an act of conservation where you try to match the original as closely as possible. One example was the neon that Andrew Verster did at the bottom of African steps. So he used specific colours of neon for the provinces. And as I understand that those were the only colours that were available in neon at the time. So when we replaced it with LED, we matched his colours to keep it as close as possible to the original. But LED technology had progressed to the extent where we could have had every province in a different colour. But we opted not to go for that and rather to match the artistic intent. But I also wonder if the artistic intent wasn't just rather him being limited by the available options.

JM: So that's quite a good example because of the decisions that were made, and by whom. The west elevation was where the artists were collaborators from the concept all the way through to implementation and installation. Andrew Verster's involvement was limited to his submission of a drawing with the outline of the provinces on an A4 piece of paper, free hand. From that drawing, the architects designed a structural sound, material, and working light fitting! We worked together with

Claude Neon, who made the actual fitting, and Verster from his idea diagram next saw the idea hanging as a fitting in the exhibition volume.

And there are many artworks where artists submitted their conceptual [proposals for inclusion, and like Andrew's, the work became integrated into the architectural design development work stages. Artists were involved to varying degrees. The Pat Mautloa painting conversion tapestry involved little input from the artist in the transformation, with the colours that were introduced those of the then South African flag]. So with the Andrew Verster provinces chandelier neon tube colours. This is a colour theme that goes on in the court, with the triangles of glass in the foyer wall, the colour of the benches in the court chamber, selected in the deep jewel colour tones of the flag.

So, the neon tubes are a good example of new choices arising from new technologies— You know neon is such a specific thing but it comes with so many challenges, because it's brittle, it breaks, electrical fluctuations are detrimental to performance. In their maintenance and recent replacement the decision to replace with LED, a new level of performance, and I think that's valid. In those kinds of instances with technology, one must review the opportunities of what is current and what's going to give it greater longevity and performance, without compromise to the intent of the work.

The carpets are tricky because they're functional, and obviously come under a lot of wear and tear and are more like a piece of soft furnishing which will at some time need to be replaced. As with the moveable furniture. All designed with a common language, how do you replace and ensure that individual preference does not override a common value driven design? And you end up with antique, colonial, ball and claw, or overly ostentatious in velveteen, as each individual person has their own choice rather than conform to a common principle?

It's tricky. The carpets are artworks that form a part of the built and experienced environment, but at the same time, are quite personal and in people's individual office space.

TIME ON RECORDING: 01:16:02

JM: When we were calling for the competition submissions, we were finding it very difficult to access grassroots and rural communities, people who were not in the public domain. [The African Art Centre was in our building and became a conduit of connection to artists and craftspeople, the Director at the time encouraging participation in the Court Artworks programme and assisting individuals in their submissions].

I left a standard competition participation form on the counter of the African Art Centre space for artists to complete, as we needed to comply with legal tender processes of open public invitation. The competition format was difficult for people to understand or to access what it is we were trying to do. We made adjustments to include a piece of artwork to be applied to general sites.

So the African Art Centre sold postcards of their artists' work, so when the artists visited the African Art Centre, I would go there and go through the form and attach the postcard as the reference image— as those artists did not have portfolio images... No one had phones then with a million pictures of

their artworks. It was another era. This is a long story to tell how the carpets and the artist who did them, were represented by the African Art Centre and the director of the African Arts Centre at the time, Anthea Martin. She assisted a lot of those artists in filling out the forms and submitting these postcards so they could be a part of the competition process. Anthea also did most of the buying of the artwork craft, the basketry and some of the weavings which came from the African Arts Centre. Simphiwe Zulu; he was one of the artists for the court carpets. Do you know which one he is? He's the artist who paints the dots.

TIME ON RECORDING: 01:19:15

FLC: Yes

JM: Okay.

FLC: We've got a minute and a half left on this call.

JM: I'm trying to get hold of two paintings which designworkshop bought, which hang in the office to offer to the court artworks collection. One is a painting that Siphwe Zulu undertook of the Union Buildings, and the other one is of the four heads, the imagery of which were submitted [and selected] as a competition entry for the Welsh Library. There's four heads that are – I don't know if you know those carpets.

FLC: Mhm...

JM: There are many long stories in this making, sourcing process to show and make into mini exhibitions which show the process..... so to be able to hang those paintings next to those carpets and to understand the transference of message and meaning into new mediums, is a really interesting set of stories to complement what you're doing with the sunscreens for example, applicable to the other integrated art pieces. How are we doing?

FLC: I think it's going to kick us off in the next few seconds. But I think we're nearly done but let me send you a link and we'll just wrap up. [...] We're back. It's great to have all of this information about the carpets on file and part of the record. Thank you.

JM: Well, I'm warning you that when you get to see the files, the printouts of the carpet designs are so pixelated. I can't believe we took that seriously as a record/photocopy.

FLC: In a way that's also charming. It's a mark of that time.

JM: Yeah. So I mean, I'm enthusiastic to hand over as much stuff as I can particularly whilst your current team is there because there's such a knowledge base that you are developing and archiving. Presumably, you're not going to be there forever. So, it's almost whilst you and Thina and your team are still there, to be able to bring this intense kind of energy and continuity in the process.

FLC: We're putting in a lot of effort to, like you say, to create an archive and to make sure that everything is scanned and filed so that future teams can engage with the material.

TIME ON RECORDING: 01:22:46

JM: I've got a file here that's got just about every press cutting that was written at the time of the building and the competition, including the opening of the court. We had a fantastic admin assistant, Natalie Jasmin, who collected and filed these articles. And the issue for us now is that they reside in our office, quite disconnected to the process and archive. And the conversation that's ongoing is where is the best place for all of this stuff to be held? Presumably now it is with yourselves, the CCT for the CCAC. We've scanned most of what we have, I don't know how much of that you've got in your archives.

FLC: Very limited. We have some things, but it's mostly that stuff that we've gotten out of other files where they shouldn't have been, in between the records or former judges and so it's very scattered, and it's definitely very incomplete.

JM: Yeah, well, we've probably got most.

FLC: We'll set up an appointment to meet you at the court.

JM: Yeah, yeah, definitely.

FLC: Thank you so much. We've gotten through most of it. It's going to be very helpful for the publication. I loved what you said about the building not having a single author and inviting artists as co-authors and how that relates to that popular TED talk of not having a single narrative. I like that aspect of it.

JM: Yes, yes, and very much need to include the people who made the works, bringing their skills, to those of the artists—the artists get a lot of credit, whereas the makers make the works possible. Working with the artists was often an extremely frustrating process as much of the time they had little idea about how the work could hang, be fixed, weather, etc. those that put the elements together, like Donavon [Dymond]; they're critical to the process. The index of artists should include those that made the artwork. It was collaboration at every front, that was the point of it. And as you say, many people contributed to the making of the building. Okay Francois.

FLC: Thank you so much for your time.

JM: Okay and we'll keep in touch.

END OF INTERVIEW 01:29:01