Post-apartheid performance art as a site of gender resistance

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Published online: 26 Jul 2012.

To cite this article: VIRGINIA MACKENNY Masters in Gender Studies (cum laude) (2001) Post-apartheid performance art as a site of gender resistance, Agenda: Empowering women for gender equity, 16:49, 15-24

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2001.9675968

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Post-apartheid performance art as a site of gender resistance

Performance art was not particularly evident in South Africa during apartheid. Subsequently, it has been used by South African artists to make apparent ways in which the body itself acts as a stage/screen/canvas/site for history, politics, culture, economics, race and social issues. VIRGINIA MACKENNY explores how two South African women artists, Carol-anne Gainer and Tracey Rose, have utilised performance art as a site of gender resistance in the South African context.

Performance art is an extremely broad category encompassing a variety of activities, styles and intentions. It is applied to ‘live’ presentations by artists, but definitions of it are often in the negative, in terms of how it is not like theatre or dance (Walker, 1977). At its most basic, a performance artist exhibits her or himself, becoming both the subject and the object of the work.

In the West, performance art has come to occupy a specific place in contemporary art making. Connecting itself to issues of protest – literally manifesting itself in ‘action/s’ – it has given an arena to many who have felt disenfranchised. Women artists in particular, have chosen to use performance art to ‘expose, controvert and subvert hidden ideologies that perpetuate archaic patterns of male power’ (McEvilley in Rosen, 1989:190-191). This was particularly true in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s in America when, in the climate of protest constituted by the civil rights movement and second wave feminism, feminist artists brought their concerns out in the open, directly confronting a complexity of gender issues ranging from rape to the paucity of women successfully active in the field of art.

Utilising performance art as an alternative to working in historically male-dominated arenas of cultural production, Cheri Gaulke exemplifies the attitude of many feminist artists:

In performance we found an art form that was young, without the tradition of painting or sculpture – without the traditions governed by men (Goldberg, 1998:129).

The presence of the living body itself, particularly in the case of women practitioners in the field, engages all the contingent issues of such a presence: the socio-cultural understandings of the body, what it represents/means and what it is, how it means, who determines the explication of that body, the manner in which it is presented as well as how it is received or ‘seen’ and issues of what has come to be called, ‘the gaze’ – who is doing the looking.

In patriarchy, woman is associated with the ‘body’. The dominant heterosexual hierarchies inscribed by this gender association, where the body is seen as marginal (to the male arenas of mind and logos which constitute the dominant discourse) leave it not only as a potential
site of subversion (Ramsay, 1995), but also an important, and necessary site of gender resistance. Helene Cixous (1986) and Luce Irigaray (1985), both French post-modern feminists working with psychoanalytic ideas around gender, refer to what has come to be called the ‘masquerade’ or ‘double discourse’. This ‘masquerade’ or ‘masking’ occurs when women play with their assigned gender roles in multiple, often contradictory ways—adopting, adapting, overlaying and subverting the hegemonic discourse in the process.

The site ‘in-between’

Since the patriarchal discourse tends to adopt a position of ‘either/or’ in its conception of the world (dividing everything into binary oppositions, each with its own hierarchy—note that in the pairs activity/passivity, mind/body, rational/emotional, culture/nature, the first in the pair is not only privileged over the other but is also associated with that which constitutes the masculine) many feminists neatly confuse the issues by adopting positions of ‘both/and’. This allows paradoxical opposites such as the ‘constructed’ and the ‘essential’ to exist together in the same place. Thus in Carol-anne Gainer’s (After Manet) Olympia the symbolic and the literal co-exist. Here the body exists as ‘experiential site’, the artist literally is the artwork and as ‘site of representation,’ she, amongst other things, represents another artwork. The piece can’t be reduced to either—it fluctuates, remains ambivalent (Allsopp and De La Hunta, 1996). It is this ambivalence, this site ‘in-between’, that is the concern of much post-modern practice. Rendering the symbolic literal in this way disrupts conventions and demands a reassessment on the part of the viewer.

Further complicating the interpretation, Judith Butler, a leading queer theorist, points out in Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990) that feminism works against its aims if it takes ‘women’ as its grounding category. Gender, according to Butler, not only ‘operates as a regulatory construct that privileges heterosexuality’ but it is also a ‘cultural fiction’, a ‘performative effect of reiterative acts’ (Jagose, 1996:84). If it is ‘an act’ it means that we can’t search for some essential core within it. It follows that what constitutes ‘woman’ (or man) is also constructed. Since gender is an ongoing discursive practice... open to intervention and resignification’ (Butler,
identity is open to reworking and repositioning and thus is always 'in-between' positions and never fixed. Performance art is one of the prime 'stages' to re-imagine gender identity as it allows a rescripting of conventions and a 'playing out' of such rescripting.

The idea of 'performing identity' highlights the presence of a viewer for whom the 'performance' is enacted. This viewer is presumed to be male, as is evident when John Berger (1972:47) observes:


Whilst 20 years later Camille Paglia noted that the idea of the male gaze has become a 'stale cliché ...(a) tiresome assumption of feminist discourse' (1992:85) it still remains a fundamental concept: that in modern western societies the one who sees and the one who is seen are gendered positions (Daly, 1989 in Ramsay, 1995:49).

Carol-anne Gainer's performance After Manet (Olympia), in her exhibition 'Ex-posed' (1999), continues this line of interrogation while at the same time highlighting issues particular to the South African context. Creating a post-modern take on a key work in the modernist canon, Manet's Olympia, Gainer occupies the position of Victorine Meurend, the model who posed for Manet.

Gainer's choice of Olympia is important here as when it was first shown, the painting, despite establishing its credentials by references to the grand lineage of Titian and Goya, caused a scandal. As recently as 1972, formalist critics continued to attribute the upset to Manet’s painting style – for instance his 'brutal contrasts' and 'the will to simplify', the fact that he flattened the scene and forced his viewers to look 'at his picture rather than into it' (Schneider, 1972). Whilst these formal considerations place the work firmly in the context of modernism, they do not investigate the socio-political and gender-related implications of the work.

It was left to feminist art theorists such as Griselda Pollock (1988), Linda Nochlin (1989) and Rebecca Schneider (1997) to explicate these issues. In their analysis, Manet's Olympia disrupted the societal expectations of who should be looking at what and how. Since traditionally women are depicted for the satisfaction of men, to be looked at, objectified, what they must not do is indicate some element of the subject, an ability to look back. Manet’s Olympia appears to do just that. Adding to the 19th century Parisian male viewers’ discomfort, the model was identifiable, an acknowledged courtesan. Her presence in the hallowed halls of the Salon made public that private world of men and presented it to their wives and daughters – to the ‘ladies’ who must not know of such things. Manet's Olympia was, quite literally, a civic affront.

**Dual positions**

The general history of the active male and the passive female ‘assigned to women the role of model rather than the artist' (McEvilley in Rosen, 1989:190-191). In ‘Ex-posed', Gainer occupies a dual position: artist and model. Conflating these roles, she prevents the possibility of binary oppositions being neatly distinguished from each other. Gainer’s piece blurs the distinction between artist/art, artist/model, constructor/constructed, finder/found, mind/body, subject/object.

This denial of clear distinctions presents the possibility of a curious fusion of voyeurism and narcissism. Schneider (1997) notes that while the status of woman as sex object (given to be seen) is difficult to change, it is important to explore how we apprehend the space between the male (given to know) and the female (given to be known). Such an exploration reveals the dynamics of western cultural ways of knowing – a tradition wrapped up in visuality,
a visuality which is proprietary, transcendent of tactility and essentially separate from the object which it apprehends.

Men’s traditional location as voyeur (subject – the one who looks at the other) and women’s as narcissist (object – the one who looks at herself in the context of being looked at by the ‘subject’) however, is not necessarily fixed but interdependent and shifting. The structure of the gaze is ‘an “inside out” one rather than a simple subject/object dichotomy’ (Partington, 1990). Gainer, exposed to the viewers’ sight, also exposes that self-same viewer to scrutiny, making the viewer self-conscious of their own looking through awareness of another looking at their looking. The power of the gaze is revealed in a direct and disconcerting way.

In addition, as mentioned earlier, there is also a collapse of the distinction between the literal and the representational. Schneider in her book, The Explicit Body in Performance, (1997) elaborates on this issue in detail. She notes that for women to be seen ‘for what they really are’ is virtually impossible. Women are plagued by their representation, their symbolic functions and their roles in society to such a degree that it is these that are seen rather than the individual. Woman, as sign, is so constituted as signifier and signified, that it is impossible for some authentic individual to be seen behind the sign – ‘woman’ is thus ‘unpresentable except as representation’ (de Lauretis, 1987:20). Schneider sees the need to collapse the gap between sign and signified – arguing that the body performers make this gap apparent by ‘provoking its implosion across the visceral space of their own bodies’ (1997:23).

Re-presentation

Gainer collapses the gap by engaging issues of signification directly with her body, re-presenting a presentation.

In this re-presentation, Gainer’s actual presence creates a discomfort for the viewer because the viewer is ‘found guilty’ of objectified looking and becomes aware that he/she has been ‘seen’ or caught in the act of such looking – what is generally covert is revealed. ‘Guilt’ is also embedded in Manet’s Olympia in another form. Included in the painting, but not often discussed, is a black serving woman who stands behind Olympia holding a bunch of flowers towards the viewer. Schneider gives a revealing analysis of her position and function in the painting indicating that she can be read as encapsulating the sexual element in the painting. She can be seen

relative to pretexts of contemporary racism and sexism as underscoring the dangerous ‘primitive’ nature of uncontrolled female sexuality (Schneider, 1997:27).

She becomes an ‘iconic stand-in for Olympia’s own sexuality’ (Gilman, 1985 in Schneider, 1997:27).

Whilst most artists alluding to the Olympia leave out all reference to this figure with no explanation, Gainer is clear in stating that for her, the omission was a conscious one. Having already decided to use herself and not hire a model to pose as Olympia, she felt she could not exploit someone else in the position of servant within the work. This point is particularly pertinent in a country such as South Africa with its historical imbalance of power based on race, and its many white madams with maids. Gainer here, acknowledges a crisis of conscience which many white artists in the South African context are confronted by.

Gainer, conscientised to her skin colour, included a print of the original Olympia on display in the exhibition for those with the eye to make comparisons and note the omission. The work, however, when read by a predominantly white audience, is seen as racially neutral. Schneider notes that ‘without a black body to distinguish it, whiteness in white culture appears to be invisible’ (a white body is not read as
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marked by race) (Schneider, 1997:31). What the omission may then serve to reinforce, is a colour-blindness that does not overtly challenge entrenched perceptions of race. The black serving-woman’s inclusion might have ensured a more complicated reading of ‘exposure’, given the links between racism and sexism, but would then have risked being labelled exploitative. Her exclusion, on the other hand, can also be seen as reinforcing an historically racist position. Included or excluded, resolution is not reachable. This inability to reach closure or a point of satisfactory solution, highlights the inextricable link between race, gender and power in any discussion of identity in South Africa.

Deconstruction of such patterns of power is particularly pertinent to artists living outside the hegemony or centre (as defined by the West). Monolithic meta-narratives are thus examined and deconstructed most strongly by those who are marginalised. Thus it is from the position of ‘Other’ that most re-definitions of identity arise. Drawing off personal experience, resisting homogenisation, or the exclusionary categories of ‘Self’, at the same time they critique and challenge perceptions of the ‘Other’.

It is just such concerns that are central to the work of Tracey Rose, an artist of mixed race. Rose explicitly grapples with issues of identity within the South African context as defined by both race and gender. Whilst the tendency to categorise people racially is seen as intrinsic to the apartheid era, it is a lesser known fact that the categories ‘African’ and ‘coloured’ were formed as early as 1904 (Ernstzen, 1999). Prior to 1904, all official sources referred to those who were later to be called ‘coloured’ and ‘African’ people as ‘non-European’.

Frantz Fanon, psychiatrist and black revolutionary activist who explored the psychological and cultural alienation induced by colonisation in Black Skin, White Masks (1952), points out that the black man is ‘overdetermined from without’, he becomes no more, no less than his skin colour: the white gaze dehumanises, paralyses and kills him. Like a laboratory specimen, he says, ‘slowly I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes’ (Fanon, 1952:116). Whilst a black woman in a white universe carries a primary identity of blackness, in a black community her identity is first and foremost that of a woman (Epstein, 1998). It is thus through both the white gaze and the male gaze that Rose has first to define herself in the public world.

Under these constraints, Rose presents herself where she can be most scrutinised: in a glass case. At the second Johannesburg Bienniale 1997, in Span II Tracey Rose sat, naked and shaven, in a museum display case. She was knotting the hair that she had shaven off in a previous performance and was perched on an upturned television set showing the image of a reclining nude. Directly engaging with officially authorised and sanctioned forms of display she conflates...
the artistic and the scientific. Both, within the western tradition, lay claim to universal value. Western science, in particular, claims to be ‘objective’ and ‘gender neutral’\(^{15}\); but, as Luce Irigaray points out, the very language of research claims an objectivity it does not have: ‘neither I, nor you, nor we appear in the language of science’ (Irigaray in Tong, 1989:228). All western systems of cultural description are ‘deeply contaminated with the politics, considerations, positions and strategies of power’ of the West\(^{16}\) (Moore-Gilbert, 1997:34).

**Strategies of resistance**

In *Span II*, Rose references the western tradition of exhibiting people of colour\(^{17}\) in the name of science through live exhibitions, museum tableaux\(^{18}\), or the dissection and embalming of body parts of native others (the most pertinent to the South African context being Saartje Baartman, a young Khoisan\(^{9}\) woman displayed for her unique genitalia and *steatopygia*, or enlarged buttocks). Emma Barker in her introduction to *Contemporary Cultures of Display*, notes that museums and galleries are not ‘neutral containers of a transparent, unmediated experience’, and hence they need to be considered in terms of ‘cultures of display’ (Barker, 1999:8). The museum display case thus becomes a site of definition and re-definition and, in Rose’s case, it is the site of a redefinition of identity. Rose utilises, as Irigaray suggests, a strategy of resistance\(^{20}\) and mimes the mimes men have imposed on women creating a doubling back – one that ‘intends to undo the effects of phallocentric discourse simply by overdoing them’ (Moi in Tong 1989:228). By choosing to go on display, Rose highlights the issues of power within such display.

Fanon elucidated the distinctions between black and white in terms of Manichean\(^{21}\) thinking whereby binary oppositions such as light/dark, God/Satan\(^{22}\) represent extremely powerful oppositional positioning\(^{23}\) sanctioned, as it is, by heaven – one is on the side of God or one isn’t, one is fully human or one isn’t. Such thinking provided the structure for an entire worldview – one followed faithfully by the Christian National Education system of the National Party during the apartheid era. Whilst such binaries are the way we normally see the South African political situation, in fact things were further complicated by a political system that did not simply divide the world into two (black and white), but four (including Indian and coloured)\(^{24}\). The implications of this for Fanon’s binaries are not simple. On the one hand, the inclusion of Indians and coloureds in racial categorisation simply disassembles the singular ‘Other’ into a number of component ‘others’, continuing to reinforce the hegemonic white position of ‘Self’, but on the other hand, it also brings into play an ‘in-between’ position which subverts the apparent clarity of the black/white divide.

Racial identity becomes particularly difficult to determine in the coloured community. Ironically, whilst ‘coloured’ is a historical, white-imposed categorisation, the two major government Commissions of Inquiry (1937 and 1976) into the history and origins of the coloured people, proved unable to agree on a definition of ‘coloured’ (Ernstzen 1999). By definition mixed – purity does not and cannot exist within this particular racial grouping – difference and sameness exist at the same time in the same place/person. Coloured identity exists then, in a place of constant slippage – ‘Other’ is here both black and white, but also neither black nor white: same but different, and rejected as such by both sides.

Conscious ambivalence thus marks Rose’s work. In *Span II* she engages with this when she displays her own naked body and works with her own hair, referencing official attempts to define identity as determined both by her skin colour and her hair type. Hair was used by the apartheid
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authorities in a 'test' known as the pencil test, to determine what racial category one might occupy. The pencil test resolved if one's hair was straight (gladde) or curly (kroes) - 'kroes' hair wrapped around the pencil and defined one as having a coloured heritage (Kellner, 1999).

Whilst hair is utilised as a sign of political classification, a pinioning of identity, it also reinforces a slippage of identity which Rose acknowledges by remarking that,

*Hair is significant in coloured communities. It marks you in certain ways, towards blackness or whiteness (my emphasis).*

She also notes that this creates a tension within the community:

'It's about the privilege of having straight hair as opposed to 'kroes' hair, but on the other hand, having straight hair meant you were often insulted for thinking you were white, for pretending to be white (Bester, 1998:92).

In addition, in her work hair also implies a less certain position in relation to sexual identity:

'I'm intrigued by the fact that body hair on a woman's stomach and nipples borders on masculinity. Confronting this hair is, to some extent, about confronting sexual ambiguity (Bester, 1998:92-93).

*Ongetiteld* (Untitled) (1997) is a video performance where Rose is presented shaving off all her body hair. Commenting on this she says:

*(It) is about both de-masculating and de-feminising my body, shaving off the masculine and feminine hair. This kind of de-sexualisation carries with it a certain kind of violence. The piece is about making myself unattractive and unappealing. But what was disconcerting about making the work was that I suddenly became attractive to a whole different group of people (Bester, 1998:92-93).*

Performed in a small cell-like bathroom and filmed from a high viewpoint as though from a surveillance camera, *Ongetiteld* presents her naked and alone - available to scrutiny. Her identity seems defined by outside control. Such references in the present South African context can be ascribed to the constant presence of the Security Branch (BOSS - aptly named Bureau of State Security) whose job it was to keep an eye on any dissident behaviour, and the subsequent possibility of incarceration for anybody resistant to the South African regime. By virtue of her colour alone, Rose is different (from the ruling power), and therefore 'Other', therefore dissident. In addition, the space also becomes a confessional - a confessional that reveals, but also conceals.

Stemming directly from Rose’s Catholic upbringing, the reference to a penance and purging is an intensely personal one. But her paranoia of a God that watches you summons to mind Fanon’s reference to Manichean thinking which governs the white man’s view of the black man’s position in the universe - a position that the person of colour unwittingly takes on.

Rose’s work thus underscores issues of identity that are often invisible given the larger, more dominant debates over black and white identity.

The patently historical source of Rose’s racial identity reinforces the “fictional” nature of founding concepts such as “origins”, “totalities” and the “subject” (Moore-Gilbert, 1997:99). Rose’s awareness of a fundamental inability to find certitude within her own position allows her to speak from ‘within doubt’. This then is a subject position that knows itself to be uncertain and hence objects to singular readings.

Like Gainer, Rose does not utilise the spoken or written word within the performance*. In Lacanian terms, language is associated with men – Lacan calls it the ‘Law of the Father’. In the work of Sigmund Freud and Jaques Lacan, the acquisition of language is seen as a key moment in the

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Gainer and Rose engage in a form of micro-resistance whereby they utilise their own bodies to address issues of gender in the South African context.

Formation of identity. Prior to that the body is somatic: pre-language, experiential and therefore seen as authentic. Women associated by proxy with the body, are therefore seen as operating in this arena. The catch is that in Lacanian terms, the somatic body is pre-Symbolic which, by definition, means it has not the words to express itself and is therefore silent. This would seem to create a conundrum for women; their ‘authentic’ unmediated voice, by definition, can’t be heard and they remain marginalised, subordinate and without a ‘voice’. This belief of ‘non-expression’, though, is based on the West’s privileging of the word. In addition, the ability to speak does not necessarily mean one will be heard. In Spivak’s *Can the Subaltern Speak?* speech is a dialogic process – a ‘transaction between speaker and listener’ (Kilburn, 1996) that is; to speak is not only to give voice, but also to be heard. Like Gainer’s ‘Ex-Posed’ Rose’s piece is silent, but it ‘speaks’. By personally occupying the space she activates it – speechless, she communicates; by confronting the viewer with the spectacle of display, she creates recognition of complicity, forcing the viewer to enter into an area of responsibility, a dialogic engagement that may yet allow the subaltern to be heard.

Both Gainer and Rose engage in a form of micro-resistance whereby they utilise their own bodies to address issues of gender in the South African context. Both reference forms of previous cultural display, mimicking them whilst at the same time challenging the viewer’s expectations of them. This process is direct, but at the same time oblique, discrete but at the same time confrontational. Their work does not purport to provide answers, but instead highlights doubt and uncertainty thereby dislodging notions of the fixity of identity and activating and acknowledging the body as a continuing site of resistance.

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FOOTNOTES
1. ‘How’ here is taken to mean both the form that the specific performance art under examination takes, as well as the manner and scope of engagement of the work under consideration. It is not within the scope of the article to explain why performance art arose so much more actively at this time (as opposed to the period prior to democracy) – instead the intention is to analyse two women artists working with issues of gender and identity.
2. ‘Performance art’ is also known as: Body Art, Process Art, Street Art, Happening, Action Art or Aktionen (Germany), Fluxus, Art Total, Art Aktuel, Living Sculpture, Theatre of Life, Time-based Art, Live Art, Interactive Art, ‘non-matrixed representation’ or, simply, ‘self-experience’. Since the ‘70s ‘performance art’ has generally been accepted as the all-embracing term despite the dislike some artists have for the implications of entertainment embodied in the word ‘performance’.
3. First Wave Feminism, situated in the late 19th and early 20th century, was highly politicised and mainly concerned with securing women the vote. Second Wave Feminism, popularly known as ‘Women’s Lib’, became prominent in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s and was concerned with a wider range of women’s rights such as equal pay and sexual equality. Third Wave Feminism overtly acknowledges that the ‘sisterhood’ is not as cohesive as it liked to think, divided as it is by race, class and sexual orientation.
4. In Ablutions (1972) for instance, Judy Chicago, Suzanne Lacy, Sandra Orgel and Ariva Rahmani held consciousness-raising sessions that dealt with the trauma of rape using tape-recordings of women describing their ordeals.
5. The lack of prominence of women in the annals of art history has been explored by feminist writers – prominent among them are Parker R and Pollock G (1981) Old Mistresses; Women Art and Ideology and Linda Nochlin (1973) Why have there been no great women artists?
6. Cixous, however, tends to resist the categorisation of feminist when its focus is on the equality of the sexes – her particular emphasis is on the ‘feminine’ – a term which she utilises specifically to mark sexual difference.
7. The term ‘masquerade’ was first coined by Joan Riviere (1929) in her essay, ‘Womanliness as Masquerade’, in The International Journal of Psychoanalysis.
8. This work will be discussed in more detail shortly.
9. Much as Carolee Schneeman did in Mink Rawl Turret (1963) and again with Robert Morris in Site (1964) and Yasumasa Morimura in his rendition of Olympia where
he not only explored gender issues within the West, but referenced the eastern Kabuki traditions of onnagata where men performed female roles (Goldberg, 1998).

10. White, middle-class feminists have been accused by black feminists of defining women's issues by white, middle-class norms thereby essentialising women's issues and overlooking and excluding black women's concerns (Schneider, 1997).

11. The term 'non-European' continued when there was need to collectively group the 'Other'.

12. Fanon, writing as he did before the impact of feminism, uses the male pronoun to include the female.

13. The official title of the bienniale was 'Trade routes - history and geography' curated by Okwui Enwezor.


15. Science, she deduces, with its passive voice and keenness to forbid the 'subjective' not only distances itself from the object to be studied, but also hides the identity of the speaker. The gender-neutral voice masks the dominant 'all-inclusive' male voice. Knowledge of the 'Other' was not purely a disinterested observation of difference, but served as a means of reinforcing both colonial and patriarchal power. It could, in addition, be used to further the illusion of western scientific and intellectual supremacy and to justify colonialism as a civilising mission (Wyrick, 1997).


17. Such displays still remain within the collections of many western museums, such as the British Museum (see its ever-popular Egyptian mummy section) and the Musée de l’Homme in Paris. As recently as 1997 a museum outside Barcelona removed a stuffed bushman from its permanent display after sustained international pressure (Thompson, 1998). In South Africa the controversial life casts of the Bushmen in the South African Museum were removed from public display earlier this year.

18. Most of such tableaux were displayed in the Natural Science sections of museums – clearly signalling the perception that such peoples were closer to animals than 'civilised' human beings. That this was chillingly the case is graphically illustrated in the frontispiece to Pippa Skotnes book Miscast – Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen (1996) where a price list for an auction of skins (1840) is presented. The first entry, under the heading ‘Saugetherie’ (mammals), is skin of a ‘Bushman woman’.

19. The term 'Khoisan' itself is the European colonists' conflation of 'Khoi' and 'San' – this conflation in name is a clear indication of, as Said had noted, the West's tendency to homogenise difference. Generally known as the Bushmen (a term that in its own right has fallen in and out of favour) a diversity of peoples came under this title with different languages, customs and histories.

20. This is the third of three strategies Irigaray suggested aimed at enabling woman to liberate herself from the margins of male ideology. The first is to pay attention to the nature of language and to adopt the active voice rather than an impossible gender-neutral one. The second is to express female sexuality, which she claims is an arena of plurality unlike the singular, linear nature of male sexuality (Tong, 1989).

21. Iranian faith – main religion practised by the Balduri pertaining to followers of Mani or Manichaeus, a native of Ecbatana (AD 216 - 276) who taught that everything sprang from two chief principles, light and darkness, or good and evil (Kirkpatrick, 1983).

22. Other oppositions would include reason/emotion, thought/sex, truth/error, nobility/baseness, civilisation/savagery, sun/moon, right/wrong, left/right, plus/minus and so on.

23. Helene Cixious declared such binary oppositions in terms of women's position in the world as 'death-dealing'; the same could also be said in terms of race.

24. The situation was further complicated by the introduction of the Tricameral Parliament in 1982, which gave coloured and Indian communities the vote whilst still withholding that right from the African population. This political move by the apartheid government successfully disrupted any sense of a homogenous black identity that might have been developing amongst the coloured, Indian and Africans.

25. The accompanying piece Span I does, however, rely heavily on words consisting of an ex-prisoner (male) writing Rose's 'confession' on the gallery wall.

26. This argument is made very strongly by Spivak in response to critics missing her point and attempting to rebut her by recording instances of burning widows crying out during Sati (the ritual burning of widows on their husbands funeral pyres).

27. Spivak's usage of 'responsibility' signifies not only the act of response which completes the transaction of speaker and listener, but also the ethical stance of making discursive room for the 'Other' to exist – 'ethics are not just a problem of knowledge, but a call to a relationship' (Kilburn, 1996).