

## **‘Connection’**

### **A Public Visual Information Centre in Newtown, Johannesburg**

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## 1. ABSTRACT

The Migrant Workers Hostel and the four Artisan houses, situated on a corner site within the Newtown Cultural Precinct, holds untapped historic and cultural potential that no facility occupying that site has allowed it to reach.

The desire to conceptualise a new role for these abandoned heritage buildings on this culturally significant site was the initial motivation for intervention.

The intended design intervention transforms the existing derelict site into one of opportunity, through a public education facility, allowing information to be accessed through the film media.

The theme that informs this project is the concept of connections. As '*Connection*' is the literal and figurative intersection of the three solids, the two voids with the many layers of time, through the seed idea of connection.

The facility will function as a public resource that will house both educational and cultural components, interacting together to form an asset to the Newtown Cultural Precinct.

The educational components will be made up of a Public Visual Information Centre, an educational cinema, multifunctional exhibition space as well as a museum. The commercial component consists of a café/ bar and an 'Arts and Culture' cinema.

Through the new interpretation of a safe study environment, '*Connection*' allows everyone the opportunity of accessing information and furthering oneself.

*'Lack of access to information has a debilitating effect on the development and the empowerment of poor and disadvantaged groups who are isolated from opportunities. Access to information and technology immediately opens up opportunities for self improvement.'* (Goldstone 2004:16)



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