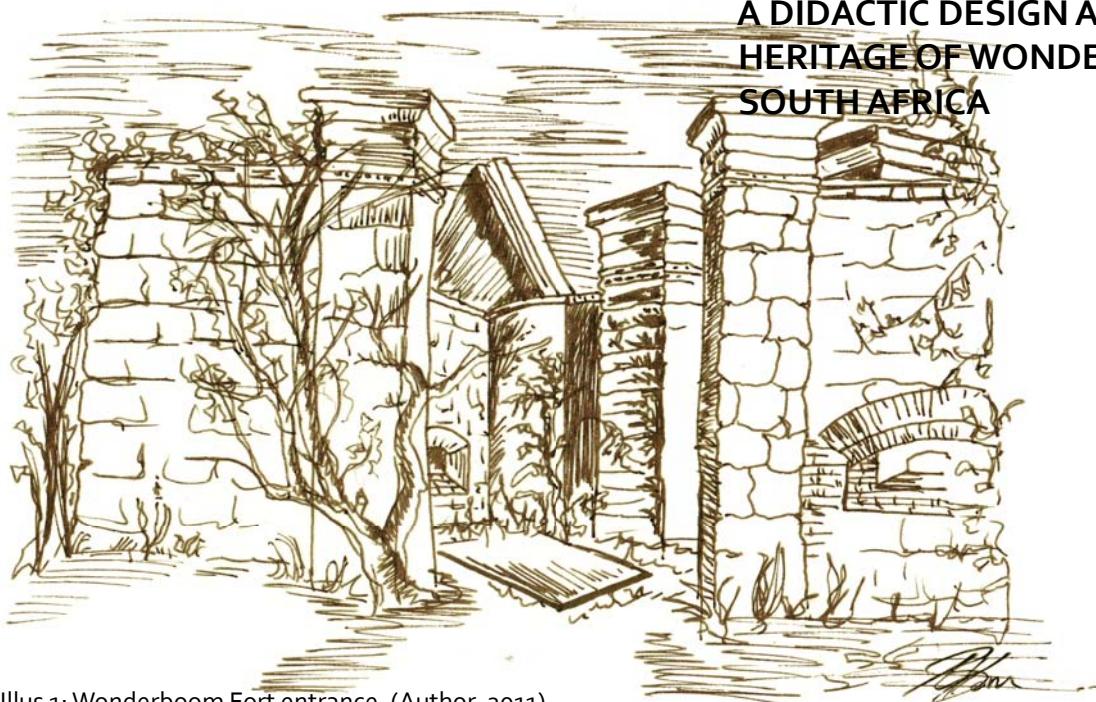


# THE NARRATIVE OF A SANCTUARY



Illus 1: Wonderboom Fort entrance, (Author, 2011)

A DIDACTIC DESIGN APPROACH FOR THE CULTURAL AND BIOPHYSICAL HERITAGE OF WONDERBOOM FORT AND NATURE RESERVE, PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA

By Natanja Blom



Illus 2: Wonderboom Nature Reserve, view in the direction of the Wonderboom tree. (Author, 2011)



The Narrative of a Sanctuary: A didactic design approach for the cultural and biophysical heritage of Wonderboom fort and nature reserve, Pretoria, South Africa.

By Natanja Blom

Studyleader: Ida Breed

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
Magister of Landscape Architecture (Professional)

Department of Architecture, Faculty of the Built Environment, Engineering and Information Technology, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

November 2011



Illus 3: Wonderboom fort ruins, view of the rooms from outside of the ruin. (Author, 2011)

Full dissertation title:	The Narrative of a Sanctuary: A didactic design approach for the cultural and biophysical heritage of Wonderboom fort and nature reserve, Pretoria, South Africa.	In accordance with Regulation 4(e) of the General Regulations (G.57) for dissertations and theses, I declare that this thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Master of Landscape Architecture (Professional) at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.
Submitted by:	Natanja Blom	I further state that no part of my thesis has already been, or is currently being, submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification.
Student number:	25080513	
Study leader:	Ida Breed	I further declare that this thesis is substantially my own work. Where reference is made to the works of others, the extent to which that work has been used is indicated and fully acknowledged in the text and list of references.
Course coordinator:	Jacques Laubscher (Dr)	
Degree:	Master of Landscape Architecture (Professional)	
Department:	Department of Architecture	
Faculty:	Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology	
University:	University of Pretoria	

## Project summary

Programme:	A didactic narrative of Wonderboom fort, tree and reserve, revealing the heritage layers.
Site description:	Wonderboom Nature Reserve, Pretoria north
Client:	City Council of Pretoria
Users:	Local residents, regional visitor's, national and international tourism
Site Location:	Wonderboom Nature Reserve (remaining portion 18, 19, portion 7, 55 and 56 of the farm Wonderboom 302 JR
Address:	c/o Voortrekker Road and extention of Lavender Road, Wonderboompoort, Pretoria, South Africa
GPS Coordinates:	25°41'33"S 28°11'39"E
Architectural Theoretical Premise:	Semiotics, narratives and didactics as communication tools to 'speak' of the site's cultural and biophysical elements and the history thereof.
Architectural Approach:	Better access, heightened awareness and heightened interest through complexity and coherence. A reversible design intervention
Research field:	Heritage and cultural landscapes

signature



Natanja Blom



*Illus 4: Wonderboom fort, night view through one of the aiming holes towards Pretoria city. (Author, 2011)*



## Erkennings...

Ek dra hierdie verhandeling op aan die Groot Landskapsargitek wat my die vergunning gee om 'n junior vernoot in Sy skepping te kan wees.

Baie dankie ook aan my studieleier, studiomaster en elke dosent wat 'n rol gespeel het in my opleiding.

My spesiale waardering aan my familie en vriende vir hulle ondersteuning.



Illus 6: Wonderboom Tree, close up view with the wooden walkway around the tree. (Author, 2011)

# Abstract



*Illus 7: The three typologies (Author, 2011)*

Many past events go unmarked and unremembered, and eventually lose their significance. One such area is the Wonderboom fort, tree and the Nature Reserve.

The research investigates how the landscape design can strengthen the existing spirit of place. The place's identity - that of a refuge – is intangible and unconscious, but can be made tangible through a narrative that engaged with the cultural and biophysical history of the site (the tangible world) by means of didactics and semiotics. This will provide a learning experience with added meaning that gives added identity of place. Furthermore, specific design principles are investigated namely: better access, heightened awareness, and heightened interest created through complexity and coherence in design.

Complexity and coherence will generate interest in the user to engage with the physical/conscious experience, engaging and learning about the physical aspects of the site's nature and culture. The unconscious experience will be guided through semiotics – the use of symbols that give meaning and add identity to place and user.

The design intervention will be a landscape which tells the story of the place and unveils the heritage and history of the site in such a way that visitors will have an engaging and informative experience of the past events.

The site can be the northern link and gateway into the city of Pretoria, a destination for local and international tourism, and a green corridor for people to experience the city in a different way.

The design approach ties in with the Burra Charter approach, namely “changing as much as necessary but as little as possible” but also with the Ename charter stating that Heritage sites should be presented to the public and the public should be educated to ensure their protection.

Hampton Adams rightfully says that: Only by looking at the past, can we plan the future.

## Keywords:

Didactic  
Semiotics  
Narrative  
Cultural  
Biophysical  
Ruin  
Identity  
Experience

Meaning  
Complexity  
Coherence  
Access  
Awareness  
Genus loci  
Landscape architecture



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