



DINGAKENG: A CENTRE FOR TRADITIONAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS

CREATING A LINK BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND MODERN MEDICINE

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister in Architecture [Professional] in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology at the University of Pretoria.

University of Pretoria
Pretoria
November 2006

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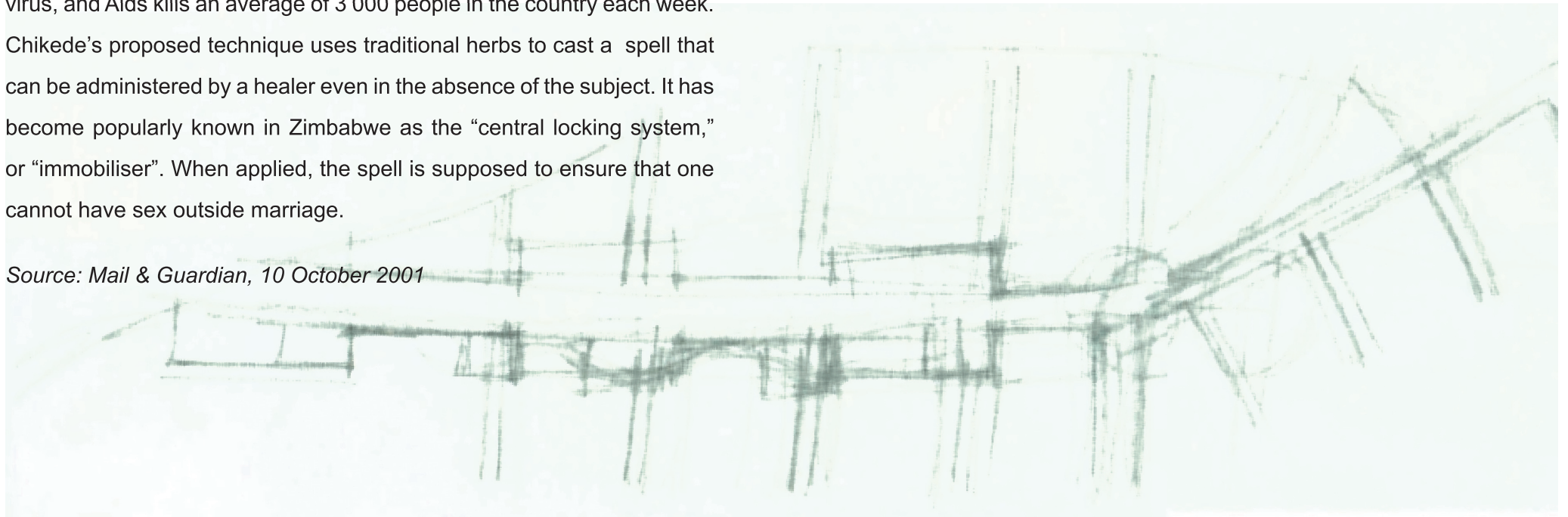
Zimbabwe healer moots magic chastity potion

A ZIMBABWEAN healer wants to promote the use of a traditional spell that ensures fidelity, alongside the more conventional methods of condoms and abstinence to curb the spread of Aids in the country.

Healer Mutsa Chikede came up with the idea of using a technique that involves magically “locking” women and immobilising men, to bar them from having extra-marital sex, alongside condoms and abstinence because the latter only have a limited impact on stemming the spread of Aids in Zimbabwe.

Around one in four of Zimbabwe’s adult population is infected with the HIV virus, and Aids kills an average of 3 000 people in the country each week. Chikede’s proposed technique uses traditional herbs to cast a spell that can be administered by a healer even in the absence of the subject. It has become popularly known in Zimbabwe as the “central locking system,” or “immobiliser”. When applied, the spell is supposed to ensure that one cannot have sex outside marriage.

Source: Mail & Guardian, 10 October 2001



Overview

This dissertation explores the fusion of traditional health practise in the context of the city. The primary objective of this dissertation is to expose people to the spirituality and sacredness of the indigenous South African health practices but also help reverse the guilt and inferiority complex usually associated with such practices.

People in the city find themselves having to travel long distances to rural areas to consult *inyangas* and/or *sangomas*. This dissertation also tries to find a solution on how to design a facility in an urban context that is going to accommodate *inyangas* and *sangomas* that is going to reflect the indigenusness of the practice.. Therefore, people will have easy access and not have to travel long distances for consultation. The Dingakeng Centre is going to be the first step in creating a link between the traditional and the modern health practice. The name *Dingakeng* is a Setswana word meaning a place of the traditional healers



I AM AN AFRICAN

I am an African.

I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land.

My body has frozen in our frosts and in our latter-day snows. It has thawed in the warmth of our sunshine and melted in the heat of the midday sun.

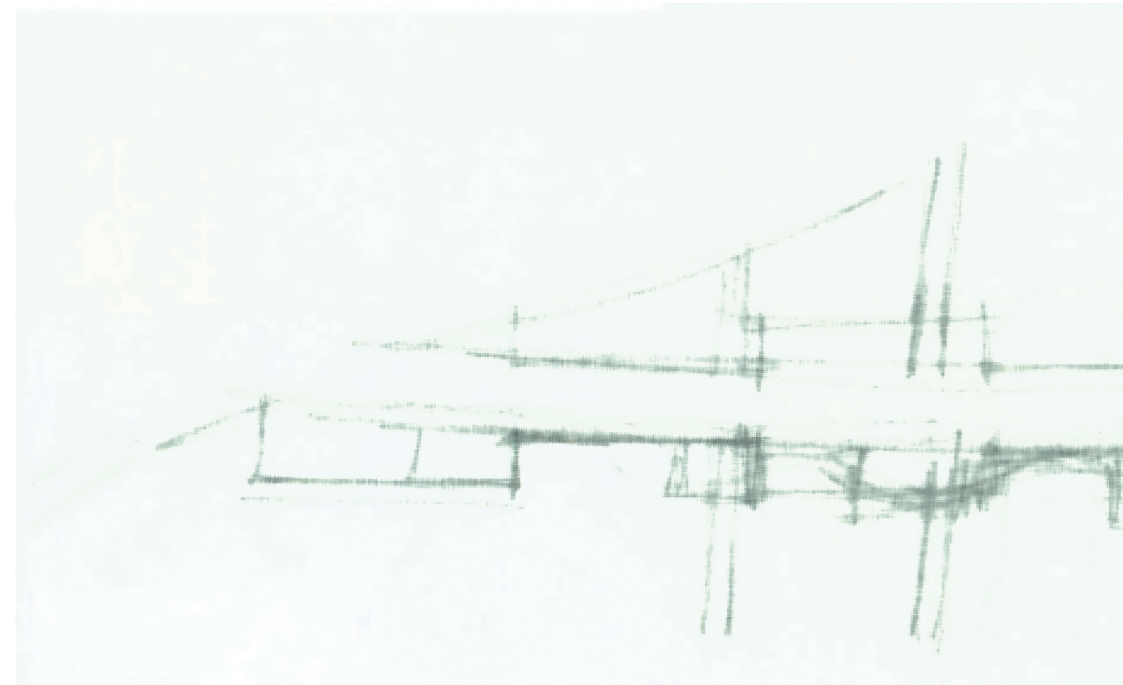
The crack and the rumble of the summer thunders, lashed by startling lightening, have been a cause both of trembling and of hope. The fragrances of nature have been as pleasant to us as the sight of the wild blooms of the citizens of the veld.

The dramatic shapes of the Drakensberg, the soil-coloured waters of the Lekoa, iGqili noThukela, and the sands of the Kgalagadi, have all been panels of the set on the natural stage on which we act out the foolish deeds of the theatre of our day.

A human presence among all these, a feature on the face of our native land thus defined, I know that none dare challenge me when I say - I am an African!

(Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, 1996, at the adoption of the Costitution)

(Source: <http://www.gov.info.co.za>)



Glossary of terms

“*Abakhetwa*” : means traditional male initiates at circumcision schools

“*Badimo*” : Ancestors or the departed; they communicate with God on behalf of the people

“*Lethwasa*” : means a person studying to become a traditional healer

“*Muti* “: means an object or substance used in traditional health practice for the purpose of:

(a) the diagnosis, treatment or prevention of a physical or mental illness; or

(b) for any curative or therapeutic purpose, including the maintenance or restoration of physical or mental health or wellbeing

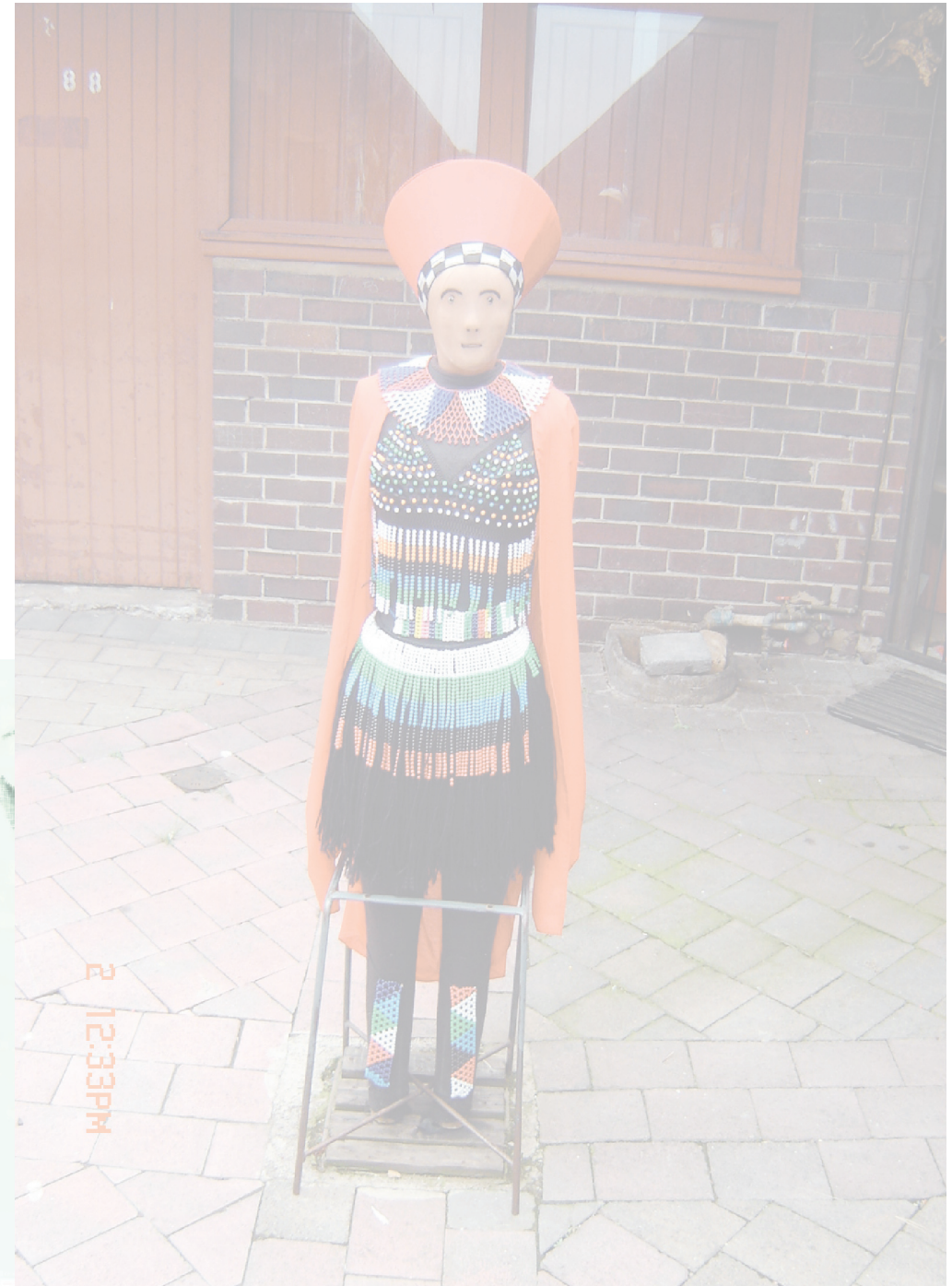
(c) in human beings, but does not include a substance used for the satisfaction or relief or a habit or craving for the substance used.

“traditional health practitioner” means a person registered or required to be registered in terms of the Traditional Health Practitioner’s Act (2003), and includes a traditional birth attendant and a traditional surgeon (*inyanga* and *sangoma*);

“traditional health practice” means the performance of a function, activity, process or service that includes the utilization of a traditional medicine or a traditional practice and which has as its object

“traditional birth attendant” means a person who attends at and assists with the birth of a child or who assists and advises pregnant women or women who have just given birth concerning prenatal, perinatal and postnatal matters;

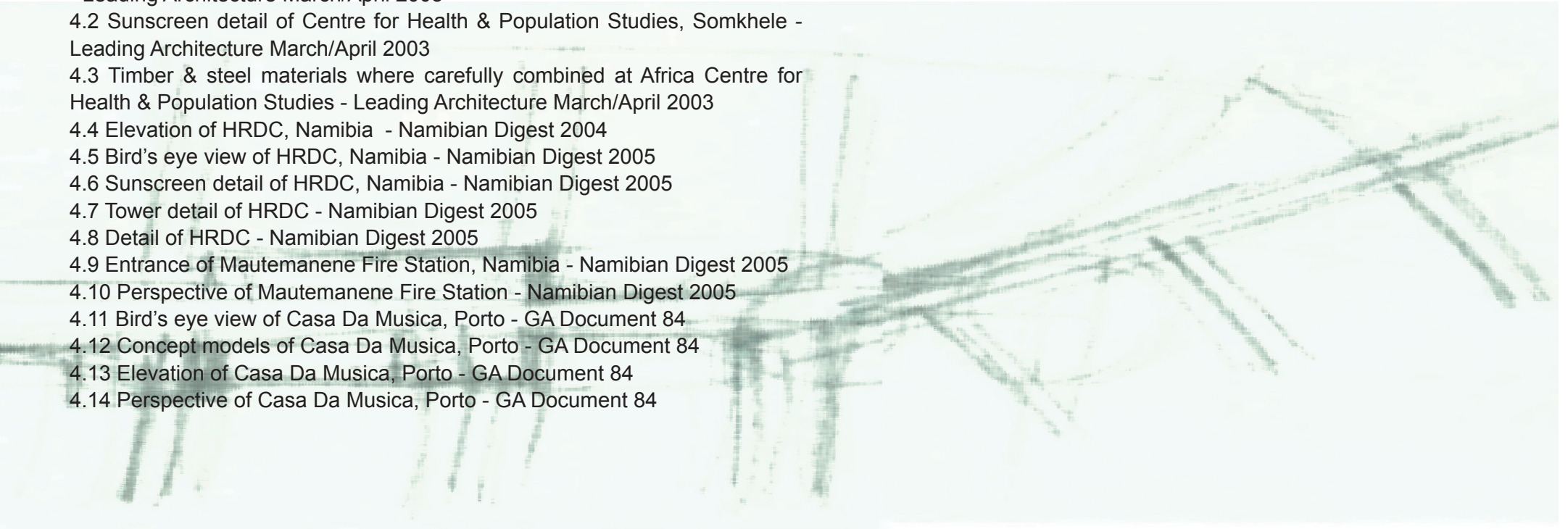
“traditional surgeon” (*ingcibi*) means a person who performs circumcision as part of an African cultural initiation ceremony.



LIST OF FIGURES

- 0.1 Credo Mutwa, well known Sanusi - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 0.2 Khekhekhe, well known *Inyanga* - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.1 Credo Mutwa, well known Sanusi - <http://www.credomutwa.com>
 1.2 A Zulu Sangoma - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.3 Lungani Nldovu, well known *sangoma* - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.4 Muti - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.5 Durban Muti Market - Author, 2006
 1.6 Durban Muti Market - Author, 2006
 1.7 Durban Muti Market - Author, 2006
 1.8 Durban Muti Market - Author, 2006
 1.9 KwaMai-Mai, Johannesburg - Author, 2006
 1.10 KwaMai-Mai, Johannesburg - Author, 2006
 1.11 Faraday Muti Market, Johannesburg - Author, 2006
 1.12 Traditional Zulu huts - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.13 Sangomas during ritual dance - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.14 A baby dedicated to the ancestors - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.15 A baby dedicated to the ancestors - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.16 Traditional herbs - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.17 Ditaola - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.18 Sangomas communicating with *badimo* (ancestors) - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.19 Khekhekhe leading *mathwasa* (initiates) - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.20 *Mathwasa* dancing during initiation ceremony - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.21 A *Sangoma* preparing muti - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.22 An *Inyanga* selling muti - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.23 Urban muti market - Author, 2006
 1.24 Khekhekhe, well known *Inyanga* - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.25 Some of the muti being sold - Author, 2006
 1.26 NEPAD emblem - <http://www.africa-union.org>
 1.27 Bishop Sikakane - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.28 *Amantombazana* (virgins) - <http://www.ucalgary.ca/books/shembe.html>
 1.29 Zionists during prayer - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.30 *AmaNazarite* during pilgrimage - <http://www.ucalgary.ca/books/shembe>
 1.31 Zionists during church service - Derwent *et al*, 1998
 1.32 *Mokhukhu* (ZCC male dancers) in action - <http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/festival1997/faith.htm>
 1.33-1.35 *AmaNazarites* during pilgrimage in KwaZulu Natal - <http://www.ucalgary.ca/books/shembe.html>
 1.36 *Abakhethwa* (male initiates) - <http://www.info.gov.za>
 1.37 Moslem is being circumcised - <http://www.circlist.com/rites/moslem.html>
 2.1 'Volkshospital' - <http://www.pah.org>
 2.2 H.F. Verwoerd - <http://en.wikipedia.org>
 2.3 H.F. Verwoerd - Time magazine
 2.4 Old Administration building - Author, 2006
 2.5 Tshwane District Hospital - Author, 2006
 2.6 New Pretoria Academic Hospital - <http://www.pah.org>
 2.7 Dr ME Kenoshi, CEO of Academic Hospital - <http://www.pah.org>
 2.8 World map - Atlas of Pretoria
 2.9 Linking Dingakeng with hospitals in Tshwane - Atlas of Pretoria
 2.10 Early map of Pretoria - Mare *et al*, 1998
 2.11 The Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek in 1868 - Mare *et al*, 1998
 2.12 The Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek (1871-1884) - Mare *et al*, 1998
 2.13 Village quarters for African servants, Pretoria, 1950. Panoramic view - Mare *et al*, 1998.
 2.14 Village quarters for African servants, Pretoria, 1950. Plan - Mare *et al*, 1998.
 2.15 Aerial photograph with site & major roads - Geography Department
 2.16 Aerial photograph of site - Geography Department
 2.17 Activity spine - Geography Department
 2.18 Proposals on site - Geography Department
 2.19 Existing hospital mortuary - Author, 2006
 2.20 Administration block - Author, 2006
 2.21 Entrance of Tshwane District Hospital - Author, 2006
 2.22 View from T-Junction - Author, 2006
 2.23 Southward view from site - Author, 2006
 2.24 Northward view from site - Author, 2006
 2.25 Panorama view of hospital along Dr Savage - Author, 2006
 2.26 Some of the prefabricated buildings on site - Author, 2006
 3.1 Obelisk Axum, Ethiopia - <http://www.sacredsites.com/africa/ethiopia>
 3.2 Sphinx, Egypt - Fleming, W. 1995
 3.3 Pilgrimage chapel at Ronchamp - Fleming, W. 1995
 3.4 Interior of chapel - Fleming, W. 1995
 3.5 Kaedi Hospital, Kaedi, Mauritania - <http://www.akdn.org>
 3.6 MATEP Art Therapy, Soweto - Leading Architecture, Jan/Feb 2005
 3.7 KwaMai-Mai, Johannesburg - Author, 2006

- 3.10 The Ganges (Mother Ganga) - Mirsty, J. 1965
- 3.11 Canaanite Stone, Hazor - Mirsty, J. 1965
- 3.12 Obelisk Temple, Byblos - Mirsty, J. 1965
- 3.13 Layers of access of Temple of Solomon - Holy Bible
- 3.14 Layers of access - Alexander *et al*, 1977
- 3.15 Intricately carved door surround, Zanzibar - KZ-NIA Journal
- 3.16 Cave Church, eastern Free State - <http://www.sundaytimes.co.za>
- 3.17 Sacred entrance of Ga-Modjadji, near Tzaneen - Author, 2006
- 3.18 Obelisk Axum, Ethiopia - <http://www.sacredsites.com/africa/ethiopia>
- 3.19 Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem - Fleming, W. 1995
- 3.20 Stonehenge, England - <http://www.stonehenge.co.uk>
- 3.21 Church of St Mary of Zion, Ethiopia - <http://www.sacredsites.com/africa/ethiopia>
- 3.22 Mantsopa Makhetha - <http://sundaytimes.co.za/insight>
- 4.1 Perspective of Africa Centre for Health & Population Studies, Somkhele - Leading Architecture March/April 2003
- 4.2 Sunscreen detail of Centre for Health & Population Studies, Somkhele - Leading Architecture March/April 2003
- 4.3 Timber & steel materials where carefully combined at Africa Centre for Health & Population Studies - Leading Architecture March/April 2003
- 4.4 Elevation of HRDC, Namibia - Namibian Digest 2004
- 4.5 Bird's eye view of HRDC, Namibia - Namibian Digest 2005
- 4.6 Sunscreen detail of HRDC, Namibia - Namibian Digest 2005
- 4.7 Tower detail of HRDC - Namibian Digest 2005
- 4.8 Detail of HRDC - Namibian Digest 2005
- 4.9 Entrance of Mautemanene Fire Station, Namibia - Namibian Digest 2005
- 4.10 Perspective of Mautemanene Fire Station - Namibian Digest 2005
- 4.11 Bird's eye view of Casa Da Musica, Porto - GA Document 84
- 4.12 Concept models of Casa Da Musica, Porto - GA Document 84
- 4.13 Elevation of Casa Da Musica, Porto - GA Document 84
- 4.14 Perspective of Casa Da Musica, Porto - GA Document 84



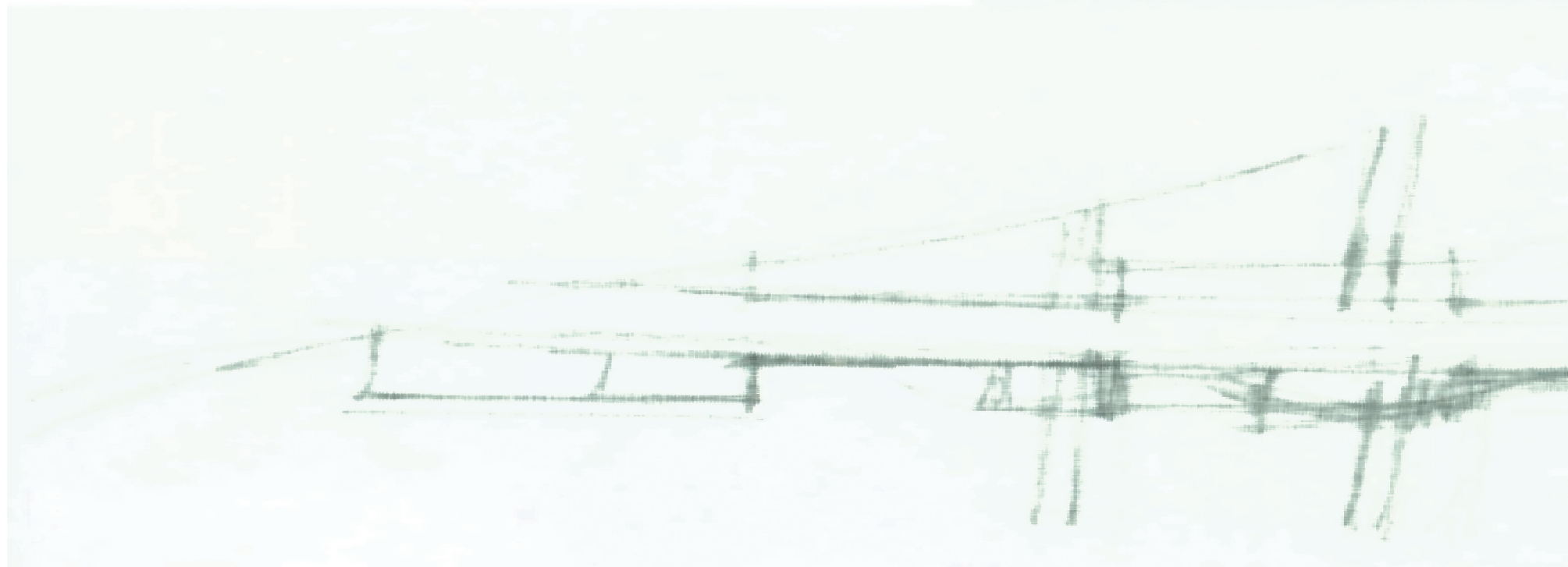


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 The Client
- 1.3 Traditional Medicine v/s Alternative Medicine
- 1.4 The Role of African Indigenous Churches
- 1.5 Traditional Circumcision
- 1.6 The Brief

2. Context

- 2.1 History
- 2.2 Why this particular site
- 2.3 Pretoria

3. Applicable theory

- 3.1 A place for identity
- 3.2 God is an African: Sacred sites
- 3.3 Houses of God
- 3.4 The Beginning

4. Precedent study

- 4.1 African Centre for Health & Population Studies
- 4.2 Habitat Research & Development Centre
- 4.3 Mautemanene Fire Station
- 4.4 Casa da Musica

5. Baseline Criteria

- 5.1 Principles
- 5.2 Occupant Comfort
- 5.3 Inclusive Environments
- 5.4 Access to Facilities
- 5.5 Participation & Control
- 5.6 Education, Health & Safety
- 5.7 Local Economy
- 5.8 Efficiency of Use
- 5.9 Adaptability & Flexibility

5.10 Ongoing Costs

5.11 Capital Costs

5.12 Water

5.13 Energy

5.14 Recycling & Reuse

5.15 Site

5.16 Materials & Components

6. Technical investigation

Appendix