wood for the trees

A temporary theatre for the performance of ‘Circles in a Forest’
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Barbara for remaining calm and believing that I could do this. It was great getting to know you

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Pa for perseverance

Ma All the above and more - Ma is my rots
In the world of architecture a field of tension exist between permanence and temporality. The aim of this study was to explore the possibilities residing within this duality. During the urban investigation conducted in the Pretoria CBD, scars of vacant space were found that exposed the possibility of temporarily utilizing these empty spaces. In general vacant spaces tend to become unsafe, degraded and illegally occupied. If these vacant spaces could be temporarily reused it would benefit the owners, users and community at large.

The binding workshop of The Government Printing Works on Vermeulen Street just west of Church Square is in the process of being relocated and no planned future use is evident. The investigation proposes that the workshop be adapted to accommodate a temporary performance space. Through the process of matching a vacant permanent space with a temporary program their interdependence became evident resulting in an approach towards a mutuality beneficial symbiosis between the temporary and the permanent. The permanent host will benefit the temporary guest by providing shelter, safety and physical support. The temporary guest will benefit the permanent host by giving it life, activity and the opportunity to contribute to its local context. The temporary program will preserve the existing host and protect it from deterioration.

Production design as an inherently, temporary form of space creation was selected as the medium for this investigation. Performance space positions architecture within the realm of temporary experience and lasting memory. Circles in a Forest are the inspiration behind the design of the temporary performance space. This novel by author Dalene Matthee speaks of a segment in the history of South Africa, but also tells a universal story; that serves as a warning against the exploitation of people and natural resources.

The design focused on creating layers of permanence and temporality dependant on each other. As these layers are peeled away the space can be reinterpreted and adapted for other performances and programmes.
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