

Bottom-up “Slum” Upgrading: Defamiliarising the Global Neighbourhood Aesthetic

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Abstract Grappling with South Africa’s processes of participatory urban development and bottom-up *in-situ* upgrading of informal settlements raises questions around the perception of neighborhoods. At the root of these questions is what has value, or is given value, in today’s climate of “desirable” urban landscapes. On the one hand, worth is added to (often imported) urban character which is deemed to foster the current trend toward globally competitive cities. On the other, worth is withheld from seemingly untidy, unsafe, unhealthy “slum” communities. This dichotomy becomes the core from which to explore the nature of aesthetic and its role in defining neighborhood within the context of urban *in situ* upgrading of informal settlements. This paper’s underlying argument is therefore the need to defamiliarise the notions of both neighborhood and slum in the urban development process.

Key Words: urban informal settlement, upgrading, aesthetic, defamiliarisation, Kliptown

9.1 Introduction

In today’s climate of global marketing trends, urban competitiveness, and the clamoring for international investment, the built environments of cities around the world reflect the varying tastes of consumer aesthetics. In Johannesburg choices of materiality and design decisions have led to such prominent development projects as the Italianate gambling and entertainment complex *Monte Casino*, the fashionable industrial aesthetic marketing food and art to local hipsters of *Arts on Main*, and housing estates promoting the desirable lifestyle to be had in Tuscan villas. Equally evident in Johannesburg’s urban landscape, but in striking contrast, are the seemingly unconsolidated shack communities serving the city’s informal residents.

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In my experiences in Johannesburg, nowhere is this more evident than in Kliptown, a economically and racially mixed community dating back to 1891. Today, this community of roughly 45,000 residents is an architectural conglomeration chronicling a very human and colourful history stemming from its farming roots. As one of the case studies in my current research, Kliptown begs the question: Is this community's contemporary development being determined by the dynamic relationships between basic need, economics, and perceived security; by the loss/finding of cultural identity; by the power dynamics of urban competitiveness seemingly intrinsic in developing cities; or is it determined by a complex layering of these influences? This paper extracts a piece of this larger question as a means to consider how aesthetic and its relationship to the notion of authentic change plays a role in cities' valuing of informal communities as urban neighborhoods *vis-à-vis* upgrading.

Frantz Fanon (2004:135) states that 'even if it takes twice or three times as long...people must know where they are going and why'. Paraphrasing Fanon, Simone (2005) suggests that 'time lost in allowing people to find their own vernaculars and practices for realising themselves as creator of life, and not just consumers or victims of it, is recuperated in the advent of real collective change'. In thinking about what is *real change* in the evolution of urban living space, I contemplate a thread of connection and ambiguity between Heidegger's (1962) likening of authentic to the essence of "Being", along with his refusal to dismiss, as inauthentic, the influence of "They" on our aesthetic values; and Vladislvić's (2004) exploration of the concept of the borrowed aesthetic. Of particular interest is the conjecture that preconceptions influences aesthetic, and that aesthetic is a key element in sense of place (Relph 1976; Vladislvić 2004). I then argue that this connection between aesthetic and place gets at a critical questioning of "slums" as viable urban neighbourhoods and therefore the role of informal settlement in cities' evolving socio-spatial development.

Further unravelling this notion of borrowing aesthetic, and adding to it the notion of using aesthetic, I consider Shklovskij's concept of defamiliarisation: the device that influences how people perceive and process the environments or objects with which they interact. In other words, their preconceptions, biases, aesthetic, and so on. Keeping in mind Roy's (2011:225) suggestion that 'the slum has become the most common itinerary through which the Third World city...is recognised', I warily draw the thread of aesthetic through the advent of experiencing "slums" in film, popular literature and tourism. Through the lenses of academic literature and in my own research findings, I query how perceptions and aesthetics are defining "modern" or acceptable urban character; and further, I question if upgrading - or non-upgrading - and the processes of informal housing fit into developing cities, as a form of community consolidation and decolonisation.

9.2 Methodology

This paper takes my review of the literature on aesthetic and defamiliarisation, both on their own as well as on how they relate to the perception of "slums", and considers its consequence within the findings of my preliminary fieldwork from Kliptown, South Africa.

Kliptown is a mixed formal/informal neighbourhood in the southwestern region of greater Johannesburg. It is one of the case study communities in my current research because of its unique thread of mixed built form and multi-racial population stretching prior to, during and post apartheid. One of the focuses of this research is defined by the following questions: Are there overlaps in the processes of informal housing/community consolidation, and decolonisation? And, to recognise the legitimacy of informal design decisions, is there a need to deconstruct the perceptions and aesthetics that define what is ‘modern’ or accepted urban character in developing cities?

In an effort to get ‘beyond *pap ‘n lebese* research’ (Dickinson 2014:324), I design my methodology with the African tradition of oral histories in mind, basing it on conversations (narrative interviews). To this end, I sit with Kliptown residents and other stakeholders explaining my research ideas, (ideally) posing very few questions, and then listening as people describe their process of housing within the context of their, and often their foremothers/fathers, life stories. In June and July of 2014, I sit on polished *stoeps*, in shacks, concrete block structures, council houses, old mud block farm dwellings that have divided, and then divided again, and I conduct and tape twenty such conversations. In most cases individuals respond generously, chronicling their lives over the course of one to two hours; if necessary I go back another day, and then another until the storyteller is done. Frequently I silence my frustrations as topics seem to diverge from my research focus, but in most cases I am recompensed with a richness of description or line of thought that would not have occurred to me to ask about.

The fieldwork presented in this paper as vignettes of residents, is the initial stage of an embedded research effort designed to build a complex understanding of the consolidation - or lack of consolidation - in informal living environments, encompassing communities’ social dynamics and the materiality of individuals’ dwelling structures. In addition to the resident interviews, this requires spending time in the settlements, a lot of time. In Kliptown, this means walking the streets and alleys and pathways to understand the convoluted socio-spatial dynamics and the geography of the multiple informal settlements interspersed among the turn of the century houses, the apartheid era council development, the post-apartheid flats, the Walter Sisulu Square/Soweto Hotel complex, the urban commuter rail line, and the Klipspruit River. It requires sitting and eating mealies (corn cobs roasted on the street) with residents, talking to different generations, those that lived under apartheid and those that have grown up after. It means listening to both genders and to people’s philosophies; piecing together the discords, friendships, agendas and supports. All of this to, as Dickinson (2014:326-7) puts it, ‘establish a more complete picture of [residents’] lives’, and to place the focus of my research ‘in the context of other critical aspects of their lives’.

9.3 Literature Review: connecting the notions of aesthetic and defamiliarisation to the evolution of urban “slum” neighbourhoods

Shifting the term used to describe informal settlements from the pejorative moniker “slum”

to “urban neighbourhood” immediately changes one’s perception. Delving beyond mere terminology to the legitimacy of this line of thought, I turn first to Heidegger’s essay on Building-Dwelling-Thinking, and specifically to Vycinas’s (1969) assertion that it is an investigation into the ontological roots at the essence of the process of building/dwelling. In it, Heidegger makes the point that a true translation from Old High German of the word for building includes the act of dwelling. Heidegger then goes on to connect “building” and “dwelling” with Being through the suggestion of spatial articulation as ‘[d]welling or building is “the manner by which we men are on the earth”’ (Vycinas 1969:15 quoting Heidegger, 1954:147). In this, I read that the truth of a space is derived from knowing the process of production and its producer. Heidegger goes on to draw together the words “dwelling” and “sparing” as ‘the tolerance of something in its own essence’ (*ibid*:15). Addressing this, Relph (1976:18) suggests that Heidegger intones in ““sparing” - the tolerance of something for itself without trying to change it or control it’.

In his later work, Heidegger (1962) explores the concept of inauthenticity. He suggests that inauthenticity is the ‘real dictatorship of the “They”’; in other words, ‘We take pleasure...as *they* (man) take pleasure; we read, see and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge...we find shocking what *they* find shocking’ (*ibid*:127). Placing this within his own work, Relph (1976:84 citing Heidegger, 1962) points out that ‘Heidegger takes pains to stress that inauthenticity is of *no lower order* than authenticity - it is simply a *different* order’. Questioning this, Relph (1976:84) goes on to argue, based on his own theory, that the concept of inauthenticity translates into ‘placeless geography, lacking both diverse landscapes and significant places’. In a parallel line of thought Polt (2006) proposes that “inauthenticity” implies a stagnation in Being. It is here that my attention is drawn back to Fanon’s (2004) and Simone’s (2005) notion of the need for a post-colonial finding of vernacular and real change; reflecting on Eurocentric development models and the international politico-economic trends influencing urban development as a borrowed aesthetic, as the “They” in developing cities.

With this in mind, I turn the conversation to the context of *in situ* upgrading in Africa, taking note of Schlyter’s (1981) research on the upgrading of George in Zambia. Though not recent, this project is of value because Schlyter documents it through the planning and construction, and critically follows it up some years later. Her findings on the overflow or greenfield section of the upgrade show that, given the choice, residents repeatedly request the development pattern of houses on a grid (*ibid*); in other words, residents want, to use Heidegger’s language, what “they” have. It is therefore not surprising when she goes on to state that residents’ ‘aspirations for a better life were very closely tied to conceptions of modernity’ (*ibid*). It is then also worth noting that her followup study shows reduced social interactions in the areas where the grid development pattern was implemented. Two decades later, Spiegel (1999) and Robins (2002) have similar findings in their studies following the formalization of informal settlements in South Africa’s Western Cape region. Seemingly this gives credence to Relph’s (1976) implied consequences of placelessness.

Delving deeper into this notion of placelessness I turn to Vladislvić’s (2004) *The Exploded View*, drawing from it the exploration of borrowed aesthetic in post apartheid South Africa. Goodman (2008:36) suggests that Vladislvić ‘takes the theoretical position that space is a

construct underpinned by social and economic ideologies, and is given significant meaning only by a consciousness of the forces underlying its construction'. The protagonist, Budlender, a traveling statistician for the national census, arrives at a Tuscan themed subdivision in the outskirts of the city and reflects that '[t]he boundaries of Johannesburg are drifting away...a strange sensation had come over him...the gates of Villa Toscana, [are] a dreamlike blend of familiarity and displacement' (*ibid*:6). While Budlender's experience is fictional, a Google search turns up a 'magnificent Tuscan villa for rent...a distinctly European flavour...in a highly exclusive development...in Bedfordview [Johannesburg]' (n.d.) among thousands of similar results. This coincides with Relph's (1976) and Polt's (2006) suggestions that humanity tends toward the inauthentic; that most people desire what they see others have without thinking too much about it. Even in the face of Heidegger's insistence that inauthenticity is not a 'lower order', it is hard not to judge this level of 'stereotyped, artificial, dishonest, planned by others' (Relph 1976:80), as Vladislvić does, in a negative light. In essence, Vladislvić's book is a social commentary on the loss of local landscapes of place; taken in this light, one could argue a parallel to the artistic device of defamiliarisation.

Viktor Shklovshij (1965:13) first coins the term defamiliarisation in an essay in 1917, describing it as the mechanism in art to 'make the stone stony...to give the the sensation of things as seen, not known'. Paraphrasing, Crawford (1984:209-10) describes it as an aesthetic device that opposes 'aesthetic perception to habitual recognition...for creating the strongest possible impression on a reader or viewer' arguing that it is the author/artist's created tension between 'aesthetic perception and habitual recognition' that forces a new understanding of an object by overcoming the everyday response to it.

Given Holston's (1998 and 2009) and Jaguaribe's (2004) use of defamiliarisation in the context of Brazilian urban development to describe the contemporary re-viewing of those parts of the city termed "slums", suggests that informality, like the Tuscan Villas, is being addressed as a crafted perception rather than in its real form. The potential reasoning for this manipulation within the context of urban development is twofold. The first is economic, reflecting the influences of politico-economic trends and the marketing of "world class" competitive cities through the principles of globalisation and neoliberalism. In other words, as AlSayyad (2004) puts it, attracting international investment becomes an underlying motivation to the presentation of urban image. Additionally, as Gilbert (2007) and Roy (2011) suggest, there is the realm of development funding, which may start with the best intentions but can become driven by deliberate marketing elements campaigning for both image and economic ends.

The second potential reason is socio-spatial, the mental partitioning of socio-economic groups into "us" and "them" (formal/informal, neighbourhood/slum, rich/poor, developed/developing), the consequence of which further entrenches urban spatial divides (Kornienko 2013). Huchzermeyer (2011:6) points to the changing perception of "slums" in recent years, arguing that 'in conceiving the "Cities Without Slums" campaign, Cities Alliance also subscribed to the idea that fuelled the advent of modern town planning, namely that "slums" were the antithesis of an aspired-to city'. This slogan is then picked up and carried on by the Millennium Development Goals, UN-Habitat and others (*ibid*). In the public arena, "slum"

finds its way into popular media, tourism, etc., becoming defined by film, photo, the view from a tour bus; resulting in a shift in people's perception not only of "slum" communities but of whole cities. Huchzermeyer (2011) goes on to point out that these changes in the public perception of "slums" have historically been mirrored by changes in development policies toward "slums".

Returning to Jaguaribe's (2004:337-8) work, we see a mechanism of this change of perception in her suggestion that 'the favela in film and literary fiction has been variously used as a means of engendering artistic "defamiliarisation" and as a form of translating the new cultural experiences of the globalised favela'. The extent to this manipulation takes on more meaning when considered in conjunction with Badiou's (2005:78) statement that '[a] film operates through what it withdraws from the visible...Cutting is more essential than presence - not only through the effect of editing, but already, from the start, both by framing and by the controlled purge of the visible'. In this combining we see both the mechanics of defamiliarisation in film, and its consequence, the indirect manipulation of the public's perception of "slums".

Similarly, Dovey and King (2012) explore the draw of slum tourism, particularly to Western tourists. Like Jaguaribe (2004) they suggest that it is the tourists' search for the authentic city that draws them to the slums, that it is the "shock of the real" that holds the power to influence the observer. Dovey and King (2012:291) go on to point out the potential transformational power of slum tourism not only to change perceptions, but also the economics and socio-spaces of cities:

'Slum tourism provides an interesting twist in that in some cities it turns the slums into part of the brand...The place branding schemes of many developing cities - importing Western models of waterfront development and dressing up local places according to global formulae - can render them placeless from a global viewpoint. In this context [they argue that] the slum adds value as an authentic urbanism cutting through the spectacle of globalization, modernity and placelessness, an insurgent urbanism that resists global capitalism and authoritarian politics'.

But just as in film, the tour operator holds the power to manipulate, framing views from the tour bus windows.

9.4 Preliminary Research Findings: delving into a South African context

In developing cities around the world, including South Africa's cities, security of tenure is commonly put forward as a significant hurdle to household and community consolidation. However, De Souza's (2001) research in Brazil shines light on this contention in such a way as to suggest a need to look beyond the mainstream legal/planning confines, a need to look for subtler relational dynamics that give or take away informal residents' confidence to consolidate. Similarly South Africa's capital subsidy system and its connection to residents' (often assumed) expectations of state housing provision is frequently cited as a barrier to consolidation. Huchzermeyer (2003) calls this into question, tabling the notion that in fact the capital subsidy development trajectory is perpetuating the socio-spatial control inherited from the apartheid state. A narrative that Desai and Pithouse (2004) as well as Bond (2006) suggest underpins the "native" sector having been replaced by the poor sector. Here

too it is perhaps worth shining a light beyond the obvious confines of this argument and delving deeper into the consequences of such policies.

In earlier writing on the ‘banality’ of power in post-colonial Africa, Mbembe (2001:102) also alludes to the flaws in just such capital subsidy trajectories. He cites the lack of emergence from the ‘violence...[of] colonial relationships’, suggesting evidence that newly emerged states effectively replace one brand of violence for another through corporate and political machinery (*ibid*:102). He describes the mechanism for this shift in violence as government coding of the ‘logics that underlie...meanings within that society’ and the ‘institutionalis[ing of] this world of meanings...by instilling it in the minds of the cibles [the targeted population]’ (*ibid*:103). This notion gives weight to the concept of defamiliarisation, or the device that influences peoples’ understanding of the world around them; and thus suggests how this power to influence carries the potential to shape spatial production. It is this tension between the power from above to manipulate desire, and the search for authentic response to need from below that is of particular interest to the question of informal housing consolidation and upgrading. Understanding this tension could prove key to unlocking the subtler influences on informal residents’ motivation - or lack of motivation - to further concretise their living environments.

Transitioning to my fieldwork findings, I first turn to an untitled poem written by Bafana, a Kliptown resident and published poet. In it, he eloquently captures the essence of need and desire:

Young as we are,
We know poverty.

Young as we are,
We know disunity.

Young as we are,
We are Meandering in an
Amazing motion.

Is this Life?
(Nkosi 2014)

Kliptown is a mix of pre apartheid row house and farm construction, apartheid era council housing, the shacks of a handful of Johannesburg’s 180 informal settlements, a commercial high street, and the area’s only four-star hotel; when asked, the residents consider it one community. The earliest records of informal housing in the area date back to 1903. Older residents reminisce about a vibrant mixed-race community before apartheid. Gene, the local historian, provides me with a document dated 7 May 1934, in which Sgt. W.H. Canisius, an investigation officer, reports to the Director of Native Labour that Kliptown is a ‘a mixture of Europeans, Coloureds, and Natives fairly evenly distributed over the whole area...Asiatics I have classified as Coloureds’. Later, Kliptown becomes a racial intersection as apartheid era

policies separate its races to neighbouring townships: Eldorado Park, Coloureds only; Soweto, Blacks only; Lenz, Indians only. However, because it sits outside the municipal boundaries of mid-century Johannesburg it escapes the total clearing and violent destruction that strikes Johannesburg's other famously mixed-race neighbourhoods in the 1950s. Because of this, Kliptown becomes a favoured hiding place for Nelson Mandela and other ANC stalwarts during the anti-apartheid struggle.

Today, the province's tourism website, *Gauteng: it starts here*, promotes Kliptown as one of its history and heritage tourist attractions, as the site of the 1955 signing of the *Freedom Charter*, the document outlining a South Africa free of apartheid (Gauteng Tourism Authority 2014). It goes on to say that, in 2005, in response to Kliptown's 72% unemployment rate, the Johannesburg City Council sponsored a R375-million (US\$35-million) revitalisation project. Part of this project is the Walter Sisulu Square and Soweto Hotel complex development (the hotel was initially a joint venture with Hilton Hotels) and is advertised as Soweto's first 4-star hotel (Fig. 4.1). At the site, I watch as traffic is stopped to allow tourists to exit their tour bus at the square and file toward the Kliptown Open Air Museum, where 'vibrant artwork, photographs, song, narration and newspaper clippings' tell the community's storied history. The tourists then climb up the stairs of the pedestrian rail-overpass to photograph the shacks 50 meters away (Fig. 4.2). Tours guided by local shack dwellers are on offer, but rarely taken. Several shack residents later comment that they feel like animals in a zoo.



Fig. 9.1 The Walter Sisulu Square and Soweto Hotel complex, formerly know as Freedom Charter Square, with a typical level of use, as observed on many visits in 2014 (Kornienko 2014).

From the vantage of this rail-overpass, is Freedom Charter Square informal settlement and its residents. Nomusa shows me her old house and relates growing up and later inheriting it from her grandmother. Holding no legal tenure, but hoping to cash in on the tourist trade, she converts it into a backpackers (hostel). However, very few Western tourists, for whom it is designed, venture into the shacks. Discouraged, Nomusa is talking of selling her house. Going on, she relates feeling the degrading looks as she sits on the mini-bus taxi with dusty shoes, a

telltale of the dirt streets/paths where she lives. She concedes that she she has come to believe the settlement should be redeveloped to look like other townships where more successful members of her family live.



Fig. 9.2 The view from the shacks of Freedom Charter Square informal settlement looking across the commuter rail line at the Walter Sisulu Square and Soweto Hotel complex no more than 50 meters away (Kornienko 2014)

A few minutes walk, on its edge but still within the settlement, is the youth centre SKY, with its plaque on the wall stating funding and support from the United States National Basketball Association. It is a refuge for young people, yet at the same time I hear whisperings from residents of unsavoury goings on, especially with young girls.

Next door is a creche run by Francina. She tells her extraordinary life story of growing up in the shacks of Kliptown, filled with defiance under apartheid that jail did not change. She now lives in a nearby township, in a house bought for her by her two university educated and financially successful children. She and the other old women work there, often taking little or no pay so that the children can have breakfast.

Another few minutes walk and I am sitting on the porch of Shutterland, an informal community art gallery. There are no benefactors' plaques on the wall. A group of young residents are creating this exhibition space. They are white-washing mud-brick walls, and mosaicking shards of white tile onto the floor. Their paintings, photographs and poems hang on the walls. Thabang, a resident and one of the gallery founders, tells me a story of family generations who lived in that old house, pointing out their possessions displayed as artefacts.

Then he tells me his story. Born and raised in the shack community, he and his brother have been on their own since his mother died when he was fifteen. Now, in his early thirties, he leads the Shutters, a group of young photographers with donated cameras. It becomes clear that his camera and this group are his linchpin. We discuss his feelings of connection to the

community and his hope for its future, his eyes light up as this engages the philosophies of Frantz Fanon, of whom he is well versed.

He takes me for a tour, showing me his and other residents' efforts to try to bring dignity to the community. Brightly coloured chemical toilets, fast becoming the iconic image of South Africa's informal settlements (Kornienko 2014), stand alone or in long rows, dotting the dirt streets. Here attempts are being made to transform the toilets (Fig. 4.3), yet still residents' sentiments parallel the findings of the South African Human Rights Commission, which recently ruled that similar toilets in Cape Town are a violation of residents' right to dignified sanitation (Abbas 2014).





Fig. 9.3 Efforts by shack dwellers to change the aesthetic of their community: (A) by channeling the ever-present grey water that runs along streets from the leaking public taps with native plantings; and by transforming the now iconic image of chemical toilets with (B) reeds from the adjacent river, and (C) with graffiti (Kornienko 2014).

Later I meet another member of the Shutters. As a young single mother under twenty, Kritumetse describes living on the streets of the settlement. She relates of her mother dying of AIDS when she was young, of being evicted from her mother's home, and of the twenty family members living there drifting apart. Thabang tells me that her baby is a product of the local drug culture. The infant's father is a dealer, sex in exchange for fashionable clothes and a fix, until she falls pregnant. Now, her friends from the Shutters find her a place to live and she is returning to school, her daughter going to the creche with money from government child grant.

Just outside the informal settlement, Janet, born and raised in a row house in Kliptown, describes life in those days. She tells of her family's row house demolished during the apartheid era spatial changes, and of her father receiving one of the limited council houses because he is considered Coloured, though Janet herself shrugs at the distinction. Then jumping forward in time, she recounts most White residents leaving post-1994, feeling that they are not safe. Janet too leaves Kliptown, many years later returning to live in her parents' house. From her window, she looks across the street at the shacks of Freedom Charter Square informal settlement. Standing in her front garden she tells me of moving back and of the shack residents intimidating her, but making the effort to know them and to feel safe. As with the racial distinction, she makes a point of telling me that in her mind there is no formal on one side of the street and informal on the other.

9.5 Conclusion

The intent of the discussion in this paper is to elicit questions rather than to answer them. Steve Biko (1978:68) famously stated that ‘the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed’. In South Africa, the legacy of apartheid’s urban machinery and its development patterns, as well as the contemporary economics of international development (the perception of cities), continue to be its oppressors. The country’s current trends of urban design and development reflect this with such practices as shack clearing and the implementation of informal settlement upgrading as greenfield development. Huchzermeyer (2009:60) underlines this with her statement that, in reviewing the legality of South Africa’s Informal Settlement Programme in the province of Gauteng, institutional change is occurring in response to reforms, however ‘mindset change currently [is] the main intervention required to unlock *in situ* upgrading of informal settlements’. This is echoed to me in a recent meeting by a member of the National Upgrading Support Programme (personal communication 2014). And while these statements allude to the mindset of those driving urban design decisions, this paper also considers the residents of Kliptown. On the one hand, the aesthetic sentiment expressed by Nomusa and others parallels those from the upgrading of George: a desire for development on a grid - in Heidegger’s words, to have what “they” have. Yet how does this bode given the followup evidence in the George project and others? On the other hand, Thabang and many of the younger generation argue that there is value of community in Kliptown, and rejecting the idea that the way forward lies with bulldozers and rebuilding.

My preliminary fieldwork yields two initial findings. The first is a hint of the post-colonial vernacular, to which Fanon and Simone allude, from residents who didn’t grow up under the yoke of South Africa’s apartheid. Through this younger generation of shack dwellers, there is the perception of hope: the development of an art gallery; the building of a bird hide; the brilliance of a clothing designer; the planting of street trees; and the empowerment in the art of photography. Is it real, or will this hope sink under the mire of poverty, drugs, alcohol, and the lack of basic services? The second is the consequence of the development of Walter Sisulu Square and Soweto Hotel complex. Its lack of congruity with the existing places of Kliptown in architectural style, scale and usage is an example of what Dovey and King (2012:291) describe as ‘dressing up local places according to global formulae’ in an effort to court tourism and acceptance as a “world class city”. The Walter Sisulu project accommodates tourists’ encounters with one of Johannesburg’s most infamous “slums”, an opportunity to engage with one of Nelson Mandela’s illicit haunts, a “shock of the real” from the safety of an overpass, a tour bus or a modern hotel; but the shack residents tell me that it has done nothing to improve their living conditions. This brings to mind Roy’s (2004:302) contention that ‘the aestheticization of poverty is the establishment of an aesthetic and aestheticized...relationship between viewer and viewed, between professional and city, between First and Third Worlds. It is an ideology of space’.

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