

# Prioritizing Community-Building through the Arts:

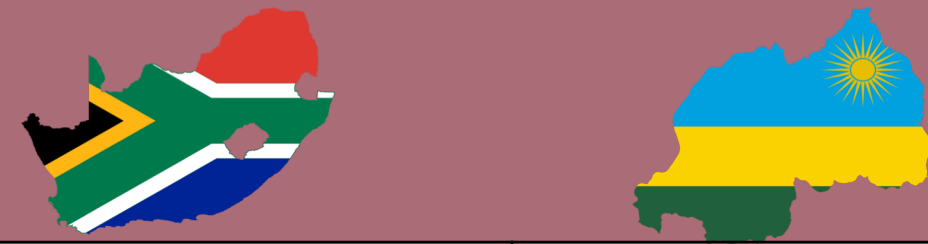
## An Exploratory Study of Community-Based Arts Initiatives in Cape Town and Kigali

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### About



<b>Location</b>	Cape Town, South Africa	Kigali, Rwanda
<b>Population</b>	433,688 in the City Bowl 3,740,026 in the Metro area	1,132,686
<b>Languages</b>	English, Afrikaans, Xhosa	Kinyarwanda, French, English, Swahili
<b>Demographics</b>	42.4% "Coloured"* 38.6% "Black African" 15.7% "White" 1.4% "Asian or Indian" 1.9% Other	84% Hutu* 15% Tutsi* 1% Twa*  Due to the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, 73% of Rwandan residents are < 30 years old.

\*note that "coloured" is a classification used during Apartheid to denote someone who is neither black nor white; most South Africans still use this terminology.

\*note that post-genocide, residents are shifting towards referring to themselves as "Rwandan" as opposed to Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa.



### Organizations Consulted

<b>Africa Arts</b> Cape Town, South Africa
<b>The Amy Foundation</b> Cape Town, South Africa
<b>eKhaya eKasi</b> Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa
<b>Ikhaya-Kulture "Home" Garden</b> Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa
<b>Imanthi Educare Centre</b> Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa
<b>Philippi Music Project</b> Philippi, Cape Town, South Africa
<b>Playing for Change Foundation</b> Gugulethu, Cape Town, South Africa
<b>Nyamirambo Women's Center</b> Nyamirambo, Kigali, Rwanda
<b>Sano Boi &amp; A4</b> Kacyiru, Kigali, Rwanda
<b>Thokozani Together</b> Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa
<b>Uthando South Africa</b> Cape Town, South Africa



### Takeaways

- As a social worker, my duty is not to tell communities how to change; my duty is to amplify their voices.** When I arrived in Cape Town, my question was: "Why does race determine access to the arts?". Now, my call to action is: "Celebrate musicians of color and support community initiatives."
- Allow yourself to be vulnerable.** The organizations I worked with showed me incredible trust and openness and it is important to return the sentiment. The best conversations I had while traveling were not planned and were only possible through mutual respect and vulnerability.
- Remember that poverty does not define a human or their community.** As we are sure to work with communities that are diverse in more ways than one, it's essential to not get caught up making certain assumptions based on one facet of someone's experience.

Academia, especially higher education, often produces an elitist view of what "smart" means and looks like: multiple degrees, anglicized language skills, and a crisp, professional appearance. You do not need a formal education to affect change. You do not need a formal education to lead a community or care for it. There are so many organizations in Cape Town with little to no funding and professional experience, yet they perform incredible and impactful work because of their experiential knowledge from the community. Time is the most valuable resource we have and how we spend it reflects our character and our values.

We do not need to start from scratch and an organization's worth is not dependent upon the number of degrees achieved by its staff. **Question popular ideas and work directly with the communities they impact to address them.**



### Acknowledgements

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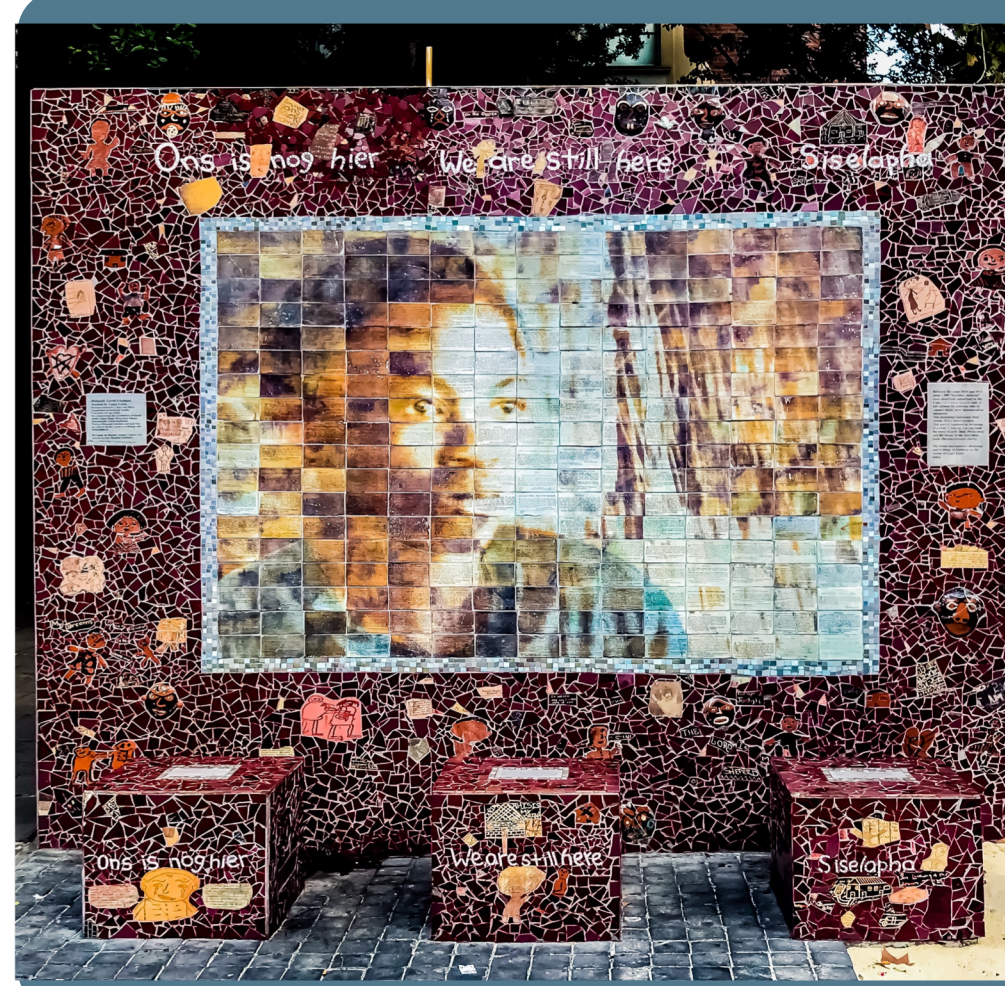
Special thanks to Sibusiso Nyamakazi, my contact on the ground in Cape Town, Dr. Larry Gant as the advisor for this project, to Paola Marquez for her support of this project, and to my friends and family who helped to make this possible.

**Location:** Downtown Cape Town

**Inscription:** "Between the years 1841 and 1921 some 7,000 'destitute children' were identified, advertised in the Cape Government Gazette and, if not claimed by someone able to support them, were indentured as labourers."

This memorial represents their stories. It is a street archive. This past is captured in the image of a child. Close up you can read the story of each child. Move away and the image of the face takes form. Distance creates clarity.

The frame incorporates drawings and writings of children on the streets of Cape Town today."



### Choice

In Summer 2015 I began my relationship with the Playing for Change Foundation (PFCF) and since then, I have wanted to visit one of their myriad music schools located around the world. Thanks to your award, I not only visited their Imvula program in Cape Town; additionally, I engaged and cultivated relationships with several other nonprofits throughout South Africa and Rwanda.

The Imvula program works out of the Vuyani Primary School in Gugulethu, Cape Town, one of the townships of Cape Town. Racist Apartheid policies forced non-white residents out of the City center in the 1950s - 1990s, creating what residents call the "slums." Yet the organizations I worked with aim to create positive change in their own communities by teaching practical skills to children in a creative environment. Through music-making, gardening, dancing, and more, students learn valuable skills of discipline while also staying off the streets and out of gang activity. The result? A great decrease in violence among youth.

### The Project

By interacting with other arts nonprofits in addition to Imvula, I learned how hard the community works to provide meaningful opportunities for its members. During Apartheid rule, persons identified as black were forcibly removed from their homes near the City center and taken to the outskirts of Cape Town, now known as the Townships. Entire families were uprooted from neighborhoods they had known for generations and forced to rebuild a sense of safety and security within overcrowded and poorly made shacks. Nearly 50% of those living in the Townships are unemployed, and the majority of those who are lucky enough to have a job must take an expensive and long bus ride into the City every day. Without jobs, many young people resort to gang behavior to fill their days, often leading to increased violence and a culture of fear.

When talking with one of the Imvula teachers, Sibuyi, he told me that the biggest benefit of music education is how it teaches discipline. Many members of society question the value of teaching children music, as seen by a governmental tradition in the U.S. of underfunding the arts. From my research, I read studies connecting arts education to decreased violence, and Sibuyi's discussion of discipline takes this even further. By committing to an instrument, musicians learn self-discipline by practicing it and persevering to always play better. The environment of the music classroom also sets high expectations and requires students to work collaboratively towards a similar goal.

### Connections

The most helpful course I took in preparation for my trip was SW 683, Evaluation in Social Work. Under the guidance of Professor Katie Doyle, I learned what aspects to consider when evaluating an organization, skills that directly transferred to my Global Independent Study. Cultivating relationships with organizations allows for further insight into their impact and future goals.

I hope to use my MSW degree to work as an international consultant for small- to medium-sized nonprofits, assessing their programming, recommending improvements, and then implementing best practices to improve capacity and efficiency. Through this, I can continue to improve access to the arts as an outsider rather than risk taking a position that should be filled by a community member.