

THE WAY OF THE WATER art performance Port Elizabeth **CALL TO PARTICIPATE 06 May 2017, 8.00 to 8.30 am**

director and coordinator of the art performance: Dr Magda Minguzzi
coordinators KhoiKhoi community: Chief Margaret Coetzee, Chief Xam ≠ Gaob Maleiba

The project *"The way of water"* is an international collective art performance that will take place contextually, at the same time, in different sea cities: Brooklyn (US), Maputo (MZ), New Mexico (US), Port Elizabeth (RSA), Venice (IT), Zagreb (RSC).

The performances, in the different sea cities, will be documented with videos and photos that will be shown internationally in selected spaces as itinerant exhibitions.

The topic to be discussed in the performance is:

"The way of water (the sea)", as common good to be protected and defended.

The scope of the artistic project is to bring attention to the fragile marine environment, threatened by pollution, excessive fishing, and irresponsible management of the coasts.

What is our role in maintaining necessary conditions for life on our planet?

PLACE OF THE PERFORMANCE: **CAPE RECIFE, NATURE RESERVE**

In this place it is possible to find the remains of the most ancient structure (construction) present in Port Elizabeth constructed by the Strandlopers: **the fish traps**.

For this reason, being there, is highly significant, in terms of heritage.

The art performance is composed of a KhoiKhoi ritual, practiced by the KhoiKhoi People as descendants of the Strandlopers, and a "general" ritual practiced by the participants at the art performance.

This will be the metaphorical act (related to identity and culture) that connects our contemporary reality (pollution, exploitation of the sea) with a time in the past, when human beings were in harmony with Mother Earth and the sea.

PROGRAMME

1) After parking the car at the entrance of the Pine Lodge Resort & Conference Centre /Cape Recife the participants should wait for the combi, that the Pine Lodge has organized as transport system, to reach the "starting point" of the ritual, at the parking area of Cape Recife light house.

In the case that the car of the participant/s has a pass organized, the participant/s can park directly at the parking area of Cape Recife/ lighthouse and join the "starting point" (lighthouse).

In both case the participants are requested to leave their shoes outside the area of the ritual.

2) A person responsible for the art performance will welcome and direct the participant/s, in silence, to the entrance point of the ritual area, where a KhoiKhoi Chief will practice the **Cleansing Ceremony** with the incense.

3) The participant/s will be directed by a person responsible at the point of collection of the **wooded sticks to pick up** a wooden stick and walk in silence in the direction of the main fire.

4) The first wooden sticks will be **positioned on the fire** by the KhoiKhoi Chiefs and consequentially the participant/s, in silence and following in a row, will do the same.

5) Immediately after having placed a stick on the fire the participant/s is/are requested to sit in a circle in front of the fire, repeating all together, in synchrony: **"WE ARE HERE"** as a mantra.

The fire is an ancestral symbol of gathering and community meeting, as primordial element (such as the water-sea) and symbol that unites all cultures.

The phrase "WE ARE HERE," marks the importance of being, as an individual, at that specific place and time, who has become a group, a community, and together express their strength. The gesture of sitting in a circle in front of the fire that is in the human DNA, regardless of place, time, culture.

6) When the last participant is part of the circle, **the horn will blow 7 times**, calling all together.

The horn bearer calls the names of the Ancestors in four directions. While raising the horn high, the horn blower honors them.

When the horn starts to blow, **the participants need to be silent again**, showing respect and a reconnection with the ancestors.

7) A new phase of the ceremony starts: **Cleansing ritual**.

The participants are requested to stay seated around the fire, in silence, while the 7 Chiefs, 7 selected woman and 7 selected young people practice the Seawater Cleansing ritual.

The **participants, sitting around the fire**, will be part of the Sprinkling Ceremony, practiced by KhoiKhoi people, **with buchu water**, which symbolize unity with one another and those in other coastal cities and continents around the world.

8) **The horn will blow**, announcing the end of the ceremony.

Before leaving the fire, the representatives of the various "communities" (artists, researchers, students, politicians, citizens, etc.) in front of the camera, concisely (in few words), will be asked to answer the question: **"What is the ocean for you?"**

The gathering will leave the Cape Recife Nature Reserve for a location (to be decided), next to the sea, to participate in the Meal Ceremony. This festive activity marks the closure of the ritual.

Time foreseen for the ceremony is more or less 1 hour.

Taboos at / during the performance of this event:

1. No use of alcohol or state of inebriation.
2. No dogs allowed.
3. No use of cell phone, video camera, photo camera during the art performance

After the art performance the area of Cape Recife should be left clean as it was before. Please leave only your footprints.

Please take note that the art performance "The way of water" will be recorded with video cameras, audio recorder and cameras. The material will be edited to obtain a short video that will be projected internationally in Art Galleries and Universities. The same will happen with the photos. If you wish to be part of this event, you automatically accept this condition.

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The 06 of May, due to a road block, the route to and back from Marine Drive/Cape Recife will be through Strandfontain road/Gomery road/ NMMU and the back gate at South campus, near the NMMU stadium.