



6 December 2011

news

Yeoville Studio is a community-oriented research initiative of the Wits School of Architecture and Planning, in partnership with residents and organisations.

Simon Says: SPECIAL EDITION!!
Final YS News of the year.
Special focus: YES Exhibition (Season's Greetings and see you in 2012!)

'The End of a Project but the Beginning of a Process'

'The end of a project but the beginning of a process ... Yeoville Studio has been key in crystallising this'. These were the words spoken by Edmund Elias of SANTRA, one of our partners, in a congratulatory speech for our final exhibition opening last week. The event showcased a selection of work that had been done over the course of 2011, and marked the official end to new research and the beginning to the 'rounding off and consolidation' process.

Conceptualised at the end of 2009, Yeoville Studio has been active for two years, producing an immense amount of research and practical output, holding workshops, exhibitions and public events, in its aims to produce material that is use-



Compliments to YS: Mr Elias of SA National Trading Retail Association talks about Yeoville Studio's work

ful to Yeoville stakeholders, as well as teaching students the value and techniques of working with people and in a different setting. But, as planned, the project has come to the end of its 'active' life. This edition of YS News looks at what's been going on in the last month, as well as plans for the future.

Celebration, Food and Music

The YS Exhibition Opening wasn't all about VIP speeches. Ama Afrika, a fantastic local band, kept people's feet tapping. Kids and grandpas got up to dance, and even a puppet was seen showing off his moves.

A delectable array of dishes was served, tempting guests with aromas from all around Africa, cooked up by three different local caterers. The Ivorian Ginger Juice, for which YS events are starting to get famous for, was much enjoyed again: 16 litres was gulped down by guests within minutes!

But one of the best parts of the celebration was the interesting mix of academics, local activists, traders, residents and people just passing by. A mix that's quite unusual, and as commented by many who attended, is something we should try for more often.



A unique mix: A diverse range of people attended the exhibition, from university professors to trader activists

VIPs and Guests

Yeoville Studio was very lucky to have an extraordinary number of high profile guests attending the final exhibition. Several people spoke about the role of the YS initiative, and the many facets and experiences of Yeoville.

Joburg City Manager Trevor Fowler, who voted in the first democratic elections in Yeoville, and has had a relationship with the place for over 20 years, spoke about the value of participatory research in urban governance.

Wits Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof Yunus Ballim, spoke about the importance of initiatives such as YS in exposing students to social and urban realities, not only as an essential part of their professional training, but also as responsible citizens of this diverse country.

Rashid Seedat, Director of the Gauteng Planning Commission, reflected on the importance of local-scale research, often forgotten in policy-making.

And in one of the most enjoyed speeches, Tawana Kupe, as Wits Dean of Humanities and Professor of Media Studies, promised that this year's project was just the beginning. Coming next would be Yeoville Studio, the TV series, and YS the movie!



City Manager and YS Partners: Heads of the Yeoville Studio partner organisations with Trevor Fowler



Please send all comments and news items to ssmayor@gmail.com/Ph 0711176522

Wits YS Coordinator Claire Benit-Gbaffou

Administrator Simon Sizwe Mayson

YSF Chair George Lebone

More about Yeoville Studio

<http://bit.ly/yeoville>



news photo special

Simon Says: NB check out the video of the exhibition at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=manv> thanks to IFAS)



Special Guests: Tawana Kupe, Wits Dean of Humanities, explains his idea to convert Yeoville Studio into a TV Series and a movie ©



YS Coordinator's Yeoville love: Claire Benit-Gbaffou ends off the speeches with a reflection on the 'Love Stories' exhibit



Checking out the work: Yeoville Studio work was exhibited at selected sites around Yeoville, and in and outside the Recreation Centre on Raleigh St. Some research participants came all the way to the Rec Centre to look at their photos



HIGHLIGHT: trading exhibits, Yeoville Square: Trading stall models conceptualised by Wits students generated loads of interest, with some people asking if they could buy one! The favourite was the 'runaway shop', created for traders to get away with their goods as quick as possible!



Massive full-size model: Bus shelter cum trading stall: a more formalised trading solution



Scale model of Rocky/Raleigh trading: Another favourite, especially with kids, was the model of Yeoville shopping street with mobile placeable trading stalls. Just seeing their neighbourhood in this form was refreshing for many residents



Testing the model: Wits Prof Aly Karam tests out a trading stall model. There was a real mix of opinion about informal trading expressed by passersby, with many customers being in support!



Light moment: All went well! In the end!

So... What now?

Although we're entering the 'slowing down' phase, it ain't happening quite yet! We already have loads of activities planned as part of the process, including:

- The last Housing policy 'Rounding up the Roundtable' session at Wits and a feedback session presenting findings to Yeoville stakeholders (date to be announced)
- A series of booklets on rights and responsibilities of tenants, landlords and owners based on housing roundtable 'findings'
- Archiving of all research and upgrading of the website
- Two books showcasing YS research! Due to be released end 2012



Band keeps the vibe going Sikhumbuzo's marimba outfit brought out a fantastic set of beats to keep guests vibing

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