



YEOVILLE STUDIO is a research and learning initiative, driven collaboratively by the Wits University School of Architecture and Planning and the Yeoville Stakeholders Forum, and supported by several other partners. It aims to produce quality academic research that is relevant, useful and of interest to the Yeoville community.

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YEOVILLE STUDIO IN YEOVILLE AFRICA WEEK, 29 MAY 2010

Organisers: Claire Benit-Gbaffou and Naomi Roux, with the participation of 2nd year Planning students, 4th year Architecture Students, and Sophie Didier (French Institute of South Africa).



Yeoville photo competition – vote for your favourite!

Africa week, jointly organised by Yeoville Bellevue Community Development Trust (YBCDT, one of Yeoville Studio Partner organization) and the African Diaspora Forum, and sponsored by the City of Johannesburg, was intended at both a commemoration of the 2008 xenophobic attacks (which started on the 19 May 2008), and a celebration of Africa Day (25 May of each year). The Africa week involved the closing off of Rokeby Raleigh street (the main street), a carnival in Yeoville celebrating the diversity of African cultures, and a series of smaller events on Africanness and diversity.

Yeoville Studio, although having just started (January 2010), decided to participate to this Africa week, by opening a public space usually closed to the public – the Library courtyard. The whole week, a variety of photographs (taken by students and by Yeoville residents) were displayed in the yard, and residents were encouraged to vote, with a sticker, for their favourite.

The five photographs selected would be printed as postcards on Yeoville. Many people took the time to vote! The postcards were printed and distributed on Africa Day (29 May).

On that day, a variety of activities were proposed. Housing posters, tracing the life and the housing conditions of seven Yeoville residents, were displayed. Several residents started discussing about rent levels, whilst others insisted they also wanted to become 'famous' and have their stories told.



Yeoville residents and wits staff gather around the Housing posters. But it is rather time to party...



More directly interactive activities were organized. Fourth year Architecture students (who had been working on local/global connections in Yeoville and inventing new forms of connections for Yeoville) proposed a scale model of Rockey-Raleigh Street, that residents were proposed to alter, imagine, paint, densify or demolish. The painting part certainly was very successful amongst Yeoville children!



A mock model of Rockey Raleigh street. Initially aimed at discussing Yeoville's future...



Yeoville Stories, a part of the Studio aimed at collecting residents' stories through a series of regular workshops, had prepared a giant map of Yeoville where residents were encouraged to locate themselves and tell stories about places. Meanwhile, Ethiopian coffee was served to launch the Yeoville African restaurants guide.



Sophie Didier (IFAS), facilitating story telling on a giant Yeoville map.



Ingrid Sott (2nd year student) and Janet, from Yeo street restaurant, serving Ethiopian coffee.



Discussing the African restaurants guide – where next?



Naomi Roux and Claire Benit-Gbaffou (Wits), tired but happy organizers!