

**THE CREATION OF A MULTI-CULTURAL IDENTITY FOR WINDOW  
DISPLAYS IN DURBAN'S FASHION RETAIL SHOP FRONTS**

by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the possibility of creating shop window displays focussing on a South African identity in the Durban region. The impetus for the study stemmed from the design of the Constitutional Court which features elements of South African culture. This study challenges the contemporary notion of presenting window displays using primarily Western influences and proposes the use of fashion imagery and cultural identity currently dominating South Africa. The study argues against corporate fashion stereotypes and champions a representation of an eclectic multi-cultural South African society. In this respect key theories of identity, culture, and design were explored. A qualitative methodology was conducted utilising interview and observation approaches to obtain data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve local professionals specialising in the fields of art, design, fashion and architecture to obtain their expert opinions. The data was analysed by clustering information into themes to establish the findings. Interview findings revealed that shop window displays should accommodate local imagery appropriate to the South African context. Observing two local production houses, namely *Hirt & Carter* and *Barrows* in Durban provided insights for a backdrop creation for the practical component of the study. The practical comprised of producing retail shop installations and a visual catalogue representing findings drawn from the study. The catalogue was used to illustrate the results of investigating a national image and identity that could be intrinsic to window display creation in South African fashion retail shop fronts.

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that all sources have been accurately reported and acknowledged, and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university in order to obtain an academic qualification.

The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.

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Sarah Christine Lichkus

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# CHAPTER 1

## OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 Introduction

It is the researcher's perspective that contemporary fashion identity and visual culture as presented in shop window displays follows a prescriptive, entrenched Western value system. The world, as Sardar (1998:13) points out, is in fact dominated by a single culture: Western, capitalist, English-speaking, scientific and media obsessed. The researcher concurs with Dr Baogang He (2004:3), the Chinese critic who suggests that the solution to this Western domination is multi-culturalism, as an open, multi-faceted, dynamic structure consisting of multiple groups with overlapping memberships that are interactive. The researcher's viewpoint is that people no longer live subscribing to strong tribal or national affiliations in society. People live mainly in multi-cultural societies, globally and in South Africa (Stevens and Munro, 2008:42). The researcher's intention is to display South Africa's rich multi-cultural heritage in a contemporary format in local shop window displays.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of the study, presenting the context of the research and introducing the main themes of the study. The purpose of the research, the aims and objectives and the specific research questions framed to focus the study are explained. It is suggested that the potential value of the research lies in a move away from Western dominance towards the development and appreciation of a national identity, which can be expressed in shop windows.

### 1.2 Context of the research

This study explores the manner in which imagery in shop windows has assumed a certain level of importance in South African visual culture. Stores and display areas are diversifying by offering themselves as venues for art and other multi-cultural events (Curtis, 2004:13). Shop window displays are to be found to a large degree in shopping malls. These shopping malls play an important role in society as spaces of consumption, entertainment and social interaction. Museums, cathedrals, theatres and the new soccer stadium in Durban all contain space dedicated to retail shopping. The shop window display acts as a visual stimulus. The viewer is encouraged to purchase the displayed

goods and thereby subscribes to the cultural value inherent in the product. According to Moreno (2005:9) not participating in consumption means not participating in contemporary culture. The malls, and more specifically the shop windows, are examined to show how they can be read as concepts that express ideas concerning design trends, local culture and fantasy. Design of a visual space can represent social backgrounds, fashion identities, cultural values and aspirations (Curtis, 2004:14).

Finally, this study focuses on the changing role of art and visual culture. Presently there are major shifts underway in visual arts in South Africa. This is evident in the move towards “less object-based to more project-based art” (Van Eeden and Du Preez, 2005:160). These exhibitions or events are not solely for artists, designers and socialites but also engender general public interest. This change in the arts suggests that art is integrating itself with other practices to create a more diverse cultural sphere. Architectural spaces and design displays should embrace local cultures in their use of artworks, images and colours. Fashion, design and architecture can all benefit from collaboration. A local example of “new art” is the South African Constitutional Court of South Africa. This contemporary creative space embodies elements such as local art and architectural aspects, which speak of a South African national identity. The intention is that the application of the theories and the findings will result in the creation of a new range of Postmodern, eclectic window displays.

### **1.3 Purpose of the research**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the importance of window displays as a means of communication with the viewer. More specifically, the aim of the research was to examine the role that Western culture plays in South African shop window displays and to develop a new version of a South African window display that might reflect a multi-cultural identity.

The objectives of the study were:

- To analyse and compare the different techniques used in conveying imagery and identities currently used in South African retail store window displays;
- To observe and document the surrounding elements used in visual imagery in fashion retail; and

- To obtain and analyse data that might provide information for developing a practical component culminating in a catalogue and an installation. These outputs would represent South African visual cultures in a local context in fashion retail shop fronts.

The study made the assumption and tested the thesis statement that a more contemporary and cultural form of window displays which exploits images, colours and motifs drawn from various local cultures might appeal to our multi-cultural society. In this respect the following critical questions were developed:

1. What fashion imagery and identity currently dominate South African window displays?
2. What cultural aspects would reflect a South African image and identity?
3. How could the answers to question two be incorporated into window displays?

The findings culminated in a practical component in the form of a catalogue portraying window displays based on a South African multi-cultural identity.

#### **1.4 Research approach and methodology**

The qualitative research approach adopted in this study allowed for an in-depth inquiry into the complexities and processes involved in producing visual concepts for shop fronts in retail stores. The research design utilised was a collective case study method (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:135) using interviews and observations within the Greater Durban area. Production houses *Hirt & Carter* and *Barrows*, were used to observe, understand and study the production process. The reason was to gain first-hand knowledge of the production process because the viability and costs in creating graphics for a shop front display must be borne in mind. In this study it was envisaged that the information gained from interviews and observations would play a key role in terms of the feasibility and design of shop fronts based on the concept of a South African identity. It was thought that the clustering data analysis method, adapted from Creswell's (2007:151) data analysis spiral, might provide an innovative technique facilitated by a step-by-step approach to analysing the research.

Primary data collection took the form of interviewing twelve experts classified as specialists in fashion, design, art and architecture. These professionals were chosen utilising purposive sampling, which falls under the non-probability sampling category. The strength of semi-structured interviewing is that it capitalises on the flexibility of

unstructured interviews and in this way research participants were able to contribute to the study (Beutler and Groth-Marnat, 2003:91). A pilot study involving two emerging fashion experts ensured clarity and made sure that ambiguous interview questions were avoided. Interviewing fashion design experts was a challenging exercise due to the participant's time constraints and inaccessibility to influential experts (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:146). However, the Durban University of Technology's close affiliations with retail companies and experts facilitated in accessing the interview participants.

### **1.5 The potential value of the research**

The study encourages the utilisation of local identity and design. This design approach is intended to contribute to the South African creative milieu and strengthen relationships on an international competitive level. There is dissatisfaction with current shop displays in South Africa which are based on Westernised ideals and a prescriptive creativity. As pointed out by Stevens and Munro (2008:45), everyone becomes a consumer of Western products and ideas; consequently, alternative cultures are eroded.

The study of design in the case of shop windows as part of social systems is relatively unexplored. Multi-cultural shop displays offer an alternative approach to the study of creativity, innovation, and design (Sosa and Gero, 2005:1). The initial interest was a creative awareness in the decorative arts, specifically South African design. Store window designs seen at *Selfridges* and *Harrods* in London or *Macy's* in New York have become art forms. New fashions, the originality of designs, and the possibility of combining a multitude of materials have brought new opportunities, and, as the famous French painter, George Braque, says "progress in art is not a question of pushing limits, but getting to know them better" (as cited by Moya, 2007:8). The involvement of interdisciplinary practices such as art, architecture, graphics and fashion, based on an eclectic approach, could reveal alternative possibilities and growth for the future of South African design. Designers must discover and master all components, as this will allow for the creation of spaces which have their own character (Moya, 2007:8)

The researcher believes that an increased awareness of genuine indigenous elements drawn from local traditions of design and culture can be disseminated through the visual world of shop window displays. It is by identifying with the local, historical and traditional images

that people experience cultural affirmation, a sense of self-worth, pride in being a South African and a desire to make a worthwhile contribution to their society. This is why window displays which advocate an attractive range of colours, patterns and motifs, local designs and familiar imagery would appeal to a South African multi-cultural consumer.

The value of this research, then, is considered to lie in:

- How it contributes to the development and appreciation of a national identity, which can be expressed in shop displays;
- The appropriate and innovative use of local symbols and images in shop window displays; and
- A movement away from Western cultural dominance towards South African innovation.

### **1.6 Practical component**

An illustrated catalogue of shop displays forms part of the practical component of the study representing the multi-cultural South African society through the manipulation of local signs and symbols. These illustrations (see Appendix E) were produced using graphic and fine art elements challenging the traditional and stereotypical iconic imagery of primitive elements in Africa. Shop window installations were setup in a local boutique in La Lucia Mall and at the Brickfield Fashion campus of Durban University of Technology. The installations formed the remaining part of the practical component.

### **1.7 Outline of chapters**

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study, and introduces the context; the purpose, aims and objectives are presented. The research questions formulated for the study are introduced. The potential value of the research study is discussed. The components comprising the practical aspects of the study are described.

Chapter 2 identifies key concepts in the literature and discusses theories pertinent to the study, including the relevance of Postmodernism, fashion identity and Western influences on fashion (e.g. creolisation). Successful examples of window shop fronts in local malls, displaying a South African flavour are reviewed. The design of the Constitutional Court of



South Africa, popular culture, art used to complement displays, ethnic and cultural influences and fantasy elements in fashion identity are explored.

Chapter 3 examines the research orientation, which is based on the interpretative mode of inquiry as typified by Habermas's hermeneutic paradigm. The chapter outlines the research methodology, techniques and research instruments used to collect data. A discussion follows on how Creswell's data analysis technique was applied. Thereafter, ethical concerns are reviewed.

Chapter 4 introduces the interviewees with a summary of their personal profiles. Observations done at *Hirt & Carter* and *Barrows* are explained. Interpretations of interviewee's ideas and issues are discussed. This is followed by the organisation of data into themes and metaphors using the clustering technique. A further examination of the data analysis reveals which metaphors and themes reflect a South African image and identity and how these might inform shop window design in multi-cultural South Africa.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions about the answers to the research questions. Decisions about how various elements can be integrated into a window display design are reached. Recommendations for further research into the design of shop window displays are put forward. The results of the investigative aspects of the dissertation are summed up.

Chapter 6 reflects on the practical component of the study. The artefact, which is informed by metaphors and themes elicited in the data analysis, is discussed. The artefact is presented in the form of a printed, high-resolution catalogue and includes a compact disc with digital imagery of the shop display installation.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

It is envisaged that the study creates shop windows not merely as a commercial means to attract customers, but rather as enriching experiences for cognitive and emotive awareness within individuals. These shop window layouts are an attempt to be more compelling and meaningful by effectively communicating with the viewer by means of imagery and symbols drawn from everyday life. Shopping forms an integral part of daily life for many and it is assumed that window layouts can be creatively designed to contribute to the

experience of interacting with local identities and cultural values of South African society. The contemporary window display concept designed for this study integrates several diverse elements including design, architecture and fine arts. This collaboration provides alternative and contemporary avenues of presentation, especially those based on graphic programmes. It is the contention of this study that shop windows need to shift away from Westernised ideals and transform to reflect the multi-cultural heritage of Durban, South Africa. The next chapter identifies key concepts in the literature review and discusses principles pertinent to the study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Culture is ever-present and visible in daily life and can be communicated using different visual symbols and images (Berberi, 2003). Visualisation of culture is important because vision is considered both a primary sense and “the master sense of the modern era” (Jay, 1994:543). This study aims to explore and discover the visual symbols and images typically associated with cultural practices and how they relate to and reflect contemporary South African urban life. An investigation of local window displays will be used to determine the degree to which these visual symbols and images are or may be incorporated as part of a multi-cultural South African fashion identity. This chapter reviews selected literature and pertinent schools of thought to provide a theoretical basis for the analysis and interpretation of collected data.

#### **2.2 Postmodernism and fashion identity**

According to Aylesworth (2010), “Habermas argues that Postmodernism contradicts itself through self-reference, and notes that Postmodernists presuppose concepts they otherwise seek to undermine, e.g. freedom, subjectivity, or creativity”. Postmodernism may therefore be thought to be at odds with the hermeneutic approach adopted in this study which has reason as its basis, and not “aesthetic playfulness and subversion”, as Aylesworth (2010) comments. However, according to Ihde (1999), Postmodern concepts are not incompatible with the hermeneutic approach, and he argues for an “expanded hermeneutics”. Two notable features of this “expanded” mode would be the use of metaphors (although applied to Science) and “the inclusion, rather than reduction of history”. According to Ihde (1999), “sociology: culture and gender factors all must be included. These factors may not be simply rhetorical, but [may] be inbuilt perspectives which can only be expanded by a multi-perspectival inclusiveness”. As both metaphors and “multi-perspectival inclusiveness” are key themes in this study, aspects of Postmodernism relevant to the research will be discussed.

Postmodernism, according to Higgs and Smith (2002:149) is primarily a Western concept but can resonate with the African experience, especially in a multi-cultural, post-apartheid

South Africa. Postmodernism offers a compelling argument for establishing a contemporary fashion identity in South Africa, which is moving away from the dominating influence of Western culture. Sardar's theory (1998:280) defines Postmodernism as inclusive, multi-cultural, diverse and pluralistic as opposed to Modernism's emphasis on exclusivity. The researcher supports Sardar (1998:44), who also holds that Postmodernism claims to give voice, not only to other cultures, but also to women, people of colour, the gay community and can be applied to all those previously excluded from mainstream South African culture. This inclusive approach to art and fashion in which the individual is considered, ensures that an eclectic mix of local and international cultures can be fully explored. Such an approach to the better articulation of fashion identity in South Africa could lead to a hybridisation of symbols and images in the quest for attractive and visually stimulating, relevant shop fronts.

Postmodernism draws attention to local identities giving them expression in their vernacular. Postmodernism proposes that human beings are profoundly influenced by and make associations and emotional connections with everyday images (Higgs and Smith, 2002:144). The shop window display can utilise these common images and their symbolic meanings to communicate with the viewer. Baudrillard's study (as cited by Van Eeden and Du Preez, 2005:40) of the effect of symbols on consumer society especially in the shopping mall asks, "What is a shopping mall?" "What happens in shopping malls?" According to Higgs and Smith (2002:137), the answer is that shopping malls are places "where we can identify with the products we buy". It can therefore be concluded that products that incorporate familiar images or desires dictate both the identity of the buyer and the products' success or failure.

Eclectic elements in window displays lead to a reconstruction of images as designers modify styles from Victorian England or colonial Africa. Retail fashion stores such as GAP incorporate these techniques when placing advertisements featuring deceased celebrities such as Gene Kelly and Pablo Picasso dressed in khaki pants (Soloman, 2008:579). Using this "language" the window displays speak in the vernacular, blending images and symbols in such a way as to coerce the viewer into purchasing the product on offer. Today's technology and easy access to the media, enables most practitioners of fashion to access and manipulate source material to incorporate every culture worldwide.

South African window displays which adopt this approach would promote a greater acceptance of the different cultures in South Africa. Bishop Desmond Tutu's unique metaphoric concept of South Africa as a "rainbow nation" graphically gives rise to the notion of all prevalent cultures merging yet remaining distinct. Furthermore, past President Mr Thabo Mbeki's dream of an African Renaissance is another voice crying out for an aesthetic based on eclecticism, culminating in hybridisation of images and an amalgamation of symbols. This does not mean that a mere amalgamation of different cultural images would suffice, but rather a "rebirth" of African styles woven together with cultures to create a uniquely South African style.

Various fashion design scholars have investigated the importance of interior settings in retail stores and how they contribute to an individual's sense of well-being. Research conducted by Escalas and Bettman (2005:378) suggests that consumers purchase particular brands, in part to construct their self-concepts and to convey meanings about their culture to others. Tian and Belk (2005:297) illustrate the significance of objects displayed in an environment as an expression of self. Several established retail outlets such as *Woolworths* and *Edgars* contribute to an increased awareness of a South African identity in the manner in which they display products in their local stores. The financial success of two small niche market retail outlets in the Gateway shopping complex in Umhlanga, namely *Holmes Brothers* and *The Space*, confirms that there are sufficient consumers purchasing local goods because of the commercialisation of cultural influences in their garments. According to Van Eeden and Du Preez (2005:40), consumers seek their social identity in shopping experiences, comparing goods and talking about consumption. This concept utilises images and symbols allied to cultural identity which can be reproduced in shop displays.

South Africa is known for its culturally varied population with each community having its own divergent needs and aspirations. This divergence is also evident in their buying behaviour. An understanding of the role of retail displays, branding and the possible symbolic expression could be of benefit to retailers. To remain competitive and profitable in South Africa's challenging market, retailers need to build customer loyalty and interest (Kumar and Shah, 2004:320). This study by Kumar and Shah (2004:320) proposes that incorporating local symbols and images is an integral part of any display.

The incorporation of local images and symbols into the display plays a pivotal role in the creation of shop fronts. Brands, products and styles in shop displays provide a tangible method of creating meaning for consumers who seek to both fit in and express individuality (Kates, 2002:383). Individuality is essential for communication in everyday life and in the celebration of one's desired identity.

The study is based on three premises:

- A South African fashion identity should reflect local visual culture;
- Visual culture as expressed within shop fronts can be projected in a display of local identities; and thirdly
- A uniquely South African aesthetic can be created

### **2.3 Western influences on fashion**

This section looks at the domination of American brands in South Africa, as well as some of the ways in which this influence can be challenged.

#### **2.3.1 The domination of American brands**

Whilst Western influences are found worldwide, American brands dominate. For example, *Nike* hats, *GAP* T-shirts, *Coca-Cola* and *Levi's* are prolific in America, Africa, Europe and the East. The allure of the American consumer culture has spread throughout the world (Soloman, 2008:609). In a global society people soon borrow from the culture they admire. A Korean researcher explains that culture is like water, it flows from stronger nations to weaker ones (Noh, 2007:7). According to Soloman (as cited by Sims, 1999:3) people tend to idolise countries that are wealthier, freer and more advanced. A commonly heard criticism of ethnocentrism is that African nations or cultures are viewed through a Western lens, and ethnic cultures are neglected (Usunier, 1998:4 and Livingstone, 2003:477). This is relevant to South Africa, as the early colonialists who ignored indigenous knowledge systems and identity dominated much of Africa's history. The African identity has today to some degree become an inverted mirror of Western identity.

This Western state of affairs gave birth to an attempt to reassert a distinctive African way of thinking and relating to the world (Higgs and Smith, 2002:55). The central ethical idea in traditional African thought is *ubuntu*. The idea of *ubuntu* is related to human happiness

and well-being. The term *ubuntu* comes from the Zulu and Sotho versions of a traditional African saying, often translated as “a person is a person through other persons” (Cilliers, 2007:7). *Ubuntu* avoids materialism of the Western world, as the concept recognises that the human self exists only to build relationships with other people. A valid question is posed, whether or not Americanism and Western influences, transported to Africa within the context of globalisation, are slowly eroding the African spirit (Cilliers, 2007:7).

There are many examples of *ubuntu* in South African society, such as caring, sharing, forgiveness and reconciliation. The relatively non-violent transition of South Africa from a totalitarian state to a multi-party democracy was based on the values of *ubuntu*. The South African philosopher, Joe Teffo, argues that *ubuntu* acts as the cohesive moral value in the face of adversity (Higgs and Smith, 2002:58). In a sense, African identity and epistemology are closely linked to the concept of *ubuntu*. The study aims to infuse retail fashion displays with this African spirit of *ubuntu*, by constructing displays that are locally inspired, open to and positive about the South African community.

### **2.3.2 The process of creolisation**

Creolisation is a process which is similar to *ubuntu*. An example of this process is the inclusion by Christians of the pagan Christmas tree into their annual Christmas ritual (Weaver, 2003). Similarly, *Levi* jeans, worn worldwide, are another example of the use of an American product symbolising the American lifestyle. Creolisation also occurs when foreign influences are absorbed and incorporated to create local meanings (Soloman, 2008:611). The creolisation concept invites a combination of local products with international trends. Contemporary products are integrated with existing cultural practices in the process of creolisation. The case study of integrating the Coca Cola product and its success in the African market is discussed hereafter. During the last few years, the Coca-Cola Company has focused a great deal of attention on promoting itself in less-developed markets such as Africa.

Coca-Cola is South Africa’s best-known soft drink, freely available in shopping malls as well as in the remotest rural areas. In South Africa, Coca-Cola is the undisputed leader in overall brand awareness. In an October 2000 survey of South Africans, 91% of

respondents in urban areas mentioned Coca-Cola as the number one soft drink brand (Irwin, 2001).

Coca-Cola's success in Africa has been due to its groundbreaking advertising as well as its ubiquitous involvement in local community life. City dwellers in South Africa cannot fail to notice the Coca-Cola signs installed in almost every shop and roadside stand. To this end, Coca-Cola has initiated sports sponsorships, sports development programmes, entrepreneurial development, scholarships, and education projects. With an enduring commitment to building sustainable communities, the Coca-Cola Company focuses on initiatives that protect the environment, conserve resources and enhance the economic development of the communities where the Coca-Cola Company operates (Mohlaoli, 2009).

Coca-Cola has cultivated a reputation for corporate honesty and openness that has appealed to the local people (Irwin, 2001). Coca-Cola, the American product, manages to assimilate itself into foreign cultures by utilising local advertising campaigns that link its products to the local people's aspirations and passions. Coca-Cola incorporates culturally significant semiotics into their marketing and advertising (Stephens, 2000:259). This strategy of integration and local concepts ensures the product's popularity and success in South Africa. The local advertisements for the Coca-Cola product can provide raw material from which consumers infer cultural meanings. The success of Coca-Cola is an inspiration and can be used as a model which can help contribute to the successful development of reaching out to multi-cultural consumers in retail stores.

Coca-Cola's television advertising campaign embraces a positive, story-telling approach that shows Coca-Cola as a preferred drink, playing an essential part in the meaningful moments of people's lives. According to Penny McIntyre, Divisional Marketing Director of Coca-Cola Southern and East Africa, "we are telling stories that are natural and honest—not contrived or over the top in their theatricality - because the power of Coca-Cola is in the authentic way it can connect people to themselves, to others, and to a culture that it is part of" (Irwin, 2001). To the researcher's mind, there is much to recommend this approach as a basis on which to reach local consumers via shop fronts in fashion outlets. In particular, the notion of story telling as a means of communicating with an audience



resonates with popular South African traditions. This is because the vast majority of the rural population in South Africa is raised in a culture with a strong oral tradition. Story telling is a practice involving people of all cultures in an ancient socio-cultural custom and it sustains meaningful cultural information through a rich archive of folktales, legend and other social narratives (Chapman, 2005:120). As with the Coca-Cola products, local imagery and narratives applied in advertisements may appeal to a broad sample of consumers. Stories can also provide a richer understanding of the human condition and urban situation, than traditional social science, and for that reason alone, deserve more attention (Sandercock, 2003:182).

### **2.3.3 Inclusion of indigenous elements in product image**

Researchers have extrapolated insights from ethnic, racial and religious communities in making sense of the social bonds which affect the consumption of products (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). In a genuinely multi-cultural world, different cultures must be revived, maintained, and be available as a choice for the members of that culture, and should not be lost in a homogenised, single, globalised "world" culture. As Sardar (1998:281) pleads, in order to develop truly multi-cultural societies, a requirement is needed which is non-negotiable: indigenous aspects stemming from traditions and encouraging the norms, language, beliefs, arts and crafts of cultures. The very factors that provide meaning, identity, and richness to people's lives must be emphasised.

### **2.3.4 Globalisation**

In the context of the processes of globalisation, a model including two intersecting dialectics is offered: one between education and development, and another between indigenous and modern knowledge (Bhola, 2002). Ironically, globalisation has brought about its dialectical opposite: the desire for localisation which includes the search for community, indigenous values, mother tongues and the wish to preserve cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge (Bhola, 2002). The new definition of African development must use all the possibilities offered by South African local communities. This is supported by the previous Minister for Trade and Industry, Mandisi Mphahlele, who stated that it is important for South Africa to find innovative ways to manage the realities of global competitiveness, which includes focusing on our indigenous character and cultures as a basis for developing our unique competitive edge (as cited by Palmi, 2007:59).

### **2.3.5 Product branding in South Africa**

An example of African craftsmanship reaching international stature is *Carrol Boyes'* pewter home-ware. *Carrol Boyes* distinctively South African “functional art” range consists of designs for the kitchen and home. Boyes’ products are a combination of metal, wood and leather. Her first choice was pewter, but she also uses stainless steel and aluminium, all designed for everyday use. Her designs are an alliance between the Western aesthetic and the diversity and rich culture of South Africa (About Carrol Boyes, 2009). Boyes’ uniquely quirky designs, inspired by all things African, are now sold throughout the world. In 2003 she opened her first retail store and this new venture has seen the opening of dedicated and branded stores in South Africa, Europe and New York (Carrol Boyes, 2009).

### **2.3.6 Integration of both indigenous and modern influences**

For the practical component of this study, insights resulting from the integration of both indigenous and modern influences were incorporated in the design of retail store shop fronts. Simultaneously, local design and artistic skills should become integral to any method of communication through visual and three-dimensional imagery in local displays. Rogerson (2006:4) views fashion design as crucial for local development and adds that fashion in all its forms is now recognised as a vital contributor to the development of South Africa’s clothing sector.

## **2.4 Visual culture**

The shopping mall possesses a visual culture all of its own. The windows of a store embody the ego and identity of a company, reflecting its confidence, fantasies and seduction techniques as consumers first approach the store (Fargo, 2003:7). These forms of attraction entice potential consumers. The intention of this visual culture is to engage with as much of the consumer market in South Africa as possible. The task of window dressing is also to create ambiances that evoke an epoch, that will culturally surround the products and are an authentic reproduction of cultures (Soto, 2004:11). The researcher’s study explores the manner in which retail stores and their shop windows have assumed this status in South African visual culture.

McRobbie (1994:96) argues that today's cultural studies focus on the integrated experience of everyday life experienced in the urban environment including the architectural setting. He provides a logical approach to investigating displays within shopping malls. The study argues that shop displays are representational systems which express diverse aspects of society. Displays are compiled of visual images that sell dreams, beauty, perfection and happiness which are important themes evident throughout this chapter. According to Marks (2001:22), shopping malls have become the "meeting places of the new South African middle class."

Hermeneutics is a form of philosophical enquiry which focuses on symbols and how people interpret them, namely "How do we discover or create meaning?" (Higgs and Smith, 2002:130). This study aims to use this school of thought in capturing meanings and understanding existing symbols and cultural elements within fashion shop displays, art and architecture. Consequently it could be argued that the clothing and brands we purchase are an expression of our sense of identity. This is because of the assumption that images, fashion, art and products are laden with shared and conflicting meanings that we call culture (Storey, 2003:78).

Roland Barthes (1981:43) explains that images can be interpreted denotatively and connotatively with his theory. The denotative meaning refers to the descriptive meaning of an image: the truth or reality that the image documents or denotes. According to Barthes, connotative interpretation refers to the cultural and historical context of the specific image, as well as the social conventions, and meanings associated with that image in a particular context. We learn these meanings through our personal and cultural experiences (Sturken and Cartwright, 2001:43). A South African shop display should engage with the consumer by communicating messages and daily experiences to South African society. The ability of images to convey multiple meanings, to define abstract and concrete thoughts, is what makes image-based media highly appropriate for the communication of academic knowledge (Weber, 2007:45).

Theorist Pierre Martineau (1958:408) described a store image as "the way in which the store is defined in the shopper's mind, partly by its functional qualities and partly by an aura of psychological attributes". Functional variables refer to the physical or tangible

store functions such as merchandise assortment, price range and store layout. The psychological or intrinsic aspects refer to intangible feelings that a store delivers to its customers such as a sense of belonging, feeling of excitement or a feeling of warmth and friendliness. A store image is complex by nature and consists of a combination of tangible and intangible factors. This theory is still used by modern researchers and Soloman (2008:591) describes how psychological factors help to explain why people are motivated to buy fashion. The reasons include conformity, diversity, personal creativity and sexual attraction.

The experience of a shop window in which the individual is coerced into purchasing by the intrinsic merit of the presentation may be one way of unifying the culturally different populations in South Africa. People want to be different, unique, make a fashion statement, assert their individually but still conform to a group or feel part of a greater whole (Macmillan, 2008:7). This dichotomy can be exploited, according to Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003:112), by customising the product, or tailoring it to suit a particular group or individual. They argue that the consumer associates the tailored product to a brand which is often more significant in the consumer's mind than any other brand. Ailawadi and Keller (2004:331) explain that a retail brand identifies the goods and services of a retailer and differentiates them from competitors. Identification with a brand by consumers and the retailers tailoring or customising the display in the shop window are simply a means to an end.

## **2.5 South African shopping malls and retail outlets**

As the new democracy has developed, cities have become larger in a “fragmented and disconnected” way (Grobler, 2007:3). De-urbanisation resulted in the construction of “shopping centres” (better known as malls) in suburban areas. The shopping centre, as a private development has thus become the civic space of society (Grobler, 2007:3). It is not only a place to shop but to be in. Grobler (2007:3) concurs with Van Eeden and Du Preez (2005:44) that shopping malls today are “the major public spaces where...people interact, form their identities, and make sense of the world”. Since 1994, shopping malls have contributed to class affiliation based on economics as opposed to racial discrimination (Tomlinson and Larsen, 2003:43) which was created by the segregation of space on racial

lines through the apartheid dispensation in South Africa (Van Eeden and Du Preez, 2005:45).

Media reports indicate that recently certain retailers have and are providing space and opportunities for local design. In 2004 *Woolworths* was already showcasing local designers, which contributed some R65-million in annual sales (Palmi, 2007:52). In April 2006, *Edgars*, one of South Africa's largest mass retailers, launched a clothing line that featured seven South African fashion ranges, one of them being *Craig Native*. The designer lines were sold at more affordable prices than similar ranges in private boutiques. The initiative behind the *Edgars* campaign was to provide high fashion at lower prices, simply because *Edgars* orders ranged from 300 to 500 garments in each design, compared to a run of five items in a private boutique (Makgetla, 2006:15). Today a well-designed display window is not limited to high fashion or luxury retail outlets. This positive development increases the feasibility of creating and incorporating South African cultures, design and art, not only in the stores' clothing collection, but also in shop displays.

According to Sonnenberg and Erasmus (2008:74) the relationship between self-image, store brand and retailer image are clearly interconnected. The researcher argues that identification by the consumer with the store brand can serve two goals. The marketability of the product improves and association with the brand develops the individual's self-image. These combined elements are excellent focal points for the developing urban areas in South Africa that are more multi-faceted and can rely on more extrinsic attributes. Consumers do not simply patronise a retail store but embrace the whole image and experience presented by that store (Kendall, 2009:203). Brand associations are symbolic and cultural (El-Amir and Burt, 2010) consequently they are important in attracting consumers to stores, especially when they communicate something about the consumer's culture.

## **2.6 Visual merchandising of display windows**

Shopping has become more of a recreational activity as opposed to a weekly necessity (Soto, 2004:7). Architecture, interior design and disciplines such as sociology, marketing and art all exert an influence on the development of shop displays. Since the end of the twentieth century theorists have stressed the importance of the context in which branded

products and visual merchandising are displayed. Shop windows have their own special dramatisation techniques, whether it is to display a simple chocolate bar or a high fashion garment. The aim of a shop window display is to differentiate, identify and show off the intrinsic worth of the merchandise. The store environment and spatial layout are also critical tools used to communicate with customers and meet their needs. Consumers want to be entertained, stimulated, emotionally affected and creatively challenged (Elliot, 1998:408).

Meaningful spatial definition in areas such as shop windows adds value and dimension to customer's lives. Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga (2003:13) argue that people form meaningful relationships with the spaces they occupy, attach meaning to space, and transform "space" into "place". Place is defined as "relational, historical and concerned with identity" (Augé, 1995:77). The shop window display may be viewed as a portal to "place" in that it responds to aspirations, desires and cultural meaning of the viewer.

The display window continues to be the visible representation and mechanism of suggestion for potential buyers purchasing from shops (Soto, 2004:57). The spaces in shop windows have to be alive and to communicate: they must be attractive and evocative (Moya, 2007:38). Fargo (2003:7) agrees that like art, shop window displays are best when they are evocative of something beyond the immediate surface, forging images which move and propel consumers toward other ideals and dreams. By acquiring powerful communication, information, function and purpose, the window display has transformed itself into a cultural phenomenon (Soto, 2004:70). Displays are able to transcend their commercial purpose, acquiring a power and life in their own right (Fargo, 2003:7). Based on the above approach to design, the researcher supports the creation of shop fronts that utilise a "South African fantasy world of cultures and imagery".

Prominent theorists have demonstrated the use of clothing as a code, a language which allows a message to be created and (selectively) understood (McCracken and Roth, 1989:13). Soloman (2008:589) explains further that in semiotic terms the meaning of fashion products is undercoded: there is no one precise meaning but rather plenty of room for interpretation. In the South African market, a fusion of cultures exists. The aim of the study is to create multi-cultural shop displays in a South African context where the fashion

items are accessible and easily understood. This will allow for an extensive expansion of cultural interpretations. The researchers concern, however, is that there is an inappropriate use of distinctive symbols that could easily lead to misinterpretation and offence. According to Stevens and Munro (2008:43) the interrelationship of different cultures is often a difficult, negotiated exchange, potentially fraught with conflict, racism and misunderstandings.

Authors such as Ailawadi and Keller (2004:332) confirm the importance of physical aspects pertaining to the store atmosphere. Furnishings and decorations were found to exert a strong symbolic and expressive influence on interior environments (Soloman, 2008:303). Consumers may affiliate themselves with a brand or product based on the experience of shopping rather than the extrinsic merit of the item. The argument is that visual stimuli and physical displays of merchandise may be of fundamental importance in convincing consumers of the store's ability to reinforce social identity and membership of cultures (Soloman, 2008:600). This could mean that interior displays are representations of expressive symbols. Merchandise or imagery may also become social objects, when given meaning through social interaction with consumers in the South African multi-cultural society (Charon, 2001:55). If local retailers use emotional appeal and desirable imagery in their displays, they could create a competitive advantage in the local retail environment.

### **2.6.1 Fashion brand merchandising**

Brands are a combination of a name, words, symbols, or designs that identify the product and its source, and distinguish it from competing products. It is the fundamental differentiating factor for all products (Alton, Bick and Hefer, 2010:105). The logo of a brand situates the product in a cultural context through the use of a symbol, text or a specific colour. Logos that are present in window displays immediately establish the category of the product (Soto, 2004:59). Graphic design plays an important role in branding. A graphic logo identifies and promotes the store's business. Graphic design elements provide the means to pinpoint, differentiate and communicate a unique identity (Fung, 2007:4) and could be used to communicate an awareness of the local South African identity.

Schmitt (1999:23) states that the retail store environment aims to and does in fact achieve certain goals. The store provides memorable experiences and cultivates appropriate feelings such as pleasure in the consumers. This encourages the consumers to stay longer and spend more money. Marketeers and merchandisers strive to build and maintain these emotional connections between fashion brands and consumers within stores (Kendall, 2009:13).

Arnould and Wallendorf (1994:495) noted that cultural values are ultimately translated into a variety of visual symbols and images. Individuals and their subcultures seek to translate values into statements of meaning. Brands have become tools for the expression of meaning as they build personalities and seek to relate to consumer identity as a method of relationship marketing (Fournier, 1998:343). They provide customers with access, a sense of belonging and an expression of individuality. Brands have become a contemporary source of entertainment. *Merchantainment* is a term for this current phenomenon. Consumers want to do more than “just wear” branded items but enjoy doing so and feel part of something larger and more exciting (Kendall, 2009:14).

The magic of logos is that they begin to take on personalities, bringing to life their own characters, styles and formalities, all of which have been derived from the underlying activities of the organisation that they symbolise (Isserow, 2009). Such symbols become universal, instantly recognisable and are able to cross all race and language barriers. One international example is the Coca-Cola product. Branded clothing adds value to the product and is therefore more desirable.

### **2.6.2 Graphic design elements in product identity**

Graphic design is one of the most common support instruments for communication. Graphic design creates a vocabulary of typographies, images and colour providing an identity for merchandise. One of the greatest advantages of graphic design is its flexibility, which can be incorporated with the use of varied technical formats such as signs and digital image projection. Graphic design is interwoven into the fabric of fashion (Fung, 2007:4); this technology allows shop windows to show seasonal fashion and new products. The development of a visual vocabulary eliminates the problem of multiple languages and allows the same information to be conveyed to different cultural contexts. By developing a



multi-ethnic graphic language, borders are eliminated and the message is universally recognisable (Soto, 2004:119). Visual technique is particularly important when consumers lack written language skills or are preliterate, as in the case of young children (Johnson and Weller, 2002:452). Fashion images are instrumental for all kinds of fashion communication and are an extremely persuasive visual language (Fung, 2007:4). This applies particularly to the South African context, where there are communication difficulties due to the multiplicity of languages and the high incidence of illiteracy in certain sections of the population. The idea of converting commercial space into visual exhibitions stems from technological developments, computer aided design programmes (CAD) and the latest technical innovations such as flat screen plasma televisions. The use and availability of huge glass panels has liberated the commercial façade thereby creating transparency and openness in shop windows (Soto, 2004:225).

Incorporating movement using cinematography animates window displays. Moving images in formats such as transparencies, media and television endows the display window with animation and allows information to be updated quickly and easily. This is because movement is one of the greatest sensorial stimuli in modern society (Soto, 2004:119). This study aims to document how fashion and graphic design interweave in retail spaces, thereby creating a multi-faceted stage or a memorable physical experience.

### **2.6.3 Design in visual merchandising**

Window design is a new and independent discipline fulfilling an important role in the experience of a commercial space. Shop fittings play a major role in fashion, particularly in the display and sale of apparel. Ideally, the look of the store creates an environment and ambience that reflect the garments it contains, cajoling the customer into making purchases (Fielding, 2008:37). The trend of telling a story through shop windows is popular in South African society. The similarity between theatrical set design and shop windows is that they both tell a story. The presence of mannequins stimulates viewers to imagine plots or stories involving the display items (Soto, 2004:233). This transforms the design of the display window into a pseudo theatre.

After establishing conceptualisation, the next step is dramatisation. This includes illumination techniques, textures and colours which seduce and sell within the cultural

universe that surrounds the store. In the fashion world it is important to have well-designed fixtures that allow the retailer ultimate flexibility and opportunity to accessorise (Fielding, 2008:37). Colour, texture, space, light and shade all have essential roles in enhancing the fashion store environment. The level of investment for apparel stores depends on numerous factors, including the target market, the product's image and price. Clean lines and simplicity in store interiors are a popular trend today so that the customer may feel comfortable and relaxed.

Museum-like arrangements have become one of the most popular contemporary alternatives for the spatial display of products (Soto, 2004:78). Museums are valued as cultural institutions and this has not escaped the attention of window designers. The museum aesthetics treat the merchandise on display as if it were a piece of art. Shop displays can become fashion theatres and canvases for expression (Fargo, 2003:7). The spaciousness and layout of design not only affords the viewer the feeling of being in an art gallery or museum, but also encourages responsive behaviour. The viewer pauses to contemplate each exhibit as if admiring an authentic work of art (Iglesias, 2009:9).

Scenography is ideal for creating a setting for objects, consumers and for articulating the metaphor and symbolism that are on exhibit (Soto, 2004:76). Soto discusses reputable scenographers such as Philippe Kauffmann who created display windows for brands such as *Chanel* and *Onix*. According to Soto, they explain that commercial scenography is a "global aesthetic reflection" which is not only limited to commercial stores but has other important metaphorical and intellectual components.



**Figure 2.1** *Anthropologie* Store (Window displays at *Anthropologie*, 2007).

In the American retail world, a store called *Anthropologie* has made a name for itself by way of its steadfast uniqueness (Embrey, 2008:42). Random objects and props, from bicycle tyres to antiques, are integrated into each of *Anthropologie's* stores displays. This creates live-art sculptures within the retail environment. The objects help support a concept or trend and narrate each conceptual story throughout numerous stores. The company's visual team is conscientious about the store's design, creating a distinctive style. Each store is individually designed to support local architecture and to create a localised consumer experience (About us, 2009).

The fashion brands of *Anthropologie* are marketed to consumers who may define and express themselves and their personal preferences and tastes. The intention by the stores' marketers and merchandisers is to identify and set their goods apart from other retail stores (Kendall, 2009:12). The concept of culture is central to anthropology and a new understanding of South African cultures is explored which revolves around cultural identities and their relationships to objects in a store (Packery, 2008:15).



**Figure 2.2** YDE store windows (YDE-Pavillion, 2010, Store window designs for *Young Designers Emporium*, 2009 and Christmas Window Display-YDE, 2011).

One of the most successful South African examples in the retail world is the store *Young Designers Emporium* (YDE). The concept of YDE was first developed as a vehicle to showcase the young local talent of South Africa's clothing and accessory designers. YDE created a store for young, trendy customers of both sexes and was able to offer cutting edge, sexy, chic, expressive, underground and original clothing and accessories. The customers, who followed both local and international trends, were individualists who did not conform to set or pre-defined standards (About *Young Designers Emporium*, 2009). YDE is renowned for its window campaigns. These YDE window campaigns communicate what could have been a mundane retail message, in an irreverent, surprising manner, which is sure to arrest attention in the mall environment. *The Young Designers Emporium* claims it is at the forefront of supporting local fashion and is the leader in identifying and supporting local fashion talent (About *Young Designers Emporium*, 2009).

## **2.7 The design of the Constitutional Court of South Africa**

The impetus for this study stemmed from the design of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. The Court's architectural design and artworks are rooted in national experience and represent the new democracy and the "constitutional right to freedom of all expression" including artistic expression (Sachs, 2008:17). The ideas and developments offered in the Constitutional Court of South Africa are seen as embodying inspiration for contemporary design. The literature referred to in this study explores national images and identities in order to result in the creation of eclectic and indigenous window displays in South African fashion retail shop fronts.

The brief for the design of the Constitutional Court was to create a building rooted in the South African landscape, physically and culturally, without overemphasising the symbols of any one section of the South African population, or making a pastiche of them all (The architectural competition, 2009). The building was to have a court chamber, public areas, a library, public reading space and rooms for eleven judges, researchers and administrative staff. The competition was advertised in local and international newspapers, professional journals and on the Internet, and drew an overwhelming response. An international panel of judges led by Charles Correa, the distinguished Sri Lankan architect, chose a South African entry. The young architects responsible for the winning submission, which was based on the concept of "justice under a tree", were Janina Masojada and Andrew Makin from Durban, and Paul Wygers from Johannesburg. They worked together in a partnership between their firms, *OMM Design Workshop* and *Urban Solutions* respectively.

The design of the court is rooted in South Africa and its people, and addresses the regional character in terms of material use and functional relationships, whilst acknowledging the history of local culture with symbolism integrated into the spatial design (Lipman, 2004:16). The buildings and site are freely accessible to the public and “celebrate the right to gather” (Makin and Masojada, 2004:11).

### **2.7.1 The Constitutional Court design approach and concept**

In order to understand the physical spatial containment of the Constitutional Court, it is crucial that the design concept and approach be understood. The design approach was augmented by concepts of heritage, dignity, a better future and the “essence of what it means to be alive and human” (Makin and Masojada, 2004:9). The building represents the values of a South African democratic constitution, without ethnic or colonial references.

In contrast to most courts, the Constitutional Court is welcoming rather than daunting. All the components of the building are appealing, warm and hospitable to the general public. Even though it has no marble cladding or wood panelling, the building has come to be admired for its graceful proportions. It incorporates local building materials - timber, concrete, steel, glass and black slate - which infuse the court with an African feel (The new building, 2009). “The design ... has the potential to express a new architecture which is rooted in the South African landscape, both physically and culturally ... more likely to

succeed in revealing African trends than a self-conscious application of traditional stylistic elements or borrowing from European or historical building precedents”. This statement was eloquently verbalised by the architecture competition's judges, quoted by Jeff Radebe, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, at the announcement of the winning bid (What people say about the building, 2009).



**Figure 2.3** Visual of the entrance and artwork of the Constitutional Court (Law-Viljoen, 2008:90).

The concrete façade of the court is emblazoned with the words “Constitutional Court” in the eleven official languages. The font is arresting, a lobby for a range of languages, and is accessible to both rural and urban populations and to diverse cultural and educational backgrounds. The font is familiar, friendly, and expressive of our history: it is brightly coloured and attractive, and reminds the viewer of the “rainbow nation” metaphor used to describe the new South Africa. The design for the font derives from graphic designer, Garth Walker, as he was wandering around three abandoned apartheid prisons on the site where the court was to be built. He photographed varieties of lettering, scratch marks and graffiti made on the walls of cellblocks by the prisoners incarcerated during the apartheid era, and these were used as inspiration (Shapiro, 2011).



**Figure 2.4** The foyer of the Constitutional Court (Law-Viljoen, 2008:94).

A view of the foyer depicted in Figure 2.4 shows Walter Oltmann's wire chandeliers forming a "canopy" of leaves and Jane du Rand's vibrant mosaics on the slanted concrete pillars (Law-Viljoen, 2008:96). The decorated structures have been described as the "forest of columns", referring to the idea of holding court "al fresco" under an indigenous tree.

The foyer of the Court is a spacious, light-filled area punctuated by slanting columns, an architectural metaphor for trees under which African villagers traditionally resolved their legal disputes (Sachs, 2008:19). In keeping with this metaphor, the concrete roof has slots designed to create moving areas akin to dappled sunlight filtering through leaves. In African cultures, elders met beneath trees to discuss important matters (Noble, 2004:20). This concept of gathering has been applied to the design in both internal and external spaces, providing opportunities for contact with others.



**Figure 2.5** Wirework sculptures (Law-Viljoen, 2008:97).

The wirework sculptures depicted in Figure 2.5 are created using semi-transparent weave and are constructed to form branches with radiating clusters of leaves. The “leaves” allow natural daylight to filter through openings in the roof, suggesting shaded space beneath a tree. This art form reinterprets traditional craft in an innovative way.



**Figure 2.6** Making democracy work: linocut by Sandile Goje (Law-Viljoen, 2008:18).

In traditional African society, communal meetings are often held under trees as shown in Figure 2.6. The idea of a symbolic tree could be utilised in background images within shop windows and could easily be identified with associations of openness, equality and the familiar. The practical component of this study will explore how symbols, which



reflect the diversity of South Africa's rich cultural heritage, could be interwoven into a new "style" of shop display.



**Figure 2.7** Constitutional Court logo (Law-Viljoen, 2008:18).

The Constitutional Court's logo was designed by local artist, Carolyn Parton and is a combination of two images firstly the mighty "Albizia Adianthitolia" (Acacia flat crown) tree and secondly a group of figures being sheltered beneath its branches. The metaphor "justice under a tree", suggests transparency, equality for all participants and respect for different voices (Law-Viljoen, 2008:19).

The design of the Constitutional Court with its modest brief and budget has brought delight to thousands of visitors and has made an explicit connection between art and human rights, thus establishing a new paradigm internationally for the role and unifying spirit of art in public buildings (Sachs, 2008:20).

## **2.8 Popular culture**

Popular culture reflects the world around us. Popular or mass culture is accessible and associated with the "man on the street" and is easy to understand and consume (Kidd, 2002:100). All cultural products that the mass media broadcast become part of popular culture (Cant, Brink and Brijball, 2002:578). Marketers view popular imagery as well as famous works of art as cultural products and utilise them to promote their brands. In marketing, an *emic* perspective or the use of popular culture would be ideal for our South

African society. This perspective focuses on commonalities and variations across cultures and argues that countries have a national character (Soloman, 2008:604). An effective strategy must be tailored to local consumers, satisfying their needs and portraying imagery from local culture. This strategy involves modifying a product or its display to make it acceptable to local inclination. The use of certain styles such as pop, punk or kitsch have the advantage of being original, brazen and striking and thus easily recognisable (Soto, 2008:129). The above styles, art movements and cultural fashion trends need to be utilised more frequently in display windows.

The store window display can become typography with great communicative and seductive powers (Soto, 2004:125). In South Africa, with its widely diverse markets, it would benefit retail stores to create a multi-cultural approach, saving time and expense in developing individual strategies for the many existing cultures. Global companies such as Coca-Cola and *Nike* also need to continue to reflect their sensitivity to indigenous cultures and habits in their management and marketing approaches (Clifton, 2010). This is crucial for South African companies, which are generally being reconfigured by local challenges and various customer needs (Miller, Saunders and Oloyede, 2008:2).

## **2.9 Art used to complement displays**

Contemporary art has been a prominent source of inspiration in design trends. Art that utilises a more seductive approach can be used as an effective medium to attract potential customers. Multi-media art can be incorporated into a window display, such as a televised fashion show complimenting the merchandise. This art form can create interest and appeal to both the designer and the public audience. This visual concept is found in the shop windows of the South African designer store, *Jenni Button*, in Durban's *Gateway Theatre of Shopping* mall. Plasma screens suspended between the clothing displays catch the viewer's eye. *Fashion T.V.*, a popular fashion programme, can be viewed as it broadcasts the latest trends. The shop window thus becomes more sophisticated due to the inclusion of static and moving images. Art can be transformed into an everyday phenomenon and this is within everyone's reach due to public exposure and the transparency of window displays (Soto, 2004:121).

## **2.10 Ethnic and cultural influences**

As South Africa is a multi-cultural society, culture and ethnicity have relevance to the study. It could be stated that consumerism has reached the point in the industrialised West where it is the dominant activity of contemporary society (Soto, 2004:31). This concept of consumerism has allowed “shopping” to become a popular interactive activity. If in the past a product was acquired because of its quality, performance or price, this has changed, as today’s trend places significant value on the story that surrounds the product. Consumers are becoming more aware of cultural meaning inherent in merchandise and local production. In South Africa we have a “Proudly South African” campaign. This campaign sustains local art, crafts and fashion. A culturally produced product is the apparel or display that incorporates the entire cultural repertoire that envelops it (Soto, 2004:32).

Contemporary issues in cross-cultural consumer behaviour have emerged because of dramatic changes in society. Market globalisation, ethnic conflict, population upheaval and the deconstruction of national cultures characterise the twenty-first century with regard to acculturation (Askegaard, Arnould and Kjeldgaard, 2005:160). Western influences have dominated the fashion industry to the extent that there has been exclusion of other cultures and fashion identities. This study focuses on how shop displays are able to attract the attention of local customers from diverse ethnic backgrounds. A successful shop window display unites cultural groups and encourages social interaction.

Anderson (2008:31) articulates the fluidity of acculturation and “reculturation” strategies within society. Ethnic cultural portrayal plays a role in the representation of consumers in our diverse population. Research in consumer behaviour revealed aspects of movement between ethnic cultures (Oswald, 1999:303). Previous literature referred to in this study and researchers contributing to this investigation focus on the process of cross-pollination between cultures and finding a common visual method for representing the various cultures and identities. Webb (2001:21) epitomises this concept by comparing culture to the air that one breathes or the water that surrounds a fish: “We live and move about in cultures with which we are closely and invisibly enmeshed.” This study suggests that a fusion of cultures can be created within shop windows. Creativity often results from dialogues created through the interpretation of symbols and products in a dynamic of sharing, borrowing and bartering across cultures formed by race, gender and ethnicity (Anderson,

2008:35). The innovative use of common symbols in window displays ensures that the customers are comfortable about entering other cultural worlds (Anderson, 2008:32). This study aims to document the creation of local shop windows which act as a multi-dimensional “bridge” linking people and cultures.

Berry’s (1980:80) identification of acculturation as a bi-directional adjustment process is particularly relevant for the multi-cultural South African market. Berry argues that individuals alternate between and accept several sets of cultural values as applicable to their lives. The literature discusses the way ethnic consumer identity and practices are intertwined with the socio-cultural patterning of consumer acculturation (Ustuner and Holt, 2007:32). Research by Maldonado and Tansuhaj (1999:135) suggests that ethnic minorities which identify with their country of origin retain true native cultural values and subsequently purchase products that carry inherent ethnic meanings. Alternatively, those ethnic individuals who wish to be assimilated into the host culture may purchase goods that they believe reflect the host country’s cultural values. This theory can be applied to the movement which supports the feasibility of creating shop windows which incorporate South African cultural images and identity. The incorporation of different ethnic groups would represent the new market-friendly “rainbow nation” of South Africa and encourage a multi-racial and multi-cultural approach.

### **2.11 Fantasy elements in fashion identity**

It is believed that shopping and commodities fabricate reality for consumers in our society. Fantasy is connected to imagery and production, which are dictated by impressions and perceptions of “reality” (Burt, Johansson and Thelander, 2007:447). These images are mainly derived from interactive experiences and references within existing lives. The shop window continues to be a physical mediator of utmost importance between goods and the consumer, between stimuli and the decision to buy, between the fantasy of the shop and the reality of the street (Soto, 2004:11).

Many aspects of fashion identity, class experience and leisure are presented within the fantasy and mythical spaces created by malls (Kowinski, 1983:137). Shopping has become less associated with buying necessities and more with experiences and sites for leisure, escapism, entertainment and tourism. This is because shopping is a social or recreational

activity which is the opposite of work, which explains why the mall and shops are now “escapist cocoons” relating to a fantasy world (Crawford, 1992:132). The youth are active participants in the mall culture because the association between shopping and entertainment is ingrained into their lifestyles. Shopping can even be a holiday activity, as many South African families literally spend their annual holidays in their local malls (Reinecke, 2003:6), which reflects how shopping has taken over our daily lives.

## **2.12 Conclusion**

The researcher proposes that for most customers the shop front is their key contact point in a retail store. The commercial façade and display windows are the first contact points with potential consumers, so striking imagery and appealing clothing are essential draw cards in attracting the consumer. Visual displays, products and imagery designed by artists assist in enriching the retail experience and are fundamental to the sustainability of the South African clothing and textile industry. The development of national and provincial fashion councils and the creation of Fashion Week events, showcasing the cultural diversity of our society, have amplified the importance of South African design. Graphic design is integral to the organisation, presentation and visual impact of any retail shop front. Imagery, text, symbols and colour are intrinsic to the representation of the garments and the brand it represents. South African designers have the ability to be highly innovative and explore the boundaries of creative arts, including architecture and graphic design in their work.

Despite globalisation and the changing face of the international clothing and textiles industry, some holistic shop displays have been developed in accordance with the purchasing power and varied cultural preferences of local consumers. The researcher highlights the point of view that the shop front should be an affirmation of local visual culture. Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology used for the data collection, which attempts to arrive at an authentic South African composite which may inform window design.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH ORIENTATION AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Chapter 3 describes the research orientation and hermeneutic paradigm, and why it was considered appropriate for this study. This chapter then discusses the interpretive research methodology, which used the case study method, and involved sampling, semi-structured interviews and observation. The method used for data analysis, which is based on Creswell's (2007:151) data analysis spiral is described next. A pilot study was used to refine the research instrument. Issues relating to the reliability and validity and ethical concerns are also discussed. Finally, the artefact design method is briefly described here, showing the principles whereby it was informed.

#### **3.2 Research orientation**

The orientation of this study follows the interpretative mode of inquiry which is best typified by the hermeneutic paradigm described in Habermas's comprehensive theory of knowledge (see Figure 3.1, in Schubert, 1986:181 and based on Habermas, 1971, Bernstein, 1976 and Giroux, 1980). Kuhn (1962:175) used the term "paradigm" to refer to the way in which we view reality: "the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community, or ... a world view". The term paradigm also provides a conceptual framework for researchers who adopt a specific orientation towards knowledge and its interpretation. The approach used here advocates a move away from the empirical-analytical (i.e. positivist) paradigm which "assumes knowledge to be objectified" towards the hermeneutic paradigm which "views reality as intersubjectively constituted and shared within a historical, political and social context" (Schubert, 1986:180). Emphasis is on the social organisation of knowledge: "its interaction among persons, the cultural and historical circumstances in which it is embedded" (Habermas, 1971:182).

Hermeneutics relates to and analyses patterns in the social, cultural and research environment, and also provides an interpretative epistemology rooted in the potential for multiple meanings and interpretations which are analysed by the researcher (Yanow, 2003:9). The aim of this approach was to create an unambiguous concept of reality,

human experience and representations of cultures in South African society through visually stimulating shop displays. This study followed the practical interest underpinning the hermeneutic paradigm (Grundy, 1987:15) in attempting to understand the dynamics of a specific environment. This environment constituted shop front window displays and the ways in which potential consumers responded to the design elements of the displays. Shop front displays in South Africa tend to be dominated by Western culture and corporate fashion strategies which advocate a “product-centred” approach. It is the researcher’s contention that such displays lack social value and true communicative interaction with consumers: instead they disseminate prescribed ideas and objectify knowledge. The researcher contends that one cannot treat information as “something out there” removed from its political-socio-historical context, as human beings are creators of knowledge who inform action in situations they encounter (Schubert, 1986:288).

TYPE OF SCIENCE/ INQUIRY	Empirical/Analytical	Hermeneutic	Critical
INTEREST SERVED	Technical	Practical	Emancipatory
SOCIAL ORGANISATION	Work	Interaction	Power
MODE OF RATIONALITY			
	<p>Posits principles of control and certainty</p> <p>Operates in the interests of law-like propositions that are empirically testable</p> <p>Assumes knowledge to be value-free</p> <p>Assumes knowledge to be objectified</p> <p>Values efficiency or parsimony</p> <p>Accepts unquestioningly, social reality as it is</p>	<p>Emphasises understanding and the communicative interaction</p> <p>Sees human beings as active creators of knowledge</p> <p>Looks for assumptions and meanings beneath texture of everyday life</p> <p>Views reality as intersubjectively constituted and shared within a historical, political and social context</p> <p>Focuses sensitively to meaning through language and symbolic use</p>	<p>Assumes the necessity of ideological critique and action</p> <p>Seeks to expose that which is oppressive and dominating</p> <p>Requires sensitivity to false consciousness</p> <p>Makes distorted conceptions and unjust values problematic</p> <p>Examines and explicates value systems and concepts upon which inquiry is based</p>

**Figure 3.1** Habermas’s comprehensive theory of knowledge (Schubert 1986:181).

The researcher's intention was to develop a concept for shop window displays which would take cognisance of Elliot Eisner's (1985) idea of "connoisseurship", namely an acquaintance with the broad range of human culture as it is found in South Africa (Eisner, 1985 as cited by Schubert, 1986:297). The practical aim of the research was to formulate a composite concept reflecting the national identity by interacting with key role players in design industries in a South African context.

Schram (2003:311) states that qualitative inquiry is fundamentally interpretative because the researcher is actively engaged in the process of interpretation. Interpretive research seeks to discover what is meaningful or relevant to the participants (Neuman, 2000:71) from their wealth of experience, to add value to the creation of multi-cultural window displays. As South African research on shop displays is limited, this study can be defined as exploratory in nature, in that it attempts to develop contemporary and meaningful knowledge on a particular topic (Babbie *et al.*, 2001:51).

As the researcher will attempt to show, shop window displays can become more than just a medium for commercial transactions. By incorporating meaningful symbols and traditions drawn from different South African cultures, shop windows displays can relay broader social messages contributing to building a national identity. An eclectic fusion of cultures may promote greater respect and tolerance amongst people of the "rainbow nation", leading to personal growth as well as cross-cultural interchange. Such a process may encourage greater social responsibility, leading to a concern with "promoting right action" (Schubert, 1986:15) such as recycling, eco-friendly consumers, multi-cultural respect, tolerance and unity with diversity.

There are also some elements of critical theory in the research orientation used in this study. The materials used in the artefact (i.e. the catalogue), namely readings, audio recorded interviews and symbols, are relevant to "culture circles" in that they are designed to reflect characteristics of people's lives and thus to stimulate a critical reflection of their lives. The purpose of the "process" in this study is to educate and promote the cultural advancement of the consumer. The critical perspective goes beyond the practical interest to an emancipatory one (Grundy, 1987:15), which "seeks to expose that which is oppressive and dominating" (Schubert, 1986:181). The end product would be the



development of critical consciousness so that the consumer sees the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation (Friere, 2000:83 as cited by Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2010:57).

### **3.3 Research design and methodology**

A research design is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumption to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be completed (Maree, 2010:70). The research design used involved case studies, using non-probability purposive sampling to select participants for the study. Data from the case studies was intended to answer research questions 1 and 2 , namely:

1. What fashion imagery and identity currently dominate South African window displays?
2. What cultural aspects would reflect a South African image and identity?

It was thought that the data from the case studies might also offer insights into possible answers to research question 3:

3. How could the responses to question 2 be incorporated into window displays?

It was anticipated that most participants would be able to offer examples of how typically South African elements might be incorporated into window displays.

#### **3.3.1 Case study method**

The collective case study was the preferred method for this investigation, as it is suitable for the compilation of data from diverse participants. The collective case study approach was used because, as Leedy and Ormrod (2005:135) indicate, such a study makes it possible to make comparisons and propose generalisations from the findings. Data was collected from the participants utilising semi-structured interviews. The aim was to learn more about the multi-cultural situation in the South African fashion retail market, specifically in the Durban region.

#### **3.3.2 Sampling**

Non-probability purposive sampling was chosen as the most appropriate method for the case study. This is a technique where the samples are gathered in a process that does not give all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected (Castillo, 2009). Purposive sampling is used in special situations where sampling is done with a specific

purpose in mind. In this case, the participants were selected because they were experts in the fashion and design industries and were able to provide relevant information necessary for the study.

Twelve participants were carefully selected and approached from the art, fashion and design industry to form the sample of the study, for the following reasons:

- Most qualitative research studies use a small number of individuals as a sample and aim to cover material in depth (Lichtman, 2009:142).
- Expert respondents were needed to provide evidence for the validity of the study. The chosen participants were experts, known for creating their own *oeuvre* based on their interpretation of a South African identity, as they held diverse perspectives on art, design and the fashion industry. The participants were influential and prominent artists in the South African art, design and fashion industry and were selected on the basis of their expertise and perspective in areas relevant to the study (Marshall and Rossman, 2010:155).

The age of the participants ranged between 28 to 70 years of age. Male and female experts were incorporated into the sample to obtain multi-dimensional responses. Because of the gender and age distribution, the researcher was able to obtain rich data from the more experienced professionals and new ideas from the younger participants in the sample. One of the limitations experienced with the selected group was that, because participants held pivotal roles in their trade, they found it difficult to make time available for interviews.

Twelve Durban-based designers were then chosen for this study because of their reputations as leaders in fashion, design, architecture and art. They were representative of the following fields:

- Graphic design
- Fashion design
- Fashion consultancy
- Trend analysis
- Art
- Retail design
- Architecture

- Fashion research
- Fashion publishing
- Visual merchandising

Their specific areas of expertise will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. The participants for the study were contacted via an email (see Appendix A) in which the purpose of the study, and how their involvement would contribute to it, were explained. Their consent to participate in the study was also sought. Semi-structured, personal interviews were conducted in the homes or studios of individuals representative of the above mentioned fields.

### **3.3.3 Research instruments used**

Semi-structured interviews with experts in the field of design were used as a data gathering method. The second was an observation process at *Barrows* and *Hirt & Carter* to learn the processes involved in the creation of display material for shop windows.

### **3.3.4 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain data as they allow for probing questions and clarification of answers (Maree, 2010:87). Semi-structured interviews also allow for a redirection of the enquiry to ensure relevant focus on the case study. The researcher attempted to be attentive to the responses of the participants so that new and emerging lines of enquiry could be identified, explored and probed. Open-ended questions were used because this allowed unrestricted responses. Permission was requested for the interviews to be audio-recorded so that transcripts of the interviews for data analysis purposes could be made (Maree, 2010:94).

Appropriate questions relevant to the participants' specific areas of expertise were designed to elicit a cross-section of ideas. These enabled the researcher to cross-correlate and compare the resultant perceptions. The dynamic and multi-faceted natures of the different participants required a holistic and in-depth inquiry to capture their opinions and experiences (Gruber and Wallace, 2001:84).

The interviewer attempted to maintain good rapport with the participants by displaying positive body language throughout the interview in order to encourage the interviewees to express their personal beliefs and feelings (Shank, 2000:147). A friendly and informal approach was used to help gain information to augment the researcher's understanding and subsequent interpretation of the data. The interview questions were posed in a general and non-directive manner in order to encourage a spontaneous response from the participants (Lichtman, 2006:118). Although the designers were successful professionals in different fields, their responses were viewed as perceptions rather than facts, as deductive reasoning holds that memories are subject to considerable distortion (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:149). According to Schacter (1999:182) and Schwarz (1999:93), the participants' ability to remember is dependent on what *might* or *should* have happened according to their beliefs, rather than what actually did happen.

### **3.3.5 Observation**

Observation of activities in the two local graphic production houses, *Barrows* and *Hirt & Carter* deepened the researcher's understanding of the print and design process. This was because the researcher's personal experience as a novice in the shop front design field suggested that first-hand observation of the processes involved in the design of display materials is a valuable resource for prospective shop front designers. Due to the restriction of time specified by the nature of production, however, there was limited opportunity for participation and observation. The observation was unstructured, allowing the researcher to shift focus from one print procedure to the next, and was conducted with the assistance of an experienced employee who explained the different steps in the printing and distribution process.

### **3.4 Pilot study**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:110) state that a brief pilot study is an excellent method to determine the feasibility of a study. A pilot study was therefore carried out with two emerging fashion experts, who assisted in clarifying and defining the interview questions in order to avoid ambiguity. The language and question structure were edited for clarity. It was found that re-phrasing questions more clearly resulted in more accurate, detailed responses.

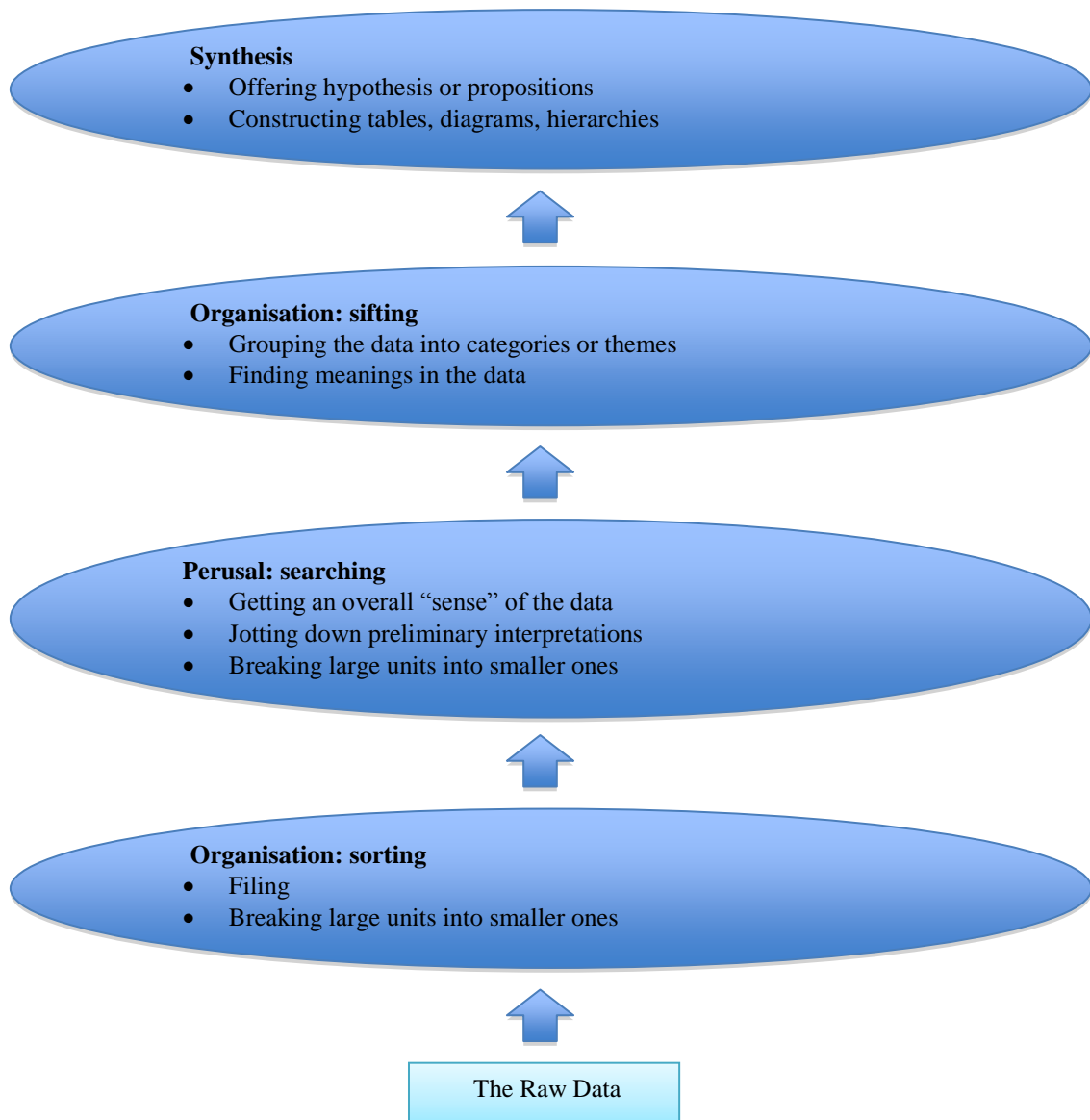
### 3.5 Data analysis

Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the data. Content analysis is a process of analysing data to identify meanings, similarities and differences in the text for a better understanding of the raw data (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:101). The value of qualitative content analysis is thought to lie in its transparency and relative unobtrusiveness (Bryman, 2001:189).

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:135), qualitative researchers rarely try to simplify what they observe: instead they recognise that the research topic has many dimensions and layers. Consequently they aim to portray the issue in its multi-faceted form. South African society in particular is a multi-layered phenomenon, with different levels of potential analysis, viewpoints and meanings (Cilliers, 2007:1). It was thus accepted that the interviewees would present multi-disciplinary positions and life experiences in the art and design industry. Multi-dimensionality presupposes that individuals have shared multiple traits (Hutchinson, 2001:285), and needs to be considered so that the analysis of the data is inclusive of class, orientation, gender and identity.

The data analysis was subjective, in terms of the researcher having to apply structure and meaning to the collected data (De Vos, 2002:339). Qualitative methodology deals with perceptions and meanings, which need to be subjectively identified, and qualitative researchers utilise inductive reasoning in data analysis: making specific observations and then drawing references about larger and more general phenomena (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:96).

The following steps or stages (as shown in Figure 3.2) were followed in analysing the data, obtained primarily from the twelve semi-structured interviews. The data analysis spiral (Creswell, 2007:151) was used in a “clustering” process which involved various levels of analysis. Clustering facilitates the identification and grouping of data which has similar patterns or characteristics, and this method can be applied at many levels in qualitative research. Patterns may be expressed in metaphors or in other symbolic uses of language, where the aim is to *illuminate* and identify main themes and character traits (Burke, 2001:419). The clustering took place at the four levels described below.



**Figure 3.2** The data analysis spiral (adapted from Creswell, 2007:151).

### 3.5.1 Preliminary organisation in sorting the data

After close verbatim transcriptions had been made of the twelve semi-structured interviews, Creswell’s data analysis spiral (2007:151) in Figure 3.2 was utilised to organise the data into a more manageable form. In stage 1 of the clustering process, firstly the raw data was scanned and cleaned of irrelevant information (e.g. digressions or personal asides). Next, transcript summaries were made of each interview.

### 3.5.2 Perusal of data in searching for meanings

In stage 2 of the clustering process, the perusal stage, patterns or similar characteristics were sought. This interpretive process can assist with grouping opinions, and negative or

positive feedback can be recorded. Critical inserts of the transcriptions were highlighted and grouped into sections representing the participant's responses, which may involve agreement, disagreement or partial agreement. Next, the data was clustered according to the interview questions, but narrowed down to those which produced responses most relevant to the study. Finally narratives were constructed (Vital and Jansen, 2006:27), grouping responses not only by what were found to be the most significant interview questions, but narrowed down to those which produced the answers and related issues raised by the participants. This study used a more personal style to include the participants' own language and perspectives (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:97), as the hermeneutic approach seeks to create meaning and understand realities.

### **3.5.3 Organisation of data into themes**

The clustering process in stage 3 could now be carried out in more depth by organising the data into broad themes of imagery, identity and culture. This was done in order to provide answers to research questions 1 and 2. Clustering the data by means of themes was considered to be useful in providing a theoretical basis for the practical application of the research contained in the artefact (i.e. the catalogue).

### **3.5.4 Synthesis of data in forming patterns/theories**

Stage 4 of the clustering process involved a synthesis of data in forming patterns or theories. Firstly, the data was re-analysed in terms of answers emerging to research question 3. The responses from the personal interviews could then be re-analysed according to identified relevant themes, patterns, recurring ideas and common interpretations (Marshall and Rossman, 2010:219). This meant that general themes and metaphors could now be elicited from the data, as will be shown in Chapter 4. Some of the themes were related to social structures, national metaphors, emblems and symbols (these themes are also to be found in the visual catalogue in Chapter 6).

## **3.6 Reliability and validity**

Reliability addresses how accurate one's research methods and techniques are in producing data. Reliability entails demonstrating to one's audience that the data is not invented or misinterpreted (Cano, 2010). Reliability in research can be confirmed, for example a different scholar conducting the same research would achieve similar results (Saukko,

2003:18). Because the dynamic world of art, design and fashion are continually evolving, however, the information can never be replicated verbatim.

Validity refers to quality assurance whether the assumptions made are in fact true. The researcher concurs with the values of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001:107), that in qualitative data collection, the intense personal involvement and in-depth responses of individuals ensures a sufficient level of validity and reliability. While the use of semi-structured interviews exploits the flexibility of unstructured interviews, it also incorporates standardisation through the organisation of the interview (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:184). For transcribed copies of the interviews (refer to Appendix C). The standardisation of data enhances the validity and hence the reliability of the assessment, the organisation of the information into themes also ensures a comprehensive evaluation (Beutler and Groth-Marnat, 2003:91).

According to Winter (2000), the validity of a study can be measured in terms of its trustworthiness, authenticity, objectivity and the facts. The validity of this study was enhanced by the open-ended and semi-formal interview technique, in which interviews were held in the homes and studios of the participants. The researcher contends that by interviewing the participants in their personal domains, this ensured that they were more inclined to answer the questions truthfully. In this study the different participants held multiple perspectives, with each perspective being accorded equal validity or truth (Creswell, 2007:258, Guba and Lincoln, 1988:89). The aim of the study was to reveal an objective approach to these numerous perspectives. The researcher has attempted to show via clustering that the data produced is relevant to the critical questions.

Qualitative methodology enhanced the reliability and validity of the results of the data collection. It was cost effective in terms of the resources available, efficient, as the study was focused on specific research questions, and versatile, adapting to different types of participants (Van der Vyver, 2008:51).

### **3.7 Ethical concerns**

The potential participants were informed via e-mail of the title of the dissertation, the nature of the study and provided with the researcher's details. Participation in the study

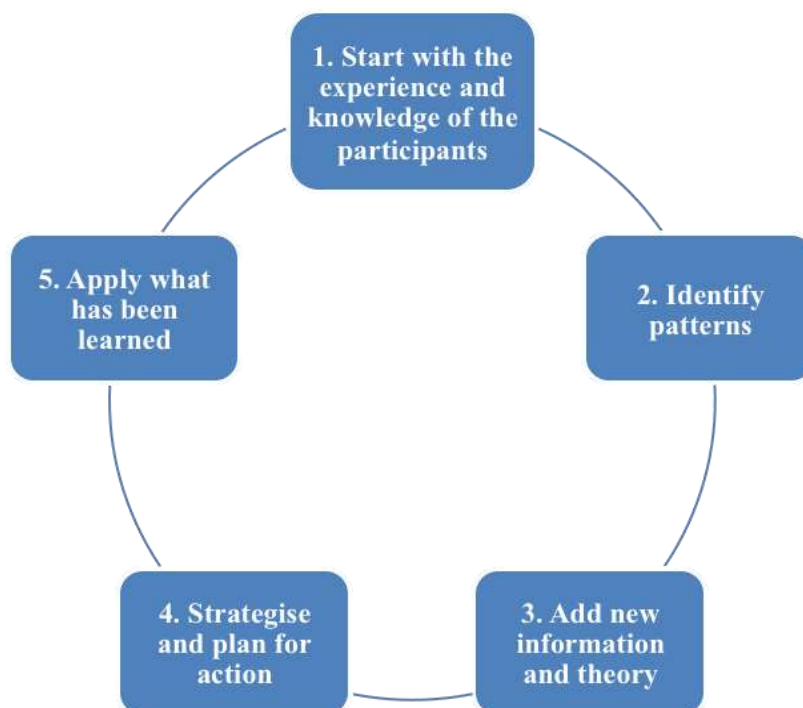


was voluntary. The respondents were thanked for their valuable time and assistance. A concise email (refer to Appendix A) was sent to various participants, based on Leedy and Ormrod's "informed consent form", which included information on participation and an outline of the study (2005:101). The participants granted permission for their opinions to be utilised in the study. Most of the participants have worked with students and encouraged the aim of this study in constructing multi-cultural shop displays.

### 3.8 Artefact design process

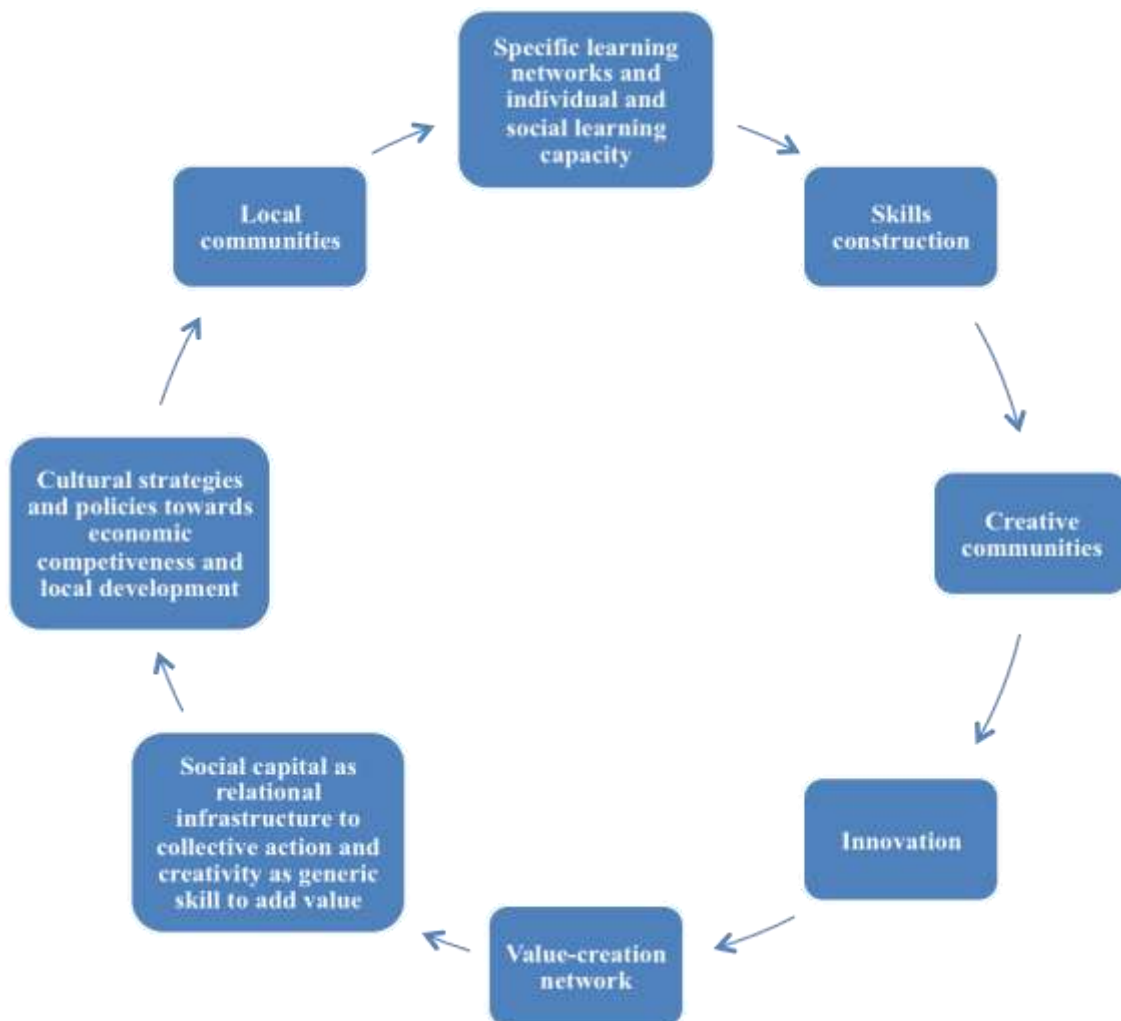
The actual process of artefact design will be described in more detail in Chapter 6, but the principles informing the method of artefact design used are briefly described here. Noyes' adapted model of action research (see Figure 3.3), informed the design process as follows.

- In step 1 of Figure 3.3, the data obtained from the case studies meant that the researcher was able to start the artefact design process with the experience and knowledge of the participants.
- Step 2 identifying patterns, was carried out in the clustering process described above (i.e. in Creswell's data analysis spiral, 2007:151).



**Figure 3.3** Model illustrating the creative design process (adapted from Noyes, 2008).

- In step 3 any insights offered by participants in the design process were added as new information, and new theory was combined by using the “model of community support interventions” shown in Figure 3.4.
- Step 4 strategise and plan for action, involved using the data gathered in steps 1-3 to plan the artefact (i.e. the visual catalogue of multi-cultural shop displays).
- In step 5 what had been learned was applied in the actual design of the artefact.



**Figure 3.4** Model of community support interventions (adapted from Costa, 2008:185).

While steps 1-4 describe the design process in general, Costa’s (2008:185) model of community support interventions, as displayed in Figure 3.4, was consulted to contextualise the design process in its South African setting.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

In conclusion, hermeneutics was considered an appropriate orientation for this study as it involved a process of consulting and meaning making, which is the essence of this paradigm. The chapter described the interpretive research methodology, which used the case study method which involved the utilisation of purposive sampling, semi-structured interviews and observation. An appropriate methodology is crucial to the reliability and validity of the conclusions and recommendations arrived at, as a result of the study. The varied methodologies can be seen to have contributed to the study's exploration of different life experiences, texts, theories and historical and cultural references. Creswell's data analysis spiral (2007:151) is relevant to both the orientation and the study method. The interrogation of the data at various levels arrives at a composite of themes and metaphors related to the researcher's aim and intention, which is to devise a theoretical underpinning for both the artefact and future application in industry.

Finally, the principles informing the artefact design method were briefly described, namely Noyes (2008) five-step model, which was adapted to the design process, and Costa's (2008:185) model of community support interventions, which was used to contextualise the design process. In Chapter 4 the data collected will be explored and interpreted according to the qualitative method. The trends and viability of creating multi-cultural shop displays in the greater Durban area will also be discussed.

## **CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter 4 offers an interpretation of the data relevant to the objectives of the study. After providing participant profiles, the chapter then attempts to answer the research questions using data from the participants. The clustering process was carried out in more depth by clustering data in various stages, as described in Chapter 3. It will be shown that clustering the data proved useful in providing a theoretical basis for the practical application of the research in the artefact (i.e. the catalogue) as well as its prospective application in the retail industry.

### **4.2 Participant and production house profiles**

As mentioned earlier, the sample size was small and was purposely selected from those individuals and production houses considered to have had the most experience with the studied phenomenon (Patton, 2002:257). The brief profiles set out below support their status as experts in their specialised fields. As the interviewee profiles were completed using data from the interviews, these are given here rather than in the methodology section.

#### **4.2.1 Garth Walker**

Garth Walker is a passionate and articulate designer and the impetus behind *Mister Walker*, one of the most renowned graphic design studios in the country. The company also publishes a creative magazine called *I-jusi* introduced in 1995, creating a corporate international design style but with an African element. Walker uses ordinary South Africans from the streets and townships as his inspiration. He tries to publish two issues per year and each *I-jusi* issue is themed on topics relevant to contemporary South Africa. Designers from all disciplines are encouraged to experiment on the topic “I am an African” (Jamarie, 2009a). Walker’s interest lies in developing and encouraging a design language “rooted in the African experience” and it is for this that he is best known. He has been widely recognised as a successful designer, having won over one hundred design awards and is responsible for the colourful type font on the façade of the Constitutional Court building as well as for articles published in various magazines and books.

#### **4.2.2 Greg Wallis**

His involvement in the fashion business for thirty-five years has made Greg Wallis a respected figure throughout the fashion industry. During this time, Wallis has worked in and involved himself in most areas of the industry, including working for large international companies such as *Lee Jeans* and *Truworths*. He is a board member of the Durban Fashion Council and is the fashion consultant and clothing specialist for the *Ifa Lethu Foundation* (Greg Wallis/Consultant, 2010). The *Ifa Lethu Foundation* promotes development of designers in the local fashion and garment industry. Wallis advises *Ifa Lethu* on designs and the production of ranges. He is well known for his work in developing the skills of the South African youth in terms of exposing them to current design trends. He finds interacting with students rewarding and has made a valuable contribution to this dissertation.

#### **4.2.3 Dion Chang**

Dion Chang is currently based in Johannesburg but has previously free-lanced as a fashion stylist in London and Paris. He returned to South Africa and in the past ten years has held positions in fashion editing and fashion directing for magazines and the media. Chang is one of the most established and well-known figures in the local fashion industry and currently works as a corporate fashion consultant and design trend analyst. Dion Chang is an innovative creative thinker and visionary. He is a sought-after trend analyst, and while he is committed to South Africa, he uses a global perspective to source new ideas and identify cutting-edge trends. He runs a company called *Flux Trends* which publishes books annually consisting of his work and contributions from other authors. He also operates as a freelance journalist and columnist, specialising in social commentary (About Dion Chang, 2010). His extensive knowledge of fashion and trends in design has made him a valuable contributor to this research.

#### **4.2.4 Andrew Verster**

Andrew Verster is an award-winning Durban artist and is known in art circles for his eclectic mix of designs, using any form of design as his palette (Jamarie, 2009b). He is an artist, a former lecturer, a writer of short stories and articles, a set and costume designer and a mosaic artist. He has held over fifty art solo exhibitions, is represented in many major public and private collections, and has been awarded two retrospective exhibitions

curated by the Durban Art Gallery. Numerous public and private commissions include sculpture and tapestry artworks for the Reserve Bank Durban, Durban Hilton Hotel, ICC Durban and stainless steel screens for the Metro Mall in Johannesburg. He was commissioned to design the metal gates, chandeliers, entrance doors, and carpets for the chamber and foyer of the Constitutional Court. He also contributed to the Constitutional Court art collection with the vibrant triptych entitled “Hotlands”. Dr Verster is an accomplished artist who has collaborated in a wide range of disciplines and was recently awarded an honorary doctorate from the Durban University of Technology.

#### **4.2.5 Pieter de Groot**

Pieter De Groot is a graphic designer within the *Corporate Image Department*, an in-house multi-brand design studio servicing various Truworths brands. He has worked extensively on seasonal campaigns for catalogues and magazine advertisements. De Groot has worked closely with stylists, photographers and art directors, and has designed commercial briefs for the retail market. While fashion is not exclusively his focus, it remains a constant source of inspiration and a vital resource for his exploration of the South African advertising industry.

#### **4.2.6 Janina Masojada**

Janina Masojada and Andrew Makin head *OMM Design Workshop*, an architectural practice based in Durban. Their completed projects range dramatically in size and function, from boutique-sized fast food kiosks to game lodges in the Kruger Park. They have acted as strategic concept designers for a number of important projects including the International Convention Centre Arena in Durban and the new King Shaka International Airport. Their appointment to design the New Constitutional Court Building of South Africa in Johannesburg in collaboration with *Urban Solutions* brought this company international attention and acclaim (*OMM Design Workshop*, 2010). They have participated in numerous exhibitions, both locally and abroad. Their innovative practice emanates from a deep commitment to South Africa's dynamic culture, its growing economy and ever-changing society (Andrew Makin and Janina Masojada, 2010).

#### **4.2.7 Renato Palmi**

Renato Palmi runs a specialist research and development consultancy, *The ReDress Consultancy*, concentrating on local and Pan African clothing and the textile industry. Palmi provides space for designers and boutiques in the industry to market themselves through an electronic platform called the *Redress Consultancy* (Palmi, 2010). Offering informative and critical commentary on related economic issues, he has become known as South Africa's "fashion insider" (Palmi, 2007:5). Palmi's monitoring of and research in provincial Fashion Week events provide invaluable information to aspiring designers in the fashion industry. He has also assisted designers and individuals wanting to enter the industry with business plan strategies and research. He is the author of a comprehensive resource entitled *Inside-Out, South African Fashion Designers Sewing Success* which was a significant source of information for this study.

#### **4.2.8 Sandra Burke**

Sandra Burke graduated with a Masters degree in Design from the Royal College of Art in the United Kingdom. She is a fashion designer and lecturer and has worked on fashion projects in Britain, America, New Zealand, Hong Kong and South Africa. She writes abundant literature on the subjects of drawing techniques, computer-aided design (CAD) programmes and business or entrepreneurial skills for students in the international market. Burke provides a step-by-step approach in highlighting the key tools, techniques and skills that are required internationally by students/graduates wishing to enter the fashion industry. Burke conducts market research with universities and the fashion industry to assess the needs and requirements of all role-players. She also uses stimulating illustrations of artwork complimenting the contents of her book for experts and students worldwide.

#### **4.2.9 Karen Monk-Klijnstra**

Multi-award winning designer Karen Monk-Klijnstra launched her label in 2001, having spent several years working both privately and commercially in South Africa. She is a passionate contributor to the country's premier shows, fashion weeks and *Design Indabas*. Monk-Klijnstra embodies quintessentially South African design (Designers, 2010). She was selected as one of three contributing designers to the inaugural *Ifa Lethu Heritage Collection* which takes place during National Fashion Week. All her clothing ranges are a

cross-pollination of her flamboyant style with a street edge. She designs for private client commissions and in 2008 saw the long-awaited opening of her first store in the Kloof Village Mall, Durban. Her playful mix of colour and texture has made her a household name in the fashion industry (Kougianos, 2010).

#### **4.2.10 Kathrin Kidger**

After completing her training at Durban University of Technology, Kathrin Kidger went on to win the *Durban Designers Collection* in 2004. This entrenched her future in the fashion industry by securing a coveted niche in the South African Fashion Week. After a successful 2004, Kathrin Kidger established her label, *Reine*. Kidger prides herself on quality garments consisting of wedding apparel, *Miss South Africa* outfits and special evening wear. Her range is available countrywide at boutiques and her first retail store was opened last year in La Lucia Mall, Durban (About Designer, 2010).

#### **4.2.11 Lorraine Parkes**

Lorraine Parkes is the head of the visual merchandising department in the *Mr Price* office in Durban. *Mr Price* offers choice, value for money and the ability to enjoy life on a budget. The *Mr Price Group* is constantly expanding and evolving with its four retail chains which focus on clothing, footwear, accessories and homeware. These chains are divided into two operational divisions: the apparel and home divisions which include *Mr Price*, *Milady's*, *Mr Price Sport*, *Mr Price Home* and *Sheet Street*. *Mr Price* presents casual, fun and relaxed fashion for the whole family. This value retail chain offers casual clothing, intimate wear and accessories for children and adults at affordable prices. *Mr Price Group Limited* and its subsidiaries operate over 750 stores across South Africa (*Mr Price*, 2010).

#### **4.2.12 Megan Andrews**

Megan Andrews is the head of the visual merchandising team at the *Woolworths* store in the *Gateway Theatre of Shopping* complex, Umhlanga, Durban. *Woolworths* was founded in 1931 by Max Sonnenberg. His belief that success lies in providing customers with superior quality merchandise at reasonable prices has been instrumental in establishing *Woolworths* as one of South Africa's leading retail chains – a benchmark for excellence and an icon of quality. *Woolworth's* core philosophy is underpinned by quality, offering



customers consistently quality merchandise at affordable prices and incorporating innovative developments across the business. Building lifetime relationships with customers remains critical to this retailer's success, ensuring that customer needs are understood and met with consistency (*Woolworths*, 2007).

Today, *Woolworths* is a retail chain that extends throughout Africa and into the Middle East, trading through more than 400 stores. *Woolworth's* influence also extends to Australia with a majority share in the Australian retail chain, *Country Road*.

#### **4.2.13 Hirt & Carter**

*Hirt & Carter* is South Africa's leading supplier of print solutions, providing a service to the marketing, advertising and general communications industry (Welcome to *Hirt & Carter*, 2009). It is particularly prominent in the retail field with clients such as *Spar*, *Milady's* and *Mr Price*. The *Hirt & Carter* group uses a range of print technologies such as digital printing and screen printing onto paper, PVC, vinyl, glass and material. *Hirt & Carter* is a prominent supplier of digital printing in Southern Africa. *Hirt & Carter* has a number of tools designed specifically for retailers such as the Digital Advertising Service (DAS). This service provides retailers with a web-based tool that allows them to view a detailed summary of their competitors' campaigns which includes location, pricing and media. *Hirt & Carter* was included in this study as it specialises in the retail field of advertising, sourcing and printing visual imagery.

#### **4.2.14 Barrows**

*Barrows* develops visual display solutions that offer value, innovation and brand presence for the commercial market. The company manufactures displays using a wide variety of materials including metal, plastic, wood and paper. These elements are combined with illumination, security mechanisms and electronics in order to produce the widest range of visual display solutions for clients. The company works closely with marketing and sales which result in retail display strategies for brands and retail clients (Strategies run deep, 2009). The design team encompasses a broad spectrum of talent ranging from product, graphic and industrial designers through to structural and mechanical engineers and artists. There is a strong sense of self-confidence within the company that underpins their belief that, by working collectively, anything is possible. With studios in South Africa, the

United Kingdom, Turkey and Brazil, the company's understanding of the retail trade is both cross-functional and international. Based on the observations made on these companies, the researcher concludes that shop window displays should be modelled on two key approaches, international appeal and the collaboration of artists and designers.

### **4.3 Results of using the clustering process**

Interviewing the participants in their own homes and studios provided an insightful journey into their personal backgrounds and current projects. The informal, comfortable settings induced a relaxed atmosphere, which assisted in the articulation of their opinions about their art, beliefs and lifestyles. The participant's environment was also suitable for creating an environment of shared experience and trust (Noyes, 2008).

#### **4.3.1 Producing transcripts**

As mentioned in Chapter 3, stage 1 of the clustering process involved the preliminary organisation in sorting the raw data. This involved scanning and cleaning the data to produce transcripts, which are provided in Appendix C.

#### **4.3.2 Creating narratives**

In stage 2 of the clustering process, the perusal stage, patterns or related characteristics were sought through the interview questions. As certain identities, ideas and issues were raised by the interviewees, these provided the first section in the narratives below.

#### **4.3.3 Exploration of identities, ideas and issues by the interviewees**

The participants addressed problem areas that required further exploration. Palmi suggested that shop windows could be exciting and creative, exemplified by the local designs seen in *The Space* and *YDE* stores. Wallis and Kidger concurred with Palmi, describing the current shop displays as "archaic", and were of the opinion that there was a need to address "clothing inspired exhibitions" within shopping centres. Wallis, Kidger and Parkes concurred, saying that shop windows and the "shell" of stores should become more visually stimulating, indigenous and innovative, incorporating examples of mannequins with movable parts.

Walker's vision was a cultural mix of imagery, encouraging the display to become a type of "vernacular language" representative of South Africa's multi-cultural society. He suggested that ideally a display should not merely be attractive but also incorporate a "subversive" element. Burke's research in fashion design considered the latest technologies with regard to fabric, illustration and computer design. She also referred to history and cultures for inspiration to create new trends. Parkes and Burke emphasised that clothing and the store window display should be enticing and possess a powerful "hanger appeal". Parkes believed that more customers could be drawn by the application of patterned and textured fabrics, lighting and the creation of a more explicit mood in window displays. In this regard, observations at *Barrows* and *Hirt & Carter* provided insight into companies that provide product design together with fixed installations and in-store lighting, which creates an ambience that is appealing and enticing to clients and visitors.

Palmi explored the social aspect of "cause related marketing" which he believed was vital for South Africa. He stated that recognition must be given to crafters or designers who create a "story" about the product. This would allow for better understanding of the skill and artwork involved in the creation of the merchandise. Palmi highlighted the idea that images in displays enhance understanding through an exploration of our identities and life experiences. He believed that displays engage with the viewer cognitively and emotionally and do not function merely as commercial presentations. It is essential to visually engage with viewers incorporating imagery associated with daily existence. Textures associated with animal skins and man-made fabrics like cotton and velvet, together with shapes derived from indigenous flora, help to create the representation as trustworthy and believable (Weber, 2007:45). De Groot emphasised the importance of local culture and the need to ensure the prevention of duplicating international trends. He explained that, with a local mix, design and advertising would improve and many more campaigns may be produced that could reach international status. Monk-Klijnstra emphasised the incorporation of local products. She stated in an email: "...if stores display local products, people will feel inclined to support local designers, and Chinese imports will slowly phase out" (see Appendix C, pg. 141).

Wallis reiterated the point of mixing influences and explained that there was a niche for ethnic flavours but with Westernised styles of design. Parkes from *Mr Price* used the

example of *Mr Price* garments, which were internationally orientated in style, but emphasised that their clothing was specifically designed for the South African market. Local examples are the *Young Designers* range with robust menswear. The menswear range is given as an example, consisting of two-toned cotton-rich garments reminiscent of the Afrikaaner farming heritage. This fits in with the concept that consumers rely on their own perceptions when choosing a store (Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, 2006:139). Perception is “the process by which the individual selects, organises and interprets stimuli into meaningful and coherent pictures of the world” (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:158). Based on Parkes contribution, using this marketing technique of perception and local and international influences, a culture or identity could be “sold” along with community projects. By using customers’ perceptions of everyday life, objects and art in window displays would be a composition of symbols which would be familiar and easily understood. The shop display would therefore become inviting and interesting.

*Woolworths* has created a similar clothing range made by local designers such as *Maya Prass* and *Stephen Quatember*. Starting in winter a new brand was introduced, the *Woolworths South African Designers Collection* in 2010. Conceptualised and developed by a talented team of in-house designers, *Suga Suga* is a fun, sassy, street-smart range that celebrates African heritage and current fashion trends (Woolworths adds a new range to SA designers’ collection, 2009). The apparel was merchandised with posters depicting local designers’ names and faces, thus allowing the imagery to become an elevated form of discourse and awareness amongst consumers about the style and origin of the specific garments.

All the participants agreed that the identities of African, Eastern and Western styles should be combined to form a dynamic national display. Parkes from *Mr Price* and Andrews from *Woolworths* agreed that the utilisation of a variety of ethnic, cultural associations and imagery in catalogues and displays would appeal to all population groups simultaneously.

#### **4.3.4 Challenging issues confronting the interviewees in their specialised fields**

Phillips (2008:188) pointed out that the loss of qualified youth negatively affected the national economy. Garth Walker’s concern centred on the “brain drain” of talented youth leaving South Africa after they had qualified. Kidger’s concern was the apparent lack of

support for established as well as up-and-coming designers. She identified with Walker and Phillips in stating that the fashion industry was difficult to infiltrate. She suggested that a “fostering” of talent should be initiated to assist with nurturing and empowering designers to be part of the South African ethos.

De Groot was concerned with the on-going emulation of international fashion trends. Based on his varied experiences in the advertising and creative industry, he believed that South Africa could compete on the international fashion platform. He suggested that the perception that South African design cannot contend was an illusion, and considered that South African designers were capable, and should be motivated to reach international markets. Kidger ascribed her success in design ethos to developing garments in line with current international trends, but within a South African context.

Masojada explored the difficulty of transporting symbols from one context to another, especially in a multi-cultural shop window, which could be misleading and even offensive. The researcher identifies with this sentiment: an example of this is the use of an ancient Eastern symbol, the “Swastika” which originally represented good fortune and well-being. The symbol was subverted by Hitler’s Nazi party, and thereafter acquired entirely fabricated associations (Hampshire and Stephenson, 2008:8). There is on-going debate as to the interpretation of the Swastika. For the Hindus and Buddhists, it is a religious symbol associated with life and good luck. Unfortunately due to Nazi influence, it has taken on multiple negative meanings including that of hatred and death (Rosenberg, 2010). The researcher has concluded that images and symbols should convey a clear message which is direct and immediate: symbols should also be introduced with care so that there is no offence given to any particular racial group or religion. Masojada explained how a physical environment with surface decoration affects consumers’ behaviour, mood and feelings: stimulating visuals and decor can elicit a positive response from prospective customers. Verster used the motto when interviewed, “being open to influences but still being true to oneself” (see Appendix C, pg. 129).

De Groot, like Verster, insisted on the notion of “creative integrity” which is possible only when the designers incorporate influences, but remain true to their own vision. Palmi, Walker, Chang, Verster, Burke, Kidger, Andrews and Masojada all emphasised the need

for sustainability and how this is fundamental to maintaining any brand design. Walker's opinion was that sustainable design is essential to establishing a serious and professional artistic nous in the retail market.

According to Walker, retail firms are not interested in finding new and intriguing imagery to transform their displays. He reiterated that, instead of developing more contemporary window displays, designers recycle current ideas which become out-dated. De Groot explained that South African retailers inflated large profits by marketing products and merchandise using derivative campaigns. He suggested that retailers should improve their visual communication, thereby raising standards to an international level. De Groot's and Monk-Klijnstra's concern lay in the fact that many South Africans were visually illiterate and needed to be educated through the visual arts. Melinda Bolton described this visual paucity in South Africa's multi-cultural society as a result of "communication aimed at a diverse population with eleven official languages, including a large illiterate component. The South African communications landscape is a "minefield of paradoxes that poses many challenges for a designer" (as cited by Hefer, 2010:149). An example is the history associated with the *Nike* brand and its meaning of victory. The *Nike Swoosh* is one of the world's most instantly recognisable logos and can be seen embellishing countless sports shoes and items of sportswear (Hughes, 2008). It is debatable how many South Africans are aware of the symbolic value associated with the *Nike* brand and its references to the Greek goddess of victory, *Nike* or *Victoria* in Roman mythology. Monk-Klijnstra and De Groot suggested that the current local market did not understand or appreciate artworks currently available in the art and fashion industry. Walker supported a more South African based design in shop windows and agreed that such an opportunity existed in the retail market.

#### **4.3.5 Marketability of a more contemporary South African shop display**

Store image enhances the customers' positive shopping experience and essentially provides superior value to the retailer's targeted market (Hawkins, Best and Coney, 2004:112). The following concepts by Wetherall (2001:385) were utilised in the context of the interviews:

- The *distal* component, which examines social class, ethnicity, ecological and cultural settings; and

- The *proximate* component which refers to the immediate environment and everyday life.

Both concepts ensured that participants were selected from a wide cultural background and that the interviews took place in a familiar environment, which fostered frank responses. All the participants supported the idea of the multi-cultural window display, viewing it as an opportunity for improvement.

Masojada confirmed that South African shop displays incorporating multi-cultural images could be viable, as the consumer market had changed and there were emerging trends of cross-referencing in both the affluent and middle class consumers in society. Wallis and Andrews stated that the *Truworths* ethnic-orientated brand *Ginger Mary* was popular and stocks sold quickly. *Maya Prass* was also cited as a success as the brands revealed that there was definitely a niche for ethnic-European styled garments. De Groot also praised Amanda Laird Cherry and identified with her locally inspired garments and the fusion of a South African design within the development of her clothes. Burke supported the trend for enterprising groups to commence with establishing more cultural and ethnically focussed fashion stores. She suggested that the tourist industry and locals would then purchase fashionable garments with traditional elements.

De Groot subscribed to originality coupled with an individual approach. He agreed that South African retail stores could increase their potential if they incorporated a multi-cultural approach, especially when selling to varied target markets in South Africa. Walker stated that, as with shop windows in Europe, stores needed to transform into “objects of wonder” and communicate their local relevance to the community. Kidger concluded “...we have such a rich diversity of cultures that such influences would draw people into stores. People love to identify with things and emotional security plays a big part in spending, if you can relate to something you are more likely to buy it” (see Appendix C, pg. 121). Megan Andrews from *Woolworths* agreed with this statement and with the “fashion forward and quality driven” *Woolworths* brand image. *Woolworth's* aim was to entice and create distinctive looks, thus appealing to a broad market. *Woolworths* took pride in its brand image and in the concept of “Making the Difference”, and was widely acknowledged as a reputable retail store. *Woolworth's* major concerns were with

quality, value, excellent levels of service and being proudly South African within their stores.

#### **4.3.6 Identifying with a multi-cultural society**

Andrew Verster argued that the source of inspiration as well as the chance to make artwork relevant to our multi-cultural society lies within broader international influences. The key to evolving a national character, according to Verster, is to merge with other cultures and create an identity. Verster described our multi-cultural population as part of a global village which must not be limited to the exclusive use of local and traditional design. Palmi agreed with this statement, pointing out that, as we have become globalised, designs have coalesced under the umbrella collaboration of local and international influences. Chang clarified this statement, stipulating that to be a success in business is to interpret trends within the field of design to suit a South African context. He described the concept in a telephone conversation as “speaking to tribes” and the “pick and mix” identity (see Appendix C, pg. 150). This design approach dovetails with a multi-cultural selection of images. Success in a South African shop front would therefore be attainable when the design is incorporated into and resonates with a multi-cultural society. Due to an increase in social networking societal boundaries are dissolving as people are becoming more interconnected. Masojada explained that a shop window display must be constructed with a clearly defined “purpose”. The brief would be to implement an installation from everyday life which causes people to recognise the objects and perceive them in a different light. She emphasised that artwork does not have to be sophisticated and lavish to receive a positive response from a broad range of people. Parkes explained that the success of *Mr Price’s* direct visual merchandising strategy was that the imagery was life-like and portrayed fun and delight through the concept of being “happy to be oneself” (see Appendix C, pg. 116).

Palmi drew attention to consumer education and awareness of symbolism and culture, whilst Wallis pointed out the need to identify with different racial groups. In the clothing industry, Kidger and Wallis proposed that the success of garments relies on an awareness of the consumers’ needs: colour, price, fabric and fit. Walker agreed, and described Durban as a price conscious market. Kidger supported this viewpoint with the adage “money talks”: the more units of garments sold, the more successful the business.



Parkes referred to the selling of key items for the season by *Mr Price* at reasonable prices, and believed that promotions such as “buy three for fifty rand” explained the high turnover and large customer base. *Mr Price’s* aim was to create “value” for the customer and the business simultaneously. *Hirt & Carter* were selected by *Mr Price* to create this sense of “value” within the *Mr Price* windows. The displays consisted of ceiling-to-floor laser printed images that were expansive and filled with *joie d’vivre*.

According to the interviewees, South Africans have a wealth of traditional and cultural imagery to draw on. Masojada agreed that people need to become conscious of their heritage with its associated traditional symbols and concepts. By incorporating these traditional elements with modern technology, the possibility would be created for such beliefs and ideas to develop into more contemporary-expressed images. She revealed that South Africans were becoming more confident in their own creativity within local design. With this confidence and transformation of technology and tradition, new and culturally-rich shop displays and outreach projects could be developed. A trend is emerging where accessories, embellishments and garment detail are becoming more locally inspired and craft-driven. There has been a revival of traditional manual techniques, such as beading, crocheting and stitching in recent seasons (Phillips, 2008:142). Monk-Klijnstra said she had always been drawn to the concept of a multi-cultural identity. Her work was known for its flamboyant use of colour, texture and pattern and her craft and handwork was sourced largely from tribal-cultural attire. Her locally made jewellery ranges, created by the *Woza Moyo* project, a self-help project initiated by the *Hillcrest AIDS Centre*, were sold in her store and used in fashion ranges. The crafters involved were either affected by or themselves infected with HIV/Aids. Monk-Klijnstra collaborated with the crafters to produce beautiful designs with beading, crochet and wire artworks. Hand-crafted designs added a personal and “home grown” quality to the clothing.

Chang reiterated the concept of *Ubuntu* as discussed in the literature review, which he described as the “bedrock of South African culture” (see Appendix C, pg. 149). *Ubuntu* identifies involvement, participation and community respect as being pivotal for personal growth. These ideas and philosophy can be seen as essential to the success of connecting with our multi-cultural community. Wallis practised *Ubuntu* by supporting projects such as *Ifa Lethu*, *Woza Moya* and the *South African Institute of Style*. *Ifa lethu* and *Woza Moya*

were local initiatives which empowered local artists and promoted their talent. Monk-Klijnstra has worked closely with *The Sunflower Fund*; *Feed the Babies Fund* and the *SPCA* over the past years. Wallis and Monk-Klijnstra acknowledged that it is of paramount importance to have a passion for youth development and community projects. *Woolworths* concentrated on the spirit of *Ubuntu* in assisting schools and local people with the *My School project*, *Making the difference through Design*, *Design Indaba* and many other empowering programmes. The company promoted environmentally friendly and anti-cruelty animal campaigns in their products and apparel. Kidger said she would like to see *Ubuntu* further contextualised in a support framework assisted by government for sharing design information and business strategies in order to empower small businesses.

Cleveland (2002) maintained that the development of the Arts contributed to the sustained advancement of human dignity, health and productivity within a community. This could be achieved by:

- educating and informing us about ourselves and the world;
- inspiring and mobilising individuals and groups;
- nurturing, and healing people; and
- building and improving community development

According to Cleveland, community art as a collaborative research tool should be profoundly integrated into local designer's artworks and projects. The process involves the engagement of people in representing collective identities, histories and aspirations in multiple forms of expression (Barndt, 2008:351). The employment of local and skilled people from rural areas allows for the dissemination of artistic and valuable skills and results in the upliftment of poorer communities. This combination of traditional skills and modern design creates contemporary inspired artwork with international appeal. Verster encouraged the idea of community involvement as outlined by Cleveland (2002) and said he was continuously involved in collaboration with other artists. He created social environments where artists could interact and display their artworks in globally acclaimed buildings.

Community arts research rests on the framework of epistemology as discussed in Chapter 3. This concept aims at uplifting impoverished communities by offering them the

opportunity to express themselves skilfully and in a sustainable way. Many participants in this study have assisted communities and establishing artists in specialised fields. *Mr Price* established the *RedCap Foundation* to give young people opportunities that their communities, schools and environments do not offer. The *RedCap Foundation* is registered as a Non-Profit and Public Benefit Organisation that carries out Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiatives for *Mr Price* Group (*RedCap Foundation*, 2010). The foundation runs several campaigns, firstly *Young Heroes Project* which encourages and supports physical activity in primary schools from low-income communities. Secondly, *JumpStart* runs as a programme that aims to give the youth work experience within the *Mr Price* group. The *RedCap Foundation* also includes the *CompStart* project and has collaborated with the *Dell Foundation*, Durban University of Technology (DUT), *Microsoft* and *Mindset Learning* to assist in the installation of computer rooms and train educators in High Schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Parkes also mentioned the well-known competition for students, *The Elle Talent Design Competition* which creates a platform for successful students to witness their design concepts as apparel in *Mr Price* stores nationwide.

Masojada encourages community participation in the architectural field and design process and encourages artists to contribute their creative value to a building's construction. According to Florida and Tinagli (2005:11) if the country is to prosper, local people must be brought into the system and employed to add valuable creative work. Creativity is a broad social process and requires teamwork to strengthen the national economy and development. Masojada explained that the new government plays a strong role in enabling non-governmental or private organisations to receive contracts on large projects. The focus is on community grass roots driven development. It is envisaged that the people inhabiting the area should be involved at the right level because structures built in their vicinity will impact on their lifestyles. An example was the proposed improvements of the Early Morning Market in Durban. The local community rejected the proposal initially put forward by the municipality because they felt that their livelihoods would be threatened by a formal "big business" approach to business in the vicinity. The project commenced only after consultation with the informal traders.

Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000:67) published informed critical reviews dealing with pressing events or social issues such as HIV/Aids where different voices of the people are involved. Community art projects involving the locally disadvantaged, HIV positive and disabled people provide opportunities and employment. Chang conducts research and gives presentations in which he advocates a shift to a “more empathetic economy which is ethical and transparent” and emphasises that social responsibility in a South African context is essential. International celebrities such as Bill Gates and Richard Branson support these principles. Chang recommended that companies should become involved in establishing outreach projects that will assist in improving businesses in the local market. His recommendations should be viewed not as a marketing ploy, but that these projects will improve community lives and the business structures. Burke contributes a percentage of the profits from her published books to an institution which assists young people living with Aids and the under-privileged in society.

#### **4.3.7 Trends in Durban**

The following trends have been identified in the greater Durban region:

#### **4.3.8 Imports**

The influx of cheaper textile and apparel imported from China and India has put pressure on South African apparel fashion retailers (Curran, 2007:122). Fashion businesses are inundated with challenges from Asian competition, as they have to contend with inexpensive imitations. To succeed in this competitive environment, the fashion industry will have to cater for the specific needs of the consumers (North, De Vos and Kotze, 2003:42).

Wallis highlighted the fact that finances in the clothing industry are limited and the unstable South African currency creates higher payment problems when placing bulk orders with China. Chang reflected on this important issue and emphasised the power of the economic shift towards the East including China, India and Korea. South Africa’s exposure to foreign media and their advertising has had a direct impact on the sales of imported goods. This also applies to the presence of international brands and retail stores, which have created a greater awareness of foreign brands and products such as *Paul Smith* designs (Shaw, 2008:76). Chang suggested that South Africans have their own identities

and desires, in spite of international influences. Parkes stated that “looks” are created by visual displays and it has been established through research that customers create their own “look” or identity by mixing items with one key feature from the advertised model depicted in displays.

#### **4.3.9 Environmental issues**

Environmental issues have emerged from a niche concern to a global movement, and this awareness has seeped into every industry (Chang, 2008:6). This trend is important in developing eco-friendly, “green” products and using recycled materials in the construction of shop displays. There is an increasing demand by consumers and buyers for eco-fabrics. Local eco-yarns that use organic dyes that are not harmful to the environment and are often the product of community programmes are being sold internationally (Phillips, 2008:142). The trend of offering customised “green” or locally manufactured items seems to be a positive trend in the fashion industry.

This “green” trend can be observed at *Woolworth’s* stores which sell organic cotton clothing ranges and take great care in the process of production. *Woolworths* has identified the environment as a key concern. They focus on areas such as organic and free-range products, healthy eating choices, protection of biodiversity, animal welfare, water management, waste management and the reduction of unnecessary and expensive packaging (The good business journey report, 2010:26). This is evidenced in their branding which ensures that their produce is organic and promotes local produce as opposed to imported produce. *Woolworths* also continues to promote environmentally sound farming methods. As a consequence of local conventional produce farmers are encouraged to migrate to environmentally sensitive farming methods and organic production.

De Groot and Monk-Klijnstra recognised *Woolworths* as a brand that portrays multi-cultural identities in their advertisements and makes use of local people and icons such as Lucas Radebe and Ryk Neethling in their posters. Charmaine Huet, *Woolworths* Divisional Director of Marketing, explains this as follows:

For several years, *Woolworths* has featured “real people” in seasonal advertising campaigns. We have always tried to feature exceptional South Africans – people who, because of their accomplishments and talents, are role models for our young people. These have included iconic South Africans like Desmond Tutu, Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba, sporting legends like Roland Schoeman, Oscar Pistorius, Victor Matfield, Roxy Louw, and, of course, Lucas Radebe (*Woolworths* winter campaign, a star-studded affair, 2010).

Andrews described *Woolworth's* iconic people as becoming ambassadors for the *Woolworths* brand. The icons are multi-racial and are a mix of local and international stars. The current campaign for the 2010 World Cup and winter fashion season features prominent celebrities, including model Alek Wek, singer Lira and football legends Luis Figo and Lucas Radebe. Huet explains further:

In June and July 2010, the world will be focusing on South Africa, and we will be welcoming visitors from every continent to our country. Our aim with “Play the World” is to create a campaign that recognises the role that South Africa will be playing and that celebrates the unique passion and energy of our country and its people” (*Woolworths* winter campaign, a star-studded affair, 2010).

Retailers promoting consumer brands are always eager to have social icons wear or use their products, either through product placements, sponsorships or television presenters wearing their clothes (Shaw, 2008:70). The media exerts a considerable influence in creating a demand for products and a much stronger competitive edge in the retail industry.

Along with the environmental trend, Masojada supported the notion that environmental responsiveness and sustainability should permeate design trends in the architectural field. Masojada emphasised eco-friendly responses to the climate such as alternatives to conventional heating and cooling processes. She also advocated using products and energy sources made out of local materials and encouraged individuals and companies to use recycled water and less electricity. Chang suggested that this eco-friendly trend should not be viewed as transient. Burke and Chang agreed that it is vital to remain informed about the utilisation of local resources, the incorporation of technology and design trends.

#### **4.3.10 Interrelationship between art and design**

Retailing and advertising can be viewed as vehicles for communicating and promoting new and evolving designs. The relationship between retailers and advertisements is a two-way

street (Shaw, 2008:72). Eight of the participants concurred that art, advertising and design are interrelated and influence each other, whilst the others partially agreed. Verster supported this connectivity, whilst Palmi partially agreed, maintaining that although art and design are two different practices, they merge to form a single language of communication. Malinski (2005:105) states that art is integral to the human experience, as both active involvement in artistic expression and the appreciation of visual art produced by others facilitate self-expression and create meaning in varied life experiences. Chang and Andrews suggested that art and design are partially linked and that consumers want to be cajoled by the artistic designs in shop windows. With the aid of technology, a display could unite the imaginations of consumers through a different and contemporary level of design.

Art can assist growth and uncover new talent in businesses and in locally disadvantaged areas. In Darso's case study (2004:108), it was found that through utilising multiple types of art, the work acts as a "catalyst" creating new ways of seeing, communication and expression. This concept, as illustrated in Figure 3.4 Costa's (2008:185) model of community support interventions, can enrich both individuals and businesses. Chang suggested that technology and the media collectively have influenced the marketing techniques and the purchasing behaviour of people. Visuals are transported and popularised through social networks such as *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *Youtube*. The revolution of the Internet has enabled instant access and availability around the world.

Wallis incorporates art, fashion and business, in his workshops with students. His programme offers visits to art exhibitions, printing and embroidery houses and lectures on business skills. This is an example of a local cultural strategy as depicted in Figure 3.4, Costa's (2008:185) model of community support interventions, Wallis creates learning networks and promotes education through art, whilst he views art as a powerful tool to engage and entertain people, and to create an awareness of relevant problems and issues in society. Art can evoke an empathic response and it can be used to inspire ethical action (Chambon, 2008:610).

The creative "art or design" brief as explained by De Groot argues that a designer must strive to meet the needs of the client as expressed in the brief. Masojada's briefs revolve

around South African culture, topography and local materials. An example of Masojada's creative direction can be seen in the iconic Constitutional Court, where the brief for those who collaborated on the project was to adhere to the South African multi-cultural identity. She described the Constitutional Court as an iconic building and a "reflection of who we are".

Figure 3.4, Costa's (2008:185) model of community support interventions also depicts the multi-cultural South African society shifting toward participation, interaction and artistic creation in local communities, who now have the tools and expertise to create, comment on and interpret their own cultural products (Block, 2005). The participants in this study have all specialised in and supported creative communication, crossing cultural boundaries through collaborations with other designers and local people. Many artists interpret their cultural and political circumstances in ways that illuminate and bring change such as local development and increased competitiveness in economies as seen in Figure 3.4 (Poethig, 2009). It is this diversity of expression and human experience that must not be lost in favour of mass-produced products exclusively expressive of Western ideals.

#### **4.3.11 Summing up of key points in the narratives**

Prominent Durban designers Monk-Klijnstra and Wallis supported a practical application of the concept of *Ubuntu*. In order to aid and empower local communities, these two designers had become integral to the developmental process as epitomised in the *Woza Moya* and *Ifa Lethu* projects. The majority of participants interviewed were cognisant of the fact that display expenses are part of a marketing budget and not a stand-alone item. This implies that the window display has to be incorporated into the branding budget and the modus operandi of the company. Above all, the shop front should functionally represent a successful brand and not merely be an expensive nicety. Budget constraints should be considered when any shop front design is produced. The designers concurred that whilst sustainability was connected to a price-sensitive market, shop windows have an important role to play. Shop windows should engage the viewer not only as a possible client but also as a responsive human being. The content and message of window displays needs to go beyond a means to an end, and not be an end in itself.



The advent of globalisation has inevitably led to calls for the recognition and reevaluation of culture and contemporary multi-culturalism. It is hence indisputable that culture has taken centre-stage in the analysis of the construction of identities and modes of self-identification in South Africa (Garuba and Raditlhalo, 2008:37). Consequently, there is a strong general opinion and developing trend that local people, resources, skills and technology should be utilised to encourage sustainability for the local environment and for the development of South African communities, their identity and varied cultures. This support is critical because of the erosion of the popularity of local products due to the influx of inexpensive imports from the East, namely China, Korea and India.

The marketing of shop displays should incorporate thought-provoking images which encourage emotional responses, thereby ensuring customer interest. All the respondents foresee a future which sustains and encourages *avant-garde*, contemporary, multi-cultural window displays in the retail market. This is in keeping with the modern definition of the term “African”, which embodies multiple identities that reflect cultural similarities and differences. Kadalie (2003:108) explains that visual representation refuses to be defined by geographic, national, cultural and linguistic boundaries. South African retail stores need to focus on a more multi-dimensional and cultural value in order to change the perception that window shopping is one-dimensional. This view is supplied by Moreno (2005:179) who states that: “...experiences, more than pretty presentations, sell stuff”.

An example of this success is seen in Andy Warhol’s Pop artwork of the ubiquitous and familiar red and white Campbell soup can. This artwork incorporates art, commodification and popular culture (Weber, 2007:45). The art movement of the 1960s was founded on a rejection of the distinction between popular and high culture (Storey, 2003:63). The shop displays, like works of the *Pop Art* movement, use memorable images from everyday life which enable customers from various backgrounds to understand and relate to the store products and imagery. The shop displays incorporate recognisable images from ordinary life and make them seem extraordinary. The majority of the design experts consulted concluded that their individual sources of inspiration were derived from numerous cultures, objects and international influences. The participants interviewed promoted a combination of vibrant intercultural exchanges which utilise South Africa’s richly diverse resources, but which also include international appeal.

#### 4.4 Organising the data into themes

Stage 3 of the clustering process involved organising the data into broad themes including imagery, identity and culture. This meant that key points emerged from participants responses to provide answers to research questions 1 and 2 (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1** Key points in answering research questions 1 and 2

	<b>RESEARCH QUESTION 1</b>	<b>RESEARCH QUESTION 2</b>
	<b>What fashion imagery and identity currently dominate SA window displays?</b>	<b>What cultural aspects would reflect a SA image and identity?</b>
<b>1</b>	We try to use our own knowledge and not just copy “blindly” from the overseas trends. The trend ... is to incorporate a more natural style and local imagery.	...the store appeals to the majority black and white market. The clothing ranges and even models used in advertising are a multi-cultural mix from Caucasian, Black, Coloured and Indian.
<b>2</b>	I use overseas sources but in a South African context. ...clients are generally conservative.	Indigenous We have such a rich diversity...
<b>3</b>	Most of the [image] sources are local. Most of the studios support local design.	Make the window “an object of wonder” that is relevant to our South African context. The local and international “mix” of sources and imagery. The South African language represented through artworks and graphics. Making subversive work appealing to a wide audience.
<b>4</b>	Head office dictates visual themes although we often have South African models, ambassadors and international stars featured in our advertising campaigns, such as Alex Wek.	Woolworths tries to support the African theme as Woolworths celebrated the World Cup in all stores.  Woolworths supports diversity and operates according to the motto “working together”. It is important to innovate, improve quality and style through brand image.
<b>5</b>	South Africa is gradually becoming more confident and growing all the time. The 2010 focus has allowed a lot of special events to happen and support local cultures. The tourists look for something local.	I believe that everything is “knitted”. . I am able to make my own interpretation and support both local and international sources.  Today there is the “global village” with a multitude of images, symbols and art forms.
<b>6</b>	In architecture there is the problem of being too literal with symbols such as a traditional bee-hive hut. It is only effective when the idea is conceptual. You have to ask “What defines a shop window, a space, a pane of glass to connect it to the world?”	South African people are more confident and have reason to use local images with cultural meanings, although it is difficult to transport symbols from one context to another.  Respond more to the topography and climate of the area. The familiar can be turned into contemporary objects without being dislocated. We can become more conscious of our heritage. The traditional is being affected by technology and new meaning will emerge. If this concept is built around our local context, our overall identity

	<b>RESEARCH QUESTION 1</b>	<b>RESEARCH QUESTION 2</b>
	<b>What fashion imagery and identity currently dominate SA window displays?</b>	<b>What cultural aspects would reflect a SA image and identity?</b>
		<p>emerges.</p> <p>It must be community grass roots driven and I can argue that the right level of participation is essential and impacts on the area.</p> <p>To cross-reference is important as you are able to identify with cultural opportunities at low and high levels, thus ensuring exposure.</p>
7	I examine techniques such as “Cause related marketing” and current examples such as the brand “Levis”. A company which supports Aids campaigns and becomes a social tool of support.	<p>South Africa is not homogenous and we have a mix of identities. There is often a story that needs to be interpreted.</p> <p>I try and encourage consumer education and discuss perspectives on topics in the fashion and textile industry.</p> <p>Tourist locations such as 1000 Hills sells crafts and the local Zulu culture in a “story” format for easy understanding. To create indigenous style and incorporate all creative mediums in South African art is important in our globalised world.</p>
8	<p>Truworths has an ethnic orientated range called “Ginger Mary”. There is a niche market for ethnic European styled garments for example international brands such as “Topshop” have a love affair with African cultures. I am very aware of the cross-cultural elements regarding sizing and fit.</p> <p>I feel that displays are archaic and tired. Local design needs assistance with media exposure.</p>	<p>I use both local and international sources as I generally travel three to four times a year.</p> <p>A trend of local design which is not fragmented but has a distinct ethnic portrayal.</p>
9	<p>My works are supremely local.</p> <p>We are developing a national pride that is not race specific and it is really one of the few things for which a democratic South Africa can be proud. Think MK on DSTV, think rugby and soccer advertisements and the Woolworths instore advertising campaign.</p>	<p>Local products, surely if stores display local, people will feel inclined to support local and therefore cheap Chinese will slowly phase out.</p> <p>Childlike displays filled with colour and excitement.</p> <p>Community based projects/design.</p> <p>A flamboyant use of colour, texture and pattern. I love craft and handwork</p>
10	Woolworths does it quite well, you can see who they are “talking to”.	Creative integrity.
11		Inspiration for new trends can be sourced from history, technology, fabrics and cultures.
12	Marketing is a large part of store design to attract the mass market. It is important to speak to “tribes” and the “pick and mix” identity of South Africa.	In South Africa the concept of <i>ubuntu</i> is the bedrock of South African culture.

Table 4.1 portrays key phrases and extracts from the transcripts. The answers to research question 1 reflect the current state of local window displays but was not without glimpses of existing attempts to construct a sense of a national identity. The key points and phrases, however, are not focused on how a national identity could actually be *created*. This stage of the clustering process was followed by another examination of the data, which provided tentative answers to research question 3, namely, how the responses to question 2 could be incorporated into window displays.

#### 4.5 Synthesis of data in forming patterns/theories

Stage 4 of the clustering process involved a synthesis of data in forming patterns or theories. Emerging answers from research question 3 led to general themes and metaphors being elicited from the data, as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2** Emerging metaphors and themes in answer to research question 3

	<b>RESEARCH QUESTION 3</b>	<b>EMERGING METAPHORS &amp; THEMES</b>
	<b>How could the responses to question 2 be incorporated into window displays?</b>	<b>Obtained from key words/phrases from all participants</b>
<b>M E T A P H O R S</b>	Key words/phrases from all participants ...is to convey “happy to be you” and real life situations and people.	Instantly recognisable and memorable signs and symbols are fundamental to indicating identity.
	People love to identify with things and emotional security plays a big part in spending, if one can relate to something one is more likely to buy it. Like-minded people are migrating towards each other, allowing people to be lumped together under a “blanket” of commonality.	“Journeys” and the development of the “rainbow nation” are two key metaphors associated with South Africa’s recent post-apartheid era.
	Make the window “an object of wonder” that is relevant to our South African context...only effective when the idea is conceptual and contemporary.	The Art of the Constitutional Court of South Africa.
	The South African language represented through artworks and graphics.	Thabo Mbeki’s “African Renaissance”
	Visuals and posters “speak” to the consumer through a “story” format for easy understanding. You can see who they are “talking to” through visual communication. Very strong communication tool through “tribe to tribe” using “ <i>Twitter</i> ” “ <i>Facebook</i> ” and “ <i>Youtube</i> ” showcasing the latest trends, fashion and styling tips.	The use of icons, pictograms and the use of graphics creates greater clarity of information without the need for text. Utilising social media for promotion and interest in the creation of multi-cultural shop window displays.

	<b>RESEARCH QUESTION 3</b>	<b>EMERGING METAPHORS &amp; THEMES</b>
	<b>How could the responses to question 2 be incorporated into window displays?</b>	<b>Obtained from key words/phrases from all participants</b>
	Everything is “knitted” in the South African “global village” with the “pick and mix” identity of South Africa under an “umbrella” collaboration.	“Rainbow nation”
	The clothing ranges and even models used in advertising are a multi-cultural mix from Caucasian, Black, Coloured and Indian.	Marketing a multi-cultural approach
	Organic, relevant and high commerciality. Encourage and adopt environmentally friendly products; Local charity and community involvement; and sustainability	Multi-dimensionality
	The merchandising is specific to the season or “look” for the month	The Soccer World Cup The <i>Vodacom Durban July</i>
	Innovative Indigenous Creative expression Rich diversity as a draw card The topography and climate of the area Colour, patterns, textures, history, technology, fabrics and cultures.	Nature and indigenous flora and fauna Local people Iconic buildings Textiles and patterns
	Local and international “mix” of sources and imagery which allows people to “come together” and create a “vehicle” for creativity or a “matrix” making it sustainable, creating structures and taking charge of the surroundings.	Community art, collaboration and the spirit of <i>Ubuntu</i> .
	Durban is very price conscious and budgets are small.	A digital format of shop displays allows easy manipulation and customisation according to the season or product range. Simple and effective merchandising

**Table 4.3** Synthesis of metaphors and themes arising from the data

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Metaphors</b>
What metaphors reflect a South African image and identity?	“Journeys” and the development of the “rainbow nation” are two key metaphors associated with South Africa’s recent post-apartheid era Thabo Mbheki’s ‘African Renaissance’ The Art of the Constitutional Court of South Africa
	<b>Themes</b>
These themes have been incorporated into multi-cultural South African window displays for the practical component of the study.	Nature and indigenous flora and fauna Local people Iconic buildings Textiles and patterns The Soccer World Cup The <i>Vodacom Durban July</i>

The metaphors and themes were summarised as shown in Table 4.3 to provide a synthesis for the data so that this pattern or theory could be used to guide shop window design underpinned by a national identity in a multi-cultural South Africa.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter shows how the clustering process adapted from Creswell (2007:151), was used to arrive at a synthesis providing a theory of national identity which is used to inform shop window design in a multi-cultural South Africa. Some of the emerging themes were related to social structures, national metaphors, emblems and symbols. This provided the basis for the design brief which assisted in the production of a practical component and the installation of multi-cultural shop displays, and will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapters of theory building and explorations provided a comprehensive framework for analysis and development in the field of shop window design. This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study and draws conclusions about the answers to the research questions. The chapter concludes showing how various components in the answers can be amalgamated into designs reflecting a South African national identity.

#### **5.2 How aims and objectives were met**

The focus of the study was to evaluate the incorporation of multi-cultural symbols and imagery within shop displays and revolved around three research questions as stated in Chapter 1, these being:

1. What fashion imagery and identity currently dominate South African window displays?
2. What cultural aspects would reflect a South African image and identity?
3. How could the responses to question two be incorporated into window displays?

The aim of the study was twofold. Firstly, to present popular visual culture in shop displays that intentionally creates a sense of belonging and “home” in South African society. Secondly, to use the artwork displays completed for this study as vehicles to explore the key concepts of identity, culture and belonging to a multi-cultural South African context, as cultural theory relies on multi-culturalism and hybridity (Nuttall and Michael, 2000:478).

##### **5.2.1 Fashion imagery and identity currently dominating South African window displays**

As depicted in Table 4.1 in Chapter 4, the answers to research question 1 suggested that, on the whole, South African shop front displays were mainly derivative of Western

concepts. There were pockets of emerging South African trends, but these tended to be ethnic and one dimensional rather than holistic.

### **5.2.2 Cultural aspects reflecting a South African image and identity**

Key aspects of these were listed in Table 4.1 in Chapter 4 in answering research question 2, and include the following:

- Cultural diversity as well as indigenous trends
- Cultural mixes of identities in South Africa
- The importance of narrative
- A sense of wonder relevant to the South African context
- A local and international “mix” of sources and imagery
- A South African “vernacular” represented through artworks and graphics
- Work that challenges and subverts established conventions
- Images which reflect the kind of enthusiasm generated by the 2010 World Cup
- Improving quality and style through brand image and innovation
- Interpretations which support both local and international sources
- Applying the “global village” concept to South Africa with a multitude of local images, symbols and art forms
- Utilising the topography, the climate and familiar objects of an area which can be turned into contemporary objects without being dislocated
- Acknowledging that heritage can be forged into an overall national identity
- New meanings which continue to emerge from the influence of technology on tradition
- Applications which are community grass roots driven
- Cross-referencing which should be able to identify with cultural opportunities at all levels thus ensuring exposure
- Creating indigenous style and incorporating media in South African art
- A trend of local design which is not fragmented but has a distinct ethnic portrayal
- Design which supports local products
- Childlike displays filled with colour and excitement
- Community based projects/design
- Flamboyant use of colour, texture and pattern
- Craft and handwork



- Creative integrity
- Inspiration for new trends which is sourced from history, technology, fabrics and cultures
- The concept of *Ubuntu* as the foundation of South African culture

To summarise the above, mixtures of ethnic identities are important, but these can be transformed into integrated contemporary themes with a vibrant, creative identity. Respect for ethnic identities in keeping with the principle of *Ubuntu* will provide a window display, which typifies a South African worldview.

### **5.2.3 How a South African image and identity can inform window displays**

In answer to research question 3, key metaphors and images emerged (see Tables 4.2 and 4.3 in Chapter 4) as suggestions of how a South African image and identity could inform window displays. These key metaphors and themes are shown in Table 4.3. These were considered to be the most iconic of the various suggestions made by participants, and therefore most likely to be more easily integrated into a multi-cultural shop window display.

### **5.3 Techniques informing the design process**

The above metaphors and images were integrated into a design reflecting a South African national identity. In order to achieve this sense of “belonging” to a South African identity, various techniques were used in the shop displays including the creation of a visual fantasy world through theatrical devices such as bold backdrops, text and strategically placed mannequins. Specific imagery was also deliberately chosen to appeal to the viewers’ imagination, thereby contributing to the narrative and making it possible for the viewer to engage with local symbols, icons and common-place imagery. The combination of all these elements was envisaged to assist in reaching a wider, multi-cultural cross-section of the public.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made for both implementation of design projects and further research into the design of shop window displays.

#### **5.4.1 Implementation of design projects**

- A positive direction for Durban companies, artists and designers would be to continue to support programmes that uplift communities and teach valuable skills. Artists, fashion designers and retail specialists need to develop local design projects which promote and popularise symbols and imagery that represent South Africa's diverse multi-cultural society. Such artists make a valuable contribution to the sustainability of a South African multi-cultural identity. An example is evidenced in the integration of local artwork into the Constitutional Court's design, which was a source of inspiration for this study.
- Store display designers should use imagery aligned with current acceptable perceptions to create a window display reflecting a South African brand that is capable of influencing customers' participation to purchase, by using images and symbols evocative of everyday life.
- Cross branding should be utilised as a useful strategy to reach as broad a spectrum of the buying public as possible in the present economic situation. As budgets for marketing have been curtailed, it has become an essential business practice to pool budgets with compatible brands to create the best visual solution. This approach would foster creativity and explore new and modern methods of presentation (De Lange, 2008:79).
- Businesses should promote and incorporate eco-friendly and green production practises.
- Familiar and easily recognisable imagery should be utilised, as it is integral to a knowledge-sharing process and promotes an acceptance of diverse cultures. This will alleviate the problem of those who may be opposed to change, or are wary of new concepts, different cultures and beliefs.

#### **5.4.2 Directions for further research**

Further research into the evolution of the South African fashion identity, especially within shop presentation or suitable display mechanisms, needs to be undertaken with the intention of discovering the elements that shape the evolving multi-cultural society of South Africa. Western influences have resulted to some extent in the disintegration of certain beliefs and traditions. This has left South Africa at a delicate stage of development

as a young democracy, a stage where the re-definition of identity is of paramount importance (Cilliers, 2007:8).

- Contemporary design and research could be directed to create self-sustaining projects for local people towards skills development.
- The construction and research into creative marketing spaces, which are multi-cultural in the way in which they exhibit, integrate, explore and present commodities, should be encouraged. This would create employment opportunities and workshops which explore and promote cultural innovation and learning. Government assistance would be beneficial in this regard so that a large and rural cross-section of the population can be reached.
- An increased and constantly expanding awareness of the diversity of South African talent and products creates a *Proudly South African* brand with quality of design and performance. South African brands are developing due to the collaborative efforts of various creative professionals in the industry.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The shop window installation, together with the visual catalogue, is the result of this research and aims to represent a contemporary, humorous and appealing collage of a multi-cultural South African society. The practical component of this study investigates local life through a critical exploration of specific daily images that challenge traditional iconography such as the stereotypical tourist curios and Western influences epitomised by brands such as *Nike* and *Puma*. There is the need for fresh, innovative display content which includes an emphasis on the local context together with indigenous design aspects such as contemporary textiles in a fashion retail environment.

There also needs to be greater collaboration between artists, designers, architects and crafters in an attempt to source and integrate local talent and create indigenous fashion identities which have international appeal. A multi-dimensional amalgamation together with the use of modern technology and popular South African culture could create an awareness of local and international issues such as HIV/Aids and the unemployment crisis facing South Africa. Window displays based on the inherit depiction of culture can be

forceful and portray uplifting messages and community values for all who are exposed to these displays.

## **CHAPTER 6 PRACTICAL COMPONENT**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter reflects on the practical aspect of the study, and discusses the artefact informed by the theoretical aspects of this study, in particular, the metaphors and themes obtained from the data analysis. The artefact is presented in the form of a printed, high-resolution catalogue and includes a compact disc with digital imagery of the shop display installation.

### **6.2 Practical component: Impressions of an African city, Durban**

The aim of the practical was to unite local symbols and imagery to construct a multi-cultural shop display. The research, interviews, observations and theories directed the practical component of this study. The practical was developed from:

- Visual language which is graphically illustrated;
- The symbols that come into play when people communicate;
- The meanings people attach to objects; and
- Imagery of Durban

The study focuses on Durban and its immediate surroundings, including its local architecture and culture. The practical component consists of two installations and a catalogue which together aim to provide a platform to explore aspects of South African culture and the integration of artwork and fashion trends. Global and local trends have been integrated into the installations, ensuring that the designs can be widely appreciated and understood by local people. The success of this practical is based on the premise that individual identities are a mixture of cultures and influences. The visual catalogue, expressed through graphic statements, will hopefully resonate with audiences which make up South Africa's multi-cultural society. The practical process will also encourage networking between established experts and emergent designers.

Creative industries include, inter alia, advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film and video, software and computer services, television and radio. All these examples

of a creative nous produce cultural products which draw on commercial and artistic enterprises, as well as public and non-profit organisations (Capone, 2008:341). Most of the aspects presented have been discussed in this study.

As mentioned above, the following themes regarding identity, nature and celebration of Durban will be discussed. The themes were composed from the collected data and were constructed utilising digital programmes. The shop displays were completed using a stylistic approach that reflects both gender sensitivity and cultural South African symbols. The illustrations aim to be innovative and anthropological. A shop window display which is anthropological in theme is based on the belief that other cultures can be understood through visual symbols (Lichtman, 2006:64). The practical aims of the study are to create shop fronts which are multi-cultural in their conception in that they address as wide an audience as possible.

Universal symbols invite, inform, befriend and entertain the public. These symbols are personalised through texts, images, screens, technology and objects that we use daily (Poethig, 2009). Shop displays are constructed using these signals, symbols and designs, which any South African customer can translate and understand. The commercial world of design and fashion is one of the major consumers of signs and symbols. Graphic images facilitate communication and the translation of meaningful human gestures into visual structures (Hampshire and Stephenson, 2008:7). Technology has simplified the process, but in South Africa designers are still learning how to design and use signs and symbols. The use of icons and pictograms creates greater clarity of information without the need for text. The display encourages the potential customer to pause and engage with symbols. The associations and borrowing of cross-cultural elements are aesthetically pleasing and form part of basic art education, social interaction and knowledge. Since the exhibition spaces are confined and intimate, this encourages personal contact and interaction with customers.

### **6.3 Theme one: Journeys through the rainbow nation**

The shop displays as contained in the visual catalogue will be examined according to their themes. The innovative shop display is a metaphoric representation of a “journey” through the picturesque South African countryside. “Journeys” and the development of the

“rainbow nation” are two key metaphors associated with South Africa’s recent post-apartheid era. The rainbow moving across the three panels symbolises the freedom and joy of the “rainbow nation” and provides a route from the green sugar cane fields and coastline, to the inner precincts of the Durban city centre. The rainbow shape also represents the HIV Aids symbol, thereby creating a social awareness of this current issue which affects many South Africans.

The multi-coloured “taxi” image is a pervasive symbol, as taxis play a major role in South African life. The taxi industry has its own rules and language and has a vibrancy that is palpable (Fox, 2000). Taxis provide inexpensive transport between urban and rural areas. Roads and transport systems encourage freedom and travel and are essential arteries of communication and commerce in South African society (Fox, 2000:459). Durban roads have been used as a source of artistic expression and contain many colourful and bustling businesses contributing to the means by which many South Africans communicate and commute.

The visual concept of a map depicting well-known routes and landmarks assists foreigners and local visitors with easy navigation when visiting Durban. The imagery focuses on expression, important and familiar selling points, everyday experiences, the desire to belong and pride in South African cultural heritage. According to Hall (1996:4) identities are about using the resources of history, language and culture in developing a South African identity. Identities contain elements of individuals, perceptions and origins, and often define the end destination. Hall (1996:4) concurs with this view and points out that identities are also about the “routes” taken in our daily lives.

Instantly recognisable and memorable signs and symbols are fundamental to indicating identity and membership in our local society (Hampshire and Stephenson, 2008:34). The urban and rural areas were adopted to represent the country and its cultures. Famous inhabitants, iconic buildings and indigenous flora and fauna are featured in the artwork. The imagery of panel transitions is positioned in such a way as to forge the transition from a rural to an urban cultural setting. This creates a link between the cultures associated with the different locations.

#### **6.4 Theme two: Vodacom Durban July**

This shop window was constructed in line with the *Vodacom Durban July*, a major annual event in Durban with the fashion theme of 2010: “It’s a Blooming, Great Day”. The use of motifs derived from floral sources is combined with the silhouetted horse and jockey. The repetitive pattern presents a trendy cosmopolitan interpretation of the Durban July. The mannequin placed within the setting represents urban sophistication and brings with it all the glamour associated with fashion at the races. The abundant indigenous bougainvillea and Barberton daisies and their bright colours are a source of natural beauty and create the exotic subtropical world expressive of Durban. This prestigious event provides a perfect backdrop to showcase a local designer’s style and talent.

#### **6.5 Theme three: Nature**

Window displays evoke a “return to nature” concept by drawing on natural and environmental elements. Nature is fundamental to our basic existence, as it not only provides food and shelter but it is also a source of visual beauty. Nature therefore can be viewed as a metaphor for a preferred quality of life. The display features signs, images and symbols from the environment to reflect the dynamic role of the display in our interdependence on nature and beauty because nature is the essence around which we weave our human stories (Du Toit, 2009:8). Our familiarity with nature that surrounds us in South Africa provides the consumer public with a sense of comfort and belonging.

The splendour of the veld, savannah grasslands, mountains and coastline, and abundant fauna and flora inspires the nature theme which can evoke feelings of uniqueness and beauty in the viewer. The illustrations portray evergreen, lush vegetation depicting local flora and hints at the possibility of adventure. The subtropical setting could be compared to a “paradise” and a sanctuary that customers desire and wish to explore. Visual surroundings become part of the fibre of human existence, history and memories: the more time spent in a place, the more evocative it becomes of past experiences (Du Toit, 2009:71).

Birds and animals featured as illustrative forms suggest a form of escapism and the positive value of nature. The *Romantic Movement* yearned for a return to the simple virtues of nature as a means to combat and overcome the artificiality of urban and



industrial life. This prominent view contained in English Romantic writing, Wordsworth's *Preface to lyrical ballads* (1802:598).

The principal object, which I proposed to myself in these poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life and relate to or describe them...to speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity.

Wordsworth's return to nature is relevant in its call to include culture and the roots of our local identity through shop displays. He was convinced that a culture which reconnected its origins with nature could work to refresh "the discriminating powers of the mind." Storey (2003:59), declares that culture is not a pre-existing condition which can be "consumed", rather culture is what is produced in the varied practices of consumption.

The nature element could result in more responsible attitudes towards the preservation and appreciation of the environment. This study proposes that shop displays should fulfil a dual function: one of creating an awareness to encourage the "green movement" as well as promoting natural products. The display is rich in detail, design and textures. A combination of natural and urban settings provides the displays with a contemporary ambience.

#### **6.6 Theme four: 2010 Celebration**

The "celebration" concept underpins the commemoration of the 2010 Soccer World Cup. One of Fifa's (Federation International de Football Association) aims is to use soccer as a means of uniting people, cultures and even nations. It can be argued that the celebration theme was appropriate as it represented the successful hosting of the tournament by South Africa. The dynamic activity and implied action energises and motivates the viewer. The decorative silhouettes are bold and are expressive of enjoyment, physical activity and the action of the soccer festivities. The layout is innovative in that it employs a range of patterns and prints which appeal to a broad target market, while never straying from the values inherent in sport.

After years of minimalism, design has now become an eclectic mix of signs, symbols, icons and illustrations, effectively used in applied patterns, textiles, graphics and art. The

combination of symbols fits broadly within the “maximalist” style identified in her book *Maximalism* by Charlotte Rivers (2007). In her introduction she states, “silhouettes and botanical motifs are taking over from rigorous, simple lines and muted tones. A profusion of colour, excess and a return to sensuality” has become a current trend (Rivers, 2007:8). This overall effect, applied in the visual graphics within the catalogue, creates an amusing, fantastical, eclectic and uniquely urban reflection of Durban.

Information and knowledge are the keystones of creativity and the resultant effect is relevant, contemporary and appealing. The joint collaboration of technology and creativity becomes the driving force for economic growth and cities like Durban can become “cauldron[s] of creativity” (Florida, 2005:214). The window display is important as Durban was chosen as one of the cities to host the 2010 Soccer World Cup. The city of Durban became a “creative cauldron” and displayed its warm hospitality to international visitors and sports fans during the 2010 World Cup.

Durban needs to continue to form a “creative cluster” which implies the inclusion of the following: (Florida, 2002:260)

- A catalytic place where people, relationships, ideas and talent can ignite pleasure;
- An environment that offers diversity, stimuli and freedom of expression; and
- An open and flexible network of interpersonal exchanges that nurture Durban’s uniqueness and identity.

### **6.7 Theme five: Kathrin Kidger retail store, La Lucia mall, Durban**

The theme for the store was contemporary ethnic elegance. This was translated into a concept to suit Kidger’s target market of mothers and young career women from 25 to 45 years old. The two semi-transparent posters showcase her latest designs based on highly decorative ethnic motifs. An Nguni mat was created to simulate an authentic Nguni hide. Nguni skins are utilised in many interior design magazines and are seen as a signature African accessory. Nguni cattle are celebrated by the Zulu people for their beauty and their multiple colours. The aim of this work is not only to record a part of this unique heritage for posterity, but also to celebrate the richness of Zulu versatility and the creative imagination of the Zulu people in Durban (Poland, 2003:1). The complimentary

accessories were two ottomans with a bold silhouette representative of the African continent and paisley print and rays of light associated with African sunlight. The fuchsia pink feminine paisley vinyl stickers placed across the window panel match the fuchsia wall paint complimenting the interior decor. The interpretation of the paisley vinyl stickers is light-hearted and romantically expressed with hearts and swirls in the repeated pattern. This boutique shop with its inherently African ambience is rooted in national pride and provides a trendy and cosmopolitan shopping experience.

### **6.7.1 Suggested improvements for the Durban region**

The following improvements are suggested for the Durban region:

- Encourage a support for different cultures;
- Enhance and encourage the artistic and cultural heritage;
- Support creativity and innovation;
- Express and strengthen local identity; and
- Enhance the image of the city and surrounding areas.

### **6.8 Conclusion**

The result of the study is a visual collage of current imagery, signs and symbols across creative disciplines including art, interior design, architecture, communication and contemporary print and pattern. Current designs are developed which embrace the juxtaposition of craft and technology such as laser cutting, vinyl stickers and fabric design. The catalogue design utilises CAD programmes namely *Illustrator*, *Photoshop* and *Sketch Up*. A digital format of shop displays allows for easy manipulation and customisation according to the season or product range. The researcher also created “touchpoints” where brand elements are applied to labels and packaging (Kendall, 2009:115). Examples of Durban branding can be seen as featured on the environmental shopping bags, CD’s and book covers in the digital catalogue.

Throughout the learning process, the researcher sought the assistance and collaborated with a graphic and interior designer in the industry to develop and create a professional product. The panels of prints were printed commercially using an industrial process, and the installation was constructed within a display window at the Brickfield Road Fashion

campus of the Durban University of Technology and in Kathrin Kidger's retail boutique in La Lucia Mall, Durban North.

## **GLOSSARY**

**ANTHROPOLOGY:** The systematic study of cultures and groups of people (Haviland, Prins, Walrath and McBride, 2010:3).

**CULTURE:** Attitudes, behaviours and values associated with a particular social group or organisation (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

**ECLECTIC:** Selecting or borrowing from the different sources: choosing the best out of everything (Collins English Dictionary, 2009).

**EMIC PERSPECTIVE:** Is an approach to culture that is subjective and experimental, by attempting to explain a culture as “insiders” experience it and stresses unique aspects of each culture (Soloman, 2008:641).

**EPISTEMOLOGY:** A branch of philosophy dealing with the theory of knowledge, the nature of knowledge, or how we know what we know (Higgs and Smith, 2002:58).

**HERMENEUTICS:** A technique or discipline of data analysis involving detailed analysis of transcripts and textual material. It is also associated with phenomenology and is an approach concerned with interpretation (Higgs and Smith, 2002:130).

**INTERPRETIVISM:** A theory or philosophical doctrine that emphasises meanings people bestow on their own actions (Neuman, 2000:71).

**METAPHOR:** A figure of speech in which a word or phrase that means one thing is applied to another in order to suggest an analogy. It is often used in qualitative writing to vividly describe ideas (Lichtman, 2009:245).

**NARRATIVES:** The organisation of stories (e.g. beginning, middle and end; plots and characters) which makes stories meaningful or coherent in a form appropriate to the needs of a particular occasion (Silverman, 2009:436).

**PARADIGM:** A way of seeing the world. It is also a set of interrelated assumptions about the world that provides philosophical and conceptual frameworks (Henning, Van Rensburg, and Smit, 2004:1).

**POSTMODERNISM:** A cultural and intellectual trend of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Postmodernism is characterised by an emphasis on the ideas of meaning, the value and autonomy of the local and the particular, the infinite possibilities of human existence, and the coexistence, in a kind of collage or pastiche, of different cultures, perspectives, time periods, and ways of thinking (Fajardo-Acosta, 2010).

**SEMIOTICS:** The study of signs (from speech, to fashion to Morse code) (Silverman, 2006:404).

**SOCIAL PATTERNS:** In the world of design, social patterns relate to architecture, furniture, clothing, the aesthetics of consumer products and visual arts. These are influenced by our social attitudes and values, which find expression in political views, moral values, social behaviour, writings, poetry and music (Curtis, 2004:14).

**SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM:** A sociological term, which examines how individuals and groups interact as a process of symbolic communications (Drislane and Parkinson, 2011).

**TOUCHPOINT:** A *touchpoint* is all the various ways that a brand interacts with and makes an impression on customers, employees, media and other stakeholders (Davis and Longoria, 2003).

**TYPOGRAPHY:** Typography is present in design and layout not only to illustrate or communicate information, but also to give the design piece a “voice” (Rivers, 2008:52).

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**APPENDIX A**  
**E-MAILED LETTER TO PROFESSIONALS**

Dear Sir/Madam

MASTERS OF TECHNOLOGY IN FASHION: SHOP WINDOWS

I am currently studying towards my Master's degree in fashion at the Durban University of Technology. My topic is an investigation into the visual culture of window displays with specific reference to the Greater Durban fashion retail market.

I believe that your expertise, knowledge and experience in the fashion industry will contribute towards my research. Your valued contribution will add to and broaden the parameters of this study. Your brand could benefit from the specialised research and visual concepts explored in developing an updated South African version of shop displays that may appeal to our multi-cultural consumers. I would be most grateful if you could allow me the opportunity to conduct an interview.

The sacrifice of your personal time will be greatly appreciated. Thanking you in anticipation of a response.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Lichkus

Tel: 084 5999 121

Email: [sepoppet@yahoo.com](mailto:sepoppet@yahoo.com)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

This interview schedule consists of basic questions, which were adapted for the different participants in their professional fields. Questions were answered with **Fully, Partially** or **Not at all** and in some cases an explanation was given.

1. How long have you been involved in industry?
2. How would you describe your style and approach to your visual work? Please could you describe a basic brief?
3. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.
4. In your opinion are there retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local fashion? Please provide examples and description.
5. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores? Please give the names of stores, if any.  
Fully  
Partially  
Not at all
6. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?
7. Which three elements in your designs do you consider the public identify most with?
8. Does your artwork incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.
9. Do you think that in the South African fashion industry, local images and symbols are well represented?  
Fully agree

Partially

No, Please elaborate

10. As a visual artist in the South African retail industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions, and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your apparel?

No role

Partial

Full control

11. There are many issues confronting designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

12. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

Yes

Partially

No

13. Who is the target market for your clothing in local retail stores?

14. Are your prices market-sensitive? Please explain.

15. Have any of your clothing ranges or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

Yes

Partially

No

16. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

**APPENDIX C**  
**INTERVIEWS AND TRANSCRIPTIONS**  
**FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS**

**Lorraine Parkes: Visual Merchandiser: *Mr. Price* Head office, Durban.**

**5 March 2010**

1. How would you describe your style and approach to your visual work? Please could you describe a basic brief?

*Mr Price has a system of “value” in the business. This concept is always considered with the approach to the budget and thought process. The windows and advertising technique is to convey “happy to be you” and real life situations and people.*

2. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*We try to use our own knowledge and not just copy “blindly” from the overseas trends. The trend in Mr Price is to incorporate a more natural style and local imagery.*

3. Is the budget for visual merchandising sufficient and how often do the displays change?

*The displays must try to be low cost and generic. The merchandising is specific to the season or “look” for the month. The visual merchandising changes seasonally or during promotions.*

4. In your opinion are there retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local fashion? Please provide examples and description.

*Woolworths support the Proudly South African campaign.*

*YDE sells local young fashion and is a successful large retailer.*

*Mr Price always supports local initiatives such as the current Elle Design competition, the winner’s merchandise will be placed in-store creating great exposure for the winning students.*

5. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores? Please give the names of stores, if any.

*Fully, Woolworths and Mr Price; our market research has proved that the store appeals to the majority black and white market. The clothing ranges and even models used in advertising are a multi-cultural mix from Caucasian, Black, Coloured and Indian.*

6. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?

*Local marketing which can be very powerful with feedback from customers.*

*Show the actual tangible product with a clever hanging system in the windows. This would add hanger appeal.*

*The correct lightning, colouration and mood are essential in retail shop windows.*

7. Which three elements in Mr Price designs do you consider the public identify most with?

*1. Price with affordability and promotions.*

*2. Fashionability.*

*3. We provide the "hot" key items at a better price. The customers have the "wanted" look and are able to create their own style so every customer does not walk out with the same items. Our promotions are an attraction, for example one to five items can be bought for R100.00*

8. Do you think that in the South African fashion industry, local images and symbols are well represented?

*Partially as at Mr Price we offer our own local ranges like Oakridge and Young Designers. The Oakridge range is aimed at the farming community so making it local and 100% South African. South African representation through fabrication and prints is influenced by the latest trends but we do endeavour to have some local imagery. Although we do utilise a lot of overseas styles which are relevant fashion trends for the season.*

9. As a visual merchandiser in the South African retail industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your apparel?

*I have a **partial** role in presentation of my work. This is fundamental and I have a very "hands on" approach. There is a team at head office and workshops are conducted. There is a process of printing and producing visual booklets which are distributed to all*



*stores for the visual merchandiser to copy and create universal “looks” within countrywide stores.*

10. There are many issues confronting fashion designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

- 1. Cost issues, with staff shortages; some stores are unable to follow principles due to time constraints.*
- 2. Communications gap which creates a missing link and therefore changes cannot happen.*
- 3. Creativity, there is so much that could be done but your “hands are tied”.*

11. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*No, both are merging into one and influence surroundings. We work closely together with art and design.*

12. Have any of your clothing ranges or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*No, we have not been able to do this in the visual merchandising department but the other departments are involved in outreach projects.*

13. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*I disagree as Mr Price is for the majority of the market and this concept only really applies to a niche market about 10% across the population. Our store provides for the entire nation hence is very commercial and fashion orientated.*

**Kathrin Kidger: Fashion Designer: Reine studio, Florida road, Durban.**

**23 February 2010**

1. How would you describe your style and approach to your work?

*Organic, relevant and high commerciality to maintain my design ethos.*

2. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration?

*I use overseas sources but in a South African context.*

3. In your opinion are there retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local fashion.

*The Space stores have been innovative for many years. Retail outlets need to address their "shell" of a shop display.*

4. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores?

*Partially, I am afraid that not enough is being done and in a cheap manner. This is very sad as there are huge resources to call on and manipulate. The problem is that there is no money outlay for retail stores. When any issues are raised there is limited guarantee of choice and the threat of competition.*

5. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays?

1. *Indigenous*

2. *Innovation*

3. *Creativity*

6. Do your designs incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.

*Partially, as this depends on the client and the design of the garment. The clients are generally conservative but tolerate some intermingling of influences.*

7. Which three major elements in your clothing designs do you consider the public identify most with?

*The public identifies with the colour, fit, innovation and fabrics of my apparel.*

8. Do you think that in the South African fashion industry, local images and symbols are well represented?

***Partially***

9. As a fashion designer in the South African retail industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions, and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your apparel?

***Partial***, as I outsource and have a manager to oversee displays so I have little or no involvement in this area.

10. There are many issues confronting fashion designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

1. *Lack of support by the South African fashion industry.*
2. *There are selected serious buyers and the industry is not helping to foster small fashion businesses.*
3. *Design and business background is missing when running a business; there is no help, sharing of information or acceptance into the circle of business.*

11. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

***No***

12. Who is the target market for your clothing in local retail stores?

*Ladies from age 25 to 45, moderate markets. Generally mums or young women who are attending functions are frequent clients to the store.*

13. Are your prices market-sensitive? Please explain

*Money talks, the more numbers that sell, the better the business. There has to be a balance with different scopes and the awareness that the garment must be wearable.*

14. Have any of your clothing ranges or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*No, I have not been approached but have indirectly helped the Sunflower Foundation.*

15. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*I fully agree and support your endeavours but the idea must be sustainable. We have such a rich diversity that such influence would draw people into stores. People love to identify with things and emotional security plays a big part in spending, if one can relate to something one is more likely to buy it.*

**Garth Walker: Graphic Designer: Mister Walker design studio, Durban**

**13 October 2009**

1. How long have you been involved in the applied design industry?

*I have been involved in the art world since 1976 when I attended Art school in Durban.*

2. How would you describe your style and approach to your work?

*I develop the idea and then utilise tools available from my studio.*

3. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*This depends on the job description and the client. Most of the sources are local but there are also international sources such as London culture.*

4. In your opinion, are there any design studios in Durban which successfully support local art and design?

*Most of the studios support local design but it depends on the skills provided by the company.*

5. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores?

*Partially as most of the stores sell garments that are imported from China although there is a move to promote South African fashion and textiles.*

6. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?

1. *To actually create a display.*

2. *Make the window "an object of wonder" that is relevant to our South African context.*

3. *Create opportunities for creative expression through the form of window displays.*

7. Does your artwork incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.

*Yes, I enjoy utilising a cross section and "mix" of influences.*

8. Which three major elements in your artwork do you consider the public identify most with?

1. *The local and international “mix” of sources and imagery.*
2. *The South African language represented through artworks and graphics.*
3. *The work that is subversive making it appealing to a wide audience.*

9. Do you think that in the South African art industry, local images and symbols are well represented?

*Partially, I feel that artists and other professionals are “lazy” to create new and interesting concepts. I describe the use of “recycling” imagery continuously.*

10. As a graphic artist in the South African design industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your artwork?

*Full control as I am the owner of Mister Walker and like to be present at all personal exhibitions.*

11. There are many issues confronting graphic designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

1. *The graphic business is not considered a professional occupation.*
2. *The lack of exposure on global design trends.*
3. *Lost skills with the “brain drain” from South Africa to overseas employment (London).*

12. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*Yes and no as they are different but have similar attributes.*

13. Who is the target market for your graphic services and *Ijusi* magazine?

*My graphic services are aimed at commercial clients and receive an income from jobs completed. The *Ijusi* magazine is a personal project aimed at the public interested in design.*

14. Are your prices market-sensitive? Please explain.

*Durban is very price conscious. Cape Town and Johannesburg are less sensitive in this regard. When dealing with the overseas market, foreign currency works in the favour of local companies.*

15. Have any of your artworks or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

***Partially** as I have provided workshops for students through the graphic department at Durban University of Technology.*

16. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*I **fully agree** and definitely feel that displays need to reflect the South African multi-cultural society.*

**Megan Andrews: Manager/Visual Merchandiser: Woolworths, Gateway Theatre of Shopping Umhlanga, Durban**

**15 April 2010**

1. How would you describe your style and approach to your visual work? Please could you describe a basic brief?

*Structured, edgy and fashion forward. There are guidelines and deadlines within our structures and we operate on a local communication system. There is an importance placed on high productivity within stores.*

2. Do you construct images in the visual displays using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*Head office dictates visual themes although we often have South African models, ambassadors and international stars featured in our advertising campaigns such as Alex Wek.*

3. Is the budget for visual merchandising sufficient and how often do the displays change?

*Head office also dictates the budget and allows a small account for props and paint. The windows can be changed weekly, seasonally, during sales or special occasions such as Christmas.*

4. In your opinion are there retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local fashion?

*“Twist” brand at Woolworths, YDE and Truworths with their range “Ginger Mary”.*

5. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores? Please give the names of stores, if any.

*Fully as visuals and posters “speak” to the consumer and describe who made the clothing for example a local fashion designer, Maya Press. Within the posters there is a photograph and short description of the designer. Woolworths tries to support the African theme as at present Woolworths is celebrating the World Cup in all stores.*

6. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?



1. *Local charity such as the My School Card donates a small percentage to the underprivileged in society.*
  2. *Encourage and adopt environmentally friendly products.*
  3. *Animal anti-cruelty/welfare.*
7. Do your designs incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.  
*Yes, Woolworths has a good balance of influences and has taken all the markets into consideration. Child models are even multi-cultural and the international stars such as Alex Wek.*
8. Which three major elements in Woolworth's designs do you consider the public identify most with?  
*1. Quality.*  
*2. Value and producing fashion forward apparel.*  
*3. Service and passion.*
9. Do you think that in the South African fashion industry, local images and symbols are well represented?  
***Fully agree** as the actual South African designer's garments are sold in-store and are well advertised.*
10. As a visual merchandiser in the South African retail industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions, and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of the apparel?  
*I play a **partial** role in presentation. There is a team of employees who work on the visual displays start to finish. We are involved in the standards, time allowance, follow up and feedback reports. The whole department of visual mechanising drives the brand image.*
11. There are many issues confronting visual merchandisers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.  
*1. Budget due to the recession.*  
*2. Skilled, motivated and experienced merchandisers.*

3. *Enticing and appealing to a broad range of the public countrywide. The appeal must be easy to manipulate with different looks, fashion and knowledge of the consumer.*

12. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*No, they go hand in hand. A person needs to be creative to develop ideas and concepts.*

13. Have any of your clothing ranges or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*Yes, Woolworths supports local incentives with recycled plastic, organic cotton and limited abuse of animals in manufacturing. The example of the silkworm, once the silk is removed the manufacturers do not kill the silkworm after it has produced silk.*

14. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*I fully agree, fashion can move forward. Woolworths supports diversity and operates according to the motto "working together". It is important to innovate, improve quality and style through brand image.*

**Andrew Verster: Fine Artist: Personal home and studio, Musgrave road, Durban.**

**15 October 2009**

1. How long have you been involved in the art industry?

*Forever... Initially I was lecturing and could not maintain two jobs with commissions. I retired from lecturing and become a freelance artist.*

2. How would you describe your style and approach to your work?

*I do not like to give people labels. I am not arrogant in my style and have very little philosophy in my approach; I construct artworks out of happiness.*

3. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*I believe that everything is "knitted". There is the question of what is "local?" Fabrics and art material are sourced from many avenues including overseas examples. It also depends on the context and the aim of project but there is the influence of a broader more international source of inspiration. I am able to make my own interpretation and support both local and international sources.*

4. In your opinion, are there any art galleries in Durban which successfully support local art?

*Galleries are constructed to "fit in" and they make their own connection with local people and art.*

5. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores?

***Partially** as gradually South Africa is becoming more confident and growing all the time. The 2010 focus has allowed a lot of special events to happen and support local cultures. The tourists look for something local. It is only the beginning but there is much hope for our country.*

6. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?

*1. Confidence: we can be deliberately different and have our own style.*

2. *Style labels: instinctively local is a good incentive especially in our Renaissance period, where local people, material, resources and technicians develop their skills.*
  3. *Collaboration: I take part in many projects and work with other professionals in their trades.*
7. Does your artwork incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.  
*Yes, this is useful for isolation and absorption of different influences.*
8. Do you think that in the South African art industry, local images and symbols are well represented?  
*I fully agree as we do not use only local and there are many foreign images such as the diverse Musgrave Shopping centre. Today there is the “global village” with a multitude of images, symbols and art forms.*
9. As an artist in the South African art industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions, and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your artwork?  
*I play a **partial role** in presentation. Artists know their limitations and allow the curator to select suitable artworks. An example is the curator at NSA gallery, Brendon Maart. He chooses and edits work and can even reject pieces for an exhibition. The professionals know how to plan the space and create conversations between works. Curators are the “boss” and have the most expertise; otherwise I outsource framing and hanging works.*
10. There are many issues confronting artists. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.
1. *Be yourself, above all, it is paramount to have your own knowledge and it will not be a regret to act as yourself.*
  2. *Be open to influences.*
  3. *Do not be afraid of criticism. Have a strong opinion and make sure that you are able to justify it. Believe intuitively rather than intellectually with real feelings and try not judge others.*
  4. *I draw a lot of value from the book “Shape of content” by Ben Shahn.*

11. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*No, everything functions together and has been since the Victorian age. Crafts and the media are interlinked and the reader must choose the most appropriate practice.*

12. Who is the target market for your art in local art galleries?

*I have no idea as I have little knowledge in marketing and selling. Marketing people help me sell my artworks.*

13. Are your prices market-sensitive? Please explain.

*Set by other people and over time, the price is able to increase with more experience. It depends on the age and experience of the artist. Young people often make the prices too high and not affordable. The trick is to keep the cost as low as possible.*

14. Have any of your artworks or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*Yes, I have been involved in many projects. I wish to have sustainability and raise expectations.*

*I work together with other artists such as Andries Botha. We hire a team of African workers and train them in a skill; this in turn generates an income for them. We approach roadside curio makers that sell existing hand crafted artworks to the public. We sponsor work and conduct business in a professional manner with deadlines and high quality of craftsmanship. The latest pieces are totem wooden poles at the Moses Madiba Stadium and this was a collective effort with a team of expert artists.*

15. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*Yes, I **fully agree**, we must try and make shops as local as possible. This idea is slightly questionable as it is difficult to determine what people want. Some people do not know what they want to be, local or Westernised. This is a good idea and it allows people to “come together” and create a “vehicle” for creativity. The only problem is that to place people in “boxes” is not necessarily a good solution.*

**Janina Masojada: Architect at OMM Design Studio: Architectural company: Florida road, Durban.**

**5 March 2010**

1. How would you describe your style and approach to your work?

*The approach does not have to be sophisticated or expensive to be successful. Our aim is that people would come and utilise the building seamlessly and elicit a good response from a broad range of the public. Our style is not to be autocratic, imposing or all powerful.*

2. Do you construct architectural buildings using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*The issue is "What is the purpose of the design?" this must be clearly defined. The sources are important and what is generated by behaviour, feelings and experience.*

3. Do you think that in the South African design industry, local images and symbols are well represented?

***Partially** as our current project is an example of South African local design and concerns the construction of pre-cast concrete panels in diverse scales which takes on a different identity and is able to connect to current culture.*

*South African people are more confident and have reason to use local images and cultural meanings, although it is difficult to transport symbols from one context to another. This can be compared to the foreign mass-produced Tuscan architecture with no link to local surroundings. In architecture there is the problem of being too literal with symbols such as a traditional bee-hive hut. It is only effective when the idea is conceptual. You have to ask "What defines a shop window, a space, a pane of glass to connect it to the world?"*

4. In your opinion, are there any buildings in Durban which successfully incorporate sources of a South African identity? Please provide examples and a description.

*The buildings need to respond to the surrounding environments and become effective concepts. There must be the appropriate relocation of images and symbols. In architecture surface decoration affects people's behaviour, mood and feelings more than the building structure. There is the transport of imported cultures such as "Disneyland" to create a "make-believe" world. We try to avoid this and respond more to the*

*topography and climate of the area. The familiar can be turned into contemporary objects without being dislocated. We can become more conscious of our heritage. The traditional is being affected by technology and new meaning will emerge. If this concept is built around our local context, our overall identity emerges.*

5. There are many issues confronting architects. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

*1. Environmental responsiveness.*

*2. Sustainability and permeability.*

*3. Technology which should respond to the environment such as heating and cooling systems, materials and the local climate.*

6. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*No, definitely one and the same thing, they are involved in the same thinking process. In architecture it is sometimes difficult to have both sources due to commercial restrictions.*

7. Besides the Constitutional Court, which of your buildings have been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*The court is an iconic building and a reflection of who we are.*

*The court was built in conjunction with an artworks programme involving a range of artists and crafters. There was the collaboration and participation of many people and everybody contributed their artistic value to the transformation of the building.*

*Our principle at OMM design is very community driven. Pre 1994-developmental areas had little or no participation in infrastructural projects. Now local people are involved and structures cater for their needs. The example of the Cato Manor community development with participation from the design of the brief to building and training resulted in a successful outcome. The new government plays a strong role in non-governmental organisations. It must be community grass roots driven and I can argue that the right level of participation is essential and impacts on the area.*

*Early morning market in Durban city, there must be an effective understanding of the local trade and facilitation of the development of the city. People must “come together” to form a “matrix” and make it sustainable and create structures to be responsible and take charge of the surroundings.*

8. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*I fully agree as the market keeps changing with merging economies. To cross-reference is important, as you are able to identify with cultural opportunities at low and high levels, thus ensuring exposure.*



**Renato Palmi: Fashion Consultant, Researcher and Lecturer: Linea Academy,  
Durban.**

**15 November 2009**

1. How long have you been involved in the art industry?

*I have been in research for six to seven years and in the fashion industry since 2006.*

2. How would you describe your style and approach to your research?

*I have a “hands on” approach and academic method to research. I evaluate, correct and create a vision on all aspects.*

3. In your opinion are there any retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local art and fashion? Please provide examples and a description.

*The Space, YDE, their stores are more exciting, are mutating and evolving with their brand names. There is the issue of cash flow and sustainability; the designs also need to come together under an “umbrella” collaboration.*

4. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores?

*Partially, as South Africa is not homogenous and we have a mix of identities. There is often a story that needs to be interpreted. Unlike other countries, Durban in particular lacks a fashion district.*

5. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?

*1. More exciting and creative.*

*2. There must be that attraction to make the viewer look at the window.*

*3. There is little interaction; local designs could incorporate live models or moving mannequins.*

6. Does your research incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.

*Partially, as it depends on the paper and the interpretation of culture and “what is it?” I try and encourage consumer education and discuss perspectives on topics in the fashion*

*and textile industry. People do not know what they are wearing and there is the need to create awareness. The fashion trend such as the Palestine scarf which is related to sensitive, violent and controversial beliefs. Like the scarf, I discuss influences, politics and consequences in clothing, manufacturing and the textiles industry.*

*I examine techniques such as “Cause related marketing” and current examples in society such as the brand “Levis”. A company which supports Aids campaigns and becomes a social tool of support.*

7. Do you think that in the South African art industry, local images and symbols are well represented?

***Partially** as this is generally for the niche market but must be ethnically merchandised so not to exploit the original artists. Tourist locations such as 1000 Hills sells crafts and the local Zulu culture in a “story” format for easy understanding. To create indigenous style and incorporate all mediums in South Africa art is important in our globalised world.*

8. There are many issues confronting researchers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

- 1. Sustainability in building relationships. In the department of public relations it is an essential tool for growth. There is the lack of finance and background knowledge for designers.*
- 2. Evaluations should take place every year. Sales need to be evaluated; the economy and buying power of retailers needs to be checked.*
- 3. Gatekeeping because of a lack of interest, research, benefits, timing, opportunities and engagement must be able to maintain the reputation, accountability and reliability of the business.*
- 4. Another pertinent issue is that South African fashion week has ceased to exist in Durban due to lack of sponsorship. The participation and goals should be constructed to create other opportunities.*

9. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

***Partially** as they merge but are slightly different, both are used in collaborative projects. Partnerships, language and cultural barriers sometimes prevent both practices.*

10. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*Yes, I **fully agree**, there is a need to draw attention to multi-cultural aspects in society, showcase fashion and provide education on culture.*

**Greg Wallis: Fashion Designer and Consultant: Studio and factory, Umbilo, Durban.**

**19 October 2009**

1. How long have you been involved in the fashion industry?

*I have been in the industry for 37 years.*

2. How would you describe your style and approach to your work?

*I have a very diverse approach including ladies wear incorporating the youth to mature women. I also create styles for menswear from 16 to 25 years of age. I cater for different markets and enjoy a challenge.*

3. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*I use both sources as I generally travel three to four times a year. My business tries to manufacture and source locally but a lot of fabrics and production derive from the East.*

4. In your opinion are there retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local fashion? Please provide examples.

*Identity, Truworths, Milady's and YDE.*

5. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores? Please give the names of stores, if any.

*Partially as Truworths has an ethnic orientated range called "Ginger Mary". There is a niche market for ethnic European styled garments although international brands such as "Topshop" have a love affair with African cultures. The problem is that large retail stores do not give a chance for space for a viable local proposition.*

6. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?

1. *A trend of local design which is not fragmented but has a distinct ethnic portrayal.*

2. *More intriguing shop displays such as an example I viewed at the Gateway shopping complex. The mannequin's heads were able to turn thus making the window a more interesting clothing-inspired exhibition space.*

3. *People who see the value of local design. I assist fourteen students every Friday and take them to printers, manufacturers and art exhibitions. The students are interested in creating proper design concepts with a high degree of ethnicity.*
7. Do your designs incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.  
*Yes, our clothing factory supplies a large racial group. Our mature range is directed and constructed for black, white and coloured customers. There are mini collections within collections to cater for different needs but the racial boundaries are merging. We cater for the Indian men in "Identity" ranges with small sizing such as xx small, as generally the Indian youth have small builds. The males have hollow backs and small chest measurements unlike the white and black men who fit a larger sizing bracket. I am very aware of the cross-cultural elements such as the above with my background in the fashion industry.*
8. Which three major elements in your clothing designs do you consider the public identify most with?
1. *Fabric*
  2. *Price is crucial and the garments will not sell if the price point (the standard price set by the manufacturer for a product) is not correct. The market is very sensitive regarding price; if the price is "overstepped" the apparel will not sell.*
  3. *Fit*  
*When I travel overseas I always think of a specific need in mind. The fabric, colour, fit, for whom and at what price? These elements are critical for my business.*
9. Do you think that in the South African fashion industry, local images and symbols are well represented?  
***Partially***
10. As a fashion designer in the South African art industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions, and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your apparel?  
***Full control.*** *This is a major issue and I provide workshops and enhance presentation skills for students. It is important to have the correct presentation/display to create reason*

*to buy and promote the apparel. When providing the garments it is paramount to “bunch” clothing correctly for the buyers.*

11. There are many issues confronting fashion designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

*1. Finances. Ordering from China can be problematic with the fluctuating dollar. The money spent on ordering can be lost and creates a huge difference in costing.*

*2. Availability of the correct cloth. The example is that fully-fashioned jerseys are only available in the East and are important value-added goods.*

*3. Fluctuating rand can cause loss of orders.*

12. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*Yes, I recently took my students to an art exhibition by Andrew Verster and it was interesting to see what they came up with, incorporating fashion design and art.*

13. Have any of your clothing ranges or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*I try and conduct outreach all of the time. I have associations with Ifa Lethu, Moza Moya, Hillcrest Aids Centre, South Africa Institute of Style, Feed the Babies, Linea Academy and helping local students. I express my views and knowledge and do not charge. I present what I feel and know as I have spent many years in the industry and am on familiar terms with the majority of people in business. I enjoy being very involved in the community.*

14. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*Yes, I **fully agree** and feel that displays are archaic and tired. A trend toward local design with the help of publicity should be considered. There is a lack of assistance from the media or in the other case bad publicity with little follow-up.*

## ONLINE INTERVIEWS

**Karen Monk-Klijnstra: Fashion Designer: Kloof retail store, Durban.**

**2 November 2009**

1. How long have you been involved in the fashion industry?

*I have been an active fashion designer since 1990 when I began my studies and have been in the industry for nearly twenty years.*

2. How would you describe your style and approach to your work?

*I describe myself as “Outrageous, daring, decadent, always up for the challenge!”*

3. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*I must explain that I have little disposable time when I am busy at work. I work with what is closest to me, thus my works are supremely local.*

4. In your opinion are there retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local fashion? Please provide examples and a description.

*Yes there are, but retail stores are few and far between! Unfortunately most work on a consignment basis and this is not always the best way for an emerging designer needing the financial income. A local example is “The Space” which is a local retail outlet on a rail rent/consignment basis.*

5. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores? Please give the names of stores, if any.

*Partially. Woolworths, Karen Monk Klijnstra and Big Blue.*

6. What three ideas would you like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays, and why?

*1. Community based projects/design. Nothing inspires more than upliftment.*

*2. Childlike displays filled with colour and excitement. Think of what moved you as a child: it stays with you forever.*

3. *Local products, surely if stores display local, people will feel inclined to support local and therefore cheap Chinese will slowly phase out!*
7. Do your designs incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.  
*Yes, I have always been drawn by the concept of a multi-cultural identity. My work has a flamboyant use of colour, texture and pattern. I love craft and handwork and this is found largely in national costumes. South Africa has the unique make up of many varying cultures and having grown up here and lived in big and small towns, my penchant for mixing various styles "a` la urban tribe" was honed.*
8. Which three major elements in your clothing designs do you consider the public identify most with?  
*Colour, pattern and texture! I think I have been accused even of owning a bohemian look! I know most people think I am insane and swim upstream as though it were normal.*
9. Do you think that in the South African fashion industry, local images and symbols are well represented?  
*Partially as we are developing a national pride that is not race specific and it is really one of the few things for which a democratic South Africa can be proud. Think MK on Dstv, think rugby and soccer advertisements and the Woolworths instore advertising campaign. However, there is still a massive reliance on popular culture from abroad. Sometimes this is not a bad thing; at least we can boast that we are international.*
10. As a fashion designer in the South African art industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions, and what role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your apparel?  
*Full control, unless approached and otherwise arranged.*
11. There are many issues confronting fashion designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.
1. *Working capital and cash flow.*
  2. *Time, specifically needing private clients to sustain my commercial business.*



3. *That your customer does not necessarily have taste or intelligence even though they may have disposable income.*

12. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*Yes, although they do work “hand in hand”, design requires logic,chutzpah and a natural tenacity. Artists rarely make money, designers are driven to.*

13. Who is the target market for your clothing in local retail stores?

*Youth of every culture and the eternally youthful aged.*

14. Are your prices market-sensitive? Please explain.

*Yes, they have to be in-store! However private bookings come at a higher price as not only are they time-consuming and draining, but also tap into one’s intellectual property—something unfortunately not well understood by the ignorant.*

15. Have any of your clothing ranges or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*Yes. I support many charities and am a pushover in these instances as my heart is overwhelmed by the plight of those who suffer on any level. I have been blessed with the creative capability of design and have had many opportunities because of that. When I feel disillusioned all I do is think of all I have done in my career and all I do everyday and the recognition I have received. To put it in perspective, one needs to say there but for the grace of God go I. Hillcrest Aids Centre, The Sunflower Fund, Feed The Babies and SPCA.*

**Pieter de Groot: Retail Graphic Designer: London.**

**December 2009**

1. How long have you been involved in the fashion or art industry?

*Six years.*

2. How would you describe your position and style in the current art and fashion industry?

*I am a firm believer in originality with an individual approach.*

3. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration?

*The sources and imagery depend entirely on the brief.*

4. Are there any shops in Durban that you consider unique and what do you purchase there?

*Don't really know Durban but have always been a fan of Amanda Laird Cherry designs.*

5. What do you think are the major concerns facing the South Africa fashion industry?

*Copying overseas fashion and the illusion that South Africa cannot compete on an international fashion platform. This illusion stops the designers and the South African fashion industry from pushing themselves harder.*

6. As an artist in the South African fashion and/or art industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions. What is your role in the design of the final display?

*Execute it to approved concept and technical requirements of the client.*

7. What do you consider to be leading issues concerning exhibiting artists in South Africa today?

*Don't know enough about the art industry.*

8. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local retail stores?

*Woolworths does it quite well, you can see who they are "talking to" but the rest do it poorly.*

9. What are the identities or issues that you would like to see represented in South African fashion retail window displays and why?

*Retail is about sales; South African retailers make a lot of money by marketing their products through mostly poor and unoriginal advertising campaigns and tools. This works for them because the South African mass market is visually illiterate. I would like to see retailers upping their game when it comes to visual communication and concepts. This would enable the design industry to compete on a more international level and so educate the general public. We have so much more to draw on in this country than copying international advertising and fashion.*

10. Is there any specific style of signage, features that you think should be added to shop fronts?

*Depends on the brand.*

11. Describe elements which assist customers to identify with the particular quality and nature of the artworks that you produce.

*Creative integrity.*

12. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*Not really.*

13. Who is the target market for your art in local stores/art galleries?

*Visually illiterate people who appreciate ideas.*

14. Do your customers buy by brand or are they driven by cost?

*Depends on the brand.*

15. Does your artwork incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.

*Depends on the brief.*

16. Have any of your artworks or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

**No**

17. In principle, would you agree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society, if they were to incorporate images and symbols from different cultures. Please explain.

*Of course, we have so much to work with in South Africa and therefore can reach a variety of target markets.*

**Sandra Burke: Fashion Author: Australia.**

**18 February 2010**

1. How would you describe your style and approach to your work?

*I write academic books for an international market. I use a straightforward writing style to deliver a step-by-step approach, highlighting the key tools, techniques and skills that are required internationally by students/graduates to enter the fashion industry.*

*Through direct contact and interviews with universities and the fashion industry internationally, and market research (primary and secondary research), I follow the international fashion courses' curriculum and the requirements of the fashion industry. I always make the books as illustrative as possible to include illustrations and designs from graduates and professionals worldwide as well as using illustrated diagrams and tables.*

2. Do you construct images using primarily South African or overseas sources for inspiration? Please elaborate.

*See above*

3. In your opinion are there retail outlets in Durban which successfully support local fashion? Please provide examples and a description.

*This is hard for me to be too specific as I am only in Durban for a short while, but I have seen several stores on my travels endeavoring to do this.*

4. To what extent do you feel specific South African cultural identities are represented in imagery in local design?

***Partially**, this is because you have to look at the market, Will it sell? Who is the customer? Internationally most people, rich and poor, from young kids to grandmothers, and great grannies, on the whole want to look a little bit fashionable. Example: I was touring through Zimbabwe about ten years ago now, and even some of the poorest people I met recognised that I had a cap with a Tick on it, very similar to the Nike. They would happily have traded the cap for their most outstanding carvings.*

5. Do your designs incorporate cross-cultural influences? Please explain.

*Partially, this is because fashion design is all about “looking good” and partly the role of other influences. Inspiration for new trends can be sourced from history, technology, fabrics and cultures.*

6. Do you think that in the South African fashion industry, local images and symbols are well represented?

*Partially, when designing for a particular market you always need to think of your customer and depending on what the design is for. An example, the Soccer World Cup being held in South Africa this July will mean that there will be visual references to the South African flag and South African symbolism placed on clothing.*

7. As a designer in the South African art industry, you are involved in the presentation of displays/exhibitions. What role, if any, do you play in the presentation of your products/books?

*Full control or as much as is feasibly possible.*

8. There are many issues confronting fashion designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

*a. Knowing what the customer needs and wants.*

*b. The green/eco friendly aspect.*

*c. Keeping up to date with the latest technologies and trends.*

9. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

*No - Art and design influence each other.*

10. Who is the target market for your books in local stores?

*See response to question 1.*

11. Have any of your clothing and design books or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*Partially, not specifically outreach, but I have donated for charity to help young people with Aids and the under-privileged in society.*

12. In principle, would you fully agree/ partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*I partially agree as from what I have seen, I think on the whole they do display such when they can, and when appropriate - again it depends on the current trends and what the customer wants. There could be a market for enterprising groups to start up a few more cultural/ethnic focussed fashion stores/markets perhaps for the tourist industry with money to spend, and would like the traditional element, but also require the fashion element so they can still wear the garments when they get back home. This needs to be well researched, as it is so important to get foot traffic to the stores so location is vital. And this brings me back to the customer, the wants and needs and what they will buy. If you have no customers, there is no business!*

## TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

**Dion Chang: Fashion Consultant and Trend Analyst: Johannesburg.**

**10 September 2009**

1. What are the major design trends in the industry/the arts?

*The latest 2010 Trend book covers this area. There is a crisis at the moment with values and perceptions. The book considers a more empathetic way of looking at sustainability and unnecessary wastage that affects all areas of design. In South Africa the concept of ubuntu is the bedrock of South African culture.*

*There is the trend of trying to slow down the design cycle which is very rapid and changes every six months such as the retail store Mr Price. The “fast and disposable” is popular with regard to design and products such as cellphones and laptops. There is the response to simplify if products are not practical. In the East, there is the simplification in art and design especially in appliances.*

2. There are many issues confronting fashion designers. Name the three which are most pertinent to you.

- a. *Sustainability in the economy is not just a fad. It is increasingly apparent and cannot be ignored. It is very important to deal with sustainability using imagery and resources.*

- b. *Presentation and an empathetic economy. A shift away from profit at all cost. Major shifts need to become ethical and transparent by forward thinking and embracing the ideals and principals such as Bill Gates and Richard Branson.*

- c. *Technology is essential and a curveball in marketing, advertising and the media. Word of mouth using the latest technology is a very strong communication tool through “tribe to tribe” using “Twitter” “Facebook” and “Youtube”.*

3. Do you think art and design are two different practices?

***Partially.** This is a difficult question. The example is that people speak to others differently: the influence of technology and the imagination. All these elements speak on a different level.*



4. Have any of your clothing ranges or commissioned pieces been produced as part of a community outreach project? Please elaborate.

*No, I present suggestions to corporates and develop outreach programmes: how to conduct business which is not just a market ploy but for the improvement of lives and business structures.*

5. In principle, would you fully agree/partially agree/disagree that fashion store displays would be attractive to our multi-cultural society if they were to incorporate images, art and symbols from different cultures? Please explain.

*I **fully agree** as marketing is a large part of store design to attract the mass market. It is important to speak to “tribes” and the “pick and mix” identity of South Africa.*

*Brands have ceased to define people as they did about five years ago. There is the change that products are able to say a lot about individuals. In society there are many social networks and communication boundaries are dissolving. Like-minded people are migrating towards each other, allowing people to be lumped together under a “blanket” of common likes in people. Technology is faster and communication is easy so it has become more difficult to target these complex markets.*

*Western ideals and economic indicators show shifts in the world. The steady rise of imports with China, India, Korea and the Eastern side of the planet have taken a powerful economic shift.*

**APPENDIX D**  
**KATHRIN KIDGER'S RESPONSE TO THE WINDOW DISPLAY**  
**INSTALLATION IN HER STORE**

Dear Kathrin

May 2011

1. Are you pleased or not in reference to the following aspects? (found in the conclusion of my study)
  - Flamboyant use of colour, texture and pattern
  - Craft and handwork
  - Creative integrity
  - A trend of local design which is not fragmented but has a distinct ethnic portrayal
  - Design which supports local products
  - Cultural diversity as well as indigenous trends
  - A South African “vernacular” represented through artworks and graphics
  - Innovation, and improving quality and style through brand image
  - Interpretations which support both local and international sources
  - Inspiration for new trends which is sourced from history, technology, fabrics and cultures.

*I am very pleased in reference to all these aspects. The integrity of our brand was maintained in all design aspects and was a point of conversation with clients and staff alike. I think the hardest aspect that you managed to achieve fairly effortlessly was combining international sources in your design content, yet still making it design-friendly to our existing clientele.*

One of the quotations from my research reveals that shop window displays should be integral to the store image and not “just an expensive nicety”.

Do you feel that this was achieved?

*This exercise has made me realise that window displays are extremely important in getting clients in and not just an “expensive nicety”. We have had people ordering off the display drops even. Many people have remarked on how interesting the shop looks with the new décor. Bigger retailers inevitably have more money at their disposal for window dressing on an on-going basis, but Sarah has made me realise that investing a little more money in décor and window displays can go a long way in assisting sales and brand interest.*