



Alexander Opper

BIGSAS Junior Fellow

Academic vita

Since 04/2017	Junior Fellow at BIGSAS
Since 2016	Director of the undergraduate degree programme (BArch), Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA), Dept. of Architecture, University of Johannesburg, South Africa
2015	Establishment and running of UNIT 1: Architecture and Infrastructure – Learning from Main Reef Road, part of UJ/FADA/Architecture’s two-year master’s programme (under the banner of Unit System Africa), University of Johannesburg, South Africa
2010 – 2014	Designer (2010) and Director of the Architecture Master’s programme, FADA, Dept. of Architecture, Bunting Road Campus, Auckland Park, Johannesburg, South Africa
2007 – 2010	Senior Lecturer at FADA, Dept. of Architecture, University of Johannesburg, South Africa
1997 – 2001	Master of Architecture (MARCH) with Distinction, University of the Arts (UdK), Berlin, Germany
1991 – 1993	Bachelor of Architectural Studies (BAS), School of Architecture and Planning, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Professional experience

2017	Establishment and running of ELECTIVE 5: Landscapes of Worship: The Architectures of Belief and Belonging, Johannesburg, South Africa
2007 – 2012	Establishment and directorship of 'Notion Architects'
2006	Professional registration with the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (Pr Arch 20611)
1994 – 2007	Freelancing for a large range of architecture and design firms in Sout Africa and Germany

Publications

- Opper, Alexander (2016). Derrière les panneaux publicitaires/Behind the Billboards. In: *Critical Addresses. The Archive-in-Practice*. L. Farber & C. Jorgensen (eds.). Johannesburg: Jacana Media. 111-122. | [pdf](#)
- Opper, Alexander (2015). Public Art/Private Lives: The Making of 'Hotel Yeoville'. In: *Museum Transformations (Volume 4 (of a 4-volume publication), Part 3 (Museum Experiments))*. A. E. Coombes & R. B. Phillips (eds.). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell. 439-470. | [pdf](#)
- Opper, Alexander (2015). About Time, (Or: Typological Transfers and the Case of Johannesburg’s Gas Works as an Evolution from Exploitative Industrial Machine, to No-man’s Land, to a Singular Chance to Realise an Inclusive Urban Future). In: *The Johannesburg Gas*



Works. M. Läuferts le Roux & J. Mavunganidze (eds.). Johannesburg: Fourthwall Books. 79-90. | [pdf](#)

- Opper, Alexander (2014). Recognising and Revealing the Public in the Photographic Constructions of Lard Buurman. In: *Africa Junctions. Capturing the City*. L. Buurman (ed.). Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz. 206-212. | [pdf](#)
- Opper, Alexander (2014). Spaces of Archival Slippage and [...] Things [...] not necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art. In: *The Fabric of Matter. The Matter of Fabric*. A. Pauls (ed.). Stuttgart: Akademie Schloss Solitude. 1-16. | [pdf](#)
- Opper, Alexander (2013). Ways of belonging. In: *Hotel Yeoville*. B. Law-Viljoen (ed.). Johannesburg: Fourthwall Books. 65-80. | [pdf](#)
- Opper, Alexander (2010). The Art of being Public. *Art South Africa Vol. 09* (02, Summer). 44-49. | [pdf](#)
- Opper, Alexander (2010). Undoing Architecture. In: *On Making: Integrating Approaches to Practice-Led Research in Art and Design (International colloquium held at FADA, UJ. 15-16 Oct 2009)*. L. Farber (ed.). Johannesburg: FADA, UJ. 183-208. | [pdf](#)
- Opper, Alexander (2010). Creating meaning in architecture and furniture design in a South African context: searching for interdisciplinary lessons between two disciplines. In: *Imaging Ourselves: Visual Identities in Representation (International conference held at FADA, UJ. 15 Jun 2009)*. L. Farber (ed.). Johannesburg: FADA, UJ. 48-71. | [pdf](#)

Conference contributions

- 2017: "Undoing the Artist's Book" - Booknesses Book Arts Colloquium: Taking Stock of the Book Arts in South Africa (International colloquium at FADA, UJ), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2015: "Derrière les panneaux publicitaires (Behind the Billboards)" - Viaduct 2015 - Archival Addresses: Photographies, Practices, Positionalities (International platform at FADA, UJ), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2014: "Separ(n)ation" - 16th ACASA Triennial Symposium on African Art, Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA.
- 2013: "Assessing pedagogical outcomes: Some reflections on Productive 'Leakage' and the 'Folding' of the Studio into the Field" - URBAN LAB+. The Laboratory approach to Built-Environment Education, Johannesburg Colloquium, Wits (School of Architecture and Planning), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2013: "'Folding' the Studio into the Field: Some Lessons learned and shared, between Johannesburg & São Paulo" - IBSA Working Group on Human Settlements (IBSA WGHS), Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Pretoria (live simulcast between Pretoria/Cape Town/Durban), South Africa.
- 2013: "Informal Studio: Marlboro South, Johannesburg, South Africa" with Anne Graupner (26'10 south Architects) - Baukulturwerkstatt. Weltstadt - Stadtwelten, Deutsches Architektur Zentrum (DAZ), Berlin, Germany.
- 2011: "(Not) Everything counts in large amounts: Dusty Realism and the productive 'archive' of the in between" - Synthetic Dirt, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.
- 2011: "Landscapes and Trajectories of Displacement: Finding Place in Hotel Yeoville" - SAVAH Conference (Other Views: Art histories in (South) Africa and the Global South), Wits, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2009: "Undoing Architecture" - On Making: Integrating Approaches to Practice-Led Research in Art and Design, FADA, UJ, International colloquium, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2007: "The Physical Relocation of Cultural Memory and the Political Dislocation of History through Architecture" - Second International Conference of the Arts in Society, Kassel, Germany.



Solo exhibits

- 2015 Uitval: Unfolded. Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). Johannesburg, South Africa. 04-26 March.
- 2013 Separ(n)ation. Goethe on Main. Johannesburg, South Africa. 24 Oct-17 Nov.

Selected group exhibits

- 2017 Booknesses: South African Artists' Books. FADA Gallery. FADA. University of Johannesburg, South Africa. 24 March-05 May.
- 2015 Past Imperfect // Future Present. FADA Gallery. Johannesburg, South Africa. 24 Mar-01 May.
- 2015 GROUP. The Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). Johannesburg, South Africa. 08-22 Apr.
- 2014 – 2015 TWENTY: Contemporary Art from South Africa. Turchin Center for the Visual Arts Appalachian State University. North Carolina, USA. 11 Jul 2014-07 Feb 2015.
- 2011 The South African Informal City Exhibition (*Informal Studio: Ruimsig*, a collaborative studio between UJ, FADA and 26'10 south Architects). Bus Factory. Johannesburg, South Africa. 11 Nov-11 Dec.
- 2010 Cloak & Dagger: The Curtain Raiser. Security Building. Johannesburg, South Africa. 25 Nov-31 Dec.
- 2010 Draw links: An exhibition of contemporary drawings. Gallery Art on Paper. Johannesburg, South Africa. 09-30 Oct.
- 2010 The Spirit is not an Idea, Says the Penguin. CO-OP. Johannesburg, South Africa. 18 Mar-17 Apr.
- 2010 Time's Arrow. Johannesburg Art Gallery. Johannesburg, South Africa. 21 Feb-18 Apr.
- 2009 2nd Floor, Security Building. Security Building. Johannesburg, South Africa. 28 Nov.
- 2009 FADA Staff Show. FADA Gallery. Johannesburg, South Africa. 22 Sept-16 Oct.
- 2009 The Double Body: being in space. FADA Gallery. Johannesburg, South Africa. 20 May-21 Jun.
- 2008 FADA Staff Show. *Signage and furniture design for Gallery Art on Paper*. FADA Gallery. Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2007 FADA Staff Show. *On Megabyte House*. FADA Gallery. Johannesburg, South Africa.

Master classes, roundtables, design workshops offered

- 08/2017 Initiation and co-facilitation of a roundtable considering the innocuous term, *Uitvalgrond*. With Dr Jonathan Cane, of the WITS City Institute, and invited specialist presenters.
- 09/2015 Initiator and facilitator of a drawing master class (with Lorenzo Nassimbeni and Rhett Martyn). *Drawing the City into Being: Jo'burg, Above, Below and In-between*. SAF/AZA. Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 10/2014 5-day international workshop on informal settlement upgrading practices and methodologies. Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.
- 11/2009 Initiator and facilitator of *Playing ball, or, a friendly between two private publics: the Johannesburg Art Gallery and Joubert Park*, an interdisciplinary (art/architecture) master class addressing the failed relationship between the Johannesburg Art Gallery and Joubert Park (conceptualised as part of architect Sarah Calburn's Rapid Thought Transport master class series). Johannesburg, South Africa.

