



April - **Dialogues** - Mvimbeni Mbuyiselo Residence, Khayalitsha, Cape Town, South Africa. A part of Cape 07. Opened by Director of City Health Dr Ivan Tomms.

**2006:** March - **The Shack** - Rheede St Mall, Cape Town, South Africa. In conjunction with Desmond Tutu TB Centre and First National Bank.

- Excerpts from **The Shack** Mama Maposela's Home for vulnerable children, Nyanga, Cape Town, South Africa. Opened by his Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

**Personal Achievements Include: Being** recognized as one of South Africa's most influential youths in the Mail & Guardian's '200 Young South Africans'

**Motivating** the Australian Government (in conjunction with the lobbying of RESULTS Australia and *The Shack*) to drop the \$75m debt owing from Indonesia on condition that 37.5m was spent on Public Health Care Development. Hence living up to their Millennium Development Goal for Debt-to-Health-Swap.

**Drawing** the attention of Bill Gates with portrait '*Ncosibaca Thinga Thinga*' from *Dialogues* and inspiring him to visit Mr Thinga Thinga in his home in Khayelisha. This potentially assisted with furthering funding in TB programs in South Africa.

**Receiving** the praise and support from his Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu when he opened *The Shack* in 2006.

**Educating** and destigmatising TB and HIV through community based exhibitions with *Dialogues* and *50 Images of MDR-TB*.

**Raising** critical international advocacy to co-infection of TB/HIV at numerous international conferences. Pulling the attention of Deputy President of South Africa - Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka; Executive Director of UNAIDS - Dr Peter Piot; and Dr Hiroshi Nakajima - Director General of World Health Organization. This was amongst the first movements to see the merge of TB and HIV treatment programs.

**Having** work recognized as a visual anthropological study and giving a series of talks about it at Princeton, Duke and Johns Hopkins Universities

**Being** recognized in the art world and exhibited next to the likes of William Kentridge, Churchill Madikida, Penelope Siopis, Pieter Hugo and Gideon Mendel in the group show curated by Carol Brown *Not Alone*.

**Enduring** the physical and mental challenges, as well as cultural negotiation of hitchhiking across Africa.

**Lectures:** Schumann has spoken about his work, methodology and subject matter at:

**In USA** – Princeton University; Duke University Center of Documentary Studies; Johns Hopkins University; University of El Paso, Texas

**In South Africa, Cape Town** – University of Cape Town; Stellenbosch University

**In Germany, Berlin** – World Tuberculosis/HIV and Lung Disease Conference. Symposium on '*Harnessing Visual Media for ACSM*'

## Biography

Damien Schumann found an interest in photography almost by mistake while travelling through the Middle East and Asia (2001 until early 2003). For a short period he lived with Dutch Photographer Arjen Jongens who was documenting the Gypsies living in Istanbul. The way in which this culture was opened to Jongens intrigued Schumann. It was also a means to gain and relay understanding that he was desperately after. Four months later, just before embarking on his first journey to Myanmar he purchased his first SLR camera. Pictures and an article from this journey were published in Thailand on his return.

In December 2003 Schumann embarked on a journey to compile his first body of work. For this he hitchhiked from Cape Town (South Africa) to Ramalla (Palestine) to put a face to emerging Africa. The photographic exhibition - *Balala* was exhibited widely in Cape Town on his return.

Recognition of *Balala* led to him receiving a scholarship at the Ruth Prowse School of Art to study Photography. During this time he started working with the Desmond Tutu Tuberculosis Centre and documenting the lifestyle and living conditions surrounding TB and HIV in the townships of Cape Town and Lusaka, Zambia. This work was launched on World TB Day 2006 as an art installation where a *shack* (informal house) was recreated and used as an exhibition space for his pictures. To reach all sides of the community the photographs were also exhibited in Nyanga township, in an orphanage where many of the pictures were taken. His Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu opened this exhibition with a warming speech.

The development of Schumann's work since then has been a progression of questions being asked from conclusions gained. And this has not only affected his product but also where and how he exhibits his work. *The Shack* opened the doors to his final year varsity work – *Dialogues* which shifted his focus from lifestyle and living conditions to the psychological effects of disease. This in turn drew his attention to stigma and discrimination. Here he found the foundation to create *Face It! – The Stigma Exhibition*. In presentation he realized that the goal of his work was not to produce good pictures (this is a technical aspect), it was to utilize the work – and an emotive picture - to its full potential. He focused his time on presenting work to policy and decision makers in attempts to change policy and gain necessary recourses for the given cause. He also took his work back to communities where he photographed and used the product of their participation and input to create education and social mobilization campaigns so that individuals could do what is in their power to combat against the given issue. The span of his work extended when chapters from *Face It!* were used as a research study in a symposium about stigma in TB/HIV at the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease Conference 2007.

The development of his work has drawn the attention of organizations involved in advocacy, communications and social mobilization (ACSM) as well as activism and education wishing to collaborate to fight for mutual causes. The knowledge gained from such organizations grouped with Schumann's creative interpretation is assisting in shaping a new era of pro-active art. The most recent exhibition being *Nuestra Casa* (Our Home) that looks at tuberculosis and contributing factors, produced along the Mexico and USA border.

**...But these are all words, and I'm about pictures...**

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