

ADA March 1989
COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECT, CAP

The initial idea for a community-based arts centre for Cape Town goes back to before the 1950s, yet such a project only emerged out of intersecting cultural currents in the mid-1970s. At this time a workshop venue was found in Mowbray where anyone interested in developing creative skills could produce their own arts. This initiative provided contact between art tutors and students who wanted to interact outside the segregated schooling system. The Workshop, as it was then called, developed into the Community Arts Project (CAP) which later moved to the old church in Chapel Street, Woodstock. Since their expansion into Community House in Salt River during the eighties, CAP has redefined its cultural direction and political orientation. It has now become a training and service centre for all cultural workers – initiating and disseminating artistic activities among a wider populace. The long-term aim is to transfer skills, develop resources and establish support structures within communities so that people may initiate and co-ordinate their own cultural organisations autonomously.

CAP now offers a full time three-year art course, and also runs a children's art teachers' training programme. The Project has a silkscreening unit which will develop into a media training project in 1989; as well as a full-time theatre course. In recent years CAP expanded its activities in the townships of Langa, Guguletu and Khayelitsha in the form of Outreach Projects. Classes in art, dance and pottery are run for the community. The long-term aim is to transfer the skills and develop the support within these communities to run these centres in an autonomous way.