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Andrew Makin is a principal of designworkshop:sa. Through design they contribute towards transforming society. Best known for designing the Constitutional Court Building (with Urban Solutions), designworkshop:sa has contributed greatly to the architectural landscape of South Africa.

SOUTH AFRICA - urban & rural : [re]constituting a dismantled society

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Although pre-colonial Cities existed in Southern Africa, the City was not the dominant form of settlement. Populations of Southern Africa were predominantly hunter-gatherers and pastoral herders. Mining and trade was strong in some regions, most prevalently to the north of South Africa; Great Zimbabwe is estimated to be the worlds largest supplier of gold at the start of the 19C. But unlike in West Africa, these cities are not thought to have been centres of trade and exchange.

On their permanent arrival at the Cape of Good Hope [Cape Town] in South Africa in the 17C [explorers from 15C], European settlers immediately established the City as the forum for economic exchange, initially on the international market.

Subsequent British colonial dominance and then the system of apartheid [apart-ness] [1948-1994] systematically dismantled these emergent Cities as a means to dismantle and control exchange, and with it any social, cultural or political integration and it's potential for innovation.

Other than for minor temporal and geographic exceptions and their faint echos in descendent generations, South Africans do therefore not have the embodied experience of the City as the primary forum of exchange. And therefore also the collective and

individual evolution and identity generation that it enables.

South Africa did also not fundamentally experience the post industrial-revolution conceptual surge that revolutionised and projected other parts of the world into the 21C. Colonialism and apartheid isolated South Africans from each other, and from the world.

The 1994 removal of apartheid structures and the global reintegration of South Africa was both shocking and confusing. Who are we in the modern world? Who are we in Africa? Who are we to each other? How shall the country be shared by newly politically, socially and culturally equal strangers? How shall we reconcile an initially subsistence and then exploitative pastoral / agrarian history with massive urban influx?

And the main question that is yet to reach the top of the agenda: what is the potential of the City in answering these questions, how shall we construct it; and how does this City confront what Marx and Engels refer to as the inherent "antagonism between town and country"?

The presentation will share a selection of **designworkshop:sa** projects that tentatively grapple with and seek to explore this terrain.