INFINITY STUDIO

UNPACKING PRIVATIZATION, MILITARIZATION AND ESCAPISM IN SOUTH AFRICA'S URBAN LANDSCAPES

“Militarized urbanism” – a term coined by geographer Stephan Graham. A term that describes the existence in South African cities, and is lived through the ubiquity and perceived necessity of concrete and electrified boundaries, pin codes, guard posts and CCTV. In the wake of climate change and growing economic inequality, this fortressing can only intensify. Peter Frase starkly argues that already “gated communities, private islands, ghettos, prisons, terrorism paranoia, biological quarantines amount to an inverted global gulag, where the rich live in tiny islands of wealth strewn around an ocean of misery”.

The security community is offered as a solution to social ills – for those who can afford it. But the retreat into them may be actively eroding empathy with the poor majority and preventing integrated solutions to problems of violence and socio-economic exclusion. Creating a country of enclaves prevents us from thinking of creative forms of mass joy and communal luxury. The acceptance that peace and order can only be obtained in privatised, securitised and curated spaces builds a bunker around the social imagination.

In the INFINITY STUDIO artists from various disciplines explore these meanings and everyday operations of privatization, militarization and escapism in South Africa’s urban landscape. Starting from real life critical engagement with ideas around enclave communities, boundaries and surveillance in relation to fears about real or imagined dangers in urban spaces INFINITY STUDIO is a scripted reality experience … a three-day long immersive world of its own.

(Bubblegum Club, Johannesburg)