Title: *Scratching the Surface*

By: The Trinity Session

Date: 10 November 2021

Time: 4:30 pm – 6 pm

Place: Zoom

What our conversation is about:

This conversation is a way of sharing our experience of a garden project, which finds its roots, creative collaboration and inspiration in oral history narratives. We share our process, intentions and outcomes through a series of visual tools, focussing on the therapeutic work that is being done and challenging the role of the artist in relation to self-sustainability, collective care and issues related to ‘’nourishment’ which range from food security, wellbeing practices to philosophies centred on permaculture design and imagining new futures.

At present we are all working on a series of creative research projects which form part of co-produced exhibition called: Scratching the Surface.

*Scratching the Surface* is a collaborative showcase that demonstrates the research and work that The Trinity Session team has been conducting over the past few months towards the broader Tipper Green Project. We have conducted this research with the aim of upskilling each team member, and transforming Tipper into a hub of activity, focused on permaculture, regenerative design, events, walking tours, performances, and so on.

Our thinking is inspired by the onset of Covid-19 in March 2020 and the subsequent national lockdowns, coupled with ongoing protests, and looting in mid-2021; which highlighted the importance of food security and collective care.

This is further informed by the oral histories exercises we conducted in Noordgesig (Johannesburg, South Africa) in 2018. One of the community leaders that was mentioned time and time again through our community engagement process was the late Sister Betty Glover, who was a formidable community leader and pastor, who ran a vegetable garden and soup kitchen out of her home in Noordgesig. Her legacy has inspired many women in the community to start their own food gardens, and their gardens have inspired our thinking around green spaces and sustainability on a micro scale.

It is with this in mind that we have begun research into green spaces and regenerative design. We believe that helping people to become more self-sufficient through trying and testing ‘green’ projects might be a good way to learn about new systems of making, designing, and assisting others in the process.

As a team of artists, we believe that creativity and sharing experiences is the most important tool for problem solving in society, and every time we build on something new that we have made as individuals or as a team, there is the potential for that new thing to change the way we think about ourselves and others around us. We aim to use green projects, such as small-scale urban farming, as opportunities to foster safe spaces, knowledge sharing, network building, prototype design, collaboration, community buy-in, and collective care.

During the the Zoom lecture you will witness an enquiry and exploration of work we have at hand, a live journey of co-production and a Q & A format of engagement, where we question our own work and creatively respond.

Who we are:

The Trinity Session is a contemporary art production team and arts consultancy based in Johannesburg, South Africa, with offices in Vienna, Austria. We specialise in public art installations and placemaking through art.

Every project we embark on is underpinned by community-led design, collaboration, and co-authorship. Our research is largely transdisciplinary while focusing on people, places, and (often hidden) histories and narratives to gain a deeper understanding of spaces and the complex socioeconomic dynamics that operate within them.

Since late 2019 we have begun to think in new directions, namely towards ‘green’ projects such as small-scale urban farming in relation to greater food security, and how these are opportunities to foster safe spaces, knowledge sharing, network building, prototype design, collaboration, community buy-in, and collective care. Our main objective is to build a sustainable programme of activity at our production space – Tipper - at The Orchards Project in Johannesburg, while sharing knowledge and skills that will enable publics and creatives to become social change makers within their own communities and the broader creative economy of South Africa.

Hence *Tipper Green Projects* (TGP) is exploring aspects of permaculture, co-production, regenerative design, and sustainability through micro gardening projects in each team members home, and actively exploring the potential for Tipper to become a ‘’green project’’ hub.