

DISTRICT SIX PUBLIC SCULPTURE PROJECT, Forced Removals, Written by Tony Morphet (1997)

*Dimensions: approx 15m line of 1800mm bows and arrows; Site: left of Horstley Street; Material: metal and wood*

“The ten bows and arrows pointing in the direction of the Cape Flats serve as a reminder of the tension and pain inflicted upon people who suffered due to forced removals. It also comments on the irretrievable nature of such actions and the deep mental scars which are far greater than the physical harm.”

Up under the DISTRICT SIX letters on the hillside a path wound through the long grass. We'd been told that there were things to see somewhere there but it wasn't clear what or where. Odd knots in the grass and ribbons round the wild dagga signified something, but one couldn't be sure they weren't just markers of some sort. Off to the side was a small group of people enjoying a bottle of wine. Another installation or just a picnic? Then, unexpectedly, above them, a big metal longbow in the tall grass, its wire bowstring taut with an arrow pointing east. At first there seemed to be just one but the eye picked up another and another – I counted five but there could have been more. A rising line of heraldic weapons running up the slope. The metaphor was compellingly simple and intense. Further along the path moans and voices were coming out of a hole in the ground. A counter metaphor – or maybe a part of the longbow design.