

## **Annexure A**

### **Imagined Conversations**

#### **Story Approach**

##### **Framing principle**

This installation uses sound, shadow, and scent to animate three rooms of a historic house around 1708–1709. Rather than telling a single story, it creates a series of overheard, partial moments that reveal how the house functioned as a site of power, wealth, control, and performance.

Van der Stel is still alive; Anna de Koningh and Oloff Bergh are in Cape Town, already visiting the house as future owners and as living proof of entangled histories (enslavement, wealth, respectability). For future room.

##### **Visitors encounter:**

- A light, almost playful threshold where children's movement and sound suggest life, curiosity, and belonging — a reminder that this house once had a pulse.
- A drawing room where civility, hospitality, respectability, and refinement are carefully performed, while the sounds of horses, messengers, workers, and trade press in from outside.
- A writing office where authority is exercised through paper, ink, record-keeping, accusation, and dispute — revealing how control and wealth were formalised and defended.
- Nothing is explained outright, overheard moments, not reenactments.
  - Meaning is assembled through fragments: murmured voices, interrupted actions, timed shadow projection of figures, directional sound conveyed (sound move through space/ recede, overlap)
- The house is experienced not as a monument, but as a working system.

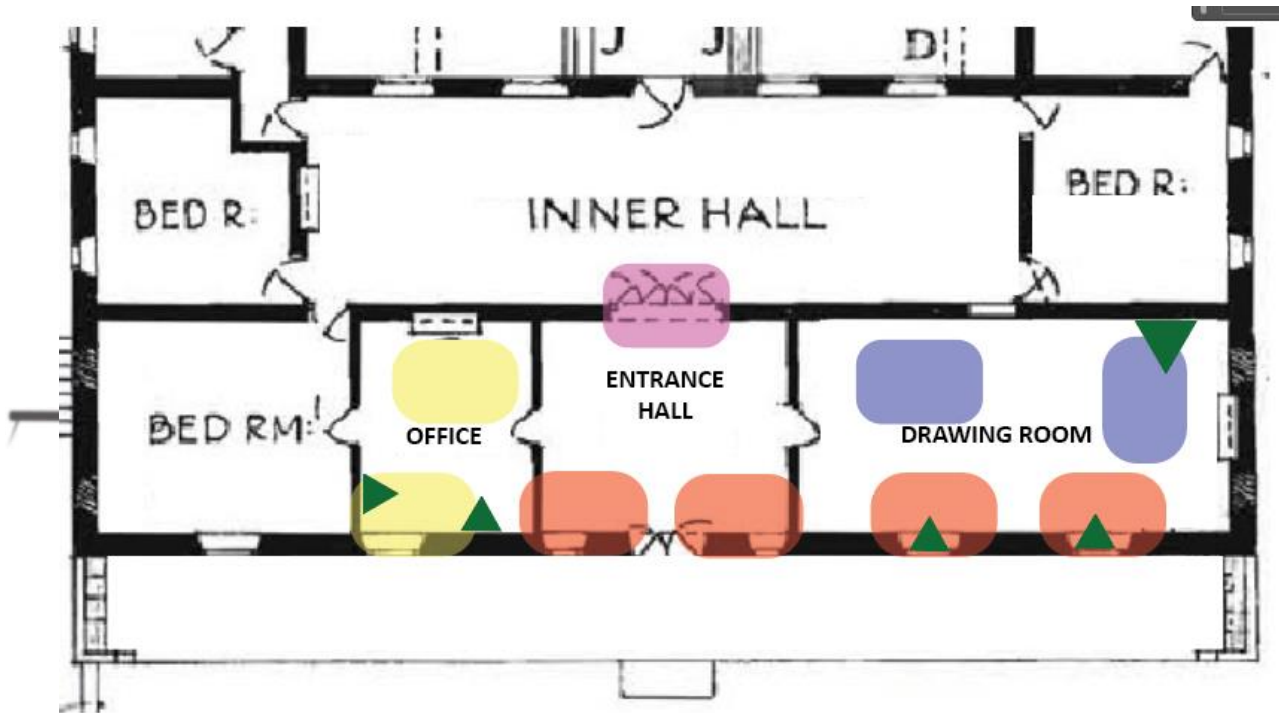
##### **At its core, this work is about how colonial power operated quietly, domestically, and administratively.**






- Wealth at the Cape was not accidental or benign.
- Civility and comfort were performances built on exploitation.
- Control was exercised as much through paperwork, accusation, and routine as through violence.
- The Dutch East India Company's presence was not abstract — it lived inside rooms, habits, gestures, and everyday decisions.

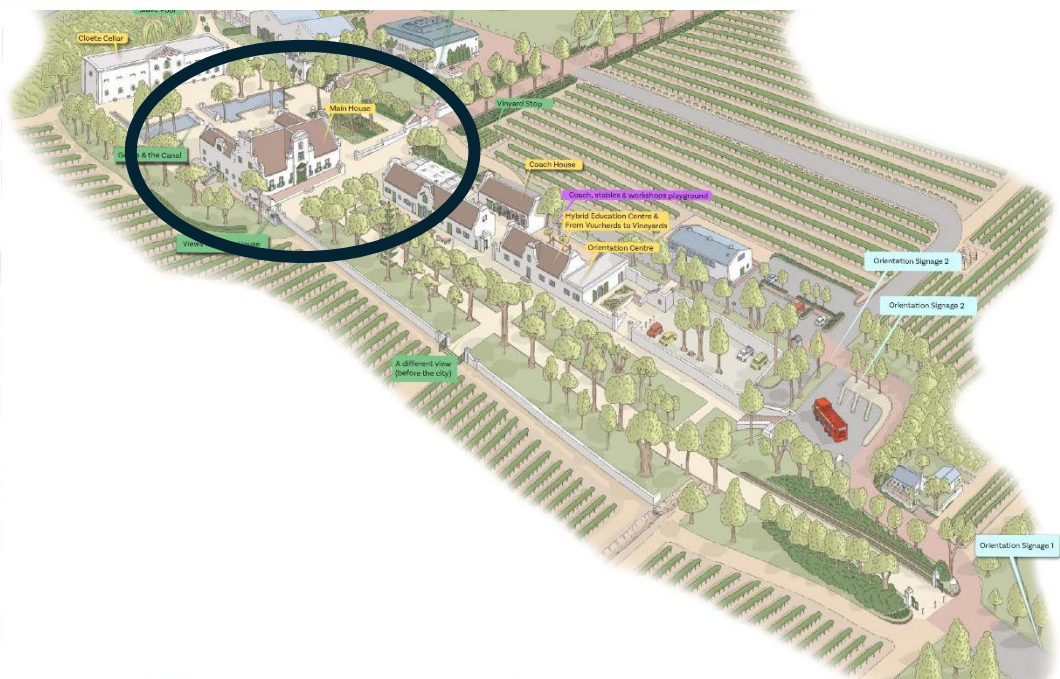
## Spatial logic (very important)

- **Entrance / threshold** = transition, movement, arrivals and departures.
- **Drawing room** = performance, civility, wealth, outward-facing life.
- **Writing office** = control, anxiety, record-keeping, accusation, ownership.

Sound should **leak but never fully resolve** from one room to another



	VISUAL AREAS	AUDIO ZONES			
KEY					
	Office x2 Drawing Room x3	Zone 3 Office	Zone 4 Children	Zone 1 Outside activity	Zone 2 Drawing Room





<b>ENTRANCE</b>	<i>(Museum front desk / foyer — light, welcoming, gentle movement)</i>
<b>Core idea</b>	<b>Implied narrative pressure</b>
Threshold, curiosity, early story hints — playful and subtle	This house has a heartbeat
<b>Shadow / Projection Moments</b>	<b>Soundscape (directional &amp; timed)</b>
None.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distant laughter of children, footsteps running lightly across a hallway. Perhaps a single, distant soft sound of a child running outside to join the others— introducing Pengu's presence without showing him.</li> <li>Occasional muffled voices, indistinct and playful.</li> </ul>
<b>Scent</b> TBC pending discussion with front of house colleagues.	<b>At key moments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link to bookkeeper walking into office</li> <li>Sound of activity in avenue heard louder due to the open door</li> </ul>



<b>Drawing Room</b>	<i>Windows to the avenue, curtains suggesting arrival/departure, piano, coffee service, receiving space</i>
<b>Core idea</b>	<b>Implied narrative pressure</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>tension between calm domestic performance and the wider, complex world outside</b></li> <li>Performance, ‘civility’, wealth, outward-facing life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refinement, civility, and comfort <b>built on unseen labour</b></li> <li>The distant activity of the avenue evokes: <b>Ships arriving, Goods being traded, Slaves moving through the estate, gossip circulating</b></li> </ul>
<b>Shadow / Projection Moments</b>	<b>Soundscape (directional &amp; timed)</b>
<b>1. Figures drinking coffee and serving coffee</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stationary near the tray, serving two people tea/coffee, glancing occasionally toward the windows.</li> <li>Could subtly shift a small tray, adjust sugar</li> <li>Two figures are being served. Gestures suggest gossip and anticipation — maybe someone arriving or leaving outside.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Porcelain cup placed gently (or softly clinking).</li> <li>Low murmured conversation — polite, indistinct, floating in the air.</li> <li>Chair scraping once in a while, almost unnoticed.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Curtain shadows (min 2 scenes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A shadow cast on the curtains shows the commerce outside.</li> <li>Horse and messenger later carriage arriving or departing along the avenue, outside.</li> <li>Stiff posture, small movements, pauses — just enough to charge the imagination.</li> </ul>	<b>Outside the windows (directional / timed to match shadows):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horses approaching, pausing, then moving on.</li> <li>Carriage wheels creaking, fading down the avenue.</li> <li>Distant voices of farm workers — never close, never intelligible, just <b>hints of activity</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Scent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Polished wood or silver polish</li> <li>Coffee</li> <li>Horse</li> </ul>	<b>At key moments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Murmurs then silence, listening.</li> <li>Chair scrapes back.</li> <li>Footsteps cross the room toward the window (timed to shadow against curtains)</li> </ul>
<b>Abstract link to interpretive content.</b>	<b>Story links</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who benefits from this performance of wealth?</li> <li>What labour, lives, and silences make this refinement possible?</li> </ul>	





<b>ROOM Writing Office</b>	<i>Desk, books, record-keeping, control, and tension</i>
<b>Core idea</b>	<b>Implied narrative pressure</b>
The mechanics of power Authority, anxiety, accusation, and record-keeping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bureaucracy, ownership, control, conflict</li> <li>Injustice is often enacted through systems</li> </ul>
<b>Shadow / Projection Moments</b>	<b>Soundscape (directional &amp; timed)</b>
<b>Writer at desk:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunched, quill scratching, page turned, paper crumpled.</li> <li>Stops suddenly, looks to the doorway (as if hearing something outside), but does not leave.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pen scratching, pages turning, paper crumpled.</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary figure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only briefly at the doorway or window, maybe carrying a book or ledger, suggesting assistance or supervision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key sounds: drawer opened/closed, ledger slapped down, faint chair scrape.</li> <li>Murmured voices (unintelligible), hinting at accusation, disputes or negotiations.</li> <li>Distant, soft footsteps fading as someone leaves the hallway outside.</li> </ul>
<b>Scent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ink and paper, slightly acrid from stress</li> <li>Old books</li> <li>Faint fish</li> </ul>	<b>At key moments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writer and secondary figure</li> </ul>
Abstract link to interpretive content.	Story of....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sense that injustice is often enacted through systems, not spectacles.</li> <li>That domination can look like paperwork, calm voices, and closed doors.</li> <li>Authority is exercised through paper, ink, record-keeping, accusation, and dispute — revealing how control and wealth were formalised and defended.</li> </ul>	Van der Stel and <b>Abraham de Vijf court dispute</b>







Simon van der Stel

