



Media Release

Acts of Care: Immersive Exhibition Brings Township AIDS Project Archive to Life

A new immersive exhibition is set to transform decades-old archival material into a living, participatory experience, inviting audiences to witness, recognise, and actively continue a legacy of queer community care that began in Soweto, Johannesburg, more than three decades ago.

Acts of Care is an Extended Reality (XR) exhibition drawing on archive material from the Township AIDS Project (TAP), held by the [GALA Queer Archive](#). Using virtual reality, augmented reality, and an interactive creative public space, the exhibition explores how communities in early 1990s Johannesburg and Soweto organised care, education, and advocacy in response to the HIV/AIDS crisis, at a time when the disease was poorly understood, deeply stigmatised, and often framed as a moral or political threat.

Acts of Care will be launched on 5 September at the Latitudes Centre for the Arts (LCA) Shepstone Gardens in Johannesburg. It is one of the projects in *Futures_Past: Amplifying Memory with Immersive Technologies*, an initiative of the Embassy of France in South Africa, Lesotho and Malawi and the French Institute of South Africa (IFAS), in partnership with Electric South, with funding from the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

Structured in three interconnected experiential zones representing the past, present, and future, that map directly into the **Acts of Care** visitor's journey and experience of Caring (Witness), Loving (Recognise), and Sharing (Act). Each zone marks a different type of engagement, carrying visitors from an intimate historical encounter, through recognition and affirmation, to collective and public participation.

The first station places visitors inside a VR reconstruction of an early 1990s community counselling room in Johannesburg, narrated by Enea Motaung, who ran TAP for many years. The scene draws on lived testimony to portray the quiet, often invisible acts of care that sustained communities during the crisis.

The second station is a playful, full-body AR photo experience, drawing on the bold safe-sex campaign typography and graphic aesthetics of 1990s queer activist culture, allowing visitors to see themselves reflected within the visual language of the movement. Participants can pose, move, and experiment with identity in joyful and unapologetic space. This station connects past activism to present-day self-expression and collective visibility.

At the third station, visitors are invited to design their own posters, physically or digitally, using visual assets from the TAP and GALA archive. Completed works are pasted and projected onto a growing shared wall, forming a living, evolving archive of contemporary care and advocacy that builds throughout the exhibition's run.



Throughout, archival photographs, pamphlets, and testimonies from TAP and the GALA Queer Archive connect the three stations, grounding the experience in lived history.

*"TAP's story has lived in our collection for almost three decades, known mostly to researchers and those who lived through the HIV/AIDS crisis. **Acts of Care** gives us the chance to bring that history out into the open, to let new audiences encounter it not as a static record but as something they can step into and feel. This is what it means for an archive to stay alive,"* says Linda Chernis, Archivist, GALA Queer Archive.

"We didn't want to simply document TAP's history, we wanted people to feel what it meant to organise care under pressure, without a manual, without institutional support, and often without the language to name what was happening," says Kieran Reid, Artistic Project Lead. *"Building this in VR and AR helped us to hold onto that intimacy while still inviting people into something collective and hopeful, and creative."*

The exhibition draws a deliberate line between the past and the present. As international HIV/AIDS funding, including support previously channelled through PEPFAR (the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) faces cuts that are currently affecting clinics, community health workers, and prevention programmes across South Africa, **Acts of Care** insists that the community-led practices of care pioneered by TAP in the 1990s remain relevant today.

*"Futures_Past set out to show that archives are living resources, not just repositories of the past. **Acts of Care** embodies that mission entirely, taking a story of care and queer resilience from the 1990s and giving it new urgency at a moment when the very systems of care it documents are once again under threat,"* says Jean Spiri, Director of IFAS.

Acts of Care is designed to engage queer communities, HIV/AIDS activists, and health workers, as well as students, researchers, and general public audiences. It runs until 1 December 2026 (World AIDS Day) at Latitudes Centre for the Arts (LCA) in Johannesburg. Parental guidance: the exhibition has an age recommendation of 16+.

In response to and alongside **Acts of Care**, LCA is proud to present **How is a triangle the strongest shape?** curated by Denzo Nyathi. This group exhibition ponders the methodologies of endurance associated with resistance, taking a particular look at the height of the HIV/AIDS crisis in South Africa. Ephemera and other crafty practices are re-examined and brought to the forefront of fine art, with a queer cohort of artists — Talia Ramkilawan, Athi Patra Ruga and Sizwe Sama — practising their own forms of resistance. **Exhibition details:**

Venue: Latitudes Centre for the Arts, 12 Hope Rd, Mountain View, Johannesburg

Dates: 5 September to 1 December 2026

Opening times: Weekdays, Tuesday to Friday, 10:00 - 15:00, &

Select Saturdays (26 Sept, 31 Oct, & 28 Nov), 10h00-13h00





Programming for selected Saturday openings:

<https://twonamegames.com/actsofcare/>

Instagram: @actsofcare_sa

Book [here](#)

Ends

Issued on behalf of IFAS and Electric South by:

Sharlene				Versfeld
Versfeld			&	Associates
Public	Relations		and	Communications
Mobile:	+27	(0)	83	326 3235
Email:				sharlene@versfeld.co.za
Website:	www.versfeld.co.za			

About [GALA Queer Archive](#)

The GALA Queer Archive (GALA) serves as a catalyst for the production, preservation and dissemination of information about the history, culture and contemporary experiences of LGBTQIA+ people in South Africa. As an archive founded on principles of social justice and human rights, GALA works toward a greater awareness about the lives of LGBTQIA+ people as a means to an inclusive society.

About the [Artistic Team](#)

Two Name Games is a Johannesburg-based playful development studio that uses games, interactive technology, and participatory design to create meaningful experiences. The studio works across cultural, educational, and social-impact projects, combining game design, research, co-design, and technology to help organisations explore complex ideas in engaging ways. Two Name Games has developed games, immersive experiences, exhibitions, workshops, and digital platforms with partners across South Africa and internationally.

Director: Tiisetso Tsholofelo Dladla; Technologist: Tim Flusk; Producer: Kieran Reid; Associate Producer: Jordan Green; Interaction Designer and Researcher: Kirsten Reid; Archivist: Linda Chernis; 3D Artist: Lauren Walter; 2D Artist: Thami "dowdles" Kolweni; Sound Designer: Juliette Love; Social Media and Marketing: Jess Jardim; Production Assistant: Cheyenne Peter.

About the [French Institute of South Africa](#) (IFAS)

The French Institute of South Africa, the cultural arm of the French Embassy, has supported creative cooperation between South Africa, France, and the continent since 1995. IFAS has





played a key role in initiatives safeguarding memory and advancing access to historical resources, including the digitization of the Rivonia Trial tapes and collaboration with the Morija Museum & Archives in Lesotho.

About [Electric South](#)

Electric South is a Cape Town-based non-profit building a robust storytelling ecosystem in Africa through immersive and interactive technologies. The organisation supports African artists and technologists through mentorship, workshops, labs, project funding, research, and field-building initiatives. Electric South-supported projects have been showcased internationally at Sundance, Venice, and IDFA DocLab.

About [Latitudes Centre for the Arts](#)

Latitudes Centre for the Arts (LCA) is a physical, multi-purpose exhibition space in Johannesburg dedicated to the year-round promotion of artists and galleries on the continent. LCA's cultural programme includes educational and discursive activities for artists and collectors. Its main objective is to provide galleries on the continent and its diaspora an opportunity to show in South Africa and access a Johannesburg-based clientele. LCA is located at Shepstone Gardens, a magnificent three-acre property in Johannesburg that comprises a large scale, purpose-built gallery, manicured gardens and rooftop entertainment areas.