Making History Come Alive

Constitution Hill is the home of the Constitutional Court of South Africa and is a multimillion rand urban regeneration development funded by the Gauteng provincial government's Blue IQ initiative, the City of Johannesburg, the Department of Justice and various philanthropic organizations – and delivered by the Johannesburg Development Agency. This vibrant development offers a unique cultural, historical, educational, business and recreational space for the people of South Africa and visitors to our country.

In 1892, Paul Kruger built the Old Fort to protect the republic against the 'uitlanders' (foreigners). The Old Fort housed the original jail complex and sections such as the notorious Number Four prison which housed thousands of black men, the Emakhulukhutu – the isolation cells, the women's jail which was added to the complex in 1910 have been brought to life with live, interactive exhibitions which evoke the experience of what it was like to be imprisoned during the apartheid years. The prison complex was closed in 1983 and was derelict for more than 20 years.

Questek's conceptualization and design of the very powerful visual and audio elements of Constitution Hill adds great impact to the visitor's experience of this historical site, ensuring that visitors gain a very real sense of the life of those who fought for democracy within the walls of the Old Fort – a heritage site of international significance.

Much of the research for the interactive exhibitions was conducted through a series of workshops, where former prisoners were invited to tell their stories and provide insight into the past of the Old Fort. In conjunction with Constitution Hill's heritage, tourism and education team, Questek has developed a unique interactive experience – a living museum. Extensive audio and visual presentations throughout the development create a unique opportunity to visualize and experience knowledge.

From the Visitor Centre to the communal cells known as Power and Punishment where students from the 1976 uprising were detained, the Orientation Room where prisoners worked as blacksmiths, the Resistence and Resilience communal cells which were overcrowded, Mandela's 'cell' and the cells from which prisoners left for court and returned each day and the Awaiting Trial area – Questek's innovative audio visual presentations present and preserve history for generations to come. Extensive use of front and rear projection, an intricate audio configuration and a fully integrated, user-friendly control system ensures a seamless exhibition.