

'Where I'm Coming From' by _inventory platform

3rd - 30th August 2020

WHAT

Where I'm Coming From was a four-week programme of digital commissions dedicated to languages that are spoken widely within Britain's migrant worker community yet remain largely invisible: Filipino, Taiwanese, Yoruba and Berber. Initially intended to take place in-person at Guest Projects in East London, *Where I'm Coming From* was re-conceptualised for the digital realm due to COVID-19 restrictions.

PROJECTS

New commissions and artworks by three artists were presented each week, exploring one language through photographic and video artworks, live performance and mixed media research. Each week concluded with a commissioned Sunday cooking session, carried out by chefs and community groups and live-streamed to enable audience participation.

Week 1: Filipino

Newly commissioned *Black Hair. Brown Nipples. Purple Lips* by Vanessa Scully, *Ang Mamatay Nang Dahil Sa'yo / To Suffer and Die for Theemonyo* by Rhine Bernardino and *Gynophobia* by Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen alongside her existing work *Seeing Pilar, 2001*. Live-streamed cooking by Pinoy's Kitchen, preparing Filipino stew, Adobo.

Week 2: Berber

Newly commissioned *I feel like I know you from somewhere* by Aïcha El Beloui, *Orkémns* by Fatima Mazmouz and *Touch my language* by Mounir Gouri, alongside his existing work *My Land, 2016*. Live-streamed cooking by Mr Berber Cook, preparing a Tajine of Octopus on the beach in Morocco.



'Where I'm Coming From,' _inventory platform, 2020.

Week 3: Taiwanese

Newly commissioned *The Botanist, Map and Tulip Flower* by Aki Pao-Chen Chiu, *Words without words* by Yun Ling Chen and *Invisible Marks of Pingtung* by Kuan-Yu Chen. Live-streamed cooking with chefs Keegan Chen and Pao-Yu Liu, and artist Lilly Yang, preparing Yilian green onion cakes.

Week 4: Yoruba

Newly commissioned *Aaye (Space)* by Taiwo Aiyedogbon, *ABD Olowe* by Aderemi Adegbite and *Stand, Wait, Listen for Ògìrìyàndá*. Concluding with cookery by batik artist Idowu Bankole preparing a vegetarian Yoruba stew with her neighbours in Lagos.

WHERE

The project was presented on Guest Projects Digital, YouTube, _inventory platform and Guest Projects Instagram, Twitter and Facebook accounts. Events were live-streamed via IG Live and Pineapple Lab.

ARTISTS

Aderemi Adegbite, Taiwo Aiyedogbon, Jelili Atiku, Rhine Bernardino, Kuan-Yu Chen, Aki Pao-Chen Chiu, Fatima Mazmouz, Gouri Mounir, Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen, Aïcha El Beloui, Vanessa Scully and Yun Ling Chen.

CURATORS

Curated and produced by *_inventory* platform, commissioned by the Yinka Shonibare Foundation to launch their newly developed digital platform Guest Projects Digital. A total of 23 artists and performers took part, with a further 45 contributors including local translators, designers, cooks, web coordinator, filmmakers.

_inventory is a collaboration-based platform, directed and curated by [Linda Rocco](#) and [Rhine Bernadino](#), which showcases artists' works and co-creates community engagement programmes in urban and rural contexts.

[Guest Projects](#) was conceived by Shonibare Studio in 2009 and offers artistic practitioners access to a free project space for one month, to use for production, exhibitions and events. Its new initiative Guest Projects Digital is an online residency platform that supports artists in sharing their creative ideas digitally.

WHY

Where I'm Coming From was an experimental curatorial project aimed to disrupt the assumed position of the English language as a primary or universal language and a provider of commonality. It sought to open up consideration of minority languages which are largely unrepresented in arts and culture, though form a fundamental part of British diversity and contribute to the UK economy. The project not only made these languages visible but created cross-cultural dialogues via new and accessible kinds of collaboration.

HOW

Where I'm Coming From was commissioned by the Yinka Shonibare Foundation and announced as an exhibition at Guest Projects in September 2019.

It was then supported to transition to Guest Projects Digital in April 2020, a platform supported by the London Community Response Fund and Triangle Network.

The overall budget for the month-long programme was £ 8,000. *_inventory* platform fundraised via the Taipei Representative Office in the UK and the Ministry of Culture in Taiwan. *_inventory* platform worked with website designers to ensure the programme was as accessible as possible, including audio files, translations, and easy-read guides using straightforward language.

Pineapple Lab supported the programme as media partner, the Kanlungan Filipino Consortium supported the Filipino cooking session, and Taipei Representative Office in the UK & the Ministry of Culture Taiwan supported the programme for Taiwanese week.

IMPACT

- Opening up conversations around the exclusivity of language in accessing the production and consumption of arts and culture.
- Emphasised the importance of working collaboratively, highlighting diversity and multiculturalism.
- Archival value in commissioning works about minority languages/dialects

IMPACT INDICATORS

- 68,934 viewers reached via Guest Projects and *_inventory* IG accounts
- Press coverage by British Council Philippines, Purveyr, AnOther, Soanyway Magazine and Art+ magazines

"The aim of the programme was to highlight the micro-narratives of exclusion that exist for those who face cultural and language barriers."

- LINDA ROCCO