

UP

PROJECTS

**REFLECTING
DIVERSITY IN
THE PUBLIC
REALM**



REFLECTING DIVERSITY IN THE PUBLIC REALM

It is essential that our public spaces reflect and feel relevant to the diversity of the communities they serve. This can be achieved by carefully considering what or who is represented, who makes decisions, who is selected to undertake and deliver commissions and who is engaged in the process. Through public art, moments of celebration, commemoration and reflection can be created that allow a broad range of communities to feel more connected, more visible and more welcome.

Over the last two decades, UP Projects have consistently foregrounded underrepresented voices in the public realm, often enabling artists from a range of backgrounds and lived experience to create new work in public spaces across the UK for the first time. Commissions such as *The National Windrush Monument*, *Globe Head Ballerina* or *A Love Song for Whitechapel*, demonstrate how artists can play an important role in sensitively amplifying overlooked stories and histories that relate to a multiplicity of communities.

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↓ The National Windrush Monument, Basil Watson, 2022. Image: Steve Russel Studios



THE NATIONAL WINDRUSH MONUMENT BY BASIL WATSON

London Waterloo Station

2022 - Ongoing

UP Projects worked with the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities and the Windrush Commemoration Committee (WCC) to commission Basil Watson to create a national monument to the Windrush Generation at London Waterloo Station. UP Projects led the artist selection process, inviting over 250 British and international curators and leaders in the Caribbean community to nominate artists to create a fitting public monument to the Windrush Generation.

UP Projects then facilitated extensive public engagement on the shortlisted artists' proposals with a particular focus on the British Caribbean community. Taking public and community feedback strongly into account, the WCC selected Jamaican artist Basil Watson to create *The National Windrush Monument*. UP Projects oversaw the fabrication and installation of Watson's monument that pays tribute to the dreams, ambition, courage and resilience of the Windrush migrants. *The National Windrush Monument* created by Basil Watson was unveiled on 22 June 2022 at London Waterloo Station by Windrush Pioneers Alford Gardner and John Richards in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.



↓ Gut Feelings, Meri Jaan, Jasleen Kaur, 2021. Film Still

A LOVE SONG FOR WHITECHAPEL BY AYA HAIDAR

Whitechapel High Street, London

2023 - Ongoing

UP Projects is working with artist, Aya Haidar to curate and produce a new light-focused public artwork for Whitechapel in East London that presents diverse local history in a contemporary setting.

Commissioned by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the artwork aims to reflect the diversity of experience in the area, developed through an intergenerational process of community engagement working with Year 12 pupils from Swanlea School and 16 members of the Bow Geezers, a group of elders based in East London.

The groups have collectively plotted a social history of the East End and mapped their shared roots in Whitechapel. Aya Haidar is now weaving together these memories, preserving local music heritage and lived experience by writing a traditional cockney knees-up song with composer Tom Carradine. The final artwork, to be launched in Autumn 2024, will be a light-focused work featuring the chorus of the final song.



↓ A Love Song for Whitechapel, Aya Haidar, 2024. Image: Zoë Scholes



↓ Globe Head Ballerina, Yinka Shonibare CBE, 2017. Image: The Royal Opera House

GLOBE HEAD BALLERINA BY YINKA SHONIBARE CBE

Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London

2012 - 2017

In 2012, UP Projects developed and delivered a public commission on behalf of the Royal Opera House by artist Yinka Shonibare CBE, who created a sculpture for the façade of the building.

The sculpture featured a life-sized ballerina encased within a giant snow globe was inspired by a photograph of the legendary ballerina Margot Fonteyn, prima ballerina absolute of The Royal Ballet. The dancer had a replica Victorian globe as her head, reflecting the international work of the Royal Opera House and emphasising the global universality of ballet as an art form.

The dancer also wore a tutu made by the Royal Opera House Costume Department, using the Indonesian patterned cloth synonymous with Shonibare's work, and implying an African identity. *Globe Head Ballerina* extended the use of ballet in Shonibare's work, as he had previously used dance to explore cultural and gender ambiguities.

BEST PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS

1 Understand who your communities are

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Take time to map and understand who the communities or audience will be for the project before you develop the brief to ensure you develop it in a way that will have relevance and create connections.

2 Consult and listen

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Allow time and resource for consultation, dialogue or collaboration with the communities the work is intended to engage; listen carefully and develop the brief and project scope in response.

3 Go beyond your usual networks when appointing artists

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Take care to consider who the opportunity will go to and how you will reach diverse artists. Cultivate networks and partnerships that will enable you to appoint artists who will understand and be relevant to specific community, heritage or cultural contexts.

4 Value lived experience

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Build a team who have the relevant skills, expertise and also lived experience to develop projects that build strong connections with non-dominant communities or address culturally sensitive themes.

5 Embrace alternative perspectives

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Listening to the varied and unique perspectives of a range of people not only helps with innovation or problem solving, but also helps counteract biases and challenges preconceptions. Intentionally seeking different opinions and perspectives will help fight confirmation bias, and enable your project in the public realm to develop in a way that is genuinely inclusive.

WORK WITH UP PROJECTS

UP Projects is the UK's leading public art organisation specialising in socially engaged public art commissioning. We bring world class artists out of the gallery and into public spaces to create new work with communities across the UK and beyond. We develop arts and cultural strategies, commission artists and activate public places through creative projects, programmes and events.

Should you wish to find out more about how UP Projects can help you commission ambitious and impactful public art projects that empower communities and bring about social change please get in touch.

OUR EXPERTISE

Collaborating with Communities

We have over 20 years experience of working with communities and understand how to build trusting and empowering relationships.

Placeshaping Through Public Art

We can help harness the power of artists and art to tell stories and reveal narratives about a place.

Reflecting Diversity in the Public Realm

Our public realm should reflect the diversity of the communities it serves. We can help create projects that make public spaces more inclusive.

Working with Children & Young People

We can curate bespoke projects and programmes that empower and involve young people.

Addressing the Climate Emergency

Considering the environment and working against climate change is central to all of the work that we do. We champion the role artists and art can play in advocating for action.

Contact Us

upprojects.com
workwith@upprojects.com
@upprojects

THE NATIONAL WINDRUSH MONUMENT

Designed by
BASIL WATSON, CD

Unveiled by **Ministry of Pensions
Arthur Gardner and John Richards**
in the presence of **Her Royal Highness
The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge**
On 14 June 2002

H MONUMENT



Designed to acknowledge
the courage and dedication of the
immigrants and residential
staff who travelled to the
country of reflection, fostering
a generation's talent, hard
work and generations however

Commissioned by
Ministry of Pensions

Designed by
Basil Watson, CD, MBE

Unveiled by
Her Royal Highness
The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge

On 14 June 2002

Location: Heath T4, J11

YOU CALLED... AND WE CAME

THE WINDRUSH MONUMENT

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