

ARTIVISM FOR INCLUSION

A Collection from the ICSW 2020-2021 Showcase

ARTIVISM FOR INCLUSION

moderator

there's a woman in me
still don't know her very well
THE OPERATION IS TOO EXPENSIVE

few Justice haikus

THE TEARS
IT BURNS MY SKIN
the revolution is born the moment we say NO!
the revolution is <INSERT YOUR NAME HERE>
the revolution is

transgirls are GIRLS

SPREAD LOVE

FRIGHT OFF THE SUPPORTERS
BOO!

RESISTANCE amid the PANDEMIC

BREAK-OUT

I reuse teabags to create

all are NEIGHBORS of someone of trees mountains nature

protect South America

WHAT DOES ART MEAN TO YOU?

ART is: magic common language healing community

art is therapy

ART BREAKS BOUNDARIES

BLACK LIVES MATTER

US economy IS BUILT ON SLAVERY

NO justice! peace!

POWERFUL VOICE

all we need is HOPE we will RISE

DIGNA Diversity & Inclusion Group for Networking and Action

ICSW 2020/2021 PEOPLE POWER

Introduction

Art is a powerful medium for activism across the world, an instrument for social movements and organisations that are trying to inspire and communicate a message to promote change. Activism is the intersection between art and activism, and it comes in many forms, including visual arts, songs, poetry, and dance, among others.



Activism has been used for decades, particularly by traditionally excluded groups to express their experiences, deal with identity trauma, and tell their stories. It has been useful in different contexts but “especially in countries where freedom of expression is severely limited, art functions as an alternative channel of communication: when demonstrations are banned, organisations shutdown or media subjected to severe censorship, art is often the only possible instrument of protest.” (Partos, 2017)

On the backdrop of the importance of activism for people power actions and social inclusion, the Diversity and Inclusion Group for Networking and Action (DIGNA) hosted an online showcase called “Activism for Inclusion” as part of ICSW 2020-2021, which is a global, year-long conversation about people power organised by CIVICUS.

The live event celebrated on July 1st, 2020, brought together around 10 activists from several countries, who shared their art and activism with a global audience. The showcase provided a wonderful opportunity to inspire and deeply connect with others despite the social distancing circumstances that we are all going through. It demonstrated the power of activism and made us realise the need for making this type of civic action more visible and for connecting activists from around the world more often.

Here is a collection of work presented during this powerful event, including information about the artists.

Opening Words

Pang started the event talking about his experience when he got arrested while hosting an art bazaar at a mall. He used this story as an example of one of the many times police and governments abuse their powers and oppress those voices of dissidence that fight for what is right. The way they act, is by attacking not only the activist or the artist, but also the people that surround them. These tactics generate isolation and fear and create what he denominates a culture of fear. One way to fight against this harassment and these impositions is to stay united and continue telling all these stories to everyone willing to listen. We need to find or create spaces where we chose to remain fully humane, and where we share all those stories that unfortunate emerge every single day. No matter the type of story, weather of fear, or courage, or a positive story or one of healing, these stories need to take up spaces all around us and this is remains a very powerful form of resistance in a culture that is trying to take away our humanity.



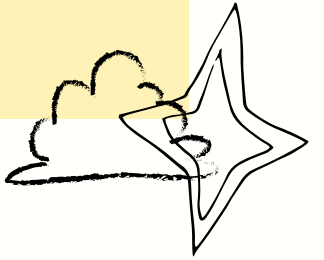
Pang

THE ARTIVISM COLLECTION



Tarryn Booyesen

South African born Tarryn Booyesen currently working with CIVICUS believes strongly in speaking up through whichever medium makes you feel most comfortable. Tarryn has found a way of expression through poetry and writing. The goal was always to help people and activism has given her that opportunity. "When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful." This piece was written following the deaths of George Floyd and Sarah Hegazy. Both people who were too tired to keep fighting. The world did them wrong. This piece speaks to us taking a stand and making a difference alone, together through art, through petitions, through breathing.



I can't breathe

*I write when it hurts. When my angered tears burn my skin.
We take to the streets, we sign petitions. Your life matters
they say, we condemn they say. Yet nothing changes and now
here I am trying to make this pain sound poetic.*

*1992 - the year I was assigned my box
It's a girl! She will wear dresses and like boys
I can't breathe
She will cook and clean and be submissive
The tears. The tears. It burns my skin
I can't breathe
Knee to neck, it hurts. He couldn't breathe*

*They wouldn't let him breathe
They won't let us breathe
They won't let us breathe
They won't let us breathe because the revolution was born
with our first breath
The revolution was born the moment we said no.
The moment we said not in my name. It was born.
The revolution is here. It has been here.*

*The governments condemn. Thank you, Mr President, for
your condemnation but what life does that bring back which
law does it rewrite?*

*Sarah Hegazy, her colors were too bright for this world. We
failed her. She left us. She couldn't breathe.*

*So we breathe! We breathe for the ones gone before us. The
ones who have paved and are still paving the way. We
breathe for us. For future generations. We breathe.*

*In a world divided, we were never meant to live in boxes
How many more? How many more of us need to suffer?
Cry! Scream! Laugh. Breakdown if you need to! Whatever it
takes for you rise.*

Whatever you need to keep breathing

*The revolution is now, the revolution is us
The revolution is here. The revolution has been here.*

*Do whatever it takes to fuel the fire, fuel the fight
Take a knee, march for your lives...*

*They will give us hashtags and petitions
We will rewrite the narrative, we will be the revolutionaries*

*For the revolution is Emma Gonzalez
The revolution is Vanessa Nakate
It is Alain Nteff, Yogesh Kumar, Greta Thunberg, Zulaiqha
Patel*

*The revolution is (insert your name here)
They may not be ready, but best believe the revolution will be
televised!*



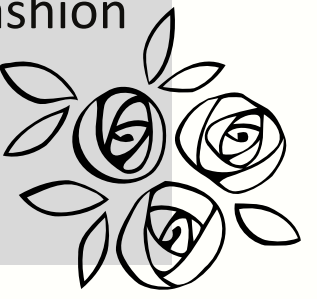
Watch: <https://youtu.be/MGkLWvoXPo>



✧
✧ *Ika Vantiani*

Ika is a self taught artist, curator and crafter. Mostly talk about women, media and consumption in her works, Ika uses collage as her main medium and public workshop as her engagement with the public to make art. She has exhibited her work inside and outside Indonesia, and curated some shows on youth, fashion and humanity. She lives and works in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Twitter and IG: @vantiani



Flower-Transgirls are girls

21,5 x 21,5 cm

2020

"Flower is something that is often associated with women in Indonesia. Meaning, flower can also be associated with transgender women. Because transgender women are women. As beautiful, as strong, and they both lived not only waiting to be 'picked' but instead they grew and bloom and died as they pleased. This work is a tribute for my transgender women friends on The International Transgender Day of Visibility this year."



Body - Woman's Choice

Analog collage

2020

"I would like to let my lesbian friends either online or offline to know that you are valid as a woman in whatever look and body you choose to have. I am inspired by your style, talent, courage and strength you all have as a woman. I am so happy and proud to be your sister."

This work was made to celebrate Lesbian Visibility Day 2020 on April 26th, 2020.



Watch: <https://youtu.be/xwzTDIk-xtQ>

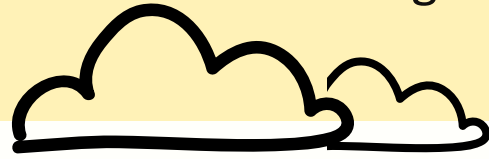


Dave Gerapusco

Dave Gerapusco is a young activist from the Philippines who is very passionate about singing. His undeniable talent and his strive have made him recipient of several champion titles in multiple singing competitions.

Besides singing, two of his passions are ships and dancing. Dave is currently studying to become a cruise ship manager and juggles his singing and activism during his free time. This multitasking leader joined Youth Voices Count Philippines, a regional network of young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex individuals in Asia-Pacific, in order to strengthen and defend Human Rights issues and youth empowerment.

Twitter: @GoleDave | @YVC_Official | IG: Dave_Gerapusco



Dave chose to perform "Rise Up" by Andra Day because it is a powerful song. Andra was motivated to write and sing the song to spread the message of perseverance during difficult times. For instance, Day sings "All we need is hope...don't forget we have each other." The message has been used as a beacon of hope. Andra Day wanted the song to uplift, restore hope and encourage people who are living in a tumultuous period. Day considered the cultural and social factors that are facing the society. Day was brought up in a rough neighborhood in South East San Diego. Some of her classmates were involved in blood gang. As such, she needed to address some of these evils in the society through performing arts. Some of her childhood friends had lost hope. She believed that the song would encourage them to rise again. For instance, in the chorus she sings "all we need, all we need is hope...and for that, we have each other...and for that we have each other...we will rise...we will rise." The lyrics are a beacon of hope to those who think that they have nothing to achieve in life. In spite of the difficulties of the day, people can still rise a thousand times and again to realize their dreams.

"Rise Up" Song by Andra Day

*You're broken down and tired
Of living life on a merry-go-round
And you can't find the fighter
But I see it in you so we gonna walk it out
Move mountains
We gonna walk it out
And move mountains*

*And I'll rise up
I'll rise like the day
I'll rise up
I'll rise unafraid
I'll rise up
And I'll do it a thousand times again
And I'll rise up
High like the waves*

*I'll rise up
In spite of the ache
I'll rise up
And I'll do it a thousand times again
For you
For you
For you
For you*

*All we need all we need is hope
And for that we have each other
And for that we have each other
And we will rise
We will rise
We'll rise
We'll rise*

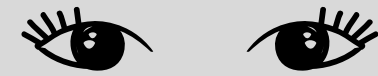
*I'll rise up
Rise like the day
I'll rise up
In spite of the ache
I will rise a thousand times again
And we'll rise up
High like the waves
We'll rise up
In spite of the ache
We'll rise up
And we'll do it a thousand times again
For you
For you
For you
For you*



Watch: <https://youtu.be/EBxgAiAclvs>



One Future Collective



OFC is a feminist, youth-led not for profit based in India, nurturing radical kindness in people, communities and organisations through the work we do on gender justice, feminist leadership and mental health. Our vision is a world built on social justice led by communities of care.

IG: onefuturecollective



FemJustice Haikus

FemJustice Haikus is a collection of poems co-created on the 17 August 2019 at the launch of One Future Collective's FemJustice Legal Centre in Mumbai, India. On this occasion, the audience was asked to co-write haikus about their idea of gender justice, gender-based violence and feminism. They did this by each writing one line before passing it on to another person. We have chosen to share some of the haikus we found most striking, through this booklet. Illustrations by Jerin Jacob, words by many.

1 To loiter in a park
Under the moon's smile
The thought terrifies

- By Sanaya, Manogni and Vandita

2 What is fair and unfair
What is moral and immoral
Only we know this

- By Anusha, Aahana and Nishma

3 There's a woman in me
I still don't know her very well
The operation is too expensive

- By Joanna, Febin and Guy



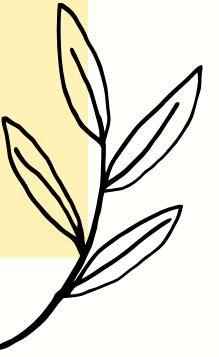
Watch: <https://youtu.be/6OZ2VdqeZqg>



Maria Sol Taule

I am Maria Sol Taule, 34, and working as a human rights lawyer in the Philippines. I currently serve as the legal counsel of Karapatan Alliance, a non-government organization working for the promotion and defense of human rights in the Philippines. I also moonlights as a visual artist who uses watercolor and acrylic as my main medium.

Twitter @soltaule



Resistance Amid the Pandemic

"My artwork entitled 'Resistance Amid The Pandemic' is made from acrylic on used tea bags and canvas. Recently, I have tried exploring and making artworks on teabags and coffee filters as a substitute material for paper and canvas. When Manila was placed on a lockdown, movement was restricted and it was a challenge for human rights workers to respond to cases of human rights violations as well as to those who are doing relief work. There has been a spike of cases of human rights violations because of alleged quarantine violations committed by ordinary folks who do not have any choice but to go out of their homes and fend for themselves and their families.



The Philippine government failed to make concrete plans to those who will be affected by the lockdown especially the poor. This has also been the subject of many of my artworks that I did while at home and monitoring the news during the 2-month long enhanced community quarantine imposed in the entire National Capital Region. At present, Philippines remains one of countries with the highest number of cases of covid-19 in Southeast Asia and the government continues to ignore our urgent demands for free mass testing and delivery of government aid to those who were affected by the economic impacts of the lockdown. Instead of addressing these very pressing matters, the government railroaded the passage of a draconian legislation called Anti-Terror Bill which will further put activists, human rights defenders and ordinary citizens to threats of human rights violations especially at this time when people are critical of the government's response to the pandemic. Our movements are currently restricted for health reasons but it should not hinder us to continuously struggle and fight for our rights. We put our masks on to protect ourselves and others but it should never silence our voices to protect those whose rights have been blatantly trampled upon."



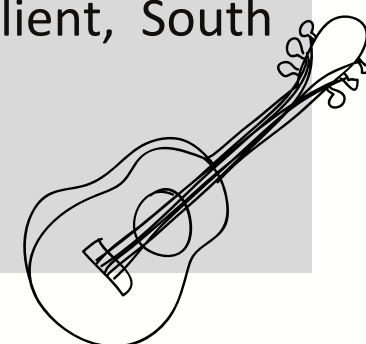
Watch: <https://youtu.be/TbMYRUmMmU4>



La Múcura

La Múcura (www.lamucura.org), is youth led organization focused on exploring the relationship between the arts and social transformation in South America. For the last seven years, their activism has taken them across Latin America threading a powerful network of community leaders, artists, and activists. Their research and art seeks to understand, feel and celebrate the complex and empowering relationship between music, social movements and community realities. The best way to get to know them is through their music. Their most recent CD title represents a diverse, creative and fragmented, yet deeply resilient, South America.

IG: lamucuramusica



"Our music transmits experiences, messages and sounds of our diverse and resilient South America. We believe in the arts as means for social transformation. The song presented is called *Canción Rural*, it is an homage to our leaders who defend rural South America, protecting our mountains, forests, and water sources. It also speaks strongly for water preservation. "

Canción Rural, *composed by Jimena AlmaRio*

*I breathe green earth, I breathe light blue
I breathe and feel the strength of my heart
I come from the footpath to the footpath I go
Come up, come up, come up, my good neighbor is my gift is
my song
Sing, so you won't forget
Always, to learn how to harvest
Life, to remember the land
Look, it's our home. It's our home.
The duty and love of living by the river
The duty and love of living
I hear a voice, ay...
Another voice lights up, ay
The voice denounces, ay*

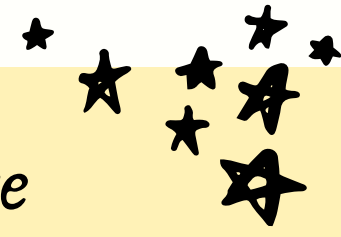
*The voice was silenced, there are
Another voice lights up, there's
Fearless voice, there's
Your voice is heard, there's
A thousand voices come alive
Strong river you hold me don't fail to come with us
Strong river you hold me don't fail to come with us
Strong river, strong river, strong river, strong river
Be with us, be with us, be with us, be with us.
I breathe earth green, I breathe clear blue, I breathe and
feel the strength, of my heart
My good neighbor is my gift is my song.*



Watch: <https://youtu.be/vD-wgP3Xbl4>



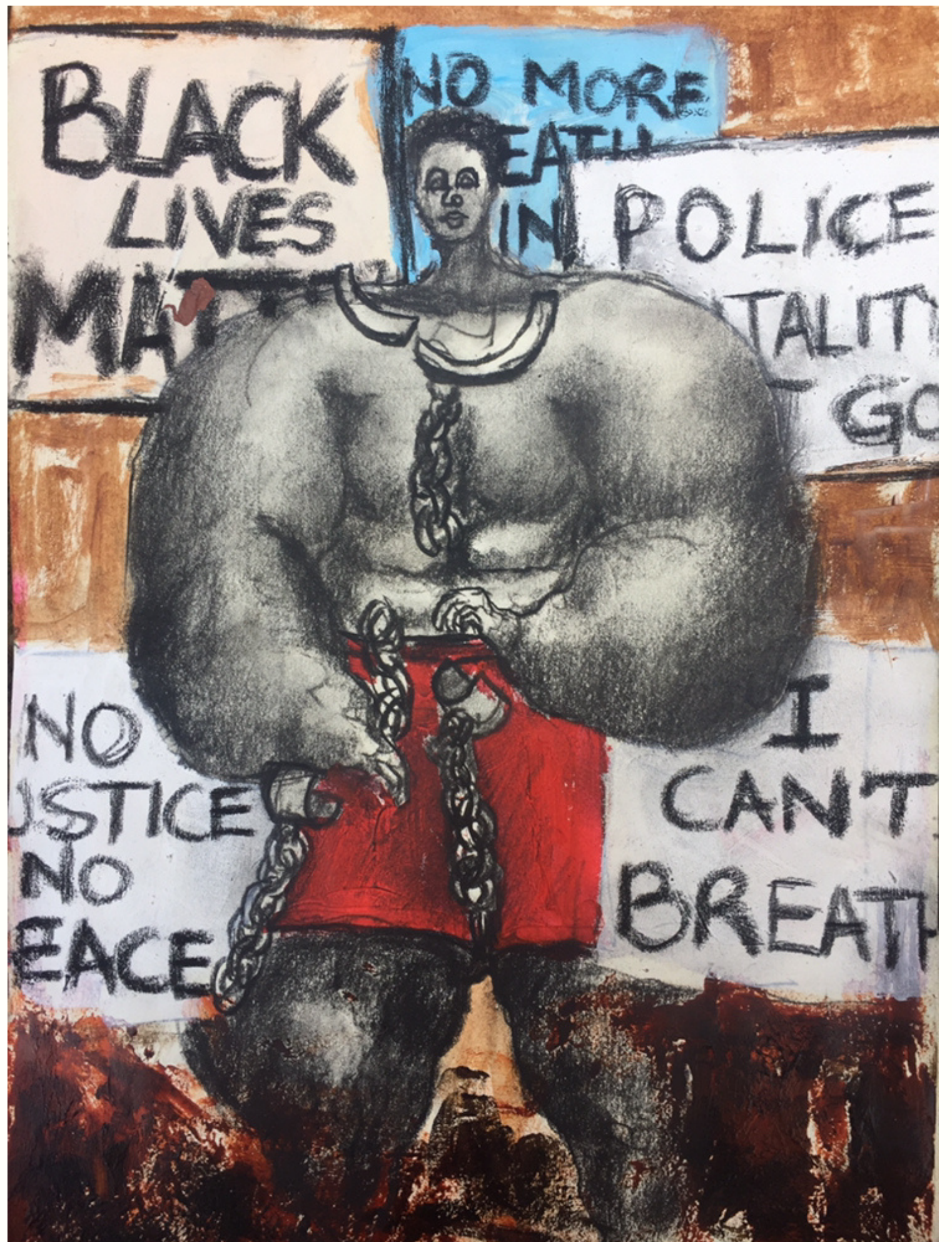
Lasisi, Babatunde Damilare



His art is based on the exploration and synergy of various materials as a tool for social commentary in addressing various issues in my environment and society, which he reimagines and recreates with the use of charcoal, newsprints, and pigment. The objects collected in his works are an integral part of his conversation. He is a graduate of the School of Arts, Design, and Printing, Yabatech with a specialization in painting, and is a pioneering member of Arts in Medicine Fellowship, where he inspires new AIM fellows through teamwork, civic engagement, volunteerism, collaboration, and exemplary leadership. He has participated in several group exhibitions, art workshops and a solo exhibition.

IG: lasisitunde

Since the Iowa states that “the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status”, why is there still disproportionate difference in treatment of racial discrimination? The council has failed to justify it as well. In order to move forward, we have to support, value and honour the contributions Black people have made in this country for centuries. It is time to repair the pain inflicted upon us. We deserve our rights to freedom, we deserve our right to live.



Watch: <https://youtu.be/Sp47NLHcEoQ>



Paraísos Invisibles

Paraísos Invisibles is a Colombian band that seeks to give new meaning to their Caribbean essence, finding inspiration in global electronics and elegant pop. The duo is formed by Andrea Roa and José Castillo, guitarist from Bomba Estéreo, a band with whom they have toured the world, playing in the most important festivals. After the success of their first two singles, Paraísos Invisibles and Champeta En Vinilo, the Barranquilleros released their first EP "Los Corales", made up of five original tracks, in November 2019.

IG: ParaísosInvisibles



"The song is an invitation to look for beauty in unexpected people and places. Many times, we are dazzled by the immensity of the ocean and the force of the waves, and we forget that if we look beneath the surface, we can find an unsuspected universe full of life and color. Being willing to listen to the stories and life testimonies of marginalized people without easy access to communication platforms opens the door to discover an endless number of talents and beauty that we never imagined and that can transform our lives."

Los Corales

*It's getting early in the morning
You got me guessing
Maybe you're thinking about me (Hey)
I'm confused by your look
It says everything and it says nothing*

*We're still here laughing
And time is running out
The real world awakens
The question remains open
I don't even know what I'm doing anymore.*

*In the wake of large ships
Coral blooms*

*What will be my game plan?
Do I launch my next attempt?
Or I keep the mystery for a moment
Ego anesthesia
Answers will come later*

*I breathe and calm down a bit
I like you but don't
Leave me the day
That you said you were coming
I remember that we're crazy*

*In the wake of large ships
Coral blooms*

*I searched my own truths in the depths
I swam in spirals among the corals
I searched in the depths
I swam among the corals*

*In the wake of large ships
Coral blooms*

Listen on Spotify: <http://bit.ly/ParaisosInvisiblesSpotify>

Listen on Deezer: <http://bit.ly/ParaisosInvisiblesDeezer>

Buy on iTunes: <http://bit.ly/ParaisosInvisiblesiTunes>

Paraísos Invisibles on Social Media:

Facebook - <http://bit.ly/ParaisosInvisiblesFacebook>

Instagram - <http://bit.ly/ParaisosInvisiblesInsta...>



Watch: <https://youtu.be/-cCy1EBzM5s>



Mawethu Nkosana

Mawethu Nkosana is a queer urban creative and LGBTI rights activist working in the Advocacy space. They curate the recently started podcasts "Living, Loving Freedom" and has written, worked intensively on the themes of human rights, race, love and gender. Amongst many other things, Mawethu is working on, they are in the final stages of compiling their debut poetry collection.

Poems

Dear God
I come to you
in
my queerness
Dying
Protesting
through prayer
Asking
you
In

The revolution
In God,
we trust
That we are named when we die
That we are remembered for
everything before death

When we are no longer shamed
or fearing the implications of
choosing ourselves
no longer scared or moved by
losing
In God we trust

To be held in honour somehow
To be remembered for life, no
matter how fickle and unfree

Dear God,
Kindly extend the favour
Of omnipresence and mercy
To queers
Life
and protection
In its expansiveness
and holiness
We die carelessly here,
Everyday
Just disappearing

We did not come here to die
We did not come here to die
We did not come here to die

Let our dying never be normalized
Let those who celebrate choke
Because we did not come here to
die
Or fight
We are tired
Of activism
It
Takes
away
Sometimes
breathe

Freedom,
Love.

Feel it
Mountains
cracked heels,
soul-ward
travel
Space
Inkling
jaw drop
coasts
neon
Light
Leaf
Like it is easy



Watch: https://youtu.be/_OyCu4quwgg

BREAKOUT ROOM DISCUSSIONS

The Artivism Showcase consisted of two parts: first, we enjoyed a live show with artist performances and the presentation of their artwork; after that, all the attendees had the opportunity to join one of three breakout rooms, divided by language (English, Spanish and French), to discuss with other attendees and with the featured activists more about the role of challenges and opportunities for activism around the world, as well as to share their own experiences and even to engage in creative dynamics. Here is a summary of what happened in each room.

English:

The English breakout room was a space for people to share their reflections after the showcase and to identify what art was for them.

What art is:

"Art is a way to challenge and connect at the same time. Art is a way for me to keep emotional hygiene, to be sane, to be here. Weapon of expression....to connect and thrive. Art is the only thing I can hold on to during this pandemic. I am so grateful for art. Art is the only thing that certain in my life during this uncertainties. Art means to zoom out of hectic city life. To me i create art in a different activities to preach Activist work in communities and right for the youths which the girls boys and children that are most vulnerable."

Creating Haikus:

Suhani Bhushan: "I watch the world burn. but I really don't feel scared. Like a phoenix we rise."

Pang Khee Teik: "There is a leaf with my heart. Flowing down a lonely river. To the sea of trees of hearts."

Nozipho Zypo Moyo: "Will I die and be remembered as a good wife, mother and daughter or I'd die as a lonely radical hero, which way should I go mama."

Moleboheng Rampou: "We will sing. We will ululate. We will be happy, joyful and free. We will all be one. Children of the world. One world."

Sinneh Lahai Sen Sesay: "Let move, move forward your passion for activism so you can be proud to be good Citizen in your country!!!"

Shupikai Gwabuya: "What else is there for me to explore in this world once I have conquered my heart's desires and seen the world evolve to kindness and authentic love ... Even from space."

Jacque Burgess: "Revolution!! Changing. Inspiring. Oh Revolution! Bringing rights and justice. I love you Revo. Make my day."

Sanaya Patel: "A revolution is a dance, a poem, a song. A revolution is a song, the words, you always knew. A revolution is finding someone to sing with."

Akechu Derrick: "Make revolution fun. Do it for the love of the people . For we have too much equality. It is not the authority of a man that matters but his practice for truth and justice."

Spanish:

In the group session with Spanish-speaking attendees, we had the great opportunity to speak with Jimena, one of the artists from La Múcura, a youth-led music group and social research organisation, about her experience using art and research to promote social transformation in Latin America.

It was very enriching to hear her more about their work and experiences and to understand how exciting it is for them to be able to mix these elements as a form of activism. Jimena shared how their music was sometimes the element that allowed them, as activists, to have access to spaces and people in complicated contexts. We also discussed that activists face many barriers, such as generating a sustainable livelihood at the individual and group level, expanding the reach of their art to a wider and more varied audience, and finding ways to measure the impact of art in processes of social transformation.

French:

After each participant introduced themselves, we all started to have conversations on the importance of context for inclusion. Some participants mentioned the lack of opportunities in their countries and thus the difficulty in promoting and implementing Diversity & Inclusion policies. There are also other local challenges, closely related to cultural aspects.

Then, the breakout room discussion focused on the need to be even more inclusive when these types of events take place. Ideas about not only raising awareness about ableism but also about how important it is to start normalizing these discussions, were brought up. There were some suggestions such as translating in sign language. All these issues have been included on the D&I agenda, as it is our compromise to always increase inclusiveness as much as possible based on the organizational capabilities.

Watch the full event here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjVaPkzjn04>

Learn more/join DIGNA:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CIVICUSDIGNA/>

Learn more about ICSW:

<https://www.civicus.org/icsw/index.php/>