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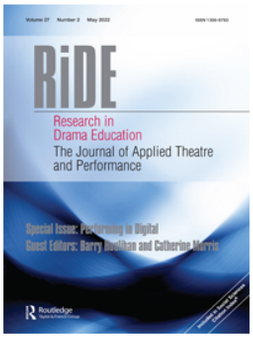

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Let Our Legacy Continue: beginning an archival journey a creative essay of the digital co-creation and hybrid dissemination of Windrush Oral Histories at the University of Greenwich's Stephen Lawrence Gallery

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ABSTRACT

How do archives start and who are they for? The Caribbean Social Forum, based in Woolwich in the Royal Borough of Greenwich, London, are currently considering these questions as they look to preserve the stories of over 600 Caribbean members who the media have framed as 'the Windrush Generation'. The paper argues that co-created projects, where the lead is de-centered away from the university institution itself, might begin to decolonise knowledge paradigms and allow for new forms of knowledge exchange.

KEYWORDS

Archives; Windrush; knowledge exchange; community; decolonise

Introduction

Let Our Legacy Continue is a partnership project between the Caribbean Social Forum (CSF) and the University of Greenwich's Centre for Applied Sociology Research and the Drama Theatre and Performance Research Group. This is the first time these three partners have worked together on an extended project, which, when imagined, would include a phase of workshops leading to a live gallery installation at the universities Stephen Lawrence Gallery, based in the heart of Greenwich, London, at its Stockwell Street site. The plan was to create an exhibition to share some of the stories from members of the CSF concerning their impact and contribution to UK society, creating an archive of personal histories which could be shared for further generations. The CSF, which was established in 2015, has a membership of 600 older people with heritages from across the Caribbean territories. The stories captured in this collaborative project charts their journeys to the UK as part of the now called Windrush Generation, speak to memories from home,

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their experience of living and working in Britain and the legacy the members leave behind.

This interdisciplinary, co-created article tracks the trajectory of the projects evolution: from an idea and gallery proposal back in December 2019, through the uncertainty of the pandemic which forced us to shift our approach online, the co-created online workshops (August 2020) and then into both a live gallery exhibition (October 2020) and online gallery (*launched* November 2021). The paper uses the concept of 'personal trajectories' (Dreier 1999) as a way to describe how each project partner encountered and navigated their work quickly to digital forms of co-creation. Each member adapting and responding from unique situated positions. This article will present the concept of trans-situated expertise as a way of recognising these distinct knowledge positions, both lived, artistic and academic (Nicolini et al. 2017). Even in naming these different positions, the paper recognises that these are not distinct from one another; instead, each member of the team carries with them a unique offer: thinking artists, scholarly leaders, and artist academics. The territories of expertise porous.

The paper asserts that the stories of Black African-Caribbean people need to be told and their contribution to British society recognised. Despite a strong oral history tradition in Caribbean communities, all too often these histories and stories of lived experiences are not heard. The absence of knowledge concerning the important role of Caribbean's to UK society is arguably the primary contributory factor in the Windrush Scandal, which saw thousands of Caribbean people, who had contributed to the rebuilding of UK's post-war infrastructure and public services, wrongfully detained and deported from the UK (Gentlemen 2019). The invisibility of these stories in public and policy debates mean that the public is unaware of Caribbean people's contribution to UK society and as such are invisible in public debate. Furthermore, when stories are captured, they are often archived in ways which are not accessible. As such, being able to access these stories once told, through the process of archiving, is also central to the project.

The live and online gallery create living archival documents which share the contributions of each storyteller. Instead of duplicating this work, this article offers a retrospective on *Let Our Legacy Continue* to date (2020–2021) and was written in response to a number of reflections, where only some of the project team were able to meet. As such, while this article offers multiple readings, it recognises that it does not fully represent all the group's voices and that other voices will have more to say. In this article, we refer to two teams: the project team and the storytellers. This article is co-written by the project team including the head of the CSF, researchers from the university, professional curators, and artists. All but one of this team have African-Caribbean heritage and all had working knowledge and prior relationships with the CSF. A set of connected relationships reflected on in this article. Here, we share the learning from the project team, who's disparate professional and personal backgrounds from inside and outside of academia came together to support the telling of Caribbean Elder Stories. We will refer to the eleven Caribbean Elders who participated in the project as the storytellers. Storytellers who volunteered to participate in the project and who formed strong bonds with each other over lockdown. We will unpack this designed relationship, between the project team and the storytellers, as part of the overall project design. The paper clearly separates the work of workshop curation, art install, photography, film editing, and wider technical practices as roles held by the project team while the work of storytelling lay with the

storytellers. This separation allows the paper to reflect and learn from the projects three co-creation strategies, so that they may be used as a framework for future co-created projects. These strategies were: firstly, championing the knowledge in communities and the ongoing process of relationship building. Secondly, the use of trans-situated expertise (a term this article will unpack) from the project team and community storytellers, and thirdly, the specific online methodologies created in response to both the pandemic and the individuals within the project: storytellers and project team. In this way, the labour of writing this article remains with the project team and will be used at the beginning of the next iteration of the project with the storytellers to adapt our processes and practices. This divide between teams is in some ways artificial, as the relationship between participants was porous, allowing individuals to shape and steer the ways in which the project would come about.

This article deliberately leaves the conversation open, as the team continue to move forward, from positions of yesterday, to the here and now and the future. To do this, we first present a short critical framework which contextualises the work within a wider interdisciplinary field. The aim here is not to force the project into a bound academic frame but rather to allow for thinking that speaks to the practice of co-creation, and to form a dialogue and conversation which does not end with this article. In this context, 'theoretical knowledge' forms only one voice in a rich conversation which looks to the future of both the university's relationship with organisations in its surrounding area, and the work of the CSF. This article maps our conversations to date; a conversation which is practice-based. The paper will unpack the terms of trajectory and trans-situated expertise, while aligning these modes of thinking to the work itself. The article takes on a narrative structure, allowing us to think through the project as time-bound: unfolding through multiple activities which have beginnings, middles, and ends; while also considering time as a precious resource which can run away from us all if we are not careful.

While we celebrate what we have achieved together, we do not paint a panacea. We share our pitfalls as learning points which we hope others may use to support the structuring of their projects. We use the terms *yesterday*, *now*, and *tomorrow* as a framing device threefold. Firstly, in the exhibition, as words displayed on walls, visually describing the journey of the storyteller's past, their lived experience now, and the legacies they leave behind. Secondly, as a project ethos, recognising that by sharing the stories both physically and online, the creative art works form part of the storyteller's legacy, left behind for future generations. Thirdly, that the project remains live, with the possibility of growing the exhibition as the work tours to Caribbean Communities in the UK, extending the reach of this conversation and making new connections.

A critical and practice-based lens

This article tells the story of how and why the project *Let Our Legacy Continue* happened. To do this, the paper talks through, either directly or indirectly, the heterogeneous nature of the project teams trans-situated expertise and rich histories: as individuals and as a group. This section provides points of reference which we hope will aid the reader in thinking through how co-created projects between universities and communities come about, the roles in which people play in those projects and the practices of individuals

within project teams. To do this, the section briefly thinks through notions of trajectories, Community-University Partnerships, and the trans-situated nature of expertise. It pairs these concepts with practical outputs of the gallery itself. The practice-based research speaking to and through a critical lens.

In *Becoming Civic Centred: A Case Study of the University of Greenwich's Bathway Theatre based in Woolwich* (Ellis et al. 2020), the concept of trajectory was presented from a Dreierien perspective (Dreier 1999). The concept describes the ways in which individuals navigate personal paths through multiple situated social practices. Here, individuals navigate multiple situated practices which hang together in a nexus of social practices (see Dreier 1999, 23). As individuals move from one activity to the next, they bring with them the wealth of experience from across their life's nexus and as such, bring the knowledge gained in those different previous activities to each knew activity. In our work, the notion of trajectory may be considered twofold. Firstly, it is bound to the trans-atlantic journeys of our storytellers, the physical trajectories of British Caribbean people journeying from multiple Caribbean territories to the UK as part of the so-called Windrush Generation. A term which refers to people arriving in the UK between 1948 and 1971 from Caribbean territories to fill labour shortages in many key industries across the UK. Their paths a physical web. These trajectories not only described in the oral histories shared through video, but physically mapped on an old Trans-Atlantic map printed to the Size of A0 clad behind a clear Perspex sheet (see Figure 1). The journey lines of the storytellers physically drawn digitally while a sign next to it asks those attending the gallery to draw their own personal journey lines. A crisscross of paths across generations. Secondly and importantly, the notion of trajectories might be conceived through the heterogeneous

Figure 1. An old Trans-Atlantic map.

personal trajectories of the storytellers, taking place across trans-local social practices. Here, each member of the project brings with them a nexus of both rich and deep knowledge. Dreier uses the term trans-local practice to describe how a social activity takes place across and is situated in multiple local contexts (Dreier 1999, 23). In *Let Our Legacy Continue*, trans-locality is bound to zoom working. Each project member working from their own home, yet tele-present in others. A portal between the private spaces of people's everyday lives and collected workspace where co-created activity emerged. Outside of these zoom-mediated experiences, text messages and phone calls create further mobile ways of working, with our experiences forged by the many networked locales of tele-present creative practices.

Like the case study of the *Bathway Theatre*, we use the term community to include all of the roles within the project team, from the CSF, artists, curators students, and academics – removing the privileging of academic expertise (Ellis et al. 2020, 316–317). Instead, we recognise how each contributor offered a direct set of skills and situated perspectives which would be used to enable the creation of the work. This article supports the assertion that the term 'University-Community' partnerships create a 'false binary' (IBID) which privileges academic knowledge over wider forms of knowledge production. Instead, within this article, we make space for the knowledge of communities to be shared, and equally valued in the situated spaces of universities. In doing so, we also recognise that knowledge from this co-created project is situated outside of classic institutional domains and through the practice of co-creation, the work is for and by the CSF. This way of thinking resonating with current discourses in theatre and performance. Swati Arora, for example, rethinks the notion of the centre, arguing for universities to become porous or leaky spaces, where the work of universities might 'leak out from university buildings into the streets and beyond' (Arora 2021, 18). Extending this idea further, we suggest that a reciprocal flow is also necessary, where the work or others and the knowledge formed out of co-created activity is allowed space to move into the institution. A true knowledge exchange.

From a practice-based perspective, we present Nicolini et al.'s (2017) term 'trans-situated expertise' as a way of exploring how teams, with different knowledge and expertise, bring their own experience to projects. In Nicolini et al.'s case study, the term trans-situated expertise arrives out of observations of a surgical team conducting the complex activity of Aortic Heart Valve surgery. Members of the surgical team worked together to resolve complex problems. In this setting, during heart surgery practice, newly situated challenges emerge which were unforeseen, or could not be seen until the surgery had begun. In Nicolini et al.'s analysis, there is a recognition of how each team member has travelled unique trajectories and brings with them networks of knowledge forged out of trans-local experiences. In the group activity of heart surgery, as unique situations arise, those with the most useful past situated experience steps forward to resolve the problem. This is not always the most qualified or most senior but the person who is best situated to speak to the challenges as they arise. In this way, expertise is considered as 'social, historically situated, distributed and materially entangled' (6). It recognises how expertise, in its many forms exists in many locales, residing not in individuals but in the many contexts of social practices. Here expert activity, either conducted as an individual or in a collective is inherently situated in multiple and connected contexts (3). Moving further, the paper frames knowledge as something which circulates and flows between

the webs of expert situated activity: it is 'trans-situated'. Within this knowledge flow, the multiple centres of activity have 'different levels of perceived prestige' (16) and as such, there is a danger that the flow of knowledge is unequal from one centre to the next.

The notion of distributed centres presented by Nicolini et al. (2017) speaks to Swati Arora's manifesto and indeed our work in nuanced ways. Where is their privilege in the academy and how might this work sit? What activities and ways of working in the team were privileged over others and what were the consequences of this? Thinking this through from the point of view of *Let Our Legacy Continue*, we recognise each team member as having multiple and specific skills in multidisciplinary areas. These included participatory arts practice, project management, community development, arts curation, photography, and digital mediation to name a few. In our project, we looked to secure equitable partnership where knowledge might flow between each situated activity of the project community. A flow of knowledge we recognise as *knowledge exchange*. In this way, the live and now virtual installation becomes a document of this knowledge exchange process, which along with this article creates archival records of not only the stories and histories of the Caribbean Elders, but also, the relationships and processes of capturing these stories. An archive of the relationships between the CSF and the university, the project team and the storytellers, the relationships forged within and across both teams.

This article uses 'thick description' and images to tell the story of our initial journey. Here, 'thick description' refers to the description and interpretation of situated social activity, in this case, the co-creation of the live and online gallery. It is being used as a way of capturing the web of social interactions across the project team and as such provides a method to unpack the ways in which trans-situated expertise is navigated (see also Ponterotto 2006, 542–543). This enables the paper to firstly unpack how and why we, as a project team, decided to create the exhibition, and secondly, to showcase some of the work which emerged out of the project. By presenting this web of ideas next to the images of some of the co-created work, the reader is invited to make connections between theory and practice. By focusing on the early processes of the project, we present the early yet crucial decision-making stages of co-created projects which are often overlooked. To begin, the paper moves to situate the work within a boarder project history to understand how relationships were formed and where the initial ideas emerged from.

Building relationships beyond the academy and championing community knowledge

In December 2019, early conversations began between Pamela Franklin, Professor Tracey Reynolds, and David Hockham. This was catalysed by an internal call from the University Galleries curator for work to be programmed in the university galleries for the academic year 2020–2021. The seed of the conversation planted by Franklin earlier that year as she wanted to ensure the stories of her mother's generation, the since named Windrush Generation, were not lost. Further motivation was drawn from the 2018 Windrush Scandal which saw not only the government destroy legal documents which proved British Caribbean People's citizenship, but which also wrongly detained British citizens who had arrived at the UK to support their mother-country in a post-war Britain.

At the time of these early conversations, Franklin, Reynolds, and Hockham had been in each other's orbit for 4 years. The CSF was founded relatively recently by Franklin in 2015, to combat loneliness. Franklin had recognised the limited opportunities for her mother, and others of a similar age, to come together in the Borough of Greenwich to meet, play dominoes or simply talk. Franklin herself recognised how she felt lonely and so with vision, started the CSF which now has around 600 members and which pre-pandemic met regularly at the Tramshed on a Thursday. The Tramshed is a theatre which is a partner organisation to the University of Greenwich's Bathway Theatre, based in Woolwich.

Since 2019, Franklin, Hockham, and Reynolds began to work on smaller projects together. This relationship began after a short conversation between Franklin and Hockham in 2018. At that time, Hockham was the Bathway theatre's senior technician who had become a co-producer of a community engagement project called What About Us: Empowering Community voices (2018) (Ellis et al. 2020). During a coffee and cake break at the launch event of What About Us, held at the Bathway Theatre, Franklin noted 'It's not what the university can do for us Dave, it's what we can do for the University'. These words had profound impact on Hockham's vision of the theatre, affecting the ways in which he thought and worked. These words have continued to resonate with him and since being promoted to Theatre manager in July 2019, has become keen to understand how the resource of universities might leak out into the spaces which surround them and in turn, how local communities might be welcomed in, and their knowledge championed. This now resonating with the words of Swati Arora and concepts now framed as a search to understand how we might de-centre traditional knowledge paradigms and ways of working; routed in post-colonial thinking (Thiong'o 1986; Ellis et al. 2020; Arora 2021). This initial meeting in 2018 lead to Hockham introducing Franklin to Professor Tracey Reynolds, then the Head of Research for the school of Humanities and Social Sciences. Tracey Reynolds's expertise includes the co-creation of creative participatory methods in social research, with a focus on women from migrant backgrounds (Erel, Reynolds, and Kaptani 2017) and transnational families, kinship, ethnicities, and identity (Reynolds 2011). This introduction led to Franklin and Reynolds co-creating several events including, but not exclusively, Windrush day celebrations in 2019 at the Bathway Theatre, with conferences and seminars held in partnership with Greenwich Maritime Museum. These projects providing the staging ground to consider a more extensive project. That project we now know as Let Our Legacy Continue (2020–Present). The importance of this work was not lost on the project team, each were conscious that any stories told needed to be told in ways which were agreed by the storytellers themselves and the material collected should be owned by the CSF and made accessible for future generations. In this way the stories, documents and materials shared for and created as part of this project were to be nurtured and cared for in ways which are in direct contrast to the records of Caribbean people which were held and destroyed by the UK government as part of Windrush Scandal.

Tracey Reynolds proposed a co-design methodology where participants can share feedback at iterative stages of a project so that the evolution of work is agreed with the entire team. As such, in these early conversations, an overall gallery design was not crafted, but rather a project brief was formed; to co-create with arts experts and with elders of the CSF to create a gallery exhibition. In this gallery, stories of community

elders from the Windrush generation would be showcased in artistic ways which would create archival records for future generations. The co-creation methods to create these archival records might be later used by the CSF in future iterations. Within this project design, decolonising as a concept can be discovered threefold, and where part of the originality of this work lies. Firstly, the exhibition itself would physically be colonised by stories of the CSF, where the lives of the individual storytellers are attached to the walls and where the gallery space became a site of porous interactions between the university and wider community. In this first iteration, the temporal nature of a month-long exhibition does not alter the knowledge paradigms of institutions and by itself may be seen as a token gesture by the university to its community partner. However, through a second lens, the method of co-design de-prioritises the knowledge held by university experts and instead requires a need to share and adapt ways of working so that they might be co-created with both project team and storytellers. Through a third lens, the project was seen as an initial phase for a longer and more sustained relationship. In this way, the methods of working, the relationships built, and the knowledge exchanged will continue over a significant period. A commitment to keep listening and learning from each other, and to share what is learnt with our respective organisations and wider community and academic partners. This article is part of that sharing.

Using arts experts to create archival material: lockdown but not shutdown

On the 23rd of March 2020, Boris Johnson, the UK Prime Minister, declared the first national Lockdown. The COVID-19 pandemic had arrived. Within a week of the announcement, Franklin, with the support of the wider CSF, had adapted to zoom and had started daily online conversations. What was once a one day a week meet up at the Tramshed became a 6 day a week online zoom programme which ranged from karaoke to bible study, and which later moved into a programme of bereavement and grief services as the pandemic took hold. With a sense of conviction, Franklin was keen for the services offered by the CSF to continue and knew that this project should go ahead, no matter its form.

Members of the CSF had started to curate archival material since 2018. At that time, members past photos were displayed as part of an Autograph exhibition titled 'Beyond Windrush' at Woolwich Library (Autograph 2018). Autograph, an organisation who champion photographers and film makers and who shed light on questions around social justice, representation, and race. Through this connection, Franklin had been introduced to Dr Ingrid Pollard, international photographer and artist who had been commissioned the previous year to hand tint five large-scale prints of postcards from Jamaica (Autograph 2017). In April 2020, in a meeting to discuss how the project might continue in digital ways, Pollard became a natural choice. At the time, it was unclear how photography would play a part, given that nobody could meet live to be photographed, yet the resultant exhibition would not have been the same without Pollards eye or photographic expertise. Using her digital camera to take high-definition photos of her computer screen and the zoom conversations, Pollard documented the activity of the workshops with the storytellers. The zoom aesthetic was something which many tried to escape from when documenting the work over the pandemic. These photographs of zoom conversations, hung in the live gallery space, became portals into the lives and personal

spaces of the storytellers. They captured personal and intimate moments. Among the zoom gallery, you can see Pollard and her camera, hidden in the crowd of online participants (see Figure 2). These photographs sat alongside some of the previously captured work from the 2018 exhibition; the past and the present connected by the walls of the gallery.

At the same time, Franklin proposed Jean Campbell as a curator and a project facilitator. Campbell's interest in the project stemmed from several viewpoints. She had sadly lost both of her parents. Her father arrived in the UK in the 1950s and mother in the 1960s and so there was a yearning to hear more stories of 'the coming here', from others. While Campbell herself may be seen as part of the wider Windrush generation, arriving here with her sister in the 1960s, she wanted to hear from slightly older people's stories and histories. From a professional standpoint, Campbell had been interested in and had worked with the histories of the forming of the Caribbean and the Trans-Atlantic slave trade for many years in curatorial spaces: education, galleries, and museums. She looked to take the opportunity to work with positive legacies to try and balance out some of the horrific aspects of the history. From a third perspective, Campbell is an expert in working with groups of people and enjoys findings ways to enable people to share their unique stories and to make sure they feel comfortable to talk, bringing 45 years of experience to the project. Campbell deployed her skills and knowledge from an MA in narrative Environments, to map draft designs of the exhibition space. This included an understanding of how stories and themes could unfold in the gallery space, where component parts could be understood narratively by audiences journeying around the exhibition.

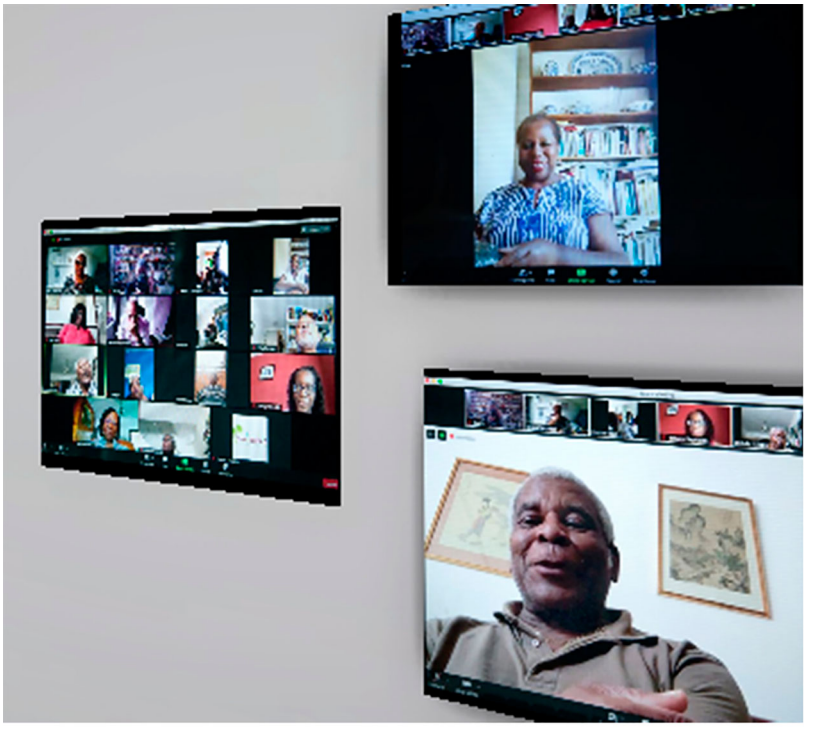

Figure 2. Pollard and her camera, hidden in the crowd of online participants.

With the expertise of Pollard and Campbell secured, planning meetings took place in June and July 2020. It was agreed that Franklin would recruit up to 12 participant volunteers, who became known as 'the storytellers', to meet across 6 weeks in a series of workshops between 21 July and 25 August. The term storytellers appearing more fitting than simply participants. This was their stories which they told. Storytellers received a £50 Love2Shop Voucher as a token towards their contribution to the project and it was agreed that anything shared could be redacted at any time in the project. Having moved online, zoom workshops would be recorded and there was a general idea that these would be later edited and exhibited as part of the exhibition. The zoom workshops created collaborative environments. Space would be given for each member to share their story which would be heard by the other members on the call. Opportunities for others to comment agree with or share different versions were left in so that stories became conversations which required the participants to actively listen and build complex and nuanced narratives. In this way, once installed, the listener too might begin to build on the stories and remember alternative iterations.

At this point in the project, there was a divide in thinking. The first is that we craved a live event to share any work that was created. As such, we championed the idea that we would exhibit in the Stephen Lawrence Gallery as first planned. On the other hand, it became clear that the pandemic was disproportionately affecting people with Black African and Caribbean heritages and significantly, those over 50 and those with underlying health conditions. In effect, those groups who this project directly engaged with. As such, the idea of an online gallery was also proposed, providing access for both the storytellers and the wider CSF community. What we did not realise at this stage was simply how much work and time this meant. It effectively doubled, perhaps tripled workloads, during a pandemic and we soon realised that within the team, we did not have the time, or the skill set to simply edit the vast material that were generated during the workshops, let alone transfer the work for online viewing. To begin to support that workload, at the beginning of July, Adele Chambers joined the team as a research intern and in early August, Shamica Ruddock, a digital specialist, also came on board.

When Chamber's joined the team, she had just completed her second year studying sociology at the University. Joining the project as an intern, Chambers noted how the gallery work, which reflected on the past and thought through the contribution that people from the Caribbean communities made to British society today, was important. From a personal perspective, Chambers noted how the project enabled personal growth. The project allowed her to identify not just as someone from African-Caribbean heritage, but also able to connect to the journey of the storytellers who arrived in the UK, prompting her to think through what this might mean from a Black British standpoint now. A set of reflections which Chambers carried through into her final year dissertation on the everyday lived reality of racism and racial inequality of African-Caribbean people in the UK. Chamber's work on the project became invaluable, responsible for the transcription of every recorded online workshop. This allowed for accurate editing notes to be shared online with the team, as editors could make notes over transcripts. The text could also then be used for accurate captioning for online consumption. The footage totalling around 20 h.

Ruddock became the final member of the project team, who came in as a digital specialist to support the creation of the live gallery's counterpart, the online gallery.

This uses the online platform artsteps, a freeware which allows the users to create an online gallery (see https://tinyurl.com/LetOurLegacy). As the project emerged, this role became the lynch pin to the editing of the footage. To place this in context, the final workshop was on the 25th of August. From here both Pollard and Campbell tracked through the hours of footage to mark editing positions on the transcripts which then required both rough edits, to ensure the narrative of each video made sense from start to end, and then further edits, to polish the transitions. This vast workload was required for the live gallery launch at the beginning of October. Four, one-hour long videos were created and played on four monitors within the live gallery space forming a critical component of the live exhibition. Three of these are now available in the online gallery.

Co-creating in new online participatory methods

It became apparent that running workshops online is different to live ways of working, requiring the design and creation of various performative rituals which were created in response to this new way of working. We describe these rituals before talking through the ways in which the rituals enabled elements of the work gallery to be created, a process of co-creation between the storytellers and the project team.

As already discussed, it was recognised early on that there would be six online workshops. Each workshop would be themed, and these themes would map onto the trajectory of the storytellers. These themes were memories of Motherland, Decision to Leave Homes, First Encounters in the UK, and Legacies. These narrative themes would map onto the gallery's walls, telling the story of the eleven storytellers from the Caribbean to the UK, their lives lived, and the positive legacies they each leave behind. Each workshop carefully mapped in workshop plans and shared allowing all involved to follow along (see Figure 3).

To speak to these themes, storytellers were invited to bring objects and photographs to the screen. These physical objects used as prompts to support and unpack stories. The

From Motherland Memories to Mother Country Realities: The legacy continues ··· Workshop Plans - **SESSION 3 (04/08/2020)**

Participants: Caribbean elders (from CSF) **Facilitators:** Jean Campbell and Ingrid Pollard +++ Tracey Reynolds and Adele Chambers

Pamela- Host – (managing platform - may join us-) Velmar McGregor to be our key group support person.

Timing: 12.45- 2-30pm ··· **Starting:** 21st July to 25th August (. 6 sessions) ··· **Platform:** Zoom ··· **Group:** 12 (+ 1 from abroad)

Time	Activity	Purpose	Materials + format options
12.45 -	Zoom log –on (glitches)		
1.00 -1. 08	**Welcome and introductions** 1. → Greet participants (**Pamela ?)** 2. → Etiquette- ··managing Zoom (Reminder) **3.** → Themes for the day. **Memories of Mother Country and/or the decision to leave ·· AND First Encounters and early experiences**	• → How is everyone?- • → Info to share for today • → Reflections from last session?	
1.08– 1.15	**Practicalities-** • → Rules of engagement • → Confidentiality/ share what feels comfortable • → **Photography-Zoom-and objects** • → **Next week – break out rooms** • → • → Any Questions?	o → Reminders o → **Ingrid –** Part of exhibition preparation o → Prepare the group for format change	
1.	**Map of the Caribbean- and the UK**	o → Augmented map of the Caribbean and UK o → Reference to both the original journey **and** the journey of this project o → Build group cohesion-	o → Gather information o → Prepare maps with routes.
	Gentle hands and face massage.		
1.30 –(5 mins)	**Comfort Break**		

Figure 3. Extract of workshop plans.

hot comb, the lunch box, the paraffin heater, and copper kettle became objects, routed in the storytellers past that connected individuals both to the Caribbean but also to the UK. These objects, among others, causing much discussion among those working at the gallery, many of whom remember a childhood with rooms heated by paraffin lamps, or whistling kettles on the stove. A reminder that Black Caribbean Histories are shared British histories (see Figure 4). These objects sat on plinths within the gallery and the stories unfolding through video footage and Pollard's photography.

Whilst the macro structures of the gallery had a beginning, middle, and end, Campbell recognised the importance of setting up microstructures within the workshops themselves. A series of rituals that would allow storytellers to move into the digital space. To begin, this meant that time was given over to check in which each storyteller to understand how people were. This perhaps made more crucial because of the pandemic, where individuals were having limited interactions with each other. Next, the rules of each session were established, and the reinforcement of these rules remembered from one session to the next, recognising the need to feel comfortable with what is to be shared, given its public audience. In the workshops, the zoom platform presented further challenges. As the storytellers and project team were physically distant, it was recognised that being tele-present made people feel physically disconnected, sitting in front of the screen, causing individuals to disassociate with their bodies. Noticing this, Campbell introduced a series of self-massages, waking up our faces, hands, and eyes, to make us feel present in our own physical space.

In each workshop, sections were presented, outlining, and explaining what was about to come. This enabled storytellers to move through the work and signposted them to ways of online interaction. What emerged is that storytellers became very comfortable to talk, and that meant that time limits for stories had to be imposed. This ensured

Figure 4. Objects on Plinths.

that everyone was able to speak. In this way, the stories were self-edited in the workshops by the storytellers who, with the project team, recognised the importance of all the voices in the workshop space. As stories were shared you can see the nods and smiles, the quiet agreements, or the need to augment others' comments with changes or variations, to add their own voice and create a divergent path. There were moments of disagreement too. Discussions on religion potentially divisive. These conversations allowed to happen as the individual truths were respected and views discussed in ways which were not accusatory but open. Offered rather than judged.

At the end of each session, the workshops would come a close. It became important to recap what they had done and make sure everyone left the space feeling emotionally, mentally, and physically well. There was a recognition that when people left the call they were not moving between physical spaces. This meant that if upset, angry, or sad, the emotion would stay with them in ways which might have dispersed if they were to move between different physical locations. While 3 h was often put aside for the workshops, there were also phone calls and group messages. This meant that if time ran out, memories re-lived or difficult emotions described, people could talk. While these mechanisms were always part of the initial project strategy, there appeared to be a greater need for when working online. As such, we urge those attending to similar projects to consider this from the outset ensuring the project team have enough resources and support so that individuals are listened to throughout the process. It was this careful and held approach that meant that participants felt supported and allowed the group to bond. Even today, the group keep their WhatsApp group alive, a legacy from these online workshop conversations.

The challenges encountered by the project team when moving online

Adapting to online working so rapidly changed how work was produced and created several challenges for the project team. The co-created making methods described at the project's inception were thought of as tangible physical craft materials which could be worked on together in real time and required little technical expertise. Moving online, while the collaborative conversations were documented and used verbatim, the recordings and photographs created digital objects which were difficult to instantly share back with the group. These mediums required specific sets of artistic and technical expertise. The project team, as a collective, had the trans-situated expert knowledge among them, but individuals would need to first process and work the digital material before being able to share it back to the group. As such, it became important that those who handled and transformed the material did so in ways which were pre-agreed with the storytellers. Yet, given the scale of the project, difficulty in sharing large file sizes online and the time it takes to edit large volumes of recorded materials, the first-time storytellers could see much of the finished videos was at the private gallery launch, just before the gallery opened. It was agreed that if anybody was not happy, material could be taken down before the public could enter. At this stage, all storytellers signed off the project exhibits. In the online gallery, after re-reviewing the material a video was removed on the request of one of the participants. In this way, the online working methods expanded the time between iterative review cycles in the co-design process. The live gallery and online gallery forming two clear cyclical iterations for the project. In future iterations, this time to be able to reflect would be built into project timelines.

To try and understand the vast quantity of materials being created and the new ideas which emerged in the project, a mapping exercise became central to communicating ideas around space and installation, sharing ideas to the storytellers, project team and that of the wider gallery and install teams. Due to the nature of co-created projects and the emerging methods of online production, it was often unclear what the material would be until the last moment. It was Campbell who had the challenge to visualise how the many components of the gallery would come together in the space, physically numbering and theming walls on printed 3D renders of the gallery (see Figure 5). These are then photographed or scanned back in to share with the team. A time-consuming and meticulous process of back and forth.

The maps became a blueprint to lay out the work in the gallery spaces. Due to limited time, and the dimensions of the screen which Pollard was taking photos of, most prints were sized at standard paper sizes, A0–A4. With the need to install the space with limited personnel, due to COVID-19's social distancing guidelines, we used the correct size scrap paper to physically stick to the walls and printed thumbnails of photos stuck in the Centre of them. This novel approach was devised out a need to communicate a vast amount of visual data including position, dimensions, and relationships with other elements to the gallery installation technician who could not be in the room at the same time. It was also relatively quick, which meant the team could utilise the limited time in the space to resolve other more complex problems, such as the corruption of digital files, the running of power for monitors or the hanging of banners which housed the central objects, playing with notions of the urban and the sea.

We are now also aware how communicating online, over zoom, was new to all the team. We had to learn new online communication styles, all within the context of the pandemic. At the time of planning, we envisaged the online gallery would take perhaps 10–14

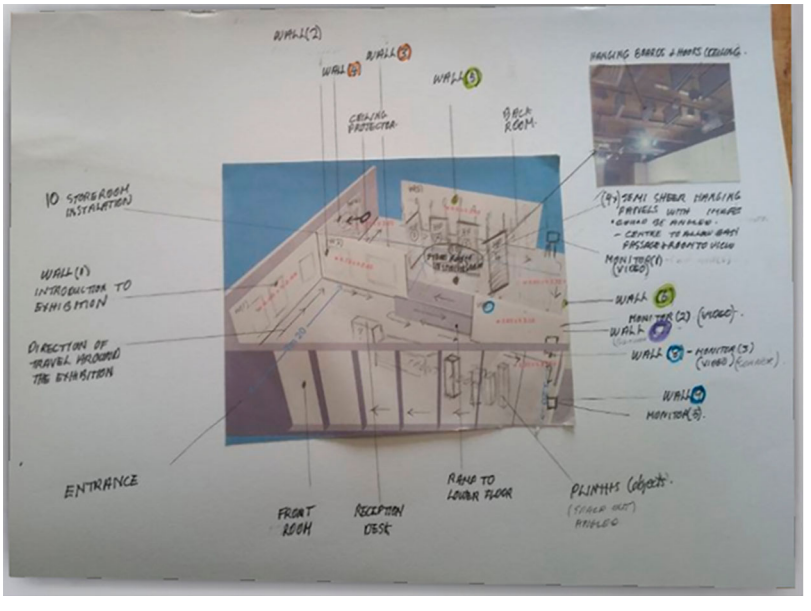

Figure 5. Mapping the Gallery Space.

days but as work progressed and the scale of the task emerged coupled with the amount of video editing for the live space, it became clear that significantly more time was required. This unforeseen increase in time and labour created tensions in the group and challenged some of the relationships which had been built in the team. In hindsight, another member of the team dedicated to video editing was required and more time should have been allocated for editing videos to be shared back before they launched in the gallery exhibition. This would have garnered a healthier project workflow and our word of caution for those embarking on similar projects is to not under-estimate the time it takes to edit and put together short films within a wider project of exhibited items.

Conclusion

This article identifies three project strategies to support the co-creation of material for community exhibitions and archives. These are distinct from each other yet are connected in situated and networked ways across teams from both within and beyond the academy and combined, offers a framework to de-centre knowledge paradigms in universities. The three strategies are: firstly, championing the knowledge in communities and the ongoing process of relationship building. Secondly, the use of trans-situated expertise from the project team and community storytellers, and thirdly, the specific online methodologies created in response to both the pandemic and the individuals within the project: storytellers and project team. By working in this way, the co-created material documents, exhibits, and archives plural narratives. The primary goal of the project was to archive the stories of each storyteller in ways that could be accessed by future generations. The universities live exhibition space with giant windows invited members of the public, looking in from the outside, to enter this space. Wonderful poster-sized images of members of the CSF alongside their family photos saw these digital renders of faces look out into the street through the glass windows of the gallery. The windows themselves now acting like the computer screens of the Zoom Platform. Children and mothers stopped to look in, perhaps seeing themselves represented on the walls of a university gallery, smiling, and waving at those fitting up. A flow from the members of the CSF to the university and back out into the local. An exchange. These physical exhibition materials plan to go on tour with the CSF to wider networks of communities, to share their work and to build on it with wider narratives. In addition, the online gallery creates a virtual space where these narratives can be accessed via the Caribbean's Social Forum's website.

By introducing art experts into the project, the work also captures and documents a working methodology which situates the expertise of the artists and project team within the work itself. These new hybrid digital and live practices were co-constructed in cross-community conversations with storytellers aged between 70 and 100 years old, with artists and the wider project team. It enabled members of the CSF to interact with the university in ways which historically had not occurred, bridging the gap between the Caribbean Community in the borough and the university institution. This allowed a flow of knowledge between the university and CSF, a flow between knowledge centres and places of trans-situated expertise and activities. In the co-construction of working methodologies, while the university played a role, the trans-situated expertise of the Caribbean artists and storytellers produced new ways of telling personal stories of past

journeys. Centred in the experiences of Black British Caribbean's, the projects co-creation strategies decolonised the knowledge paradigms of university spaces.

The university partners in the project team look to sustain these shared ways of working through their extended commitment of working with the CSF over several years. The relationship between the CSF and the University continues to grow and evolve. Having exhibited the *Let Our Legacy* installation in the Stephen Lawrence Gallery at the University of Greenwich across October 2020, we launched the online version of the Gallery in November 2021, alongside a selection of stories and recipes in the university's heritage gallery. Recipes which the CSF intend to create into a recipe book to be later shared. Franklin, Hockham, and Reynolds began a three-year project in October 2020 to upskill elders in digital technologies with significant funding secured for the Caribbean Social Forums work on this project.

The paper has told the stories of how the project team came together. It forms another document archiving the work and lived experiences of the members of the CSF. From inception, the CSF have been creating archival records and it is now at a stage to look to understand how these are housed and shared. Starting an archive appears to have occurred organically in the process of shared activity. How that archive is curated and shared remains part of an active conversation. What has started to emerge are the plural ways in which members might tell their stories and the many ways in which these might be documented. Stories which might now be used as ways of collectively coming together with other members of the CSF before later, acting as part of the members legacies for future generations. Using thick description and images, this article has demonstrated the multiple nuanced trans-situated positions of the project community members and in doing so recognises the situated nature of the work: the pandemic, the university, and the lives of people with stories to tell. It recognises that if universities intend to decolonise university knowledge paradigms, there is a requirement to commit to an ongoing process, rather than a one-off initiative or practice.

Notes on Contributor

Adele Chambers graduated with a BA (Hons) from the University of Greenwich and was an intern on this project.

David Hockham, Theatre Manager, Producer and Pedagogue at the University of Greenwich, Dave's. PhD is on the learning and pedagogy of situated vocational and technical practice due to complete 2022.

Ingrid Pollard, Prof. International Artist and Curator, Ingrid has won multiple awards for her work across mediums including photography, video, and sculpture.

Jean Campbell, Arts Educator, Facilitator, and Trainer for museum staff, Jean has worked with museums across the country and on arts based, community projects.

Pamela Franklin is the founder and leader of the Caribbean Social Forum.

Shamica Ruddock is an artist and arts educator working predominantly across text, sound, and moving image.

Tracey Reynolds, Prof. Research and Knowledge Exchange lead for the University of Greenwich's Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science. Tracey is a leader in the field of applied sociology and participatory arts practices.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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