**Encounter of Queer PoC ancestries**

**a decolonizing ritual in a safe space created by Tyna Adebowale**

As two artists we were invited to connect with each other in the space of an art institution. A collaboration between spaces, Dans Brabant and Park Tilburg. Tyna had been building their exhibition for almost two months already in that space, thus creating a safer space, as they do in their work. In my understanding their work is very much an act of claiming space with bodies and stories of queerness researched from traditional African history and mirroring these stories in the diaspora.

  In the safe space of Tyna we had the privilege to have our first physical encounter, getting to know each other, and finding a common ground. This common ground was rooted in our shared imagined identity being Queer and people of color of migrant stories, living in the Netherlands. My artistic practice is intertwined with my spiritual journey, and political activism, thus creating decolonizing rituals is an act of the everyday. These rituals allow us to get to know each other by developing a broader understanding of our sensorium, which allows us to travel and move beyond the physical space we exist in now.

I invited a dear friend and performance artist, Devika Chotoe, who shares with me several identities: ancestral roots from Surinamese-Hindustani / Indo-Caribbean descent, Queer and a dancer. Tyna Adebowale invited Collins Nice, who is an asylum seeker from Nigeria, sharing ancestral roots with Tyna. The act of getting to know one another is also a crucial part of Tyna’s artistic practice, as they spend quite some time getting to know the people who potentially become part of the transcendental portraits they create.

In our coming together, we all brought in some elements to create an altar for a ritual to connect with our Queer ancestries and each other. Formulating intentions and connecting them with multi-sensorial acts throughout the ritual; symbols to mark our individual safe spaces; connecting with our bodies through multi-sensorial acts of purification; inviting the ancestors into the space; meditating on the transcendental bodies of Queer/asylum seekers of African descent in the art works of Tyna Adebowale; materializing through an act of writing to our ancestors; dancing through the energies we had activated in the space; and eventually dematerializing our writings. In this journey we got to understand more closely where we share symbolism from our respective backgrounds, in a multicultural hybrid reality, bringing together African, South Asian, Caribbean, and European histories.

***Fazle Shairmahomed****19 August 2021*

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