

Theatre For Change

WITNESS AND PERFORMER RESPONSES TO AFRICAN STORIES OF IDENTITY,
BELONGING AND COMMUNITY

Prepared by Christopher Sonn, Rama Agung-Igusti and Geskeva Komba



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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation and pay our respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge that these lands are stolen lands and that Aboriginal sovereignty was never ceded.

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"It was such a pleasure and privilege to watch the blossoming of African Australian performance art at Arts Centre Melbourne with my family and so many other supporters. Words cannot describe how we felt. To cohealth Arts Generator, I thank you for holding the space for our children to bloom. It is the beautiful start to our presence being felt, heard and accepted as part of the human tapestry in Melbourne . Everyone was a star on stage, they moved us all. We want and need more and we'll support you ALL the way in every way. My husband asked me what my involvement was and I said, I don't know; it was a spiritual exercise. Too. Happy. For. Words."

Zione Walker-Nthenda (Incubate Foundation)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this report was to conduct research into the experiences of AMKA and to gather evidence of its impact on audience. In particular, the research set out to examine the experiences of both the performers, as they shared narratives of the African diaspora in Australia, and audiences who witnessed the enactment of the diverse stories. The report is premised on audience experience as a key evaluative measure of performing arts, and is concerned with community arts as a modality for transformation and integral to self-representation and self-determination for diasporic communities.

The research for this report was framed within participatory approaches, and utilising collaboration and consultation between stakeholders, and positioning key members of the AMKA group as co-researchers. This approach guided the conceptual directions of the research, and informed the key instruments used for data gathering and collaborative analysis. Semi-structured life story interviews with the performers, audience surveys, and semi-structured performer reflection questionnaires were used to gather information for the research.

Narrative analysis of the semi-structured life story interviews led to the



development of three themes that threaded through the performers life stories. These stories include; remembering stories of being objectified, which captured experiences of being raced and identity negotiation; awakening and transformation, where participants spoke of seeking new ways of being free of constraints and informed by critical consciousness and creativity; and searching for rootedness, which captured the way participants spoke of connecting to cultural and family histories and knowledges, as well as transnational diasporas.

The audience surveys and performer reflections examined experiences of the performance itself, from the perspectives of the audience members as witness and performers whose stories were shared. From the data there were key insights around transformative experience of witnessing and the importance of self-representation within

the African diaspora. These insights varied according to the positioning of different audience members, as the way they engaged with the material was contingent on their own subjectivities and resonance with the performance. Importantly, AMKA conveyed differing individual and group representations, as positive narratives arose to challenge dominant negative representations of the African diaspora within Australian culture, but also representations of Africans in Australia were expanded to encompass the complex, contradictory, and myriad of voices of a diverse and nuanced diasporic community.

This report complements the knowledge produced through AMKA and inserts into the public record as a counter story to the negative representations circulating in media discourse about the African diaspora. The research also provided an

evaluative framework premised on audience experience and transformation and has highlighted the important role that theatre and performance plays in creating projects for enabling young people to enact racial justice. Community theatre is an important modality as it creates spaces of transformative inter-cultural contact and learning, as well as for fostering solidarity, reconnecting with and reclaiming community histories, which are both vital to positive personal and community development, and fostering and claiming belonging.





2. BACKGROUND

2.1. cohealth Arts Generator

cohealth Arts Generator (cAG) is a participatory arts “space” that mobilises arts-based programs and opportunities to increase agency and improve wellbeing for young people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. At the forefront of this participatory model is the privileging of lived experience, the creation of spaces to speak up and push back, development of critical literacies within the community, and the collaborative creation of new knowledges. Liss Gabb (2017), the

**“where public pedagogy
meets race literacy and
arts practice”**

program coordinator at Arts Generator, draws in Pratt’s (1991) notion of contact zones to conceptualise the space, stating that the zones that they create is “where public pedagogy meets race literacy and arts practice” (Gabb, 2017). Arts Generator, has over the years, developed models of practice based on mobilising encounters with difference as a catalyst for meaningful transformation. Gabb (2017) has described several examples of projects that offer insights as to how Arts Generator, through its participatory and community arts programs, have challenged structural

systems of oppression within Australia, including critically engaging with and turning to decentring whiteness in everyday and institutional contexts.

The Art of Radical Listening is one example of a program developed to raise racial literacy and address understandings of unconscious bias within a local government run cultural space. It drew on dialogue theatre, which allows complex social conflicts to be discussed and interactively examined, inviting participants to be a part of the mediation process. This process invited white cultural workers to open themselves to the lived experiences of people of colour, to witness, and consider the various positionalities within the vignettes, in particular examining their own positions. Shoulder to Shoulder was a program that sought to foster solidarity between Australian First Nations people and members of the African diaspora. It consisted of a mobile engagement model that could be taken to African community events, and included traditional Welcome to Country and smoking ceremonies, and the sharing of stories and experiences. Through Shoulder to Shoulder many commonalities were found between the two communities, creating opportunities

for solidarity and further facilitating critical awareness. Furthermore, this solidarity decentres whiteness in narratives of belonging and identity within Australia, strengthening goals of self-determination.

Arts Generator enacts its values of inclusion, justice and voice. AMKA is another example, and it was created with a goal to centre African identities in Australia, sourcing and prioritising indigenous knowledge from the global South that work towards an ongoing collective emancipation.

2.2. AMKA

AMKA, previously known as Afrobeat, is an artistic approach to the writing of a significant chapter of the experience of the African diaspora in Australia through multiple art-forms. Produced by cohealth Arts Generator and created by a collective of multi-disciplinary artists AMKA was originally planned to be delivered in three stages – In the Flesh, In Our Eyes and In the Spirit. However during preliminary planning critical conversation between the artists informed and transformed all three stages into one (In the Flesh). This was renamed as AMKA and the major outcome was an exceptionally successful new theatre work. There is still a desire in the creative team and cohealth Arts Generator to continue to develop the other stages in the future.

**“This journey was new,
raw, hard work...but
needed to happen”**

The creative team shaped the project through a democratic process grounded in a decolonising approach to self and governance. The principles and values at the core of this process were self-determination and self-representation. To create an authentic representation of themselves the artists needed to have autonomy of their stories with how they wanted to tell their stories and in what way. To do this they had to consciously locate themselves, their relationship with the colonality of this society in Australia and re-centre the African narrative. It also included de-centering aspects of whiteness, Eurocentric ideas and processes, and having them at hand as peripheral tools, resources and support. The commitment to these values fuelled a lot of the important changes to the project. The ideas that precipitated these changes grew from conversation about the fact that the actioning of self-determination and self-representation from the perspective of people of colour (POC), does not have a framework within the containment of the Australian context. Therefore, this journey was new, raw, hard work but needed to happen.

AMKA means “wake up; get up” in Swahili. The use of the term “amka” (pronounced um-kuh) in most contexts in Swahili culture has an emphasis of urgency and frankness when articulated. This was something that the collective felt was important in capturing all of the themes within the project processes and creative outcomes. The project had grown out of cohealth Arts Generator’s deep engagement with communities of young African Australians from South Sudan, Liberia, Burundi, Uganda, Ghana, Ethiopia and Tanzania over the past eight years and was co-created by a collective of multi-disciplinary artists of African descent. The production explored identity, dispossession and cultural conflict within the African Australian experience and combined poetry, music, dance, theatre and projection through a series of individual and ensemble pieces that interpret stories of the African diaspora in Melbourne.



“AMKA means 'wake up; get up' in Swahili. The use of the term 'amka' (pronounced um-kuh) in most contexts in Swahili culture has an emphasis of urgency and frankness when articulated”

The production was created through a democratic process. There was no single director or form of hierarchy in the show or entire process, rather each individual played an equal role in the development. The process, like the content, is an act of resistance. This resistance is essential to the act of self-determination for people of colour. Some of the artists who performed were also involved in determining this process. This process comprised of group meetings, strategic consultation and in response, a program of skill building in various art forms was developed through a range of master classes and professional development through mentoring with POC professionals. This program was instrumental in building relationships, developing content and trialling strategies that align with AMKA values.

2.3. Africans in Australia

Migrants from the African continent have contributed to Australia’s overseas born population, with early migration prior to the 1970’s comprising of mainly South

Africans, to an increase in refugees from the Horn of Africa and countries in West Africa in the 1990's, and later increases in sub-Saharan migrants from 2001 onwards. By 2006 African-born people accounted for 5.4% of Australia's overseas born population (Jakubowicz, 2010), accounting for myriad countries, cultures and religions. Many of these migrants and their families maintain strong connections across borders, creating transnational and diasporic spaces that enable and sustain myriad and diverse cultural experiences (Schiller, Basch, & Blanc, 1995).

Africans within Australia face a number of unique challenges that play a significant part in the construction of individual and community identities and what occurs in spaces of inter-cultural contact. For many newly migrated young Africans, many of these challenges are similar to that felt by other migrant groups such as learning a new language, changing social norms, and loss of existing social supports (Landau-Stanton, 1990). For those born in Australia, there is the navigation of the various cultural and social expectations they may encounter through both their family and other dominant forms of social practice. However, one added dimension for Africans in Australia is the experience of racialisation within the dominant "white" culture of Australia. In a recent Scanlon report mapping attitudes in Australia, it was found that

60-77% of migrants from African countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Sudan reported having experienced discrimination, with many also reporting that this was linked to the colour of their skin (Markus, 2016). This was also found in a report by the Australian Human Rights Commission

We desire to bequeath two things to our children; the first one is roots, the other one is wings – **Sudanese proverb**

indicating that "the vast majority of African Australians who participated...said that having a 'visibly different appearance' did impact upon their everyday experiences" (2010, p.8), and was manifest in discrimination, negative stereotypes, racism and prejudice. Whilst many migrant non-White groups are positioned as "other" within national discourses, this experience has been particularly evident for Africans in Australia.

From the 1850s until the 1970s Australia implemented a range of policies, known as the White Australia policy, which was designed to prevent non-European immigration (DIBP, n.d). Whilst this racist policy was eventually dismantled, and subsequent Federal Governments have professed a national commitment to multiculturalism (Australian Government, 2017), these historical policies and

histories of colonialism and subjugation of Australia's First Nations, have led to a racialized white Anglo national identity, positioned against a marginalised and excluded black "other" (Ahluwalia, 2001). It is from this identity position that the fantasy of Australia as a White nation is sustained as national discourses seek to control spaces of belonging (Hage, 1998).

Examples of this racialized and exclusionary discourse can be seen in the construction of negative African identities within the media, including recent media attention criminalising African youth (Wahlquist, 2018; Windle, 2008), narratives adopted by state and federal politicians portraying a threat of gang violence and are instrumental in selling "tough on crime" policies (Baak, 2018), and within intergroup communications with white Australians (Hatoss, 2012). These discourses have constructed Africans in Australia as criminal, culturally incompatible, and as being burdened by deficits such as experiences of trauma and lack of education, often as a support for arguments of criminality and poor integration (Baak, 2011). These historical and political contexts and narratives have shaped and continue to shape the experiences of belonging and identity for Africans in Australia.

2.4. Stories, Narratives and Belonging

Narratives draw on the social and cultural elements of human experience and provide a frame for human action (Hiles & Cermak, 2011). At the level of the individual, identity can be conceptualised as being constructed from the stories we tell about ourselves. These stories represent an individual's selective interpretation of their history and experience, and is a process of meaning making that changes and evolves as one transitions through life events (McAdams, 2001). However, shared narratives also exist for groups and communities, creating an interplay between the personal identity making narratives, collective narratives, and the dominant cultural narratives that infuse day to day life. Each influences ones individual stories and the positive or negative social identities constructed. Narratives can therefore be conceptualised as resources that individuals and groups utilise for important meaning making processes (Rappaport, 1995). Thus, it becomes important to question what narratives are available and who controls them. This also highlights the importance of counter stories that seek to challenge these received understandings of the social world, narrative as transgression and creation (Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013).



Narrative methodologies further offer an alternative to research that pathologises and problematises identities of Africans in Australia by privileging individual's voices and allowing for the representation and reclamation of their stories. Such pathologising through research is common in the social sciences and can have deleterious consequences for individuals and communities. In an open letter, Eve Tuck (2009) warns against damage-centered research. She defines this as "research that operates, even benevolently, from a theory of change that establishes harm or injury in order to achieve reparation" (p. 413). Such research restricts communities to single and simple narratives of oppression, pain and brokenness and operates within a theory of change where change is inextricably linked to the disempowerment of communities that must position themselves as defective. All the while, reparations are rarely achieved, and all that is left to draw on is damage. Tuck (2009) instead urges a shift towards a desire-centered framework "concerned

with understanding complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives" (p. 416). Such a framework is not a denial of the damage that communities may feel, or a refusal to address felt oppressions, but rather seeks to move beyond these singularities and also embrace the wisdom and hope of these communities.

2.5. Applied Theatre and Participatory Research

Performance has the capacity for both individual and social transformation, it "teaches us to examine our values and beliefs, to hone our ability to empathize, and to understand our connections to the larger world" (Howard, 2004, p. 220). Applied performance often refers to performance within educational, institutional and community contexts with a focus on social or personal benefits for participants and particular community groups (Nicholson, 2011). It is a wide reaching term that encompasses various forms of educational and community-based theatre, such as political theatre,

social justice theatre and community theatre (Prendergast & Saxon, 2009). Examples that highlight the way applied theatre seeks to enact change can be found in performance methodologies that have stemmed from Augusto Boal's (1979) Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed was influenced by Freire's (1972) writing around critical pedagogies and the concept of consciousness raising, and in turn has influenced the development of participatory theatre forms such as playback and forum theatre (Nicholson, 2011).

Applied theatre has been central within arts-based research which "puts artistic knowing at its core and recognises that the arts offers unique ways of understanding and communicating human experience" (Sonn, Smith & Meyer, 2015, p. 295). Participatory arts and research approaches such as Participatory Action Research both share

Birds sing not because they have answers but because they have songs –
African proverb

goals of liberation through consciousness raising and challenging oppression and are well suited through their reflexive examination of power and structure (Sonn et al., 2015). One key modality of applied theatre, and its forms

such as community and participatory arts, is story-telling and embodied memory. It is through shared memories that we can "envisage social change [and] challenge official accounts of history by raising awareness of alternative perspectives" (Nicholson, 2008 p. 268). Our shared memories provide symbolic frameworks which shape, reinforce and recreate memories reaching illuminating oppressive social structures and constructing powerful counter narratives (Sonn, et al. 2013).

However, whilst performance has the capacity for transformation through the sharing of stories, this can be a powerful psychological experience for both performers and those who witness the performance. The concept of aesthetic distance describes the extent to which the audience is immersed in the fictional reality of the performance or remains in their own reality. It was first described by Edward Bullough (1912) as the space between what we perceive and what we feel. Within the realm of performance the term can be used to describe "the boundary between art and life" (Wood, 2017, p.23) and exists on a continuum of complete immersion to the audience as an observer that exists apart. Theorists alternately propose that transformation occurs through the elimination of this distance, through a prolonged emotional assault as the audience bears witness to a form of testimony; a reduction and maintenance of distance, where the

emotional experience must be intense and impactful, but not overwhelming. This maintained distance is a form of psychological protection, whilst still allowing for resonance between audience and the performed stories; lastly, maximum distance posits that increased distance allows space for critical reflection. Audience empathy and identification can be emotionally overwhelming, and space needs to be made to step back and reflect as an observer (Wood, 2017).



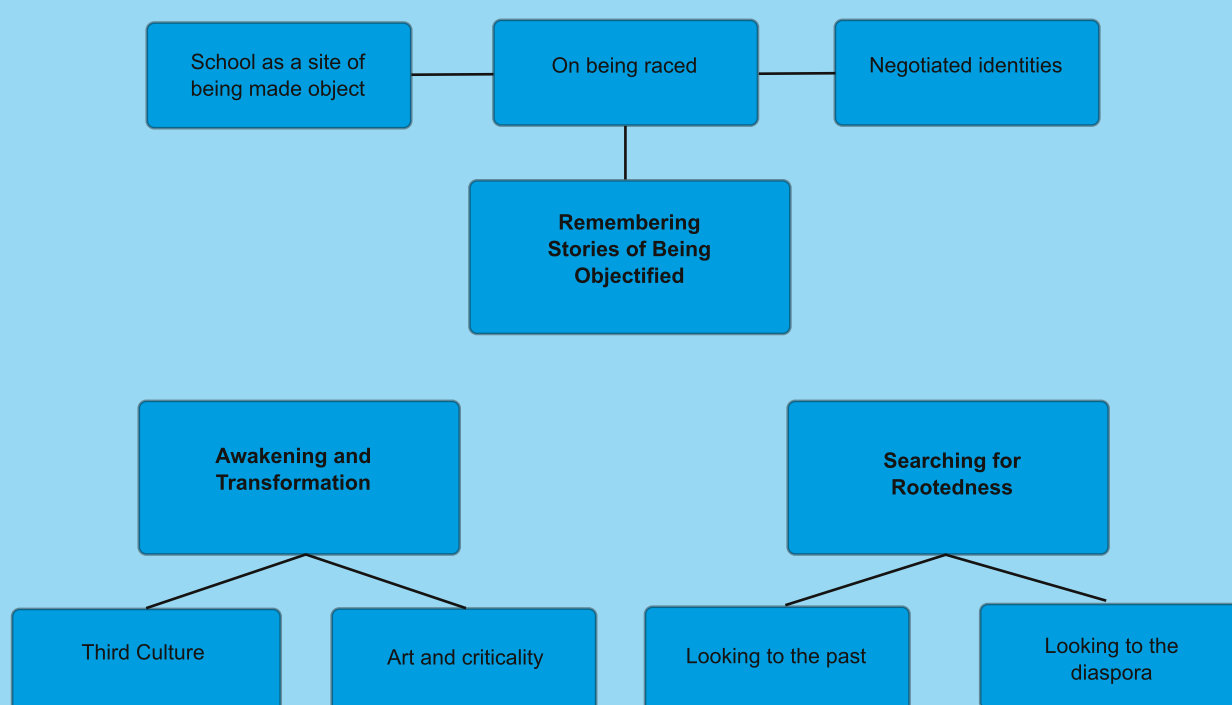
3. NARRATIVES OF IDENTITY AND BELONGING IN AUSTRALIA

As part of our collaborative approach to documenting AMKA we agreed that it was important to conduct life story interviews with the performers given the focus on the project. This section describes the outcomes of that aspect of the project, which provides insight into various psychosocial and political processes in the narrations of life stories and subjectivities of African background people in Australia. This aspect was important to theorise given that these narratives constituted those conveyed through AMKA.

3.1. Analysis of Life Story Interviews

During the development of the performance, semi-structured life story interviews were conducted with five of the nine performers (Agung-Igusti, 2017). These interviews were transcribed and analysed to examine the individual and collective narratives, as it is through these that people represent and convey meanings about everyday life, identity, belonging and about becoming. The life story interviews were analysed to get a sense of the stories that people told about their everyday lives as these also inform the individual and collective

Figure 1. Map of narrative themes and their relevant sub-categories.



narratives of AMKA. Following analysis and feedback, three key narratives were generated, which are presented in Figure 1.

The first narrative was Remembering Stories of Being Objectified. This narrative is made up of memories from member's childhoods. They recalled stories of being made object: the experiences of being racialized, the contexts they occurred and the process of negotiating contentious identities. The second narrative theme was Awakening and Transformation and it captured the transgressive ways performers saw their present identities, embracing plurality of identity options, and creating spaces and identities free of constraints and the potential for change. This is linked to experiences of a growing critical consciousness, expressed through their involvement in arts and arts communities and fostered through their experiences of being between cultures. The last theme was Searching for Rootedness where the performers spoke of a desire to root their sense of belonging in tangible forms. This occurred through personal liberatory projects to uncover/recover family histories and develop a sense of place connected to ancestry. The performer's personal stories and identities were deeply connected to this knowledge and was a source of self-understanding. They also sought roots within wider diaspora, creating spaces of belonging and

solidarity within dominant White cultures, where such spaces aren't immediately available, and seeking a rootedness in a shared experience of exile – an exilic consciousness.

The next section reports on the audience surveys. We describe the guiding framework for constructing the survey, our process of analysing the responses, and then, in section five we report the results from the survey.

4. THE AUDIENCE SURVEYS

Transformative witnessing: the witnessing of performance that facilitates an individual transformation in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, and creates opportunities for solidarity, and projects for change outside the theatre setting.

Radical listening: enables differing standpoints to be expressed and received openly and dialectically, rather than in opposition or within an either/or binary. The listener moves to adopt the speaker's standpoint to explore the possibilities connected, engaging in a receptive and open form of communication.

4.1. Guiding Concepts

The project also aimed to evaluate the impact of the show through an audience experience framework, and further investigate particular concepts involved in the performance of political and transformative theatre. This was done through an audience survey that was developed to contribute to a theory informed evaluation. Key concepts that guided the development of the audience survey are transformative witnessing, radical listening as well as the broader notion of public pedagogy.

Transformative witnessing illuminates the space between performer and the diverse subjectivities of the audience, facilitating individual transformation in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, and creating opportunities for solidarity, and projects for change outside the theatre setting (Sajnani, 2010). Radical listening enables differing standpoints to be expressed and received openly and

dialectically, rather than in opposition or within an either/or binary. The listener moves to adopt the speaker's standpoint to explore the possibilities connected, engaging in a receptive and open form of communication (Tobin, 2010). Both these concepts are understood within a broader understanding of political theatre as public pedagogy. Within this frame, arts and arts practice elevate the lived experiences of marginalised communities, and those are used in turn to speak back to dominant narratives that marginalise, silence, and disempower (Sonn & Baker, 2016).

4.2. Developing the Audience Survey

The items on the survey were chosen with reference to evaluative arts frameworks that focus on aspects of audience experience. Radbourne, Johanson, Glow and White (2009) proposed the following as critical components to audience experience:

knowledge, providing audiences with information to aid understanding of the performance and facilitating thought and discussion; risk management, the congruence between audience expectations of the performance and the performance itself; authenticity, which describes both a sense of “emotional truth” as experienced by the audience and artistic authenticity; and collective engagement, describes an engagement with audience and performers, as well as between audience members. The New Economics Foundation (2010) developed a handbook that offers both theoretical and methodological guidance for collecting data to evaluate performance through audience experience. They suggest a model that details five dimensions of audience experience: engagement and concentration, learning and challenge, energy and tension, shared experience and atmosphere, and personal resonance and emotional connection. Many of the dimensions within these frameworks capture the process of transformative witnessing, and the survey items used were guided by this literature.

The survey was drafted and presented to members of the performance group as part of the research’s collaborative process. A draft survey was provided and each item was discussed in terms of its phrasing, the information it aimed to capture, and its relation to the goals of

Components of Audience Experience (Radbourne, Johnson, Glow, & White, 2009)

Knowledge: providing audiences with information to aid understanding of the performance and facilitating thought and discussion.

Risk Management: the congruence between audience expectations of the performance and the performance itself.

Authenticity: describes both a sense of “emotional truth” as experienced by the audience and artistic authenticity.

Collective Engagement: describes an engagement with audience and performers, as well as between audience members.

the researchers, the performers, and funding groups that would also be receiving the evaluative report. Some of the changes that were made include the use of open responses to capture demographic information around cultural background and gender, allowing people to identify themselves with their own language and labels. Whilst some of the evaluative templates opted for Likert scales to capture data, the survey design mostly utilised open response text boxes so as to capture more in depth qualitative responses, however, some Likert scales were used for some questions to maintain the surveys brevity. An example of changes to the framing of questions include discussing comfort within the Arts Centre rather than accessibility, which may be construed as relating to physical access.

Within these meetings some of the group also expressed that the performance was for their communities and the African diaspora in Australia, leading to a discussion around the extent to which the diversity of views within the audience should be captured. Whilst there was some feeling that capturing these views took away from the work's purpose, the potential diversity of the audience and the different ways they engaged and "witnessed" had to be considered.

The final 16 item survey (See Appendix A) consisted of 5 demographic questions and 11 questions pertaining to individual's expectations, engagement and understanding surrounding the arts, the performance and the arts centre.

4.3. Data Collection

The survey was administered online using Qualtrics software, with emails collected at the point of online ticket purchase and a link sent out after the performance. Once final amendments were made to each survey item, they were transferred into Qualtrics with the relevant information to participants and informed consent documents adapted for online viewing and completion. Each step of the online survey was tested across platforms, and consideration given to the participant experience to ensure the survey flow made sense, was not too lengthy, and would elicit full survey completion. However, as the

performance date approached the group reported most ticket sales were made in person through performers, colleagues and friends rather than online, thus alternative methods to distribute the survey were utilised. Hard copy surveys, with information to participants and consent forms (See Appendix B) attached were compiled to be distributed and completed in the Arts Centre foyer at the conclusion of the show as the audience left the theatre space. Small A6 flyers containing a QR code and a URL (See Appendix C) both linked to the online survey were also distributed after the performances, allowing for audience members to complete the survey at a later time. Lastly, multiple Facebook announcements by the group members were posted, both soon and sometime after the show, calling out for audience members to complete the survey and providing links for access.

These strategies were also used in conjunction with a post-performance announcement highlighting the research project and requesting audience members to participate. One issue was that on the first night this announcement was made by a white arts manager, which was felt to be inappropriate in that particular space for that particular performance, however, this was changed for the second night and the matinee. Another issue that occurred with the data collection related to a

performance held for school groups prior to and apart from the main show nights. As ethics approval did not encompass participants under the age of 18, surveys were unable to be provided to the students who attended. However, one of the teachers connected with the school group sent through a letter with detailed feedback relating to the show and the students experiences. This letter, in addition, to a separate feedback letter from an audience member of the main performance both contributed to the collective data to be analysed alongside the online and hard copy surveys.

*Milk and honey have different colours
but they share the same house
peacefully – African proverb*

4.4. Data Analysis

Once the survey was taken offline the data was exported from Qualtrics into an Excel spreadsheet. There were 92 online responses recorded and 24 completed hard copy surveys which were transcribed into the excel file, with a total of 116 survey responses. Of these total responses, 21 participants were removed due to survey previews being recorded, the selection of non-consent at the informed consent stage or non-completion of enough questions as to not yield worthwhile data. Whilst some

participants did not complete all the questions, those who provided answers to questions that were salient for data analysis were retained, in total 95 participant responses were retained for analysis.

Frequencies for closed answer multiple choice questions were noted and recorded. Answers to open ended short answer demographic questions such as preferred gender, cultural background and suburb lived in were collated into smaller meaningful categories, and frequencies were also recorded. One issue that arose referred to the question requesting participants to record their current occupation. The formatting on the hard copy surveys caused two of the answer options to be grouped together as a single answer, as this information was not pertinent to the overall analysis data was not included.

For the open ended long answer questions we used directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) within a broader interpretive framework. Following Hsieh and Shannon, (2005) content analysis is “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.” (p. 1278). Directed content analysis is to some extent deductive and guided by existing theory or concepts. Thus, our

use of content analysis of the open ended questions was to some extent directed by the guiding concepts that informed the project development. Initial codes were generated through the literature on evaluation and audience experience that informed the survey design, these codes formed an overarching framework which smaller sets of more specific codes could be organised under. First codes were applied to the answers for each questions, the codes were then examined again for overlap, before being placed within the larger categorical codes with their overall frequencies recorded. However, some answers represented elaborations of the previous question, these were analysed to first see if new codes emerged, otherwise they provided further context. One issue that arose was a question relating to what participants learnt about their own community and people within it. Whilst some participants answered this question in reference to their own communities there was some variability and other participants answered in reference to what they learnt about African communities within Australia, or their experiences of the show itself. Answers were coded where applicable, and answers that were better suited as providing further context for other questions were included in those analyses. Lastly, the final question asking what participants would tell others about this performance was not

coded as the responses were mainly positive endorsements for the show, instead responses with detailed or specific feedback were noted and discussed.



5. FINDINGS

5.1. Audience Surveys

Frequency data is presented for demographic data and for each of the questions probing about audience/witness experience. Frequencies along with illustrative quotations are used to present responses to the key open ended questions relating to aspects of transformative witnessing.

95 survey participants consisting of 65 who identified as female, 27 who identified as male, and three who did not record a response (Figure 2).

Whilst age groups were represented by participants, the two largest were 18-24 range which accounted for 24% of respondents, and the 25-34 range which accounted for 40% of the respondents (Figure 3).

5.1.1. Who came to the show?

Of the approximately 700 people who came to see the show, there were in total

Figure 2. Gender identification.

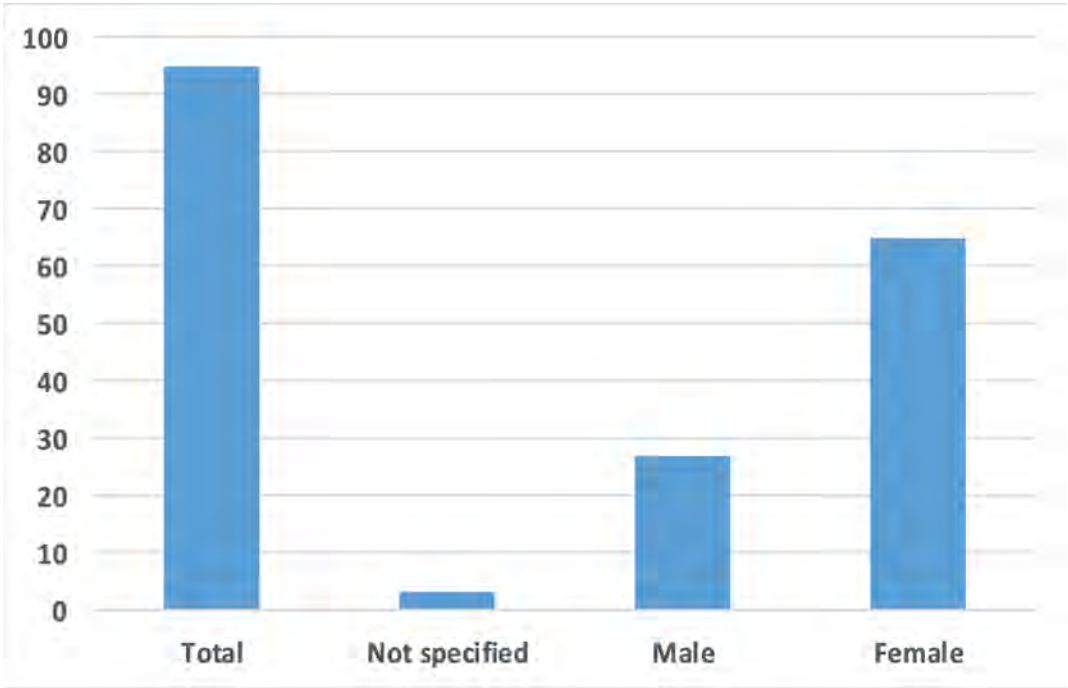
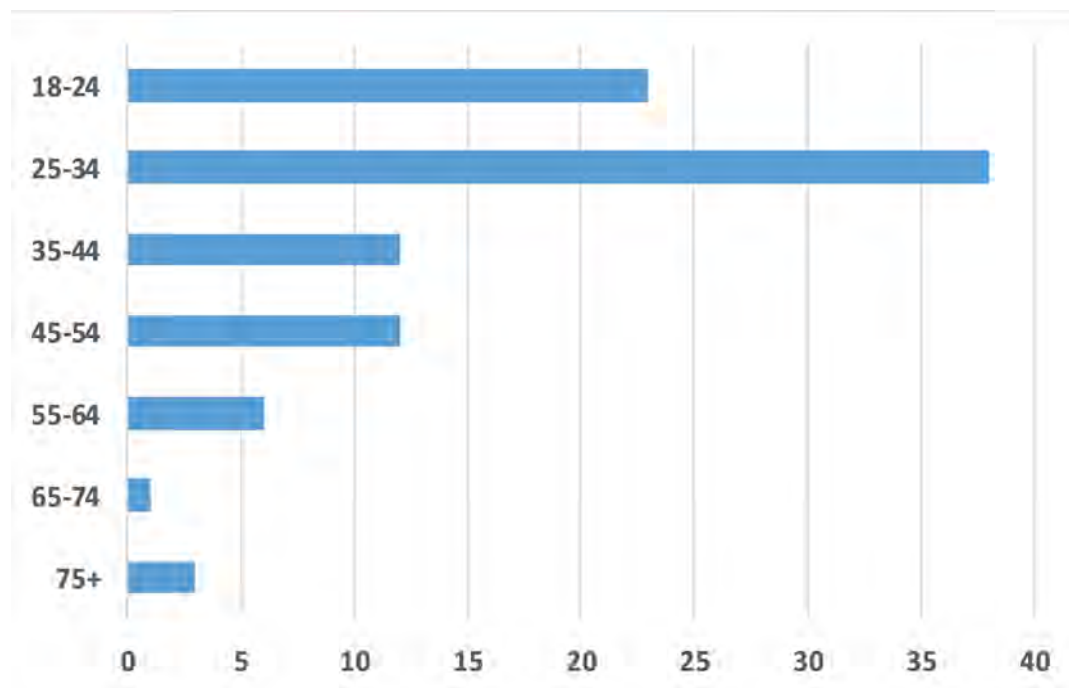


Figure 3. Age groups.



The categories presented in Figure 4 provide some insight to the ways people identified culturally, however, it doesn't capture the diverse ways many participants described their cultural backgrounds.

Many participants used hyphenated cultural identities; others qualified various aspects of their identities, for example as Australian, Chinese cultural background, and Singapore borne; others described a black or white cultural identity; some included other social/cultural identities such as lesbian and feminist to describe their identities; and others recognised indigenous sovereignty and their settler identity through their description of being born on Wurundjeri land rather claiming a nationalised Australian identity. In total, the participants represented a diverse

range of experiences and viewpoints that encompassed the African diaspora and beyond.

Figures 5 and 6 represents information about suburbs reported by attendees. The suburbs that participants recorded as living in were categorised by proximity to Melbourne's CBD, with Inner Suburbs defined as within 10km, Middle Suburbs as between 10-20km, and Outer Suburbs as 20+km and not otherwise classified as regional Victoria. Melbourne's Inner Suburbs were most represented with 44% of participants recording this as where they lived.

Suburbs lived in where also categorised by compass direction. The top three areas which participants responded as living in where West with 21%, North with 20%, and North West with 15%.

Figure 4. Cultural identification.

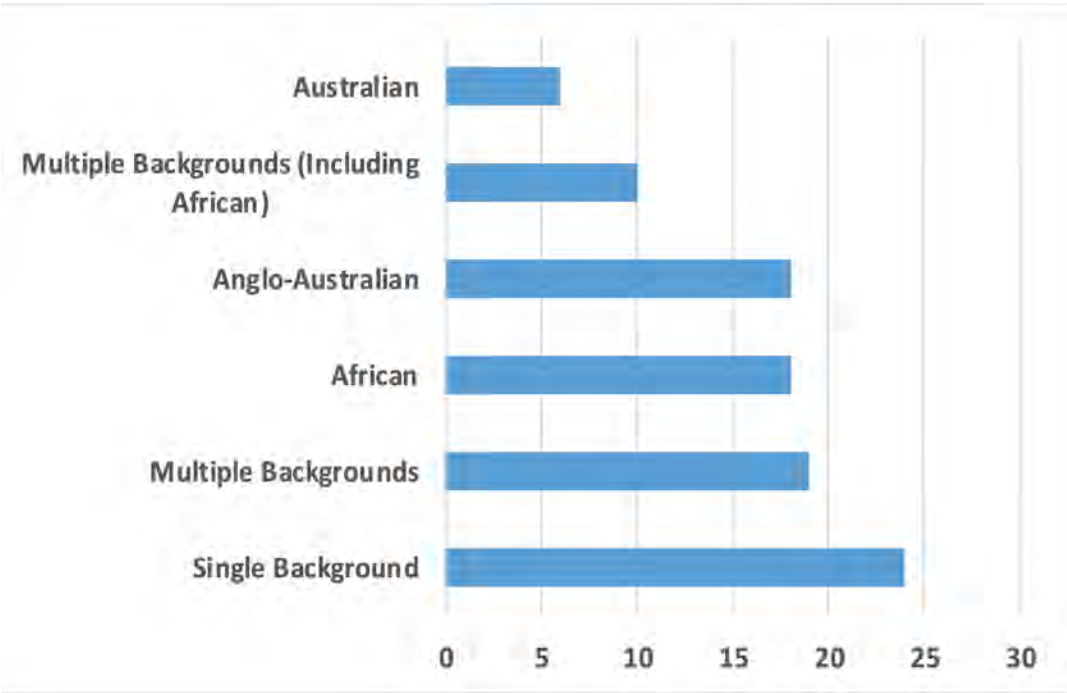


Figure 5. Suburb by compass direction.

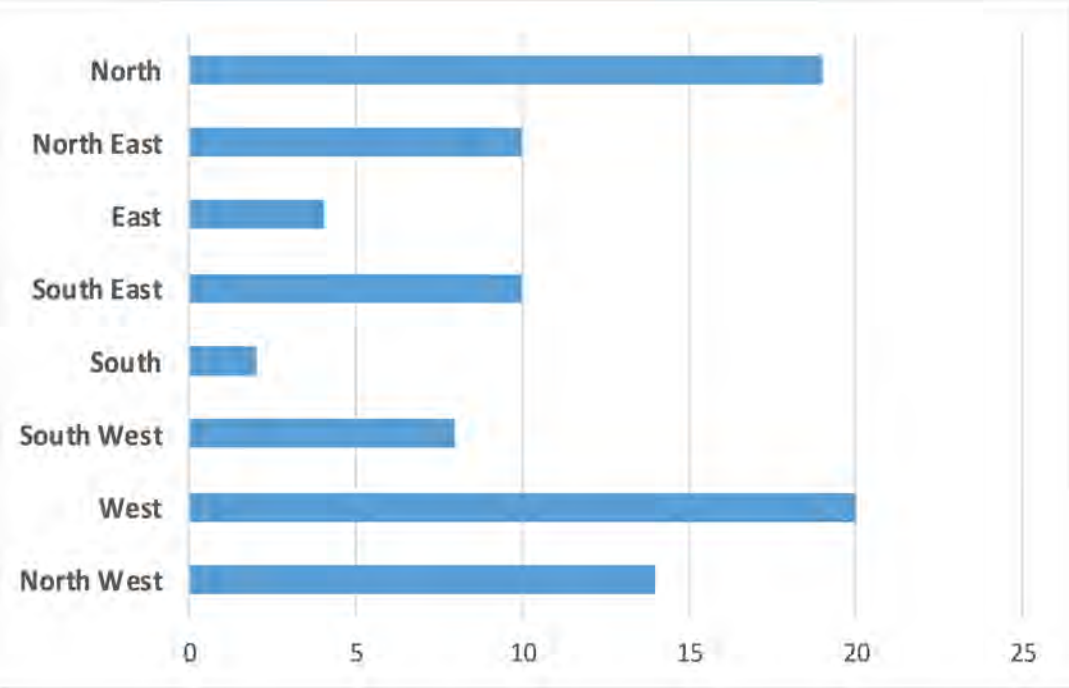
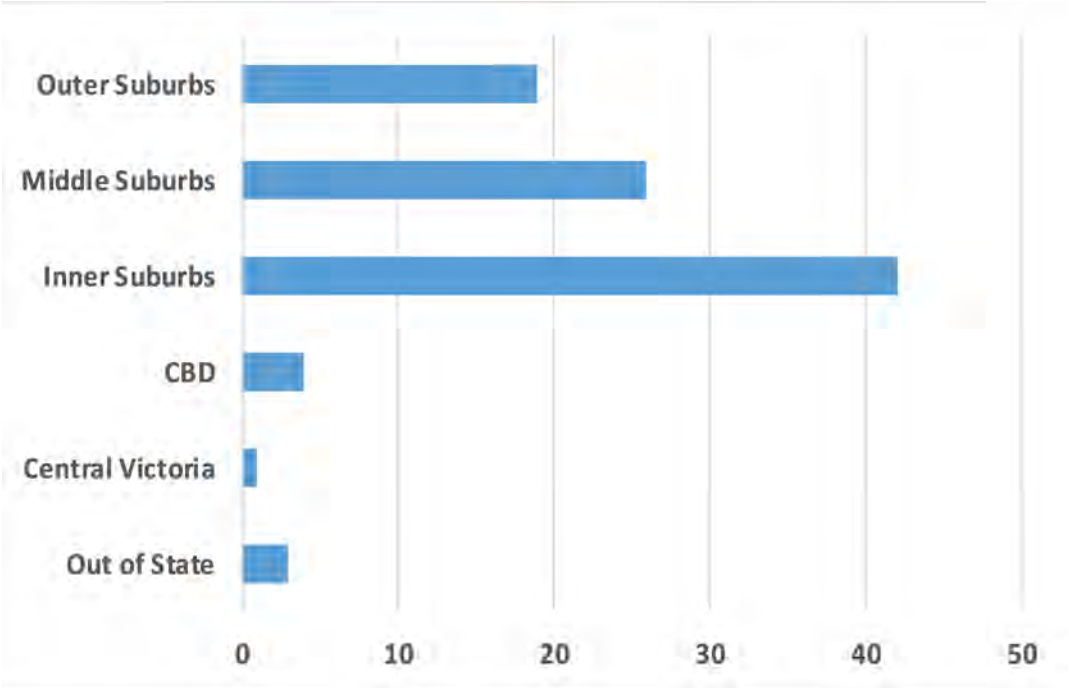


Figure 6. Suburb by CBD proximity.



5.1.2. Purpose of Arts

Participants were also asked to provide their understanding of arts. Majority reported that it was for expression, sharing and communication while some pointed to psychosocial dimensions such as healing, empowerment and identity (Figure 7).

5.1.3. Comfort at the Arts Centre

The decision to present AMKA at the Arts Centre was strategic and purposive and based on the understanding that it is not a venue typically attended the African and other CALD communities. We were thus interested in how people felt about being in the space. Of all the participants 88% had been to the Arts Centre before, and 12% had not, and

whilst 56% felt very comfortable in the space, 18% felt either very uncomfortable or somewhat uncomfortable (Figure 8).

Participants were also asked if they would see the performance again. Most participants responded that they would come to see a similar type of performance again, with 91% recording yes for their answer. However, one participant said no they wouldn't, and 8% recorded no response (Figure 9).

Figure 7. Purpose of arts.

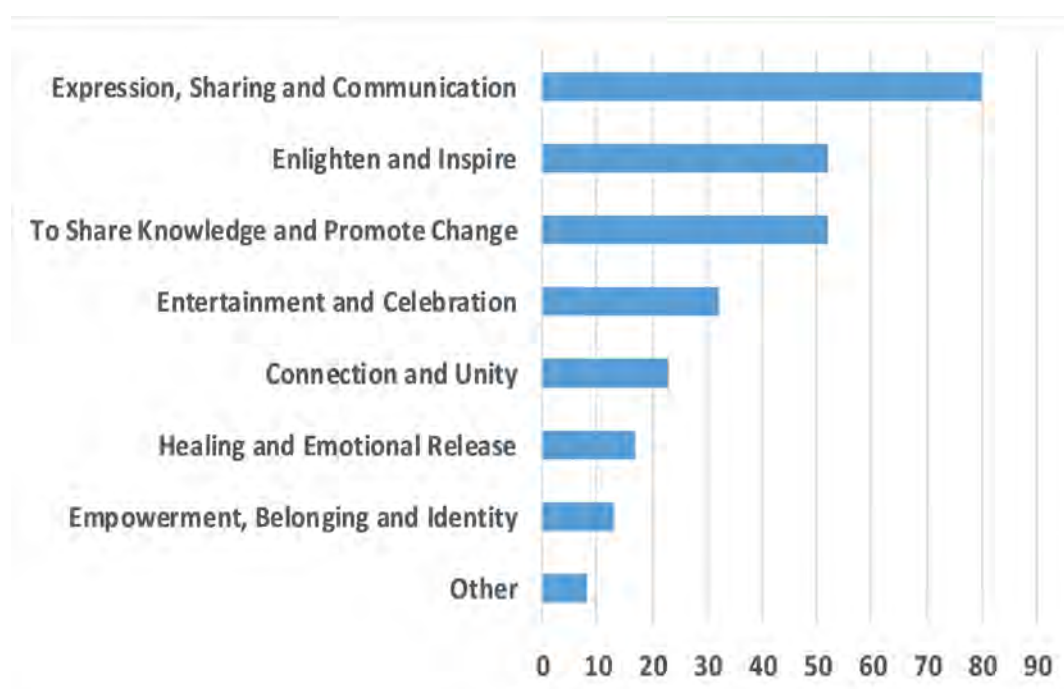


Figure 8. Comfort at the Arts Centre.

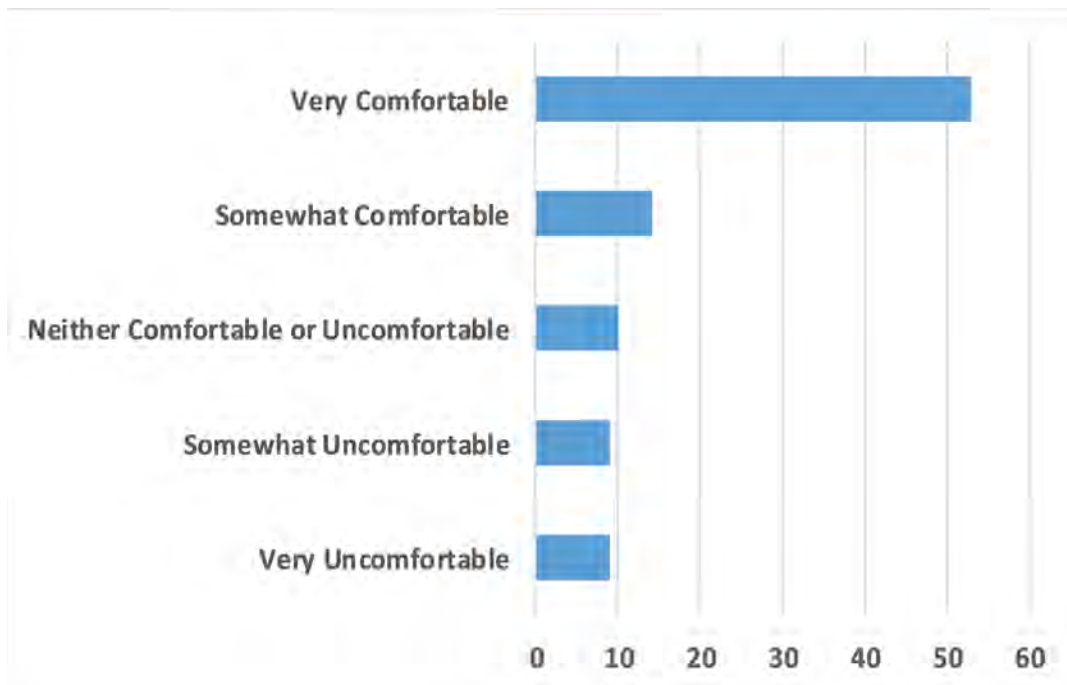
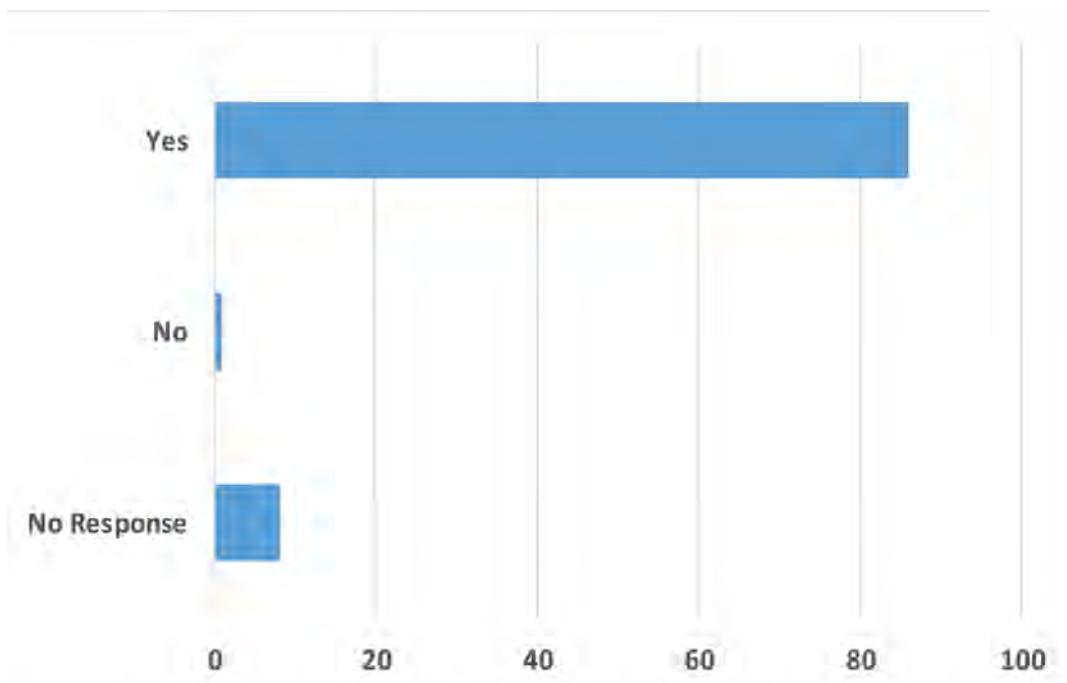


Figure 9. View performance again.



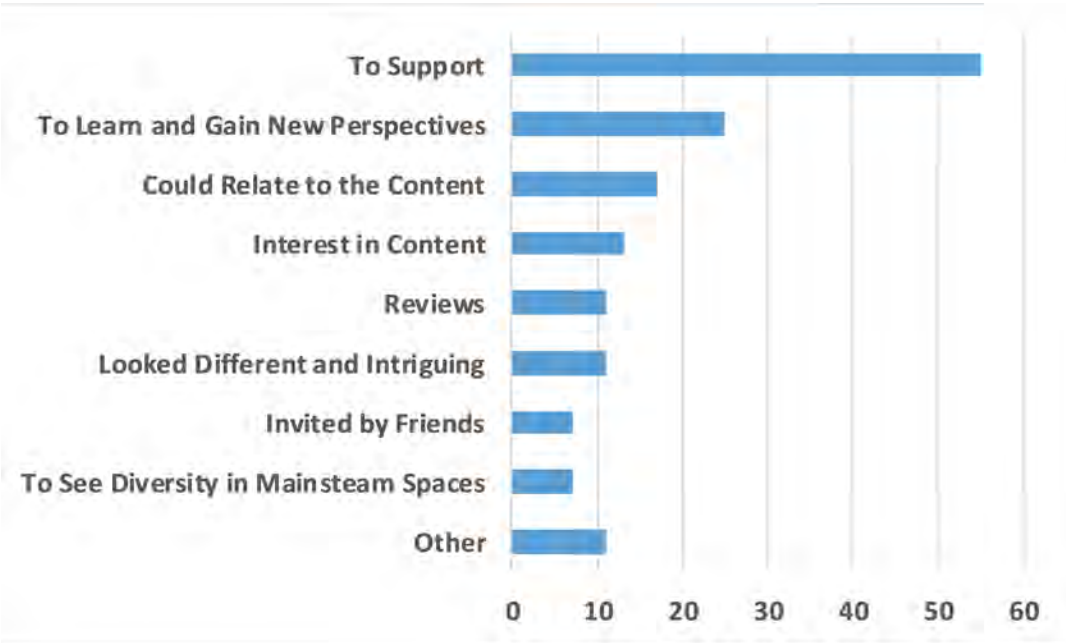
5.1.4. Reasons for Attending the Performance

One of the most frequently noted reasons given for attending the performance was to provide support. This was mostly support for friends, family and colleagues who were directly involved in the performance. A small number of participants also attended to provide support to cohealth Arts Generator and community arts. Another important reason provided by participants was around learning.

However, the reasons attached to learning differed amongst participants. For some it was to see new perspectives and to learn more about the African diaspora; for others the focus was more inwards as they felt the performance

would provide insight into their own understanding of self and place. Other participants expressed a direct interest in the themes addressed in the performance, in particular the various aspects of identity and belonging for Africans in Australia. Many participants also expressed that they could directly relate to the content as it directly connected to their own experiences (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Reasons for attending.



5.1.5. What Stood Out Most for the Performance

“Content was a pure expression of the artist's experiences and realities”

One of the key things that stood out the most for participants was the authenticity of the performance and the performers (See Figure 11). The notion of authenticity encompassed the connection the performers had to the stories they presented, and how for many participants these stories came across as raw and unembellished, there was an immediate belief that the *“content was a pure expression of the artist's experiences and realities”*.

Some participants noted the emotional toll of honesty on the performers. Another linked the discomfort they felt witnessing to the truth evident in the presented stories. The following excerpt captures complexity of what the performance conveyed for one witness:

“I am so impressed by the African-Australian community in their ability to focus on their emotional and psychological well-being by bravely telling their stories. It is so important that their stories are told and received. For the performers, it can be a very therapeutic creative process. For the audience who are not from the African-Australian background, it is great to hear their stories. For the audience who are from the African-Australian community, it could be a life-changing experience to

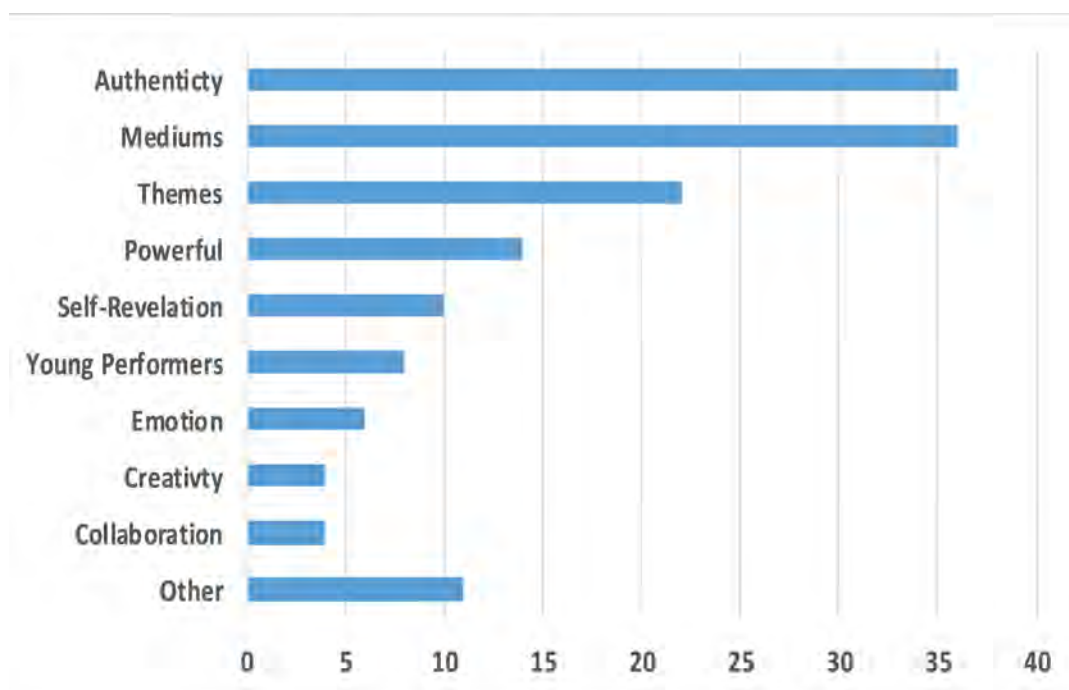
see their stories told in such powerful ways. I imagine that it could be very empowering and inspiring for an African-Australian youth to see their community united and entering a space such as the Art Centre. It helps to break stereotypes and racial boundaries.”

Others also connected authenticity to the diversity of perspectives represented and the ways they could relate the stories to their own experiences:

“This stood out because there was such a profound familiarity with the themes and its connections to my experience as an African American. It mirrored my experience as a son, student, teenager, teacher and Pan Africanist coming of age in the United States, an entirely different country but another (of so so so many others) which shares some similar truths.”

Both the content and form of the performance also stood out for many participants. As the themes of the performance represented an important reason for many participants to attend, it can be seen that they also were an important element of the show which resonated with the audience, and could be linked to aspects of learning and understanding new perspectives. Whilst the participants speaking of the form of the performance through the mediums it used represented an aesthetic quality central to the positive experience of the arts.

Figure 11. What stood out the most.



5.1.6. What was learnt about the self?

“[I have learnt] how much more I have to learn, give space for voices that aren’t mine”

Participants were asked what they learnt about themselves through witnessing AMKA (Figure 12). By being asked to reflect on what things they learnt about themselves through watching the performance, participants located themselves within different identity positions. As they engaged with the social representations of the performers and the discourses on identity and belonging for the African diaspora, participants connected with the material in relation to their own constructed identities.

For example, the most prevalent theme encompassed participant's lack of knowledge, awareness of privilege and

prejudices. Many participant's spoke of a realisation that they had much more to learn and understand. One response read:

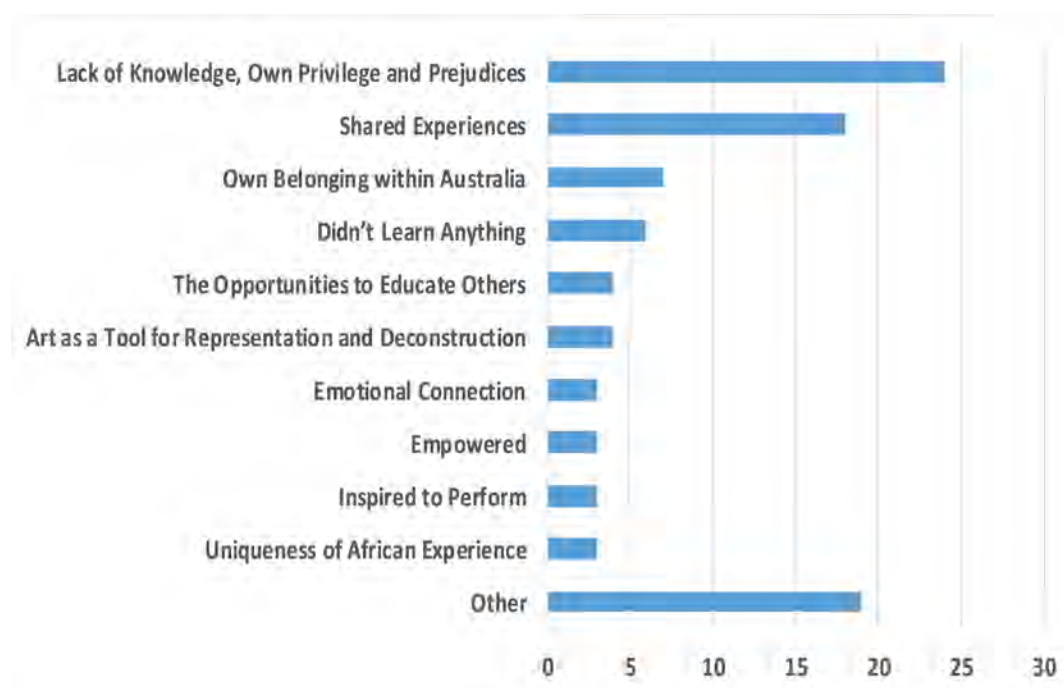
“[I have learnt] how much more I have to learn, give space for voices that aren’t mine, get out the way of great talent, understand the depth of pain”.

A response like this was linked to other responses, which echoed becoming aware of their prejudices and learning more about their own privilege and

“continuing to understand...privilege in different settings and reflecting this within professional work as well as...personal relationships with...family and friends”.

This type of awareness raising was primarily reported by respondents identified as white, Anglo-Australian or from a European country.

Figure 12. Things learnt about the self.



The theme with the second highest response encompassed shared experiences. Within this theme there were two kinds of responses, the first was drawn from respondents who identified as African, having an African background or Black. These respondents noted that they could “see” their own personal experiences represented on stage. As a respondent noted:

“I saw parts of myself on stage – as harrowing as some of the experiences portrayed were it was important to know that they were shared experiences that we could address as a community”.

In the second set, respondents drew connections between the experiences of the African diaspora in Australia and their own migrant and diasporic communities, or identities as people of colour. These respondents noted shared experience, as one participant responded:

“It taught me that Africans are just as humble as Islanders. Being told to wait, be patient, be calm. But my brother, they’ve been waiting, been patient, been calm”.

Some participants, however, identified important differences between the experience of their community and the African experience in Australia:

“There are common experiences between our cultures, but also things that are unique to the African experience in

Australia, which cannot be compared”.

These connections and experiences of learning were also articulated by one audience member who submitted a letter recounting his experience of the performance. In one section he details the differing individual engagement as felt at different subject positions:

“The themes and dilemmas presented were plenty. The dilemma of living in the margins was tackled from the onset. The sense of anger, passion, hunger and hopelessness burst on to the stage. ‘This is an angry poem’ echoed the frustration which accompanies prolonged patience with injustice and neglect. The challenge of “privilege” was enough to make audience members stir in their seats. If aware of it, it was strong enough to evoke a discomfort that accompanies the shame of knowing and not acting. If unaware, it evokes a shame of learning for the first time. For others, it will have been dismissed as banter between mates, but this is the nature of prejudice and art; it’s complex.”

Three of the themes referred to how the medium of performance resonated with respondents. For some participants, watching the performance reignited their own love of the medium, as well as a recognition of theatre as pedagogy. One respondent wrote:

“...the fire within me to perform is still there. It showed me that there was still much I could personally do to educate society on the issues faced by people from diverse backgrounds.”

Other respondents referred to creating

spaces for voice and representation, whether by making space for diverse voices, or by bringing forth their own silenced stories. For example someone wrote:

“...our stories need to be told, things that are held within the secrets of my mind need to come out and to find healing or closure through decolonisation”.

Some participants also expressed that they didn't learn anything new about themselves or were not sure if they had learnt anything. However, two of these participants also noted that it was because they had already shared the same views communicated in the performance, or had already been exposed to the ideas.

5.2. Reflections from the Performers

The development and performance of AMKA was an important, meaningful, transformative and emotional experience for those involved. The re-telling of personal and community stories and the embodiment of painful memories, in a way that seeks to unsettle and resist, draws on the emotional and psychological resources of performers. An integral part of the performance was to debrief with the performers both individually and collectively. This occurred some weeks after the final show to ensure time and space for reflection, and to allow for the development of reflective questions to

be posed to the group.

The development of these questions occurred during an iterative meeting with the project lead, Geskeva Komba, as well as through subsequent email communications. In this meeting Geskeva presented a set of questions guiding feedback and reflection, which captured individual's experiences of the development process as well as their engagement with the content of the performance (See Appendix D). Some changes were made to allow for wider and more open reflections, and some questions were added to capture particular aspects that were of interest to the present report. Once these questions were finalised Geskeva and along with another group member, Ezeldin Deng, presented them to the crew capturing both written and video documented reflections.

From these reflections some important themes were interpreted which spoke to the shared experiences of many of the group members. One such theme spoke to the importance of self-determination for the performers. Here Geskeva reflects:

"For me it was a platform for myself and others to represent ourselves the way we needed and wanted it to be in our own way. Being able to re-centre the African narrative in a way that created a journey of reflection [and] critical conversations...We weren't continuing the same narrative of the African

which is underrepresented on many platforms, spoken about out of context, and usually given a single narrative."

Part of self-determination is to regain control of how stories are represented, a reclaiming of narratives from the African diaspora that speaks truly to the diasporic experience and allows for its complexity. Wani also reflects on the how the re-centering of voice and narrative can empower:

"My experience in doing Amka was one of extreme pride and privilege. It felt really empowering to be able to work in a space where not only was your body, being, experience and knowledge prioritised but also centred throughout the whole process from conception through to actualisation of the performance."

This was particularly significant as this representation and re-centering occurred in the context of hegemonic whiteness within the Australian performing arts and within the Arts Centre, a symbolic space of mainstream performance. As Motley recounts:

"As a group, we achieved solidarity and achieved our common goal which was to plant the seeds of discussion (specifically of our 3rd culture) into the community and inject some blackness into the white washed world of performing arts in Australia."

Another important theme reflected on by the group members was the formation of supportive communities and spaces

of solidarity. Wani describes:

"Being surrounded by folk who could validate you, share your experience and have in depth conversations about creating works that are about you and your community in ways that are holistic and feel beneficial to said communities because they don't feel pacified."

This captures how the sharing of experience validates and affirms, giving power to one's story and connecting it the story of diaspora. This also was reflected by Motley:

"Personally, I overcame fear of sharing deep thoughts around my personal experience of blackness. I achieved real vulnerability and I supported my fellow cast in achieving our collective goals. I made stronger connections with my community."

It was within these spaces that vulnerability was supported allowing the depth of experience to be explored, which facilitated critical consciousness and individual and collective growth. As Motley continues:

"The show was a big adrenalin rush, such a high and a highlight of my life and career as a performer, definitely a defining or redefining point that allowed me to boldly step into a new arena and just be, and not just be accepted but to be further supported and encouraged is a lovely, spirit lifting process that I am forever grateful for. After experiencing such a liberating event, I am left hungry for more, more sharing, more vulnerability, and more connections and of course more creativity."

For these group members, AMKA was transformative, not only as a form of self-determination within diasporic communities, or within spaces of encounter, but individually as performers. For Tanya, who became involved in the later stages of the production, the spaces that emerged through the purposeful coming together of AMKA's performers ignited a political love borne of struggle and action. In a Facebook post after the performance she wrote:

"Being part of the tail end of this work -devised, created and controlled by an incredible cast of all POC creatives and intellectuals- has been one of the most raw and joyous experiences. I have never really used the word love to talk about practice but this is love, political love. The type of love that Guevara spoke about in relation to revolution. The type of political love that Silvio Rodriguez, Victor Jara and Amparo Ochoa sang about during consciousness and liberation ...struggles."

This further reflects the purpose for political arts as a tool for transformation and inspiration, and collective empowerment as together people resist, support and speak back.

The creation of spaces of support and openness enabled an authenticity and genuineness that informed the stories that were presented. Whilst this was challenging, it was necessary. As Geskeva reflects:

"We were carving out a new pathway. That was hard, it was always going to be

difficult but we knew it had to be done, and on our own terms. It was rewarding because of the richness and rawness in how we were all able to share our own stories, our fears, trauma and aspirations as authentically as possible without it being played around with too much. This was important but it couldn't be done without trust, giving up space for others to be heard and letting go."

This truth and rawness speaks to the complexities of individual subjectivities within the African diaspora, it neither enshrines or obscures difference, but peers past essentialised representations to communicate the multitude of stories and experiences that makeup this collective community.



6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this report was to document the production and performance of AMKA. In particular the research set out to examine the experiences of both the performers, as they shared narratives of the African diaspora in Australia, and audiences as they bore witness to these diverse stories. In examining what occurs in the space between performer and audience, we can see the possibilities for transformative social change through the modality of community arts.

“Through witnessing these stories, their own positioning in relation to the African diaspora is made apparent, and the status quo is critiqued rather than enshrined”

Transformative witnessing captures the space between performer and audience, and describes a shift in attitudes and beliefs that translates to actions and behaviour outside of the theatre setting (Sajnani, 2010). To facilitate transformative witnessing the “gap” between performer and witness must be observed, as the diversity of views, experiences and social positions within an audience can hinder resonance of the themes and concepts communicated. The audiences present during the AMKA performances were indeed diverse, and

and represented an array of differing identities, prior knowledge, social locations, relationships to the performers and understanding of community arts. For the audiences of AMKA, individual subjectivities shaped the way they engaged with the content and themes as they witnessed each story from their own unique positions. This was evident in the way audience members who described themselves as white, Anglo-Australian or European spoke of a burgeoning awareness of their need and desire to learn more about, not only the experiences of Africans in Australia, but their own privileges and prejudices. Through witnessing these stories, their own positioning in relation to the African diaspora is made apparent, and the status quo is critiqued rather than enshrined. For many other audience members, their engagement with the performance was quite different, as they either were themselves positioned within the African diaspora, or recognised the narratives of their own diasporic communities within the stories told.

Aesthetic distance is a concept that

*Hata ukinichukia la kweli nitakwambia
Hate me, but I won't stop telling you the
truth – Swahili proverb*

describes a psychologically protective distance between audience and creating the conditions for transformation (Wood, 2017). Whilst various theatre practitioners have proposed frameworks that have adopted varying degrees of distance, one such approach is the reduction of distance but not its complete elimination. Boal (1995) speaks of three key types of engagement instrumental in audience transformation. Identification, is where the audience sees their own experiences within the material. This was evident in the responses from the audience members who identified as belonging to the African, or other, diasporas. Recognition describes audience members who can see the experiences of others they have met and interacted with reflected in the material. This can be seen in the responses of many of the audience members who identified as white, Anglo-Australian or European. Within the survey responses, respondents largely spoke of attending the performance to support friends, family or co-workers, suggesting that if the content did not directly speak to their own experiences, they recognised them in the lived experiences of their own social networks. Lastly, resonance, can encompass recognition and identification, and signifies an emotional awakening and a key level of engagement for transformation to take place.

One measure of positive audience experience draws on the concept of the audience's emotional perception of authenticity, or the "emotional truth" within the performance (Radbourne et al., 2009). This could be one aspect that leads to resonance within the audience, and signifies a reduction of aesthetic distance. For many audience members it was authenticity which stood out most from the AMKA performance, often described as raw and truthful. This was mirrored within the performer's reflections, as they also spoke of the spaces they worked within with a language of authenticity and openness. This was an important process for the performers who shared important and meaningful stories, and evidently was translated into the performance itself resonating with the audience.

"For many audience members it was authenticity which stood out most from the AMKA performance, often described as raw and truthful"

For many of the performers the AMKA project was about and for the African diaspora. It was a project for self-determination and self-representation, and it enabled Africans in Australia to see their own stories and the stories of their friends and families enacted upon the stage of a mainstream cultural institution. Rappaport (1995) speaks of

Until the Lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter – **African proverb**

in the performance, may have seen and heard new stories and new perspectives from within their communities.

narratives as a resource for the production of positive social identities. Whilst individual and collective narratives are shared between communities, many powerful dominant narratives that exist within mainstream media and public discourse influence identity development. Self-representation, therefore, is an important project for many communities whom have been reduced to essentialised, racialized and negative representations. The stories of AMKA, as told from the stages of the Arts Centre, allowed the voices of the African diaspora into the mainstream. Furthermore, it constructed important positive narratives for community members to draw on and inform their own identities. Many of the audience members spoke of the importance of seeing these stories and knowing that they were shared experiences, leading to solidarity and affirmation. However, AMKA also depicted diasporic stories and identities as nuanced and complex. It recognised the diversity of voices within its community, another key theme articulated by many audience members. For any diaspora is not easily distilled, and diasporic identities occur at the point of many intersections. So even those who saw their own stories reflected



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APPENDIX A: AUDIENCE SURVEY

AMKA Audience Survey

We invite you to complete this short 16 question survey about your experience of seeing the Amka performance.

This survey is part of a research project undertaken by Victoria University and cohealth Arts Generator.

All information will be kept anonymous and confidential.

1. What is your preferred gender? _____

2. What is your age (please circle)?

18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75+

3. What is your cultural background? _____

4. What is your current occupation (please circle)?

Student employed unemployed retired other

5. What is the suburb you live in? _____

6. What is your understanding of the purpose of arts?

7. Have you been to the arts centre before (please circle)? Yes No

8. How comfortable do you feel being at the Arts Centre (please circle)?

Very comfortable

Somewhat comfortable

Neither comfortable or uncomfortable

Somewhat uncomfortable

Very uncomfortable

9. Why did you come to see the performance?

10. What stood out for you the most about this performance?

11. Why did this stand out?

12. Through witnessing this performance, what did you learn:

a. About yourself?

b. About your community and different people within it?

13. Would you come again to this type of performance (please circle)? Yes No

14. Would you come again to the Arts Centre (please circle)? Yes No

15. What would you tell others about this performance?

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: African Australians negotiating belonging and Identity: Examining the role of participatory arts practice.

This project is being conducted by Dr Christopher Sonn; Christina Maxwell, a Masters of Community Psychology student; and Rama Agung-Igusti a fourth year student from the College of Health and Biomedicine.

Project explanation

The current study will be undertaken in partnership with cohealth Arts Generator (Arts Generator). Cohealth is an arts provider in a community health organisation. Their work is premised on the knowledge that access to the arts is fundamental to enriching people's lives and therefore increasing their wellbeing. The aim of the current study is to conduct a participatory case study of the Amka initiative, an initiative which seeks to empower young people through the creative documentation of the experiences of African Australians. The participatory case study will gather interview and survey data to explore various questions about arts, belonging and identity.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to participate in an interview that may be up to an hour in duration. The research will be conducted as a participatory case study, with Amka constituting the case. The case will be situated within a broader framework of narrative inquiry where narratives are the key means for constructing and conveying meanings about everyday life, and understandings about self, others and belonging. You will be interviewed about your life story, your use of arts in your work, and the meaning of participation in the projects.

What will I gain from participating?

Your participation will provide you with an opportunity to voice your opinion about what life is like in your community and also to contribute stories that will inform activities aimed at supporting and strengthening African Australian communities.

How will the information I give be used?

The information you provide will be digitally recorded (with permission) and transcribed verbatim.

These transcripts, which will inform the final report and academic papers, will be confidential and only seen by the researchers. All of your information will be coded and not attributed to yourself. The research will be produced into a written report as well as academic journal articles and presentations. Your transcript will be returned to you.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

There are low probability risks. The aim of the questions to be asked in the interviews is to elicit the meanings made of your experiences of place, displacement and place making and participating in your community more generally. This question will most likely stimulate you to share part of your personal history and life experience that may distress you. It is possible that you will become distressed because of the questions asked in the interview. Topics discussed may heighten your concerns on the particular aspects of your history, culture, identity and belonging.

How will this project be conducted?

This study will use interviews to gather information from African Australians. Those interested in participating can contact Christopher directly. He will contact you separately to organise a time and place that is mutually convenient for the interview to be conducted. After the interview has been conducted they will make contact again to go over the transcription of the interview with you and to discuss the next steps in the research and your involvement.

Who is conducting the study?

Dr. Christopher Sonn
College of Arts
Victoria University
Christopher.Sonn@vu.edu.au
Direct contact number: 99195226

Support Services

Dr. Romana Morda
Psychologist
Romana.Morda@vu.edu.au
Phone: 99195223

cohealth
Health and Support Services
www.cohealth.org.au
Phone: 83984100

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above.

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: African Australians negotiating belonging and Identity: Examining the role of participatory arts practice

This project is being conducted by Dr Christopher Sonn; Christina Maxwell, a Masters of Community Psychology student; and Rama Agung-Igusti a fourth year student from the College of Health and Biomedicine.

There are low probability risks. The aim of the questions to be asked in the interviews is to elicit the meanings made of your experiences of place, displacement and place making and participating in your community more generally. The questions will most likely stimulate you to share part of your personal history and life experience that may be distressing. It is possible that you may become distressed because of the questions asked in the interview. Topics discussed may heighten concerns on the particular aspects of your history, culture, identity and belonging.

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, _____

of _____

certify that I am at least 18 years old* and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study:

African Australians negotiating belonging and Identity: Examining the role of participatory arts practice,
being conducted at Victoria University by: Dr Christopher Sonn and Rama Agung-Igusti

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by: Christopher Sonn or Rama Agung-Igusti, and that I freely consent to participation involving the below mentioned procedures:

- Individual interview that will be digitally recorded (with permission) and transcribed

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I have been informed that I will not be identified by name and that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed:

Date:

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher

Dr Christopher Sonn

Direct contact number: 99195226

APPENDIX C: SURVEY ACCESS FLYER



AMKA AUDIENCE SURVEY

This survey is part of a research project undertaken by Victoria University and coHealth Arts Generator and is about your experience of seeing the Amka performance.

All information will be kept anonymous and confidential.

Please go to the [URL](https://goo.gl/osHgLi) or scan the QR CODE below to start the survey.

<https://goo.gl/osHgLi>



APPENDIX D: PERFORMER REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is AMKA?
2. What were your expectations for the project?
3. In what way do you think AMKA met or didn't meet your expectations?
4. What was it like working with a collective of people that you haven't worked with before in this sort of way?
5. How would you describe the process?
6. What was a highlight for you?
7. What could have been done better?
8. What is it that this contributes to the African narrative here in Australia?
9. From a personal viewpoint, what was it like knowing that as a collective you were going to perform such raw experiences?
10. Self-determination was a core element in creating this work, what did that look like, feel like for you throughout the process?

