

Presentation

TA : My name Taqwa, Taqwa Ali, I am from Sudan. I am an artist and I moved to Maastricht mainly for study about few years ago, sob I would say I'm integrated as a local.

From Sudan

Lives in Maastricht

IP : What is your artistic background?

Artistic Practice

TA : My disciplines, I'm interdisciplinary, so it's I would say it's very hard to try to fit a certain narrative in the arts. And that gives a lot of freedom to be experimental and to experiment with every material, colors, performance and a lot of artistic research.

Interdisciplinary

Experimental

Artistic Research

My art practice started, I think I always have been creative but haven't actually had the courage to think about that as a career, until move back in Maastricht. And started looking into the art scene and think this could become my life. And then I applied to iArts.

Always been creative

Art as à carrer

iArts

IP : What are your motivations when creating?

Motivations

TA : I think what drives me to create is being completely lost. There was just a lot of confusion and I don't like talking about it, so I ended up making about it.

Being lost

Not talking but making about it

IP : What notions of artistic activism do you have?

Artistic Activism

TA : I heard about artistic activism also at the study that I'm doing at iArts, because it's been socially engaged sort of art. I think the first thing I really really saw that made sense and resonated was the gorilla girls, for me that was really interesting to see. And then later I ended up doing a residency, which I'm actually finishing, for critical fashion.

iArts : socially engaged

Gorilla girls

Art residency in critical fashion

It's with a group in Ghana that is researching the impact of the second hand wave in the global south, and just immersing and looking into this impact that we're not aware of, that we are or at least now that I am part of this western space, there are things that I don't know anymore that are happening.

Perspective from the western space on issues in the global south

In lots of acquiring control and open my eyes into what I could do with my practice you know, and yeah I think artistic activism doesn't have to be the way that we think of activism. As loud and mean and scares people away, I think they're beautiful ways to be active part of society and actually take position and stand for something that's beyond your artistic practice or artistic aesthetic.

Artistic activism can differ from regular activism

Activism can be loud and mean

Take a stand beyond your artistic practice in your artwork

IP : Do you consider yourself politically engaged?

Political Engagement

TA : I don't think I have a choice to like not be politically engaged. I come from a background that carries a lot of baggage for people in my generation. Sudanese post-colonial republic trying to grow and it's just never been consistent

Needs to be politically engaged

Heavy background

Sudanese post-colonial influence

So things are always happening and revolution, actually the other and current things are happening quite intensely in Sudan. And obviously a lot of motivation in my work comes from Sudan or stems from that experience; being from that space. So for me to detach from that, I don't feel like I could do that. So then I end up integrating a lot of emotions into the work I create. I think the current project is very much involving this experience of Sudan and also my political position I would say.

Sudanese influence in the artwork

Cannot detach

Integrates emotions

Current project : experience of Sudan

Current project

Sudanese diaspora in the NL

Existence of identities

Liminal space

Political dialogue as a part of people's experience

Works with clay

I'm doing my graduation work on being diaspora of Sudan in the Netherlands. I'm sort of researching... First I wanted to research how identity exists in this network communities that live in what I would call the "Liminal space" which is between spaces and doesn't really belong anywhere. But then it ended up being a lot of political dialogue, but of course that's something I cannot remove from people's experience. And naturally it's become part of my interviews and slowly part of the creative meetings together, and naturally part of the making of my own private making, working with clay.

So it's a bit informative, it's a bit conceptual, like wrapping together notions of identity being between spaces and generation. I guess We work towards regulation, so yeah I have to be.

Conceptual and informative

Identity between spaces and generations

IP : Do you translate your political engagement in your artwork?

Political Engagement in Artwork

TA : Yes I do, and most of the times it's the foundation, under which a lot of the work is. I don't think it shows in a very obvious way, but there is definitely the feel that you might experience, I hope cause that's what I tried to create this experience. There was a feel, I would say, like some residue ?very very small.

Present in the foundations

Not obvious

Feeling the experience

IP : What do you expect from your audience?

Audience

TA : I think I would like for my audience to seek the dialogue, if my work has I guess sensitised a certain emotion, because I would want to know what kind of emotion that was. I love that Dialogue, I love having conversations about anything. So if you see my work you definitely speak to me about it, or send me a message, or write about it.

Seek a dialogue

Feedback from emotions

Having conversations

Share about it

IP : So you kind of want to have this return from your audience?

TA : I always seek for an exchange. I think it's valuable because obviously it's part of the growth when you try to make work, you cannot just make work out of your own ideal of what resonates and what does not. So still seeing the perspective of the audience is definitely cultural. I actually saw an artist who did experiment photography work at the Vrijthof museum, during museum night, her name is Indra and she was just standing in the background and the crowd was just walking back and forth in front of her, seeing the work and just making the worst comments. Sometimes they were really intrigued but she

Exchange

Perspectives of resonances

was just in the back, like not even saying anything, just dressed really plainly and just standing there with her bag like that if she's lost waiting for somebody. And I just walked around like "Oh my God" and she was like yes I'm just here listening to people giving feedback indirectly. I'm hearing everything just fine, that's quite ballsy I don't think I'll be able to handle that. But it also inspired me a little bit.

Artistic Activism

IP : Do you think Artistic Activism has more power than other forms of engagement to trigger and effect on people?

TA : I don't think it's better than other forms of activism but what makes it different ,and perhaps works best, is that it leaves this foundation that allows for people to be more receptive. I think if you approach certain topics that are really really difficult to engage in, you bring that difficult energy, I would not be receptive to hear that. And I think bringing creativity always functions best to bring difficult dialogue or get across a message that is crucial. And I think it's maybe the best way to approach it, at least from my perspective, like this besides from that I think, it has always worked best for you to see creativity merged with deeper thought that engage the social context.

More receptive

Easier energy

Benefit of bringing creative

Might be the best way to approach difficult dialogue