

My reflections on the project

I embarked on Routing Diaspora Histories with the intention to give and receive creativity. Only it took me further on a journey of understanding what I perceive as history. Working through a vast collection of historical articles, books, music and poetry, I found that my historical voice is rooted in people, in community and in culture.

From birth I never had the blessing of learning these home truths, the spirits that my grandparents knew. My mother would sprinkle little pebbles of fables. Hoping I'd one day settle into a place of untangled cables, seeing African folklore as the way forward. I could talk to you about how I never walk across 3 tiles, under a ladder but truly I do these acts without realising. And I think that's where the problem lies, I assumed I didn't need to look back at the facts laced in mystery – only my eyes have never seen evil through a Jamaican lens. My heart has never beat like a Nigerian woman, because I don't hold the riches of that legacy on my bosom. I've never danced to the way flowers blossom from the Orunmila – yellow and green intertwined around the word 'orisha'. Oya a mother of nine - but she was never a mother of mine.

Until I embarked on this journey of delving deeper into African divinity. I believe blackness exists more than in the tongue. Our history is spoken through body, stories and song. So being the voice of when academia meets creativity; history meets individuality - I discovered what history really meant to me.

This project unearthed a yearning for a better future, the decision that our history is still hurting within us and we may need to keep searching for ourselves but as a unit, what lies ahead is more important. As the remaining voice of Roehampton, I speak for the youth, the truth of what the education system needs to breed for us to succeed. Routing Diaspora Histories is an inward battle, but the future needs to be heard too.

- Mya Onwugbonu