FLINN WORKS

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Talk | White Money
33–42 minutes reading time

Sophia Stepf (Berlin): Good evening, everybody. Thank you for coming at this weird hour of the day. Friday, 6 p.m. Probably the hardest time to concentrate on anything. My name is Sophia Stepf, I'm the artistic director of Flinn Works. White Money is a new kind of project for Flinn Works because this time we tried to expand funding regulations by inviting people to take part in a lab on ‚White Funding' or European arts funding for the Global South. At the end of the lab, which took place over a period of eight months, the participating artists could decide whether they wanted to create an artistic response to what we had discussed in this lab. All six agreed to produce artistic projects as a response. Now, to the introductions.

Aderemi Adegbite (Lagos): I would like to introduce Nora. I think that that's a big thing for me. Nora is a performer, writer, choreographer, working at the intersection of activism and trauma. She recently married a friend after 28 years of friendship. That's really interesting.

Nora Amin (Cairo/Berlin): Thank you for the great introduction. And now I will introduce Anuja. She is the founder of Drama Queen. She works and focuses on documentary theatre as a performer, as a person who conceives productions and also writes. She also curates international workshops on documentary theatre, including one with Rimini Protocol, and she has great humour on stage. Every time, I watch a performance I laugh non-stop. So yeah, that's Anuja for me.

Anuja Ghosalkar (Bangalore): Thank you. I think it's a really warm introduction. I will introduce Sophia Stepf, who is the artistic director of Flinn Works. And she said she first wanted to become an anthropologist and then an international festival curator, then a theatre maker, then a cross-cultural trainer. And now she mixes it all up as part of Flinn Works. And for me, it's very exciting to introduce Sophia because she has a long connection with India, and I think a love for India. I have to explain very little of my context to Sophia, and I think what binds us is also her love for dosas, which is a food from South India. She really enjoys masala dosa. In fact, I carried dosa batter across the border for her.

Sophia Stepf: Thank you. I would like to introduce Aderemi. He wears many hats – those of a cultural producer, of a curator, of a wonderful photographer, of a writer. And I would say he is a person who makes things possible in Lagos, Nigeria. And he recently became the father of a beautiful baby daughter.

Aderemi Adegbite: Thank you.

Sophia Stepf: OK, so we challenged each other to ask two questions each. We will have eight questions in total. Some of the questions we know already, some of them will be posed for the first time now. And after that, we will be very happy to talk with you.

Anuja Ghosalkar: Aderemi, your Tutùọlá Institute poses a great challenge to the idea of institutional funding structures as we know and experience them in the Global South. And it really goes to the heart of the idea of the politics of money, right? How did you come up with this brilliant concept?

Aderemi Adegbite: Thank you Anuja. Well, I would not say it's a brilliant concept but an ambitious idea. When I had a Nigerian cultural institute in mind, I interacted with various (European) institutes, for example the British Council. These (European) cultural institutions – for the context of this project I say 'us from the Global South' – basically, we always wait for them to give us funding when we have a project, both artists and content producers. It's a ‚mono way' funding system. If we continue to approach cultural institutions in this manner, they will always treat us in the same way. We are at their mercy all the time because their mission is not actually to support us, not to give us all this funding, but to promote their culture and their language. What they do is ‚tokenism' and we roll with it. So, creating this institute (Tutùọlá Institute) was to create some kind of alternative discourse. So, one country from the Global South comes to Europe to run an institute and to fund local artists. That was the reason I said that it's really an ambitious project because – see how much money these Goethe-Instituts get from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs every year? And also, both the corporate and individual funding that goes into institutes such as Alliance Française and the Goethe-Institut? And now we find just one man pushing this idea of an institute. Meanwhile, in Nigeria, it would never have become reality because the government does not care. We provide our own water and our own electricity. So, we have to create this kind of discourse in our own thinking.

Anuja Ghosalkar: I have a connecting question to that. And it also comes from what we talked about in the labs. You always say that as somebody who has received funding, you have a responsibility towards the funders. And I think it's quite exciting that you say that because we also often like to challenge the funder, right? And

when you said that in the lab, it was quite unique to me that: 'No, I have a responsibility.' Would you like to talk a little bit about that and how you see it?

Aderemi Adegbite: Yeah. I actually don't see any reason why someone should fund me (laughter). If you want to give some money to me to run a particular project, you should be interested in the project as well. I see it more as a collaboration, so I have a responsibility towards you as the artist or cultural producer running a particular project. And you (as a funder) have a responsibility to follow your money, to see how it is being used. You'll find some cultural organisation or artists collecting money and not doing what they say they will do with the money. So yeah, it's a big responsibility for me to get funds. And I have to put the money to a very good use. And sometimes I go to the drawing board and ask myself – if after a year I don't have access to other funds and this is all that I have for a year, what will become of the project? Because I always think about the future of the project, not only, you know, for the period that I have applied for. So, sometimes I tweak things. Like in a project that I did, which was funded by the Prince Claus Fund. It was said that I would create a small lab where participants would present their works during the laboratory. And at the end of the day, I realized that creating a small lab would not work because where would they practice afterwards? We have a big problem with big art institutions. We actually have just two in Nigeria, and we don't have alternative institutions that can take in upcoming artists and groom them. So, in the end I built a very big space that has been in use since 2008.

Sophia Stepf: The Tutùọlá Institute was inaugurated in Lagos. You have a small office in Lagos now, and here (in the Sophiensaele Berlin) the Institute is an artistic intervention. But how is the Tutùọlá Institute going to survive in the future? What are your strategies of institutional survival? And where will you find funding?

Aderemi Adegbite: I get these questions every day. Ever since I stumbled on this idea of creating an alternative institute from the Global South. I had a very long conversation with a lawyer, someone who understands how an artistic project is funded. And he asked me: 'Why are you doing what the government should be doing?' And my immediate response was that if we don't do it, the government that we know will not do it. I'm a typical Nigerian. I've never lived abroad. I go abroad for projects only. I mean, typical Nigerian is that I know that the government is not interested in cultural issues and cultural programming. Nothing. They are not interested in cultural diplomacy. So, I have been thinking about how to keep it going. Well, the first thing was to have an office, which is very small. It's just about the idea, actually. And the next step will be to generate funds. I have started talking to some peo-

ple. Yeah, I hope my negotiations and my conversation with them comes to fruition.

Anuja Ghosalkar: When we were prepping for this question, Nora said that she would require a two-hour lecture series to answer it, but I will persist with it. Maybe we'll get a short Twitter version answer, but I'm going to ask the question anyway. So, with White Money, we've been talking about the decolonization of objects. And in Nora's performance, and in her being really, she goes deep into the question of the body. And I'm interested in that as a performance maker and a performer myself – how does this process of the decolonization of the body begin?

Nora Amin: I think the colonization of the body, not the de-colonization, but the colonization itself, is when a certain knowledge takes over the body and identity, and this knowledge is either imposed or forced on people and not generated by them themselves. And this I regard as a kind of colonization of the body and identity. Not just the colonization of land or territory, but the body as territory and body as identity. And the first form of colonization I can think of is the patriarchal colonization of the female body, and how this system of values and thinking takes over. The female body as a kind of object, it comes back to the decolonization of objects, and also how to work with the female body as a body of reproduction, for creating families and wealth. It brings me to the body of the performer. Maybe with me as an example. And how we are raised in the tradition of the performing arts that were mainly created by the patriarchal system, we are educated in acting schools, where teachers mostly work from this patriarchal system of thinking not only towards female identities, but also masculinities, and how they instrumentalize masculinities within the system. And this for me translates into a colonization of the way I should speak. My articulation and the lines, my pauses. How I move on stage, how I should look. And for me to decolonize my body from this, I feel I need to start first by reflecting on my perception of myself. And is it really mine? And then I discover there is a whole minefield of pedagogy, pedagogy that is very deeply rooted in our visions and perceptions of ourselves. So, if I am able first to decolonize my own perception of myself and my own traumas, maybe this is one step towards trying to find for myself a feminist perspective towards my stagecraft, whether this is movement, dance, writing, speaking or directing. And this brings me to a moment where this decolonization is just a kind of continuous action. And the peaks of it are the moments of performance. I feel that each performance is a chance with the spectators to find a way to transform. And this transformation happens with connection, with the exchange of a gaze, humour, exercise, dance, speaking interactions. And I feel then it becomes a collective action of decolonization. This is not the full lecture, of course. But it's a glimpse of it.

Sophia Stepf: My question connects to this. So, you talked today about the patriarchal gaze as opposed to the male gaze. Could you explain to us what you mean by patriarchal gaze, and also how you subvert it on stage?

Nora Amin: For me, patriarchal gaze means a gaze that belongs to this system of thinking. Whether the viewer is male or female or whatever the gender is does not matter. So, for instance, sexism is not delegated to one gender, but it's delegated to a system of thinking that discriminates. And so, for me these things are the experience of over 25 years. It is a continuous experience of confrontation. From the beginning I have been interested in personal histories and how to tell the unspoken. The truth of our lives. And this made me enter a confrontation because I wanted to speak about topics that were not allowed or were not very familiar or popular. And there comes a reaction or how I receive the response of the gaze from the audience. This is all happening on an immediate basis. But I also think that moments of performativity, of performance, are very intense moments where histories are compacted together. And maybe if we are successful with an interaction and with the overall feeling, we can move this moment to a different point of understanding or perception. And maybe each performance can not only receive a gaze of transformation, but also gaze back at the spectators and break borders, maybe also between the stage and the audience. I feel the moment where we can identify, where we find that maybe we have similar moments or maybe we can identify similar experiences is a moment that also moves performativity to a more intimate level. Maybe this is a possibility to change the tradition of this patriarchal gaze. We look at things totally different from one person to the other. But we are still framed in a communication that is shaped by this universal pedagogy. And every time we see on stage something that breaks away from this history, we either feel a certain discomfort or triggers or we say ‚Oh, it's too emotional for me' or ‚What is this? You cannot classify it. Is this dance?' or ‚What is this? Is it true or is it acting?' I love those movements. So maybe I can now ask Anuja a question, which is also related to moments of confrontation and the gaze and personal histories. Because in your performance, you speak about the two years of pandemic and isolation. I would love to hear from you how you experienced the premiere, the first night of performance in front of the audience.

Anuja Ghosalkar: Thank you. I mean, that's something that I was obsessed with coming here and actually in our lab, both you and Azade (Shahmiri, lab participant) spoke about this: just to be performing live again. And I felt relief. I was like ‚Oh, I'm not the only one feeling that. The two other performers feel the same'. And the first night of the premiere, this comes back to something very vital and fundamental, which I think my show tries to talk about. It's the breath. It was just exhilarating to be able to exchange

breath again with so many people looking at me and me looking at them. And like you were saying, I felt like the body remembered. My body, as a performer, remembered what it means to be in front of the lights, what it means to catch light. It was a bit rusty; it took time to find it. But the memories came flooding back, memories of inhabiting space with other human beings. I think that's fundamental. We don't ever forget it. The moment of isolation of two years! In India, the second wave was especially bad for us. We were literally locked in. It also gives a body the static, kinetic energy while itching to, you know, like the bulls are let out, I felt like being let out. And I have to say, that moment of the premiere night provided a sense of freedom. It was a sense of like, Oh, I can breathe freely with all these people'. And as one would like to intellectualize it and think about it, for me I keep coming back to the breath. Why are so many people risking their lives to come to see a theatre performance? Really, why are we doing it? And I felt that sense of freedom and joy, which I hope I can convey. So, the first night was incredibly joyous and free.

Aderemi Adegbite: What was the main challenge you faced during the conceptualization of this performance?

Anuja Ghosalkar: The challenge was that normally when I make an artistic work, it comes from something that I feel like talking about, whether it's erotica or whether it's personal stories or it is commenting on technology that we used for two years. This prompt came from the outside. The idea of ‚white money' came from somewhere else. And first I asked myself, do I want to persist with it, because it's not something that I had actively been thinking of or actively wanted to make art on. Once I made up my mind saying 'Yes, I want to think about it', the second big challenge for me was to find the poetry in the idea of money, because money can be dry and transactional. And I was like, what is poetic about money? What are the aesthetics of money? And I wanted to understand and showcase the tactility of money. I was like, okay, I can respond as an artist, not just as someone who thinks of money from the outside as I have also worked in an arts foundation and given grants to other people. I wanted to tap into an idea that was poetic. And the final big sort of paintbrush gesture for me was finding a humanism in it. I had to find a humanism, too, to be able to defend to myself, as to why I was working with the idea of money.

Aderemi Adegbite: So how did it feel to be an outsider? You know, after being an insider in a grant making organization and giving grants to artists. Now, you are outside of that framework. When you make an application (as an artist) and it's not accepted, how does it feel?

Anuja Ghosalkar: That's a great question. My proposals are never accepted. I've never made it through a grant writing proposal, ever.

The open calls just kill me because I put my foot in my mouth too much. Being an outsider and just being outside institutional structures preserves my artistic instinct. When I worked at an arts foundation, I lost agency. I spoke in the voice of an institution. I did not speak what was true to me. And I have to say that being an outsider is a great place in life, dancing outside a building and doing whatever the hell I feel like doing. I have a lot of agency. As an artist, of course it's difficult to find the money, but institutions blunt imagination. It's just the nature of it. How do you keep the spark alive? And I have refused institutional jobs ever since, including teaching at art institutions. For me, it really damaged something. It took five years to come out of this institutional mindset.

Aderemi Adegbite: Was this institution that you worked with one of the usual (European) ones or was it a local Indian organization?

Anuja Ghosalkar: It was one of the biggest Indian art foundations.

Nora Amin: So, for me, it was very reassuring to rehearse in front of you, Sophia. And I want to ask you, when you sit among the audience and watch this project being implemented, live, with real people, how do you feel as a spectator, as a producer?

Sophia Stepf: I try to separate the hats that I wear a little bit, because different feelings arise. So, there's a feeling for Flinn Works. I'm responsible for Flinn Works. I feel I have to make sure that these performances are received in the right way. So, I feel anxiety about how the communication process is working with the audience. And I also feel more responsible because, yes somehow, we are all responsible together but Flinn Works made this framework, and we said: 'Okay, let's go on this stage. Let's do it.' Then as a professional director and a dramaturg, it's very stressful sometimes because I want to immediately put my hands onto this thing that I'm seeing and edit – mostly edit. Because that's my training, it's what I do all the time. Like I look at work and I'm like, okay, let's edit. Anuja got a little bit of it because we had a feedback session and of course she didn't accept the feedback, which is also good (laughter) I said, 'Look, there's these three sentences. I could easily just edit...'

Anuja Ghosalkar: But you were very gentle. You are extremely gentle, I have to say, surprisingly.

Sophia Stepf: I try really hard because, of course, I'm giving up privilege. I think that's the hard thing. So, when you (Nora) first told me in the green room that you were going to ask me this question. I said, 'No, it should not be about my feelings.' Then I thought, okay, why don't I want to answer this question? And it's because, of course, I'm giving up a privilege and sometimes I bite my teeth, clench them together while doing so because it's not always easy.

Nora Amin: It‘s never easy. But you did it.

Sophia Stepf: I‘m not sure I fully succeeded all the time, but I think we are all human beings and we‘re not complete. And the structure for this project was that I would try not to interfere, at least not in a way that I had power. I‘m not sure that always worked. But you know, it‘s a murky terrain. It‘s a bit muddy. I still feel conflicted about a lot of things, but I guess that‘s the nature of new work. Also knowing we are walking on a new terrain. How can we have total clarity on anything? So, I remain in murkiness.

Aderemi Adegbite: I think it‘s good to remain in that. Because some of us are still questioning things, even if we have created something that, you know, we put out there as a response to this theme. But we still think about it. Is it the right response? And are we doing it right? And that takes me to my question. What prompted this subject for Flinn Works?

Sophia Stepf: So, we‘ve been working internationally for many years, especially me, since I started. When I first came to India, I was a student and I travelled and looked at theatre and wanted to understand what theatre is like in a different cultural context. I think this was the anthropologist in me. And of course, in my first project I immediately experienced this whole moment of white skin privilege and power, with communication completely failing. With me thinking, I‘d done everything right, everyone else thinking we‘d done everything wrong, and people being hurt. People not talking to each other and people thinking everything had failed. And I realized that there was a lot more to learn and a lot more to deal with. I continued to work for international festival curators – I worked for a powerful theatre curator for some years and I realized how she could make or break careers because she could invite a group and promise a lot of money but she could also then say, ‘Oh sorry, it didn‘t work out‘. And this is what sometimes happened. Seeing the economy of that and seeing how much power there was in this kind of European arts funding that we had access to and how violent it could be... There‘s the A Midsummer Night‘s Dream story - a British Council production in India where people actually died. Maybe it’s an extreme example but still... When I participate in international collaborations, the issue of money arises at some point, but it‘s in the green room and it’s likely to be unpleasant. It‘s never discussed in academic discourse and never on stage because at the end of the day, we all have pressure to get this production to the stage. And I think there‘s a lot of hard and bad feelings in people‘s minds and hearts after transnational productions. If you ask people from other countries, how a project with Germans was and you get an answer, it‘s sometimes quite terrible what you hear. And then there‘s this whole academic discourse on the other hand, with conferences and symposia. There‘s a huge gap between the people, who practise, and the people

who create the academic discourse of - and for - cultural institutions. I found that an interesting void to produce into.

Aderemi Adegbite: Interesting. One thing that I noticed is that you've done this in the past, in terms of working with artists internationally. I am thinking of the Schwindelfrei Festival, when I was flown into Mannheim as a photographer. I told them, why would you hire me to come all the way from Nigeria just to make the pictures or document the festival. But well, I was well paid. I was happy. During the project, I met interesting artists from within Germany, but also from India or from Tanzania. So, I think you were already doing it. You know, perhaps there is no point in wanting to do this kind of project again, you know.

Sophia Stepf: White Money?

Aderemi Adegbite: Yes. What you said happens behind the stage, it happens everywhere. And I'm sure that if you ask some of the artists of this project, you will find the same situation that you are trying to challenge. So. Perhaps we don't need to do it anymore.

Sophia Stepf: I really believe institutions need this kind of response. Maybe it's because I want to respond to my funding reality in Germany. Also, with this project. For example, the Federal Cultural Foundation's TURN-Fund is linked to a responsibility on the part of the German group that gets the finances to administer all the money. It cannot give part of the money to its partner company. It has to make individual contracts. These structures are very complicated to work with. And yet the amount of money is very attractive. So your choice is this, either you say ‚I don't think the structure of the funding is fair and therefore I am not applying, therefore, I will never do this project'. Or you say 'I'll be clever, I'll play the game. I'll find a way to make it work'. This is the way we usually choose as Flinn Works.

Aderemi Adegbite: Interesting. Thank you. Well, anyway, if you hadn't initiated this project, some of us wouldn't have been able to create what we have created and presented. Creating this institute for me was really a big thing. And it kind of highlights my career not only as an artist, but also as a cultural producer who has been thinking about the process of funding for a long time. At some point, I was so angry with the fact that I had to apply for funds from outside Nigeria. Nigeria is an oil-producing country. Why can't I raise money here? After all, how much is it? 20 million naira, 10 million naira for a project? I should be able to raise these funds but it's not possible. Maybe that is the reason why I was so interested in being part of the project, and now I'm going back home to start making that possible.

Anuja Ghosalkar: Should we open to the audience?

Audience 1: Hello. I have a very simple question for Sophia. How were the six participating artists selected, did you choose and pick them or was there an open call? And what was the system behind this choice?

Sophia Stepf: Yes, I get this question a lot. So, we asked people we knew from previous works. Because we knew it would require trust. The only person I didn't know was Nora. But I saw a lecture and I said to myself: 'OK, maybe we can build this trust.' But I knew that if we made an open call and people applied, we would not be able to create trust on Zoom. I had a feeling that it was absolutely necessary for all of us to meet, to really establish a relationship. Because we were asking people to ‚bite the hand that feeds us'. We were asking people to reflect on funding that they might depend on, and that we also depend on. We were going into a risky, unsafe zone. I also asked people, whom I thought had a connection to funding, who thought about funds. Anuja for example, had a fitting background since she worked for the Indian Foundation for the Arts for five years before becoming a full-time artist. Hers was an interesting position for this project. We asked some other people who said ‚No, we're not interested in the subject'. I understand, it's not everybody's cup of tea. Aderemi is somebody I knew from before. And I knew that these questions were already cooking in him, we had talked about it before. So, I knew that he would probably be interested. I saw you, Nora, give an incredible talk at an ITI Symposium. Yes, I took a photograph of every one of your PowerPoint slides and then at some point I mustered the courage to just write an e-mail to you saying, 'Look, we're doing this. Would you consider being part of it?' Therefore, it's a bit unclean as it's also about friendships and networks.

Audience 2: Thank you very much for your talk. It's very interesting. I am a white funder and work for the German Federal Cultural Foundation. Sophia mentioned the TURN-Fund. We know that it's unfair: The fact that we can't give the money to institutions or groups on the African continent is very (...) At the very beginning of 2012, when we started it, we thought maybe we would not do it because the asymmetry in power was so big. My colleague has set up five collaborations with a transparent budget, bilingual applications. So, we're trying to improve. But the fact remains that we have this power asymmetry between the Global North and the Global South. So, my question is, should we stop such projects?

Aderemi Adegbite: Thank you for your question and for your explanation. The reason why I have an issue with getting funded from outside my country is because of the way I have noticed that the funding structure is. I think that if someone spends the taxpayers' money of a country on projects, the people from that country should benefit more than, you know, all the people from the other

side. I'm sorry, that's how I see it. But I think that you should continue to run these projects because if the funding was not there, I don't think we would have been able to have the kind of project that we just participated in. Thus, it would not have inspired some of the discussions that came up in the project. So, you should continue.

Anuja Ghosalkar: I actually have a counter-question for you because it's a great question to say: 'Should we stop?' But can you stop? Because the onus of the funding and the disposition are from taxpayers' money, right? So, you also have a responsibility to see that the funds go somewhere. So, can we stop? To me, this is a little bit of a question asked at gunpoint. Would you be able to stop awarding grants because that's your primary job, right? So, when you say should you stop, of course, we, a bunch of artists, what are we going to say? Yes? No, we can't say that. But my counter-question is, can you as a funder stop funding? Because you're getting money from the taxpayers that has to go somewhere. That has to be seen as doing good. Right? The money has to be channelled somewhere. Can you stop funding?

Audience 2: First of all, I would like to say I don't think the aim of the funding is to do good.

Anuja Goshalkar: OK.

Audience 2: I think for me, funding the arts can be good but can also be very questionable, very critical, very clever. But for me, I don't think one should instrumentalize the arts. Can we stop funding? As a foundation, you could say, spend the money from the taxpayer on something else, such as education, research, scientific research... For us, it's more a question of how do we fund? And I think one last thing is ‚whether', so 'how' and 'whether'. If you can't really properly answer ‚how' in terms of ethics, then you probably should stop.

Sophia Stepf: Thank you. I've thought a lot about 'how' in the past 15 or 20 years and since the wonderful ‚Wanderlust - Fund.' We've had issues with all these projects, however hard we tried to do it right. It never quite worked because of the admin. You set up an Excel spreadsheet that goes through to the cultural foundation. You show it to your partners, and they just look at it and they're like: 'What is this? It's like a seven-page budget, how can we read this?' Of course, we are trained. We are trained to create such tables. We are also trained in what we call ‚funding application poetics'. We know how to write applications in order to get the funds. And I think it would be really worth looking at ‚how' for a year or two and think more of easy access and about how everything should be available in more languages, and that there should be workshops. The Goethe-Institut has funding that you have to

apply for – the International Coproduction Fund. Now, you have to apply from the country itself. And what ends up happening is that people who want to apply for the funds sometimes call me in a panic and say, ‚Can you help me? I don‘t understand how to fill out these forms because they‘re so German‘. They are not self-explanatory. If we could try to open up the system to make it simpler and easier. I know that the German cultural foundations are not free. They too are bound by strict regulations. But I think if there were a dialogue, there could be huge improvements. And although I don‘t have a recipe for ‚how‘, I think we all have ideas, you know, little things about what we could do to make the system more understandable.

Audience 3: I‘m just wondering, you mentioned the ‚Abrechnung‘ (accounts/ book keeping). But what prevents a foundation or the German government from engaging in redistribution of wealth and giving money to an African company, with as few strings attached as possible? What is standing in the way? Because if the German government now wants to engage critically with colonial history – there is wealth here for historic reasons, we should engage in redistribution. Would you agree that one of the reasons the Nigerian government does not invest in the arts and support them has to do with colonialism and history?

Aderemi Adegbite: I think that because we are in the 21st century we should move forward, which means that we should stop thinking like that. You know, each of these countries in the Global South gets (financial) aid from the Global North countries. I remember during the lab that I was actually the first person to get vaccinated and I was just laughing at my colleagues in Germany. This vaccine came from the US with the support of Europe. I got it first, while Germans were still sorting out how to get theirs. You know, we get things for free all the time. My government should do something with the money that they make every year. There is a lot said about this issue of money, you know, but we don‘t need a lot of aid from Europe. Let us also discover for ourselves. Let us also find a way of running our economy. Let us also get taxes from ourselves and distribute the money amongst ourselves. The distribution of wealth that you mentioned. Let‘s just do it amongst ourselves. Whatever money that is made in Germany, let it stay there in Germany or even within the European region.

Anuja Ghosalkar: Can I just quickly add to some of that. I agree with you. I feel like India has so much money. India should also be supporting its own artists. India should also support Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and Nepal and Bhutan because India is the ‘big brother’ in that region. And I‘m with you on this, that our government needs to assert its economic power and support Indian artists. And it does, I would say. But at the same time, we are talking about the idea of ‘white money’. ‘White money’ has travelled from some-

where. It's not just that one day somebody was sitting somewhere, and 'white money' suddenly appeared, right? There is history of travel, a very fraught history of how this money was accrued. We know this. I'm not even ascribing a moral value to it, that now we must feel guilty about this money and, therefore, give it to Africa or India. But yet, I think there is value in re-examining money structures and funding structures. And normally I say that since I have agency as an artist, I will make my money. I also think there is an onus on white foundations, or those run by white people, to think about where the money first came from. I'm saying that it's also from years and years of colonialism, years and years of oppression. Right? I'm not saying exacerbate that guilt by giving money now. No. But I think a little bit of conversation around that would be helpful. And I think that conversation can be extended by saying, we don't really just need to support German artists coming to India, but perhaps we can also support a conversation between a Nigerian and an Indian artist? That is exciting enough.

Aderemi Adegbite: Just the conversation I want to have.

Anuja Ghosalkar: It doesn't even have to be moderated or go via German. I mean, we are intelligent people who can talk (laughter).

Aderemi Adegbite: I want to go to India; I want to go to Indonesia.

Anuja Ghosalkar: We had to come to Germany to have a conversation with each other because a German foundation made it possible. Thank God for that. But we could re-imagine it also.

Aderemi Adegbite: Yeah. Maybe what the Goethe-Institut and all the other European cultural funding organizations can do is to actually make these conversations possible, within a region if they really want to do something.

Sophia Stepf: Our time here is up, but if you all want, we can continue the conversation in the next room, the Tutùọlá Institute. It might be a suitable place. Thank you all for coming.