

DIG WHERE YOU STAND

MANIFESTO

1st Edition

WE ARE ALWAYS FOR WE

Dig Where You Stand is an archival justice movement. Rooted in South Yorkshire, we disrupt colonial archival practices and restore dignity to the Black, brown and global majority people who have been harmed by them.

We do this by exploring archival records and using art to reimagine the lives contained within them. We share this work through events, exhibitions, resources and training programmes.

Our mission is inspired by Sven Lindqvist's book *Gräv där du står* ("Dig Where You Stand") which called for workers to explore their own histories and ignite a socialist movement.

This is a version. It carries the echoes of other work that has come before, but fitting for the times we live in. We put a racial lens on working class histories, primarily before 1945.

We build communities in the present to curate liberated futures.

Our central message is clear: you have long been here, now come and find out for yourselves. Dig Where You Stand.

ARCHIVAL JUSTICE

In the archives is the proof of the lie.

We redress the historicide of the archive to deliver justice to the people in it. And therefore to us.

A collective memory stands less chance of being erased. Memory justice is the overstanding we start from.

We were always here.

ART AS ACTIVISM

We use art to navigate the archival gaps and convey our humanity, history and purpose.

FOR THE PEOPLE

Dig Where You Stand isn't about kings and queens but ordinary people who end up in the archive as fragments of a will, notices in newspapers, playbills or baptismal records.

We dismantle barriers and deliver access to these stories. About the people, to the people for the people.

RECOVERY

Reclaiming the lives in the archives is an act of recovery.

Always rooted in archival source material, we honour past lives with critical fabulation. In this way we draw out the personhood buried beneath bare facts, figures and fragments.

A dreamscape imagined; the lost lives and the lost stories we hold to convey not loss but presence. Taking up space denied us, pushing through the negative narratives to illuminate life, so we illuminate us.

UNEARTHING RE-EARTHING

Remembering what's at stake.

We expose the stories hidden deep within the archives as a necessary act of disruption.

In the process, we commit to honouring and restoring connection with our body, people and land through rituals of care. Gently, purposefully, preparing for future growth.

WE GATHER

Our archival work brings people together to commune, share and replenish.

In sharing our stories we connect to each other and ourselves. In sharing space we come together as an act of recognition, joy and movement building.

DISRUPTING BORDERS

Borders are man made and fixed in colonial and capitalist structures.

The archive shows how often marginalised people work across borders; for protection, solidarity and solace.

We continue this ethos of disrupting borders that separate and harm us.

OUTTANATIONAL

The personal is the political.

We root our work in the interconnectedness between struggles, to better learn from and support other liberation movements around the world.

VERSION

Each telling carries echoes of previous tellings.

Version is a thought remembered and reshared with the added weight of us and us again.

Together we lay our different perspectives to build a more complex picture of the past.

LEGACY

We are not a project, we are a movement.

We think about a future without us in it. That we plant and nurture to replenish and re-exist in the archives and wherever we are. That we are everliving, connected to the past and the future and that we make sure we are intentional about laying those legacy foundations.

This is about longevity.

DIG
WITH
US

DWYS.CO.UK