

Calling the Body to attention

Yewande YoYo Odunubi

7 – 11 December

International Curators Forum (ICF) was founded by artists and curators in 2007 to offer a dynamic and evolving programme that responds to the conditions and contexts impacting creative practitioners through commissions, exhibitions, projects, publications and events. We provide tools and platforms for professional development and facilitate an open peer-to-peer network inviting participants to be part of a generative system of skills and knowledge transfer. Across all of our work, both critically and practically, we aim to challenge the barriers to equality and inclusivity within our industry. Through all aspects of our programme we engage with diaspora as a critical framework through which we can address and complicate public discussion, test and explore new innovative curatorial models, and create space for artistic and discursive interventions into historical narratives and systems of representation.

www.internationalcuratorsforum.org
@ICF__

A limited run of two artist prints, from the series *Small Gestures* (2022) by Yewande YoYo Odunubi are available for sale. Visit ICF's website for further details on how to purchase.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

phf Paul Hamlyn
Foundation

ICF

Exhibition opening times:

8 — 11 December
Thursday, Friday & Saturday 12 – 5pm
Sunday 12 – 4pm
No booking necessary

Events:

Exhibition opening and performance by Yewande YoYo Odunubi and Auclair

Wednesday 7 December, 6 – 9pm
Doors open: 6pm, Performance begins: 7:30pm

The Score(s): III – performance by Yewande YoYo Odunubi and Rohan Ayinde

Saturday 10 December, 6 – 7:30pm
Doors open: 6pm, Performance begins: 6:30pm

Read Yewande's interview with Orsod Malik, ICF's Curator & Digital Strategist discussing her fellowship and research on ICF's website or scan the QR code.



Front cover image: Yewande YoYo Odunubi – *Gestures In Black and Blue* (2021) video still.
Courtesy the artist.

Calling the Body to attention, Yewande YoYo Odunubi's first solo exhibition, is a gesture towards (re)centring and (re)claiming the body as an embodied site of archive, communication and imaginings. Sitting on a moment of pause, it reflects on what might constitute a poetics of the body, and the role movement performs as a process and language for enlivening threads of inquiry.

Featuring moving image, sound and performance, as well as collaboration with music and sound artist Auclair and interdisciplinary poet Rohan Ayinde, the exhibition forms part of Yewande's year-long Diasporic Curatorial Animateur Fellowship with ICF, during which she has been conducting research into our archive and exploring a series of questions that resonate with her practice. During this process, she has been concerned with what dreamings, imaginings, potentials and possibilities are opened up and actioned when the body – particularly the b/Black diasporic body – is understood beyond dualism, monolithic stereotypes, and a fixed idea of identity.

The concept of the body as a purely representative marker has long been used to justify damaging ideologies and oppressive power structures. In many African and b/Black diasporic traditions and philosophies, the body is foundational to our capacity to imagine, our potential to connect, and our ability to build knowledge in space. Working against reductive concepts creates space to sense, speak and write the body and ourselves with a (re)new(ed) language closer to our embodied experiences and impulses.

Starting from a place of attunement, *Calling the Body to attention* is an invitation to reflect on what it could mean for us to connect to an awareness of a full-bodied, expansive and imaginative self that, in each moment, is weaving new ideas into space.

The Score(s): IV (2022)

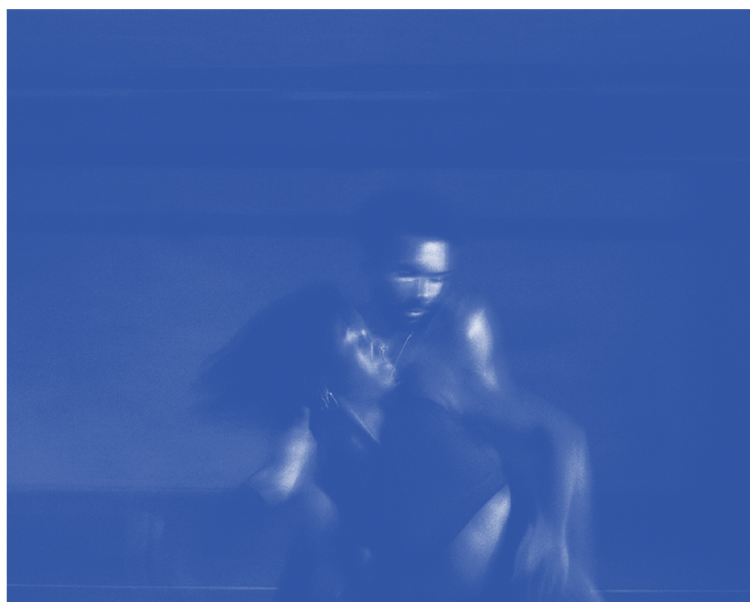
A dance between close friends Rohan Ayinde and Yewande YoYo Odunubi, *The Score(s)* is a living archive and an experiment in collaborative study. Iteration IV of *The Score(s)* is a video essay exploring the relationship between their bodies and the legacies of the Black Atlantic. Citing works from b/Black artists like Paul Gilroy, Kevin Quashie and Audre Lorde to Solange, Nicolas Huchard and Melo-Zed, they find joy in how ideas merge, morph and become other things. Opening the film with the language of everyday gestures and building into an improvised duet, Yewande and Rohan dance to animate, punctuate and translate the 'texts' they have been exploring together.

Throughout the film, they ask: what does it look like to build and share a practice with the person sitting beside you, and what new spaces can it open up?

Dive into the 'texts' explored in *The Score(s): IV* by scanning the QR code below.



Image: Rohan Ayinde and Yewande YoYo Odunubi (i.as.in.we) – *The Score(s): IV* (2022). Photography by Darryl Daley.



Credits:
Artists & Editors: Rohan Ayinde and Yewande YoYo Odunubi (i.as.in.we)
DOP: Denisha Anderson
Photography: Darryl Daley

Gestures in Black and Blue (2022)

'We move to touch and touch to move...To touch is to activate relational movement-toward.'

— Erin Manning 'Taking the next step: Touch as Technique'

Gestures in Black and Blue is an intimate movement meditation and exploration about attuning to one's needs and desires. Re-edited for this exhibition and with a new sound score by Auclair, this video work plays with how these impulses manifest in and through the body using repetition, speed, gestures, and movement—in particular touch—to call attention to themselves. Bathed in a blue light, the movement sequence performed by Yewande on screen speaks to touch as means of knowledge acquisition/production, and the communicative language it holds in expressing care and self-permission.

Speaking towards the Yoruba terms 'ori' ('head') and 'ori inu' ('inner head' or 'inner person'), which conceptually refers to an individual's consciousness — in particular, their spiritual intuition and purpose — the visuals constantly overlap, reform and dance with one another on screen as if calling one's ori inu into being. The viewer is invited into an intimate space of ritual and a journey of self-fulfilment.

Credits:
Artist & Editor: Yewande YoYo Odunubi
Videography: Anthony Shapland
Sound & Music: Auclair
Mixed: Will Worsley

'What I hide by my language, my body utters'⁽¹⁾ (2022)

Contemplating what rhythms we, our bodies, are attuning to/tuning into, this audio-visual installation draws on the rhythmic function of syncopation as an action disrupting the accepted order of things.

Syncopation, polyrhythms and cross-rhythms — essential rhythmic features in African and b/Black diasporic musical lineages — connect to bodily intuition and melodic sensibilities. Taking root from this, the harmonised assemblage of Yewande's poetic sketches and Auclair's sonic interventions engage with cyclical rhythms to puncture, disrupt and reverberate new ideas. Accompanying the sounds, visuals of Yewande in fluid movement against the backdrop of a postmodern building complicate the body's presence in relation to space and time.

A dialogue between architecture, sound and movement, this piece experiments with how syncopation can allow us to move off-beat to the 'monotonous' rhythms of our regimented worlds.



Credits:
Artist & Editor: Yewande YoYo Odunubi
DOP: Rohan Ayinde
Sound & Music: Auclair
Mixed: Will Worsley

Yewande YoYo Odunubi is an artist, researcher and cultural producer working in the spaces between movement, research and facilitation. Centring her practice around the core inquiry: "what does the body need to dream?" she is concerned with what is enacted into space through connecting to one's intuitive experiences and bodily rhythms. Viewing the body beyond the idea of a singular, fixed form, identity or function, Yewande is interested in the role movement, dance and rhythm(s) perform as languages, knowledges and means of world-building. Alongside poet, curator and friend Rohan Ayinde, she is one half of the wayward/motile collaborative duo i.as.in.we.

Auclair is a British-Rwandan music and sound artist. Her work explores rhythm, voice and electronica - treating everyday life like new mythologies and taking an embodied approach to exploring ideas with sound. Alongside a series of releases, recent commissions are *Munganyinka is a Transformer* for the Riot Ensemble and *RUZUNGUZUNGU* for ISSUE Project Room NYC's 'With Womens Work' series. Across these works she plays with ideas around non-linear time, memory, ritual, grief, language/cadence, architecture and Rwandan folklore. Her latest EP *Giramata* is out now on Amorphous Sounds.

Rohan Ayinde is an interdisciplinary artist based between London and Chicago. His work is centred around creating "otherwise" potentials (Ashon Crawley), and in so doing breaking down and simultaneously reconfiguring the ideological architectures that shape our daily and generational lives. Most recently, his work is shaped by a consideration for translation and the ways one might translate radical ideas into structures/forms/worlds that we can engage with and inhabit materially.

⁽¹⁾Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*