

***Please Pass the Dark Chocolate Over, Before I Commit Suicide*, 2006 - 2007**

[Multimedia Installation | painting : house gloss industrial paint on MDF (70 x100 cm)
– video (1'33") – desk, chairs, sheet [dimensions variables] - London, UK



Ferly's video ***Please Pass the Dark Chocolate Over, Before I Commit Suicide*** is an interactive installation curated by Régine Cuzin for the French audience, through the *Latitudes* exhibition. It explores the daily life of minority groups living in the UK, being confronted to the system of positive discrimination.

Visitors are invited to fill in forms left on a table, and watch the video presented in loop.

The video revisits the Equal Opportunity Monitoring Forms used in the UK, and questions the limits of Positive discrimination, which according to Ferly, reinforces barriers between community groups while depriving any individual person from its right to privacy.

Monitoring forms are imposed in Great-Britain, to anyone applying for a job, council flat, art funding or registering with a school, a sport centre, a GP...

The forms requires the candidate to tick several boxes corresponding to their status : Male, Female, Transexual / Age group / Religious background / Sexual orientation / Ethnic background / Disability / Marital status and so on...

The minimal soundtrack of the video goes « tic tic » at various tempos, following the rhythm of an invisible candidate carefully filling forms, "ticking boxes".

Some questions asked on the forms are very detailed such as that of ethnic background, requiring the degree of race and ethnicity (mixed white and black, mixed other...). Should there be no correspondence with the pre-defined section, candidates are invited to "specify" his/her own status.

Data collected are in turn reused to feed statistics, which according to the artist are in great part responsible for maintaining devious racist theories.

The Black community of the UK has for long been unhappy about the monitoring form, which purpose has very quickly drifted away from its original meaning. Instead of offering a platform for those in need of more visibility within the social landscape,

the monitoring form has become an important tool to establish tokenism practices. More importantly, the use of the form has allowed workplaces to prove their anti-discriminating recruitment procedures toward any potential candidates, while maintaining inequalities on the work ladder. Many people from the Black community in the UK has lost faith in such system, which they regard as a waste of their time.

France, and Guadeloupe where the artist is from, the latter being part of the French Caribbean, are not familiar with positive discrimination. France has recently decided to embark on using monitoring forms to remedy to the growing social violence among the French youth rioting against French social injustice.

Positive discrimination has come into the debate, though many continue to shout out loud with the artist « *We are not statis...tics !* ».

The title of Ferly's video pays tribute to 'Ntozake Shange's piece "*For Colour Girls Who Has Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf*", which Ferly considers as a major piece of Contemporary Art. Chocolate bars being the substitute to counselling for most stressed and disappointed candidates who never secure a positive outcome from their job interview...

A social reality proper to the Black community of the UK and witnessed by the artist on many occasions...