

# A memory garden for David Oluwale

## What does Leeds think?

---

A report by the David Oluwale  
Memorial Association (DOMA) on  
four community engagement events,  
June-July 2022



# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Part 1: The engagement events.....	5
Part 2: A summary of the conversations .....	7
Four 'found poems' by Ruth Steinberg .....	7
Graphic recording through live illustration by Jon Dorsett .....	13
Part 3: Community responses: more detail .....	14
Hamara Healthy Living Centre .....	14
Left Bank .....	18
Seven Arts.....	24
The Old Fire Station .....	28
Part 4: Evaluation .....	32
Appendices .....	33
Publicity.....	33
Session design and content .....	35
Session plan.....	35
Gathering responses .....	37
Dissemination.....	38
Support us .....	39
Acknowledgements.....	40

# Introduction

The flagship project of the David Oluwale Memorial Association (DOMA) is a Memory Garden\* featuring a world-class sculpture. The sculpture and garden have a mission: to remember David, and to educate and campaign for equality and social inclusion, to overcome the issues that traumatised David Oluwale's life: racism, mental ill-health, homelessness and unlawful policing.



Artist impression of 'Hibiscus Rising' by Yinka Shonibare, OBE, RA and landscape design by Panit IE  
© Panit IE

DOMA obtained funding from Arts Council England, LEEDS 2023 Festival of Culture and others for the development phase of its project to commission a sculpture from Yinka Shonibare OBE, RA to

---

\* At the time of writing the plans for the space around the sculpture included many elements of planting. The plans are evolving and may include less greenery but for the purposes of this report we will refer to the space as a garden.

make a celebratory sculpture for the proposed David Oluwale Memory Garden in Aire Park, just south of the River Aire (near where Oluwale was drowned in 1969). When the maquette of the sculpture and a short film were delivered in 2022 DOMA undertook the community engagement events that had been outlined in the bids for funding.

These events were organised in community centres in locations across Leeds. Their aim was to show to the public the maquette of the sculpture, the film of its making (with Yinka speaking about his intentions), and to gather their opinions.

We commissioned facilitators trained in 'The Art of Hosting' methodology so that these events would generate maximum discussion from all those who participated. Saphra Bennett, Jon Dorsett and Ruth Steinberg did a fantastic job and each event was bursting with energy and commitment to social justice. Sue Ball, for LEEDS 2023, looked after the tech for us and she and members of the DOMA board helped facilitate discussion and take notes. Feedback was also gathered in more creative ways through found poetry and a live action graphic. (More on the methods we used in the Appendices.)



DOMA Co-Secretary Chloe Hudson with the maquette of Yinka Shonibare's *Hibiscus Rising* at The Old Fire Station  
© Max Farrar

# Part 1: The engagement events

## The DOMA Community Engagement Programme with the maquette of Yinka Shonibare's 'Hibiscus Rising' for David Oluwale

### Session design and showing the film

A lot of thought was put into the design of the events in order to provoke as much discussion as possible and gather feedback. Each session started with a 'diversity welcome' so that everyone would feel included and valued. There was a facilitated icebreaker for participants arranged at tables to get to know each other, followed by an introduction by a DOMA board member on the work of DOMA, their motivation for being involved, an overview of David's story and our plans for the sculpture and garden. We showed the film 'Hibiscus Rising' in which artist Yinka Shonibare talks about his motivation for taking the commission and his thought processes behind the piece. The film was produced by A to B Films (which can be viewed at [atobfilms.com](http://atobfilms.com)). The participants were given the opportunity to discuss the film before moving into discussions of two questions:

#### Question one

When we think of Leeds and all the issues that David experienced, what questions should we be asking?

#### Question two

Thinking of the 'Oluwale Issues' (e.g. race, homelessness, migration police malpractice and mental ill health) how can we help Leeds become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive? And how can the sculpture garden support our efforts?

After more in depth table discussions, the participants were invited to shout out final thoughts – we called these 'popcorns'.

For more details please see the session plan in the appendices.



Facilitator Saphra Bennett (left) and DOMA Co-Chair Cllr Abigail Marshall Katung at Left Bank.  
© Max Farrar

## Gathering opinion

Each room was set up café style with groups of participants around large tables equipped with paper and pens. Helpers helped facilitate the conversation around each question and wrote down views and notes and participants were also encouraged to jot thoughts down. These were gathered up at the end and transcribed (see Part 3).

During each session facilitator and poet Ruth Steinberg, in her role of ‘word thief’ wandered around the room, listening to the speakers and eavesdropping on the conversations to note down phrases and thoughts to create found poems (see Part 2).

For three of the four sessions facilitator and artist Jon Dorsett created an action graphic including images of David, the venues and quotes from the participants from the ‘popcorn’ part of each session (see Part 2). For the fourth session, which Jon was unable to attend, the popcorns were written down and Jon added them later.

Leeds2023 organised for videographer Maria Spadafora to take some footage of each event and capture some voxpops by inviting participants to be interviewed for short pieces of film which will later be available on the RememberOluwale YouTube channel.

## Where and when

For the four community engagement events, held in summer 2022, we chose community venues in different locations across the city to enable as many people to attend as possible (links to the Eventbrite booking site):

- South Leeds: Wed 29th June, 6-7.30pm at Hamara Healthy Living Centre, Beeston  
<https://bit.ly/DOgarden>
- Northwest Leeds: Tues 5th July, 6-7.30pm at Left Bank, Burley  
<https://bit.ly/DOGardenLeftbank>
- North Leeds: Tues 7th July, 6-7.30pm at Seven Arts, Chapel Allerton  
<https://bit.ly/DOGardenSeven>
- East Leeds: Thurs 12th July, 6-7.30pm at Old Fire Station, Gipton  
<https://bit.ly/DOGardenOFS>

## The maquette

The maquette of the Yinka Shonibare Hibiscus Rising sculpture was transported in a specially hired vehicle to each of the venues and constructed and taken down by trained technicians under the supervision of The Tetley Art Centre. It was displayed in the centre of each of the rooms hired for the event.

## Roles:

Facilitators:	Saphra Bennett / Ruth Steinberg
Action graphic:	Jon Dorsett
Found poem:	Ruth Steinberg
Tech:	Sue Ball (Leeds 2023 consultant)
Maquette:	transported, assembled and re-created by technicians organised by The Tetley Centre for Contemporary Art
Filming and vox pop:	Maria Spadafora (commissioned by Leeds 2023)
Introduction:	DOMA reps: Abigail Marshall Katung, Emily Zobel Marshall, Victoria Ajayi, Asher Jael, Max Farrar
Event management:	DOMA co-Secretaries: Max Farrar and Chloë Hudson
Notes:	a person on each discussion group table from the above

# Part 2: A summary of the conversations

## Four 'found poems' by Ruth Steinberg

One way of summarising what was said was through the ears of Ruth Steinberg, the 'word thief' poet. Ruth listened to all of the speakers and quietly circulated, listening into group discussion and making notes of phrases and comments that resonated. At the end of each session she performed what she had noted down as a 'found poem'. The four poems (one from each event) are below.



Ruth Steinberg (right) performing her 'found poem' at The Old Fire Station  
© Max Farrar

### Remember David Oluwale One, Hamara Centre

Different conversations  
Four different places in Leeds

Welcome ancestors  
Welcome welcome welcome

Maquette beautiful centrepiece  
Meet the maquette  
Meet each other

David Oluwale  
Tragedy  
Resilience.  
Migration  
Homelessness

Mental health  
Same journey as many people

Story and conversation  
Police violence Centre of story

Hit  
Head  
Truncheon  
E.C.T.  
Returned every time  
Slept in same doorway  
Over and over and over

Hibiscus rising  
Memory history

Suck nectar from hibiscus  
Happy  
The way the world will look like  
Relationship between Europe and  
Africa  
Wow  
Hope  
Celebration of life.  
Forwards, not backwards  
Yinka Shonibare  
What question should we be asking?  
Security?  
Protection?  
Why are we still dealing with all the  
same issues??  
Why would he come to this country  
and stay?  
Why was this allowed to happen?  
Taken aback  
10 metres high  
That is positive  
Can't miss it  
Place where people will gather meet  
talk  
Try to scale it?  
Make it uncomfortable  
Weight of three international rugby  
prop forwards  
Identify with poor guy  
Painful  
Part of building community  
Reasons for migration

Long tradition  
Not a dirty word  
Beeston  
Strong tradition of migration  
Tradition  
Come together against racism  
Brown black white came together  
Celebrating  
Peace tree  
No label on peace tree  
We love our parks  
They could be used like Beeston  
festival  
Celebrate difference.  
Gambia  
Centre of slavery  
It really happened  
Young people  
Conversation  
About racism and inclusion  
Motivates me to get up on Monday  
morning  
Small is good, small is all  
How do you know what racism is when  
you haven't experienced it?  
Need something in all parts of Leeds?  
Not just meadow lane  
Racism is the central question  
What do you mean by inclusive?  
Remember David Oluwale

*A Found Poem. All the words are from the participants at Remember David Oluwale event, Hamara Healthy Living Centre, Beeston, Leeds, Wednesday 29 June 2022, 6 -7:30. Harvested and compiled by Ruth Steinberg, Word Thief.*



A discussion group at Left Bank  
© Max Farrar

## Remember David Oluwale Two – Left Bank

Welcome Language Faith Class Ages  
Bodies Emotion Ancestors

Welcome, Welcome, welcome.  
You're in my home.

Meet the Maquette  
Vision for Monument  
Remember David

As a woman of Nigerian origin.  
Max Farrar never been to Nigeria

Compassion and service  
Remind City about David  
About our past

Never again  
Racism  
Hatred  
Still here

We are here  
To remember  
Learn  
Consult and engage

How to make Leeds a better place  
Blue plaques stolen  
Blessing in disguise

Reinstall September Festival party

Hibiscus Rising  
Bullied  
Remembered Nigeria  
Happy childhood  
Sad story

Batik Indonesia produced in Holland  
Became African textiles

Why hibiscus?  
Hope  
celebration of Life  
Forwards, not backwards

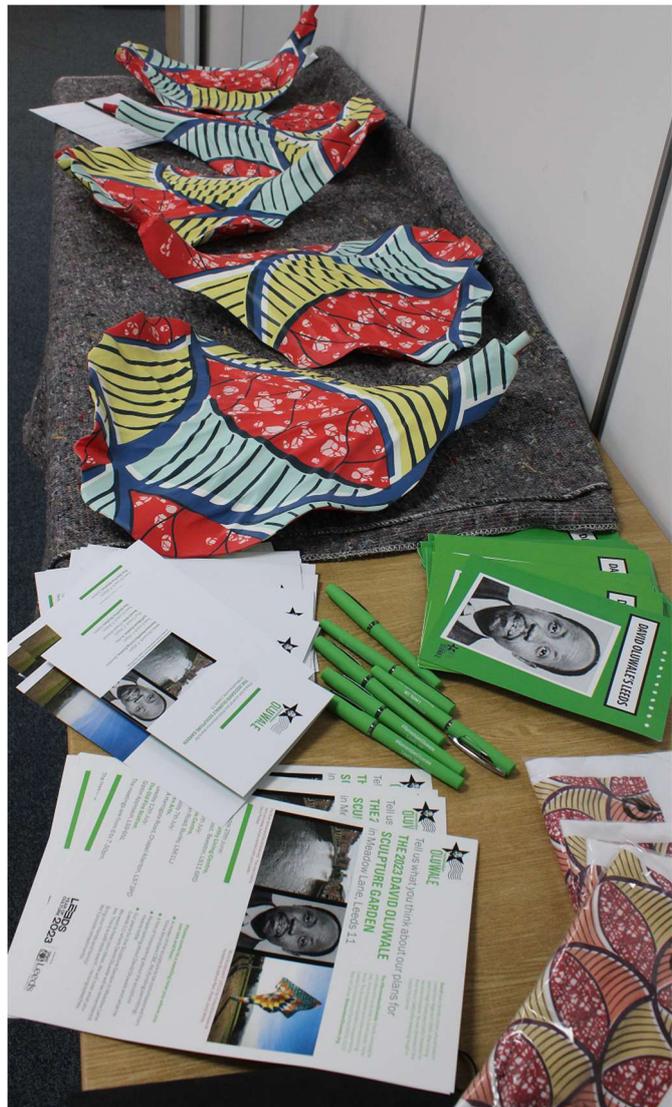
How far as a city have we come since  
David's death?

Same issues still here

I still get stopped by police  
Mental health incarceration of black  
men

More likely to go to prison  
 Don't get support  
 Right to privacy  
 Rough sleepers Compassionate city  
 Police  
 Moving people on  
 Mean  
 Favourite sleeping place  
 Drove to countryside  
 Came back Honour in that  
 Within living memory  
 More people know the story  
 Not same language, food, weather.  
 I cried  
 How do people live here?  
 Getting people together, festivals  
 Nothing as nice as eating something  
 I've never eaten before  
 Talk over food  
 Individual. Never give up. You can  
 make a difference  
 Butterfly  
 We do all matter  
 Choose how we feel  
 Depends what you have in your pouch  
 Armour resilience  
 Collective trauma  
 Compassion, solidarity, direct action  
 Leeds anti-racist history to be proud of  
 I want to learn about the whole man  
 Mates called him Yankee  
 English first, mother tongue second  
 Remember David Oluwale

What type of Leeds do we want?  
 Constant surveillance



Preparing the event: parts of the *Hibiscus Rising*  
 maquette and the DOMA merch stall.  
 ©Max Farrar

*Found Poem. All the words are from the participants at Remember David Oluwale event, Left Bank, Burley, Leeds, Tuesday 7 July 2022, 6 -7:30. Harvested and compiled by Ruth Steinberg, Word Thief.*

## Remember David Oluwale Three - Seven Arts

Welcome  
Beautiful sunny day  
Darkroom  
DOMA and why you're here  
All sorts of shenanigans  
More pertinent than ever  
Killing of George Floyd  
Black Lives Matter  
institutional racism  
A long way to go  
And hope  
Face the past head on  
Statues memorials  
No piece of public art that celebrates diversity  
10 metres Splendid Confident  
Party on the bridge  
Celebrate  
Diversity  
Inclusion  
Migration  
No cynicism but  
Joy  
Passion  
Eagerness  
Clarity  
Hibiscus Rising  
Remembers Nigeria  
Happy childhood  
Sad story  
Europe and Africa  
Hope  
Celebration of Life  
Stowaway  
Racism  
Mental ill health  
What needs to change  
New horrors  
Don't feel joyful

No one knew how to administer justice  
Black community, unwilling to trust.  
Lots of questions  
Collective healing?  
So much pain  
Young people bring new things  
Hard to think what I can do  
Lucky to be born in the Caribbean and not in Europe  
Journey of liberalism rather than effective change  
We are the change  
Poverty  
Poor people are generous  
Transform community  
Cross borders  
Park schools, public places investment  
Air we all breathe  
Sculpture triangle.  
Yorkshire Sculpture Park Hepworth Art Gallery Henry Moore Sculpture Gallery  
This needs to be included  
99% of Leeds don't know what we're talking about  
Leeds Mecca of shopping in the centre  
DON'T STEAL OUR PLAQUE\*  
Balance and tension  
Celebration and change  
Colour of skin, not a prison  
A prism  
Can't believe empty seats  
How to get more people in the room  
Remember, David Oluwale

*\*The Leeds Civic Trust Blue Plaque for David Oluwale was installed on 25.4.2022 and stolen a few hours later. It was reinstalled on 23.10.2022*

*A Found Poem. All the words are from the participants at Remember David Oluwale event, Seven Arts, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 6 -7:30. Harvested and compiled by Ruth Steinberg, Word Thief.*

## Remember David Oluwale Four – Old Fire Station

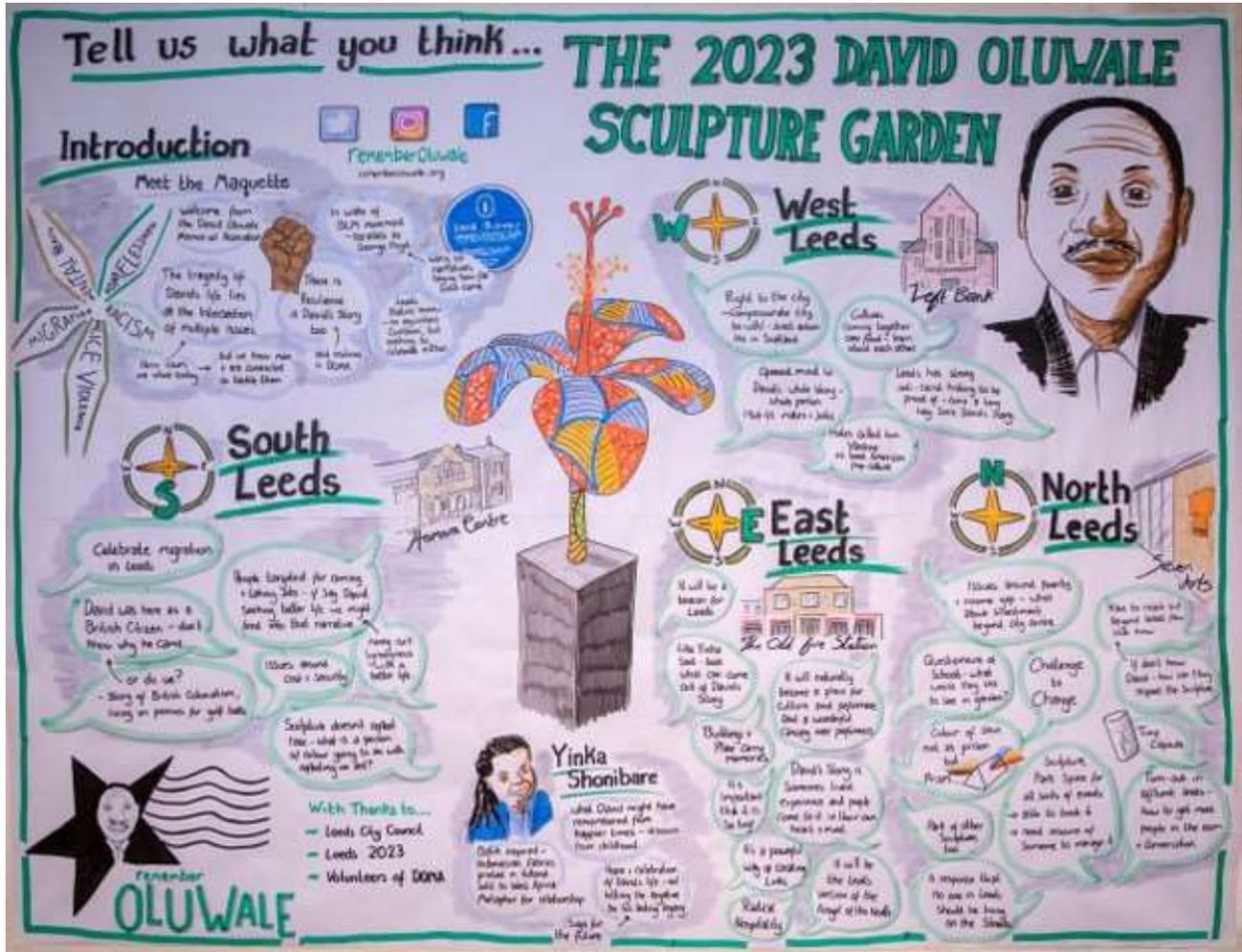
At a lecture one of the slides  
David's signature  
Emotional  
He wasn't down and out  
Writing beautiful  
Not just a story  
A real person.  
When I get to the other side I will get  
a good and better life.  
I remember Hibiscus  
Thinking of home  
If only  
What if?  
Remember Nigeria  
Time when he was happy  
Come together  
More hopeful  
We have to remember and change  
City of Compassion  
Sanctuary  
Deep connexion  
How do communities fail?  
What can you do?  
Homeless people look after each other  
White church. We don't mind you  
coming to our city  
but not welcome in our church  
Black churches in homes  
Hate  
rejection  
not allowed to go to church  
Removing plaque  
Armed with screwdriver  
Hate  
Fractured  
Lonely  
Shame in being homeless  
Activism  
Hospitable  
No savings things go wrong

Electric Convulsive Treatment  
ECT  
Largactil  
Wrecked  
We knew we were failing him  
Crime: Driving While Black  
Irish Centre opened  
Police closed it down  
David Oluwale was part of my life  
What responsibility do we have?  
Not my problem  
Can't have that privilege  
Remember my mum gripping hand  
tighter  
walking faster.  
We have all walked by  
Places  
Hubs  
Natural ways of connecting  
Landscape events garden  
Canopy  
Intimate  
I can see you performing under that  
12  
Beacon  
Eager to see it up  
Leeds version of the Angel of the North  
Place for performers  
It's important it's that size  
When it's raining who needs an  
umbrella  
Stream of migrants  
Lived experience  
Not one story  
Such sad story  
Celebration  
Radical hospitality  
Remember David Oluwale

*A Found Poem. All the words are from the participants at Remember David Oluwale event, The Old Fire Station, Gipton, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 6 -7:30.  
Harvested and compiled by Ruth Steinberg, Word Thief.*

# Graphic recording through live illustration by Jon Dorsett

Participants' views were also captured in a live illustration by artist Jon Dorsett who noted down the comments in the 'popcorn' part of the workshop (see the session plan in the appendices) live during the session. The artwork was then continued in the next session so that participants could view it. The comments are also transcribed in the next section: Part 3, Community Responses in more detail.



The artist Jon Dorsett listened to what was said and produced this graphic representation of the places where we met and the comments from the 'popcorn' part of each session.  
© Jon Dorsett

## Part 3: Community responses: more detail

Notes of the group discussions, captured by helpers and participants themselves, have been transcribed verbatim below.

### Hamara Healthy Living Centre

Beeston, Leeds, Wednesday 29 June 2022



Saphra Bennet (on right) facilitating the event at the Hamara Centre  
© Max Farrar

*When we think of Leeds and all the issues that David experienced, what questions should we be asking?*

- I'd like to know more about David's story — why did he choose to come to Leeds?
- Why has it taken so long to tell David's story?
- I'd like to examine the legalities of the Oluwale case.
- All the public art/sculpture in Leeds is about rich white men (and Queen Victoria) so it's great that there's a sculpture coming by Yinka Shonibare CBE, RA.
- The David Oluwale story is integral to the history of Leeds — can it be included in the curricula of Leeds' schools?
- What are the current issues around policing and racism today?

- Changing all these issues is mission impossible! The bosses at work have all the power and it's very difficult getting them to change. How can ordinary people's health be improved when all the resources go towards the wealthy?

*Thinking of the 'Oluwale issues' (e.g. race, homelessness, migration, police malpractice and mental ill health) how can we help Leeds become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive? And how can the sculpture garden support our efforts?*

- In the East End Park area (LS9) in 2005 there was racist violence against our house — cars were driven into our building. But things have improved since then; more black people are living there.
- Beeston (LS11) has always had people from all over the world living here. It has a history of racism, and a history of anti-racism. The Beeston Festival (originally the Beeston Mela) has global music.
- Communities from all over the world should be celebrated — we need something like the Yinka Shonibare sculpture in all the parks in Leeds, with educational materials attached to them.
- Education is so important. We have to decolonise the curriculum.
- We need to understand the trauma these issues produce.
- There should be more funds to support homeless shelters.
- Can DOMA link up with the Leeds United Foundation? LU fans sang their song for David against the police, yet LU fans in those days were notoriously racist!
- Don't steal our Blue Plaque!! [The first Blue Plaque for David Oluwale was installed at about 5pm on Leeds Bridge on 25th April 2022 and stolen at about 9.45pm that evening.]
- We must acknowledge the past and realise how far we have to go to create a really welcoming city.
- There's so much more to do to change attitudes towards those who are perceived as 'Other' or as 'Outsiders'.
- So many talk the talk but don't walk the walk, especially on poverty in Leeds. There's so little investment in schools and public services in the most deprived areas.
- All the funding for youth services is disappearing.
- Revd Jesse Jackson said: Don't let the colour of your skin become a prison — make it become a prism.
- We must challenge people to change. We must keep talking.
- Police officers are now being trained in how to connect with Black communities. And trained to understand mental health issues. But how much has changed?
- There must be real change at the executive level and at the individual level in society — both the structural and the personal levels.
- Leeds City Council leadership must acknowledge that black people are already disadvantaged. Everyone needs to be treated more equally, regardless of background: can they do the job? And legal action must be taken if prejudice is being exerted.
- Having more people of colour in the council might help, depending on their calibre.
- We need economic change as well.

## *Other points discussed*

### **About Beeston**

- What do we have in Beeston that celebrates our diversity?
- Racism in the 1970s was a key issue.
- I grew up in Beeston in the 1970s: I rarely left my home without being called a ni\*\*er.
- Beeston was once rich: the poet Tony Harrison and the painter...

### **Migration**

- Let's celebrate!
- Leeds has a history of being multi-cultural — and it has a history of blatant racism with some areas being unsafe for black people to visit.

### **Education is the key:**

- Decolonise the curricula.
- Reach out to school and universities.
- History talk and walks for kids and parents.
- Break down boundaries.
- Inclusive educational practice.

### **The Hibiscus Rising sculpture**

- A symbol of hope.
- The sculpture will be a target for the far right activists — how will it be kept safe? Security is an essential consideration.
- The cost of creating this sculpture and the garden is too great.
- Why has it taken so long to get to this point? The practical issues should have been sorted out much more quickly.
- No black person is going to visit the sculpture garden to talk about or think about racism.
- Isn't this project just a vehicle for salving the white liberal conscience?
- The sculpture garden for David Oluwale should have events specifically for children.
- Picnic areas nearby.

### **Mental health**

- Was David getting any support for his mental ill-health?
- The issues of mental health and homelessness should be given more prominence than the 'race' issues — make this more than just about David Oluwale.
- My mum was in and out of High Royds/Menston Psychiatric Hospital [where David was kept in the 1950s and 60s] — it was grim.

### **Other issues raised**

- How can we prevent this happening again today?
- We need more leadership from the politicians.
- Where are we now? Historically, there's so much divisiveness. 'Tribalism' seems to have grown in the past few years — how can we stop this?

- Leeds is recording increases in homelessness and mental health issues. Are the agencies collaborating?
- Young people are speaking up against injustice.
- There should be links with the schools in the vicinity of the sculpture garden and an educational pack made available.
- Lots of serious issues persist in Leeds: racism, homophobia, Islamophobia, homelessness
- Can we treat people fairly, just as people?
- It's positive that the police who assaulted David O were imprisoned — but was justice really done?
- Can the Black community trust the justice system today? What, if anything, has changed?
- It is shocking how little support David received.

### Popcorns:

- Celebrate migration in Leeds.
- David was here as a British Citizen, don't know why he came... or do we? Story of British colonialism, getting pennies for golf balls.
- People targeted for coming and taking our jobs. If we say that David was seeking a better life, might that feed into the narrative? Money isn't synonymous with a better life.
- Issues around cost and security.
- Sculpture doesn't reflect race, what is a person of colour going to do with reflecting on art?



Asher Jael, DOMA Board member (on right), speaking at the event in the Hamara Centre  
© Max Farrar

## Left Bank

Burley, Leeds, Tuesday 7 July 2022



The maquette of *Hibiscus Rising* being assembled by the technicians from The Tetley Centre for Contemporary Art before the community engagement event at Left Bank  
© Max Farrar

*When we think of Leeds and all the issues that David experienced, what questions should we be asking?*

- Has anything changed?
- What is the reason that David Oluwale came to Leeds? Why did he come as a stowaway at a time when Nigerians were citizens and so were automatically allowed entry into Britain?
- Why was David's life allowed to take the course it did?
- What positives can we take from this story?
- Can we use the story in a constructive way to build stronger communities?
- Have attitudes/perspectives towards migrants changed since David Oluwale's time in Leeds?
- Is the system now more favourable towards migrants?
- In what ways have mental health care and services improved? How has change been achieved?
- Are people more aware than they used to be of the impact of derogatory words relating to mental health?
- What would the police do differently today? What have they learned from his life story?

- What can be done to make Leeds more welcoming?
- How do we move things forward?

### **'Future'**

- A starting point could be the future not now. In terms of mental health what would our vision be?
- There are 169 different nationalities in Leeds. If language was music and colour, what would that be like?

### **'Mental Health'**

- How does this issue fit with David's story?
- Are we meeting the needs of all communities and people specifically in terms of mental health?
- Training can be very generic – needs to be more specific and person centred.
- There are racial inequalities. Black men are five times more likely to be sectioned.
- Different cultures have different ideas of mental health issues.
- People of colour are less likely to be taken seriously if they don't dress smartly.
- People are targeted more by the police if they have mental health issues.
- How does change happen in Leeds?

### **'Humanity'**

- I want to live in a city that helps me grow my humanity.
- Should humanity be prioritised over ideas of strength, power and function with no room for leeway?
- As a city are we ready for the humanity that's involved?

### **'Migration'**

- It's very complex, there isn't a level playing field. Its very nuanced. Why do people move? We need the humanity to welcome people and find links between us At City College people seem.
- The language of migration is interesting: expats versus migrants.
- The use of African print for the sculpture and the links with that pattern having migrated through several countries is really appropriate (Indonesia, Netherlands, West Africa, UK).

### **'Power'**

- Power of a police officer, power in the wrong hands – to actively hound someone like David is a misuse of power.
- Should moving people on be a function of the police? David was moved on by the police from his favourite sleeping place but he kept coming back.



A discussion group at Left Bank with graphic artist Jon Dorsett centre back  
© Max Farrar

*Thinking of the 'Oluwale issues' (e.g. race, homelessness, migration, police malpractice and mental ill health) how can we help Leeds become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive? And how can the sculpture garden support our efforts?*

### **'Educate'**

- E.g. through the Students' Union using the story to drive campaigns for young people to get involved with.
- Would be good to think about how these conversations would be different with a group of young people. At Leeds City College people seem to be engaged and willing to explore.
- It's not about agreement, it's about having the conversations even the difficult ones.
- It's a young person's world because they've got more time left.
- Need to make young people feel that they do have a voice because many have become disenfranchised.
  - Making it (the message) feel relevant to Leeds.
  - For students who might not stay in Leeds, get them involved so they can spread the message or take it with them throughout their life.
- Learning about individual stories is a way to build your own compassion which translates to action or to a better way of being.

### **'Sense of community'**

- We should have more events like these (i.e. the community consultation event) that build a sense of community because 'community' can be overwhelming from an individual's point of view.
- Each one of us makes a difference and adds something. The way we live and where we are in our hearts in relation to other people is really important in community.
- Community is about listening to people and not 'othering' them. We or our friends and families might have mental health issues and not just 'other' people.
- Need to ask ourselves what would make us feel more supported if you just arrived in a city.

### *General comments*

#### **The Yinka Shonibare sculpture:**

- Protecting it has to be included in the costing of this project.
- 10 metres high: it will be imposing and positive — it cannot be missed.
- It provides a context for discussing the life and times of David Oluwale.
- Make symbols and representations of diversity in all neighbourhoods, not just one place.

#### **On 'race'**

- Be honest; don't ignore what's happening on your doorstep; don't generalise (drop the perceptions that are passed down from previous generations).
- There's no time for gradualism: why don't we see change NOW? The council takes so long to make changes.
- Racism, homelessness, black boys being hounded by the police — these are all still issues in Leeds. Why are we still experiencing them? What are the legal strategies for challenging them?
- Example: young black people are hassled every day when they are driving their cars.
- The policy-makers should be educated.
- All ethnicities should be represented on policy-making bodies — we need more councillors from BAME backgrounds.
- The council should adopt very specific policies on these issues.
- Money should be put into anti-racism initiatives.

#### **Equity**

- Tolerance vs Acceptance.
- Genuinely welcoming.
- Modelling good practice.
- Embrace diversity.
- Celebrate difference.
- Small is good > small is all.
- Listen more > meet communities where they are.
- Do not be silent.
- Accents reveal/hold power.
- Common goal, shared vision.

- Different kind of politics > Campaigning for more resources > redirection of resources.
- Racism is the key issue.
- Police brutality > Police racism.

### **Decolonialising education [This issue was mentioned several times]**

- Teach the truth.
- Need for un-learning.
- Teach issues not covered in the curriculum now.
- Create spaces to share best practice.

### **Why do we need a sculpture for David Oluwale?**

- Beautiful and vibrant.
- It makes you look up.
- Is it just a gesture?
- People who experience racism: do they need a sculpture?
- Security is poor.
- It's too expensive.



*Hibiscus Rising*, a film by A to B Productions, with Yinka Shonibare CBE, RA on screen, at Left Bank  
© Max Farrar

### **What do we do to make the city more inclusive?**

- Institutional racism is still happening.
- Whose voice is heard? Upper class white people's? People who've experienced racism?
- People are not welcomed and not wanted.
- Mental health issues need to be represented.

- Leeds is a multi-cultural city — let's celebrate that [said several times].
- What are the reasons for migration?
- Leeds has a long history of migration.
- Why do we treat other communities differently?
- The narrative has not changed since 1949 [when David Oluwale arrived in England] E.g. they still say 'migrants are stealing our jobs'.

### *Popcorns:*

- Right to the city, compassionate city, be with! Direct action like in Scotland.
- Cultures coming together over food – learn about each other.
- Opened mind to David's whole story, whole person, 1949-53 = mates and jobs.
- Mates called him Yankee as he loved American culture.
- Leeds has a strong anti-racist history to be proud of – come a long way since David's story.

## Seven Arts

Chapel Allerton, Leeds, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022



Dr Emily Zobel Marshall, DOMA co-chair (on left) at the community engagement event at Seven Arts  
© Max Farrar

*When we think of Leeds and all the issues that David experienced, what questions should we be asking?*

- What has changed and what needs to change?
- Leeds is now a prosperous city.
- In many ways things have got worse e.g. deporting people to Rwanda.
- Less social housing.
- I feel pessimistic and not joyful.
- But there are causes in Leeds for optimism on the individual rather than institution side - people are a bit more welcoming.
- IS there better access to mental health facilities? Probably not.
- Are communities doing more than the government?
- I'm new to Leeds – last week I witnessed a racist assault towards an UBER driver – seemed like a regular thing because colleagues came to his rescue in a very organised way. This is obviously better than calling the police.
- There is more division now than ever: homelessness has increased and some of the police are in special measures.
- People are living in poverty.

- Community cohesion has disintegrated – there are lots of different communities but they are not integrated.
- David and many others were murdered but it wasn't recorded as murder.
- Who are we asking? Is an internal or external thing?

### **Issues faced – do we agree with them?**

- I experienced hatred as a black man.
- Racism of police, the judge (and his direction of the jury).
- Institutional racism still exists and racism is now more hidden and less explicit.
- Where is human kindness, our humanity?
- Have things changed between 1969 and 2022?
- USA v UK – is it different?
- Can we change things and how do we change things?
- How do we respond to mental health issues and change what needs changing. There is now less time and support available, we've gone backwards. Also poor cultural awareness.
- How do we respond to homelessness and has there been change?
- What has happened with our education system?
- How many black teachers/lecturers are there now?

### **Change – what's changed since David Oluwale and how do we make a change?**

- We are the change and the 99%!
- More BME police.
- More access courses, role models and mentoring resulting in more black and Asian teachers.
- Be more inclusive.
- How do we engage young people?
- Remember our history of resistance/rebellion.
- Recognise cross cultural marriages/partnerships – a positive.
- In mental health there are wrong diagnoses especially in the black community.
- How do we celebrate difference?
- We need culturally appropriate support.
- Importance of food.
- Education.
- Leeds/Yorkshire Hospitality BUT segregated, 'othering'.
- Need to listen to different perspectives.
- 99% of Leeds don't know what we're talking about.
- What's the role of the charity in relation to...
- What does the story trigger in people?
- Where are the spaces for collective healing at the intersections of these issues?

- What's the agenda, who does it benefit and what is the legacy?
- Effective education.
- How much has changed? What is the legacy?
- Who is sharing information about the current stats on police harassment/brutality in the community? Leeds Beckett, Leeds History teaching forum.

*Thinking of the 'Oluwale issues' (e.g. race, homelessness, migration, police malpractice and mental ill health) how can we help Leeds become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive? And how can the sculpture garden support our efforts?*

- Since Brexit we've become an island – the sculpture garden makes us part of a global community [because of its subject matter, the inspiration and the artist].
- Need to make sure people are aware of the issues and the reason behind the sculpture – proper info boards etc.
- Time capsule to be buried there and opened in 2064 ('Roots' social enterprise – co-ordinated by Bill Walton.)
- Leave a positive legacy (because David couldn't). See if other groups want to leave a time capsule.
- People need a sense of ownership - they should have an art gallery of inspired work on the website.
- Can other sculptures be added to the garden in the future? Build a sense of engagement?
- Have planned activities that bring people to the garden and use the space so that people engage with the sculpture.
- Need to encourage other groups to do the same – have a simple booking system for the space – though the council?
- Ask children what they'd like to see happen there. Build an online questionnaire and send to schools and youth groups (faith and not faith).
- Could be incorporated into Carnival and Pride.
- Space for Artists to explore these issues together – prompted to think in different ways.
- Sculpture garden needs to be on the map.
- Add to the sculpture.
- A strapline for the sculpture park could be 'Challenge to change'.
- Other artwork in the garden to explore the dark and the light.

*Additional points:*

- Leeds has so many migrants and there was a magnificent response when the Blue Plaque was stolen in April 2022 — that in itself celebrated Leeds as a city of migrants.
- More education is needed.
- Black people are targeted by people who say they 'steal our jobs'.
- The David Oluwale story is bleak but we can refer to positive things too — the city HAS made progress since those days.
- We need to take care in the messages we communicate, EG explaining why David Oluwale came to Leeds originally?
- The answer to that makes us think about imperialism: David was a citizen of the British Empire, which condemned him, his family and friends to poverty.

- The sculpture is too expensive and the artist's fee is too high.
- The security is poor, it's too easy to deface.
- For me, the sculpture is more about mental health and not about race.
- How many more David Oluwales will there be?

### Popcorns:

- Issues around income and the poverty gap – what about investment beyond the city centre?
- Questionnaire for schools – what would they like to see in the garden?
- Challenge to change.
- Colour of skin not as prison by prism.
- Have to reach out beyond a select few that know.
- If don't know David – how can they respect the sculpture?
- Time capsule.
- Park of other sculptures too.
- Sculpture park space for all sorts of events: able to book it and need resource of someone to manage it.
- Turn-out in affluent areas – how to get more people in the room and conversation?
- A response that no one in Leeds should be living on the streets.



A participant at Seven Arts, sporting his DOMA Tee, designed for us by Yinka Shonibare CBE, RA  
© Max Farrar

## The Old Fire Station

Gipton, Leeds, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022

*Notes from the introductory speech by DOMA Board member Victoria Ajayi:*

- I was so struck by the slide shown by Dr Kennetta Perry at the recent David Oluwale Annual Lecture — it showed David's signature on a charge sheet and I suddenly realised that this was a man with a good education with beautiful writing. It was so moving. It made him so real. Not just a story. If only he had had more support, he would have had a decent life.
- When I look at the maquette of the sculpture and the film that Yinka Shonibare has made for us to show you today I see the batik fabric he's using and it takes the work to another level, it takes me home to Nigeria!
- Thankfully, Leeds today does have the mental health services that can support anyone with David's issues — things really have moved on, but there's plenty of room for improvement.
- Leeds is aiming to be a city of compassion, inclusive of everyone, and the DOMA charity is proud to be supporting that ambition.



Victoria Ajayi, DOMA Board member, speaking at the community engagement event at The Old Fire Station  
© Max Farrar

*When we think of Leeds and all the issues that David experienced, what questions should we be asking?*

- A Polish homeless man with mental health problems was given good support during the Covid lockdown and his problems were sorted out — but now he's back on the streets again and comes to us for sandwiches. If we could help before, why can't we help now?

- What can you do? It doesn't seem enough to buy a sandwich. There's a man sitting under the temporary David Oluwale Blue Plaque on Leeds Bridge and begging — and he says he's keeping an eye on the plaque!
- Homeless people do keep an eye on each other and help each other out when they can.
- Most people just walk straight past.
- It's so hard to break the cycle when you have problems like these.
- Is there enough support in Leeds for people with these problems?
- There would be if the Tories didn't keep cutting the resources.
- Buildings (where David slept) carry memories.
- Should we give money or not to the people who are begging?
- St George's Crypt say we should not — they used to have food vouchers we could buy, to hand to homeless people, who could then redeem them for a meal at the Crypt. Not sure if that scheme is still in operation.
- It's moralism to judge them and it fosters an attitude of not giving homeless people any support.
- The police were biased against David Oluwale. Are the official agencies biased against the homeless? Bernard the Belfast singer was always being banned!
- There are many types of people among the homeless — so many of us are just a few pay packets away from becoming homeless.
- Are the welfare services much better today than they were in David's time?
- There's much more discussion of mental health issues.
- Is there abuse of power by the police? Especially around crimes against women?
- And there is institutional racism — how many black people driving expensive cars get stopped and questioned? The crime of 'driving while black'!!
- When the Irish Centre opened during 'the troubles', bus-loads of police arrived to close it down!
- David Oluwale's life was an important part of my life growing up in Seacroft. My brother is buried in the grave near David's in Killingbeck. Another of my brothers used to sing the Oluwale songs composed and sung by Leeds United fans. My friend was one of the boys who found his body at Knostrop weir. I was so relieved when Kester Aspden's book came out and I could read the story in full. The story is integral to Leeds.
- What we need is 'radical hospitality' (Rommi Smith's expression). David's story is a beautiful way of bringing people together.
- What happened to David's community? If only he'd had a somewhere he could turn to for sanctuary and to feel safe and comfortable.
- We have a vibrant Nigerian community in Leeds.
- The city is quite fractured.
- I was so angry when someone took the plaque off – that rejection and hatred is now in our city!
- David might have felt shame at being homeless.
- 'Radical Hospitality' – what would this look like for Leeds City Centre?
- Why do we sometimes want to hide away?
- England – even the north is not as friendly as Scotland.

- How can we foster those small interactions? If you start by feeling superior, how can you start a conversation?

### **Issues to do with immigration:**

- Disgust of people who are different.
- Inhospitable environment for people immigrating to the UK.
- How can Leeds combat top-down xenophobia?
- How can we connect with someone to break that xenophobia?

*Thinking of the 'Oluwale issues' (e.g. race, homelessness, migration, police malpractice and mental ill health) how can we help Leeds become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive? And how can the sculpture garden support our efforts?*

- How connected is Leeds — are we a community?
- People do remember feeling unable to help David.
- Where were his friends?
- Where are we now — how do we stop this happening again?
- People might be in a similar situation but they need different types of support.
- The theft of the David Oluwale Plaque was an act of symbolic violence.
- The Yinka Shonibare sculpture is symbolic of a better future — it must be kept safe!
- The space around it should be used for special gatherings and events.
- People will gravitate towards this art work.
- It will be a kind of Angel of the North for Leeds; a symbol of what Leeds can be.

### *Other comments:*

- How can we build stronger community links within our cities? How do we put this into practice?
- How can we encourage people to play a more active part in the community?
- The pandemic made the importance of community clear by taking a lot of it away.
- The themes are global but when you bring individuals into the narrative, it brings it to life.
- What responsibility do we have as individuals?
  - Sometimes we don't feel we have the skills or resources.
  - Needs multi-agency support.
  - The council has to do more but public money is so poorly allocated.
- Need to personalise the story and as an artist this is exactly what I've been looking for to express my art – can layer different issues using the David Oluwale story.
- The arts are important because it's a very natural way of bringing people together – makes things personal – there are stories and places associated with those stories and some have been highlighted and some haven't. The sculpture will highlight this story.
- Use the sculpture as a venue especially if it could have a sound system playing nearby.
- Connect different people and community groups in Leeds. It provides a new way for people to connect.

- Need more places to connect at a community level.
- Community hubs are important.

### *Popcorns:*

- It will be a beacon for Leeds.
- It will be the Leeds version of the Angel of the North.
- It will naturally become a place for culture and performance and a wonderful canopy over the performers.
- It's important that it's so big.
- It'll be all over social media.
- Radical hospitality.
- David's story is someone's lived experience and people come to it in their own heart and mind.
- Like Yinka said – look what can come out of David's story.
- Buildings and places carry memories.
- It's a powerful way of creating links.



Discussion groups at The Old Fire Station  
© Max Farrar

## Part 4: Evaluation

Attendance varied from 15 to 40 at each of the four events. Attendees, of both genders, were highly diverse in terms of national origins, heritage, class and age. We measure these events in terms of quality, rather than quantity. The discussion was highly informed and sometimes passionate. It became clear that some had not had much opportunity to talk about issues like these before.

Much enthusiasm was expressed for the maquette and the film. There was intense interest in the sculpture (including its security) and considerable interest in how it will be used — clearly, this Memory Garden will be a place that will be made not only by DOMA's specific efforts, but by all the people who utilise it. There were some very useful and interesting suggestions here.

People felt that the 'found poems' were an interesting way to summarise each session, getting a sense of other people's input and discussion in an innovative and interactive way (we all clicked to keep the beat for each poem to be performed to) and it was validating to hear snippets of their own conversations or comments in the performance.

What seemed to appeal to participants most was (a) the use of the arts to tell David's story and (b) DOMA's intersectional approach, educating and campaigning on migration, (un)settlement, racism, mental health and homelessness all at the same time.

While the total number of participants was not particularly high, DOMA believes that the exercise was worthwhile. The email advertising the events reached nearly 500 organisations and 99 councillors. The leaflets and posters were spread far and wide, so we know a very large number of people became aware of the plans for the Oluwale Sculpture Garden. This was something of a niche event, and with caution over COVID still evident, it's perhaps not surprising that large numbers did not join in. The quality of the discussion was, however, excellent, and the sense of engagement with the art-work and with the relevance of the Oluwale story was very high.



Showing the film 'Hibiscus Rising' by A to B films at Seven Arts. Max Farrar taking photos, left  
© Chloë Hudson

# Appendices

## Publicity

The events were publicised on social media through DOMA's usual channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Nearly 1500 leaflets were circulated, posters were placed in shops and public buildings, and every local organisation in each sector of the city was emailed using the Voluntary Action Leeds database. 467 organisations were emailed; 2084 emails were sent, including 486 people on the DOMA Newsletter list. Every Leeds City Councillor was personally invited (99 people). A press release was issued. Some of the venues also publicised the events on their website and through social media.

**Come to an event to share your opinion on**

**A NEW SCULPTURE GARDEN FOR DAVID OLUWALE**

**6-7.30 pm**  
**Wed 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

**Hamara**  
**Healthy Living Centre**  
**LS11 6RD**

Preview  
a sculpture by  
internationally renowned  
artist:

**Yinka**  
**Shonibare CBE, RA**

Other dates and  
venues in July

Booking essential: Search  
'Eventbrite Oluwale Sculpture'  
[rememberoluwale.org](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/s?search=rememberoluwale.org)

Drawing of David  
By Victoria Mienkowska

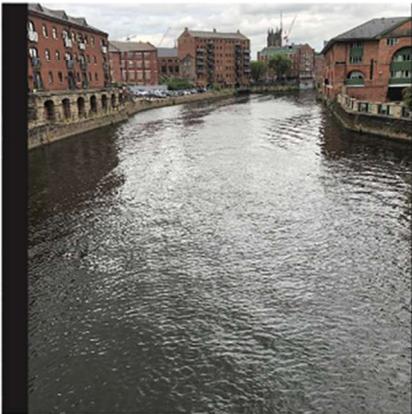
Flyer designed by Chloë Hudson



David was a British citizen who arrived in Leeds from Nigeria in 1949. After a long spell in High Royds psychiatric hospital he became homeless. He was drowned in the River Aire in 1969 after sleeping rough in Leeds City Centre.

# Tell us what you think about our plans for **THE 2023 DAVID OLUWALE SCULPTURE GARDEN** in Meadow Lane, Leeds 11

The #RememberOluwale charity campaigns with others for a city that is more equal, more just, more hospitable and more welcoming for all. The Sculpture Garden is supported by Leeds City Council and the LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture. [RememberOluwale.Org](https://www.RememberOluwale.Org)



The River Aire where David drowned: 'The river tried to carry you away, but you remain with us in Leeds.'  
Caryl Phillips



'Wind Sculpture II' (2013) by Yinka Shonibare at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Photo: Jonty Wilde.



Wednesday 29th June:  
**Hamara Healthy Living Centre,**  
Tempest Road, Beeston, LS11 6RD

Tuesday 5th July:  
**Left Bank Centre,**  
Cardigan Road, Burley, LS61LJ

Thursday 7th July:  
**Seven Arts,**  
31A Harrogate Road, Chapel Allerton, LS73PD

Tuesday 12th July:  
**The Old Fire Station,**  
Gipton Approach, LS9 6NL

The meetings are from 6 to 7.30pm.



**Please come to a meeting near you where you can see and hear:**

- ◆ A model of the sculpture to be commissioned from Yinka Shonibare CBE, RA (funding permitting)
- ◆ A film of Yinka talking about the sculpture
- ◆ People talking about David Oluwale and what he means today
- ◆ Our plans for the Sculpture Garden in Meadow Lane (Leeds 11) where David Oluwale will be remembered

We want to hear your ideas. We will note what you say. This is a café style event — no long speeches.

Bring your friends and family!  
We'll provide refreshments.



Poster and flyer designed by Andy Edwards

## Session design and content

Each event was facilitated by a person trained in the ‘art of hosting’ methodology and the events followed a structured ‘world café’ format. We developed the programme in consultation with three people trained in the art of hosting (Saphra Bennett, Jon Dorsett and Ruth Steinberg. Saphra then facilitated three events and Ruth facilitated one. Jon did the ‘live graphics’ for us). The format of the events was carefully planned by DOMA and the facilitators.

The maquette of the Yinka Shonibare Hibiscus Rising sculpture was transported in a specially hired vehicle to each of the venues and constructed and taken down by trained technicians under the supervision of The Tetley Art Centre (where it was stored and displayed from September 2022 to January 2023. From February 2023 it will be on display in Leeds City Museum). It was displayed in the centre of each of the rooms hired for the event. Participants were instructed not to photograph the maquette so that the big reveal of the sculpture at The Tetley in September would not be compromised).

There was a short introduction by the facilitator, followed by a short account of our purpose by one of the co-chairs of DOMA or its Board members. DOMA’s aim was to get people’s views on the relevance of the David Oluwale story to Leeds today, and on how the sculpture garden might contribute to the city’s, and DOMA’s aspiration for a more welcoming, inclusive and equal city.

The film made by A to B Productions showing the making of the maquette and an interview with Yinka Shonibare was shown.

Then the participants engaged in two rounds of discussions in groups of four or five. The first topic was ‘When we think of Leeds and all the issues that David experienced, what questions should we be asking?’ The second was ‘Thinking of the ‘Oluwale issues’ (e.g. race, homelessness, migration police malpractice and mental ill health) how can we help Leeds become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive? And how can the sculpture garden support our efforts?’ These discussions were noted by the participants at each table.

## Session plan

Time	How long?	Who	Task	Resource / Pre-task
5.00	30 mins	ALL	<b>Room Set – up</b>	Flipchart paper Pens
5.30	In advance	ALL	<b>Facilitator Check – In</b> Opportunity to sort out tech, get grounded, any issues or concerns to work out.	
6.05	5 mins	Saphra/ Ruth	<b>Diversity Welcome</b> To help a diverse group establish a more compassionate culture in the session	
6.10	2 mins	Saphra/R uth	Introduce herself and wordthievery Leads the <b>Check - In: <i>One minute welcome</i></b> <i>Say hello to as many people as possible in the room in however you feel most comfortable. It may be your mother tongue, it might be non-verbal, a wink, a fist bump.</i> <i>Please make sure any contact is consensual!</i>	

6.15	5 mins	Victoria Ajayi, Abigail Marshall Katung, Asher Jael, Max Farrar	<b>DOMA background</b> David Oluwale's story and relevance today The work of the charity	
		DOMA	<b>Oluwale Memorial Garden</b> Info on the blue plaque and the current situation with funding and the sculpture garden.	
6.20	5 mins	Sue	<b>Screen the A to B Productions film of Yinka Shonibare and the maquette</b>	A to B Productions film
6.25	5 mins	Facilitator	<b>In pairs</b> - turn to the person to your left and introduce yourself and what brought you here and briefly your thoughts on the film	
6.30			On tables of 4/5/6 You'll have 15 minutes to introduce yourselves to each other, maybe share what brought you here and think about the following question(s)? Following the principles from world cafe we really encourage you to slow down, try not to think about the time and what you need to get in before the clock runs out. Take time to make notes, draw, really listen for connections, deeper insight, patterns. Focus on what really matters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to find the nectar 'the sweet spot' amongst these issues.</li> <li>• Art is often controversial - some folks will love it and others might hate it or be indifferent. This offers the perfect chance to start a start for great conversation. What does this sculpture evoke for you? What does it or could it represent for people in Leeds? We are not looking for consensus and there may be disagreement but this is the space to navigate that together and listen for insight and connection. understanding of difference.</li> </ul>	
6.35	15 mins		<b>Question One:</b> When we think of Leeds and all the issues that David experienced, what questions should we be asking?	
6.50	15 mins		<b>Question Two</b> Thinking of the 'Oluwale issues' (e.g. race, homelessness, migration police malpractice and mental ill health) how can we, as the people of Leeds, help the city become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive? And how can the sculpture help in this respect?	

7.10	10 mins		<b>Popcorn:</b> What stood out for you? What stood out for you? What challenged you? What excited you?	
7.20	5 mins	Ruth	<b>Ruth's Poem</b>	
7.25	5 mins	Facilitator & DOMA	<b>Thank You and What's next?</b> Ways to keep in touch with DOMA Next event is:: Please buy our merch!!!	

## Gathering responses

People's views were gathered in various ways:

- Self-styled 'word thief' Ruth Steinberg listened to the introductions, the group discussions and the 'popcorn' section of the sessions and noted down sentences that struck her most forcefully. At the end of each session she performed these notes in the form of a found poem. These were very well received. Participants were asked to create a rhythm for the poem by clicking or clapping quietly and several people said that it was a great way to summarise the session, get a sense of other people's input and validating to hear snippets of their own conversations or comments in the poem.
- Notes of the discussions were made at each table by volunteers and the participants and their comments form the bulk of this report.
- Throughout three of the events the graphic artist Jon Dorsett drew on large sheets of paper pinned to the wall and he included feedback given during the 'popcorn' section of each session. For the fourth event that Jon couldn't attend, the artwork was displayed, and the 'popcorns' of that event were added later by Jon.
- At two events the film-maker Maria Spadafora did short interviews with participants, commissioned by LEEDS2023 Festival of Culture. These will be available on the LEEDS2023 website and we will link them at [www.RememberOluwale.org](http://www.RememberOluwale.org).

## Dissemination

The purpose of this report is to capture the variety and depth of Leeds' people's responses to both the story of David Oluwale and Yinka Shonibare's Hibiscus Rising, the centrepiece of the David Oluwale Memory Garden in Aire Park, close to the David Oluwale bridge over the River Aire.

DOMA aims to engage the whole population of Leeds and the region in knowing about David and the persistence of his 'issues' — migration, (un)settlement, racism, mental ill-health, rough sleeping and police malpractice — in our city, while appreciating the progress that has been made since his death in 1971. So we will make this report available as widely as possible to further the city's efforts to expand inclusion, hospitality, equality and social justice.

This report will be available across our social media platforms and our website. It is deliberately arranged so that people do not have to read it all — each section covers most of the main points and is sufficiently provocative and digestible to provoke thought and conversation. It is complemented by the extensive video materials available on our YouTube channel (RememberOluwale), not least of which is the short film by A to B Films in which Yinka Shonibare, CBE RA, speaks about what David's story means to him, and why a hibiscus flower is his vehicle for transmitting a message of happiness and hope in response to the gruelling story of David's life and death in Leeds.

DOMA always works in partnership with others: a prime example is our work with The Tetley Centre for Contemporary Art. From February to June 2019 the Tetley staged a major exhibition featuring Rasheed Araeen's fine art work 'For Oluwale 2'. Hibiscus Rising and the film made by A to B Films were the highlights of The Tetley's second 'Oluwale' exhibition (September 2022 - January 2023) which represented David and DOMA's work, specifically our collaboration with Leeds Civic Trust to produce a Blue Plaque for David Oluwale. This exhibition also included illustrations of the design of Aire Park where Hibiscus Rising will be installed and Jon Dorsett's graphics and Ruth Steinberg's "found poems" (included above in this report). The Tetley also hosted our mini-festival when the Blue Plaque was re-installed in October 2023. The David Oluwale Room at The Tetley will display Jon Dorsett's graphics and Ruth Steinberg's poems from January 2023 onwards.

Hibiscus Rising (the maquette and the film) and other examples of DOMA's work will be included in the major exhibition 'Overlooked' at Leeds City Museum from February 2023, maintaining our public presence in 2023. More information can be found here <https://www.opforum.org.uk/2022/09/29/what-is-overlooked/> Our aim is for the Hibiscus Rising maquette to become a permanent item in the Leeds City Art gallery after the Overlooked exhibition ends (in summer 2023).

With huge support from LEEDS2023 Festival of Culture and Leeds City Council the Hibiscus Rising Sculpture, almost 10 metres high, will be installed in the Meadow Lane section of Aire Park in the autumn of 2023. This space will be animated by creative activities, performances and other events on one Sunday afternoon each month in the spring and summer, drawing people of every background into the David Oluwale story. One of our intentions for the sculpture and the space, in recognition of much of David's own life is that it is welcoming to all including rough-sleepers.

The online interpretation materials surrounding the Hibiscus Rising sculpture will include this report and findings from it.

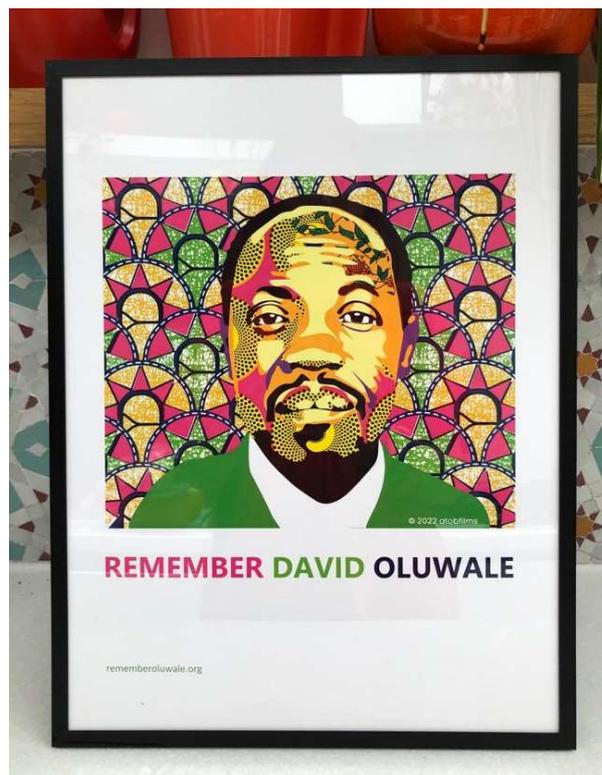
A further example of our partnership work is with the staff and students at Leeds Beckett University. Students from its Schools of Arts, Cultural Studies and Humanities and Social Sciences have worked with us in various ways, most recently in their Public History and Applied Humanities modules. These students will receive this report to add to their research materials. We gave several talks to students at Leeds City College during Black History Month and we supported their diversity and inclusion staff team with a workshop in December — explaining David's story and the purpose of Hibiscus Rising.

## Support us

We welcome your support in any way you choose. We have volunteering opportunities, we welcome new partnerships and ideas for collaborative working and we appreciate donations large or small.

To supplement the ideas in this report DOMA produces other materials to stimulate understanding and to support all the campaigns for social justice including another book of poetry, short stories, prose and art, *Remembering Oluwale Anthology, Volume 2* (Peepal Tree Press, 2023).

We organise several events each year and a variety of merchandise to raise funds. We love to see our merchandise displayed wherever it can reach. For example Jeannine Mellonby's beautiful graphics for the Hibiscus Rising film have been incorporated into this art print:



For more information on all of these things and more email ([rememberoluwale@gmail.com](mailto:rememberoluwale@gmail.com)), visit our website and follow us on social media:

[rememberoluwale.org](http://rememberoluwale.org) |  [rememberoluwale](https://twitter.com/rememberoluwale) |  [rememberoluwale](https://www.instagram.com/rememberoluwale)

# Acknowledgements

This project was possible thanks to funding and support from the Arts Council England, Leeds City Council, Leeds 2023, The Scurrah Wainwright Charity, The Tetley Centre for Contemporary Art and and A to B Films. With additional funds received from private donors to the DOMA charity and a generous donation from the Lord and Lady Harewood Charitable Foundation.



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



**LEEDS  
YEAR OF  
CULTURE 2023**

**T | THE  
TETLEY**

**SWC**  
The Scurrah Wainwright Charity



Report produced by the David Oluwale Memorial Association, March 2023

## The David Oluwale Memorial Association

Registered office:  
8 Gledhow Park Road, Leeds, LS74JX, UK

UK Registered Charity No. 1151426  
UK Company Limited by Guarantee No. 8107693  
rememberoluwale@gmail.com  
rememberoluwale.org

