A 30,000 Word Rant: Mapping the Awkward Space Between 'Representation' and 'Tokenism' within British Arts-Related Institutions.

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Abstract:

Preconceived cultural expectations in artworks produced by artists of the global majority has been a problematic issue which runs through the veins of the predominantly white-led British contemporary art discourse. Additionally, more recent movements such as Black Lives Matter and Stop Asian Hate which transpired in 2020 acted as catalysts for the revaluation of how these artists are and have been represented in cultural institutions. Although existing research has accessed theories of both 'representation' and 'tokenism', as separate entities, within the British visual arts, the ambition of this thesis is to map out the awkward space in between the two. Though younger (18-24) artists contribute to the contemporary discussion of these topics, this research shows that there are many social obstacles which makes this space in between 'representation' and 'tokenism' awkward to navigate.

Guided by an auto-ethnographical perspective, I outline and apply Hall's 'Representational theory' and Kanter's formalisation of 'tokenism', originally applied to gender studies, to young- emerging artists of Chinese (and ESEA) diaspora, or relating heritage, in Britain, I identify key social problems which are being upheld by the leading white narrative. Alongside recent case studies like the defunding of the Centre of Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA), I interrogate the argument that the stability of a leading narrative has an integral effect on the stability of a young Chinese/ESEA's artistic position within a British art context. Furthermore, by applying Kanter's three perceptual tendencies to the thesis' subject, I identify reasons which contribute to the lack of confidence one must be able to confront tokenistic gestures.

This research concludes with a conceptualisation of three key social 'landmarks' which I argue contributes to the awkwardness between 'representation' and 'tokenism': 1) one's lived experience as a non-white artist being a social or financial trend, 2) becoming the solution to the problem of the deeply embedded colonial mindset, and 3) being the ticked box which ensures an institution receives funding.

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Introduction

Having been born in China, adopted by a white family from the age of seven months old, grown up in Essex, UK and facing racial ignorance throughout my time studying art, the purpose of this thesis is to turn the problematic experiences I encountered during my Fine Art and Art History (FAAH) undergraduate course into a cathartic academic exploration. However, throughout the duration on this project I became overwhelmed with the various approaches and discussions regarding how artists of the global majority are still being treated in the contemporary British arts. It was beneficial knowing that I was not alone but as this thesis explains, I observe space for academic discussion within this topic with further and developed consideration for the next generation of artists. As the title of my thesis suggests, alongside my undergraduate and day-to-day life, this year-and-a-bit-long research project has conjured a demand for discussing such a complex topic within a limit of thirty-thousand words. The method of unpacking, breaking down and articulating said topics and my own perspective is through conceptualising a theoretical space between 'representation' and 'tokenism'.
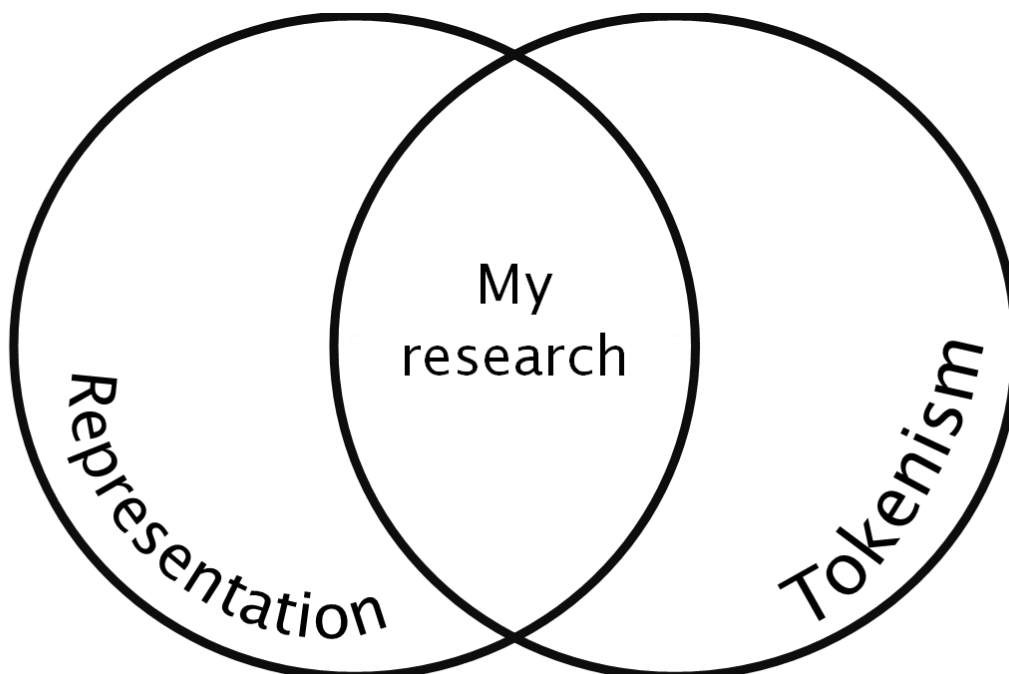

Figure 1: My thesis as a Venn-diagram

As figure 1 shows, my research's predominant focus will be within the overlap of the Venn-diagram in which I argue is an awkward space which is difficult to map and navigate especially when at the early stages of one's art education or career. I use the word 'awkward' to describe this concept due to the unstable and socially difficult nature of the subjects which exist in this space. By reviewing literature and embedding auto-ethnographical experiences, this thesis will identify significant 'landmarks' within this space to assess and evaluate key issues which need to be addressed within British arts-related institutions. These key landmarks will form at the end of this thesis by addressing a combination of theoretical frameworks and current social conversations to breakdown such complex topics.

The core subject to this research project stems from my lived experience being physically of Chinese ethnicity with a British upbringing and therefore the questioning the term diaspora[1] within a cultural context. The notion of identity conflict between being from China and living in the West is a common topic amongst contemporary Chinese artists (Chiu & Genocchio, 2010), these include the works of Ai Weiwei who is most famous for fusing Chinese craft and Western philosophy to challenge global contemporary issues (Zhuan & Pierson, 2010). Other artists explore emotional and identity orientated conflicts such as Chinese-Australian sculptor Ah Xian who expresses this very issue by explaining that "those who have grown up steeped in Chinese ways can hardly escape the influence of thousands of years of Chinese history and cultural traditions" (Ah in Chiu & Genocchio, 2010:55). Whist there is an ongoing conversation amongst established artists and academics regarding how Chinese art and artists are represented within Western institutions, the thesis will focus on the young-emerging artist as I argue that there are certain discussions that younger artists find difficult to navigate or even challenge. The thesis' predominant case study to tie the young-emerging Chinese/ESEA diaspora artists within Britain is the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA), Manchester, UK. The CFCCA was founded in 1986 by artist Amy Lai in the heart of Manchester City Centre and, as chapter two will elaborate in further detail, over a span of just over thirty years (2021) closed. I have been following the

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[1] The term diaspora is defined in Cambridge Dictionary as "a group of people who spread from one original country to other countries, or the act of spreading" (Cambridge Dictionary, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/diaspora). Tate defines 'diasporic art' as a term used "to discuss artists who have migrated from one part of the world to another, (or whose families have), and who express their diverse experiences of culture and identity in the work they make." (Tate)

movements of this centre, not only because I have been based in Manchester for a few years, but because of limited representation of the Chinese/ESEA creative community in the UK.

The following chapter will aim to set up context and both theoretical frameworks, which I will be deploying to map the issues I argue exist within this space of 'representation' and 'tokenism'. Contemporary context that will be addressed is the Chinese population in Britain and the British arts-scene and its' approaches to representing artists of the global majority in the 1990s, predominantly framed within Art's Council England's approaches to diversity. This is supported by Hylton's argument that in this era, tokenism began to infiltrate British ACE funded gallery spaces as they, the galleries, were "uninterested in what black artists had to offer individually" (Hylton, 2007:13). It suggested that those not identifying as White-British[2] was considered as 'diverse' so therefore inclusion is noted and given merit to those institutions that are diverse. Additional contemporary discussions addressed in the literature review include the call for reappraisal for people of the global majority amidst the BLM and Stop Asian Hate movements in 2020/2021 and the rise of conversations of tokenism within the arts and wider creative arts. Education, expanded in section 2.5, as a method of setting up young-emerging artists of the global majority's perspective of both them and others with whom they may identify, critiques how some white teachers/tutors represent artists of the global majority within arts-education – arguably through a Eurocentric gaze.

My usage of the term 'representation' is defined in both the Cambridge Dictionary as "a person or organisation that speaks, acts or is present officially for someone else" (Cambridge Dictionary: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/representation) and Stuart Hall's Representational framework. Chapter one provides historical context to the concept of representation within the British arts discourse. As the chapter explains, the topic of the lack of racially diverse representation arose due to the debate "of black art in Britain as a whole" (Mercer,1994:234). The subject of representation has been continuously flying well under the radar until 2020 amidst the Black Lives Matter (BLM) and Stop Asian

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[2] 'White British' being defined as "English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma, Any other white background" (https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups GOV.uk, 2021)

Hate (SAH) Movement when the topic of how creatives, and people of the global majority in general, are still being treated in contemporary Britain. I suggest there is little discussion of the Chinese/ESEA diaspora creative community within the contemporary arts and representational discourse. Therefore, in the literature review I discuss the notion of representation from an alternative angle by employing a sociologist lens – Hall's Representational theory, explained in chapter one. In chapter two I proceed to argue that the multiple, therefore unstable, representations of an ACE funded institution, the CFCCA, can create an unstable sense of artistic self for young-emerging artists of the relating diaspora. Within this framework I identity and analyse six methods of unstable representation with the purpose to pinpoint issues that I argue would overlap with 'tokenism'. By deploying Hall's theory to the more culturally specific Chinese/ESEA community in Britain through the CFCCA's movements leading up to its closure, I offer a unique perspective into the representation of the visual arts community of the relating diaspora and/or artists of relating heritage.

Tokenism, in the context of my research project is defined as "something that a person or organization does that seems to support or help a group of people who are treated unfairly in society, such as giving a member of that group an important or public position, but which is not meant to make changes that would help that group of people in a lasting way" (Cambridge Dictionary: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/tokenism). The topic of tokenism rose into mainstream, predominantly online discussions in 2020 which ultimately followed the topic of representation. This is evidently extended into the arts and media[3] sector because it was evident that visual marketing and representation had a dramatic turn regarding who was depicted in their images. The third chapter, Tokenism, will deploy Kanter's formalisation of tokenism and its three perceptual tendencies to young-emerging Chinese/ESEA diaspora artists. In the context of the awkward space between 'representation' and 'tokenism' which young-emerging artists of the Chinese/ESEA diaspora find themselves, I find that of the three, visibility, contrast and assimilation, the latter is the

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[3] Examples of tokenistic discussion within the British media following the BLM in 2020 includes Channel 4 "Black Takeover Day" which Arnell questions to be a "bold move or tokenism" (Arnell, 2020) and ITV's search for a Black presenter (Meye, 2020). Reasoning for assumptions of tokenism is due to the sheer lack of representation of people of colour in programmes shown through these channels up until sudden visibility of people of colour in roles within the public eye, such as presenters, whilst the infrastructure remains predominantly white led.

most difficult to navigate as it applies to aesthetics as well as lived identity which is therefore embraced or rejected depending on the motives of the majority. The following sections therefore argue that tokenising an artist due to solely race/ethnicity/cultural difference is a dehumanising construct and therefore I highlight and suggest the social retaliations a young-emerging artist would receive when confronting tokenism. As the subject of tokenism is ultimately synonymous with indications of racism and ignorance and often in these circumstances it is from an individual of higher authority, in the following section, I argue that education and class are underlying factors which contribute to the young-emerging artist's confidence to confront. The end of this chapter shows concern for present young-emerging artists but suggests further research and recommendations to provide hope for future generations.

From assessing the literature and both theoretical frameworks in chapters two and three, the final and fourth chapter will identify three significant 'landmarks' which I argue need to be focal discussion topics that British arts-related institutions need to address and consider when approaching representation of young-emerging artists of Chinese/ESEA artists. The following section will provide a personal and practice-based contextual perspective which aims to remind the reader that the topics this thesis will be addressing is an ongoing problem that young-emerging artists of the global majority /diaspora are experiencing. This section is then followed by the thesis' aims and objectives and finally the methodology which will address methods of research that was carried out to develop this outcome.

0.2 Position Statement:

This section provides context in which this research originated, its justification and its purpose in the realm of future contemporary art research. This entire project is an extension of my autoethnographic perspective which I've experienced within my exposure to the artworld. As mentioned in the previous section, this research will be deploying my unique perspective, stemming from both a British and Chinese narrative which has perpetuated a conflicting artistic position between difficulty in facing a perceivably 'exotic' heritage, a tendency to avoid it and a tendency to make it a cliché feature in my practice.

Thorough discussions of racism itself were largely avoided within my artistic practice and family household. In his study *Racial Inequality in Psychological Research: Trends of the Past and Recommendations for the Future 2020*[4] , psychology scholar, Roberts, argues that "race plays a critical role in the extent to which people even care about race" (Roberts, 2020:1296). Drawing from several previous studies, he summarises that "white persons are more likely than persons of colour (POCs) to avoid conversations about race, potentially because they feel inexperienced in the subject" (Roberts, 2020:1296) which has a likely potential to result in future generations of white people to be much more sensitive to discuss subjects of racism. As a result, I argue that most artists of the global majority find themselves having to justify their opinions and perception to hundreds of years of deeply embedded sensitivity which is normally expressed through passionate defence and ignorance I will discuss this further in chapter three; but what happens when someone such as myself is brought up within a white family and society? Roberts' accounts for the critical extent of caring about race has questioned my naivety towards the subject. I later found that my experience at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), awakened a deep anger to finally confront the deplorable expectations of my cultural heritage and how I should exercise it. Interacting with an expansively white-led[5] faculty left me observing and critiquing the identity politics which I faced when it came to producing work and writing essays.

A comment that embodied the start of an incredibly conflicting narrative between my visual and cultural identity was when my tutor suggested that I 'go to Chinatown' to take preliminary photos to spark a passionate project about my *exotic* and *interesting* heritage. Evidently, from the offset, my tutor did not connect with my work or individual artistic perspective, made clear by their comment that I 'had no artistic soul'. However, as they held the determination of my final BA grade in their hands, I complied with their request and resorted to adopting universally recognisable Chinese aesthetics within my practice.

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[4] This study "queried more than 26,000 empirical articles published between 1974 and 2018 in top-tier… psychological publications that highlight race" (Roberts, 2020:1295) and found that there is limited discussion of race in said papers, those that so have been edited by white editors and that many of these publications have been written by white authors who employed significantly fewer participants of colour" (Roberts, 2020, 1295)

[5] Rathore defines the term "white-led" as "organisations that are majority white in leadership, i.e., board and SMT" (Rathore, 2021) (Senior Management Team).

Additionally, at this time I'd hit a creative rut and I suggest that my tutor, being a product of his culture, moulded my practice into what they initially wanted and expected from me: a Chinese artist making Chinese art about being Chinese. Their assurance that at least one student of the global majority made work about their 'cultural' heritage did not benefit my sense of security or trust in those in senior roles. It worked and I finished with a 1st Class Honours, but the omnipresent feeling of guilt left me to question whether what I did was a form "tactically utilising my ethnicity" and cultural heritage for instant recognition (lok in Smith, 2006). So, as my art practice continues, I often wonder if I am contributing to the upholding of tokenising of artists the global majority and representing Chinese/ESEA as a whole.

These comments are prime examples of the awkward nature of the theorised space which limits one's confidence to express themselves with vigour. Rollock defines comments like these as 'racial micro aggressions' in which he defines as "brief, everyday interactions that send denigrating messages to people of colour because they belong to a racially marginalized group" (Rollock, 2012:517). Normally micro-aggressive comments are "subtle and insidious" which often leave "the victim confused distressed and frustrated" (Rollock, 2012:517) whist the offender is unaware of the emotional distress they have caused. This is evidently something I continue to experience but aim to address later in this thesis.

Reflecting on this experience has sparked a sad realisation of the salient upholding of the white status quo embedded in the art world. It was evident that my confidence in discussing my work, based on lived experience, in an art university could not match the individual marking my work. I question why this is the case; should I have been taught how to defend my artistic perspective as a non-white practitioner? Who can teach me this and where can I find them if they're not employed or accessible to the institution? Is there and ounce of wisdom I can part on future generations of artists? If there is, I will go to my best efforts to make the knowledge and advice as accessible as possible, elaborated and explained in the Methodology section.

0.3 My Practice:

Since finishing my BA degree, I have continued my artistic practice with ceramics, rendering a series of vases that bare the likenesses of traditional blue and white porcelain and selling them online and through art fairs. Though there is not a finalised tangible outcome, as I have mentioned, my artistic practice has heavily informed this theory-based MA project. A huge inspiration to my attitude towards using my heritage in my art practice has been the works of Ai Weiwei, specifically his 2000 exhibition titled *Fuck You*, his photo series *Study of Perspective* (1995-2010) and his complex relationship with ceramics (Zhuang, 2010) and the concept of the vessel[6]. My resulting ceramic installation formed with the aim to place an object of a forgotten antiquarian context into a contemporary art context. Adopting the universally known blue and white patterning utilised traditional craft to catch the viewer's eye, to draw them in and then to challenge their assumptions and expectations with real quotes submitted by real ESEA victims of racism and microaggression behaviour. The mission of this work, titled "*Take your Chinese and shove it up your ass, you chinky pig!*"[7], figures 3 and 4, is to challenge these behaviours by deploying the pressure to tactically utilise my heritage.

Figure 3 & 4: Photographs of my ceramic installation work, *Take your Chinese and shove it up your ass, you chinky pig!* 2021, 7 vases (ivory stoneware, tin shiny glaze, cobalt oxide), 7 plinths (MDF) and A6 zines (RISO graph on laser paper)

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[6] Other artists included Liu Juanhua, Chie-Wei Chang, Paul Harfleet
[7] More information about my artistic practice in full detail can be found on my online portfolio: https://jasmine-gardner.jimdosite.com/gallery/

My work and persistence to commercially sell ceramic work, post undergraduate degree, questions the notion of cultural authenticity and artistic identity within a British contemporary art discourse. After my BA concluded itself, I continued to make and sell my vases and I observed that the traditional Ming Dynasty pattern was the most popular which developed an interest into exploring why this was the fan favourite. Would this mean when guaranteed success is needed, I'd simply repeat what is expected of me, a traditional Chinese motif? So, by reflecting on my experiences of tokenism during my time in higher education has tainted how I perceive certain scenarios within the arts, I tend to heavily research art white-led open calls which specifically call out for work that 'explores' culture, diversity etc which perpetuates an ongoing questioning of my individual value and perspective as an artist if accepted. When applying the concept of tokenism to young-emerging artists, I am aware that it is a very difficult topic to deal with for both the young artist and, predominantly, white-led art institution, therefore, this thesis also explores the social and effects of tokenism and confronting tokenism. Due to the present and ongoing nature of my research I highlight current and ongoing problematic examples, discussed in chapters one and two, as it is important to demonstrate that there is still a long way to go.

0.4 Research Aims and Objectives:

Research Aims:

- To analyse, critique and illustrate the problems young-emerging artists of Chinese/ESEA heritage experience when positioned in-between 'representation' and 'tokenism' within British arts-related institutions.
- To produce an accessible and engaging academic study for both individuals atop of British arts institutions and the young-emerging artist.

- To identify significant 'landmarks' within the space to draw attention to key issues I argue require developed research.

Research Objectives:

- To analyse and evaluate existing literature and suggest further research which needs to be conducted.

- To analyse and evaluate a mainstream institution, its methods of representing 'Chinese' art in Britain and arguing its potential effects on the young-emerging artists of the relating diaspora/heritage within Stuart Hall's representational framework.

- To apply Kanter's three perceptual tendencies to young-emerging Chinese/ESEA artists in Britain.

- To analyse potential mental effects being in the space between 'representation' and tokensim' has on young-emerging artists of the global majority and highlight potential retaliations if they confront an individual about it.

- To analyse British arts-related institutional methods of representing artists of the global majority in online resources.

- To recommend methods in which British arts-related institutions can represent artists of the global majority within an educational context.

0.5 Methodology:

The outcome of this thesis has been predominantly informed by secondary resources through extensive desk research. Additionally, as my position statement addressed, I aim to comment, critique, and expand upon my experiences and observations from my time in university alongside secondary resources. Reasoning for this stems from my observations that there is a level of inaccessible language when it comes to the level of communication preparation for the young-emerging. With this in mind, I will embed short anecdotal experiences, which may use informal language, throughout the main body of this thesis and its theoretical frameworks to:

a. Signpost the reader back to my autoethnographically-based position and that the topics of conversation focus on ongoing observations.

b. Provide short breaks, or transparent 'reality checks', from theoretical academic discussion which may not be accessible for some to concentrate on for an extended period.

c. Testify to the fact that there is an awkward, unspoken and therefore non-confronted power imbalance within art institutions such as my university.

Throughout my project I have used a range of sources to inform the direction of the research. The rationale for using a range of formats is due to the varying academic nature of the topics which I will be discussing. Therefore, academic texts written by art historians and theorists (Bhabbha, 1999; Blanco, 1998; Bourdieu, 1993; Braziel & Mannur, 2003; Lü & Wu 2010; Mercer, 1994; Said, 1978; Wu & Gao, 2008) provides the relevant frameworks and historical context. Text and social media posts written by current artists and young academics/journalists themselves (Ali, 2020; Andjelic, 2019; Areen, 2007; the Artists Working Group, 2021; Daisley, 2022; Muhammad, 2019; Paintsil, 2020; Sandiford, 2022) alongside perceptions from a similar point of view to myself (Ang, 2001; lok, 2006) develop academic articulation of personal thoughts and support my own autoethnographically-based argument. An informed fusion of academic and artist-led literature alongside an ethnographic perspective will be evident in my writing style. At times the language I use will be slang or informal phrases as a form of agitational equivalence relating to white elitist language which I address and expand upon later.

Literature which discusses the rise of 'Chinese art' and the Chinese community in Britain (Barnes, 2003; Benton and Gomez, 2008, Binyon, 1935; Chiu & Genocchio, 2010; Davidson, 2020; Grant & Kruger, 2020, Groffman, 2018; Hongm 2014; Karetzky, 2016; Parker, 1995; Yeh, 2004) has informed both historical and art historical context in which to set my research. By using this literature, the platform in which I began to build my argument regarding the Chinese/ESEA community informed my perception of how said communities are perceived within British society, and therefore within the arts. As the main case study, the CFCCA is based in Manchester, I refer to texts which discuss the Chinese community and arts specific to Manchester (Kennedy, 2015; Mitha, 2007; Zhuang & Pierson, 2010). References to sociological (Althusser, 1970) and psychological theories and frameworks are used to support the emotional (Patel, 2021) and psychological impacts, and effects, (Agata & Okada, 2010; Doronio, 2022; Hall, 1997; Fung, 2013; Kanter, 1977; Morris, 2020; Platz, 2021; Roberts, 2020; Sook-Jeong, 2007; Willis, 2021; Wolstenholme, 2020) that these young-emerging artists may be experiencing.

The two predominant theoretical frameworks which I will be deploying to illustrate the conditions within this difficult space between 'representation' and 'tokenism' are Stuart Hall's Representational theory (Hall, 1997, Hall in Bishop, 2021, Hall, Jhally, Talreja &

Patierno, 1997) and Kanter's Three Perceptual Tendencies presented in her formalisation of Tokenism (Kanter, 1977b). The arguments and points I highlight in these chapters are further supported by recent discussions of representation and tokenism within the arts (Blair, 2021; Crafts Council, 2021; D. Ashe, 2021; Haq, 2016; Ira, 2020; Kapoor, 2020; Lin & Frazer 2015; Muhammad, 2018; Mwanza, 2018; Sandiford, 2022; Schmidt, 2022). Additionally, as the thesis is discussing 'British arts-related institutions', which therefore implies educational studies, I use literature which explores various approaches to arts education and policies in Britain (Arts Council England, Brook, O'Brien & Taylor, 2020; Dash, 1998; Desai, 2000; Gaztambide- Ferández, Kraehe & Carpenter, 2018; Henley, 2016, Hewison, 2014, Hylton, 2007, Niemann, 2016, Rollock, 2019; Salisbury, 2020; Serota, 2020; Shaw & Carrigan 2020; Swann Report, 1985). Some of these are predominantly factual based to support my arguments, whereas others are academic interpretations of the context in which they are discussed.

It is also worth noting that some of the literature referenced is within an American context (Almino, 2020; Huang, 2021); as the full literature review will discuss, there is limited literature on British-Chinese artists in direct relation to my thesis' topics. The mini case study I address in chapter one includes an online resource: the Arty Teacher (Crowther, 2022). The main case study, chapter two: the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA) utilises secondary resources (Aesthetica, 2016; AWG, 2021; CFCCA, 2017; Chan, 2020; Diversity Matters, 2021; Dunbar, 2016; Chan & Willis, 2018) as I, myself have not visited the centre due to COVID-19 and its immediate boycotting in 2021. As mentioned before, other resources relating to the CFCCA have been through casual conversations and online encounters with individuals who visited, worked, and volunteered for/within the centre. This included former curator and acting director Yuen Fong Ling.

0.6 Terminology:

I agree with Benton and Gomez argument that the terms 'China' and the concept of 'Chineseness'[8] tends to generically refer to mainland China (People's Republic of China, PRC), a huge country with a dynamic history and twenty-three provinces but remains to a fixed place in a Western mind as originating from the exotic and idiosyncratic Communist 'other' civilization (Benton & Gomez, 2010). This is the reasoning behind why, when referring to the research's predominant subject, there are times where I put quotation marks ('') around terms, such as 'Chinese'; to emphasise generalisation when referring to 'Chinese art'. For example, in relation to certain case studies such as the CFCCA where the notion of 'Chinese art' was preconceived by the public (arguably non-art objects/artefacts which sold for more (Spencer, 2003:185) like Blue and white porcelain and urns, ink and calligraphy paintings). I would not personally identify as an individual of diaspora but as my story is very specific, I use the terms 'diaspora' and 'relating heritage' to include the different scopes of young-emerging artists who may identify as having a similar experience to myself. As I intend to highlight in this thesis, everyone has their own individual definition identifying with either the term 'Chinese'/'British-Chinese', an artist of 'diaspora' and their lived experience in Britain. This thesis uses this specific subject to not only draw attention to what I observe is an overlooked community but to frame the discussion of representation and tokenism within British arts-related institutions.

I will also address that my use of the terms, for example, 'white-led institutions' and 'artists of the global majority" throughout this thesis are rather generalised. Of course, the issues and examples I will discuss do not apply to every single British arts institution and is not to reflect every board, art director, curator, and its staff. Most of the discussions and arguments presented in this research can be applied to other young- emerging artists of different backgrounds. This can include artists who identify as a different global majority background (Dyer, 2007; Sivanandan, 1976), artists within the LGBTQIA+[9] community

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[8] Chow defines 'Chineseness' as an ambiguous Western term applied to anyone/thing which can be perceived as being from a common cultural Chinese heritage. She argues that it is "a kind of cultural essentialism… that draws an imaginary boundary between China and the rest of the world" (Chow, 1998:7).

[9] LGBTQIA+ is the most recent established abbreviation to group individuals by sexual orientation and gender identity. The abbreviation stands for: Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, Asexual and Plus (all additional orientations and gender identities). Arts Council England use the abbreviation LGBTQ+

(Topaz, Higdon & Epps-Darling, 2022), artists with disabilities etc. This is evident in the literature (Boué, 2019; Nesbit, 1997; Oxley, 2015) I refer to throughout this thesis due to the fact underlying discussions of tokenism are present in many creative circles. Based on my own experiences and encounters, I unpack various conflicting thoughts young artists may have and the ever-increasing difficulty of navigating them.

 One issue I argue exists within the space between representation and tokenism is the pressure to accommodate to the white- led institution and its expectations built upon centres of the colonial-gaze. To support this argument, I refer to some commercial and capitalist orientated frameworks and theories (Charlesworth, 2013; Perry, 2014; Perry, 2018; Spencer, 2005; Winkleman, 2009; Velthuis, 2005) as I argue the movements of arts institutions are swayed by financial influences. These texts informed my perspective on the reasoning and logistics for my argument, most specifically toward the CFCCA. I also apply some of this literature to discussions regarding ACE projects and funding, as the CFCCA was funded by ACE. Even though organisations funded by ACE are non-profit, I argue that because the competitive capitalist system and the hopes that artists "may have a better chance of succeeding in a competitive art market" (Perry, 2018:113) is deeply embedded within Western society, these ACE projects have become more commercialised over time. This includes the CFCCA where in chapter two, I suggest that a mainstream commercialisation of heritage sets a standard for young-emerging artists of the relating diaspora to commercialise or tactically use their heritage for exposure and potential financial gain.

Within these broader case studies, such as ACE, I refer to the term people/artists of the 'global majority' which is defined by Campbell as a unification to "groups that are routinely either not seen or marginalised … including the historical and current role of, systemic racism, white privilege and the power dynamics therein." (Campbell – Stephens, 2020:1). The following chapter is the literature review will demonstrate my understanding of current research and the position of my particular interest within it.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

1.1 British Arts: The Rise of Tokenism:

In the UK, New Labour's encouragement of the 'Black experience' and the pressures by organisations, such as Arts Council England's (ACE) deciBel[10], evoked an unspoken need to meet a particular 'quota' when representing artists/employees of the global majority. Hylton expresses that deciBel, created in 2003 to publicly disseminate enthusiasm "for public institutions to address the issue of 'inclusion' and, by association, cultural diversity" (Hylton, 2007:19) failed to sustain its primary focus within the British arts. Hylton further argues that the policy, as a result, "compounded the problems of tokenism and racial separation within the visual arts sector" (Hylton, 2007:19). A prominent example of this is the discussion of the lack of Black artist representation in British arts-related institutions which materialised in the 1980s[11]. Whilst policies like these were met with some enthusiasm, they sparked serious criticism amongst the Black Art debate (Mercer, 1994); some artists were happy to simply be included (Hylton, 2007) whereas others suspected tokenistic acts. I question if the artists who were happy to be included in the Black Artists exhibitions were young/emerging or young-emerging artists as opposed to those who suspected tokenism whom I hypothesise would have been more experienced and educated. I therefore argue that further research is needed to investigate the young-emerging demographic rather than the established. By referring to Araeen's impossible task of curating a nationally acclaimed exhibition *The Other Story*[12] to represent, and accommodate for the lack of, ALL artists of global majority in 1989, Mercer highlights the key problems a tokenised artist faces. The key problems will be discussed and summarised within Kanter's three perceptual tendencies in chapter three.

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[10] deciBel implemented a 4% diversity inclusion rate which institutions aimed to match the national percentage of BME individuals who lived in the UK the time the scheme started.

[11] Example like the 1986 'The Arts and Ethnic Minorities- Action Plan' which provided a "notable shift in its attitude towards Black artists" (Hylton, 2007:12)

[12] This exhibition was held from 29th November 1989– 4th February 1990 at the Hayward Gallery, London. Areen received multiple criticisms including that of the "twenty-four artists in the exhibition, only six were drawn from the younger generation, which included only four women" (Fisher, 2009)

Arts Council England's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Data Reports:

Some of the key questions Hylton tackles consists of critiquing schemes and policies like Decibel, suggesting that they cause more damage to 'culturally diverse' artist's perception of self. Is tokenism the underlying reasoning for the inclusion of these artists in exhibitions, funding, and awards? And most importantly, how can future policy making improve these issues? Though Hylton's text refers to schemes introduced in 1980's Britain and written about fourteen years ago, its questioning and conclusions, I argue, remain present in the art world today.

Hylton's vigorous chronological discussion on Greater London Council (GLC) and its lack of consideration for inclusion of black artists, despite the initiation of numerous exhibitions dedicated to Black artists in London, provokes relevant points to this case study. These exhibitions received backlash as they "paid little attention to potential differences and conflicts between art forms and artistic concerns presented. Instead of considering these issues as possibly determining factors in shaping the nature of any project, the organizing principles for supporting Black artists focused almost exclusively on their "Blackness" as the single and most important legitimating factor for their inclusion" (Hylton, 2007:48-49). This epitomisation of tokenism ensued the argument that these artists should not rely solely on the colour of their skin to gain recognition within the art world. Brook, O'Brien & Taylor state that "who makes culture has consequences for the way individuals and communities are represented" (Brook, O'Brien & Taylor, 2020:75). Though this statement applies to the occupational roles within cultural institutions I feel that the 'makers' of culture also apply to the artists themselves. The consequences are, in this case, the role of the artist changes within the context of the exhibition; their job is to represent their heritage. This suggests that there is an automatic responsibility that comes with being grouped in a collection dedicated to a cultural heritage – with responsibility, comes great pressure which I expand upon in reference to Kanter's perceptual tendencies. In relation to current discussions within the arts, Davidson[13], art historian and curator, acknowledges Mee Moua's disparages to the comparison of Asian-American to rugs to highlight the issue that "Chinese artists are

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[13] Davidson's research predominantly focuses on "transnationalism, performance, feminism, global expositions and contexts of Chinese identity in contemporary art". (Davidson, 2020)

expected to represent Chinese identity for an entire populace through their art objects" (Davidson, 2020:29).

By referring to secondary data collected by Arts Council England's yearly 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' (EDI) Reports' between the years 2015 to 2019[14], this section aims to discuss and access the importance of published statistics to emphasise racial polarisation within ACE funded organisations.
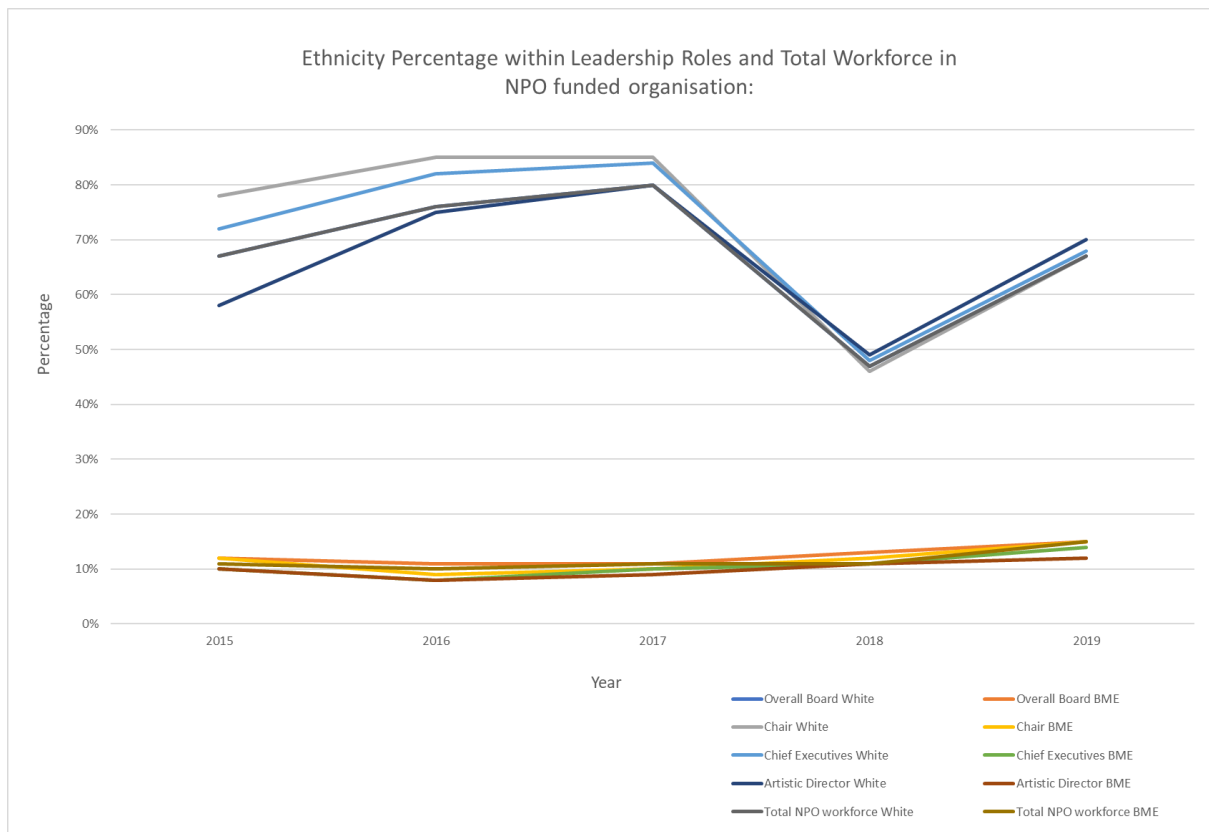
Figure 5: Line graph of ethnicity group percentages in leadership roles and total workforce over in National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) funded organisations across 2015-2019.

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[14] On 23rd June 2022, ACE published its EDI: A Data Report 2020-2021 which uses the full-term Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse rather than previous year, BME. The site states that as this report is of "the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic", "this year's data cannot be compared to the past" (ACE, 2022) due to lockdown and the virus having a significant impact on the nation.

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	White	67%	76%	80%	47%	67%
Overall Board	BME	12%	11%	11%	13%	15%
	White	78%	85%	85%	46%	67%
Chair	BME	12%	9%	10%	12%	15%
	White	72%	82%	84%	48%	68%
Chief Executives	BME	10%	8%	10%	11%	14%
	White	58%	75%	80%	49%	70%
Artistic Director	BME	10%	8%	9%	11%	12%
	White	67%	76%	80%	47%	67%
Total NPO workforce	BME	11%	10%	11%	11%	15%

Figure 6: Table of data depicted in figure 5.

As my research is in direct discussion of the visual arts, figure 5 aims to enhance the visualisation of the collected pragmatic data in figure six. As the data in figure 6 is published yearly and takes the form in different graphics, these statistics compare the total percentage of White and 'BME'[15] employees in leadership roles (Overall Board, Chair, Chief Executives, and Artistic Director) and total workforce within organisations that are funded by ACE. This is because my preliminary research and my own experience indicated that authoritative roles have a big impact on the young-emerging artist's sense of artistic identity and its position between 'representation' and 'tokenism'. As the key in figure 5 shows, the blue and grey lines represent the total percentage of white workers in the roles, and the orange, yellow, green, red, and brown represent 'BME' workers across hierarchies of employment. Perry argues that art, itself, seems to be partly dependent on "political decisions that enable the accumulation of wealth and its movement between nations, art institutions, biennales, dealers, gallerists and others involved in the art world" (Perry, 2018:102). Could it be perceived that Perry's term 'art' includes the art world itself in

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[15] BME or BaME is a term to group together Black and Minority Ethnics together which is used less over the years due to the community's preference of the term Global Majority – I used 'BME' in this section to clearly reference the data in figure 5 and 6.

addition to traditional outcomes like paintings? Additionally, within this context, art policies like deciBel and ACE's diversity quota also contribute toward the movement on which 'art' is dependent. So, when referring to figure 5, it is evident that the condition of the British artworld, those that are funded by the ACE and pledge to improve representation of BME groups, are by those under white-led influence. This enhances the questioning of motives behind organisations who are ACE funded when representing artists and employees of the global majority.

From the offset, there is a clear disparity between the total percentage of white workers and 'BME' workers. From 2015 to 2017 there is a steady increase of white workers, especially in the Chair and Chief Executive roles. In contrast, within the same years, there is a slight decrease in 2016 and then a slight increase in the total percentage of 'BME' workers. The slight increase continues from 2017 whilst the percentage of white workers dramatically drops in 2018 and is recovered to similar, yet slightly few percentages as the previous years. Since then, the percentage of white workers shot back up with an average percentage of 20% whilst the average percentage rise between these two years for 'BME' workers is 2.6%; virtually unaffected.

Whilst it can be perceived that in separating statistics solely by race is upholding the act of marginalising groups of people based off generalised terms such as BME/BaME, CIPD argues that publishing statistics, such as pay gaps, "by race and pay band will improve transparency and will ensure that employers are focusing on the right problems" (CIPD, 2017:4). I agree that as a society, we are still in the early stages of efficient communication between binaries such as white majority and global majority. Therefore pragmatic-based publications of statistics which emphasise racial binaries, such as figures 5 and 6 can provide a straight-forward dissemination to draw the public's attention to racial polarisation. Within this complex society, reception of facts and figures such as figure 6 can be met with a multitude of reactions, to be discussed in chapter three. My personal experiences have shown that certain topics receive negative responses from the white majority when faced with challenging remarks of tokenism, a topic which is evidently synonymous with racism in further detail. In their research that highlights disparities in education, work, and family, Grant and Kruger argue that one of the effects of ethnic disparities within a mostly white workplace is "palpable discomfort" (Grant &Kruger, 2020:12). They argue that this is a

"matter of social justice that people of all ethnicities should participate in" (Grant &Kruger, 2020:12).

In January 2020, Arts Council England published *Our Strategy 2020-2030* which extensively outlined its aims and objectives for the next decade based off "two years of evidence-gathering and consultation" (ACE, 2020). The strategy emphasises its need to retain up-to-date methods of building upon existing and creating new networks to uphold their goal that creative projects are understood and championed by "a wider range of culture" (Serota, 2020:11). In short, this includes working with an extensive range of organisations from digital, local, media and sport. With this push for such great exposure, is it evident that the study of the social effects of tokenism is needed within the creative arts. Public facing roles within the arts, such as gallery and museum assistants, gift shop and café staff and even features artists themselves, are essential for networking and for setting the "overall tone or expected behaviour within a space" (Winkleman, 2009:131)[16] . These roles, however, are lower in income and therefore occupied by workers of the global majority whilst office roles, usually atop of the institutional food-chain, are normally occupied by white people. As mentioned before, ESEA communities of young-emerging artists are sparse due to such a wide distribution across the country. Therefore, it is important that further research which focuses on tokenism within the arts is necessary. The importance of the visual arts, as quoted by Serota, "allows us to reflect and comment on society, to better understand our own lives and those of others, and to occupy a shared space in which we debate, present alternative views, and discover new ways of expressing our anxieties and ambitions" (Serota, 2020:4).

It is evident that there are many factors to consider when stuck between being represented and tokenised; the socio-political climate of the society in which we live, its policies, as a bifactor and economic influences such as funding. Based on the literature reviewed so far, there is a lack of academic discussion of the social effects of being tokenised, as an individual young-emerging artists of global majority. Therefore, I frame the research's topics to its subject within the theories of sociologists Hall (1997) and Kanter (1977) in chapters

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[16] This text is in reference to running a commercial art gallery where financial profit is priorities, as opposed to organisations funded by ACE, however I argue that as this point is within a public facing role context, in a gift shop for example, this relates to Winkleman's statement.

two and three. The following section aims to review literature and ideas surrounding this thesis' predominant subject, the young-emerging artist of Chinese/ESEA in Britain, in which I justify the need to research further.

1.2 Young-Emerging Chinese/ESEA in Britain:

This section aims to unpack attitudes concerning historical lived experience of being 'Chinese' in Britain to identify reasons behind preconceived social and artistic preconceptions. I will expand on the notion that conversation of British-Chinese contemporary art amongst younger- generations of artists is limited. Whist there are discussions of Chinese artists who reference tradition when living, or responding to living within Western society, the focused artists tend to be significantly established (e.g., Ai Weiwei who is globally recognised). Benton and Gomez's comprehensive chronological analysis of the complexities of Chinese life in Britain studies and suggests the extensive history behind institutional racism, threat and even commercialisation of cultural identity for Chinese diasporic groups in Britain. The key purpose of the text is to argue that preconceptions of a migrant's cultural identity can alter how the homeland identifies them within Western society, and the threats of sense of self that come with that. Benton and Gomez note that people of Chinese heritage are usually grouped together as a "homogenous and monolithic group" (Benton & Gomez, 2008:10) and contested that within these groups grow tensions.

The "homogenous and monolithic" grouping, as mentioned in the Methodology section, as well as the notion that there is a "cultural hierarchy that has whites at the top" (Benton & Gomez, 2008:284) will be applied when discussing arts-related institutions in chapter two as the book focuses on economics, transnationalism, and identity. Benton and Gomez's studies show that "Chinese in Britain have tended to ignore or underestimate the extent to which state decisions set the terms for Chinese settlement and the way in which Chinese see themselves and others" (Benton & Gomez, 2008:323). This is a helpful insight when thinking about the emerging contemporary artistic context. The term 'Chinese diaspora capitalism' is also mentioned when Lever-Tracy, 1996, references the economic interethnic relations between the Chinese in Britain. Though this is heavily linked to the financial notion that this

form of "capitalism is based on personalized, long-term horizontal networks that bind together Chinese-owned family companies" (Benton & Gomez, 2008:13), it fails to consider psychological feelings of isolation and homogenous othering Chinese diaspora must feel.

A concept of a theoretical hierarchy nods to the idea that ESEA communities are normally overlooked. Song suggests that this has existed for centuries within society, for example "white Americans are at the top of a racial hierarchy, African Americans at the bottom … and groups such as Asian Americans and Latinos somewhere in between" (Song, 2004:862). Whist this statement is discussing generalised racial hierarchies within America in 2004, I argue this still present within Britain today. This can be highlighted in the fact that in the same article, section titled *Britain: 'A hierarchy of oppression'*, Song provides limited accounts of the ESEA population within Britain. Other literature that focuses on younger generations tend to be within a broader cultural context such as Yeh's (2014) study that draws on how young 'British Chinese' challenge constructions of the model minority discourse within terms such as '*Orientalism'* (Said), 'Chineseness' and 'British-Chinese' nightlife spaces. Yeh's study found that those "ascribed as British born Chinese tend to be invisible within youth cultures and rarely receive media attention, except as a model minority" (Yeh, 2014:1197). The Model Minority Myth, usually in context of the Asian-American population in the US (Ruiz, Shao & Shah, 2022) is a term applied to the minority demographic which perceives them as high achievers which as a result, is a common preconception of this community in the West.

In Manchester:

As the predominant case study to the research is based in Manchester, I will address specific background to this Chinese community living in Britain[17] . As I will discuss in chapter two, Manchester's former Chinese Arts Centre, founded in 1986, was the first of its kind with purpose to bind an underrepresented community. I argue that addressing the Chinese population in Manchester therefore highlights the potential significant impact its unstable representation could have on the younger generations and the wider relating community.

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[17] Manchester is known as a polyglot city with the University of Manchester's Multilingual project saying that "could be up to 200 languages spoken by long-term residents in the Greater Manchester area" (University of Manchester, 2013) which highlights the importance of cultural institution and its potential impact on future generations.

This idea is closely linked to the term 'glocal' which was coined by sociologist Roberston in the "1980s to designate the point at which the local and global intersect in a network of intersection" (O'Neill, 2012:53). In relation to my research, the term is applicable to public dissemination of how artists of the global majority, for example, are represented. This is due to, as Perry argues, the "technological and digital revolution" (Perry, 2018:99) which has increased the number of speeds in which one can send and receive images and text. This is expanded upon in chapter two's methods of representing the CFCCA.

At the time of raising its national profile in the mid-1990s, Manchester had the second highest percentage of Chinese residents in Britan (Smith, 2006). More recently, according to the 2011 Census of England and Wales, "Manchester [is] home to the largest population, with 3.4% of all Chinese people living there" (GOV, 2020), which is an equivalent to about 13,540 residents. The summary also stated that "23.7% of people from the Chinese ethnic group were born in the UK" (GOV, 2020). These facts highlight a young but growing community of a second and third Chinese community within Manchester alone and, therefore, promising potential for a creative space dedicated to these groups of people. When reflecting upon artists in the UK with Chinese/ESEA "migrant roots" creative scene (Chuhan, 2011:76), Chuhan suggests that one's agency of self is tested. He states that at first glance, artists from Asia who are "introduced as coming from a particular nation state" "seem to have a clear sense of their own identity, of who they are and a sense of home and belonging" (Chuhan, 2011:76). I question if this applies to the second or even third glance for young-emerging artist of similar background?

Young-Emerging:

The reasoning for the term 'young' on addition to 'emerging' is to be specifically clear of the group of artists I will be addressing throughout the thesis. GOV UK defines 'young' as "those aged 16 to 24 years" (GOV, 2022:4) and Arts Hub states that the arts industry has recently "recognised emerging as creatives in the first five years of their professional practice" (Fairley, 2018). It is evident that the two do not necessarily cross over as one does not necessarily need to be 'young' to pursue a career as an artist. Fung argues that "individuals from each cultural context internalise cultural values with age" (Fung, 2013:369) which therefore "become goals that guide adult development" (Fung, 2013:369). By applying

issues and problems which exist between 'representation' and 'tokenism' to the young-emerging demographic, I will highlight the significant level of power white individuals in authoritative roles have. This is a big factor in the developing stages of an artist's career due to the level of trust one has in the institution and its workforce and will therefore be more inclined to carry out the wishes and recommendations of said institute which I argue has a deeply embedded colonial gaze.

Arguably, there is a limited collection of literature that discusses Chinese in Britain; my predominant contextual sources are Benton & Gomez and Parker. I argue that there is a lack of interest and investment into the younger generations of Chinese heritage within visual contemporary British research discourses. I argue that this is demonstrated by some research foundations, like the Stuart Hall Foundation (SHF)[18]. Their website states that the foundation is "particularly interested in helping to support Black and brown students, activists, and artists. These groups are underrepresented in UK higher education" (SHF). As Hall was a Jamaican- born sociologist whose work focused on Afro-Caribbean diaspora, identity, and representation, it is understandable that the foundation's research focuses on the original subject. However, it begs the question if the foundation would not be particularly interested in supporting ESEA students. Given the Foundation covers topics of cultural identity, otherness, race, and ethnicity, synonymous with physical appearance, the report lacks an emphasis on the visual arts. Visual arts are one of the few discourses that offer visual aids and unique interpretations into complex issues regarding the subjects of the self. Visual arts have the capability to depict issues that would be too complex to discuss with young generations of the global majority, especially if there is a lack of communication, like a language barrier, which isolates the individual. Naturally, especially when younger and agency is forming, you are more likely to invest interest in visual depictions of people who look like yourself, this is important and should have been taken more seriously in studies such as this.

Literature which discusses younger generations of British-Chinese or Chinese in Britain also mentions the notion of feeling overlooked as a community – this includes both societal and artistically. Yeh notes that there are "specific assumptions that the Chinese do not

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[18] The Stuart Hall Foundation is dedicated to effectively disseminating education of topics such as anti-racism within cultural discourses.

experience racism" due to their "reputation in Britain as a peaceful, law-abiding and insular community" (Yeh, 2014:1198). I question if this arguably national reputation has seeped into the arts which has in turn affected these groups of young artists' confidence to confront individuals in authoritative roles about issues of tokenism, a difficult subject inevitably synonymous with racism and ignorance. I explore other factors and effects which I argue exist within the space between representation or tokenism in chapter three, one of which is the term 'racial-gaslighting', which circulated within discussions about the BLM movement. Doronio states that "many students are told that their work is too Black, Brown, feminist or queer" (Doronio, 2022) which would therefore create an unsafe environment for self-expression through the very course they signed up for. The following paragraph is an example of what Doronio explains, which took place in Manchester School of Art (MSoA), MMU, bearing in mind this is a university which claims that "throughout your studies, you'll have the guidance[19] of practicing artists and technical experts" (MMU: https://www.mmu.ac.uk/international/subject/art).

Successful MSoA alumni, Anya Paintsil[20], posted on her public Instagram account that her white illustration lecturer told her and "another mixed-race student that [their] projects discussing race issues were alienating to a white MMU audience" (Paintsil, 2020). She then continues by stating that her lecturer said that "he found it 'jarring' to look at us as women of colour and [thought they] had 'white-blonde ladies as mothers'" (Paintsil, 2020) and afterwards complained to her course leader. Paintsil then faced "half an hour trying to convince [her] the tutor [was] 'not racist'" (Paintsil, 2020). Though this example is not from an ESEA perspective, I draw attention to this example to highlight the demand for discussion which focuses on the young-emerging, especially within educational arts-related institutions. This post was uploaded to the social media platform in 2020 showing that I experienced similar encounters only a year later. Whilst Paintsil is a successful artist who gained recognition through topics of race and cultural identity, the tutor and course leader should not have managed the situation in that way.

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[19] A friendly reminder that the 'guidance' I received was to 'go to Chinatown' from a tutor from the same university.
[20] Anya Paintsil, Welsh and Ghanaian, is a textile artist whose work celebrates "women's craft through history" (Paintsil in Hessel, 2021) to discuss, not exclusively, issues of race and identity.

The build-up to the discussion of Chinese in British creative industries:

In March 2020 former US president Donald Trump first used the term "Chinese Virus" to publicly address the global pandemic (Reja, 2021). Thus began a wave of inflicting physical, verbal and emotional abuse on thousands of innocent people solely based on their race. Hate Crime Data provided by End Violence and Racism Against Esat and South-East Asian Communities (EVRESEA) revealed that there was "at least a 27% increase in hate crimes from 2019-2020 (1742 in 2019 to 2212 in 2020)" (EVRESEA:2021) in the UK. EVRESEA quotes Humberside Police's response stating that "Unfortunately this information is not held in a searchable format" (EVRESEA:2021) which suggests either the lack of interest in recording data on racial attacks or the lack of interest in recorded racist attacks focused on the ESEA population.

Arguably, one thing that proved itself to be the silver-lining that surrounded the physical, emotional, and virtual cloud of abuse that is continuously being inflicted upon the ESEA community across the globe called for an urgent act to #StopAsianHate. To this day has 564K public posts attached to it on the social media platform Instagram. Chin reports that on the 9th of December 2021, Twitter announced that the site's most tweeted post of the year was posted by popular K-Pop band BTS with a total of 99.2.9k retweets and 2.5 million likes (Chin, 2021).

This section has discussed the reasoning behind my interest in researching both Chinese/ESEA diaspora in Britain and young-emerging artists and has demonstrated that there are numerous topics that can be discussed. The prominent topics which evidently require further investigation are 1) the notion of the Chinese/ESEA community being overlooked and homogenised within the arts 2) accessing approaches to representation of young-emerging artists the global majority 3) responses to critiques from the young-emerging and the condition of the environment in which they habituate. These points will therefore be addressed throughout the research to map the space this thesis is conceptualising. Existing literature which has discussed, and critiqued similar topics include frameworks of the leading Critical Race Theory (CRT)[21], coined in U.S in the 1980s and

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[21] For further reading: Delgado &Stefancic, (2012) *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*.

"challenges the dominant discourse on race and racism as it relates to law by examining how legal doctrine is used to subordinate certain racial ethnic groups" (Solorzano, 1997:6). This theoretical framework consists of five tenets which provide a foundation for research methods; whose theory is commonly discussed in relation to education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012 [one of the founders]; Dixson, 2018; Solorzano, 1997) and within the arts is discussed as Critical Race Art History (Holloway, 2016). However, as the following section explains, I aim to offer an additional framework, originally within a sociological and media studies discourse, to tackle issues of representation within my research's predominant case study, the former CFCCA.

1.3 Representation:

I will deploy the concept of 'representation' to the CFCCA and the young-emerging Chinese/ESEA diaspora artists which will be specifically framed within Hall's representation theory, a customary cornerstone for media studies. Hall states that he chooses to analyse visual representation because "in the modern world our culture is saturated by the image in a variety of different forms" (Hall, 1997). Hall, born Kingston, Jamaica in 1932 and arrived in England in 1951 (Farred, 1996:30), draws from his background within a Caribbean and British community[22] within his studies in English and, to this day, is renowned for his contribution to cultural studies. In chapter two, I apply his representational theory to the CFCCA. Though his most notable work is his theoretical approach to the production of media messages in his essay *The Encoding/Decoding Model of Communication* (1973), I argue his representational theory still holds itself as a study of racialised difference and stereotypes. Fuelled by lived experience, Hall's studies of racial representation, diasporic and cultural identity, are typically central to the depiction of Afro-Caribbean individuals and communities within mainstream media (Hall, 1992; 1996; 1997). In short, his representation theory argues that media outputs consume modern life with the attempt to 'fix' a 'meaning' onto a person, group of people, event, place etc. He argues that in this case, representation is not a finalised outcome, instead it is a constituent process (Hall,1997) which can result in the event, for example, of having multiple meanings. I will therefore apply this theory to the

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[22] Hall was born into a British colony and found that his migration to Great Britain "was fraught with tension of racism, discrimination and displacement" (Gaynair, 2018). This inspired Hall to study social movements of African Americans.

Chinese/ ESEA diaspora on whom Hall briefly touches upon in his essay in the *West and the Rest* (1992).

Within these representations, Hall fails to consider the significant impact and representation that contemporary visual arts could have on cultural identity for a younger audience. The examples Hall uses in Representation (1997), *The Spectacle of the Other*, are from media-based origins such as articles, photographs and stills from film and videos and text, like headlines and articles. Though, from the 80s, he proceeded to engage with black British visual artists and filmmakers, his predominant interest focuses on the realm of film and media. Hall's overlooked consideration for the visual arts had potential to explore a different avenue into the relationship between representation and creative identity. Therefore, in chapter two I use his theory to highlight the significant impact of a contemporary visual arts environment, the CFCCA had on young-emerging Chinese /ESESA diaspora/of relating heritage artists within Britain. I will also elucidate my argument that a series of instabilities within a cultural arts-related institution has the potential to impact the stability of a young-emerging artists and of the relating cultural heritage, position within the art world in which they habituate. The ambition of this section is to demonstrate my interpretation, understanding and relevance to the young-emerging Chinese/ESEA diaspora artists living in Britain.

Why Hall?

Hall was a key post-colonial and cultural studies innovator and pioneer who was born in Jamaica, 1932, and lived in the UK till he died in London 2014. From a personal and theoretical standpoint, I was drawn to Hall's theory as he was broaching representation and meaning from the perspective of an academic of the global majority and 'diaspora' within a white-majority nation saturated by the white gaze. Much like Robert's psychology-based study perspective as a person of the global majority informed his argument which highlights racial disparities within his respected field.

Though Hall's predominant field of study focuses to "identify and characterise a significant shift that has been going on (and is still going on) in black cultural politics" (Hall, 2006:442) mainly within media outputs, his thoughts on representation are transferable to this case study. Hall's theory draws from semiology which one could argue is quite a stretch from the

argument within the visual arts discourse. Much like Hall's proposal that language can act as a barrier for which an individual of a contrasting cultural background from another (Hall,1997) may not use the same word or phrase to define something, Blanco[23] also touched upon this in his study, *No Difference, No Future!*, 1998, by referring to a Chinese diaspora artist. One of Blanco's key findings stated that "language can label and limit out perceptions" (Blanco, 1998:10) and draws upon an example of a Chinese visual artist who experienced numerous assumptions that her work was centred around her "experience of a Chinese woman in Britain or draw on traditional Chinese art" (Blanco, 1998:10). Though Blanco uses this example of language – as a construct as opposed to a difference in communicating through different nations- to demonstrate the passing of preconceptions of culture, for example, the question that he does not ask is what form this language is in. Blanco argues that the decolonising of institutions is the way forward, but what happens when the institution's infrastructure is unstable? Who is affected by the uncertainties of language and the multiple ways in which it can be disseminated to the public? Additionally, I observe that, as well as Blanco, Hall does not consider the impact this may have on a young-emerging artist's sense of self.

Hall's Representational Theory:

Hall hypothesises that 'representation' is a process, as opposed to a finalised outcome, that is carried out by producers, or 'meaning makers', to 'fix' a meaning onto a group of people, places events etc. via language and text (Hall:1997). Outputs of representation can simultaneously be symbiotic, clashing, or natural despite referring to the same thing, or 'code'[24] . Therefore, Hall argues that representation does not need to be fixed but due to the deeply embedded colonialised infrastructures that lie within our society, this is not the case for many artists of the global majority. Because Hall argues that "as the relationship between the sign and its referent becomes less clear-cut, the meaning begins to slip and

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[23] This study was "commissioned by North-West Arts Board and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities" to identify key issues within art practices in "communities of African, Chinese, African Caribbean and Asian descent in Greater Manchester" (Blanco, 1998:4). Documented issues from around 80 interviews over 8 weeks were drawn together to "make proposals for ways forward" (Blanco, 1998:4)

[24] Further reading on this theory includes *Representation* (1997) and explained in full detail in the video of Hall's conference: *Stuart Hall: Representation & the Media* (1997)]

slide away from us into uncertainty" (Hall, 1997:5), theory is a very relevant point to the meaning of the CFCCA, the 'sign' or 'code', and therefore the meaning to the young Chinese/ESEA diaspora creatives in Britain.
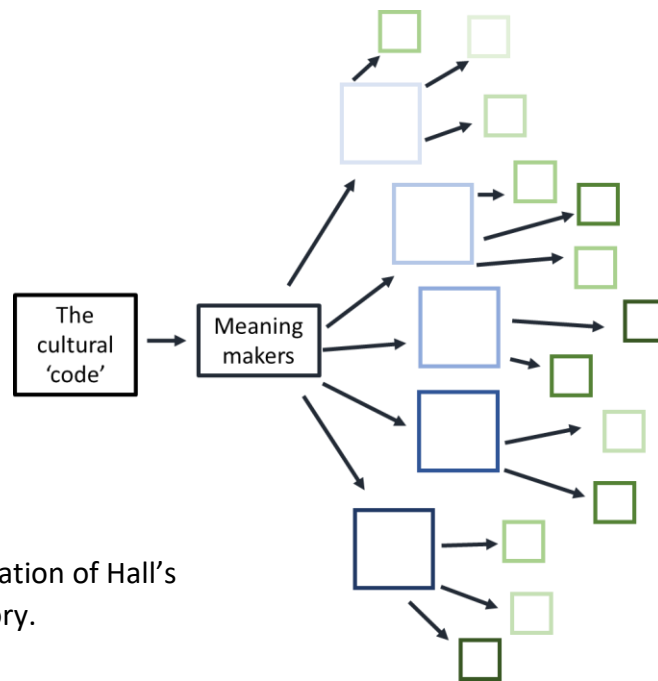

Figure 7: My interpretation of Hall's Representational theory.

Figure 7 is a digital diagram of my interpretation of Hall's theory. It shows the 'code' which can be a group of people, an object, a person; however, in this thesis, the 'code' is the CFCCA. The code is then taken by the 'meaning makers', expanded, and explained in chapter two, through different representations, depicted as the blue squares, which therefore created multiple different meanings to the public and young-emerging artists of relating diaspora/heritage, depicted as the smaller green squares – which, arguably, can be infinite. In his own words Hall argues that representation is how one gives "meaning to things through language" and "'makes sense of' the world of people, objects, and events and how you can express a complex thought about those things to other people or communicate about them through language in ways in which other people are able to understand" (Hall, 1997:3). In this example the 'meaning' is being applied to the CAC/CFCCA through the unstable fixing of several different representations which are identified in chapter two. Hall's theory argues that sources of representation include media outlets such as news tabloids, posters, newspapers. With such a high level of power within representing new art via these media outlets, the 'meaning makers' possess a great power to mediate what and

how something is being represented (Hall, 1997). This is where, Hall argues, stereotypes and racism surface.

Hall applies this point to the representation of black bodies in the British media. The attempt of fixing stereotypes onto groups of people the dominant feel is different from them is suggested to be an act of upholding white-supremacy. Bhabha delves into the 'fixing' of meaning with the concept of "'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness" (Bhabha, 1999:370) which he argues is "a paradoxical mode of representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition" (Bhabha, 1999:370). Additionally, within this theory, Hall argues that there are three 'approaches' to representation: Reflective, Intentional and Constructionist[25] However, in this chapter's reference to the CFCCA, I will be deploying Hall's representational theory from a blanket-term framework with slight references to each approach to avoid over complication.

Limitations to Hall's theory:

I argue that Hall is not clearly specific on the term 'meaning' definition in the context of this theory as in Hall's eyes, the definition would be 'the meaning of something is how it is expressed or represented'. The term 'meaning' has its limitations in this framework as it is an extremely interchangeable and interpretable variant individual to each person. Therefore, there are perceptions of Hall's theories which have been perceived to be somewhat idealistic rather than realistic (Peck:2001). This is reflected in what I argue Hall's theory lacks; the consideration of financial influences and how that can affect levels of representation (such as levels of exposure to the public) which is dependent on the 'meaning makers'. I question would the attitude towards authoritative roles change if financial motivation was not behind a representation? This idea will be expanded upon in chapter two.

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[25] Reflective: this is where the representation of the subject aims to "*reflect* the true meaning as it already exists in the world" (Hall, 1997:10). Intentional: this approach argues the exact antithesis of the previous as the meaning of the subject is fixed through the language and words of the speaker/author. Constructionist: this approach acknowledges the notion of one subject not having a single fixed meaning through social language and environment.

As Hall's theory is originally linked to media studies, the examples of 'representation' he uses is therefore media based. This includes newspaper articles, posters, texts and moving image such as film and video. Though he sometimes uses images like historical paintings[26] , prints and photographs, there are limits in which visual art is used as an exemplar. This could include sculptural and installation-based artworks which arguable contain more room for conceptual interpretation. However, this thesis will tackle Hall's theory to methods of representation which are not media based, for example a group of authoritative roles, a physical relocation of an institution and a front of house team. Therefore, I suggest that further research should investigate an association between how physical representations and the stability of a cultural institutionalist's meaning to the public can have the potential to highlight the significance of the impact of roles, such as a gallery's board.

This section has laid out the relevant knowledge of Hall's theory to set up the content in chapter two. The following section will therefore introduce the term 'tokenism', its relevance to the British arts discourse and my research's subject and finally introduce the second theoretical framework I will be deploying to the young-emerging Chinese/ESEA diaspora artists.

1.4 Tokenism:

The definition for the term tokenism, summarised in Cambridge Dictionary's definition, is defined as an act "a person or organisation does that seems to support or help a group of people who are treated unfairly in society, such as giving a member of that group an important or public position, but which is not meant to make changes that would help group of people in a lasting way" (Cambridge Dictionary

https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/tokenism). These desired 'changes' include genuine societal impact and positive contributions to marginalised groups such as Chinese/ESEA artists. In the case of being the 'token', this group is often small in numbers compared to the majority. Under the materialisation of social and employment policies, the

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[26] Hall's examples when critiquing institutions have not been exclusive to historical images; in the past, Hall has accounted for his perception that "museum collections have a deep and consistent symbolic relationship with the environment of the world as well as the communities that created them" (Hall in Costa, 2017) when critiquing the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) "with its exclusionary past" (Costa, 2017).

term 'tokenism' was thought to emerge in the United States in the late 1950s to early 1960s (Nesbitt, 1997) through the Civil Rights Act, 1964, which enforced the requirement that "private employers were no longer able to explicitly refuse to hire or promote African Americans" (Riccucci, 2002). Like Hylton, Riccucci had observed that due to policies like this, white-led organisations have historically projected public "impression of being inclusive, when actually, [ethnic minority] groups are not welcomed" (Ricucci, 2020).

In 1998, Blanco touched upon this in his report *No Difference! No Future!* [27] where one of the key findings was that 75% of African and African Caribbean people who took part in an interview process "said that they were tired of being researched into and had little confidence with funders' ability to make progress" (Blanco, 1998:5). This highlighted the urgent need for "funders and districts to improve relations" (Blanco, 1998:5) with these communities. Though this report was published in 1998, this topic of conversation remains to be amidst the forefront of contemporary discussion. Since Blanco's study, there has been a spike in online discussion with the focus to shine a light on tokenised bodies within the visual arts and media and challenging the roles and positions in which these tokenised bodies find themselves. Mwanza explains that "this could be anything from including a black woman as the face of a company while maintaining a completely white senior board or adding a 'token Asian' character in a film and killing them off before they have the chance to have a real impact on the plot." (Mwanza, 2018). This statement highlights that a small select set of individuals who fit into the 'BaME' are used by white-led institutions, to trick "onlookers into thinking that the organisation has the objective of inclusion" (Ira, 2020) whist maintaining minimal impact or focusing on pragmatic results to proudly publish. Based on the literature and my own experiences, society remains far from reaching these goals. Referring to figure 5 and 6, my research suggests that mainstream institutions tend to exhibit artists of the global majority in temporary exhibitions, hire people of the global majority in public facing roles in efforts to appear equal.

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[27] This research project was "commissioned by North-West Arts Board and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities" (Blanco, 1998) to identify key issues regarding ethnic minority communities.

My own experience of being tokenised:

Judging by my former tutor's great enthusiasm for some new and exciting 'Chinese' art, hypothetically, I felt like I could do anything if it met the preconceived standards and would get away with a decent grade[28]. Though this may not have been the case, from my perspective, my tutor set me up as a token to gain recognition as a Fine Art tutor to appear diverse and inclusive to the public, fellow students, and members of staff in an obvious way. Daisley suggests that in scenarios like this, the ethnic-minority token essentially becomes "an advertisement that falsely suggested that the [institution] was a racially diverse community" (Daisley, 2022). Riccucci references Malcom by stating that "tokenism benefits only a few. It never benefits the masses, and the masses are the ones who have the problem, not the few" (Malcom in Riccucci, 2002). Malcom, in Riccucci, also suggests that the "one who benefits from tokenism…doesn't want to be around us [people of global majority] anyway—that's why he picks up on the token" (Malcom in Riccucci, 2002). Ali adds further emphasises on the few versus the masses by arguing that white-led organisations "engagement with ethnic minority communities and artists is rarely sustainable or lasting, leaving creatives feeling exploited and perhaps further marginalised" (Ali, 2020).

In May 2021 I was contacted by a London-based T-shirt printing company expressing interest in a collaboration to "join forces with [them] and create a limited-edition t-shirt to empower ESEA voices across the globe by raising awareness, amplifying our voices, and uniting against Asian hate" (said company)[29]. Like Daisley's comment of being conditioned into thinking it was such an "honor to have these opportunities" (Daisley, 2022) I was excited to be contacted. However, communication was suddenly dropped to which I observe that the #stopasianhate movement was no longer trending online; they swiftly moved onto a LGBTQIA+ Pride month campaign[30]. In the long run I feel fortunate that I was not left feeling further exploited and marginalised like Ali suggests. Therefore, segregation mentioned in Hylton's text is an ongoing problem young-emerging artists of global majority

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[28] To avoid feeling as though I was selling out, themes that were addressed in my work heightened my recognition and appreciation within the Manchester art scene as well as the ESEA online creative community with whom I built a growing connection.
[29] This conversation via Instagram Direct message regarding a project unrelated from the MA
[30] A term used to refer to the tokenising of LGBTQIA+ communities is rainbow-washing.

face when observing artists and workers, in which they identify with, are being treated within the arts.

The wider Chinese/ESEA creative community:

Whilst the nascent resurgence of interrogating tokenising ethnic minorities in the creative British art's industries has opened discussions that had previously been swept under the carpet, specific research into young Chinese/ESEA within the visual arts needs to be investigated further. There is a lack of open discussion of the notion that Chinese and ESEA artists are subjected to this very issue too. Articles which discuss tokenistic representations of ESEA communities within the mainstream are in close relation to the entertainment industry and the dating scene within America (Cao, 2021; Kates, 2017; Kwon, 2020; Park & Umrotkar, 2020). Whist there is some discussion within the British media, the predominant examples used to demonstrate the author's argument are televisions shows such as reality ITV shows Love Island and TOWIE (The Only Way is Essex) and BBC show The Apprentice (Pandey, 2022; Smith, 2021).

The lack of academic discussion regarding the subject of tokenism to the Chinese/ESEA creative community within a contemporary Western art has resulted in the practitioners themselves having to open the conversation. Though this in within an American context, zoom conference hosted by Huang, titled Hyper(in)visibility[31] offers interesting points fueled from ethnographic observations. Huang states that "the strange space between subject and object [artists like themselves] are asked to occupy or the fact that [they] are tokenized to reduce superficial progressiveness or used as a wedge between whiteness and other people of colour" (Huang, 2021).

This is touched upon in Karetzky's article Contemporary art by Chinese Diaspora in a Global Age, (2016) where she suggests that despite living in a Western context, art of the 'overseas Chinese' will naturally emulate a relation "to their cultural heritage" (Karetzky, 2014:268). First, this article provides a slight optimistic reflection on the adoption of traditional craft/aesthetics, such as ink paintings, within contemporary art. However, it proceeds to suggest an almost desperation to use Chinese cultural influences to bring these Chinese

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[31] This conference's panel consisted of six contemporary artists are Stephanie Mei Huang, Christine Tien Wang, Maia Ruth Lee, Astria Suparak, Pearl C Hsiung, Hồng-Ân Trương.

diaspora artists closer to a culture they may feel disconnected with. An opposing argument would suggest that certain aesthetics are being used to allow these artists to step into a broader and global context; "it was not that long ago that contemporary Chinese diaspora art was criticized; some averred that it was not possible to make Chinese art while living elsewhere" (Karetzky: 2016: 269). The article addresses the issues that these artists "make art that is still global in its appeal" (Karetzky: 2016:281) to maintain an international stance whilst simultaneously maintaining ties with Chinese culture. The exploration of conflicting schism between utilizing one's heritage and the natural desire to reconnect with one's 'homeland' needs to be explored further in relation to younger artists of the Chinese diaspora, particularly in the British discourse. The lack of research into these subjects seems to have left a space in how we view young artists of Chinese/East/South-East Asian descent and the knock-on effect it has on their production of art.

Why Kanter?

Kanter (1943) is currently a professor at Harvard Business School (Harvard College, 2022) whose formalisation of tokenism in her book titled *Men and Women of the Company* (1977), is a classic in gender and management studies. Though originating from discussion specific to race and ethnicity, in 1977 Kanter formalised 'tokenism' in her large study of consulting firm Industrial Supply Corporation (Indsco) by applying the term to gendered studies where the women is the token. I chose to approach tokenism through Kanter's business and sociological lens as I have discussed policies within ACE, or mainstream, organisations. Though this framework derives from a business and sociological lens, as my thesis' argument overlaps with social impacts on a young-emerging artists, it is relevant. From a business and workplace standpoint, to be discussed in relation to the CFCCA, Kanter's application to tokenism as a workforce is relevant to this discussion. Additionally, though this thesis is looking more directly at young-emerging artists of global majority/Chinese/ESEA diaspora rather than young workers of global majority within the arts sector, I still argue they would still feel similar social effects which will be discussed in chapter three. As my position statement and my personal experience with tokenism expresses, I argue that there is an omnipresent sense of intimidation and therefore

frustration when wishing to confront those atop of the institution about tokenism and race. I therefore argue, as discussed in chapter three, that the discussion of social effects of being tokenised in the arts will encourage developed vocabulary and openness to such a difficult topic.

Kanter's formalisation of tokenism:

In short, Kanter concludes that tokens are more likely to feel fewer negative effects when there are more of them; strength in numbers (Kanter, 1977). Kanter summarises this theory in four group types which are identified "on the basis of different proportional representation of kinds of people" (Kanter, 1977:208). The four group types and their numerical ratios are as follows:

•   Uniformed group – 100:0

•   Skewed groups – 85:15 (dominants: tokens)

•   Tilted groups – 65:35 (majority: minority)

•   Balanced – 60:40/ 50:50

Furthermore, Kanter argues that when in the position of being a token within the skewed group, there are three associated "perceptual tendencies" (Kanter,1977: 210) that generate particular social reactions:

- Visibility: the first of the three perceptual tendencies with its predominant effect adding pressure to the token's performance in the workplace as well as becoming more susceptible to exotification (Kanter 1977).
- Contrast: Kanter defines contrast in the scenario when the dominant "become[s] more aware of their commonalities and their difference from the token, and to preserve their commonality, they try to keep the token slightly outside, to offer a boundary for the dominants" (Kanter, 1977:211). As a result, the main effect is that the token is left isolated from the dominant group through appointed marginalisation.

- •Assimilation: This tendency argues that the token's individual characteristics are moulded to ensure that they fit the expectations of their given role because of being "easily stereotyped" (Kanter, 1977:211) compared to the dominant.

The full exploration of these tendencies relating social reactions in relation to young-emerging Chinese/ESEA artists is to be addressed in chapter three.

1.5 Hall and Kanter

From reviewing existing literature alongside the thesis' two theoretical frameworks, the ambition of the section will tie Hall's and Kanter's theories together.
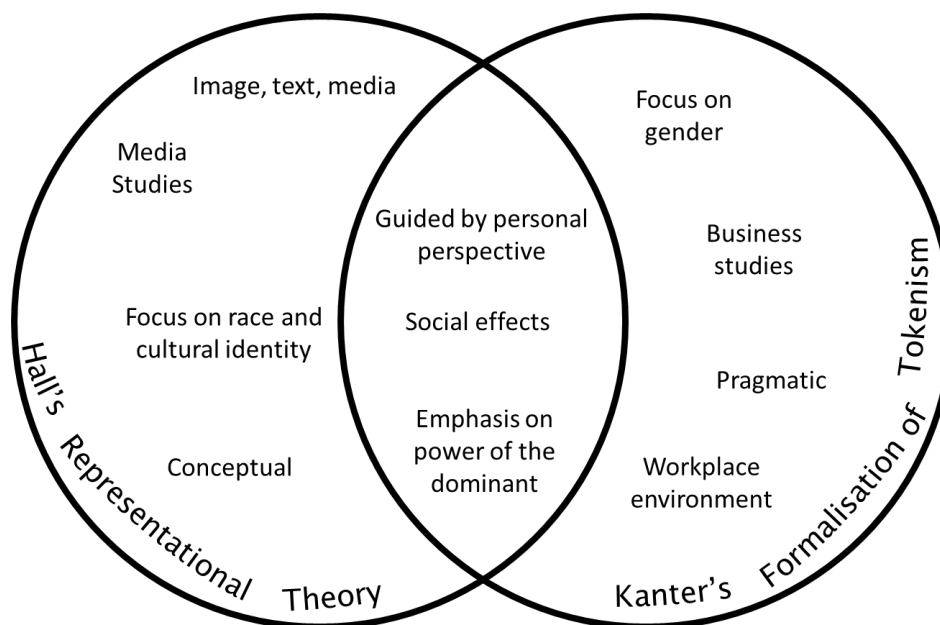
Figure 8: Venn-Diagram of general similarities and differences between Hall and Kanter's theories.

Figure 8 shows contrasting and overlapping themes and topics I argue exist between Hall and Kanter's theories. It is evident in the subjects of their work (race/culture: gender), their methods and environment (image/text: their background (media: business) and their approaches to the finalised theory (conceptual: pragmatic). However, the overlaps these theories have strongly relate to the space between representation and tokenism as they:

1. Are guided by personal perspective as Hall is Jamaican born and lived in the West and whose theory is central to representation of race and culture in predominantly mainstream media. Kanter's critical study of gender where women are tokens within a predominantly male workforce is led through her lived experience as a woman in a similar workplace.

2. Are both originating from a sociological background which considers the social effects of the subject which I argue needs to be discussed, not just in academic text, but within arts education and applied to young-emerging artists.

3. Both emphasise the level of power the dominant has over the minority. In Hall's theory he argues that methods of representation are mediated by the 'meaning makers' which is normally the dominant population – so in this case, white people are creating meaning to the public through representing people of the global majority in a certain way (Hall, 1997). Kanter's theory points to the notion that the role of power, based on her study of a corporate office, came from "the more hidden political processes" (Kanter, 1977:165) along with its impact on workers performance.

Furthermore, as a young-emerging artist, it is extremely difficult to navigate such a complex arts-environment. I argue that it is especially difficult if an additional factor is racial or ethnicity based; if we consider Hall's theory of multiple representations, their disseminators and guidance of authoritative roles, established in figure 5, is predominantly run by white people. Whist Hall's theory explores representation through media output such as images, news articles and stories, Kanter's theory explores tokenism through a business studies lens. Though it is evident that I will not be deploying theoretical frame works which are arguably better suited to the visual arts, like Holloway's Critical Race Art History (Holloway, 2016), topics which lie within a contemporary western art discourse are applicable to media and business studies. This argument is based on my own observations as a young-emerging artist. Due to social media platforms, such as Instagram, being a "great tool for growing the audience for [ones] art" (Elliot, 2022), an institution's exhibitions and its reputation, for example, and its media outputs would fall into this conversation of representation and tokenism. The ways in which, as chapter two will explore, a single institution can be represented through multiple online platforms by different 'meaning makers' will therefore

question the level of power and influence these makers have on the young-emerging. From a business standpoint, Elliot suggests that a "successful art career consists of 30% creativity and 70% business" (Elliot, 2022). Not only is this applicable to individual artists, but also relevant to arts-related institutions.

There are additional and more specific overlaps between Hall's theory and Kanter's perceptual tendencies which will be addressed throughout chapter three. By applying the reviewed literature, Hall and Kanter's theories with my own lived experience, the following section will approach the subjects of representation and tokenism to arts education. It is evident that organisations such as ACE sometimes place artists of the global majority in a separate and generalised category to the main body of the workforce. Therefore, the following section takes a deeper exploration into this.

1.6 The Impact of Arts Education

As my research is specifically focusing on the young-emerging artist and British arts-related institutions, the inclusion of the education of visual arts is vital as the foundations of the confusing and frustrating space between 'representation' and 'tokenism' begin to form here.

This was the case for myself, as stated and explained in my position statement. Following on from the previous, this section highlights the problems with teaching the normalisation of marginalising artists based on race and ethnicity alone within arts-related institutions. The mini case study I will use to address the problems is an online resource compiled and curated by a white person: "The Art Teacher" (Sarah Crowther, founded in 2017). By addressing this case study, it not only discusses the problems that can inevitably impact a young artist's sense of self but also emphasises that there is still a lot of progress to be made within today's wider society. Highlighting existing examples like "The Arty Teacher is important as it proves that these methods continue to be taught to young students and teachers and are accessible to the public of a similar demographic.

Tate enforces the importance of arts education by drawing from ACE's 2018 study titled Tracking Learning Engagement in the Arts (TALE) which included the voices of "thousands of young people and their teachers in secondary school and special schools" (Tate, 2022). The

results show that arts-related subjects "encourage self-expression and creativity and can build confidence as a sense of individual identity" (Tate, 2022). The role of the teacher has the power to shape the building blocks for artistic taste, aesthetic value, and level of success through the content they deliver to young students. Platz argues that "in many cases, students do not know whether what the teacher teaches is worth knowing [and that] they simply trust that the teacher will select relevant content and appropriate learning methods for their lessons" (Platz, 2021:689). Therefore, there is an assumption by the student that the material they are being taught is correct and important, so, if the material is taught to a white Eurocentric standard it would imply that 'good' and 'need-to-know' art would have to come from a western or white background. Likewise, if there is art they are not being taught about, to the students, it might not be worth knowing or considering. The concept of 'power' is also mentioned in Kanter's 1977 study which uses the term as a 'sense', rather than "hierarchical domination", as an "ability to do" (Kanter, 1997:166).

Muhammad addresses this in her article discussing 'representation' when questioning if she speaks "from an art skl [SIC] ivory tower, with 4 years of subtle brainwashing that has formed my preconception of everything; from aesthetic taste to what I can and will accept as critical reasoning?" (Muhammad, 2018). This notion of brainwashing can also include the acceptance of approaching artists of global majority differently by marginalized categorization and commercialising heritage. Furthermore, if artists who are not white are taught in separate categories, lessons, or lectures, it would imply, to a young artist of global majority that if they are to embark on a career within the arts, they will likely be categorised based on their race or ethnicity, assuming their work does not directly address it. If said student continues to study art through to GCSE to undergraduate and nothing changes, due to constant exposure to this certain categorisation, fuelled by a continuous cycle through a western gaze lens, this racial/ethnicity separation will be internalised and therefore alter the student's perception of themselves within the arts. With this in mind, it is evident that a demand for non-white teachers and tutors in arts-related institutions needs to be met.

In the 2021 Stuart Hall Foundation's Race Report, its conclusions recommended an encouragement for collaboration and/or consultation amongst governmental and educational approaches through "joined up thinking and greater collaboration across different branches of government at both the local and national levels" (D. Ashe, 2021:29).

The report's results which are "relating to education highlight the need for greater collaboration and co-ordination between different bodies responsible from pre-school education, mainstream schools, supplementary schools, as well as the Department of Education, local education authorities and teacher training" (D. Ashe, 2021:29). By implying regulated communication between these 'different bodies' in both private and public sectors, the Race Report argues for an assurance that "voices of different ethnic and minority community groups and leaders are represented on various task forces, boards, committees and forums" (D. Ashe, 2021:29). This would therefore enforce an assurance of an authentic perspective which has the capability to contribute to a rich and integrated curriculum, rather than a segregated one. Segregation in the workplace, for example, would therefore induce Kanter's perceptual tendencies such as contrast. An example of when communication and/or consultation is needed within an educational context I will be the first mini case study I address.

Referring to Kanter's usage of the term 'power' she argues that those who are more empowered and have control accomplish more work (Kanter, 1977). This is synonymous with the notion of motivation as if one has little creative control of their work, they will feel less motivated and therefore produce work at a slower rate. This is something I have been aware of when liaising with the various young artists via Instagram and local exhibitions who are experiencing a similar phenomenon to my own during my BA. Findings from Agata and Okada's study of three-hundred and six Japanese undergraduate students suggest that "self-efficiency and artistic expression highly affected motivation for artistic expression and art application" (Agata & Okada, 2010:438). Additionally, the study shows that "stereotypes about artistic creation contributed negatively to self-efficacy in artistic expression" (Agata & Okada, 2010: 438). I therefore highlight the importance of further research into the association between motivation and marginalization in young-emerging artists of diaspora. Kanter also argues that by "empowering more people through generating more autonomy, the total capacity for effective action rather than increased domination" (Kanter, 1977:166). Though Kanter's conclusion of strength in numbers is rather naïve and is specific to the token, this notion of an increase in autonomy and effective action can apply to expanding awareness of issues like tokenism to more teachers/tutors to break the colonial mindset. Kanter also states that "the powerful are the ones who have access to tools for action"

(Kanter, 1977:166) which refers to the notion of vocabulary and advanced academic language being linked to class.

Of course, these assumptions do not apply to every young artist of the global majority as much of this argument is based on my experiences and limited conversations with fellow ESEA artists. Platz reminds the reader that "students do not simply parrot the teacher but will instead come to their own conclusions and independent justification of knowledge (Platz, 2021:5) as opposed to taking every word that is taught as gospel. However, Platz argues that the content being taught to students is guided and "justified by the teacher's epistemic authority" (Platz, 2021:5), or specifically, the term 'testimony'. This highlights how important it is to emphasise the direction of an education programme, exhibition or gallery which will inevitably be informed by the authoritative role's 'testimony'. I suggest that further research of the student-teacher relationship's level of trust should be conducted within the arts discourse. This can apply to Primary and Secondary years when children may be more impressionable and conditioned; however, students studying art in colleges and universities will just as insightful and focused as they have chosen to pursue art, assumingly based on a higher level of interest. I therefore suggest that these students will be susceptible and inclined to trust art tutors and take on any direction given to them, including utilising, and using heritage as an exotic scapegoat. Supposedly, Platz's research does show evidence of a high level of trust, will, in turn, encourage teachers and tutors to become more aware of issues such as ignorance and tokenising students of the global majority.

The mini case study, The Arty Teacher's 'Black Artist' list, encapsulates the very concerns I have just addressed. This list is only one amongst many online methods and resources[32] made available and promoted within the educational side of teaching art in schools and universities. It is concerning cases like this to which demonstrates societal acceptance that it is approved for a white-led individual or institution to represent and categorise artists based on how they feel it fits the minimal requirements to appear diverse and inclusive.

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[32] Another includes University of Salford's *Chinese Contemporary Art* online collection in which I counted that out of the twenty-nine artists thirteen explore Chinese heritage and the other sixteen explore and investigate themes beyond their heritage such as technology, existential sense of self, urbanization, and the study of everyday objects.

Mini Case Study: The Arty Teacher's List of "Black Artists"

With demands to push for developed and accessible educational schemes to be taught in schools and colleges for example, which addresses 'other cultures' in art, the outcome can become a rapid and inconsiderate result. A friend of mine was studying a PGCE course at MMU[33] , to be a secondary school art teacher and in a seminar was introduced to The Arty Teacher, an online resource written and curated by Crowther, a "high school art teacher for over 20 years… [with a] … passion for [their] subject" (Crowther, 2022). Crowther proceeded to show the room of training teachers a page titled "Artists Listed by Theme". The list if themes are in alphabetised and started with themes such as 'Alphabets', 'Animals in Art', 'Assemblage', 'Bicycles' and then 'Black Artists'[34] . Though the number of black artists represented in this list had increased, studies like Topaz's (2022) still argue that "higher representation does not equate with equity and inclusion" (Topaz, Higdon & Epps-Darling, 2022:1). The ambition of this small case study is to expand upon this notion.

It is evident that within the rest of the eighty-eight-theme specific list, the Black Artists was the ONLY one racially 'themed', a theme or category like 'Black Art' which was used as an umbrella term in the UK in the eighties/nineties to refer to all artists of the global majority (Hylton, 2007; Mercer, 1994). Two other lists remotely like the theme of being a black artist was 'Hispanic Heritage Artists', only featuring Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, and 'Mayan Art' which has a link to 'Mayan Art in the Met' – a white led museum-and Google search links to Mayan Sculpture and Masks. There is a distinct difference in that the categorisation of having a Hispanic heritage, often alongside Latinx, is ethnicity based rather than racial due to its defined shared cultural history (Hall, 1997). Additionally, Mayan people, as defined by the Britannica, are a group of people which occupy "a nearly continuous territory in southern Mexico"[35] (McKenna, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Maya-people). So, I ask: why does a list of artists, based on a singular physical trait, exist? Crowther describes the list as being "really useful to help you integrate more black artists into your curriculum"

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[33] Manchester Metropolitan University promotes the Arty Teacher as a resource for lesson plans due to its wide range of artists resources and activity worksheets for art teachers to access.
[34] My friend informed me that The Arty Teacher's "Black Artists" list had greatly expanded since the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement (2020).
[35] The Mayan group likewise share cultural heritage such as language and a rich history of the Mesoamerican civilisation dating back to around 1800 B.C.

(Crowther, 2022) and it is comprised of thirty-three artists all of which range from different national and cultural backgrounds but remains under the problematic and reduced umbrella term 'black'… where is the 'White Artists' list? How can there be one group of artists for Nigeria and Madagascar, for example? If artists like Yayoi Kusama (Japanese) and Ai Weiwei (Chinese) can be put into their respected categories, then why not do the same for black artists? Though there may be the best intentions behind putting a spotlight and expanding the 'black artist' list, it is evident that these artists are not integrated, like Crowther states; instead, they are distinctly separated.

If all artists in this list centre their practice around, or relating to, their lived experience of being black then the curation of the list would be more understandable and would include artists like Elizabeth Catlett and Najee Dorsey. If this was the case, I argue that the title of the list would not be so generalised. Some artists like Reggie Laurent and Basquiat use cultural references but this is not synonymous with the specificity of being black as a 'theme'. It is also worth noting that very few of the artists in this list are crossed referenced into other themes: Betye Saar can be included in 'Assemblage', Mark Bradford in 'Collage', Rashid Johnson in 'Science', Ebony Patterson in 'Identity' and 'Collage', to name but a few. This can also apply to artists like Frida Kahlo who is included in 'Hispanic Heritage', 'Cultures' and 'Self Portrait' – having her in these three lists indicates that she is a self-portrait artist whose work depicts her 'Hispanic Heritage', however, this was not the sole focus of her work. A list for feminist artists could be made to include Kahlo and other artists like Jenny Saville and artists from the 'Black Artists' list such as Emma Amos. Though some of the artists in the "Black Artists" list are crossed referenced into other themes-Amy Sherald featured in both 'Black Artists' and 'Portraiture' for example- it is evident that there is a lack of attention to the consideration and categorisation of black artists compared to artists such as Picasso who is included in six lists and Van Gogh who is mentioned in sixteen.

I highlight The Arty Teacher as it demonstrates how in some schools, artists who are black, for example, are being included in art lessons for diversity inclusion purposes rather than their individual style and perception as an artist. I also focused on this small case study as it is concerning to me that a university is promoting resources like this. Although the website appears to be an efficient resource for training teachers, it is evident that the university has not been thorough on its recommendation and even worse, is accepting the marginalisation

and separation of artists from certain lists based on the colour of their skin. The next stage in this butterfly effect would be that the standard is set for training teachers that it is appropriate to teach children the same categorisation based on Topaz's theory of trust. Though the Crowther is white, it is not the sole reason why I am discussing it; the curation and intentions behind the list were indeed evidently tokenistic rather than enforcing genuine diverse integration however the fact that the Crowther is white, perpetuates the ongoing disconnect that many young students of a minority ethnic background experience within arts-related education between themselves and the educating body. The notion that the university trusts and, therefore, promotes this source may reflect the institution's ignorance towards problematic artist categorisation. It is evident that the Stuart Hall Foundation's recommendation for collaboration and/or consultation is needed[36].

Concluding thoughts:

This chapter has sought to demonstrate my understanding of gaps in arts research within the discussion of representation and tokenism. Already, it is evident that there are many underlying factors to which arts-related institutions may tokenise young-emerging artists of global majority which therefore create social and creatives problems for said artists. As established through the analysis of ACE policy, its EDI data collection, Hall and Kanter's theories and The Arty Teacher's list, so far, I conclude that there is a problem with leadership roles representing artists of the global majority with the predominate form being categorisation based on race. With this comes the problem of these young-emerging artists, who may be observing galleries or who are students in an arts discourse, internalising these movements.

The following chapter explores this in depth through the thesis' predominate case study, the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA) by applying Hall's theory of representation through multiple forms.

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[36] Since writing this section I gained the confidence to talk to my workplace, the gift shop in an established arts-based institution, about their EDI section. By suggesting that this collection is an act of segregation rather than genuine integration, I managed to discuss possible changes to the gift shop where EDI products will be properly integrated into the shop's main collection of products rather than on a separate table.

Chapter 2: Unstable Representations:

2.0 Introduction:

As this thesis argues that as arts-related institutions play a huge role in shaping future generations of artists, it is not surprising that they also inhabit the awkward space between 'representation' and 'tokenism'. An example of an institution would be my predominant case study, the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA), Manchester. This chapter suggests that the CFCCA acted as a physical embodiment of the young-emerging generations of British Chinese diaspora artists' position in the contemporary British artworld. The centre's annual report stated that the CFCCA encouraged the development of "opportunities for UK undergraduates and local, national and international emerging and established artists and curators" (CFCCA:2017). It is also mentioned that as well as a focus on the visual arts, education within the organisation was an important asset to increase the "number of academics, artists and curators" who provided, not only local, but an insight "and engagement with Chinese visual culture through writing, events and conferences" (CFCCA,2017). With a long list of positive aims, the CFCCA thus became the "leading authority on Chinese contemporary art in the UK and the only not for profit gallery in Europe" (Yin in Aesthetica, 2016) which showcases Chinese contemporary art. Along with the census statistics in the introduction, I highlight the level of potential importance the organisation had for a young-emerging creative community. However, in 2021, statements regarding the centre's treatment toward the very artistic community that built it began to circulate on multiple online platforms[37] which inevitably called for a boycotting. Why was this art centre whose purpose was to promote British-Chinese artists, such as myself, called to be shut down so abruptly?

This chapter will firstly give a brief history of the former Chinese Arts Centre (CAC), founded in 1989, to the rebranding of the CFCCA and its eventual defunding due to a series of public boycotting in 2021. Secondly, I will examine these series of events applying sociologist Stuart Hall's 'representational theory', explained in the introduction, to argue that numerous unstable representations of a single arts organisation resulted in unclear

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[37] These online platforms predominantly consisted of social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter

meanings to the public, young-emerging British Chinese/ESEA artists to be specific, which in turn had a potential impact on the stability of said audience's cultural and artistic positioning within British society. I will proceed to identify and analyse six methods of unstable representations that I argue produced and contributed toward an unstable environment. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the instabilities which still exist in, not just Britain, but the Western contemporary art world.

2.1   A Brief History of the former CAC to the CFCCA:

As the introduction noted, Manchester was home to many Chinese families since the late 19th century/early 20th century. However, it wasn't until "the 1960s that the city saw significant migration" (Payne, 2016:32) via Liverpool due to various trading that became established in 1970s when "several entrepreneurial Chinese businesspeople purchased a number of run-down textiles warehouses in central Manchester" (Payne, 2016:32). Thus, becoming the early foundations of Chinatown.

	1986	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Name	Chinese View Arts Association (CVAA)									Chinese Arts Centre (CAC)																	Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA)									
Director	Amy Lai (Founder)				Wendy Hee			Kwong Lee (Acting Director)				Sarah Champion										Sally Lai				Sarah Fisher				Zoe Dunbar					Xiaowen Zhu	
Location	Charlotte Street, China Town									Edge Street, Northern Quarter																Thomas Street, Northern Quarter										

Figure 9: Full timeline of CFCCA's history including name, director, and location.

Like Hylton's observation in the 1980s, (refer to section 0.2), artist Amy Lai, arriving in Manchester in the mid-70s after studying at the Central School of Art in London, noticed that "younger generations of Chinese already in the UK had very little knowledge and appreciation of their cultural roots" (Payne, 2016:32) and very little representation amongst the contemporary arts. Parker states that in Britain, there has been a historical "lack of a narrative about the Chinese community in general" (Parker, 1995:4) which is heavily reflected in the arts as Desai states that "the art system [was] not always or wiling to be able to accommodate" (Desai, 2000: 114) the complexities of identity. Lai noticed the discrepancy in the community, rather than the market, and enacted a formation of a charity that met the needs to give a voice to the under-represented British-Chinese. This non-profit charity was originally called the Chinese View Arts Association (CVAA) and hosted its first exhibition: The Chinese View 86 in 1986. The exhibition was a great success and brought in numerous groups from the north- west and PRC which as a result, expanded the national"

profile of Manchester's Chinese community" (Payne, 2016:32). Due to this community of artists having limited exposure, the Chinese Arts Centre became the "key to the debates around art and multiculturalism" (Dunbar, 2016;5)[38]. The organisation officially opened its doors to its first visitors-the media 'represented' Lai's *Chinese View 86* as "a bridge between Chinese communities and white British" (Payne, 2016:32) with Lai's intention to "introduce 2nd and 3rd generation Chinese immigrants to the culture and history of their ancestors" (Payne, 2016:32). These aims and objectives therefore "determined the embracing of tradition alongside more modern and contemporary artistic developments" (Payne, 2016:32), a binary which is often used by cultural commentators when discussing non-Western aesthetics.

As figure 9 shows, since the opening of the centre, the CFCCA has endured a series of changes; three names, seven directors (excluding Xiaowen Zhu who was appointed in 2022) and three location changes. As a young-emerging artist who has observed the movements of an established ACE funded institution dedicated to my relating heritage, it is evident that the stability of the CFCCA's has left me feeling uncertain about it's, and therefore my own, artistic position within the British contemporary arts scene. I argue the centre started to become unstable from 1997 which suggestively links to the employment of a white director and its relocation out of Chinatown and into the Northern Quarter (NQ). As section 3.6e explains in further detail, in 1997 the centre relocated from Manchester's China Town to Thomas Street in the NQ which arguably officially established the centre's direction toward a contemporary demographic in comparison to its original one, the local and underrepresented British-Chinese community. It was the following year that the centre hosted its first major touring exhibition titled *Representing the People*, 1998, which aimed to draw public attention to "new art from China" (Smith, 2016:22) [39].

Figure 9 also shows that of the three longest standing directors (Lai, Champion, and Dunbar) two are white (Champion and Dunbar) which could point to upholding "racial capitalism at work, extracting value by instrumentalizing the poc bodies while institutionally re-enforcing

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[38] Dunbar was deemed by some to be pivotal to the whitewashing of the CFCCA having been a white director during the centres last seven years prior to its boycotting.
[39] *Representing the People*, 1999, was a large-scale touring exhibition which was commissioned to the at-the-time director (Champion). The exhibition was comprised of 40 works from 10 contemporary artists from PRC. Curator, Smith stated that the exhibition toured to four venues and was seen by 250 thousand visitors.

practices that do not change the fundamental structure that perpetuate white supremacy" (Hồng-Ân In Huang, 2021)[40] . This is like Yuen's statement that since the rebranding, the Centre "became less and less in touch with its kind of core stakeholder" (Yuen in McAulay, 2021) due to its distancing and loss of it "community focus and sought instead to establish the identity of British-Chinese" (Yuen in McAulay, 2021). A community Lai sought to connect on a local scale. A contrasting perspective would suggest that as there was so few resources and acknowledgement for the creative Chinese in Britain community (Kennedy 2015), it was more likely that certain representations were overlooked. However, these overlooked elements became deeply embedded within the Centre's infrastructure, therefore I argue that the only way to fix it was to completely dismantle it. The following section provides a deeper account of the Centre's public boycotting which transpired against the background of COVID-19.

BOYCOTT IT!

As well as the priority of national public recognition, the penetration of the white narrative sustained itself within the foundation of the CFCCA behind the representational veil of a Chinese orientated organisation; there was a concern of retaining the appearance of the original cause of the charity. The national discussion of the reappraisal of representation of artists of the global majority in 2021 shone a harsh light on the extremely problematic issues of the centre's workforce's lack of diversity, institutional racism, and dominance of the white narrative, of a Chinese visual arts institution. Here, the formation of the boycotting originated from a series of open letters written by former artists, and key employees, such as resident artist JJ Chan who was working on a diaspora themed exhibition at the time, the Artists Working Group (AWG[41]), and additional internal reports and the CFCCA's own accounts and statements on the matter (Diversity Matter, 2021).

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[40] This comment was in conjuncture with the topic of removing the online panel from the original associated Vancouver Art Gallery due to its hiring of a white director and lack of support admits the BLM and Stop Asian Hate movement. This was a similar situation to the CFCCA as AWG argue that during the movements, the CFCCA's action was "doubling down on protecting white privilege and white occupation in the organisation" (AWG, 2021). It is evident that white supremacy continues to be atop of the arts food chain.

[41] AWG consisted of artists: Eelyn Lee, Enoch Cheng, Erika Tan, Gayle Chong Kwan, Jack Tan, Whiskey Chow, and Yuen Fong Ling

In 2019 the CFCCA carried out an internal 'revisioning process' (Diversity Matters, 2021:2). When the AWG were called to "co-design a Revisioning Project that would address equality and inclusion and the future relevance of the organisation" (Yuen, 2020) they were shocked by the salient level of white- led institutional racism and inconsiderate appreciation for the original cause. The AWG, all Chinese heritage, released a public Call for Action that revealed disconcerting statistics, facts, and references to other statements of racism. They argued that they were only asked to carry out this process as a "performative gesture [which added] an Asian veneer to a white organisation's revisioning" (AWG, 2020:2). This is a similar perspective to Daisley's observations of performative and "activist gestures" (Daisley, 2022). It was revealed that the organisation received "funding of over a million pounds (£1,149,924.00) from Arts Council England" (AWG, 2020:5), thereby supporting the fact that the CFCCA was a lot "more secure that other organisations in terms of political power, financial security and influence" (AWG,2020:7) within its sector. It is also worth noting that the salary displayed on the call for a new director's recruitment pack, prior to the recruitment of Xaiowen, was £58-60K per annum (CFCCA, 2022). Like the AWG, I question if it's fair that a white individual is earning that much per year when the position could have been granted to someone with a closer and authentic perspective to the cause? Alongside AWG's statement, the public boycotting was picked up by various journalists (Brown, 2021; McAulay, 2021; Perveen, 2021; Redmond, 2021; Resonate Team, 2021) which enhanced a long overdue public debate; ACE's response is discussed in chapter three.

During my research project, the CFCCA underwent a restructuring of its board and director. It was announced at the end of May (2022) via social media and its website that the new five trustees, Philomena Chen, Sion Li, Yung Ma, aaajio (Xu Wenkai) and Bonnie Yueng and its director: Xiaowen Zhu, had been officially selected. The centre stated that the hiring of the board members came "at a time of transformation and growth as the CFCCA re-examines its purpose and works to embed collective and sustainable change to serve its communities, including increasing the representation of people with lived experience of Chinese and East Asian heritage" (CFCCA, 2022). The Centre's pledge to set the organisation back on track sounds promising although the path of the Centre still has time to solidify its position within a developing conversation of representation in contemporary British art. This case study does not focus on developments of the organisation that take place beyond

its temporary closure in 2021 as I intend to refer to previous chronological events to inform my current perception at the time of writing. This section aimed to provide context to the development and defunding of the CFCCA for the following section which applies Hall's representational theory, explained in the following section.

2.2 CFCCA: according to Hall's Representational theory.

As the previous section clarified, the CFCCA's underwent a series of dramatic changes that in turn, impacted its artistic direction, workforce, motives and meaning to the public who followed its movements. As someone who has grown up in a white dominated art world, it was hopeful to see an institution such as the former CFCCA stand for an underrepresented group for which I felt, and still feel, a part of. As stated before, I did not experience the centre first-hand due to covid restrictions so when gathering resources for this project I was surprised by the variations of explanations for each change that occurred. When the only arts organisation reflects a part of your identity that nowhere else does, one can become susceptible to following its movements, especially if that individual is of a younger generation keen to make it in the art world. Therefore, when the organisation that captures that part of one's identity shape-shifts which is then represented in different way through different outlets, it is understandable to feel confused. A significant part of my internal debate is reflecting on the extreme lack of diversity and the disappointing level of institutional racism which was allowed to run through the veins of a Chinese arts-related charity.

This section aims to elucidate my argument that a series of unstable representations of a cultural arts-related institution has the potential to impact the stability of young-emerging artists- of the relating cultural heritage, position within the art world in which they inhabit. The ambition of this section is to be addressed through my interpretation of Hall's representational theory despite it normally acting as a cornerstone for media studies. Here I refer to the CAC/CFCCA as the cultural code, the subject of a series of turbulent narratives that attempted to fix specious meaning to it via different methods of representation.

2.3 Methods of representation within the CFCCA:

To evaluate my argument within the framework of Hall's representational theory, this section will identify and analyse six unstable representations which produced unclear meanings, thereby potentially impacting the young-emerging ESEA artist's sense of self-positioning within society and the British art scene. Representations I will be addressing in the section are as follows: the name of the Centre, directors and curators, the workforce, prioritisation of the Centre, its location, and the gift shop.

2.3a CAC to CFCCA

Under the direction of the fifth artistic director (excluding Kwong Lee as acting director between the years 1992 – 1996) Sarah Fisher, the Chinese Arts Centre (CAC) was rebranded with a new name in 2013: Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA). This was, as Champion stated, because 'CAC' implied a misguidance to the public's expectations of the 'Chinese' art they would be faced with- expectations such as "very traditional, brush painting and calligraphy", (Champion in Kennedy, 2015:4). Its change to CFCCA therefore rebranded itself with the term 'contemporary' which was interpreted as both a progressive projection "away from any traditional perceptions of Chinese art, but for many it was seen as a problematic term to define that which is non-western, being such a western aesthetic." (Dunbar, 2016:9). In other words, Dunbar states that the change of the name from CAC, which implies a non-western focus (Chinese) then came to embody a 'western aesthetic'. This 'western aesthetic' is defined by Michel-Schertges as challenging "capitalism in mostly bourgeois frameworks of musealised exhibitions, criticising political leadership and social inequalities and presenting it largely to exactly the established classes" (Michel-Schertges, 2019:1.)[42] By these definitions, it was clear that the brand of 'Chinese' was becoming more commercialised. Within a branding mindset, that as "brand intangibles [, for example a name of an institution,] are a common means by which marketers differentiate their brands with consumers" (Keller and Lehmann in Phillips, McQuarrie & Griffin, 2014:318), the organisation utilised 'Chineseness' as a brand to boost exposure as an arts institution 'different' from the others.

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[42] As Hall refers to semiology within his Representational framework, further reading which explains this in relation to words being a 'code' can be found in *Representation,* Hall, 1997.

From several casual conversations regarding the CFCCA, I many have referred to the centre with different names and abbreviations such as "the Chinese Contemporary Centre", "Chinese Arts Gallery" and "The Contemporary Chinese Arts Centre". By these encounters alone, it is evident that the changing names created public confusion which has created an ongoing uncertain identity for an institution.

2.3b Meaning Maker, Director, and Curator:

Hall's answer to his own question of "where do meanings come from?" (Hall, 1997:10) argues that the 'meaning makers' control the versions of representations that we, the public, see via mass media. These makers possess a huge level of power and responsibility to represent a code as accurately as they can to fix a meaning that bares resemblance to reality. But as we observed from figure 6, most of the meaning makers within the British contemporary arts sector are white males. Like my argument in section 2.3, Hall argues that because of this imbalance in white-patriarchal power structures, representation of ethnic minorities is limited and therefore reduced to stereotypes (Hall, 1997). Thus, increasing the level of marginalisation of these groups. As stated before, Hall's theory suggests that although representation "may also have a material dimension" (Hall, 1997:11), the common form would be visual. However, in this and the following section, I suggest that representation can take the form of an individual person – as well as being the 'meaning maker'.

Arguably, the meaning maker of an arts-institution would not fall under sole direction of the director and curator, instead the Centre's board trustees would be the meaning makers. Although they do not involve themselves in "day-to-day- life" of an institution, the board of trustees plays a prominent role as they are "tasked with strategic planning and providing oversight and accountability for the organisation" (Warner, 2022). Therefore, whilst "the appointment of a non-ethnic Chinese [board and] director appeared to lead to a more mainstreamed, less ethnically Chinese art focus" (Kennedy, 2015:9) it therefore maintained that the preconception of "the 'Chinese' subjects in dominant regimes take precedence over the actual lived realities of everyday life" (Yeh, 2004:73).

Roberts argues that a white individual within an authoritative role can be sympathetic and absorb as much second-hand knowledge on the topic of racism, from a psychological

perspective, but to achieve a strong study, the organisation as a whole "must examine and understand racialised experiences" (Roberts, 2020:1296). As the rules of identity are not fixed, but holistically connected, this implies that the Centre's board or director does not necessarily need to be a person of the global majority; if they "include editors, authors, and participants or diverse racial identities in the research project" (Roberts, 2020:1296) they can be white. However, reflecting on the direction of the CFCCA, it is evident that none of these factors were embraced. Desai further argues that "one of the primary concerns of multicultural art education is to provide accurate and authentic representations of the art of radically and ethnically marginalised groups" (Desai, 2000: 114)[43]. This would still be applicable to the fact that the Centre quickly departed from the original focus of British-Chinese artists (CFCCA). Karetzky's states that in the late 20th century, many of the overseas Chinese community living abroad developed a strong sense of community and therefore was "able to maintain itself" (Karetzky, 2016:268). despite changes, threats, political oppression from host country" Lai, the original founder of the CFCCA, was able to identify herself as the 'other' (Kennedy, 2016) and built a creative community with those who were experiencing the same feeling. A white director, such as Sarah Champion, would not have experienced the same sensation of 'another' cultural identity.

It is evident that there was a significant disparity between the CFCCA, its resident artists and connection to the community. JJ Chan's states that "galleries and institutions value academic qualifications and industry experience" (Chan, 2020) and therefore hire those fortunate with that knowledge and understanding. In Britain, it seems that most authoritative roles within arts-related institutions are middle-class, well-educated white people which has become a default ideal and trustworthy image for any gallery or museum. This dominant group uses the disguise of being "backed up by academic institutions" (Chan,2020) to move up the ranks easier than someone of the global majority with less experience and qualifications. The notion of arguably white academic nepotism within art galleries is touched upon in the following chapter where I discuss education and class as

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[43] To define my use of the term 'authentic', in the context of the CFCCA, I argue that an 'authentic' director or senior member of staff would have to understand the perspective of the lived experience of being Chinese living in Britain.

underlying factors for a young-emerging artists level of confidence to confront those in authoritative roles above them.

2.3c White workforce:

As discussed in the literature review, it is natural to assume that any organisation will be steered by its team within leadership roles (Ali, 2020, Platz 2021). For the CFCCA, it was evident that having a white-led narrative through its board, directors and curators had seeped into public facing roles. When the CFCCA was under internal investigation in 2020 it was revealed that only "one member of staff identified as being of Chinese heritage" (Diversity Matter, 2021:4). In early December 2020, the CFCCA released a statement addressing Chan's open letter and accounts of racism and lack of diversity. Though the organisation mentioned that it had been alerted to areas of concern including the lack of Chinese bodies with lived experience within the staff team they were not specific. Was this an attempt to sweep bad representation under the rug? The AWG expressed their distain to this fact by arguing that "having a predominantly white staff lead an ethnic minority cultural organisation is unthinkable"[44] (AWG, 2021:6)

However, both Chan and the AWG highlighted the important point that "of the 13 of the members of the CFCCA's team, only 1 of them [was] not a white person" (Chan,2020) and that there were cases of "junior staff fearing to speak out and feeling embarrassed by the lack of diversity in the team" (AWG, 2021:3). Perpetual feelings of being cautious to speak out, I argue, can be common in scenarios like this due to the imbalance of power, fear to lose one's position within the institution, or intimidating environments with experienced individuals higher up in the food chain. In the following chapter I identify and analyse responses to individuals that speak out, effects the individual may experience and additional factors that play into the confidence the individual has to confront. A former volunteer of the CFCCA, who is white[45], from November 2019 to January 2020, stated that at the time

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[44] To contrast with the CFCCA's, arguably casual, equality and diversity policies, Manchester based SHISHA "an international agency for contemporary South Asian crafts and visual arts" (Mitha, 2007), established in 2001, was very specific. The organisation's plan stated that "the posts of Director, Deputy Director and Chair are set aside for people of South Asian descent" (SHISHA, 2007:35). I argue that as SHISHAs was one of "few South Asian-led arts organisations in the UK" (SHISHA, 2007:35), it was appropriate to establish a strong policy to protect its core beliefs and demographic.

[45] These were a series of casual exchanges via Instagram direct message which were not a direct part of this research project.

they "thought CFCCA was really strange given that there were so many non-Chinese people employed but at the same time the main curatorial voice was coming from someone from China, so [they] gave it benefit of doubt." They then continued to say that they felt the main issue was how the CFCCA "branded that it was okay mainly white staff". 'Branding' of a predominantly white workforce for a specifically non-white cultural and visual arts institution under the watchful eye of the public contributes to an act of upholding a status quo that encourages an endless regurgitation of employer and employees from the same background. Subject was brought up to another former volunteer, from around the same time, who is also white and who said that now "looking back [they] can totally see that", 'that' being the notion of white nepotism. Though these two encounters were brief, it is evident that there was a lack of accountability on the CFCCA's behalf when addressing this issue with staff.

Within his theory, Hall metaphorically uses a mirror to describe how language creates "meaning in thought to lie in the object, person, idea or event in the real world" (Hall, 1997:10), thereby reflecting "the true meaning as it already exists in the world" (Hall, 1997:10). So, in terms of the CFCCA's white authoritative roles, it is evident that the promotion and enthusiastic engagement of Chinese art was simply a reflective approach rather than a grounded approach informed by lived experience. Huang argues that there is only so far, a white leadership role within an arts institution can go: they're "just going to know what it's like to have lived in this space between object and subjects and therefore [they] will not know how to curate a space that might be referencing that embodied lived space" (Huang, 2020). The idea of Chinese in Britain should not be confused with the lived experience of showcasing an under-represented ethnic minority group one is part of. Because of the unintentional yet suspicious, adoption of the reflective approach the meaning of the CFCCA as cultural code is 'refracted' in the 'mirror' under the influence of the white narrative.

2.3d Following the Funding:

This method of representation, arguably, had the most significant influence of the direction of the CFCCA's movements, physically and its position within the British contemporary arts. However, due to the small scale of both the centre and the British Chinese community, in

relation to the surrounding majority, Lai recalls that "the public funders would not fund you if it was just about the local" (Lai in Kennedy, 2015: 12). This involved public workshops which emulated traditional Chinese craft and practice such as "brush paintings shows and origami exhibitions" (Lee in Kennedy, 2015:8). AWG states that it wasn't until the Centre received ACE funding that a white director was appointed once the centre had "been granted it NPO status[46]" (AWG, 2021:7), the centre had been "initiated and led by artists and facilitators whose origin was ethnically Chinese" (Kennedy, 2015:9). It was with this appointment of Champion which arguably kickstarted the turning point for the CFCCA's new direction toward funding over community.

Smith accounts for Champion's observations that the "horizon for contemporary art from China had begun to expand in the mid-1990s" due to a "handful of 'China' exhibitions presented in Europe" (Smith, 2016:22). Though Smith had not specified these exhibitions, Yeh also outlined several Chinese exhibitions which occurred in Britain in the 80s/90s in her *Ethnicities on the* Move, 2000, article which suggests that they were most likely curated or collected by a white-led organisation or group. Barnes, in her discussion of the representation of Chinese art and culture in twentieth century contemporary British museums argues that the "very acts of collection and selection are influenced by the ideologies of the age and much of the non-Western material in British museums, came from the collections of colonialists and missionaries." (Barnes, 2003:3). More recent western attention to China's growing/dominating economy, and therefore the art market, grew especially after the exposure in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Manchester formed the Manchester-China Forum in 2013 to "increase Greater Manchester's commercial connectivity, trade and investment with China, and it marked the growing cultural and economic influence of China in the United Kingdom." (Dunbar, 2016:7). I highlight these facts as I argue it is evident that trends of art from countries and cultures outside of the western world was, and still is, mediated and directed by a western gaze. Like the AWG, this gaze infiltrated the motives of the organisation which therefore informed a new direction of the Centre.

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[46] ACE claim that NPO are leaders in "with a collective responsibility to protect and develop our national arts and culture ecology" (ACE, 2018:5)

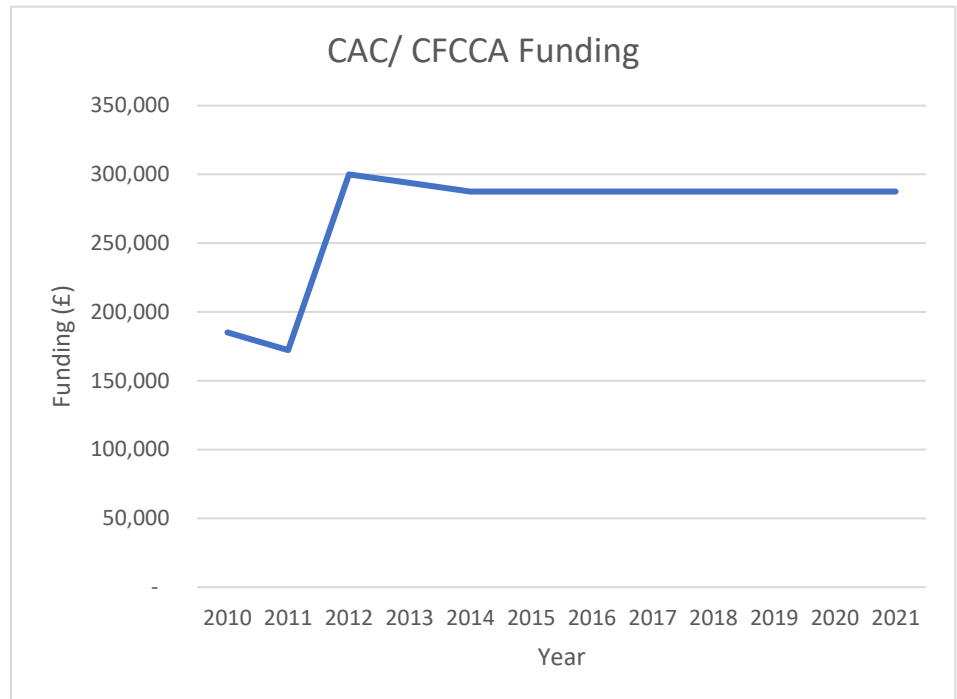| Year	CAC/ CFCCA Funding
2010	185,056
2011	172,287
2012	300,000
2013	293,763
2014	287,480
2015	287,481
2016	287,481
2017	287,481
2018	287,481
2019	287,481
2020	287,481
2021	287,481

Figure 10: Statistics of CAC/CFCCA's public funding from the year 2010 to 2021, all data is publicly accessible via Arts Council England's website: https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/search?query=Equality%2C+Diversity+and+Inclusion%3A+A+Data+Report

Figures 10 and 11 depict data gathered from Arts Council England's funding reports between the years 2010 and 2021, the year of the Centre's temporary closure. The data shows that from the years 2011 to 2012 the total amount of funding the CFCCA received was 1.7 times more. This may have been due to the alignment with the launch of the Manchester China Forum in 2013. This forum marked "Manchester's commercial connectivity, trade and investment with China and marked the growing cultural and economic influence of China in the UK" (Dunbar, 2016:334 [spread]). From this point figure 11 shows that funding granted to the CFCCA remained steady at an average of £287, 481 and would be perceived as "much more secure than other organisations in terms of political power, financial security and influence" (AWG, 2021:4) within the arts sector. However, like the AWG, I question "where are the lost stories of the exhibitions of the 80's and 90's that platformed British Chinese artists? Where is the curatorial care of marginalised histories and diasporic bodies?" (AWG, 2021:6). After the public boycotting it was evident that many of the core foundations, celebrating British-Chinese communities and artists, of the institution

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had been swept aside through a white-led narrative which informed choices to make room for appealing to the masses, and therefore gain funding.

2.3e Location, Location, Gentrification!

The CAC's decision to physically move symbolised something a lot bigger that itself. Arguably, this marked a move to the gentrified and elitist end of the contemporary art spectrum (AWG, 2020), thereby a new meaning was fixed onto the CFCCA. Dunbar, former curator of the Centre, however, stated that having the move to the NQ overlapping with the Hong Kong Handover[47], was a great opportunity to take advantage of the international media attention which was focused on "all things Chinese" (Dunbar, 2016: 233)[48]. This somewhat of a problematic statement as it demonstrates that the boundaries of being a colonial subject is very hard to escape. Furthermore, Dunbar did not acknowledge the distinction between the mainland PRC and the SAR of Hong Kong/ 'HongKonger' identity. Artists who may or may not identify as being Chinese, like lok, may feel "wary of being lumped together, regardless of ethnic, generational, geocultural, sexual and political differences" (lok in Smith, 2006:20). Phrases like this have been deeply embedded within the west's gaze on 'Chinese art' in that from the sixteenth to nineteenth century the trade of goods from China to Europe[49] "aroused the curiosity of Westerners about China in general and held to maintain a taste for things Chinese" (Spencer, 2003:178).

Timberlake notes that hierarchies of cites within the global network there is "competitiveness for dominance" (Timberlake, 2014:163) within cultural sectors. The CFCCA was the only mainstream organisation that was dedicated to the showcasing, promotion, and celebration of Chinese contemporary practice in Britain[50]. This USP became a desirable market for collectors and investors who were interested in 'Chinese' art. This

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[47] The Hong Kong Handover, July 1997, was a point in history when Hong Kong was reverted over to China (History.com, 2009) from Britain.

[48] Charles Saatchi also picked up on this trend and curated an art exhibition exclusively showing Chinese contemporary art titled *The Revolution Continues: New Art from China* (Oct 2008- Jan 2009

[49] Resulting in Europeans endeavouring to mimic 'Chinese' styles within discourses such as interior design. A common term used to refer to this copied stylisation is *Chinoiserie*, defined as the European interpretation of Chinese/ESEA designs and aesthetics.

[50] Now, there is the 3812 Gallery in London which is a leading private art gallery established in Hong Kong (2011) and London (2018) located in the art district - 12 min walk from London Chinatown, specializing in Modern and contemporary Chinese art with a focus on ink.

competitiveness for dominance over this organisation led to a corruption of Western led consumerist culture.

The Centre's move to the NQ in 1997 signified the organisation's enthusiasm to "encourage mainstream audiences to engage with Chinese arts" (Dunbar, 2016:233) within an up-and-coming area for arts and culture. Stepping outside of Chinatown lead to the first of many disconnections and associations from the young-emerging and established British Chinese creative community. Dunbar stated that "the move affirmed the Centre's desire to become a relevant contemporary art gallery, reaching a wider and more diverse audience" (Dunbar, 2016:4). This implies that the Centre was not considered relevant when habituated within Chinatown which relates back to the notion of white-led organisations and individual categorising of what is considered 'cultural art'. The counter argument, made by Yuen was that the physical move was a method of opposing itself from the "'ghettoization of a culture' which has constrained the Chinese Arts Centre's development in its early years" (Yuen in Dunbar, 2016:4). Whilst I agree that it is important to make a conscious effort to step away from an isolated and marginalised categorisation, the move defined the Centre's effort to redefine itself stepped away from its original purpose which was to promote underrepresented local British-Chinese artists and their communities.

Blanco's 1997 study suggests that "contemporary artists and organisations perceive the city centre as a more profitable place to be based, especially if practice there is thought to be more sophisticated" (Blanco, 1998:15). Despite already being in a very central location within Manchester city centre, Diversity Matters argues that the move was described as a "bold statement" (Diversity Matters, 2021:2) that symbolised the organisation's focus with engaging with "larger 'mainstream' audiences" (Diversity Matter, 2021:2) in the hopes that the appreciation for Chinese art will spread rapidly. Sandor's discussion on the opposing argument against rapid gentrification of the Northern Quarter includes the harsh fact that "arts organisations and long-time independents were forced out when their rents were put up 30 – 40% per cent overnight" (Sandor, 2019). Though this article was written 10 years after the CFCCA's second move from Chinatown to NQ, it still highlights the large economic shifts that took place in that area of Manchester. The move to the NQ, at a time where regeneration emphasised areas of socio-economic polarisation within creative and

independent communities (Taylor & Holder, 2008) mirrors the emphasis of the CFCCA's new priorities.

2.3f Selling the CFCCA:

This section uses the CFCCA's website and online presence to reflect on online representations to analyse the depiction of the Centre's methods to promote commercial products. A gallery gift shop provides the opportunity to gain commercial profit whist maintaining the overall objectives and aesthetic of the gallery. Winkleman points out that in the eyes of the public, collectors, and experts, "most art galleries, therefore, have specific programmes in order to maximise the advantage of filling a niche in the market that often reflect the unique experiences, connections and interest of the gallery owner" (Winkleman, 2009:15). Winkleman also suggests the importance consistent branding in that the owner must consider all elements including refreshments and shop products. The representation of the CFCCA's shop was very much under the direction of the leading narrative and upholding the notion that the angle to success was to accommodate to the western- gaze, a direction which has been internalised by a young artist.

As I had never seen the shop in person, I am reliant on secondary sources and what remains of the Centre's online presence. The shop, as a method of disseminating representation to the visitor and passerby, was brought to my attention when speaking to someone who has been in the gallery retail business for years. They stated that they were disappointed in the products the CFCCA's shop had in stock in that it felt "mass-produced"[51] and there was a lack of, expected, handmade items or prints produced by smaller artists. The individual expressed confusion to the lack of local goods in comparison to the great population of the Chinese community in Manchester. They made a fair point; however, it is worth noting that whilst commercial attention, through workshops and exhibitions that referred to traditional styles of what the public perceived as 'Chinese art', was very popular, it was less so amongst the developing British-Chinese creative community (Kennedy (2015). Additionally, some members of this unique and growing community had stepped away from the confines of being 'Chinese' by exhibiting their individual developed style of working. Older members of

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[51] This was a causal conversation at an art event.

the community within Chinatown did not consider this as the 'Chinese art' they knew. Furthermore, as the Centre moved out of Chinatown, not only did it mark a direction toward a gentrified demographic, but it also marked an established distancing from the local community.

Figure 12: "CFCCA Shop 2018 by Joe Smith Photography" via https://cfcca.org.uk/visit-us/shop/ (accessed 21/02/2022)- shop temporarily closed.

The only image of the shop that existed on the CFCCA's website, up until its current restructuring, was figure 12 which depicts, what would be assumed, a woman and her daughter browsing the shop in the CFCCA, both of which are white. The array of products that are visible in the image appear to be mass produced and generic gift shop items made and distributed by mainstream companies. Andjelic argues that "art is a reflection of the time we live in, and the idea of the white box format is very 20th century. The format of the 21st century is the feed" (Andjelic, 2019) which highlights the importance of social media in the realm of the visual arts. By briefly highlighting this, I suggest that online content of an arts institution's retail department has potential impact on the observing young-emerging artists as it depicts what is deemed sellable within this specific cultural context – a white audience.

Concluding thoughts:

By analysing these different methods of representation of a single institution, the ambition of this chapter was to identify the predominant roots of problematic issues that contribute to the awkward nature of the space between 'representation' and 'tokenism'. Throughout the CFCCA'S development there is an underlying sense of power imbalance between the leading narrative, employees, and resident artists like AWG. Therefore, the study of the upspoken sociological hierarchies that lie within an arts institution's infrastructure is in further need of development. This chapter evidently demonstrates that financial gain for the leading narrative is a prominent factor in which an artist of the global majority may find themselves in a tokenistic situation. Furthermore, this chapter shows that when the stability of a culturally specific arts-related institution is unstable, the multiple methods of representation (mediated by the leading narrative) become unstable which, therefore, results in an unstable perception of young-emerging artist's, not just their individual artistic position, but their practice in the eyes of the public.

Chapter 3: Visibility, Contrast and

3.0 Introduction:

Since the BLM and Stop Asian Hate movements of 2020, Shaw and Carrigan argue that "hundreds of museums, galleries and other arts organizations have been accused of tokenism, hypocrisy and fake solidarity" (Shaw & Carrigan, 2020), as a result, an urgent call for reassessment spread across the globe, particularly within the West. This is something I have experienced on a personal not when in Mid-March 2021, I posted a brief statement via Instagram to highlight my concerns of hate crimes toward the Asian community, which was later met with numerous supportive messages from friends and followers. However, one of which replied "I'm so sorry that's ever happened to you – what can be done do you think? What can people like me do?". My two initial reactions questioned why it was MY responsibility to educate them and their use of the words 'people like me'. Scenarios like this caused a natural gravitation toward Kanter and the need to unpack Kanter's three perceptual tendances identified from her study in 1977, in relation to the British art world and the young-emerging artists of Chinese/ESEA diaspora who are trying to navigate it.

 In contrast to the previous chapter which focuses on a visual-arts institution and its social impact on the surrounding local society and national image, by discussing these tendencies in their own chapter, I aim to deploy Kanter's perception to identify key sociological issues which I argue exist within an arguably broader creative community. In highlighting prominent sociological issues, I aim to draw conclusions to set guidelines for future research which looks to develop inclusionary policies within art spaces[52].

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[52] Toward the end of November 2022, the manager of my gift shop I work in asked a member of staff, who is British-Jamaican, to price a jigsaw puzzle which depicted a puppet baring striking resemblance to a minstrel character. When requesting that the jigsaw should be thrown away, my colleague was shortly faced with multiple retaliations, most of which addressed in this chapter, from white senior members of staff and then decided to terminate her employment. Alongside accounting my own experiences of lack of support from the supervisor, myself and my now-former colleague wrote a detailed Call for Action Letter requesting that senior members of staff need to be trained in handling difficult issues such as racism. This chapter built the foundations of this letter as I was able to extract parts into the letter. The letter was sent to the CEO of the institution and was followed by a phone call. The CEO respected the contents of the letter with a request to potentially collaborate into a wider investigation of the institution's policies and training regarding topics of race within the workplace.

3.1 <u>Kanter's theory and its limitations</u>:

Whist Kanter's study provided a foundation on which to build studies of tokenism in the workplace, it is evident that there are limitations which need to be revised. There have been several recent studies that have tested and critiqued Kanter's theory (Yoder, 1991) with the focused tokens being both gender (Zimmer, 1988) and race. Research shows that the predominant racial subject are black workers (Jackson, 1995; Giles & Evans, 1986; Hilton, 2007) and the predominant occupational environment being within nine-till-five office (Hoffman,1985) and educational roles (Niemann, 2016) or the criminal justice system (Krimmel & Gormley, 2003; Gustafson, 2008; Archbold & Schulz, 2008; Stichman, Hassel & Archbold, 2010). Though many of these jobs are public facing, the visual arts sector, especially with organisations funded by Arts Council England, are equally in the general public's eye, if not more so. Perry argues that the "increasingly international network of museums and artistic centres [which were developed] in the later twentieth and early twenty-first century" (Perry, 2018:99) is due to the "hybrid nature of the institutional networks, galleries, curators and practices that constitute contemporary art" (Perry, 2018:99). This hybridity can take the forms of multiple online platforms (such as Twitter, Facebook, Linked In, website and Instagram) which galleries and organisations constantly must maintain to project expected professional standards to their followers and a wider audience.

Since its publication, Kanter's theory has been tests in various workplaces like Gustafson's[53] (2008) study which found "the results on the whole supported the visibility/performance pressure principle and suggested that race may be the more important explanatory variable, since the greatest differences seemed to be between non-White and White officers" (Gustafson, 2008:7). Kanter argues psychological distress via the internalisation of self-expression and/or repression, the notion of being pitted against each other (tensions), performance pressures and high levels of physical and mental stress (Kanter, 1977:239-40). However, Kanter does not consider the internalisation of negative stereotypes which would impact the token's sense of self significantly. She also fails to fully unpack her numeric ratios

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[53] This research study applied Kanter's theory to a policing context where females, non-whites and non-white females were allocated as the tokens with the main objective of the study to determine a 'double token' effect between gender and race.

which leaves a generalised conclusion. Kanter also states that "any situation where proportions of significant types of people are highly skewed can produce similar themes and processes" (Kanter, 1977:207), however, this is dependent on the discourse, environmental and socio-political context in which the job is framed. This is due to the simplistic nature to Kanter's numerical based theory: 85:15, male or female (sex) for such a complex subject. The study does not factor in other reasons for discrimination as she argues it is mainly down to the number. For example, an organisation where the ratio of white to BME is 50:50, according to Kanter's theory, is a 'balanced' workplace, therefore the effects of being a token has low impact on the BME workers. Zimmer criticises Kanter's study as neutral (gender and race) suggesting that she does not consider factors like sexist and racist societies and the social-political climate in which we inhabit; there could be a 50:50 ratio which can still result in tokenistic gestures based on its motives. This point is relevant to ACE's EDI reports; ACE funded organisations which can show an increase in minority groups (including those who identify as the global majority, LGBTQIA+ and female), however, those categorised as minority groups can feel just as tokenised if the arts-related institution was skewed or balanced.

Kanter's findings "predicted that as the number of tokens increase in a group, they are less likely to have negative experiences" (Stichman, 2002:634). However, statistics of the gender of the individuals in the leadership roles would have been insightful into the overall results. For example, was the person in the autorotative role male? In tests like these the workforce is important to examine as they are the face of the organisation, but, if anything, the roles atop of the command must be included to understand the full narrative. I suggest further study of the association of 'visibility', 'assimilation' and 'contrast' within the workforce against the 'visibility', 'assimilation' and 'contrast' within the higher roles. Kanter could have also developed research into the token's consequences of confronting or challenging the dominant when faced with derogatorily sexist comments. With this in consideration, section 3.5 therefore identifies possible social obstacles which will contribute to the awkward nature of the thesis' conceptualised space in which a token may face when receiving tokenistic gestures.

3.2 Visibility:

Visibility is the first of the three perceptual tendencies with its predominant effect adding pressure to the token's performance in the workplace as well as becoming more susceptible to exotification (Kanter 1977). Additionally, having been in smaller numbers compared to the majority, visible tokens "serve as symbols of their category" (Kanter, 1977:239) which in turn amplifies their actions to become a homogenising representation of others who fit into the same 'category'. Here, stereotypes are formed which as a result can enhance further marginalisation. Hồng-Ân argues that there is a "paradoxical condition of invisibility that has played with Asians in the American context" (Hồng-Ân in Huang, 2021). As stated in the introduction, there has been a historical perception that the Chinese community within the west appears to avoid issues of racism (Swann Committee, 1985) which extends to the creative industry in terms of academic discussion. However, applying the tendency of 'visibility' to my time in university as the token artist of the global majority, a role that I feel was forced upon me, it is evident that I was just a mere gesture. I felt a lot of pressure to represent a culture I had no immediate connection with, let alone an entire culture. This is the very issue Araeen experienced when approached by ACE to curate the ambitious *The Other Story* exhibition in 1989; due to the lack of representation of any artists who were not white, all eyes were on him (Mercer, 1994). As noted, before, the discussion of Chinese/ESEA diaspora artists within the context of being tokenised within the contemporary visual arts is limited. However, as a token, when placed in a situation that is surrounded by the white dominant, these ESEA individuals embody a state of, as Huang (2021) describes, hyper(in)visibility. Hall also argues that "what replaces invisibility is a type of carefully regulated, segregated visibility" (Hall in Dei, Karumanchery & Karumanchery-Luik, 2004:5) which can take the form of categorisation, demonstrated in the Arty Teacher's list.

In contrast, Blanco suggested that negative effects of being a token through visibility "could be improved through better networking, platforms, showing work in mainstream institutions and developing relationships with funders." (Blanco, 1998:7). At the time of this publication, this would have been ideal as it would have allowed artists of the global majority to expand a network that is usually white dominated. However, it is almost twenty-five years since this publication and its ideas were introduced and I suggest this had not

been effectively implemented, therefore, in 2023 there is still a call for these improvements. Another problem which Kanter argues that tokens encounter is the 'Fear of Retaliation' and subsequently added pressure "not to make the dominants bad" (Kanter, 1977:217) as they, the tokens, would stand out for the wrong reasons. These retaliations are addressed in the following section. Oxley argues that there is a "desire to make marginalized peoples visible in predominantly white exhibition spaces" (Oxley, 2015), which can even go as far as if the work itself depicts marginalized bodies but produced by a white person. However, as established, due to general lack of said bodies and artists within the mainstream, in addition to the added pressure to financially sustain yourself, artists take whatever opportunity arises. As a result, the perpetual unfractured nature of white supremacy is upheld within a constant cycle of tokenised artists and workers of the global majority. Huang argues that "if the leaderships continues to be these white individuals who … champion diversity" (Huang, 2021) then there is no real progress.

By referring to Foucault's[54] analysis of power and knowledge, Hall emphasises that as most of the British population are white, "racial and ethnic difference is foregrounded" (Hall, 1997:215) in the majority eye. He further argues that within a cultural discourse, this notion of visibility exists in the "politics of exhibiting [which] means museums make certain cultures visible" (Hall, 1997:170) due to an "unequal relationship between western powers and non-western people" (Hall, 1997:170). If we apply this to the contemporary art discourse by arguing that those in power, the meaning makers, select the ways in which certain cultures are visible to the public, over time, preconceptions of said culture become deeply embedded.

The tendency of visibility within the CFCCA was due to the nature of the workforce; one of thirteen employees, three of eleven board members were of Chinese heritage with the director and curator being white. Referring to a characteristic of tokenism in contemporary discussion: an organisation, for example, having individuals from a minority background in public facing roles whilst authoritative roles remain white, it is evident that by these facts, people of Chinese heritage were tokenised. This is also supported by Kanter's argument that

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[54] Michel Foucault was a French philosopher (1926 – 1984) who influenced the notable work of Said and Hall. He is best known for his concepts which surround the relationship between power and knowledge with social control.

"tokens typically performed their jobs under public and symbolic conditions different from their dominants" (Kanter, 1977: 212). Yuen's experience of being visible as second-generation Chinese, within the predominantly white CFCCA led to, as he argues, the Centre's attempt to utilize and take advantage of his, and the AWG, emotional and lived experienced to keep the organisation alive. Alongside Yuen were six artists, all set with the impossible task of shaping the CFCCA's "future and solve issues of underrepresentation in the staff team" (AWG, 2021:1). It was evident that due to hypervisibility, the AWG were responsible to 'fix' the very issues that lay within the infrastructure in higher positions, the dominant white majority. In addition to feeling immense pressure to keep the only publicly funded institution dedicated to Chinese contemporary art, I argue that this was also the Centre's way of reminding the AWG of their ethnicity and its place in the organisation: the face, the ticks for boxes and solve problems that they did not create.

Though in, Hall's theory, visibility is a result and not a process, like in Kanter, they both argue that there is a prominent relationship between visibility and power between the token and the dominant. By looking at both theories and the CFCCA, it can be interpreted that there is a cycle between having higher visibility (Kanter) due to methods of being made visible (Hall) by those in power. In direct relation to my research, those in power are, but not exclusively, white individuals in authoritative roles who persist on remaining atop of the arts food chain without considering genuine contribution from non-white perceptions. Because of this it is therefore very difficult to tell which meaning makers are considering how artists such as myself are visible and methods of making us visible.

3.3 Contrast:

Kanter argues that the predominant resulting effect of contrast leaves the token isolated from the dominant group through appointed marginalisation. I argue that this is synonymous with the notion of white individuals or institutions categorising and reminding artists of the global majority by their "exaggeration of differences" (Kanter, 1977:210), as demonstrated with Arty Teacher. Hall also argues that the process of emphasising difference is "also rather crude and reductionist" (Hall, 1997: 225). Blanco's 1998 study found that amongst ethnic minority groups, there was confusion with the usage of the term 'cultural diversity' within public funding schemes and organisations (Blanco, 1998) as the

term was vague and extremely unspecific which supports that Kanter and Hall's account of contrast was, arguably still is, active within the arts. Blanco argues that ultimately, the term was conceived by the "funder's attempts to define and manage needs as they perceived" (Blanco, 1998:10) people of the global majority to highlight the difference between white and non-white: *us* and *them* Vs *we* and *us.*

Hall's accounts of representation[55], in relation to contrast, argues there is a use of principles of similarities and differences to "establish relationships between concepts or to distinguish them from one another" (Hall, 1997:3). Here, he argues that difference is ambivalent in that "it can be both positive and negative" (Hall, 1997:228) as he argues it has a big factor on creating meaning as well as the "formation of language and culture for social identities and a subjective sense of self" (Hall, 1997:228). Blanco and lok also encourage the embracing of difference as a positive asset to one's cultural identity. Blanco agrees with lok's proposal that the term 'cultural difference' should replace the homogenising 'cultural identity' as it "reminds us of the need to recognise and make provision for difference" (Blanco, 1998:10). Here, 'difference' should be marked by those who feel or experience difference due to different needs[56]. This is certainly a valid point when referring to the CFCCA as the previous chapter established that the Centre was failing to accommodate to a different lived experience due to being lack of a diverse representation and social retaliations such as racial gaslighting. Kanter, from a business's grouping mechanics background, argues that by becoming more aware of similarities and differences, the dominant keeps "the token slightly outside, to offer a boundary for" (Kanter, 1977, 211) the group they have commonalities with. Here, as a method of doing this, the dominant dehumanises the token as an act of positive discrimination[57]. "On more formal occasions, as in meetings, members of the numerically dominant category underscored and reinforced differences between tokens and dominants, ensuring that tokens recognized their outsider status, by making the token the occasion for "interruptions" in the flow of group events" (Kanter, 1977: 224). This can occur in formal educational occasions, as in my one-to-one tutorial, as well as professional.

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[55] For further reading on Hall's account for when he argues the west encountered black people and their depictions of them, refer to Hall, S (1997) *Representation*, chapter four *The Spectacle of the Other* 2.1.
[56] This is not exclusive to race as diversity policies include religion, disability accessibility etc.
[57] Positive Discrimination is defined as an individual being treated differently but in a positive way.

The debate of subject or object in direct relation to tokenism is discussed by Huang's zoom conference *hyper(in)visibility* where she expresses that" applying the term, 'token', to a group of people is a method of objectifying" (Huang, 2021). From a dehumanising and an objectifying standpoint, I refer to the common definition of a 'token'[58] as an inanimate object. Referring to Kanter's formalised research, it is interesting that the term was coined by an individual from the study's marginalised group. I question if this ethnographical perspective authentically informs the usage of this term. This can be drawn from observations of men objectifying women, so an inanimate object, like a 'token' seemed like a fitting word to use. In other words, it would be more of an objectification if the term was coined and used by a white person to describe ethnic minorities within an institutional context, which it has been (and still is). The objectification of people of the global majority as a 'token' is synonymous with the term 'playing the race card' (to be addressed later). This phrase suggests that race is a 'thing' that can be conveniently used, swapped, and exchanged at any time to one's advantage or as Hong suggests, "a luxurious opinion that anyone can casually slip in and out of identities like a video game avatar" (Hong, 2014). Whereas there are those "who are consistently harassed, surveilled, profiled, or deported for whom they are" (Hong, 2014) that will not be in a scenario where race is a 'role' to slip in and out. Chan and Daisley also argue that artists of the global majority who are used as tokens are simply being stripped "of their individuality [and this] reduces them to a prop based on their skin color, gender, etc, and robs them of their voice" (Daisley, 2022) to benefit the appearance of an organisation[59] . Kanter mentions this in her study by that the dominant group state "the terms under which tokens enter the relationship and reminded them that they were special" (Kanter, 1977:225). By applying Daisley's perspective to Chan's comment regarding tokens being reduced to a numerical percentage "as signs of good performance in diversity efforts" (Chan, 2020), it is evident that this dehumanizing construct needs developed discussion.

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[58] Cambridge dictionary definition: "something that you do, or a thing that you give someone, that expresses your feelings or intentions, although it might have little practical effect" or "a piece of paper with a particular amount of money printed on it that can be exchanged in a shop for goods of that value" (Cambridge dictionary, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/token)
[59] This can also be applied to the literature review's mini case studies, particularly the Arty Teacher; the website, (white) individual owner and the university promoting gains credit for being inclusive which therefore further promotes the resource.

<u>Playing the Race Card as a form of Contrast:</u>

When individuals are put into a competitive field like the contemporary art industry, Hall's account of hostility and aggression towards the 'other' can emerge. This has often been the case for art critics bestowed onto artists of the global majority through the usage of the phrase "playing the race card"[60] which is defined as someone exploiting or bringing up their lived experience as a person of the global majority to gain advantage, be it political, for popularity or to accuse an act of discrimination. The term popularised in mainstream pop culture during the OJ Simpson trial in the 1990s to trump all arguments for him, as the televised trial was viewed by one-hundred and fifty million viewers (Robinson, 2016) and who, as a result, adopted the well-known phrase. These facts closely relate to the level of power white people have when representing a token under the watchful eye of the public. As Hall states, this significant emphasis on difference "carries a message" (Hall, 1997:225). Chinese artists have been subjected to this phrase when critics have accused artists, such as globally established, Ai Weiwei of 'playing the Chinese card'. Zhang and Frazer refer to various comments made by critics which argue that Chinese artists play the card to flaunt "exotic, stereotypical cultural and political symbols and representations of China for commercial profits and career advancement" (Zhang & Frazer, 2015:569). This provides a conflicting narrative for Chinese contemporary artists as it suggests and assumes the commodification of Chinese ideologies and artistic practices without considering the historical or cultural impacts the artists are making within the contemporary art world. For young-emerging artists who are observing interactions and comments like this, the effects can be internalised into their sense of artistic self. This means that they could assimilate their practice without considering or fully researching aspects of Chinese culture, which as a result, risks disrespecting or appropriating said ideologies.

Whilst Halls theory aims to emphasise difference to base positive or negative relationships between the token and the dominant, Kanter's theory uses contrast to argue further marginalisation within tokenised groups. However, both argue that with contrast/difference, inevitably comes the formation of stereotypes. Therefore, within an

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[60] Historically, the term 'Playing the Race Card' was "first recorded as early as the 1960s in the" (Eccleston, 2022) when a British conservative politician was "attempting to capitalise" (Eccleston, 2022) on anti-migration.

arts-related institution, these stereotypes become deeply embedded preconceptions of a group of people and assumed relating artistic aesthetics.

3.4 Assimilation:

Kanter's use of assimilation argues that the token's individual characteristics are moulded to ensure that they fit the expectations of their given role because of being "easily stereotyped" (Kanter, 1977:211) compared to the dominant. Kanter argues that a token in a skewed group (15:85%) can retain the generalised stereotype which informs an easy method to instantly finding an "identity by conforming to the pre-existing stereotypes" (Kanter, 1977:211) of what a token 'must' be like. Kanter further suggests that by assimilating to the dominant's stereotyped role, the token may lose their sense of individual identity (Kanter, 1977). Bousé suggests that the application of role taking is a normal part "of our everyday attempts to make sense of the actions of others, and to divine their motivations" (Bousé in Hall, 1997:115). Based on this comment, young-emerging artists of the global majority are in an environment where assimilating assumed cultural aesthetics in their work is 'normal'. This is because they must make sense of the actions of their white tutors/mentors and the western art world, which is arguably under the influence of the white gaze. Hall also argues that stereotypes are the 'meaning makers' (refer to 2.3b) attempt to 'fix' meaning onto a group of people, for example, it thus creates a "struggle to increase the diversity of things which subjects can be of – the possibilities of identities which people have not seen represented before" (Hall, 2005:21). In this instance, if young-emerging artists of the global majority are encouraged to adopt stereotypical artistic and aesthetic, based on race and/or ethnicity, there will therefore be a lack in aesthetically and conceptually diverse outcomes. Therefore, the progression for these young-emerging artists would be limited and restricted into a continuous circle of recycled motifs and ideas.

Assimilation is greatly discussed within social and cultural academic discourses to access social patterns of an immigrant living in a Westen dominated environment. Amongst Chinese or ESEA discussions in art, cultural assimilation is normally synonymous with conversations of identity, both culturally and nationally in comparison to the West (Yamamoto, 2016). In terms of the younger generation of the British Chinese community, Parker argues that racially differentiated discourses, especially in a white context, can be

easily altered to "intersubjectivity motivated as fears of incompleteness within oneself are projected onto others" (Parker, 1995:23). Parker then proceeds to relate this to the Chinese cultural identity by highlighting "anxieties about cultural loss, impurity and the wish for a return, imaginary and real, to Chineseness" (Parker, 1995:23). This relates back to Braziel & Mannur's questioning that national identification for generations of diasporic youth will "relate to the cultural heritage of their parents" (Braziel & Mannur, 2003:9). Is this a pressure from society or genuine concern for loss of heritage? The pressure from a western society to adapt its behavior is commonly defined as cultural assimilation or the model minority myth.

Ang states that she "was brought up in an assimilationist European environment in which my Asianess (or Chineseness) was rendered virtually irrelevant" (Ang, 2001:8). This links to the notion of Cultural Assimilation which is the most known form of assimilation which Holohan defines as a process involving "ethnic groups taking on the cultural signifiers of the host nation" (Holohan: 2012:2). Expectations of adapting their way of living includes language, religion, and appearance which in turn typically results in the minority losing the original customs native to their cultural background. Holohan argues that within the dominant population the process of assimilation is "expected" of the minority immigrant to avoid conflict and "achieve social stability and economic success" (Holohan, 2012:2). This is built upon pre-existing concepts and stereotypes of minority ethnic groups which links to assumptions of one's artistic style to pre-existing concepts of the visual arts[61].

Another reason for adapting one's behaviour to fit with the dominant and job role would be avoiding the adaptation of the dominant's behaviour around the token. This is something I have experienced as I have found in the past that as soon as I mention that my art practice aims to confront topics such as racial discrimination, the listener can adapt their behaviour to emphasise the fact that they understand or make extreme effort to establish their alliance to people such as myself. Dyer expands upon this by suggesting that some non-white artists "feel the need to actively distance themselves from conversations around

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[61] This is demonstrated in the art world where O' Neil observes that some curators who make 'personal choices' gain recognition and the reputation as the 'genius' which he argues is this is highly dependent on "attention, discussion and acceptance" (O'Neill:88) of their peers, the artists, and dealers. Therefore, will curators, who are including artists of colour, assimilate their selection to the preferences of the white-led market and/or dealers as a form of 'acceptance'?

diversity, to be treated as a "normal" professional"' (Dyer, 2010). This implies that artists of the global majority are, firstly, not being seen as a professional and to be taken seriously, and secondly, it implies that they do not class themselves as 'normal professionals' in comparison to the white artists who are, thus, seeing themselves as separate entities from the 'normal' professional population.

As this section aimed to establish a multitude of social effects a young-emerging artist of the global majority can encounter, framed within Kanter and Hall's perception, addressing potential retaliations from the white majority, which will emphasise an unstable and unsafe environment for young-emerging artists of the global majority. The following section will briefly identify three retaliations from white individuals in authoritative roles above the young-emerging artist of the global majority which will then be followed by my argument that education and class are underlying factors contributing towards the level of confidence one must be able to confront tokenism and retaliations. Though this thesis is framed within the visual arts, I argue that addressing social issues is important as the two evidently intwine with each other.

3.5 Challenging Tokensim:

Retaliations,

By drawing from personal experience, observing my peers, and existing literature, this section identifies some retaliations which young-emerging artists of the global majority can encounter when confronting those who they feel have tokenised them. I argue that topics of tokenism, inevitably synonymous with racism and themes of ignorance, can often be met with a strong defense, being ignored or racial gaslighting on the opposing half's part. Grant and Kruger's research highlights that for some policy makers, the discussion of race and ethnic inequalities can be considered as a "taboo" topic for which they "have been afraid to tackle" (Grant & Kruger, 2020:12). The reasoning behind this is suggested to be that these policy makers, for example, do not wish to "offend or misspeak" (Grant & Kruger, 202:12) when focusing on people of the global majority's lived experiences. The simple solution here would be to, as Ira argues, "involve people from a range of different backgrounds to bring

new ideas and perspectives to the organisation" (Ira, 2020). As my research shows, this is easier said than done. Ira's article did not consider the significant role of the white narrative as the dominant position which is evidently an area within the awkward space between 'representation' and 'tokenism' which needs to be more open. Once this is achieved, white-led organisations will, and should, openly listen to minorities and employ them ensuring that the policies have genuine lasting impacts on the relating communities.

Microaggressions

I have observed that microaggression, acts of "subtle, intentional – and oftentimes unintentional – everyday interactions or behaviors that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial messages or assumptions toward historically marginalized groups" (Sandiford, 2022), contribute to most retaliations to confronting tokenistic topics. Craft Council argues that there are regular acts of "racism and microaggression in craft spaces" (Crafts Council, 2021) behind the curtain of appearing to support greater diversity within the craft industry. In this context, Patel describes the subject of racism and micro-aggressions as "outward expressions of implicit biases and assumptions, which arguably feed into how craft by makers of colour is judged and valued" (Patel, 2021:38). An example of a microaggression I experienced during my BA was when my tutor told a story of how they met a former Chinese general in Berlin who taught them self-defense moves in a bar with no real relevance to my work. My tutor probably walked away from that conversation with the feeling that they proved themselves an 'ally' to the ESEA community. This may have been their attempt to swerve the risk of offence and misspeaking like Doronio, Grant and Kruger suggest, however this left me feeling frustrated and awkward. Sandiford states that "the weight of these daily interactions underpins very real consequences on marginalized groups [such as] stress, anger, frustration, self-doubt and ultimately feelings of powerlessness and invisibility" (Sandiford, 2022). Because their subtly, these are one of the most difficult retaliations to deal with due to a significant difference in exposure to the effects microaggression's can have. The difference is down to race and as stated before, when this is the only factor between a peer fully understanding another's perspective over something that seems so minor, in my experience, the conversation goes nowhere. Microaggressions fit into Kanter's third perceptual tendency of contrast as constant, yet subtle, everyday

reminders of one's difference from the majority can be gradually internalized by a younger mind.

Avoidance

Another retaliation an artist of the global majority can be met with is avoidance. From the perspective of a young-emerging artist who wishes to confront their tutor but does not know how, researching into similar scenarios would be the next point of reference. However, when said scenario, a very public confrontation between the Artists Working Group and the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (a group of artists with Chinese heritage/diaspora and a board of white individuals leading a Chinese arts Centre) did not meet the result demanded, it destabilises the art environment in which one finds oneself. Having been acutely aware of the fact that the CFCCA were taken advantage of their deep attachment to the organisation (AWG, 2021), the AWG took it upon themselves to conduct a thorough revising process with the best intentions for the gallery to stay open. The group worked together for three months (Sept – Dec 2020) to conduct substantial "groundwork to undo the discriminatory stating conditions and to lay more equitable foundations for an open and effective collaboration" (AWG, 2021:2).

In their public Call for Action, the group enumerated a list of difficult and awkward meetings with a white led board with the conclusion that to 'fix' deeply embedded institutional racist problem, a ten session revisioning plan was to be implemented. It was then to their disappointment that the "CFCCA quietly replaced [them] with external consultants whose approach was less challenging to the organisation's status quo" (AWG, 2020:4) and they were no longer required for their input. It is evident that the CFCCA did not have it in them to deal with such requests, so the solution was to sweep the group under the rug. Here, it seems that a willingness to approach serious issues with a white-led organisation with a far more authoritative status compared to a small group of artists of the global majority is met with sheer avoidance. This is synonymous with Doronio's argument that these individuals in higher roles, like teachers, "often SWERVE around discussing work centered on telling of a marginalized person's lived experience in order to avoid discomfort or fear of making mistakes" (Doronio, 2022).

Racial Gaslighting

As mentioned before, another response is 'racial gaslighting' which became a hot topic among journalists amidst conversations (Morris, 2020; Wolstenholme, 2020; Doronio, 2022) regarding reappraising the treatment of people of the global majority following the growing awareness of the BLM movement. Wolstenholme defines the term 'gaslighting' is itself as one "manipulating someone into thinking they're wrong even when they're right" and "a form of emotional abuse, it can be used to make the victim question their own mental wellbeing" (Wolstenholme, 2020). In relation to topics regarding race, Wolstenholme uses racial gaslighting to "describe a way of maintaining a pro-white/ anti-Black balance in society by labelling those that challenge acts of racism as psychologically abnormal" (Wolstenholme, 2020) which, in turn, creates an extremely difficult space to challenge forms of racism. This was another negative effect the AWG mentioned following their non-voluntary departure from the CFCCA who, in January, suggested that they were a wellbeing "threat to the staff team" (AWG, 2021:5). Here it is evident that what the CFCCA lacked in accountability, they made up for in tone-deaf harmful accusations towards the Chinese artists who were part of the community who built this organisation amidst the Stop Asian Hate movement. But if the white staff were not at risk of harm, this was deemed acceptable.

From the standpoint of a young artist who intends to confront these issues to the white individuals in authoritative roles, what is expected of them if they are immediately shut down? How are artists such as myself expected to confidently discuss relating topics having just observed a group of seven established artists of Chinese heritage being ignored and pushed aside with no improvement? Therefore, consultation with young-emerging artists of the global majority needs to implemented to improve white-led institution's openness to these topics. The following section argues that educational and class backgrounds contribute to the level of confidence a student or young practitioner has when wanting to discuss these issues.

3.6 Education and Class: underlying factors in the level of confidence one has to confront.

As the previous section indicates, being a young-emerging artist of the global majority and/or diaspora can be met with problematic situations within this space between 'representation' and 'tokenism', and therefore can equally be met with difficult conversations when one wishes to challenge them. The literature and my own subjective experiences demonstrate that it can be extremely difficult, as a younger artist, to fight your corner when matched with someone, not necessarily much older than yourself, but more educated from studies and/ or years of experience within the arts[62]. I, however, have been fortunate enough to fund my visual arts educational studies and am, therefore, greatly aware of those who would not have had the same opportunities. Dyer argues that British publicly funded schemes like ACE's Decibel "have not addressed the real issues of class, race, social disadvantage and educational attainment" (Dyer, 2010) due to the priority to simply tick a box. These are the topics this section will briefly discuss.

Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor's discussion of who specifically 'works in culture', argues that one's class origins is an important factor. The authors argue that because of social status, cultural occupations, "like many other middle-class" (Brook, O'Brien & Taylor, 2020:17) are highly desirable and therefore competitive. The authors use Meg, a 'success-story' of a mixed-race woman originating from the working class[63], to argue that language and her education resulted in her fearing that she "didn't have the language to say what she was thinking" (Brook, O'Brien & Taylor, 2020:55). Therefore, educational, as well as class, origins have a significant impact in that the institution may not have invested money into encouraging a diverse curriculum because of social status. Most likely, this is down to the lack of teachers of the global majority working in schools and higher educational institutions

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[63] The definition of 'working class has shifted over time, Cambridge dictionary defines the term as "a social group that consists of people who earn little money, often being paid only for the hours or days that they work, and who usually do physical work" (Cambridge Dictionary https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/working-class).

like universities and therefore inability to contribute to a programme that discusses these very issues.

Reflecting on the previous section's retaliations to confronting subjects of tokenism and/or being a token in relation to Kanter's remark of security, it is evident that one's mental well-being is at risk. This was a prominent concern the AWG expressed when instructed to collate a revisioning strategy for an impossible task. Throughout the process, the AWG questioned if it was "worth less than the consultants mining [their] trauma" (AWG, 2021:2) as individuals of Chinese heritage living in Britain? At the time, the answer to that question was no. However, as being brushed aside was arguably the last straw, AWG's public Call for Action commenced the boycotting and its inevitable restructuring. Eventually, it was worth the pressure, having their trauma dug up to inform a direction that was met with defense and being brushed aside. This therefore proves that in some cases, confronting retaliations can result in desired change. However, in this example, education and a sense of community significantly contributed to the confidence to confront this institution; we have seven established artists of similar lived experience, in their respected fields who[64] collectively have one advanced diploma, seven undergraduate degrees, eight postgraduate degrees and two Ph.Ds. As a young- emerging artist who felt academically intimidated, who felt I had no one to relate too, it is evident that there is a need for a diverse arts faculty.

Additionally, vocabulary, especially within a Fine Art context, is a necessity for easing the trepidation of confronting someone with developed academic authority over yourself. Blanco states that "language can be a powerful tool for defining – and limiting – ideas and understanding" (Blanco 1998:8) I have found that effectively explaining artistic practice to a tutor, or anyone in the arts requires a combination of advanced art-related/ vocabulary, justified passion, and pretentious mantra. With such complex topics of race, representation and tokenism on top, the repetitive conversation gets frustrating. Having a diverse faculty within an arts institution would arguably be beneficial to students as it will ensure a safe environment with options to seek advice from a senior member of staff with related lived

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[64] AWG education qualifications: Eelyn Lee: degree and postgraduate in Fine Art, Enoch Cheng: BA in English Literature and Art History and MA in Creative Writing, Erika Tan: Advanced Diploma in Film and MA in Fine Art, Gayle Chong Kwan: BA in Politics and Modern History and MSc in Communications, BA in Fine Art, Jack Tan: BA and MA in Art and Ph. D in Legal aesthetics and performance, Whiskey Chow: MA in Contemporary Art Performance and Postgraduate Certificate in Art and Design, and Yuen Fong Ling: BA in Fashion and Textiles, MFA and Fine Art Ph.D.,

experience (Lyn, 2017). Like Paintsil's experience, when my tutor stated that I "have no artistic soul" I sought advice from another tutor who simply brushed the hurtful comment off. I unfairly convinced myself that the reason for not standing up for myself was because I could not academically justify[65] why I thought I had an artistic soul. Kanter argues that "tokens become encapsulated in limited roles that give then the security of a 'place' but constrain their areas of permissible or reward action" (Kanter, 1977:231).
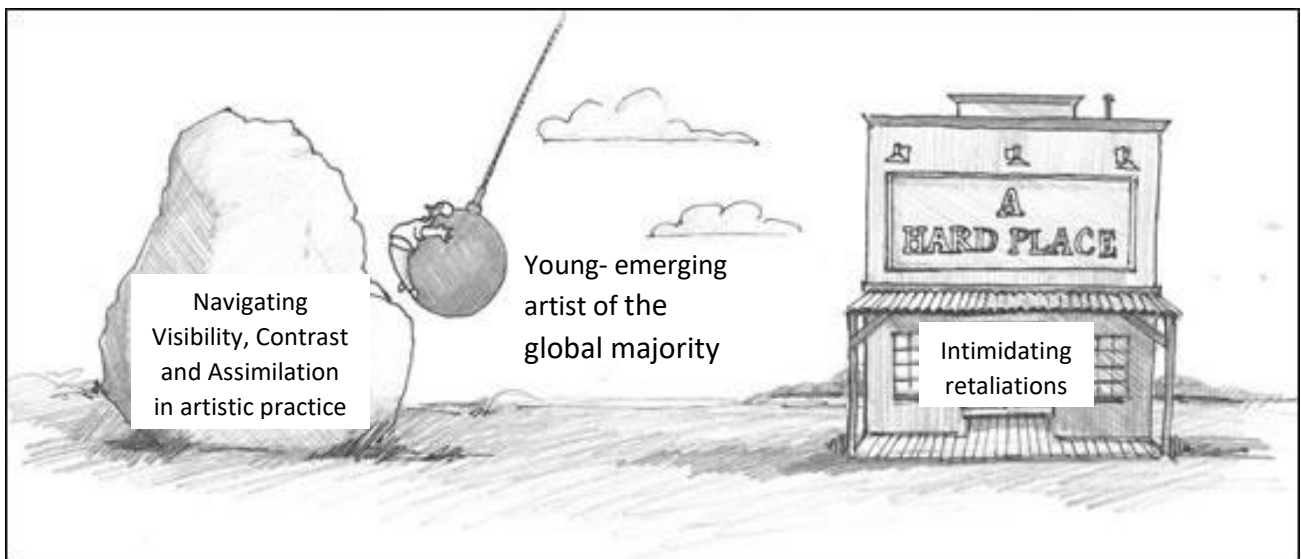

Figure 13: A rock and a hard place (simplified edit of still from The Simpsons Movie's re-enactment of the well-known saying, 1:01:45–1:01:46)

Figure 13 uses the phrase 'stuck between a rock and a hard place' to visually depict the mental conflict one may have when put in a scenario like my own: the rock being the social effects of Kanter's perceptual tendencies and the *Hard Place* being retaliations[66].

Snoussi and Mompelat argue that there is a prejudice against the working class which "maintain privilege at the top and leaves working-class people in low-paid" (Snoussi & Mompelat, 2019:5) work. The link between race and class contributes to the argument that mostly-white-led art institutions maintaining white supremacy within authoritative roles,

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[65] It is not only until studying for this thesis I feel (just about) confident enough to have a balanced academic debate with someone like my former tutor without feeling incredibly intimidated, getting frustrated and inevitably feeling like I did not do myself (and every other individual like myself) justice.

[66] It is worth noting that these metaphors are not fixed and are different for all situations such as myself. In the example, figure 13, the side depicted as the 'hard place' can arguably be malleable depending on the opposing party.

leave the lower paid public-facing jobs to workers of the global majority. Dyer found that after publishing her essay (2007) which criticized British visual arts schemes like decibel, the most supportive responses within the private arts sector were "ACE staff working in non-diversity roles" (Dyer, 2010) which she suggests is due to those individuals having a "more secure position within the organisation… [and therefore felt] … confident enough to engage with dissent" (Dyer, 2010). This assumption is applicable to most teachers and certainly university tutors as their job as an educator and practitioner is established.

Lynn's study argues that art teachers who practice alongside their teaching gain a developed and improved understanding of student learning (Lynn, 2017). The study highlights the valued importance of "shared learning experiences occurring in a classroom culture designed for the experience and expression of creativity" (Lynn, 2017:5). Therefore, the results of this can be easily transferred into the subject of race and ethnicity. Teachers of the global majority inevitably enhance the notion of shared experiences for the students by expanding upon the very white curriculum. It is worth emphasizing that the counter argument would state that it would be just as ignorant, and would go against my entire thesis, to assume an art teacher of the global majority would be expected to bring something new to the curriculum. So, to avoid this, teachers, and tutors, white or not, should be enthusiastic to contribute to lessons with the creative freedom and choice to teach what they feel would benefit a diverse curriculum.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

To begin my conclusion, I refer to the figure 1's centre of the Venn-diagram in which, as figure 14 shows, the Venn intersection suggests three prominent landmarks of influence which I argue enhance the difficult position a young-emerging artist of the global majority encounters when between the space of representation and tokensim:

A Trending
Topic

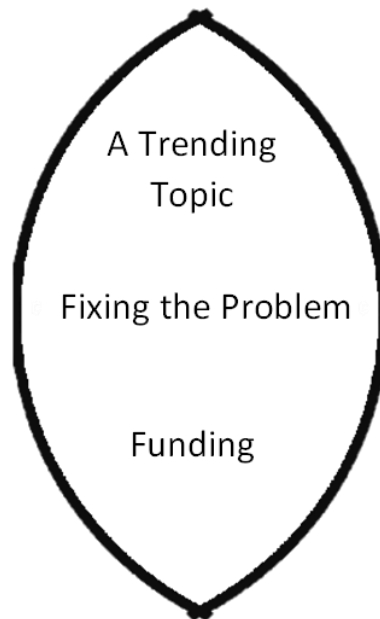Fixing the Problem

Funding

Figure 14: Representation or tokenism: the three landmarks of influence

As suggested, for a young-emerging artist of the global majority, it is difficult to differentiate the two apart. This thesis has only scratched the surface of an overly complex ongoing conversation; however, I aim to suggest principles which I argue need to be addressed further be it within future research or within institutions. Firstly, as the main case study discussed in chapter two suggest, the stability of a cultural arts institution can have a significant impact on the stability of a young-emerging artist's, of the relating culture, position within a British contemporary art context. From this and Kanter's application to my thesis' subject, the significant influences in which these artists find themselves between the space of 'representation' and 'tokenism' is down to the motives behind the individuals who inform the direction of the institution:

1) One's lived experience as a non-white artist being a social or financial trend.

2) To be the solution to the lack of diversity.

3) Funding.

A social or financial trend.

Based on my own experiences, including the T-shirt company, and researching The Arty Teacher, I have observed that the motive behind the inclusion of certain racial or ethnic groups is to follow social trends, which ultimately links to financial gain. Parker argues that a "year after the murder of George Floyd, black creativity and inclusion in the [arts] sector are more vital than ever" (Parker, 2021). As established in the introduction, BLM and SAH sparked public debate which larger and mainstream organisations, predominantly white-led, saw as simply as a social trend on which to capitalise and gain respect from the public. However, Suparak argues that "only when non-white voices lead and are mainstreamed" (Suparak in Huang, 2021) they often find themselves marginalized with prewritten histories through a white lens. Suparak, however argues that there is a need for artists of the global majority to "control more media means of production that will allow [them] to be seen… more" (Suparak in Huang, 2021) and within their own terms. Muhammad expands by arguing that white-led organisations "to be reaching out to work with makers marginalised identities so heavily/exclusively within the realm of public program, means they can then go back to funders (private or public) with better diversity figures (while spending fewer ££s), to morally prove they are on side with ~trendy~ social justice movements, argue they are fulfilling a still! undefined!" [SIC] (Muhammad, 2018). A financial trend would, like the CFCCA, typically align with the social trend e.g., 2008 Beijing Olympics with a surged interest in the Chinese art market, in which authoritative roles within arts institutions are constantly paying attention to what appears at action: 'trends' (Velthuis, 2005:23).

To fix the problem:

As argued by Muhammad (2018), Kapoor (2020), Huang, (2020), Riccucci (2002), Mwanza (2018) Ira, (2020), Mercer (1994) and demonstrated by the AWG during the defunding of the CFCCA, an influence which needs to be addressed is the expectation that artists of the global majority know the solution to fixing problems deeply embedded within the western narrative. These problems would include representation, tokenism and decolonializing an

entire institution. Therefore, like Ali, there needs to be "more poc within various departments, rather than the facing roles to appear diverse, like key roles permanent within the organisation/ institution" (Ali, 2018). Much like my argument within the Impact of Arts Education, this would arguably decrease the need to fix a problem within an institution as different perspectives of lived experienced will diversify a workforce or exhibition.

Funding:

Funding is arguably the most discussed (Hylton, 2007; Boué, 2019; Areen,2020; Chan, 2020; Styles, 2020; Ali, 2020) influence within the public representation of artists of the global majority /workforce. It is evident that throughout this research project, organisations, such as the CFCCA and policies like decibel, lack the ability to "sustain a national profile or to investigate a genuine debate around the issue of cultural diversity" (Hylton, 2007:19). I, like Hylton, suggest that this is due to the stability of "financial and structural input" (Hylton, 2007:19) that is maintained in higher authority roles within policy makers and mainstream institutions. Furthermore, I suggest that due to low integration of people of the global majority, individual roles in authoritative roles in both cultural and educational institutions, categorised funding continues to be upheld by a white-led narrative. This therefore implies, to a younger artist or organisation of the global majority, that the likelihood of successfully receiving funding would likely depend on its relation to a specific race/nation. It seems that there is a vicious cycle which surrounds funding and representation: you cannot receive funding without representation of 'BME' workers/artists and you cannot sustain genuine diversity programs with BME individuals with no funding. However, I question if it is possible for funding to be sought in relation to projects which are not categorised as BME for an institution, like the CFCCA, which is race/cultural/nation specific. Ultimately, the direction of the institution would inevitably circle back to its cultural roots. However, to appeal and avoid ostracizing the masses, which in Britain would be predominantly white, publicly funded projects within these spaces should be open to all. I argue if this is the case, then collaboration and communication between the leading narrative and relating cultural narrative, whether that be artists or local communities, should be open and ongoing throughout the project to avoid culture insensitivity/appropriation.

A prominent issue embedded in my thesis is the imbalance of power between the authoritative, white-led institution and the young-emerging artist of diaspora/the global majority. My research finds that most concluding thoughts points the finger toward the institution. However, there is discussion amongst the diasporic artists which question their position of upholding the problem themselves by complying with the white gaze. Muhammad argues that "diasporic art capitulates to the white gaze's well-intentioned drive to understand, sympathise, but never to overthrow, act or change" (Muhammad, 2018). However, as my research suggests, there are many negative social impacts a young-emerging artist can encounter when dealing with the desire to act upon change. Institutions themselves, such as the CFCCA, have the potential to function as spaces of representation without being tokenistic, however as this research suggests, this would be dependent on the leading narrative, which is ultimately swayed by the three landmarks. Based on these three landmarks of influence, I question how young-emerging artists are expected to navigate such a complex and unstable environment with limited confidence and knowledge of approaching challenging topics to those white individuals above them? Here, it is evident that communication amongst and between young-emerging artists of the global majority and educators needs to become less intimidating.

- Arts educators/mentors/tutors MUST be open and/or trained to listen to their students and obtain a safe environment to discuss difficult topics if they arise.
- Mainstream cultural institutions whose core principles are dedicated to showcasing people/artists of a specific culture should be more considerate of the impact they may have on young-emerging artists of the relating diaspora. Therefore, communication and collaboration with the relating community must be adopted.
- Dialogues with said community must not be on a one off or on a temporary basis and should be simultaneously integrated into mainstream disciplines unless grouped together by appropriate theme.

<u>To the young-emerging artist,</u>

For young artists who face the awkward space between 'representation' and 'tokenism' I offer some advice. In my circumstance I gave into my white-tutor's expectations of my heritage whilst feeling frustrated and intimidated at the very idea of challenging him. This research had scratched the surface for many problems that have deeply embedded themselves into the British contemporary arts discourse, which has evidently shown itself to be a slow ongoing progression. I hope that case studies like the 'Arty Teacher' and the CFCCA have helped inform a better understanding of categorisation and direction to avoid tokenism. Based on my three landmarks of influence, it is evident that the feeling of being tokenised remains to be an omnipresent possibility for being showcased in an exhibition, for example. However, my advice is simple:

- If, for example, 'Chinese' aesthetics is what they want, give it to them, but on your own terms to shine a light on the emotional distress you have endured. It is too soon for the art world to 'not see race' so young- emerging artists of the global majority may as well play to that. As we know, the climate of the art world is extremely sporadic and your chance to showcase your perspective can be down to a single opportunity. So, make the most of it!

- Share your work and build a strong network of artists like yourself and allies who support you. If you find yourself within an awkward space with a concern of defending retaliations, I encourage the building of creative communities and connections with other practitioners who identify similarly to yourself.

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