

Communicating truths: promoting HIV and stigma awareness through storytelling and devised performances inspired by the #MayStigmaBa? Project qualitative research

AUTHORS

E. Figuracion¹, J. Fontilla², I.F. Alquiros³, G.L. Bendicion¹, R. Pagtakhan⁴, E. Bagasol, Jr.⁵, M.C. Azarcon⁶, V. Balanon II⁶, V. Paguirigan⁶, D.J. Dolot⁶, T. Balensoy III¹, M. Farinas¹, B.I. Mendoza¹, M. Muyargas⁷, A.H. Pamoso¹, J.L. Panaligan¹, V. Reyes¹, A.M. Robles¹, K.A. Sarmiento¹, A.P.V. Villasanta¹, J.E. Violago¹

¹Culture and Arts Managers of the Philippines (CAMP) Pag-Ayo, Inc., Research Department, Mandaluyong, Philippines, the,

²Australian Federation of AIDS Organizations, Sustainability of HIV Services for Key Populations in Asia Program, Bangkok, Thailand,

³Culture and Arts Managers of the Philippines (CAMP) Pag-Ayo, Inc., Executive Department, Mandaluyong, Philippines, the,

⁴LoveYourself, Inc., Taguig City, Philippines, the,

⁵LoveYourself, Inc., Sustainability of HIV Services for Key Populations in Asia Program, Taguig City, Philippines, the,

⁶Culture and Arts Managers of the Philippines (CAMP) Pag-Ayo, Inc., Performance & Art Pedagogy, Mandaluyong, Philippines, the,

⁷University of the Philippines Visayas, Gender and Development Program, Miagao, Philippines, the

Research Question & Significance

- to explore how art can translate scientific research into a widely accessible format
- to translate qualitative research findings into short vignettes captured on film

BACKGROUND

- stigma against HIV/AIDS and key populations are well-investigated in the social sciences
- however, the endpoint of research is often publication in scientific journals, to which the public may have limited access

METHOD

- conceptual framework: Practice as Research (Nelson, 2013)
- creative method: Devising Method (Oddey, 1994; Heddon & Milling, 2006)
- devising location
 - blank rehearsal studio with situational fixtures or objects
 - neutral space conducive for doing exercises and games
- collaborators
 - four performer-collaborators and devising director
 - purposive casting: actors KPG or allies
- process
 - review and reflection of qualitative study findings
 - selection of statements and stories from qualitative study as devising stimuli
 - dramatic-thematic analysis, including improvisation and storytelling
 - scene studies exploration
 - live script writing
 - output refinement
 - filming
- process documentation
 - recordings of final product and drafts
 - rehearsal photos
 - idea wall, including drabbles of actors
 - daily notes of devising director
 - journals

OUTPUTS

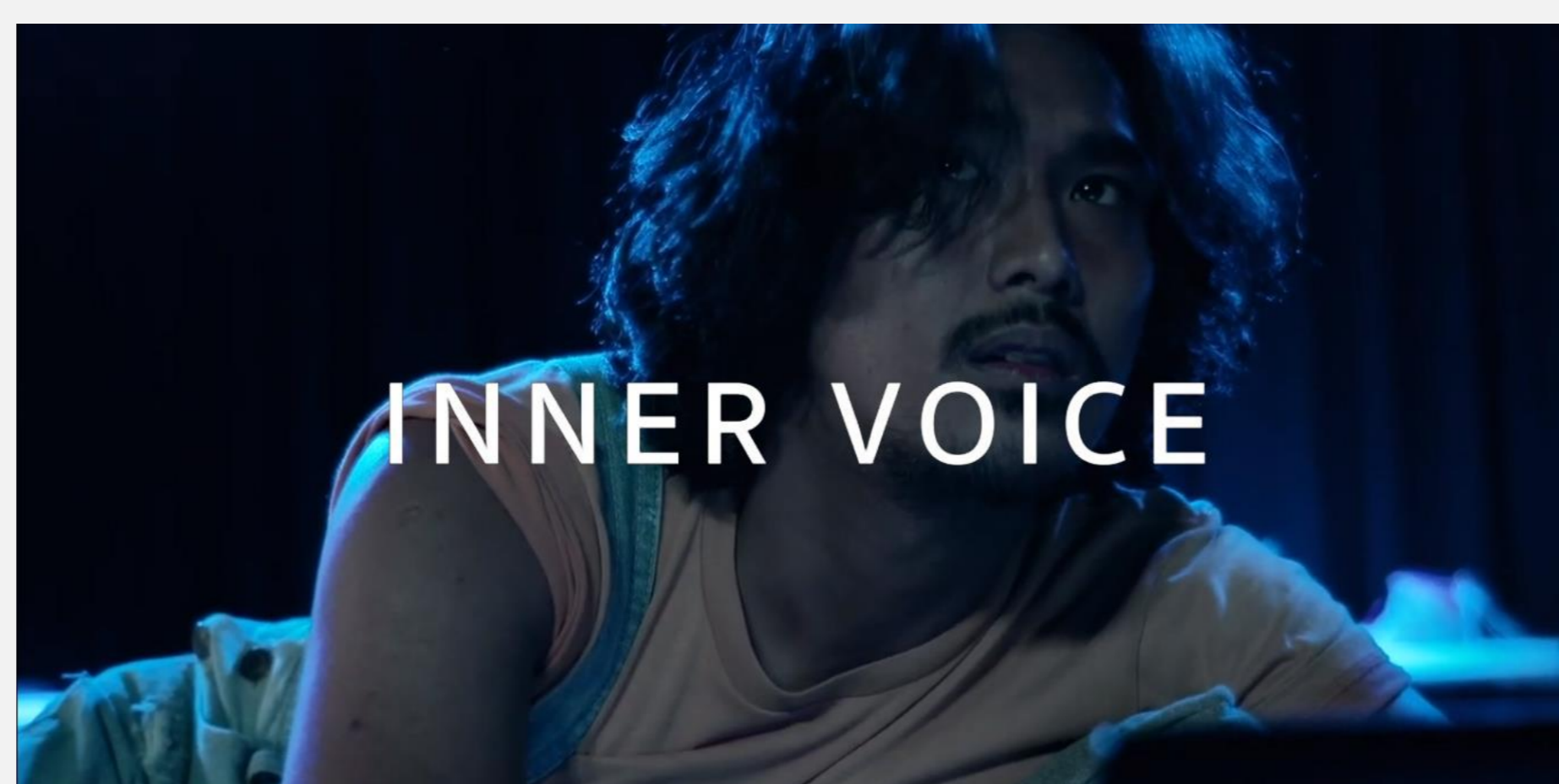
- over 11 days, five films (3-5 minutes each) were produced
 - each film represented one finding from the qualitative study
- film 1, "Erasure", depicting the layers of stigma LGBT persons experience
- film 2, "Inner Voice", depicting the psychological distress experienced when considering an HIV test
- film 3, "Between Friends", depicting the difficulty of having conversations about sex
- film 4, "Breakthrough", depicting the challenges of starting conversations about sex
- film 5, "Floodgates", depicting the use of media as a stimulus for conversation

Film 1. Erasure



YouTube link: [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAhhZIS7k2M>]

Film 2. Inner Voice



YouTube link: [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4292Hbv9vQ>]

Film 3. Between Friends



YouTube link: [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjEmA5Y-27c>]

Film 4. Breakthrough



YouTube link: [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhJxzDeEozs>]

Film 5. Floodgates



YouTube link: [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KA2qjwhMCUs>]

LESSONS

- devising can translate qualitative research data into a widely communicable medium within a short timeframe
- collaborative-reflective process enabled artists to reflect upon their own stigma experiences and deepen their understanding of stigma as a social issue

CONCLUSIONS

- the arts may aid in disseminating scientific knowledge to audiences beyond the scientific community
 - important for consensus building for stigmatized communities and their allies
- devising may be a technique for deepening the commitment of individuals to combat stigma in their communities
- next step: formal evaluation on the reach and effectiveness of the stigma reduction campaign

References

- Bogart, A. and Landau, T. (2005). *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*. Theatre Communications Group, Inc. New York, USA.
- Culture and Arts Managers of the Philippines (December 10, 2021). #MayStigmaBa: Break the Silence, a Culmination Performance [Online Culminating Performance]. Metro Manila, Philippines. Accessible through: [<https://fb.watch/9P5GYwgZL1/>]
- Heddon, D. and Milling, J. (2006) *Devising Performance, A Critical History*. Palgrave Macmillan. New York, USA.
- Nelson, R. (2013). *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*. Palgrave Macmillan. United Kingdom.
- Oddey, A. (1994). *Devising Theatre, A Practical and Theoretical Handbook*. Routledge. New York, USA.
- Rabu, M. et. al (2020). Creating art from research: a theatre play based on research interviews with senior therapists. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, DOI: 10.1080/03069885.2020.1755419
- Rossiter, K. et. al (2008). Staging data: Theatre as a tool for analysis and knowledge transfer in health research. *Social Science & Medicine* 66 (pp. 130–146). Elsevier. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2007.07.021>
- Saldaña, J. (2005). *Ethnodrama: An Anthology of Reality Theatre*. Altamira Press. Oxford, United Kingdom.
- _____. (2003). *Dramatizing Data: A Primer*. Qualitative Inquiry. Arizona State University. USA. DOI: 10.1177/1077800402250932
- _____. (2011). *Ethnotheatre: Research from Page to Stage*. Left Coast Press, Inc. California, USA.
- Sallis, R. (2018) *Exploring the Landscape of Research-based: Researcher, Playwright, Educator*. Theatre. Journal of Artistic Creative Education. University of Melbourne, Australia.

PaR Documentation Links:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/18rijAEh33x5D7WJyf-FRYMt19TOgFLb4?usp=sharing>

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/138PwDcqpF_NhOZ9db9lcPzw7q64gKYem?usp=sharing

Output Videos

Figuracion, E. et. al. (2021). #MayStigmaBa? Culminating Videos [Video Playlist]. YouTube Playlist.

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYUEtHFduCjX_1cBEvHJz8RKDFScy2