

CASE STUDY:

SKIN DEEP

January 2024



Artist name: Sarathy Korwar
Skin Deep Sonic Transmissions 2023
taking place at Roundhouse
Photographer name: Joladé
(website: <https://www.jolade.com/>)



Artist name: FACESOUL
Skin Deep Sonic Transmissions 2023
taking place at Roundhouse
Photographer name: Chuko
(website <http://www.thephotocrib.com/>)



Background

[Skin Deep](#) is a multimedia racial justice organisation that develops digital and physical spaces for Black, people of colour (POC), migrant, refugee and marginalised creatives to work towards justice through cultural production – in print, online and at live events. Skin Deep began life in 2014 as a print magazine, the tenth issue of which will be published in Autumn 2023. Its flagship event, Sonic Transmissions, is a series of live public listening sessions. It creates digital multimedia storytelling – from in-depth features and interviews to creative writing, illustration and film – that platforms creatives, activists and community leaders. Across its programme, Skin Deep explore how to globally build towards racial justice.

Approach

Skin Deep builds capacity and audiences for artists and activists globally to think beyond crisis and survival and envision just futures for themselves and their communities. It has published nine high-quality print publications, each placing work from unpublished contributors alongside high profile and experienced creatives and activists.

Skin Deep's Sonic Transmissions event series platforms the immense creative influence and impact of Black and POC music artists from across the UK. These collective listening sessions include live performance, conversation and recorded tracks, and have featured Shabaka Hutchings, Moses Boyd, Cassie Kinoshi, House of Absolute, Lex Amor, Tawiah, Sarathy Korwar, tyroneisaacstuart and FaceSoul.

Highlights

Funding from the PoP Fund is supporting Skin Deep to redesign its organisational structure and to put in place the systems and policies it needs to be able to carry out its work effectively, equitably and with long-term stability in mind. This work is still underway, particularly to explore the creative storytelling side of Skin Deep's work.

Skin Deep has appointed award-winning freelance journalist [Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff](#) to be the Managing Editor of the tenth print issue. This print will be a collaboration with dozens of Black and POC creatives in the UK and internationally. The theme of 'PLAY' has allowed Skin Deep to think about how to create spaces for joy and imagining for Black and POC communities, and reflects the fact that systems change work is inherently imaginative.

Longer-term vision

Skin Deep is working to ensure that Black and POC creatives have better access to the time, space, tools, collaborators and care that they need to work in the creative industries. Its longer-term vision is that Black and POC creatives are empowered to navigate, collaborate, influence and improve the mainstream creative industries, leading to proliferation of nuanced stories from marginalized perspectives that challenge tired, harmful and unjust narratives.



“The core funding we have received from the PoP Fund has been truly transformational for us as an organisation. But in order for us and our communities to see the fruits of this deep systems change and culture shifting work, we need funding commitments that allow for longevity and sustainability. We'd love to be thinking about the role of Skin Deep has in the culture five to ten years from now, and then create the pathways to get there” – Skin Deep Team

The Power of Pop (PoP) Fund is a pooled UK fund supported by Comic Relief, Unbound Philanthropy, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Oak Foundation. The PoP Fund supports organisations working at the intersection of popular culture and social change, with a particular focus on migration and racial justice.

The first cohort of funded partners is made up of: 2POCC, Skin Deep and We Are Bridge. The second cohort is made up of: Counterpoints Arts, Heard and OKRE. Collectively, their inspiring work amplifies the experiences and testimonies of Black, People of Colour (POC), migrant, refugee and marginalised creatives through bespoke support, network building and cultural production.

