



Waking our Stories

Stories to think and create with...



Agenda

- The collection
- What is *Waking our Stories*?
- Our Approach
- Our Positionality
- What does it mean to “wake” the stories?

The Vansina Collection

1. Rwandan pre-colonial stories collected and translated by Jan Vansina (a Belgian anthropologist) between 1957 and 1961.
2. Filmed for microfilm at the university of Chicago in 1973, housed at the US library of Congress as well as at the Africa Museum in Tervuren Belgium.
3. Digitized by and available to, members of the Center for Research Libraries in 2019.



What is Waking our Stories?

Waking our Stories is a work of resistance

Using Ibetéekerezo as our entry point to (re)activate a Rwandan cultural archive

By interacting with, and creating a community around, these oral histories, we are resisting the erasure wrought by colonialism.

Our Approach

Placing emphasis on the people behind the stories.

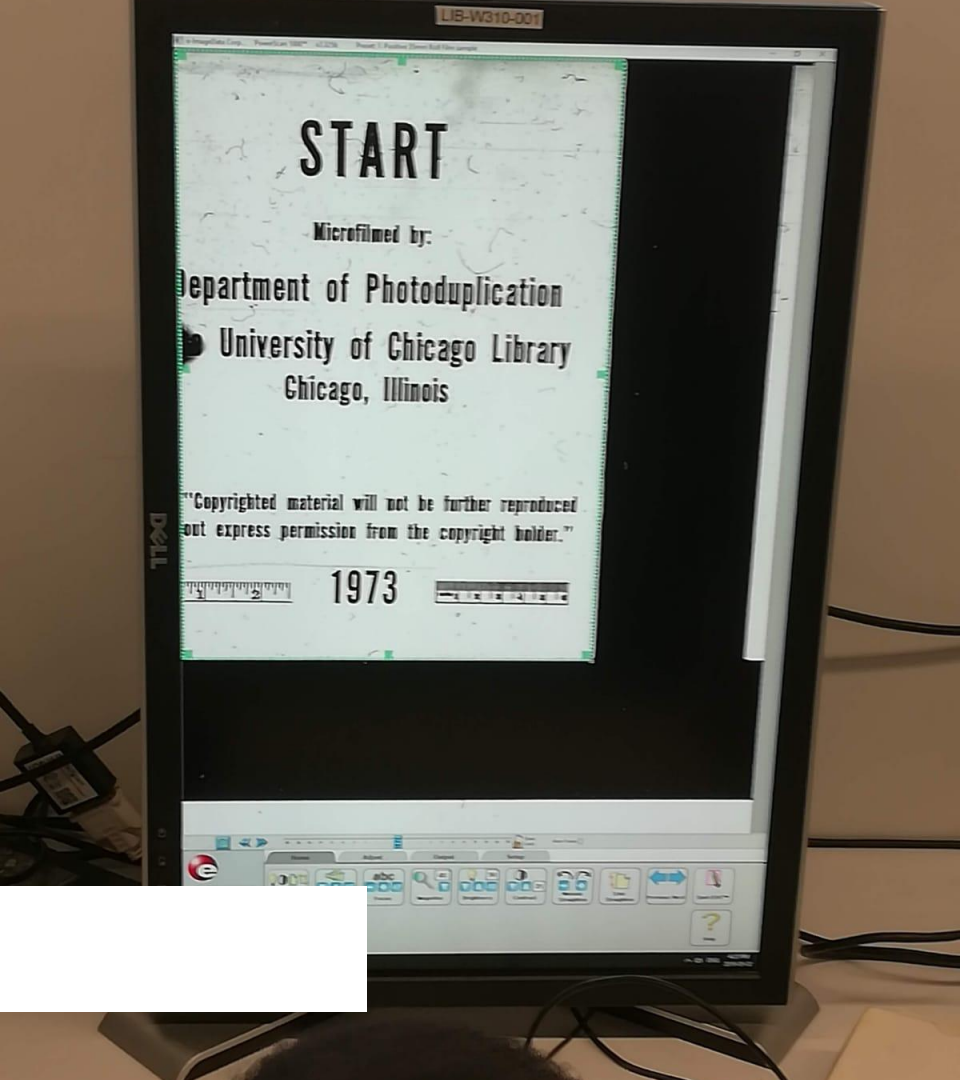
Using a blend of community archival practice and a postcolonial approach to archives.

Influenced by the work of Jeannette Bastian, Andrew Flinn, Tom Nesmith, Mary Shepherd, Michelle Caswell, and others.

Our Positionality

We place an emphasis on:

- Care work and understanding;
- Community building;
- Healing; and
- The refusal to use the (de)colonial lens to read with or read against.



Working with the stories

Project Development



Conclusion

“The conventional form of the archive as a deposit of traces of the past should be rethought to include archives of embodied performance, film, festivals, photography, art, archaeological artefacts and the evanescent cyberspace in order to open up the range of possibilities for the imagination of pasts and futures.”

- Ferdinand De Jong and Paul Basu, *Utopian Archives: Excavating Pasts for Postcolonial Futures*