

## Exhibition

During the biannual conference of the Global South Studies Center, the group of colleagues who are also responsible for the first issue of *The Mouth* presented a small exhibition on the normaliminal in mass tourism. Besides the pictures also published in the journal, the exhibition featured a collection of motto t-shirts, with explanations on the often sexist, racist and transgressive prints. Being of quite some interest for linguists who took part in the conference, the t-shirt collection elicited comparisons to bumper stickers, paintings and writings on lorries and tuktuks, kanga imprints, and other forms of language mounted on things that move. Interestingly, the perhaps most nonsensical t-shirt, with a 'HULA PALU' imprint, got missing during the conference and exhibition. Who might be wearing it, and where?



Another part of the exhibition was a suitcase with flotsam and jetsam from Arenal. In the suitcase, there were old flipflops, cans and bottles, seaweed, plastic toys, sunglasses, a cigarette lighter with a photograph of a nude woman on it, wet and dirty underwear, a violently violet blouse, a rubber glove, a paper cup telling us to 'enjoy', and a blue plastic shark. These objects seem to have attracted no desire to be taken by anybody and by now are safely locked in their suitcase again. A video

installation accompanied the exhibition, showing how the objects were collected, just before professional beach cleaners removed all lost and discarded things from the sand.



Besides a selfie booth that offered the possibilities to snap one's own white gaze pic, a commemorial beach vendor shrine, and a table that invited to a feast of Nigerian Malta and Spanish Sangría, there were two displays of objects of utter banality: items from shops in Son Gotleu that are needed in daily contexts – cooking West African dishes, hair weaving, and little souvenirs given as gifts to tourists in order to get business going – and items from Arenal's beach section, where cups in the shape of a penis or a vagina are offered to stag party participants, and phallus-shaped bottle openers, cigarette lighters, water pistols, etc. point at a heteronormative, patriarchal norm imposed on or shared by customers.





The conference venue's bathrooms were incorporated into the exhibition and turned into installations of Mami Wata shrines that features all the equipment of the Nigerian woman in charge of the toilets in a large club of Arenal. Visitors said they were fond of the installation and consequently used the toilets twice as often than in their undecorated condition.







A beach recliner in front of the conference venue offered several readings: a place to rest for a Senegalese sunglass vendor, for a tired German party tourist, or for conference visitors immersing themselves into one of the most globalised settings possible?



Visitors, including our colleague and friend Festus Badaseraye who came over from Palma, enriched us a great deal by sharing their ideas with us about connections between tourism and conferences, African migrations into other Souths, experiences of coming back (like we are, as well as the Ballermann tourists, coming back), and exotism of the banal.





