

THIS IS CROYDON OUR STORIES

Photo: Chris O'Donovan for Croydon Council.

ZAWDIE CAMPBELL

FASHION MEETS MUSIC

During *This is Croydon*, London Borough of Culture, Lizzy Lambie and Dennica Abdo's creative business [Fashion Meets Music](#) ran training sessions for emerging designers to develop skills in sustainable fashion. The series culminated in an all-day fashion event in [Centrale and Whitgift](#).

IN NUMBERS

Fashion Meets Music

Lizzy Lambie and Dennica Abdo

During *This is Croydon*,
London Borough of Culture:

10 training sessions were run for
emerging designers

62% of participants said the
sessions helped them sell more of
their work

We spoke to local creative and entrepreneur, **Zawdie Campbell**, about his involvement in Fashion Meets Music as Project Assistant. He reflects on Croydon's creative landscape and the opportunities he encountered during London Borough of Culture, which have fed into the development of his own business.

Tell us a bit about your background.

Since leaving college at 18, I've been teaching myself things, getting to be known as somebody who can do film and photography. My friend wanted to DJ when we left college, so I did a bit of DJing. That led me into graphic design and taught me a bit of audio. So, for about eight years I was just following my interests.

Then, inspired by Covid, there was a moment where I went, "Okay, where am I actually going with this?" I wanted to create an agency 'Stratagem' that helps upcoming creatives avoid the eight years of aimlessness I went through. It helps develop content and strategies and put them into production. That's where I'm at now.

How did you get involved in London Borough of Culture?

I was in self-development mode in 2023. I did a music course with Croydon-based Finesse Foreva, and Lizzy Lambie's Win Creative business course. She helps creatives develop their business skills – we tend to be good at the creative side of things and neglect, you know, the business side of things!

From Win Creative, I developed a working relationship with Lizzy, and she introduced me to Fashion Meets Music. I got to work as a Project Assistant during London Borough of Culture. It was a really good opportunity, spanning different things, from graphic design and designing things for a clothes recycling project, to putting together the fashion show itself. We also worked on a BTS documentary, which I put together.

What did the Fashion Meets Music project consist of?

We were delivering a take on sustainability, to change the mentality around fast fashion. We had swap shops and up-cycling workshops, we put together materials for people to access online to develop these things, and we had donation boxes. Then we topped that off with a fashion show at Centrale and Whitgift, showing upcycled works by local designers.

What was it like doing work in Croydon?

I've lived in Croydon for 20 years but, as a creative, I've been in the dark about things that happen here. Being involved in these projects opened up the landscape for me.

Why do you think you felt in the dark about creative opportunities in Croydon?

I'm from the Selsdon/Addington area. Sometimes, if you don't work or engage heavily with Central Croydon... there's not always a clear

tether between what's happening and how it reaches people. The London Borough of Culture year is where it really started to reach different corners. You know, having so many organisations working together, to create a buzz – it got more eyes on what's happening.

What's your relationship with working in Croydon now?

I love Croydon. It's interesting now to develop a working relationship with the place I'm from and do things here that mean something to me. A lot of the work I'm now doing with businesses and creatives is Croydon-based.

Do you find there to be a strong appetite for creativity in the borough?

There are more opportunities that could be created. We are a bigger borough than most, so there's scope to do bigger and better things. There's an ecosystem here: you've got your writers, musicians, filmmakers. It has a lot of room to grow and develop a strong scene.

What was your favourite thing about London Borough of Culture?

Lots of different organisations coming together to be a part of one overarching thing. It was fun for me because I was quite new to it. The little networks I was able to make were useful, and they came together. Being able to bring in musicians I had started to work with to perform at the fashion show was good.

Amazing, it sounds like a real snowballing of connections. What's next?

I'm looking forward to what else comes from it. I hope that snowball continues. You get introduced to this wide landscape, and you've got to find your corner and build out from there. I'm developing my business to engage with what's happening.



Fashion Meets Music Swap Shop

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