

Ashlee

Ashleigh

Ashlie

Ashly

**Ashley**

Ashlea

Asha

Asher

Ashlyn

April 1995

This is me.

Ashley.

I asked my mom how she named me, she said she first came across the name Ashley after watching Ashley Judd in 'Ruby in Paradise' in '94'. She was actively looking for a different name because the naming trend at the time was to name your child after their father or combining the parents' names together but with a twist.

She did not like that.



First, I was Ashlyn,  
then I was I was Ashley,  
then I was 'Baby Buggy'.

A humble beginning of ackee and breadfruit trees and an ocean breeze, typical island living seen only in dreams of the over worked and vitamin D deficient .



The left-over mark of colonial occupation runs deep in the ley lines of the country from Spanish ghosts to dead saints.

“Jamaican society gossiped,  
monitored intensely and speculated  
riotously about this perpetual,  
confusing fluidity of the body.”

(Hall, 2018)



By just existing, my body is a site for militant for activism. As a woman not born of this country, I am not seen as my own person first. I am seen as a product of my ancestors struggles.

I was not given the freedom to forge my own identity.





The Google definition for 'cultural identity' refers to 'identification with, or sense of belonging to, a particular group based on various cultural categories, including nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, and religion'.

This is resonated in the Jamaican national motto, 'Out of Many One People', and my mom blasting Bob Marley's 'One Love' every Sunday morning. While the idea of being 'one' with the people around you come with completeness of character, when you are displaced from this 'oneness' you can find yourself adrift in foreign lands.

“It was very clear when I was at art college that I was somehow out of place; the system hadn’t anticipated me, or anyone like me. Even though there were a lot of female students, they were thought about as though they were being trained to become the wives of artists, not artists themselves. As a black person, there wasn’t a narrative at all.”

(Sonia Boyce, 2018)



Sonia Boyce  
From Tarzan to Rambo, 1987



“It is not culture which binds the peoples who are of partially African origin now scattered throughout the world, but an identity of passions. We share a hatred for the alienation forced upon us by Europeans during the process of colonisation and empire.”

(Ellison, 1955)

The term "diaspora," finds its roots in the Greek word "-dia" which means "across," and "-sperien," which roughly translates to scattering or spreading of seeds.

Diaspora, in the context of the Caribbean, challenges the complexities of the displacement of Africa-descended peoples from the historical processes of Empire.

To invoke the term diaspora is to call into question relations of migratory subjects - the migrant, immigrant, emigrant, and refugee.

To place and movement, forced and free.

"We are bound by our common suffering more than by our pigmentation. But even this identification is shared by most non-white peoples, and while it has political value of great potency, its cultural value is almost nil."

(Ellison, 1955)



**IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT  
RESPECTABILITY WILL NOT SAVE YOU**

Alberta whittle,  
What sound does the Black Atlantic make, 2019



Cultural identity

Personal identity

Etymology of identity

- Diaspora
- Egress
- Culture
- Occupation
- Movement
- Place
- Freedom
- Immigrant
- Migratory
- Binding
- Empire
- Together
- ness
- Alienation
- Origin
- Identity
- Fixed
- Scattering
- colonisation
- Perceptions
- Prejudice
- Belonging
- Emigrate
- Exodus
- Dispersion
- Disbandment
- Home
- Space
- Transcultural
- Generational
- Community
- Journeys
- Being
- Hardships
- Experiance
- Routes
- Discovery
- Family
- Assimilation
- Outsider
- Households
- Guilt



A: “Like my mom never brought me up as ‘a black girl’, but it wasn’t until secondary school I was told if you were a black girl, you’re meant to be like this and that and if you’re black you’re not meant to talk all white, you’re meant to be a certain way and that just wasn’t me you know.”

Becoming somebody:  
Finding an Identity and the complexities that  
come with it, 2022

## Identity (n.)

c. 1600, “sameness, oneness, state of being the same,” from French *identité*.

A name or persona. A mask or appearance one presents to the world, by which one is known.

“These Elements of Me, a play of repetitive, incomplete, and unresolved propositions—“I AM NOT THE”...“BUT NOW I AM”...“BUT NOW WE”...“THE NOW I AM”...“BUT WAS THE”—unfolds in uncanny dialogue with shapes, marks, hatching, and reproduced images.”



Adam Pendleton  
These Elements of Me, 2019

## In Search for Self

“I remember the very day that I became colored...I do not always feel colored. Even now I often achieve the unconscious Zora of Eatonville before the Hegira. I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background.”

(Neale-Hurston, 1928)

As I grew, I questioned my own identity and my sense of worth in the places I was in.

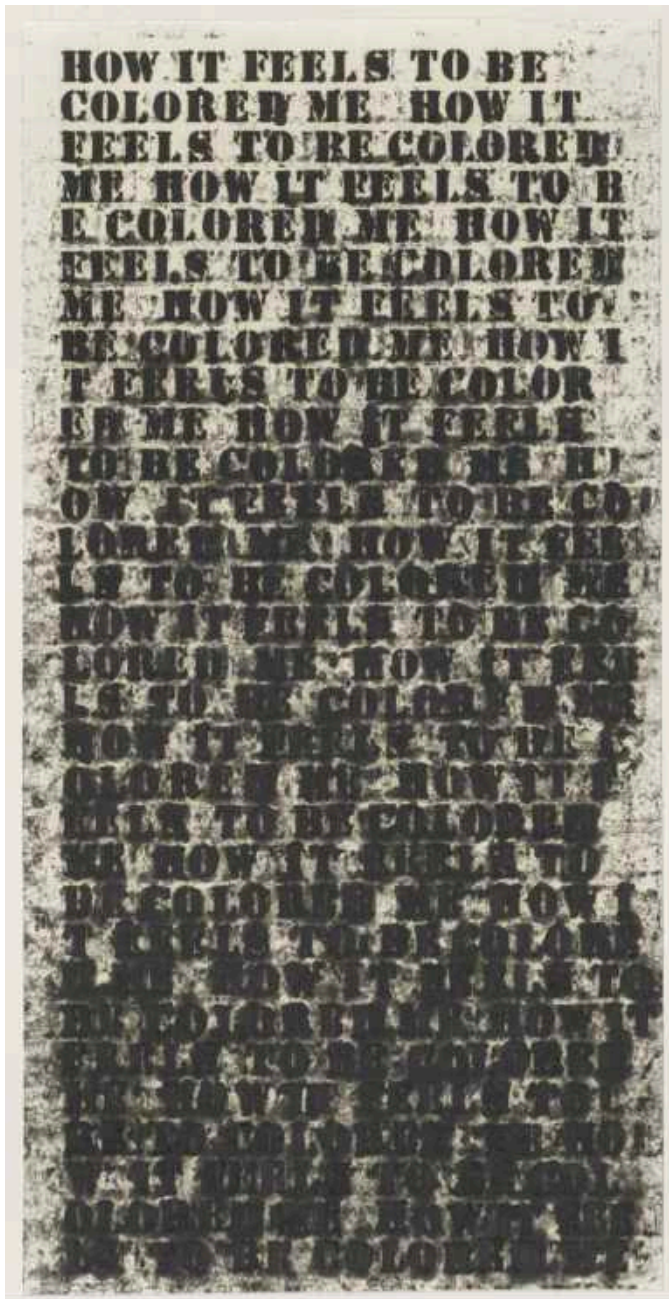
It started with a name, my name.

Without a stereotypical black girl name, I felt a complexity with what I was given.

In the south suburbs of Kings Norton, the name was too white for me but in Handsworth surrounded by kin I wasn't black enough.

Becoming confused and lost, rejecting these roles. Trying and trying again to answer the same question.

Who am I?



“It makes the words cast shadows, bleed into one another, [so that] their meanings seem less fixed; the smearing also creates a visual interaction with the gesso ground, a metaphor for the interaction between blacks and whites in the construction of racial identity.”

(Ligon, 1990)

Glenn Ligon  
Untitled (I Do Not Always Feel Colored), 1990





always there

standing and forgotten

Common and widespread

but never alone.



*Fraxinus excelsior*, known as  
ash.

Intrusive by nature, Ash Trees are  
durable and reliable.

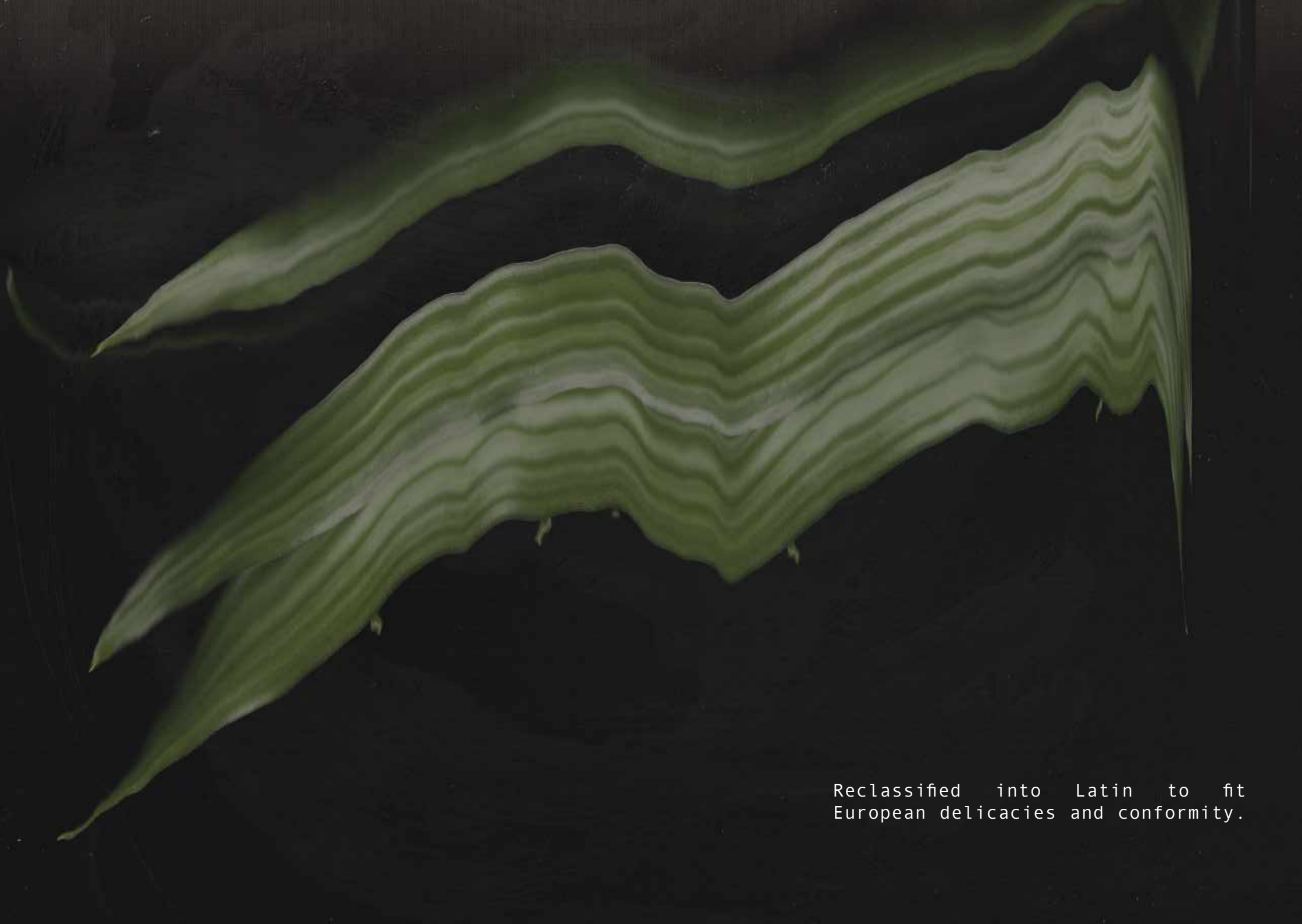
absorbing shocks without splintering.

The  
n a m e  
you are given  
at birth is like a  
brand you carry  
around for life, it  
can be seen as a  
badge of honour or  
a mark of respect  
that is carried  
over from the  
generations  
behind  
you.

But  
w i t h  
this badge,  
this brand,  
am I a genu-  
ine product of my  
lived experiences  
or am I product of  
the generation-  
al hardships  
that echoes  
through  
m e .

Identities become not so much categories to be occupied, owned, protected, or rejected, but space to be navigated, revisited, revised and elided on a moment-to-moment basis.

(Noreen Giffney, 2009)



Reclassified into Latin to fit  
European delicacies and conformity.





“Traces of European colonialism are ever-present. But often the knowledge required to uncover and decode them is missing. Uriel Orlow’s works construct paths for connecting the past, present and future.”

(Kunsthalle Mainz exhibition booklet, 2019)

Uriel Orlow  
Conversing with Leaves, 2019

Most plants you see hold dual citizenships. Their bodies are the only things connecting them their uprooted homelands.

Ripped up and replanted.

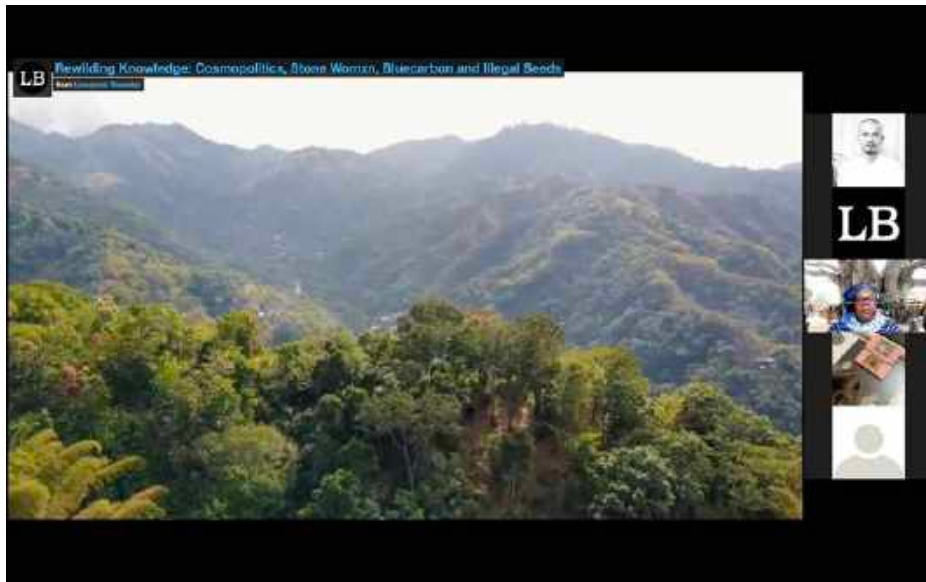
Displayed and but hiding the legacy of their travels.

They once were known by one name only to be given another.

These identities washed away with the crossing of the Atlantic.

Shipped across the wetlands and given another, one that is unfamiliar to their native tongues.

Heavy and complicated.



Decolonising Botany Working Group,  
 Rewilding Knowledge-Cosmopolitics, Stone Womxn,  
 Bluecarbon and Illegal Seeds, 2021



The migratory dispersion of the diasporic people is one that is scattered with feelings of guilt and alienation.

There is a sense of displacement that is soulfully deep. I found that these complexities around my own identity and existence was not a lonely one.

The lasting legacy of colonialism is still prevalent within the Caribbean diaspora.

It is filled with traumas and pain that has been passed down through generations.

This generational pain is inescapable, echoing in our lives. Deep-rooted in our lives, homes, societies, and minds.



I find the act of printing  
can be laborious and violent.



To begin you must cut and carve  
into the flesh of the lino,  
scarring the surface permanently.



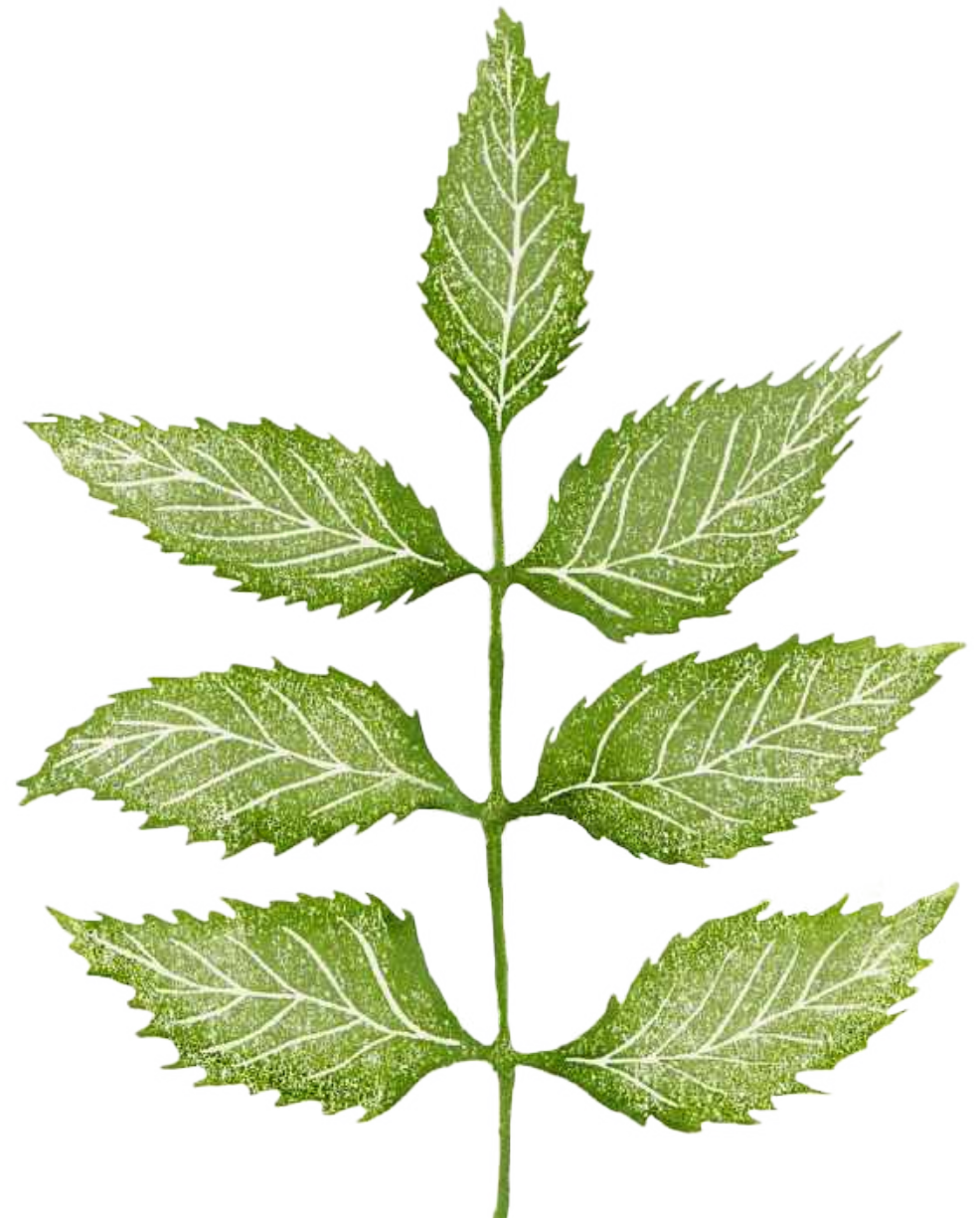


These marks will never heal.

Covered in abrasions and Imperfections



But once finished, you are left  
with these beautiful impressions.



Like people, the personalities  
and lives we have are carved out of  
the traumas and lived experiences.



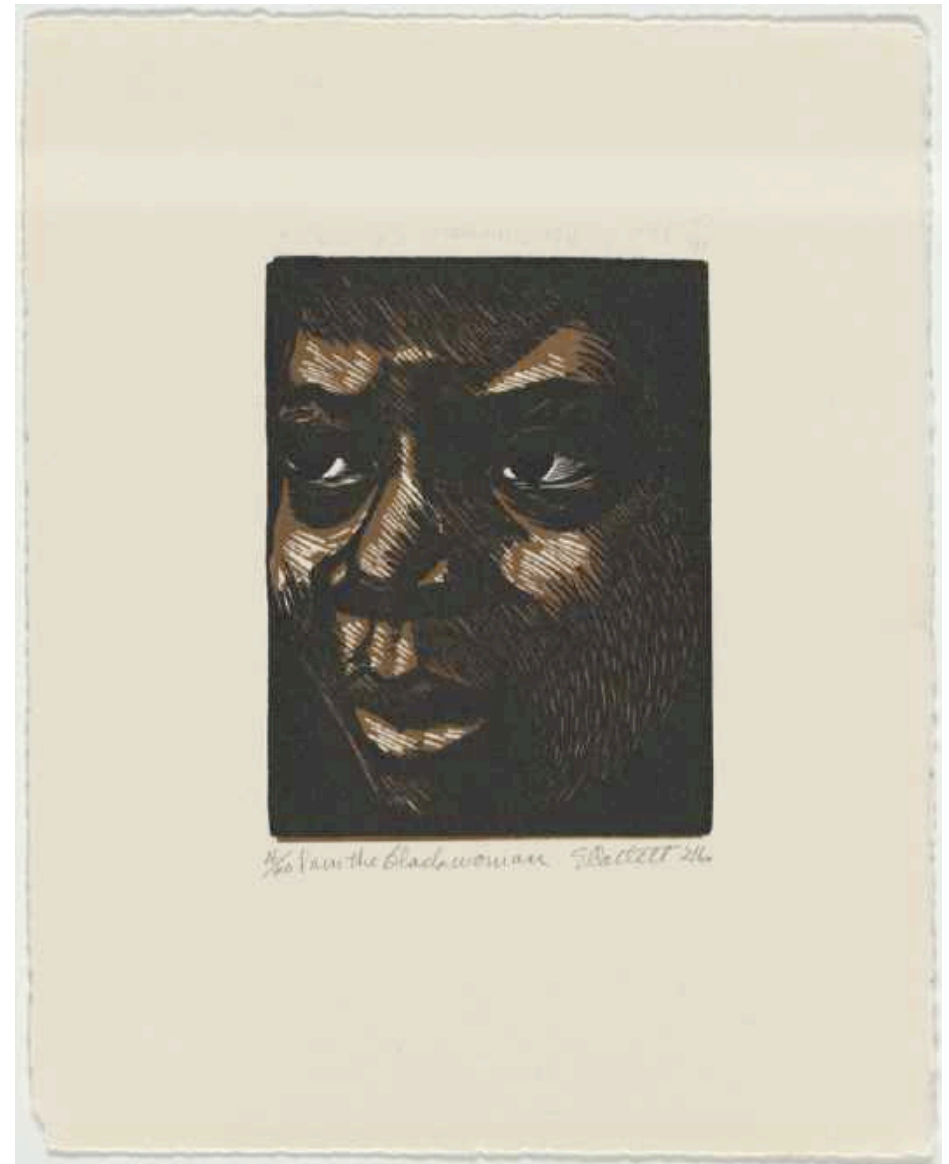




Warped and flawed

“I have always wanted my art to service my people - to reflect us, to relate to us, to make us aware of our potential. We have to create art for liberation and for life.”

(Elizabeth Catlett, 1989)



Elizabeth Catlett  
I Am The Black Woman from the series The Black Woman,  
1946, printed 1989

“It is only as we collectively change the way we look at ourselves and the world that we can change how we are seen. In this process, we seek to create a world where everyone can look at blackness, and black people, with new eyes.”

(Bell Hooks, 1992)

I've found that these complexities round my own identity and existence is no a lonely one and that the feelings of dissociation around the occupation of place as an immigrated person is universal.

There is a struggle to balance the transcultural relationship between a distant homeland and your current place is perturbing and disconcerting. You are often left adrift, grasping at metaphorical straws.

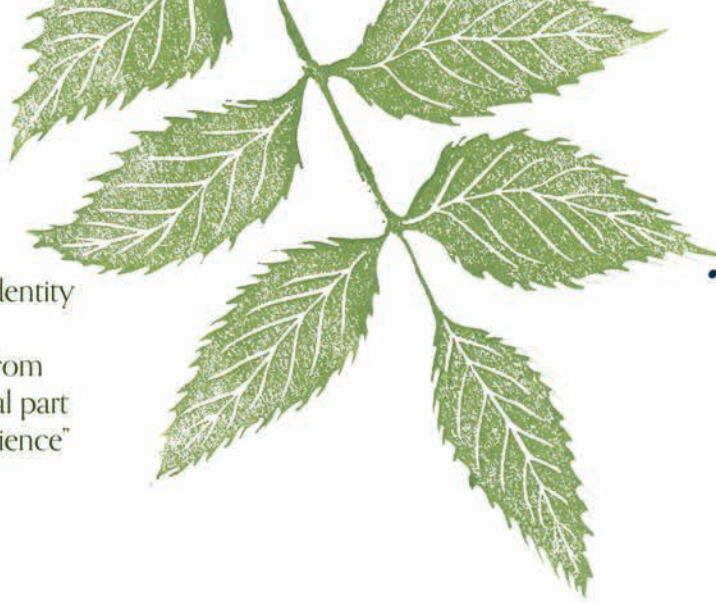
Humble beginnings, colonial occupation and journeys. Are the people we are today a genuine product of the experiences we have lived or are we products of the generational hardships that echo through us?

The emotional effects of Diaspora and transcultural identity are notably unheard of, simply accepted and not understood, intricately and subtly sown into stories from home, these stories and conversation being an integral part of understanding our "own historically situated experience" (Kirsch and Rohan, 2008).

Incommensurable meaning which engage in ones 'roots' and 'routes'.

We continuously **grow** and we **cultivate**

*"understand and explore the fissures of historical narratives, the places at the margins that where voices have been suppressed, silenced or ignored." (Kirsch and Rohan, 2008).*



• *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process* - Gesa E Kirsch and Liz Rohan

• *All About Love* - bell hooks

• *Sister Outsider* - Audre Lorde

"Whats going on in our household, in our family, that is my number one priority"

**DIASPORA:** the etymology of the term deriving from the Greek verb 'diaspeirō' translating to 'scatter' such as to **scatter seeds**.

Reading list: Space  
Time

Reflection

Seeing

People

Place

Identity

Home

Questioning

Stories

Learning

Unlearning

Relearning

Documenting

Archiving

Discovery

Diaspora

Transcultural

Growing

Routes

Scattering

Conversation

Generational

Community

Love

# In Conversation: Stories From Home

Gugan Gill and Ashley Wilson  
March 2022

In conversation Stories From was a collaborative workshop between myself and artist Gugan Gill, discussing stories of life and journeys and the narratives of people and place.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ND0zoXMXWy8>



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAOxn\\_ztDoY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAOxn_ztDoY)

Gugan Gill and Ashley Wilson, In Conversation: Stories From Home Workshop, 2022

In the words of Audre Lorde, "your silence will not protect you". However, neither will relentless, unfocused, counter-productive fighting. Action must be sustainable; consciousness must be valued; your work, and your wellbeing, must be bridged.

Family photographs offer glimpses into parallel histories. In the case of artists such as Guga Gill and Ashley Wilson, there is an interesting relationship occurring in images and sound - in how these photographs and recordings have been taken and preserved. Within these portals, and time-machines, and windows, there is careful planning, and yet authentic serendipity. There is a play between formal composition and intimate recollection - between professional staging and familial spontaneity.

IT'S BAAAD THAT's In Conversation, with Guga Gill and Ashley Wilson, offers a timely reminder of the importance of heritage.

To the stories we share, and the lives we touch. To the legacies of our families. To the connections that make us whole.

Canaan Brown  
March 2022

THE CONNECTIONS THAT MAKE US WHOLE:  
A reflection on IT'S BAAAD THAT-In Conversation  
Stories From Home  
Canaan Brown, 2022



untitled  
Lino print on liner wallpaper, 2021





Coming to the end of my undergraduate, I've spent a lot of time thinking about the places around me and whether or not I was 'present' in them. Beside my home, the art school was where I spent most of my time outside of my home.



To Make A House A Home,  
Lino print on glass, 2022



could be argued that there is a sort of abrasive relationship between reality and imagination, and self and other, which in combination light and kindle a creative spark. The same tension exists between our past and present, and is found in a particularly visually focused form in art, design and architecture. In this way one can see the Margaret Street building as an emanation of cultural history, as an embodiment of alternative values, and as a catalyst in the reconsideration of tradition, challenge and change: in other words, an ideal location for the practice and theory of art and education. ●



The School of Art is a grand building that stands tall and proud its histories are embedded in its walls and leftover archaic machines. Its existence is a constant reminder of what was but not a reflection of what currently is.

Unfortunately, because the school is a grade listed building there was only so much, I could physically do to it - printing wise. This means I could only print on windows that would be wiped clean or on plinths or studio walls that would be re-painted over or on wallpaper that will be tore down.

DO NOT PAINT ON THE WALLS

NO ENTRY



MIND THE FLOORS

## Marooned

1: to put ashore on a desolate island or coast and leave to one's fate.  
2: to place or leave in isolation or without hope of ready escape.

Places have meanings.

But what is a place beyond a map and geographical lay lines?

What these places do is mirror the existence of the people that occupy them. They carry symbolic meaning that run deeper than the architectural styles that are often outdated and archaic.

The memories of the past inhabitants set the scene for the future dwellers sowing seeds that contain stories and lessons that go beyond place and its foundations.

Some theorists have adapted the term space to refer to social and psychological attributes of a place this symbolic value of space has accumulated over time reflecting the lives and cultures that exist in them. But while these places hold value that doesn't protect a space from change. Especially in an ever- changing world where the past is demolished and replaced with a vague idea of what the future will be.

This School of Art is a grand building that stands tall and proud its histories are embedded in its walls and leftover archaic machines. Its existence is a constant reminder of what was but not a reflection of what currently is.

A building that was designed for a purpose that apparently no longer hold educational currency. In this ever-developing world, one that is obsessed with change, the School of Art loses its relevance day by day.

When I walk the walls, I see scars of a past I didn't exist in where and a present I also feel absent.

The constant reminders are imbedded in the marble walls, from the 'museums' arches to the hulking iron printing press machines' in the print room.

I'm an intruder.

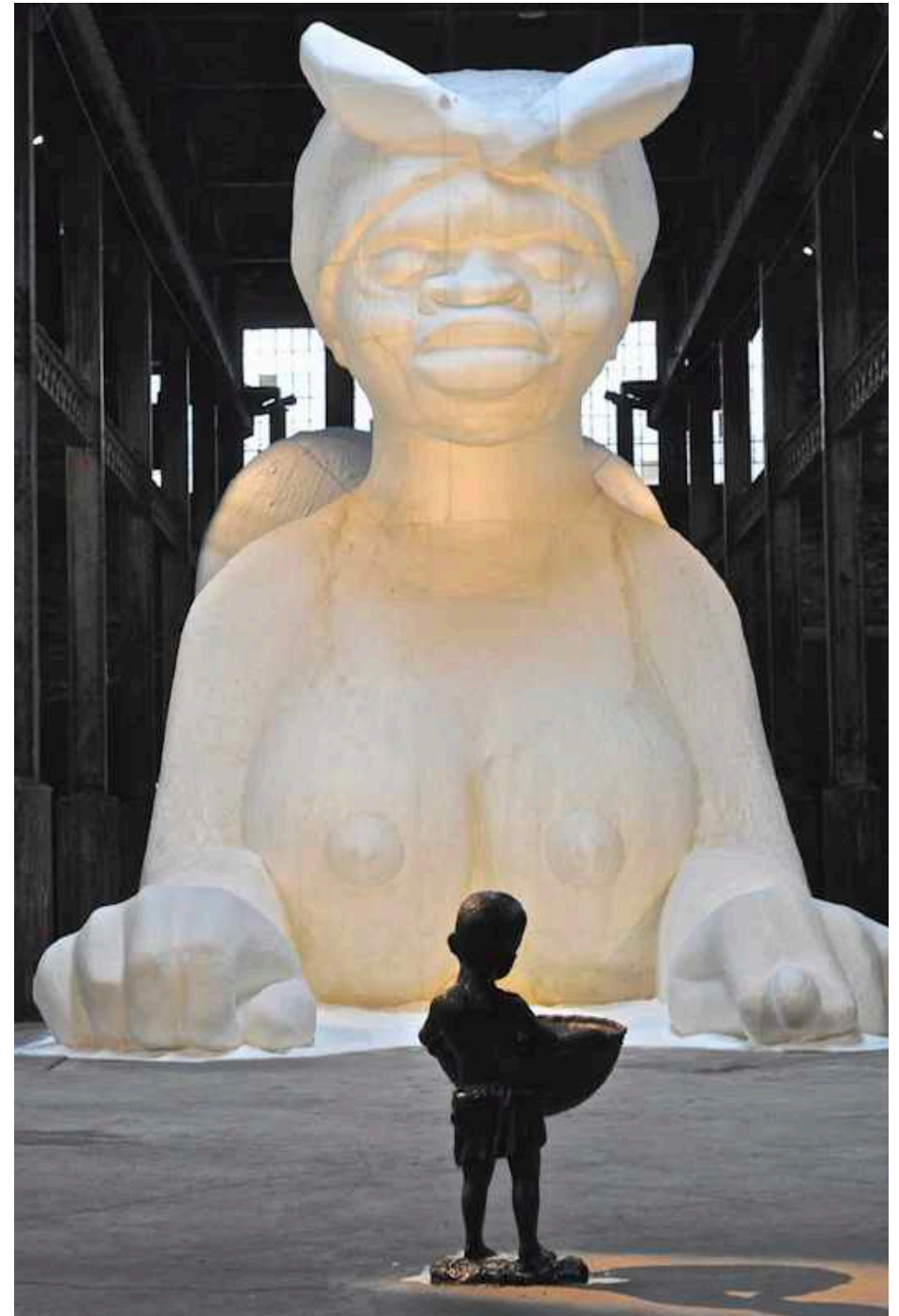
Extract from Marooned: A reflection,  
Ashley Wilson, May 2022



Installed in the relics of the Domino Sugar Factory in Brooklyn, Kara Walker's physically and conceptually expansive installation— a massive, sugar-coated sphinx-like woman— responded to the building and its history.

“The Marvelous Sugar Baby  
an Homage to the unpaid and  
overworked Artisans who have  
refined our Sweet tastes from the  
cane fields to the Kitchens of  
the New World on the Occasion  
of the demolition of the  
Domino Sugar Refining Plant”

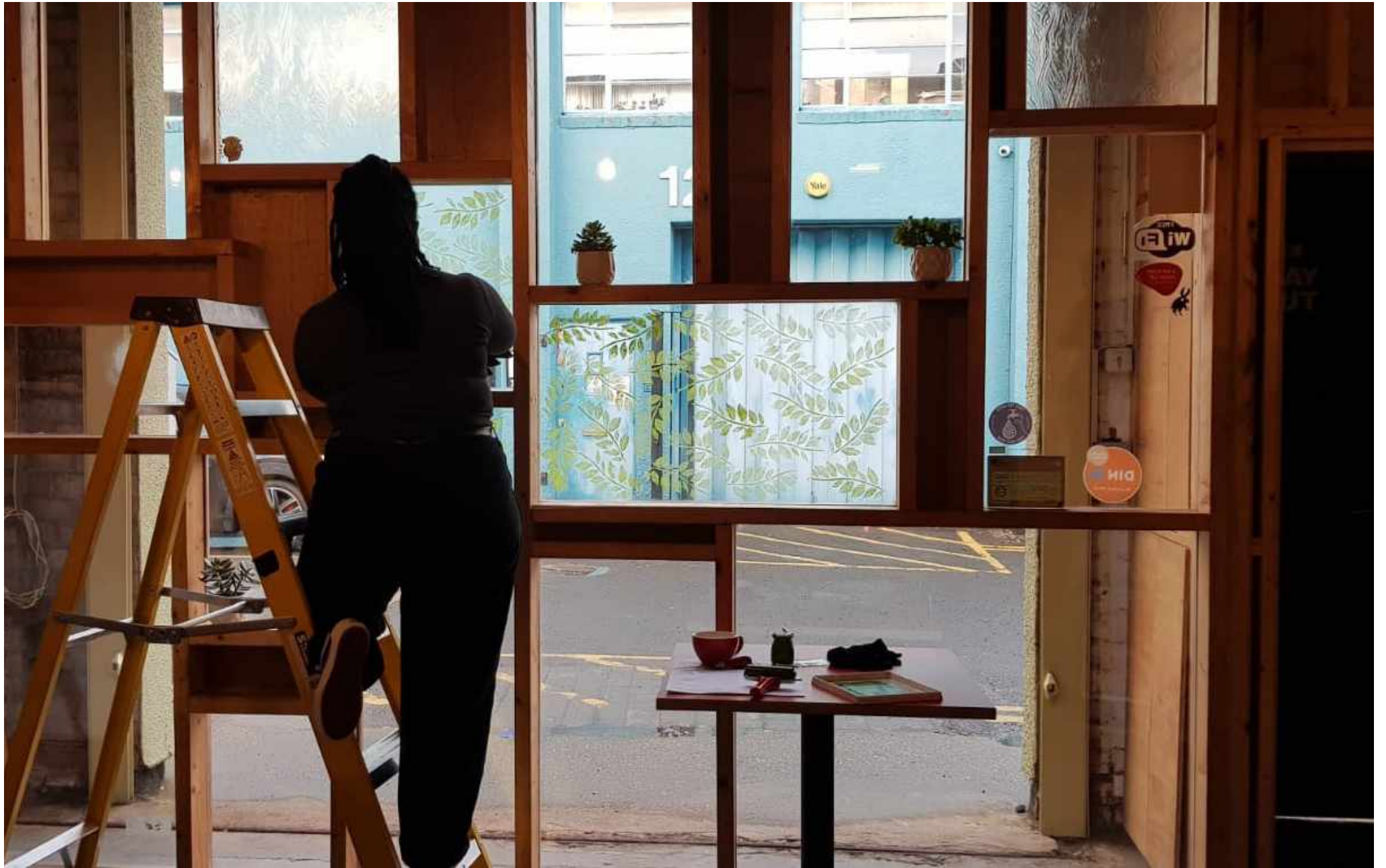
Kara Walker  
A Subtlety, 2014





The series 'Through the Looking Glass, is my way of imparting myself on this space it's about seeing and being seen bulling my way to. Be acknowledged reclaiming these space that historically by people were not welcome in.

Through thee Looking Glass  
Lino print on glass,2021





Through the Looking Glass 2,  
Lino print on glass, 2021



The history of linoprinting has been around nearly as long as the School of Art.

This way of printing hasn't evolved much outside of carving materials. The use of wooden blocks and Linoleum is still the same as it was in 1900's.

It is dissapointing to little experimentaion outside of printing on paper and card.

This art form is still stuck in the past and that is disappointing.

Transferring my prints into digital format has given me a medium that allows me the option of reworking my original prints into something new.

With projections one is able to transform institutions. Projections allow symbolism to fill the facade, mixing the heavy histories with a present that is trying to leave a lasting imprint.

But this imprint is fleeting.

A projection is a temporal thing it can be moved anywhere, but I have a feeling which will sit with a person, something that isn't tangible, that isn't visible. I'm highlighting my experiences as a black woman living now. This feeling isn't a physical, like a projection.

1) places have meanings... or so they say. But what is a place beyond a map and geographical way to what these places do is mind the existences of the people that occupy them. They carry symbolic meanings that run deeper than the architectural styles that are often outdated and archaic.

2) The memories of the past inhabitants set the scene for future dwellers, ~~preserving~~ of sowing seeds that contain stories and lessons that go beyond a place ~~map~~ and its ~~geographical~~ lay lines.

3) The school of Art is a building that stands tall and proud its histories are imbedded in its walls and left over archaic machines

4) its existences is a constant reminder of what was but not a reflection of what currently is.

5) When I walk the walls I see scars of a past I didn't exist in and a present where I also feel absent.

(an) A ~~times~~ ever changing world the school of Art loses its relevance. A building that was designed for a purpose it has now. A purpose that is being devalued day by day. The ideas that no longer hold educational currency.

6) A building where its purpose at the school is slowly being chipped away, where in the eyes of the world the ideas that no longer hold educational currency.

There are a lot of outside forces that go into a person's identity, for place of origin to place of settlement and all the external factors around that transcultural process. It is hard to try and find yourself in the overlapping layers of identity and that can be difficult and confusing.



“My idea is to disrupt the Neoclassical façade and mash it all up. It’s my take on the world as it is, defacing and refacing and putting chaos into order”.

(Chila Kumari Singh Burman. 2020)



Chila Kumari Singh Burman, Remembering a Brave New World, 2020



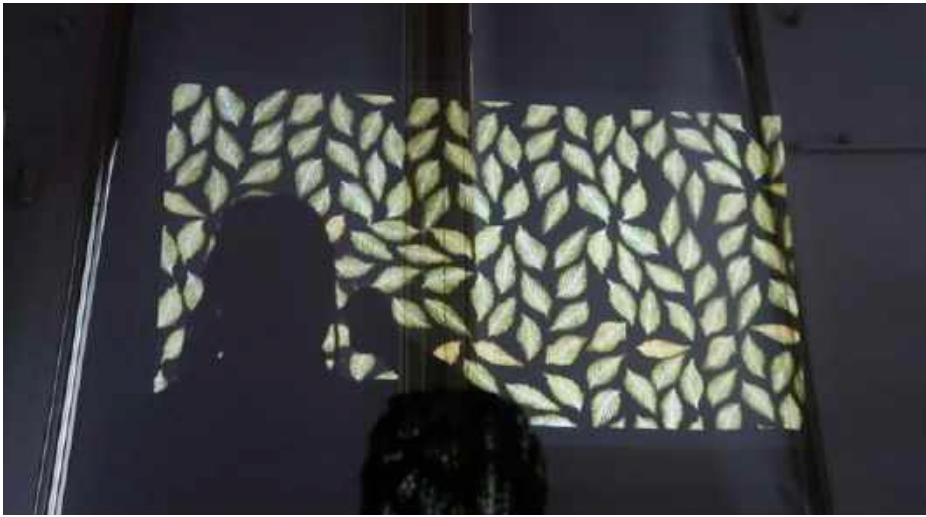
Transferring my prints into digital format has given me a medium that allows me the option of reworking my original prints into something new.



Through the Looking Glass 4 Digital projection and  
Audio Soundscape 4 minutes, 2022

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8ZY\\_BwjGP4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8ZY_BwjGP4)





With the construction of identity, one goes through different iterations, different stages of visibility, toeing the line between visibility and invisibility.



This introduces a vicious cycle of searching, questioning and settling,

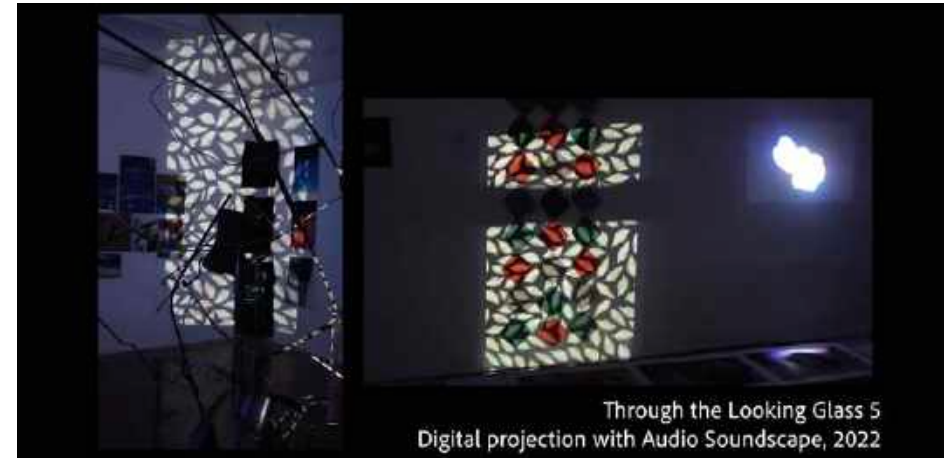
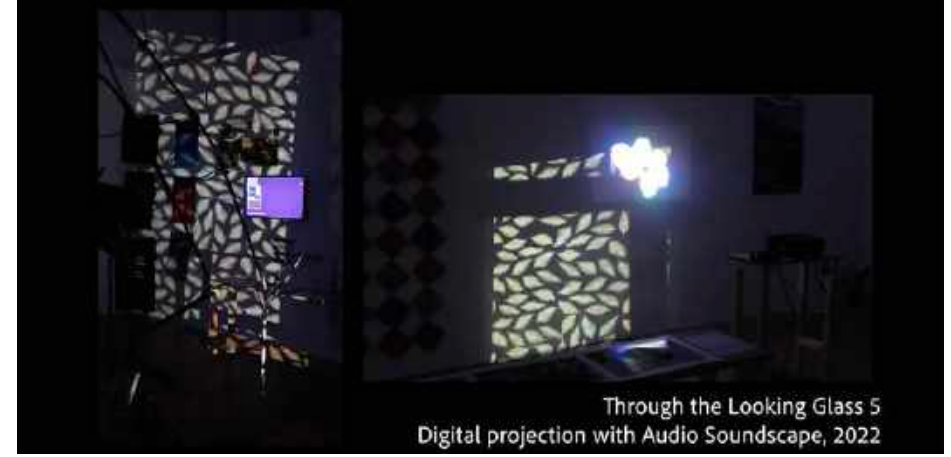
Through the Looking Glass 5 Digital projection with  
Audio Soundscape, 2022

identity

of

layers

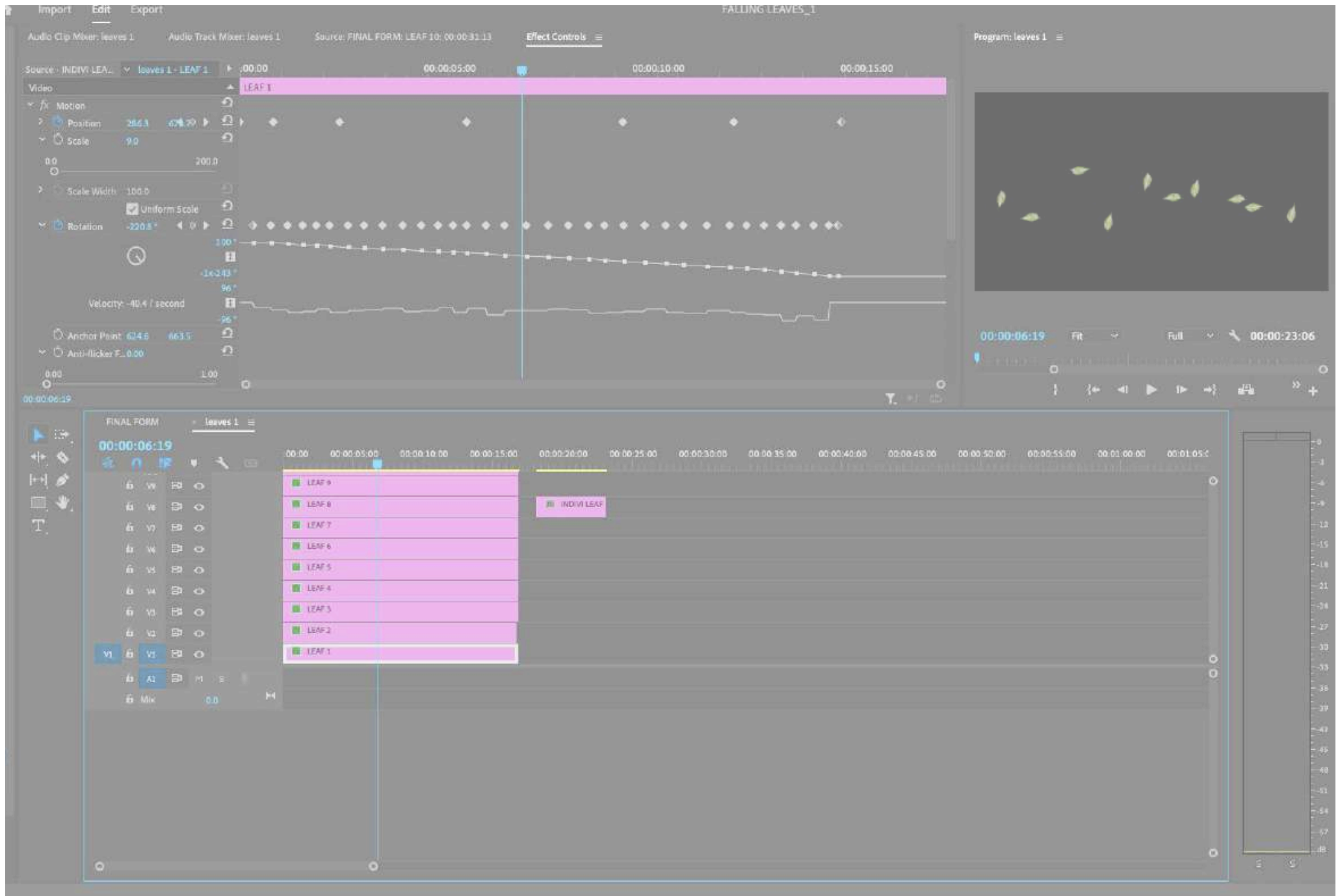
Overlapping



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOHhENGE\\_w4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOHhENGE_w4)

Keyframing is the simplest form of animating an object. Based on the notion that an object has a beginning state or condition and will be changing over time, in position, form, color, luminosity, or any other property, to some different final form.

f a l l i n g   l e a v e s   e d i t s



animation with keyframing in premeire pro





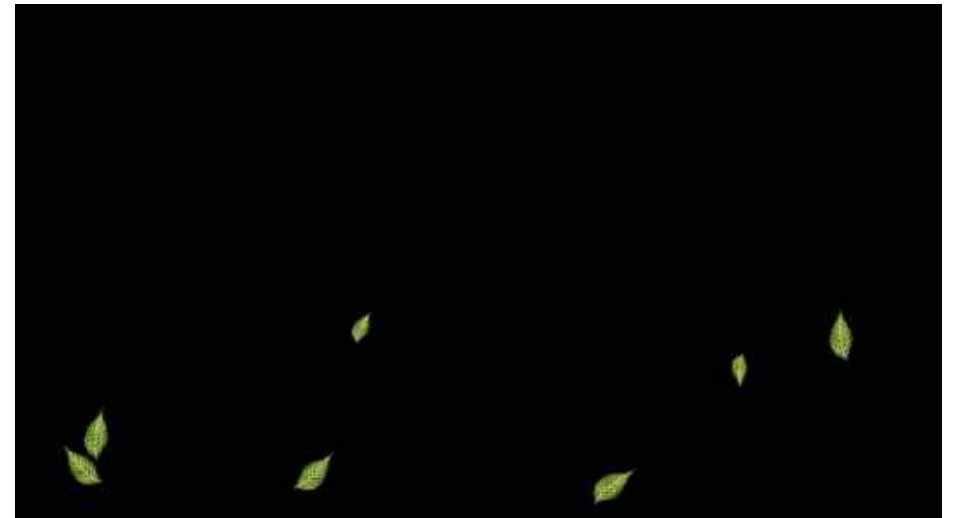
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPhYUgkHQMM>

falling in an arch with  
leaves piling up the side

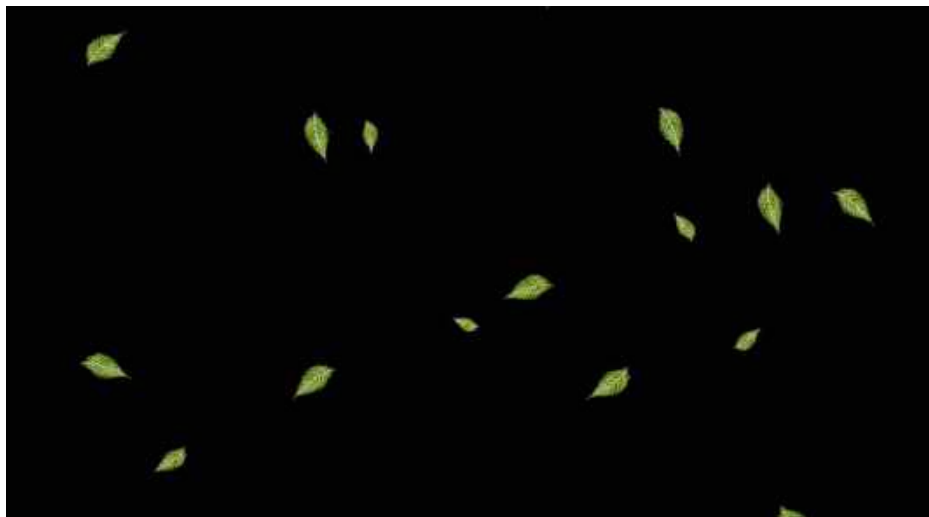


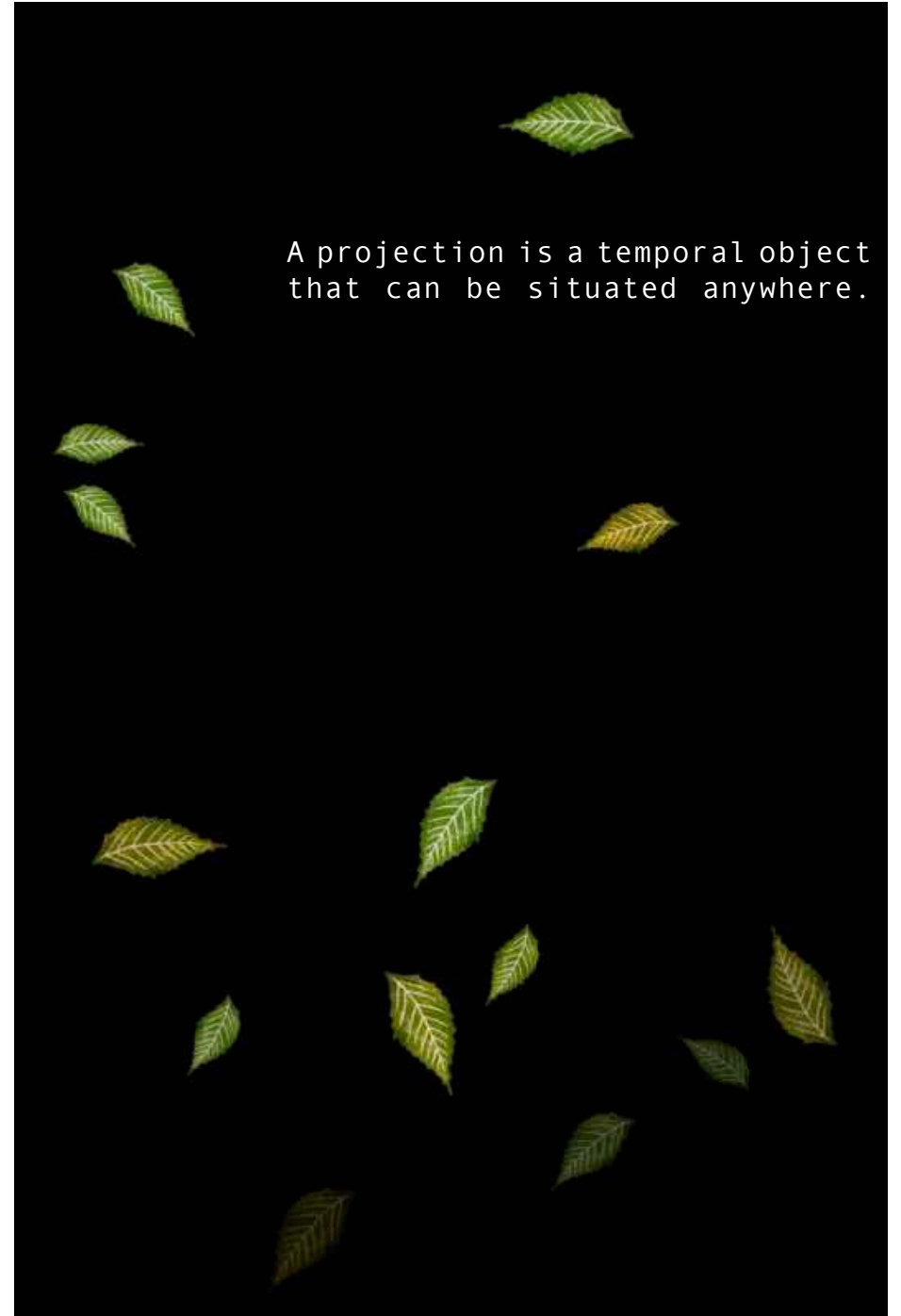
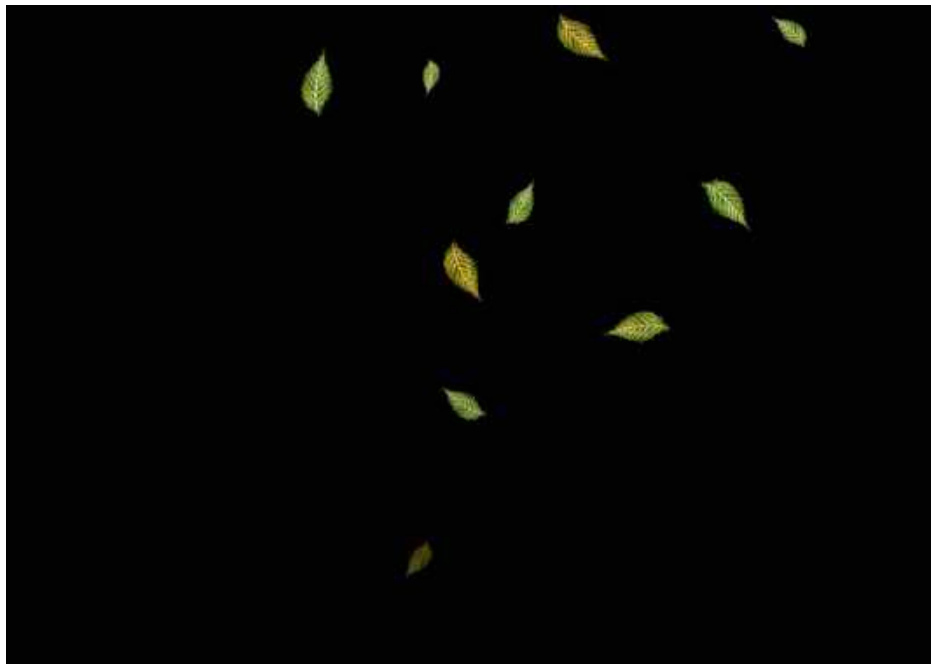
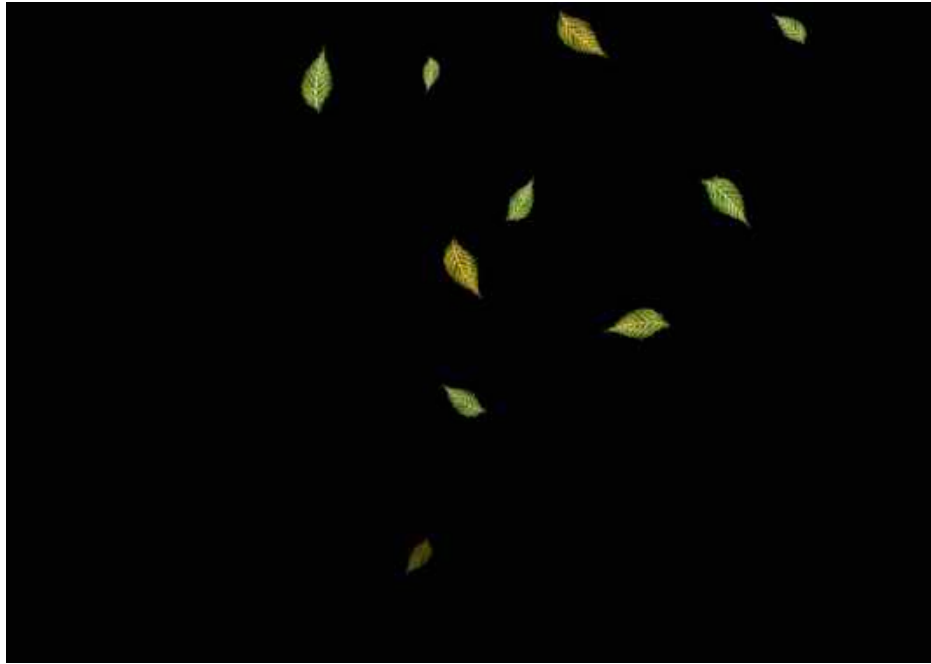
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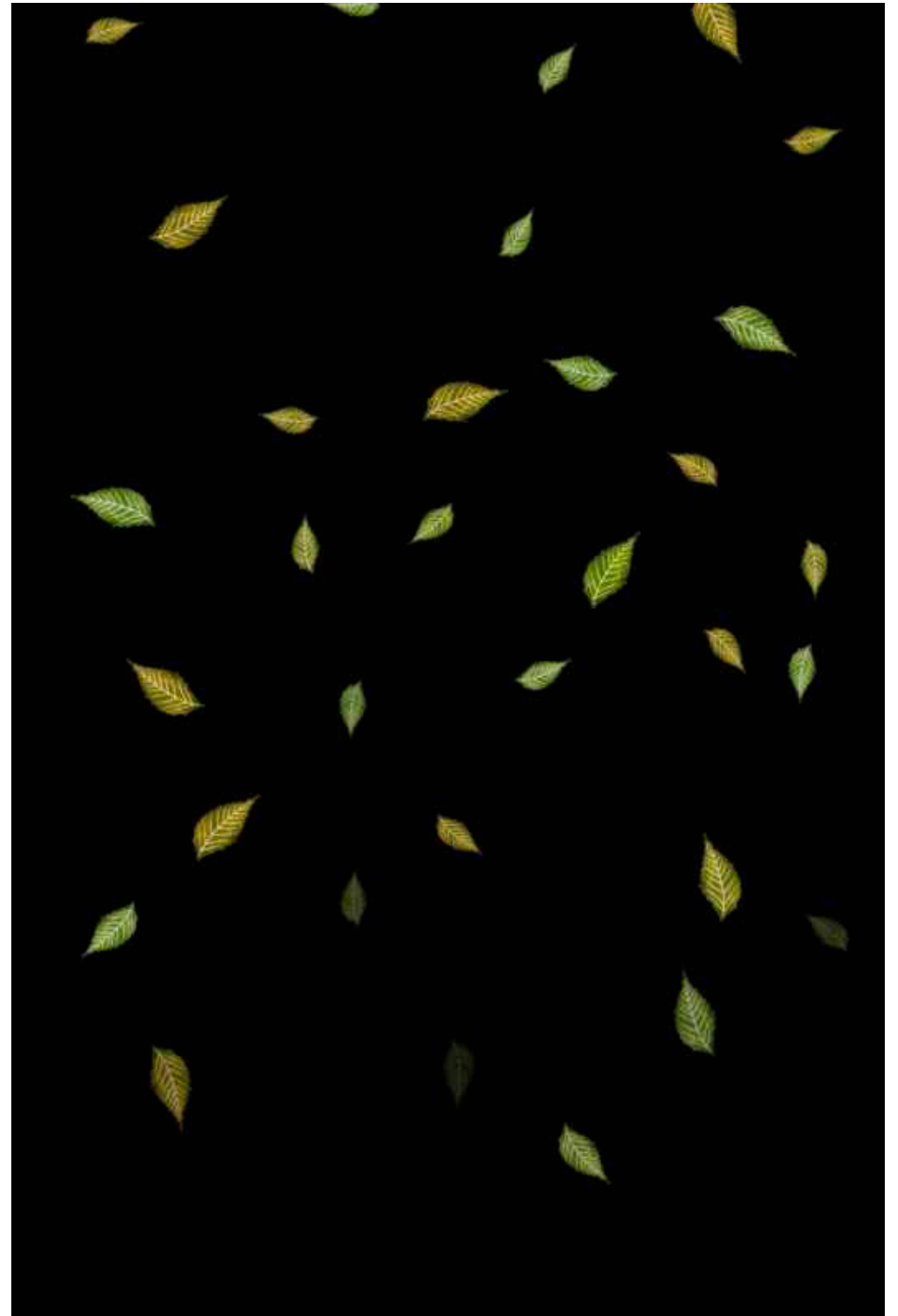
leaves falling  
to the ground



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WU6KF33nf2o>







<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gedOt-25bA4>



Marooned,  
Digital projection, 2022

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Mckay, C. (2014). *Home to harlem*. Melbourne, Vic.: Wildwood Publishing.

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0 t h e r



# BAAAD Media

Audio descriptions and accompanying QR codes for access



Adam



Atlanta



Claudia



Conger



Dawid



Gugan



Hannah



Henry



Holly



Howard



Jessica



K'zhayha



Katie



Kia



Lily-May



Mary



Molly



Olivia S



Oliva W



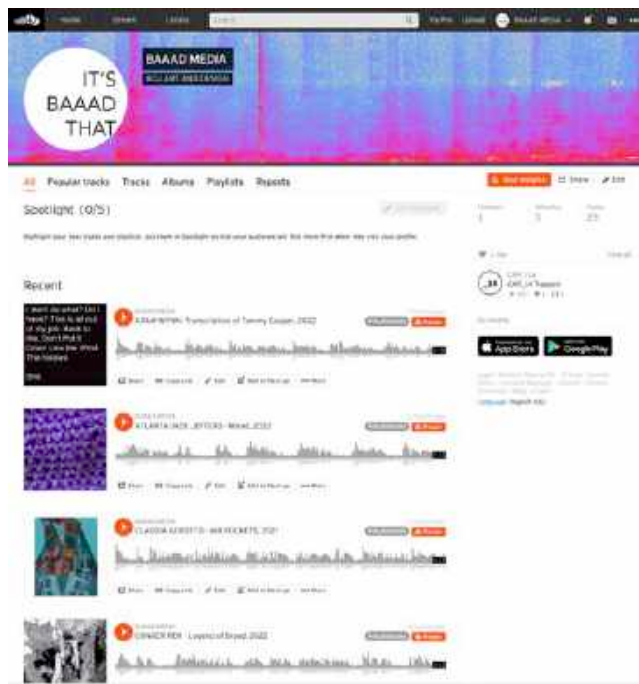
Suchana



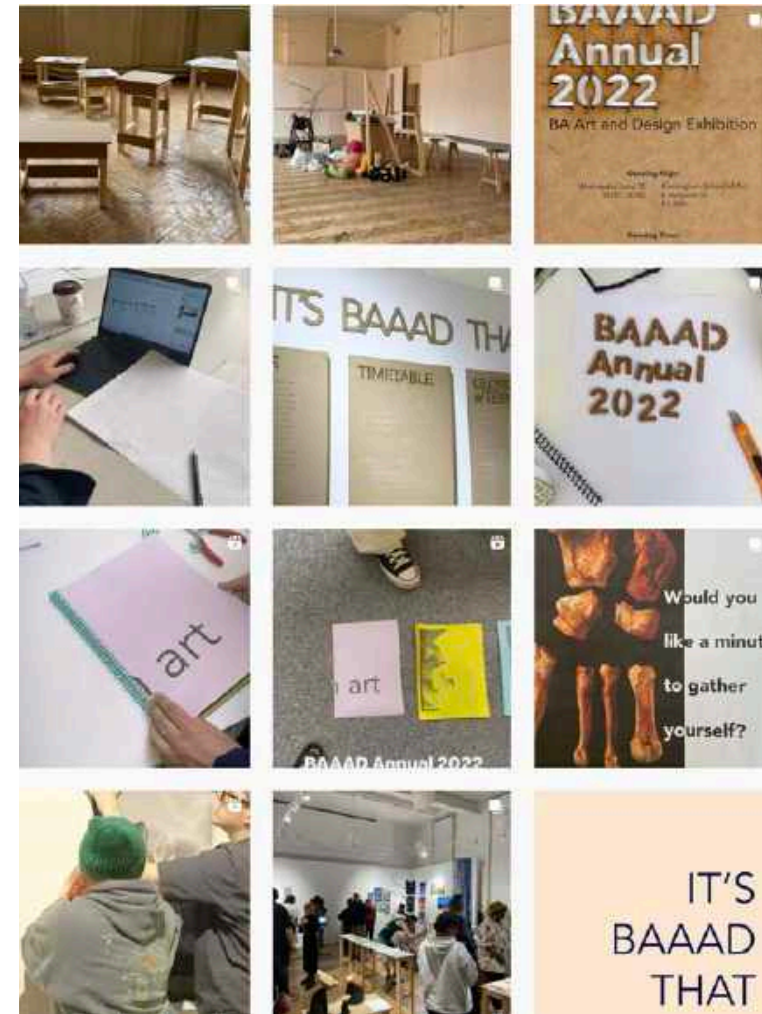
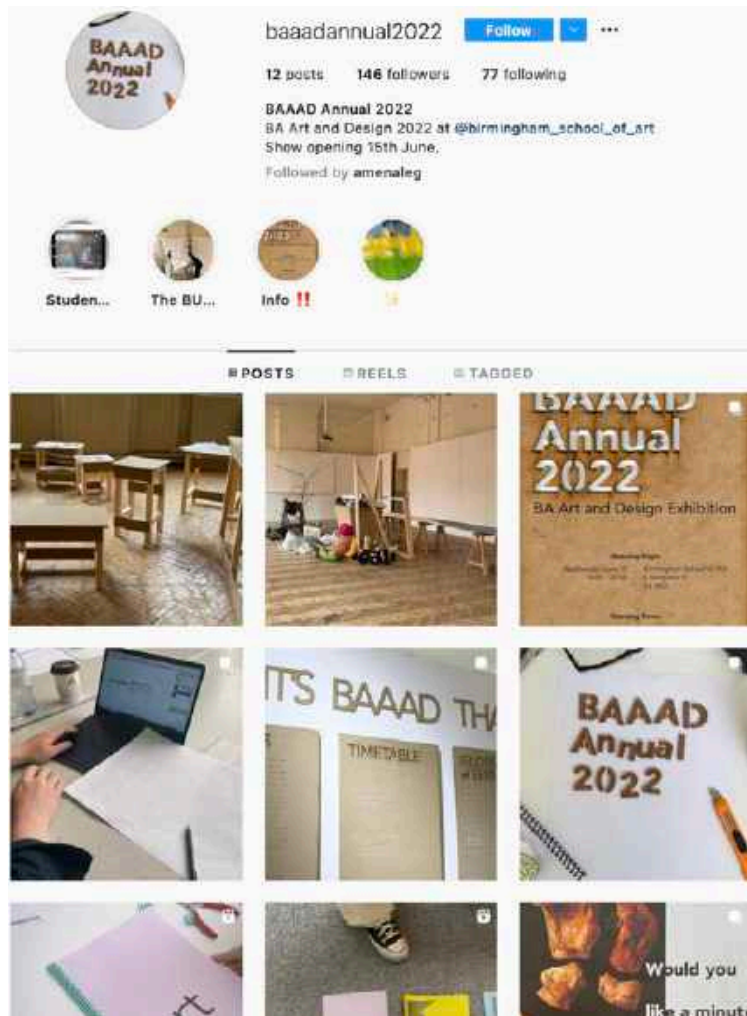
Susan



Tracy



Creator and admin for the degree show Instagram - BAAAD Annual 2022

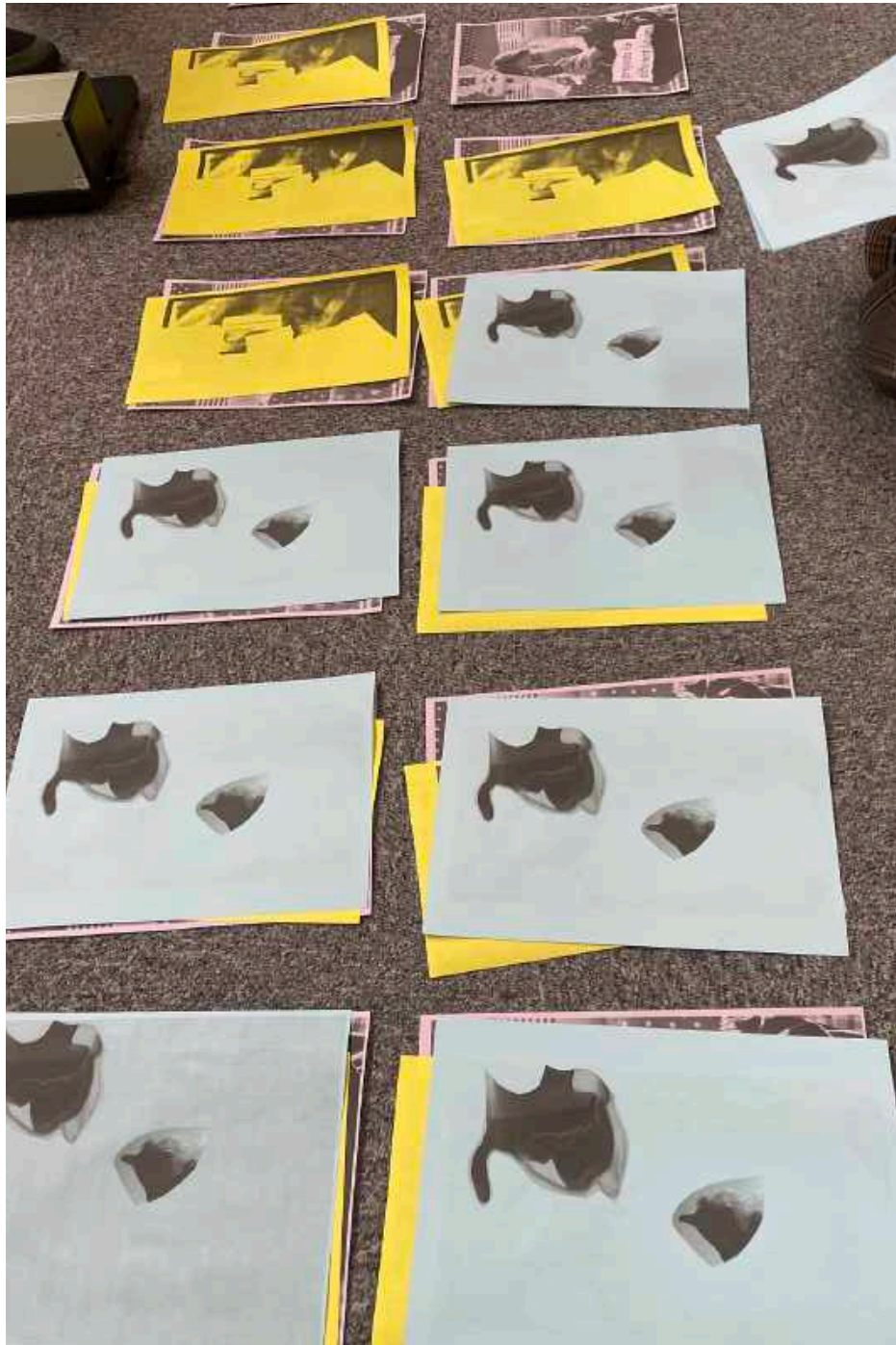


<https://www.instagram.com/baadannual2022/>

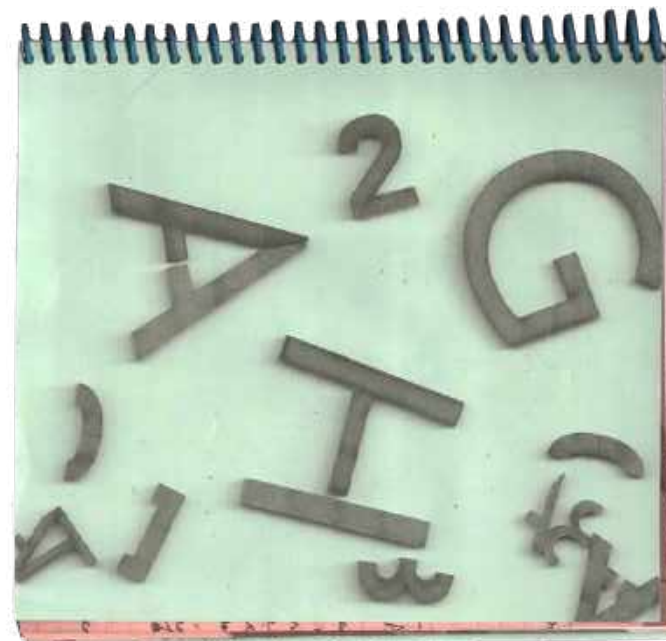
Post curation (reels, stories and promotions for the show)



BAAAD Press Duplicate Publishing fair



Collabrative publication between myself of  
4 other artists for BAAAD Press Duplicate  
Publishing fair, Curated by Gugan Gill



Black Hole Club

Collabrative piece with Artist Gugan Gill



Degree show build









Northfeild Arts Forum workshops



Northfeild Arts Forum and Arts in the Park  
commission.

Decorating an outdoor container in prints for  
Manor Farm Park.

Launch June 11th

## Arts in the Park with Manor Farm Park

By Artist Ashley Wilson



Inspiration from  
Local vegetation:  
-Cow parsley  
-Hogweed  
-Rose Bay willow  
-Forget me nots  
-Bluebells  
-Black bamboo