



Stay Home Artist Residency

RESIDENT BLOGS

Issue 1, Vol. 3

La Vaughn Belle

US Virgin Islands

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La Vaughn Belle

US Virgin Islands

Post #3

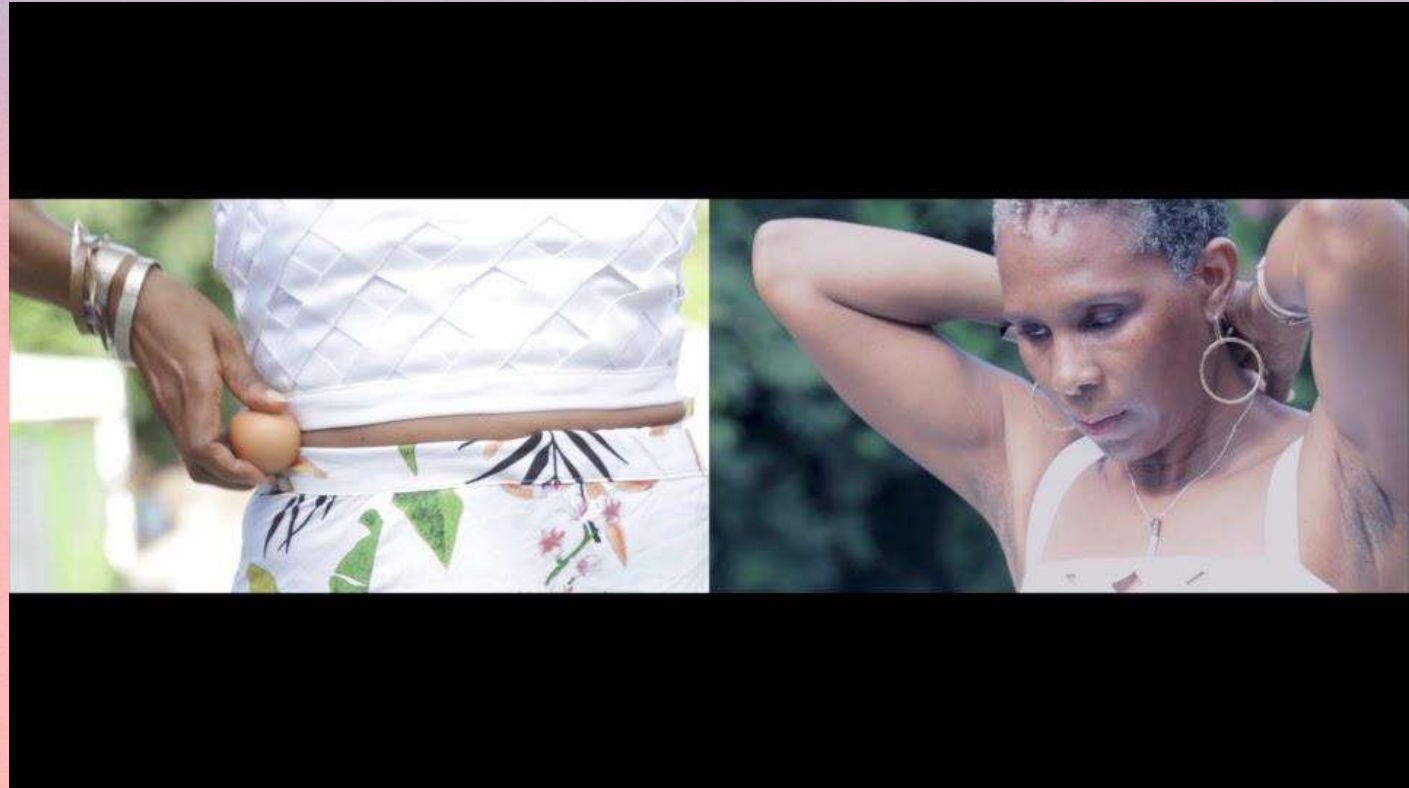
lavaughnbelle.com

I recently had a solo exhibition open at the National Nordic Museum of Seattle entitled [A History of Unruly Returns](#). It focussed on a long standing series of paintings I've been working on based on piecing together images from fragments of colonial era pottery. Chaney, as we call them here in the Virgin Islands, is a hybrid word combining *china* and *money*, referencing both the history of where porcelain comes from and the history of children rounding them to look like coins to play with in games. This detritus from the Danish colonial period keeps resurfacing, especially after a hard rain. The sea also delivers them on occasion, depositing them back on the soil. They are unruly returns - haphazard and willful. They are histories refusing to be discarded and forgotten.



I have had my own returns. During this Catapult Stay Home residency, I returned to aspects of my practice that had been yearning to find a space again - video, performance and writing. In recent years of focussing on objects and the materiality of coloniality, I had long since moved away from these kinds of performative and ephemeral gestures that were central to my practice during my time studying and living in Cuba in the early 2000's. As is often the case in my work, the ideas I am exploring guide the form. This new work, *strange gods before thee*, called for a return to using my body because it was one of the ways that I could access the knowledge absent in the colonial archives. It called for text because I was researching how obeah was used during the colonial period in scholars' writing about the court trial records. You could see glimpses of their spiritual practices, even if distorted by translations and the threat of severe punishments. Video was the medium by which to create a new archive, an alternate memory, an altered site because of the possibilities of incorporating multiple modalities, times and spaces.

I have recently finished the work and am still processing what I made. It's the most personal work I have ever done, not just because my body is in it or that my children are in it, but it is an intimate journey into another kind of archive - that of ritual. It is a journey into how the body moves through time and space in these ancient and invented rituals - cleaning rituals, calling of spirit rituals, rituals of play and rebellion that have given me access to other ways of seeing and thinking not possible in the archives. In [a recent article in the Guardian](#), archaeologist Dr. Sada Mire affirms that cultures of the African diaspora have traditional ways of creating and passing on knowledge stating, "Knowledge is passed on through oral culture, festivals, songs, poems, commemorations and casual conversations and observations...This is because history is a living part of culture and it has an active role in current social issues, often involving ongoing rituals and performances." Ritual is a kind of bridge, and it is one that I return to as a way to cross into the unknown and unremembered.



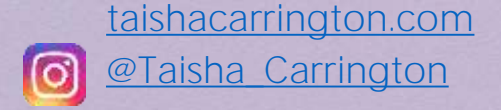




Taisha Carrington

Barbados

Post #3



Symbiotic relationships for a peaceful mind and a healthy heart

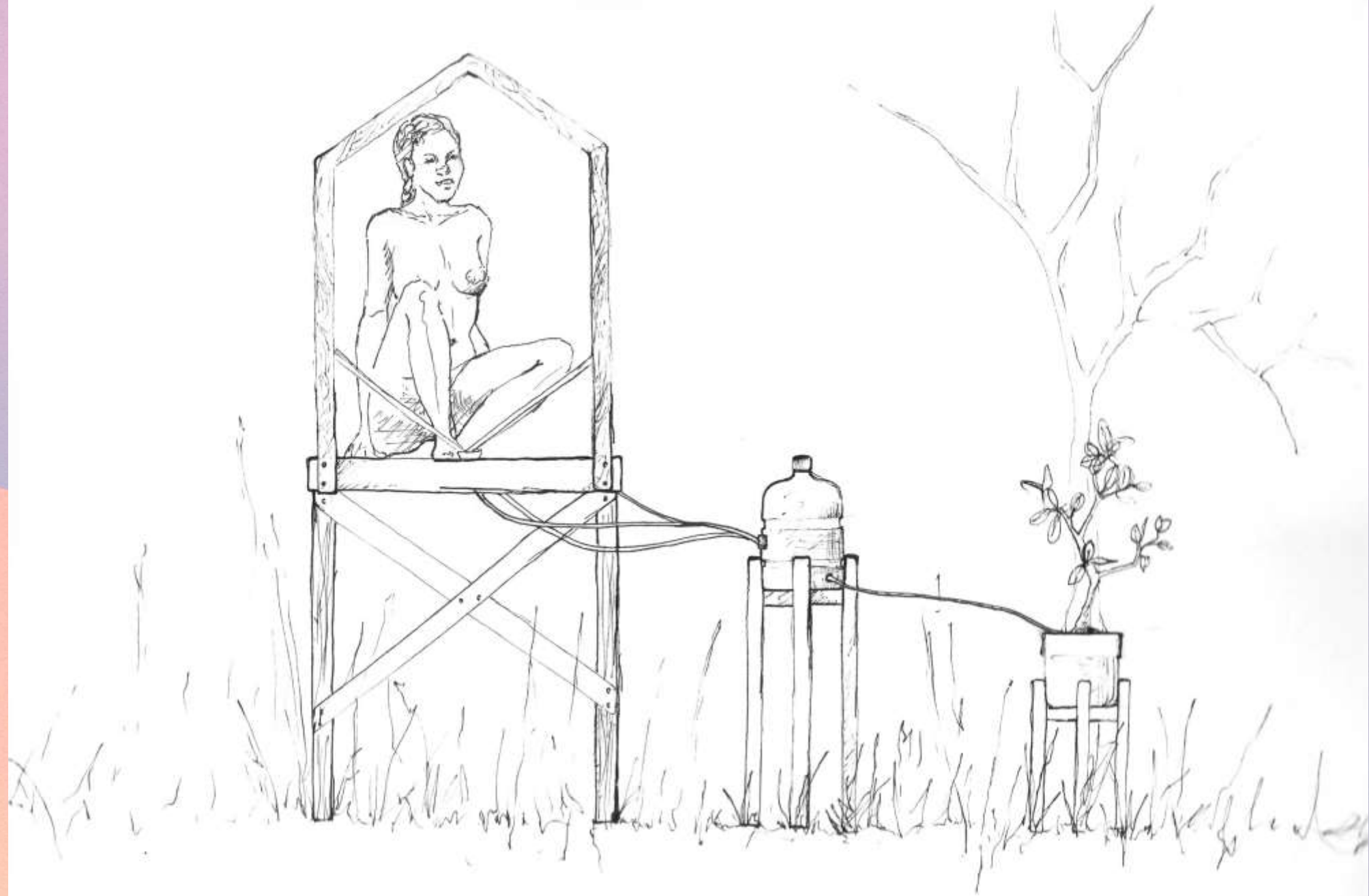
My relationship to my natural environment is becoming more focused on its constituents rather than the whole: I no longer see myself in a larger landscape, I look for myself in individual trees; full moons are now my favorite symbol of patience, dependability and cyclicity; the sea is no mere body of water, I understand it by its temperature when we are in contact just as it reveals me by subtle shifts in my buoyancy. This is about where I stand and how I understand myself in relation to each element.

I want to test the limits of the symbiotic relationship between people and trees. Partly also, I want to ease the nagging feeling that I (and at large the human race) take so much from my habitat with little to return. This sculpture places a 'white wood tree' at the mercy of my care and attention - indirectly, my self care. The water that feeds the tree is generated from fresh water extracted from my sweat and ocean water I gather around the island. I have chosen the white wood tree for its resilience and its properties as an antidote against poison according to Barbadian ethnobotany.



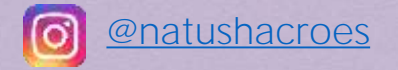
The concept of 'residence time' as outlined by Christina Sharpe proposes that remains of enslaved persons who lost their lives by way of the sea remain present in the ocean due to the human body's similar substance composition. This said, the ocean water dually represents my island as it does represent the bodies of my ancestors. Between my ancestors and myself, I will attempt to bring this tree from seed to full fruition, from which I hope to plant it in a final 'resting place' to remain for many years as an artwork and as a promise to myself.







Natasha Croes



Aruba

Post #3

Touch leading me into dance, dance leading me into poetry and poetry into reality. A performative chain reaction that a touch-based sensibility induces. From touch a caressing tendency is provoked, a need to unfold into more. A methodology that leads me to translation, transmutation, transcendence, transmission, and ultimately transformation. I want to be the fluid means from which I navigate the multiple. And I could not find a better means to interpret who I want to be, but this constant unfolding of routes, veins, showing the interconnectedness of Aruba and thus Caribbean state.

(touch, tactile sensibility, caress, gesture, movement, embodied vocalisation, poetic utterance, a chain reaction, a movement of constant conversation and transformation.)

In between a gentle caress and the movement that floods through my body as I interact exists a soothing calmness – a silence, a curiosity navigates through my entire being and I remain still to witness how my tactile yearnings transport me. I am being transformed because of my sensibility. I believe it is a portal, to reintegrate and to encounter the child that still lives within. To encounter that ancestral guidance, the timelessness of the body and the landscape becomes a vehicle to engage with the manifold of identity that dominates. I am submerged in the familiarity / unfamiliarity of these feelings. And I am at ease because feeling is the means from which I want to navigate my existence. I'm feeling out my way. And I create from an urgency to establish this felt-sense, to enable it.



Having the rock on my feet and leaves in between my toes becomes a time machine. I am devoid of meaning and I only feel the vastness that language cannot capture. Words fall short at their singularity. Everything cancels out. I am left with this zero-state. I can begin again. I am beyond an encapsulated state.

As I practiced these words came to me. “This space enables a sacred playground to feel. Hold space to feel and enable two ancient things to meet. The body and what compromises the landscape, the first location; Daimari.”

This orphanhood of constantly being on the margins looking in. Opening a portal to a world that goes beyond the one that I am currently living. Offering an escapade. A place to feel the endless potentialities of being a seed; a child again in nature’s embrace. What is this void in between the world that this artistic pursuit wants to generate and the one I am currently inhabiting? I am consumed with questions that give shape to this gap, to this space of in-between. How can this gap be diminished? How can we take care of each other better? Become the water supply that the Caribbean art scene needs to continue existing?

“Retroalimentarnos”

Where are we? This multiplicity I feel part of. The orphaned children. Not here, but caught in the past for a better future. I don’t know. Yet again, words fall short, and I allow the timelessness of these feelings to guide me, for I am only a vessel for the manifolds that are trying to reach me.





Maria E. Govan

vimeo.com/mariagovan

The Bahamas

Post #3

Here is my family gathered in this video.
I chose this moment in time for obvious reasons.



Click above to view the video on YouTube

I grew up with my Mother's sister Poppy, who had down syndrome. She lived with us my entire life and so was like a sibling to me. Those of us who have been loved by a downs person, have been blessed beyond measure. They are far more evolved than most of us - the eternal child - forever innocent, pure in heart, giants in their ability to give so many things, but most of all unconditional love.

Just after finishing my second feature film "Play the Devil," which we made in Trinidad, Abigail Hadeed, my producer and I, were invited to a film market in Argentina called Ventana Sur. After which we made our way to my family home in Nassau Bahamas.

Poppy ended up in hospital the day after I arrived with a blocked and distended bladder. She was very sick, with a terrible infection and had to stay in hospital for several days. We almost lost her. This began the two years of full time care for Poppy.

At the time my parents ran a very humble store, which they had rented in downtown Nassau since my Mother was a small child. To say that it was not doing well is an understatement. They were losing money by running it and had no savings whatsoever. Poppy needed three people to change her diaper and care for her. Me and my two parents, each in their early eighties, did all of her care, and so had to give up the store and find some alternative income, which was incredibly challenging.

After that illness, Poppy was unable to walk. I was committed to rehabilitating her legs but we could not afford a physiotherapist. Everyone told me that I was crazy, that she would never walk again, but a physiotherapist named Christina who is a friend of the family showed me how to hold her up on my knee with a belt, and basically I dragged her around the house for some nine months until Poppy started to walk again. It was the hardest time of my life. Her care was relentless and she was often in crisis.

Two years after her first hospital visit I went to the Sundance film festival to spend time with friends. I didn't really want to go. I was a person who promised myself I would only go with a film in the festival, but I had support with accommodation and many friends there who said that it was time I got away, had some fun and energized my career, and so I did.

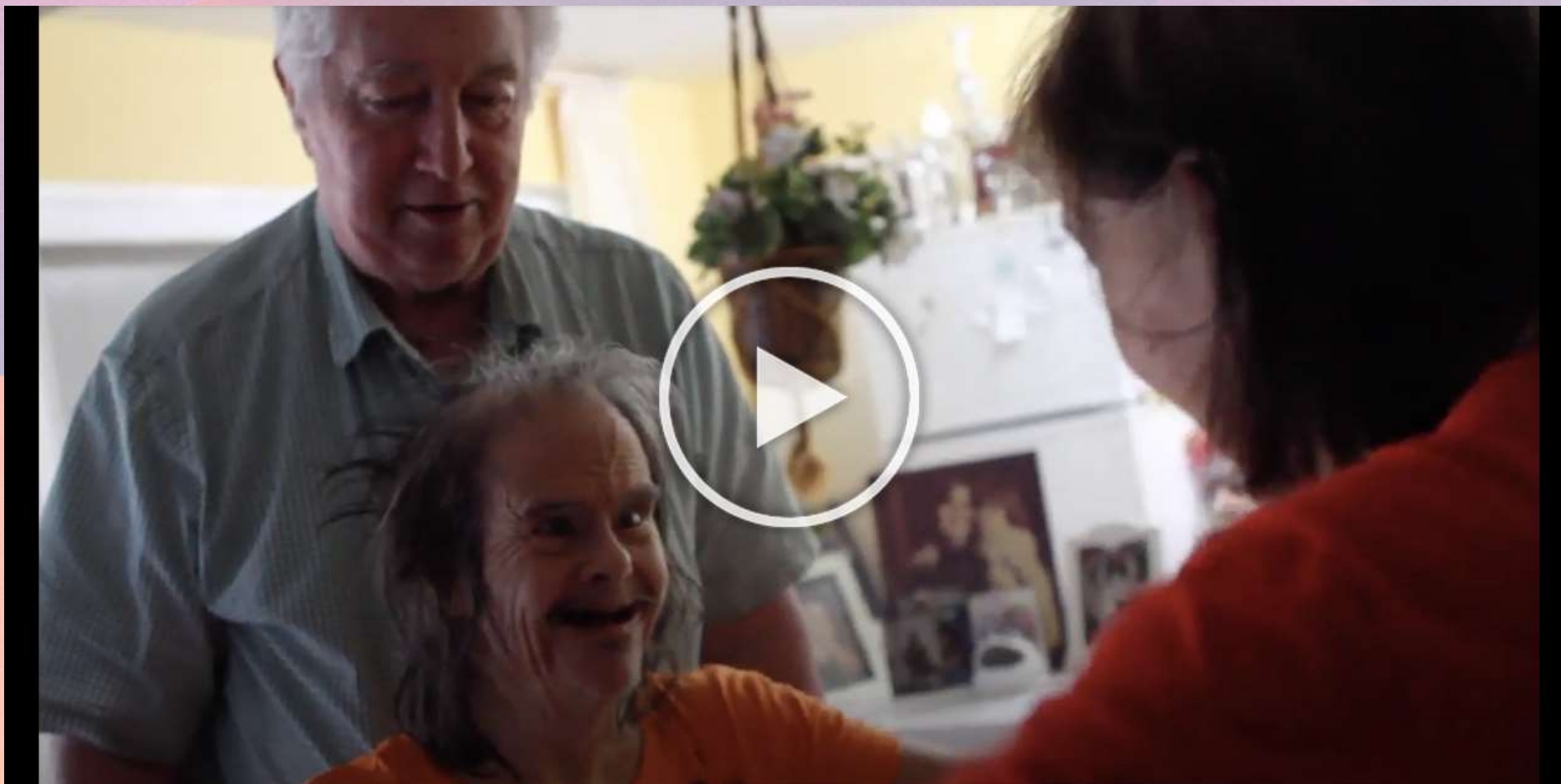
I remember landing late and in the cold. There was a raging party at the house where I stayed, and the entire time I was there I kept thinking "this was a grave mistake." I didn't have it in me -- all the industry small talk. It was utterly depressing.

I woke early the next morning to a call from actress CCH Pounder, who is a dear friend. CC told me that Ava Duvernay was looking for me. She was considering hiring me to direct an episode on season three of Queen Sugar. I was over the moon. I called my Mother to share the great news but she quickly cut me off with "Poppy has a fever of 105." Poppy had never had such a fever. I knew she had a terrible infection and was in a lot of trouble. I spent the next three days in hell. I stayed at Sundance hoping to meet with Ava, who was there, but most of my time was spent on the phone with doctors and pharmacies trying to keep her safe. We got a nurse and IV at the house until I returned.

I got home and within a day she was in an ambulance on her way to the hospital. That night is a story unto itself. She pulled through and then days later was discharged, but her infection had not been taken care of and they sent her home with a high fever and bloated full of fluid, with no lasix to help her. She went back the next day and went into cardiac arrest because her heart was pushing around too much fluid. The level of neglect, ineptitude - the nightmare that we encountered is something I cannot put into words. Basically the infection that had not been properly treated meant that her bone marrow was not producing platelets. A week or so after her re-admission, the doctor called us in to see him and warned that she might not make it. That afternoon, broken and crying, my parents and I returned home. That day that I received a voice message from Ava Duvernay asking that I call her. I did my best to pull myself together. I called her and she offered me the job. She asked that my lawyer send along the paperwork to get the process started. Again, I heard nothing for the next ten or more days. Sadly, on the morning of February 16th, 2018 we got an early call that Poppy had died. We went to the hospital to see her. When we returned home, later that morning I opened my computer to find an email from Kat Candler, the showrunner of Queen Sugar. It read, "welcome to the family Maria." Two weeks after we buried Poppy I was in New Orleans prepping my first TV episode.

I know that Poppy orchestrated that job. It came when I least expected it. It saved me that year on so many levels. It was as if God was rewarding me, somehow. When I get scared that life will not take care of me, when the chips are low and I fall into comparing myself to others, I remember that God is there in our darkest night. God is always there.

This is a video of Poppy the Christmas before she died. She lived to be sixty six years of age. We miss her every day.



Click above to view the video on YouTube



Patrick Jerome Lafayette

chrismixradio.com

Jamaica

Post #3

The year was 1984. I had just returned to Jamaica to start my college internship with Radio Jamaica Limited. It was the start of my junior year at Marist College in Poughkeepsie New York USA. It was also the year that I met multi talented musician, singer, writer, composer, producer, and foundation band member of The Fabulous Five Incorporated, the illustrious Asley Grub Cooper.

The 80's ushered in the digital musical production era, and the Jamaican music industry became vibrant with a whole new added level of creativity. Grub, during this time, was busy solidifying his role as writer and producer. Working with a number of newly established artists, like the multi festival winning sensation, Roy Rayon, and the awesome Gem Myers, who received major contributions from Grub in the construct of her music catalogue.

During the 80's I was also forming networks and associations with individuals and groups that contributed to the local music and entertainment industry. My career as a broadcast announcer in the Jamaican media marketplace grew exponentially, based on my new and innovative professional style of presentation.

I was the first visually disabled individual to be employed to a major commercial radio entity in Jamaica in the 1980's when I worked with Radio Jamaica's Fame FM. The novelty of a blind person doing the things that I did led to a great demand for my public appearances. It was during this period that my friendship and relationship developed with The Fab Five Band.

Though bass player, Frankie Campbell, guitarist Junior Bailey, and drummer, Grub Cooper were still foundation members, there were other members that made up the band, including my friend and blind keyboard player, Sidney Thorpe.

Ever since that initial introduction to Fab Five, a healthy relationship was established between us.

Whenever I visited their headquarters on Springvale Avenue in Kingston, I was always well received, and properly accommodated with respect and consideration of my blindness. This was in part too because a number of their members, including Grub Cooper, were like myself, visually challenged.

Photo: Grub Cooper





Though Fab Five's Journey together has been solid and monumental in its achievements over the past fifty years as a group, Grub Cooper, as a single powerhouse musician, writer, producer, arranger and singer, has done his fair share as a creative architect. He has left his indelible mark on cornerstone songs like Rita Marley's One Draw and Fab Five's very own party favorite You Safe.

As I sat with Grub to document his journey, I realized that Grub Cooper has done extensive work all across the spectrum. From theatre as music arranger and composer, to shaping the early talent and eventually working to produce the first album in 1985 with the Marley children, The Melody Makers titled Play the game right. He has done tremendous work in the production of commercial jingles for radio and television.

Cooper has a lengthy history of audio production. Some remain as cornerstones and great reminders of our cultural heritage. In the next presentation of my biographical feature entitled From Heartbeat to Drumbeat, I shall feature reggae ambassador Grub Cooper. Stay tuned to www.chrismixradio.com on November 13, for the contribution of this multi-talented individual – the true phenomenon, Asley Grub Cooper CD.

Photo: Grub Cooper



Daphné Menard

daphnemenard.com

Haiti

Post #3

La quête des images.



Il en faut. Celles qui s'imposent dans la tête et qui veulent asseoir la chose. Celles qui limitent l'imagination et définissent des bornes. Celles qui aident à ne pas se perdre dans l'infini. Car l'expérimentation pourrait être infiniment étendu et aller au-delà du nécessaire. Nous sommes à cette phase avec CONVERSION. Il faut donc trouver des images dans ce fond de réflexions pour tenter d'aller plus loin en se fixant sur une certaine idée de départ et d'arrivée. Là s'amorce un autre défi de la création :

vouloir regarder ce qui se passe dans la tête du créateur et de l'interprète afin de se faire non pas une autre idée mais plutôt une projection fixe du profil du monde que l'expérimentation doit accoucher. Pouvoir regarder ce que l'on pense de soi et de l'autre. Le décortiquer et le retourner matériellement dans tous les sens de l'espace 3 D. Extérioriser pour éviter de s'éparpiller à l'intérieur de soi.



La quête des sons.

Il faut surement des sons. Ceux qui aideront à catégoriser le propos et le classer à l'intérieur de l'intersection que nous recherchons entre l'objectivité académique et la sensibilité artistique. Des sons qui étireront ces deux côtés sans les déchirer. Qui trahiront leurs spécificités sans les violer. Oui il faudra une langue. Une langue avec des mots pour définir le territoire de la scénographie sonore. Laquelle ? Celle de l'artiste ou celle de l'académique ? Il faudra un son hybride. Suspendu toujours entre deux possibilités.

Le prix.

Cela coûtera même si l'on choisit de ne suivre aucun chemin et de rester en place. Cela coûte de rester artiste. Cela coûte d'abandonner pour se trouver « un job ». Cela coûte d'hésiter. Cela coûte de procrastiner. Cela coûte de respirer. Cela coûte d'en discuter. Cela coûte de considérer tous les angles d'approche possible. Cela coûtera d'en choisir un et de l'assumer par rapport à tous ceux que l'on choisit de faire taire. Que cela soit donc clair. CONVERSION sera une « Confermance » coûteuse. Ce n'est pas un choix. Cela n'a même pas à s'imposer. C'est un fait.





Sofía Gallisá Muriente

Puerto Rico

Post #3

hatoreina.com



[@hatoreina](https://www.instagram.com/hatoreina)

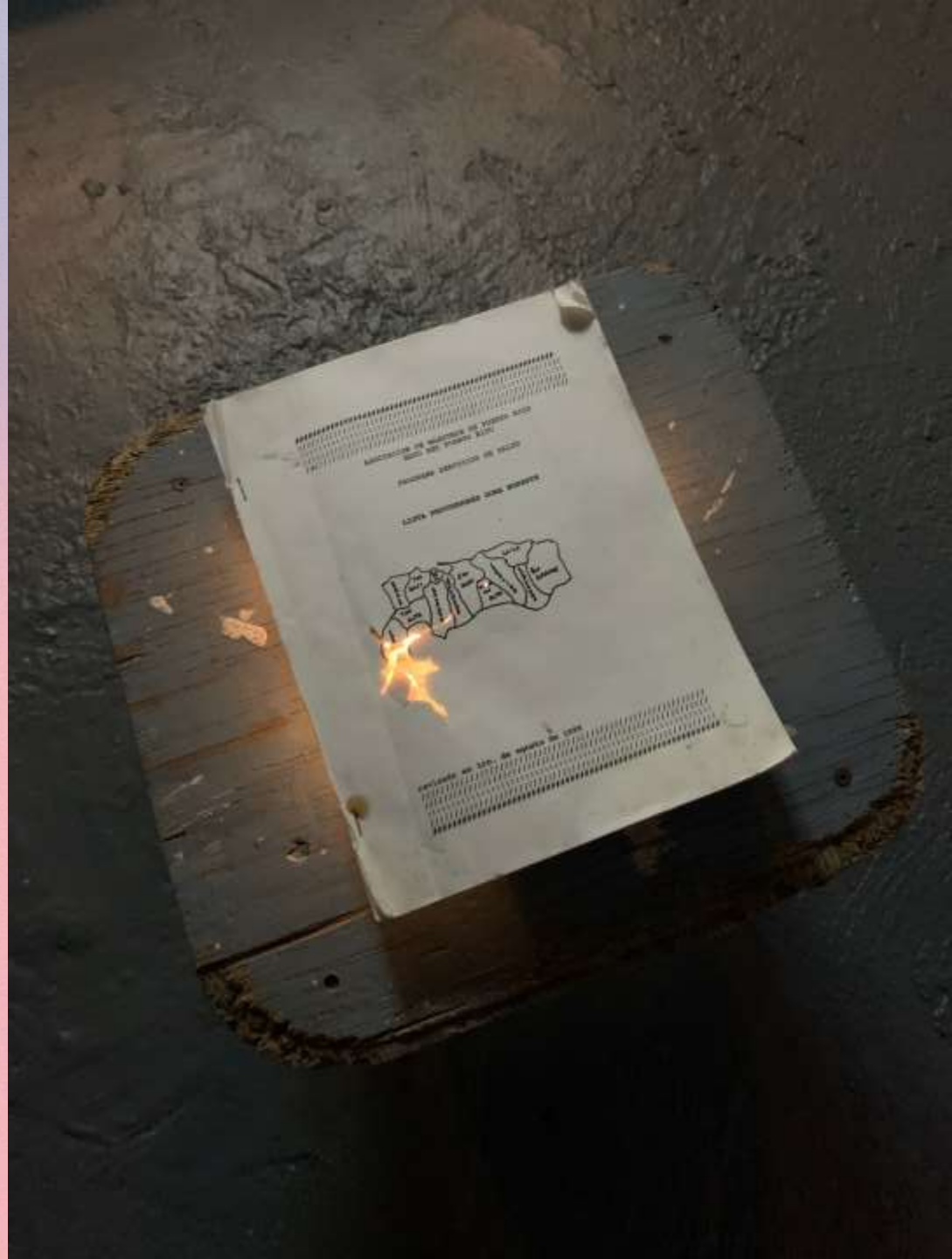
October 30, 2020

It has been a busy few weeks for me, despite these pandemic times. In Puerto Rico, independent art spaces and cultural activity seems to be claiming a right to return, even if it's in different terms and scales.

On October 23rd I opened my first solo show at independent art space Km 0.2, where I'm showing the film *Celaje* produced in large part during the quarantine, as well as a series of light boxes of the *Assimilate & Destroy* series (2017-2020) and objects found in my grandmother's home that speak of her gaze, her sense of aesthetics and her

artistic curiosities. We turned the space into a large projection room with comfortable distanced seating for up to 12 people and spent opening weekend in a hosting marathon, with full shows and lots of moving responses and interesting conversations. It was the most socializing I've done in months, and it was really wonderful to listen to people's reactions and questions. I felt a need for catharsis and for being with others, and the intimacy of these small screenings really allowed for people to honestly share their feelings and opinions.





Simultaneously, the neighboring art space El Lobi was showing *Assimilate & Destroy II*, a piece that is related to *Celaje* and which I had intended to exhibit the weekend after the covid lockdown started in March. It was shown as part of *en_registro_vídeo_sanación_memoria*, an exhibition of video art works curated by Vanessa Hernández and Alexia Tala that was another soothing art experience adapted to pandemic times. Through three weekends, they screened short video art pieces and people visited by appointment to see them. It was interesting to talk to Vanessa and Melissa Sarthou, the other co-director of the space, about how covid-19 had forced new conditions for art watching that were refreshing and valuable in many ways. Smaller groups of people with genuine interest for the art and an openness to talking about the work and their impressions seem like one of the best consequences of pandemic protocols, and a clear sign that there is much to learn and conserve of this moment of forced deceleration and downscaling.





Finally, I participated in a third exhibition that also opened this weekend, even if I **couldn't** personally attend. 'Como ningún lugar en la Tierra' (Like no place on Earth) is a group show curated by Néstor Delgado Morales at TEA museum in Tenerife, Canary Islands, which connects transatlantic exchanges and places artists from there and from the Caribbean in dialogue. Néstor has worked closely with me in the research that led to Celaje, and we even co-wrote [this text](#) that now accompanies the film and was recently published in English and Spanish on the platform Categoría 5. To be able to show this new piece there and in the company of a great cohort of artists I admire was really an honor. I'm just bummed out that we **couldn't** all dance the night away on the opening - we really need to come up with a covid-safe alternative that might allow us to celebrate such occasions.



*Photo: José Iván Lebrón
Moreira and myself on
opening night.*





Redji Senatus

Haiti

Post #3



[@redji_plasticien](https://www.instagram.com/redji_plasticien)





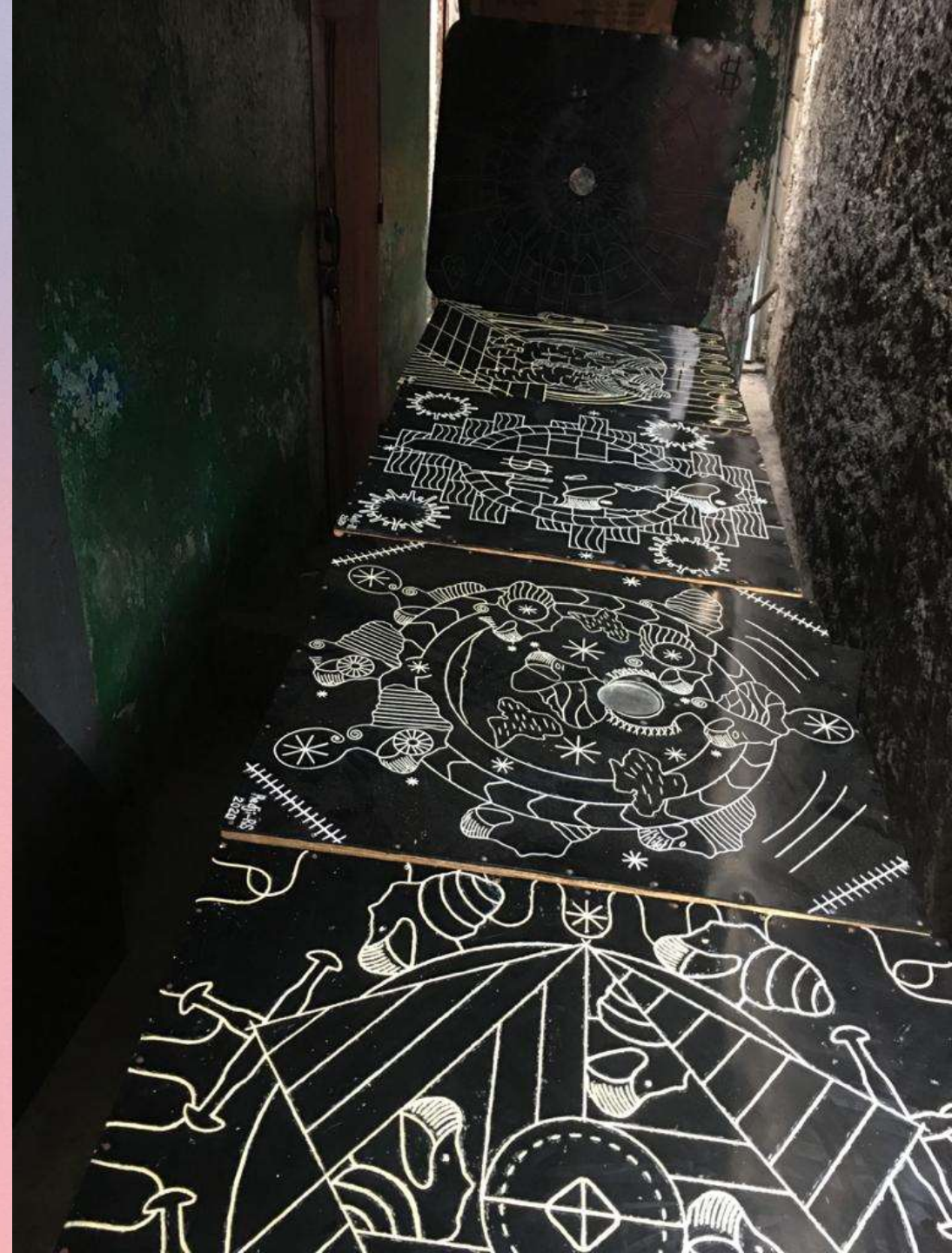














CATAPULT | A Caribbean Arts Grant is a COVID-19 relief programme conceptualised by Kingston Creative (Jamaica) and Fresh Milk (Barbados) and funded by the American Friends of Jamaica | The AFJ (USA). Designed as a capacity building initiative it will directly provide financial support to over 1,000 Caribbean artists, cultural practitioners and creative entrepreneurs impacted by the pandemic and working in the themes of culture, human rights, gender, LGBTQIA+, and climate justice.

kingstoncreative.org/catapult-arts-grant
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