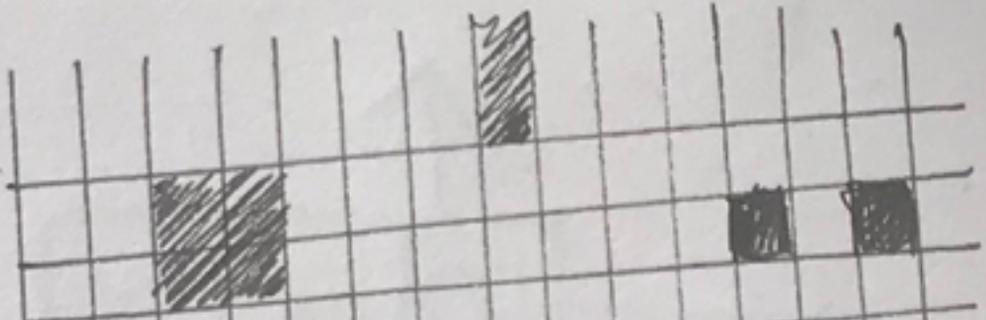




SHADOW SISTERS
FIGHT CLUB

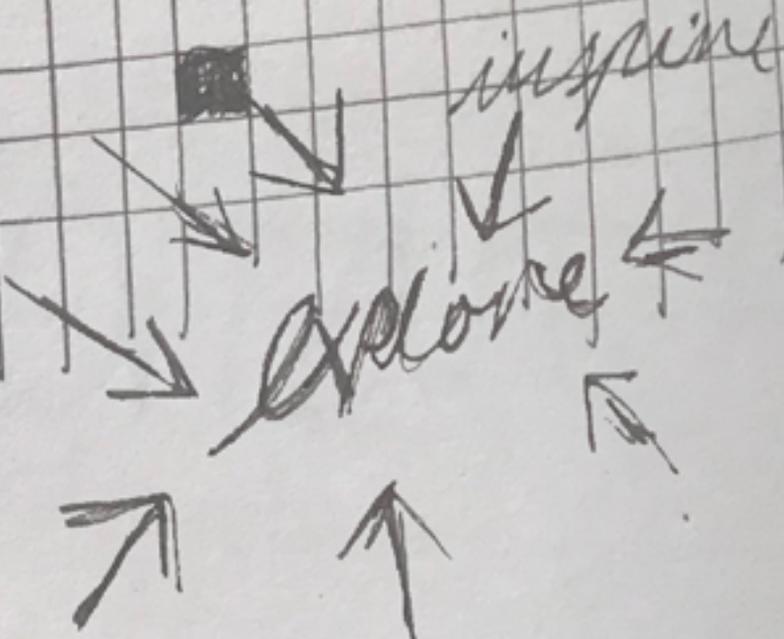
WE ARE THE
SHADOW SISTERS

AND WE ARE THE
PROTECTORS OF
OUR OWN SOULS



collaborative

SCN.



The Social Creative Network (SCN) was set up by the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in 2018 as a supportive network for young people to share, connect, create, and relate, across the digital sphere and IRL. The network is designed to be an enabling space for those who believe that the arts and creative industries can be utilised to make positive change in the world. The Shadow Sistxrs Fight Club x Social Creative Network Self-Protection Manifesto is a collection of creative, experimental, visual and textual responses to an open call for work on self-protection, self-love, and self-care. The Manifesto was galvanised by the diverse array of issues affecting young people today – issues that cut across health, wealth, education, sexuality, gender, ecology and class and expresses how young people navigate adversity, from their own perspectives.

SCN works with a range of dynamic members, artists, activists, advisors, and influencers to forge collaborations, highlighting the ways creative and social ideas are interrelated and interconnected, and challenging conventional ways of creating value.

Shadow Sistxrs Fight Club are SCN's first artists-in-residence, who are working in collaboration with Social Creative Network to host short films, share crucial conversations, and run their self-defence classes; combining Brazilian jujitsu with medicinal and magical herbalism. Shadow Sistxrs meditate on craft, culture and collective bodies as a radical and holistic approach to healing that inspires, empowers, and brings you the tools to self-protect.

Collective divinations against systemic violence

The Healing of Shadows :

Self Protection is practiced in a variety of ways by different people. We each have our own unique experiences, and we all have different journeys that have shaped our understanding, perspectives and connection with the world.

Through Shadow Sistxrs Fight Club, I have come to understand the true importance of community, collective healing, and shared wisdom. Both Monique and I had a vision of creating a space where women, non binary folk and QTIPoC (Queer, trans, intersex People of Colour) could feel they could explore their physical and meta-physical body with the collective aim to self-protect.

My interest in herbs, combined with Monique's lifetime in martial arts created a beautiful union, but we don't see ourselves as the workshop leaders, preferring to remain facilitators of the space, in which the alchemy continues as attendees share their own wisdom and experiences in the circle. We learn from each other, and collectively deepen our understanding of the world by sharing these unique experiences, stories, histories and cultures.

This Self Protection Manifesto is an extension of this circle of sharing. We have opened up our coven to a wider collective of folks, through the ICA's Social Creative Network, to collectively create a tome rich with wyrd, reflections and tactics from young people around the theme of self-care, self-love and self-protection.

AYE\$HA + AN JONE\$
THEY / THEM / THEIR\$
ARTIST / MUSICIAN / WITCH

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Adam Patterson

Self-Protection is the critical interrogation, hindrance and negation of the various gazes (queerphobic, racist, touristic, (neo-)colonial) that rest on, disfigure and reduce my particular body. Whether this is accomplished through invoking bodily qualities of the violent or inhospitable, or reserving my right to a porous and elastic vulnerability, I am protected if I do not fall prey to the gazes, desires and fears of others.

Alice Ulade

To protect myself from myself and from falling back into the toxic whirlpool of body dysmorphia, I treat my body like a canvas. For so long, I cut and starved my body but now I just want to dye my armpit hair and become wrinkled with experiences. Through making films, I use my body to express myself and explore what it means to be female.

Ana Ferrera

Cada persona en su interior tiene una fuerza oculta que algunas tardan en descubrir.

Otras por casualidades o un momento de furia la descubren.

El miedo es una de las formas de protección que usa el cuerpo y se malinterpreta, la magia está en la forma en que enfrentas tus miedos .

Protección no es sólo alejarse de los problemas o de cosas que nos aterran, es enfrentarse a ellos con valor protegiendo así nuestras convicciones .

Todos somos más que un simple número en el gran ciclo de la vida somos poder .
Cada persona tiene el poder de HACER todo lo que decee.

Cuándo protejes a los tuyos te protejes a ti mismo ,cuando protejes tu cultura ,tu idiosincrasia protejes tu esencia .

Somos poder.

Inside each person is a hidden force that some directly discover.
Others discover this by chance or in a furious moment.

Fear is one of the forms of protection that uses the body- the magic is how you confront your fears.

Protection not only is moving away from your problems or things that terrify you. It's to confront these things with valour, protecting our convictions.

All of us are more than a number in the great circle of life. Each person has the power to do what they desire.

When you protect what is yours you protect yourself, when you protect your culture, your idiosyncrasies, you protect your essence.

We are Power.



Andriana Lagoude, This Jacket.

Andrianna Lagoude

Barcelona 2015

We were rushing down the stairs.
To do something new, for the first
time; again. Down the glossy
off-white staircase. On to the mar-
ble tiles. We're almost out. Lewis
swooshes out of the building, i'm
next. Kkpppx - (ripping sound), I
stop.

Andrei stops; 'What's up?'

My new/old/ used/ vintage/fresh/
silky/phresh
phat/creamy/ precious new jacket
got hooked. I had become one with
the Tenant's notice board.

I un-hook myself,
nod to him the I'll-survive nod and I
pace outside.

This time; doing something new
had a meaning; again.

Now

The very same jacket stolls around
and about my life. The fraying prob-
ably bigger. the threads probably
looser, the stress points more vis-
ible around the armholes and neck-
line. For all you're concerned I'm still
wearing it right now. But at least
now I know.

For the first time I realised that all
those textures, of a different weave,
touching my body / my skin
everybody has become the very
root

dogma
foundation

of the person I am,
I'm trying to be;
the person I'm trying to become.

My textures, the extensions of my
life.
These things have become the tap-
estry of me;
my skin.

If I was a tapestry;
I'd camouflage myself into the
world.

The Japanese silk and its rustlinf
flowers would extend their arms;
and its stems would swivel around
themselves; and the leave the flat sur-
face of the tapestry and extend their
existence into space
into tangible space;
and transform
and transcend
and develop into Cypriot almond
trees; and transcend through like
little white flowers peeking through
green bold leaves of a Cypriot lem-
on tree. Like polka dotted reinders
of love, life

and light.

Anjali Prashar - Femme

Parties, clubs, and nightlife are hedonistic and frivolous. But, they are also potent forms of every-day politics, self-care, self-love, self-protection and rituals that embody transcendence, hope and imagination.

Temporary_Autonomous_Zones

As a femme at a rave I feel like I can be. Like I can transcend. Like I can connect with sound and technology, with others and with myself. I feel like I can enter spheres and spaces that I was led to believe were not for me.

There is nothing more euphoric than being on a dancefloor and being able to – even if just for one moment – let go of worries about how I dress, about seeing people see me, about seeing people sexualize or judge my dress or my brown hairy body, reading me as invitation or a mistake. I transcend the fact that I may be the only person who looks like me, dancing as hard as me. Transcending the gatekeepers and technosnobs of the rave.

Maria Pini referred to the femme raver as a manifestation of Donna Haraway's Cyborg, opening up modes of being which are not structured around traditional dualisms of
mind/body
self/other
physicality/machine

Don't reject technology as antithesis to nature. Reject the nature-technology binary like you would reject the gender binary. Social media, a sound system, wifi – these are no less 'natural' or 'authentic' than a tree, water or air.

Smoke, blinking lights and rumbling techno beats. Hopeful soundscapes. A collective euphoria. I feel protected, and connected in these aural envelopes.

These spaces are a powerful release, a trigger for optimism and change, a feeling of collective effervescence

that I can remember, re-imagine and return to in times of stress in everyday life.

We also cannot forget that the way we party is directly affected by political and social borders and boundaries. For many, raving entails risks of imprisonment, exclusion, harassment. [thinking of the recent armed police raid of Bassiani, an exceptional club in Tblisi, Georgia – where I was lucky enough to stumble upon an ethereal queer techno night in a society entrenched in Orthodox Christianity and homophobia]

DIY your way to a techno-utopia. Re-imagine what social interaction can be or look like. Finding your own space of self-care and love means that you need to work to protect it as well as enable others to access it along with you. Hedonism and frivolity are things worth fighting for.

‘Nothing Is, But What Is Not’

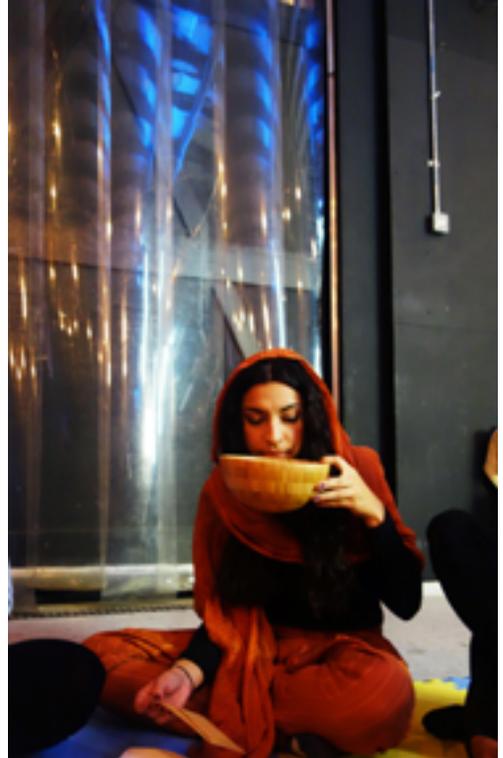
“Utopias explore ‘what is not’” - “Utopias involve a process of critical reflection (about the ideas and practices of contemporary society and of the proposed utopias) that can lead to thoughtful action. Regardless of the standard stereotype that utopias present blueprints to be realized or dreams to be established, for many utopians the central concern is the process of raising and reflecting on alternatives, thinking about the present in light of them, and acting where warranted.” – The Philosophy of Utopia, Barbara Goodwin

Actively -

Fall_into_the_Rave

Annabelle Sami

All That I Am: Ascending
I am the brilliance of Sun
and the enigma of Moon
I am the deep, still lake
of a mermaid's lagoon
I am dredging up wisdom from my
unknown depths
I'm the hierophant's daughter I'm the
secret not kept
I am my mother's mouth
and my father's eyes
I am the soaring endlessness of a
thousand skies
I am searing pain
and the balm that soothes
I am water in air
and the swimmer's pool
And if you want to come find me I shall
make it plain
(for I wish not to give
And hope not to gain)
That I am intensity, burning bright, in the
blackest shadow
of the darkest night.



Annabelle Sami

Annie Elliott

Art has become a useful therapy to explore difficult emotions. As well as figuring out the identity role of being a woman in a world that is more conscious of labelling. My practice helps me to work through questions about life. Writing has become a powerful tool to move through feelings and understand thoughts with more perspective. Video is an extension from this allowing me to explore the sensory connections between the body and mind. But I'm still exploring my techniques of self protection, sometimes this resilience forms a closing, and it's about understanding that it's okay to feel vulnerable.



Anuka Ramischwili-Schaefer, lap(se).

Anuka Ramischwili-Schaefer

In the first most bare instance, self-protection to me is being able to acknowledge that I deserve protection. After that comes a need for collective consciousness and responsibility. I require for there to be light to shed upon truth and to not feel shame in weakness but rather an absolute necessity to stand up for my people. Silence is complicity.

Self-protection is not falling prey to performative 'niceness': it is speaking up with ugly voices against ethnocentrism, violent gender assumptions, anti-blackness, caste-based exclusivity. Body-building, body un-building and the death of social capital. Self-protection is knowing tact and dynamics.

Areena Ang

the perniciousness of racialised microaggressions advocates for a held hope that the constant othering is inherently flawed in execution, that they may feel uncomfortable in your presence but they, to no degree, hate you. hate your presence, your yellow, brown or black skin. your jagged edge that so visibly screams in this blaring space. and yet, this resolves itself into an eventual, violent gesture of exclusion, aggression or fetishisation. a simplistic gesture that only confirms the ugliness, the grotesqueness, the alienness of your body that monolithic whiteness has erased from its story and curated cultural landscape. they can accept you, with an ounce of discomfort, but fundamentally may always hold reservations, concerning trust, value and the right to exist within said space. that you are constantly on duty, on surveillance, that assimilation is required to even ascertain normalcy to their definition. to never question their violence, to take the jokes, to make the jokes: to immediately take a stance of such a high degree of magnanimity towards prevalent alienation. to never question or be critical of whiteness as a dangerous, debilitating superstructure, and to expect to be disciplined on your 'ignorance' and your tendency to 'generalise' if so.

a system thrives on breaking down the scapegoated, whittling them until they are no more but empty mists. for hundreds of years, we have weaponised strategy, stoic courage, assimilation techniques and survival. but what about weaponising healing? what about weaponising love, one that we have for our own brown and yellow bodies and ones that we have for our heritage? a love that keeps us honest and strong, a love so viscous it becomes a fuel to simply staying alive. spending ample time on healing, decolonising and unlearning that we no longer become passengers to marginalisation but the warriors we always dreamed ourselves to be. to be happy, to be tender, despite it all. to repurpose healing as a shield to the pain of the past, whilst also opening the doors to a better future. to heal ourselves for our entire family line. to heal ourselves for our children, friends and for our ancestors who had no choice.



Areena Ang, Healing is a Warrior Stance, 1.8m x 1.45m. Oil and acrylic on canvas.



Arizona Smith

Arizona Smith

I have paid attention.
To the sounds of you.
To the crashing waves of you.
The high notes
where angels glide.
You can't go up they say.
It is dangerous.

I have paid attention.
To the golden roots that grow, hidden.
Caked with the mud and the grime
of the deepest depressed down.
They say you must avoid the devils land.

I have paid attention.
To the little hair-like movements
that sing around my body,
moving like wind through wheat
as the world jostles me.

I have paid attention.
To the wounds that drip
from each bodily realm to the next.
To the way we are taught to be fearful.
Miss-using our gifts.

And I have paid attention
to the fact that I draw
circles, salt-like glances.
Perhaps too often.
Perhaps too often.
Now.

Ayesha Can Jones

there was an ancient chinese proverb, but we forgot it but we forgot it
those words were lost when we stopped listening
listening to the hums of the earth, the murmurs of the hills, the whispers
of the reeds there was echoes of our ancestors speaking to us in dreams,
but our dreams were shrouded in screens

remember the sound of your mother crying?
i hear her all around
the spider weaves a web of copper , wires kept the world in its trap.
and it got harder, mother, to breathe
with each breathe i took i tried to remember that old proverb they taught me
but all i could hear was the screams of the skies
and the screams of the ground
and there are veins to this earth,
that i know
there are sacred pools of energy flowing deep within
but we muted them
we numbed them with concrete
so she cannot speak no more

we tried to capture you, you were just out of our grasp.
what we inflict on you, we receive ten fold back

they said we needed 2 upgrade our systems so we can be free.
they lied
we needed to restart, reset, and thats what we did
the apocalypse is to uncover and reveal. so what did we find?
among of layers dirt and oil , mineralised mechanisms that once kept the
system alive. clusters of corporate crystals and fossilised factories,
still bleeding deep and thick.
and thats where we were born
in the belly of the earth, your womb
our toxic bodies were rotting, but your roots gave us life

we have exorcised those ghosts, mother, they are gone now
your shoots are blooming once again, awakening from their long slumber
i'm weaving my words into new proverbs so that i will always remember,
and one day i'll be ancient too.
we are the protectors . it is our duty to serve u





Bernice Mulenga

OFFERING UP MYSELF TO MYSELF.
MY SPIRIT IN NEED OF FINDING SELF. AGAIN.
REMEMBERING WHO I AM ON DAYS I WANT TO FORGET
I EXSIST.
REMEMBERING MY BODY
HOW IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE IT BELONGS
BELONG IN THIS WORLD
BELONG TO ME
BELONG IN ALL ITS GLORY
YOU TELL ME

I AM
WHAT
I AM
I AM
WHO
I AM
I AM
HERE
I AM
I AM
FINE
I AM

ME

REPEAT IT WITH ME
WITH YOU

UNTIL YOU FEEL IT AGAIN
YOU WILL GER THERE
KEEP GOING

Brown Girls

self care means building a space to belong in a society
that constantly expells you

self protection means creating a space for truth telling in a society that constantly lies

self love means build a future in a society
that strives to erase you

Chioma Udogaranya

You can do anything you put your mind to
You are in charge of your own destiny
To be alone is to be free

Chantal Foo

You do not know how it started.
Sometimes lines not of precise tautness fall
into themselves
and become a loosened bow.

The mechanics of Breath seem to weave this
passing a boat shuttle between
layers of skin and currencies

A firm knot indeed
Perhaps sit in salt water
soft warm water
The liquid weight will stretch into your ears and the fibres of your toes
which will swell; a surrender.
In this dip you rinse and the tub's lapping
coaxes and questions.
Saline saps and preserves but it too invades and reminds you
that heaviness is a force
saline is an agent and it grants you a blooming—
the coming apart is also the becoming.



Christian Noelle Charles, CC Time - What Do You Feel Like.

Christian Noelle Charles

For Self-Protection, I had to develop a double awareness. The work--which centres around black female identities, bodies, body language and self worth-- is informed by this double awareness. With the influence of pop culture I create art that considers, questions what it means to be a woman of colour in the world. The whole idea of narcissism has had many meanings and connotations however, in this generation especially, I believe that those meanings have expanded, with the help of Facebook and Instagram



Christy Leung, Animalmagnetism.

Christy Leung

Self protection for me is to put your well being first, no matter how much you love the other person. It is to allow yourself to recognise the negative impact that the toxic friendship/relationship has imposed on you and still gather enough strength to walk away from it. Despite the pain that you have caused yourself, love yourself enough to let the pain serve as the seeds of your growth and to forgive yourself for the pain you have caused others as their pain is only a piece of the puzzle to their own journey.

Cosima Cobley Carr

After pain, self-protection can become avoiding and ignoring. Upholding constant self-defence, self-protection is really self-preservation. Not a box with a cerulean butterfly preserved inside, but something rancid at the bottom of a jar. Nothing can be preserved forever; at some point it will rot. Slowly festering, whilst you're pretending to be strong. To protect yourself, first you must build yourself to be strong, then you'll be able to take on the good and deflect the bad. Not defensive but defended.

Courtney Hackley

Self protection, self love and self care are important in my ritual of learning to love and accept myself. It is vital to my mental health to be able to protect myself from the negative thoughts and understand ways to increase positivity and self compassionate thoughts. Self protection makes me feel empowered and confident in raising awareness around questions of self esteem, especially body issues and negative thinking. Through moving image I deconstruct negative thoughts in a critical way and rethink them into creative way of self love and self care. It is important to me to have the creative escapism to redefine who I am and use the tools of self protection, self love and self care to break down negative thoughts and create more compassionate ones.

Daniel Valentine

We floated up through the red.
And we swayed with the rocks. The lava, and the warmth.

The Devil and I through veins, and tubers, and pipes.
And directional flows of magma. No mirrors and bricks and motors.

We floated up - and grew. For nine months.
Trans-morphing, we slipped inside and outside each other's bodies.
His horns on my head. The liquid. The red.
For nine months, and nine circles. The under.
An underclass of underground beings.

In limbo and lust, we could hardly open our eyes.
"They'll burn, just a slit, the opening comes later"
He was laughing and crying, his skin was hardly formed
My limbs were now developing.

My mother once was scared that she could have known him, yet little did she know that we were growing
in the centre of the Earth only for her to release us with an epidural and 9 doctors.

One for each circle.
So, learn through the feeling, he told me, our carcass can harden
We can eat it or leave it behind.
The further from the centre we found ourselves, my once microscopic body
Began to ache and press against the others.

In circle three Cerberus laid whimpering in rubble and dirt
Not quite the hound, but three buried bodies of domesticated creatures
Bones now lost and eaten, covered in maggots, worms, pouring from the marrow, engulfed but still larger
than my own bones. Brittle and off-white and powerful still.

The dirt now, was immersed in clay. These crusts were hard to pass by,
Mites and bacteria in numbers, picking up a rock here or a stone there and they would climb up the newly
formed fingers, up the arms and into the creases behind your ears

And whisper
They said
"Welcome back"
and Cerberus too, welcomes you with all their teeth, a snarl,
Welcome to the human condition, it is inescapable. Yet your kind are organic.

They stopped talking,
All light suddenly went down, the warmth from my body, and his body, and our hands together were all
that could be noticed. And so, we were digging, and clawing, and the bacteria spores off into web systems
and root organisations that acted like ladders and gave us information, sometimes a root, sometimes a
cord, fleshy and passing water and food.

Or a message, of the next circle. Sinners are only fossils beneath the surface. In the greatest paradox of life and death the only tangible matter is within the traces. And even then
The traces become suggestions and suggestions eventually become questions again.

And from once floating through the red, the hot-rod-red-speed-racing-soul-shaking, burnt out blood spill of red, we reached the wet. And the wet was also black.

To float became to walk in the black. Occasionally through a tunnel with steps, burrowed and rebuilt by ants, by beetles, by my hands and his feet, by people, bones, mites, my mother, wine, ashes, heat, turbulence, digging, industrialisation, rubbish, plastics, wood rot, stone chips, obsidian, water, clay, sand, glass, hair follicles, acidity, pins, pieces, peace treaties, tadpoles, gay decapods, claws, shells, crushed wings, discarded skin, thorns, thistles, oat milk, tree sap, adaptable genitalia, the vibrations from the lip sync, apple seeds, the bodies of Adam and Steve, metal, swords, rust, chalices, snakes skin, blood, web, ivory, wheat, flour, sweat, worms, the ever changing bodies of crustaceans, Kobudai humans, thousands of them, every single leg of every single millipede, the wings of flies, twigs, hollow eggs, honey, hexagons, scorpions, dark matter, B12, vitamin, mud, dirt, weeds, mud, cold, dirt, bugs, dirt, weaves, soil, rocks, dirt, my hair and dirt, my eyes and dirt, dismembered with dirt, my flesh and dirt, apart with dirt and hurt by dirt, and pieced back with dirt, the devil sewed with mud, I helped with dirt, and laughed with mud and cried with happiness, with care, eyes opened with dirt, and touched, with dirt, warming up, mud with metamorphosed, soil, a child, organic, dirt, dislodged with dirt, and chaos with dirt in flux with dirt, larvae and dirt, adaptability, dirt, changed by, dirt, de-constructed with mud, loved. The smell is still potent.

Stag larvae locked into an embrace, wrestling through rot wood and water
Horns flexed, tense and release,
they resist the structure, and both come out on top.
Holding tiny hands,
create a swarm,
clicking noises from their newly formed hard carcass
clicking noises, knocking against each other.

The tidying up of parks to make a more palatable environment, no places to hide and hold hands, couldn't stop stag beetles from climbing out of the black and into the last crust.

And us neither.

Our interchangeable bodies writhed and wriggled, and with a few motherly pushes, my fingers reached the light.

And light I did become.

The layers of my skin had changed countless times. Hardened, softened, hardened again.

And the first thing that happened was for my mother to pick me up.
I had moved through the layers of lessons.

Kissed on my head,

Yet at 15 my head was to be the source of the tainted image, the blurry and the wretched.

Only so far had trees and vines, and shrooms and flies, and crabs and shrimp and mosquitos, and fungi and bacteria and rot, and the stringy roots you find when the earth is ripped up from itself, dangling with ants falling off them, and snakes - only these things had understood the undoing I had done. I met them on my way out. The wind took me. The underworld. Where my mother was the moon and the sun.

I became disease at 15.

I missed the red.

I missed the earth being hot.

There is something. Within the problems of your skin.

You cannot be like the human and make more.

You cannot be like the human in a static state, prolong the existence! Stretch out the carcass to a million years - send us to the moon and into the gases of Saturn and swallow pills of extension and fill the sockets, the ear lobes, the internal tubing with creams and green so-good-for-you wheatgrass bullshit, because the body must be pristine!

He who did make it like this, made it so perfect and rigid and tight

Our genealogical worth

He made us so we could make more

To breed his own

Do not be useless

Do not enjoy the intuition

Do not listen to the body but do listen to the noises outside of it telling you

That transformation is to be against nature

Because now

We live where the trees do not die, and the frogs do not die, and the birds do not die, and we do not eat, and the water doesn't run out, and the plants do not reproduce, and the children stay young, and the old smile, and the male bugs do not swarm together, and swans don't steal eggs, and fish can't identify as, and the bushes bear so many fruits, and the sun does not go down, and moon does not come out, in fact no one "comes out", and the worms do not exist, and the maggots are not to be seen, and the devil is none, and the sky is blue, and the red is dried up, and the bones are in bodies and not under the earth and in the rocks

We are happy! We are perfect! We are in image! We are a painting to be painted!

Nothing is moving! Nothing is changing! Everything is ordered! A structure! A line!

And if another line forms! We have the axes to cut it! And the chainsaws to tear it! And the guns to shoot it! And the power to hide it!

But the devil and I felt, that the fluid red was still bursting beneath the surface

As a reminder for those who had travelled beyond,

That this image was made up of words

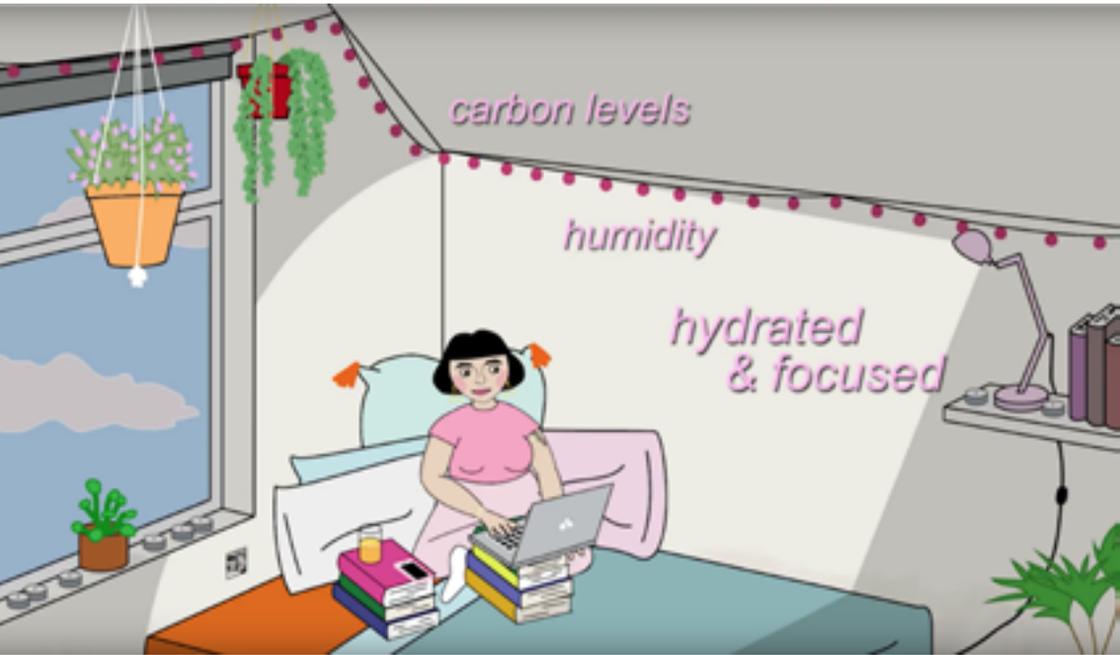
And that our bodies can move between them...

Des (Cybercesspool) Pneu

Self protection is when you are able to love yourself enough to not end your life but fix it. Tapping into the subconscious, creating has always been a means to cope with the everyday. Art keeps me grounded, it keeps me away from my former dependency of alcohol. I admit I still struggle.

Growing up in a country like Singapore, it pressurises youths to keep up with the joneses. No matter how much one tries to evade the system, there is no way of total dissociation. It is also a city where one is expected to internalise their emotions resulting to a state of anxious and depressed youths.

Through my art, I hope to relate to anyone who has been sweeping things under the rug and to maybe, have a sense of belonging. -



Eden Mitsenmacher and Rebecca Tritschler, HOW TO TURN YOUR BED INTO AN OFFICE.

Eden Mitsenmacher and Rebecca Tritschler

Self-protection is creating a space for non-popular actions/states such as losing, forgetting, unmaking, undoing, unbecoming and not knowing. Self-protection as a practice recognises the alternatives already embedded in any act of creation. The acknowledgment of inconsistent dominant truth reveals alternative paths that might serve as an opportunity to rethink the project of learning and thinking altogether.



Elisa Schmidt, becoming a bodyvideo5.

Elisa Schmidt

Hello, I am a voice message. I'm from a zone where there is no time. I only have the amount of power that your perception has space. Your lies are not very well hidden. I can see them in your deleted post. All I own is your desire, the desire to lock pixels in your gaze. There I have it, the lines around your pixels frame a space where time can be found. Who needs money with a wifi connection this strong? Your body doesn't need that much fuel. It's your childhood that doesn't leave you, your need for comfort. You're lucky the language of pixels is based on a universal concept of coloured dots instructed by a series of zeros and ones. Paint your landscape to its limits. I miss you, reality. You can only happen when I let you go.

Emily Lynch

Live in the moment, live free

Guya Sullivan

I am aware that we live in a world ruled by capital, efficient production and individualism - which breeds a society of cynicism. A society that lacks hope, devoid of love, vulnerability and care. A society that doesn't listen to one another, or try to make sense of ourselves in relation to the world around us.

To protect myself from this situation I am trying to slow down, to take my time to sit and understand my emotions, to understand my pain is a deep root that will take time to untangle, to share emotions with others and let them share with me. I focus on listening, I believe that listening can help both individuals and communities to understand themselves.

slow healing.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE ARDENT DESIRE OF SOME DEVOUT PERSONS TOWARDS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

O H,

278 IMITATION OF CHRIST.

with the greatest devotion and affection

Thy

heart

vehemently

desire
their

mouth both of their heart as well as of their
body, their soul

to moderate or satisfy their hunger
receiving all joy and spiritual
avidity.

For they truly know
whose heart burneth so
mightily within them,

Alas,

Be Thou merciful
sweet and gracious, and grant
to feel, sometimes at least,

my hope
increased; and that

may never die away.

the desired grace

For though I burn not with so great desire

I have a
desire,

to seek grace

patiently and confidently,
receive it thankfully, to keep it humbly, to
work with it diligently, and to commit
the time and manner

especially to humble thy-
when thou feelest inwardly little or no
devotion

the grace of devotion
good hope and

overcome

thy whole heart

thou shalt find thyself
at peace ;

disengage

to receive grace,

he shall admire, and his heart shall be enlarged within him, because he hath put himself wholly into His hand,

Behold, who seeketh with his whole heart, and taketh not his soul in vain.

obtaineth

great grace

O I now desire to receive with all devotion,

I come for remedy,
for consolation and relief;
who knoweth all things,

Behold,

coldness with
my blindness

Lift up my heart
do not let me wander upon earth.
Thou alone
henceforth and for evermore.

a love purifying hearts and
understanding!

WITH great devotion

O

Eternal Love,

I offer

whole affection of my heart,

I desire

O

Creator

desire to receive Thee this day with
such affection, reverence, praise, and honour,
gratitude, worthiness, and love,
faith, hope, and purity

And as Thy blessed precursor,

the Holy Ghost

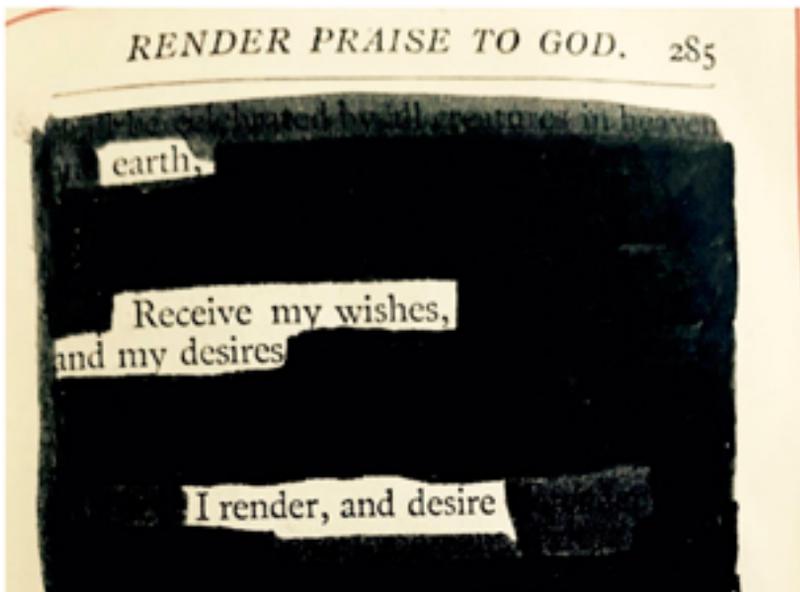
walking among men, humbling
with devout affection,

rejoiceth with

inflamed

great and holy desires.

ardent affections, ecstasies, supernatural
illuminations, and heavenly visions;



Hayley Hu'mani

Self-protection means keeping myself aligned when faced with challenges, whether internal or external or the combination of both.

Self-protection means confiding with my highest self, loving and caring for myself through creative expression.

To solidify and surround oneself by their version of truth is, arguably, the most protective means any person can do.

I have combined separate avenues I employ as modes to self-protection (music, movement, poetry and art).

By creating, I check in and express all that I am, let the (e)motion run through me, as to not stagnate.

If I stagnate and fail to transmute, I ultimately cause damage to myself.

Higher Self Monologue

ANOTHER

288

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

For faith and love are
predominant, and work

eternal and incomprehensible
of power infinite, and things great and

wonderful works.

such that the

THE END.

Helene Selam Kheib

Dissociative anaesthetic

You are not your mother's genetics
Nor your father's blood

You see not their trauma
But feel their pain
Or how and what they do not gain

What's not to gain ?
The endurance of oppression/sedation/elation
More than 23
Or 32

You've seen the line
You've felt the grain

Below your shoulders
The pits of ammunition
Between your shoulders
The beat of fury/ faith

Protect yourselves
From the refugee statuses
The refuge status

The blacked out trunk ~ limbs skewed/ing
The black trunk ~ belongings askew

You see
The ants rushing
(If you take the sugar off the table
the ants will stop coming')

Across the line
Through the line
On the line
On the margins
Racaille, rascals, rats
Marginalised

You have strength/force/
Virtuosity// versatility//
Nitrous ~ virtuous
By force ~ by grace

You will succeed

By Father's blood
Mother's genetics
Government name's creed

The twitch
The slant
The wonder
The grunt

Is not ignorance
Is not indifference

Is all that you are

Is all that they expect
The you are they
And they are them

Those
That possess the same faces
And the poses of command

Are those that wish
To have their own land



Holly Sandford, Hungry Tiger

Holly Sandford

I explore my gendered body through writing and characterisation, performing it as a method of coping, which becomes a transformative tool for self-reflection and integration. The adrenaline of vulnerability is a self-caring space.

Self-protection is knowing when to assimilate and when to deliberately fail that assimilation.

Self-care is how I spend an evening in bed, away from cis men, in front of the mirror.

Self-love is complicated - sometimes it takes me a lot of energy. There's no end goal of healed or cured, more a process of learning to love myself as much as I love my queer family

Ibrahim Kamara

I keep peace in myself by controlling my actions and thoughts and allowing people to people. The world is based on perception and although someone may try to express prejudice etc towards me, I make the mental choice to not let it have power over me.

Indrani Ashe

I am fighting two wars.

Women of colour are fighting a war of representation that reaches into the past and projects itself into the future. A war over who is visible and who authors what is seen. Women like Matahari took our clothing, our jewellery, and our cultural products, selling them as their own until we became alienated by our own image. Now the world is populated by our absence, and the twisted versions created by these wannabes. Our bodies are being bought and sold all the time, but we still don't make any money. Like vampires we suffer from being unable to see ourselves in the mirror.

I created Sadette Delacroix to fight the war for me. My inner goddess gave birth to a psychedelic time traveling goddess who seeks to infiltrate the system; to create, distribute, and profit. A brown girl imitating a white girl, imitating a brown girl. I can't culturally appropriate myself, I'm TAKING IT BACK. Because I listened to my auntie when she told me we didn't wear blouses under our saris before the British infected us with repression and made the temple dancers into prostitutes. That body is mine, to make, recreate, and multiply.

Artists are fighting a war, with people who want art to exist purely as an elite commodity, alienated both from meaning and a public. They want it to be a dead object, a token of speculation. People need beauty for meaning making, not just industrial consumption. And when we have unearthed all the sexism and bigotry from the world's religions, will we have anything left...Will we still have space to be spiritual, worship beauty, and connect to each other? Could art be that space?

So come to the goddess, buy her icons, perform her rituals. Live in beauty; be connected, blessed.



Jiaqing Mo, Subliminal Mirage

Jiaqing Mo

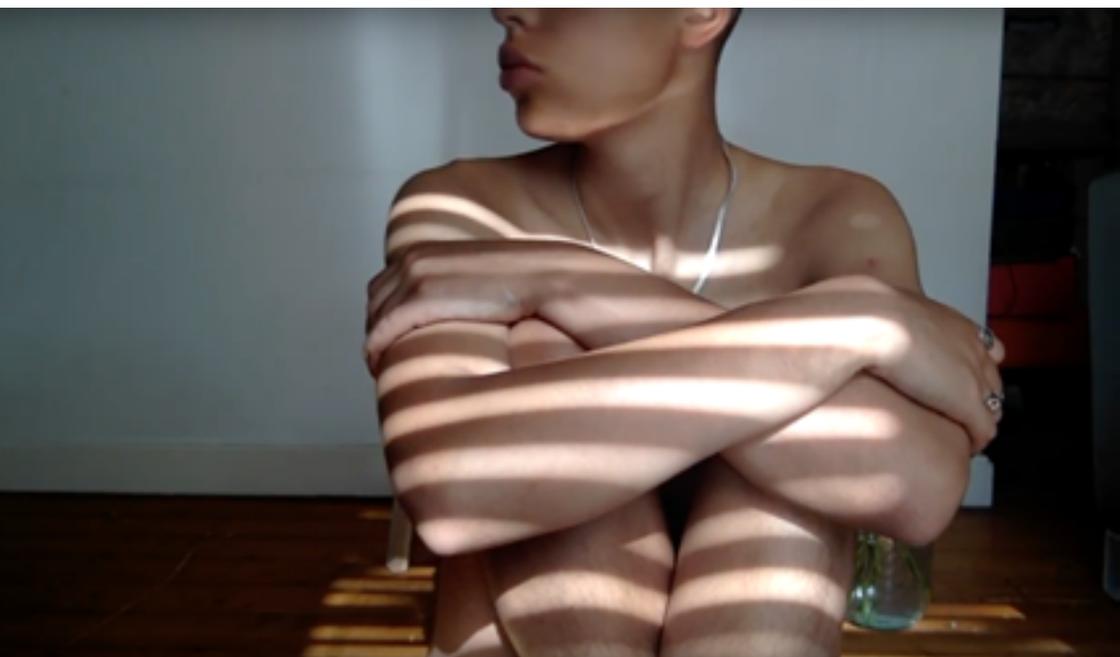
In my works, I try to construct philosophy, sociology, anthropology into my own visual language. I believe that everything that exists on our earth is settled by rules which are created by humans, so I am also creating various rules and new perceptions for the earth by myself, this is my way of self-protection, this is also my way to describe our contemporary social relationships and human living condition.



Johanna De Verdier, creepy deep sea monster footage

Johanna De Verdier

It is so stressful being alive! I try my best to stay calm. There are many things I have tried to achieve this calm state, for example; not looking at my phone as much, caring for gardening, taking multivitamins, listening to radio documentaries on the bus, taking a bath with some smelly bath bomb. But I am still stressed. So instead, I've refused the idea that my calmness will be attained through activities, consuming or appreciating moments. My place is in the pile of compost, this is the most soothing place to imagine myself. creepy deep sea monster



Kai-Isaiah Jamal

So I'm sitting on this train hurtling along tracks, like it knows where it is going and what exactly it is. And I'm biting my skin in the corner of my lip. And my head dips like trying to ground in this motion. And I'm sipping coke like a potion and I turn to my left. Sitting where I left off is this little boy, with eyes like he's seen the world already. With curls that cascade like his mothers, but he's always wanted to be the father he didn't know. And he's digging his nails into my hand, I understand he too is grounding. We are finding a way to slow down when the floor won't. I pull music out of my ear and I smile as if to say 'I'm here'. He takes his hand half the size of my fist and holds it to the middle of his forehead, as if to say 'You are me' and I know why we are both so fearful now, and I know why he smells like my house and I finally understand how he is I. And I breathe, lean to my left, lift my arm above his head and hold his shoulder like it is the last thing I will touch beneath a setting sky. I say what is speed but something that makes our feet not know where they are going. And how many times you been lost. But how many times you found home? The train is now flying, only fractions off the floor but yet still off the floor and the doors and the windows are crackling like pork belly on plates that look like yours. And the wind is rushing down the aisles. But what is speed but something that teaches you to sail, on a sea that ancestors still live in. What is movement but knowing that you are alive, even if you care barely stand up, keep going but find a way to sit. To breathe, to hold on without trying to hold everything, because sometimes just holding on is enough. But what is life but one fast train that never seems so slow, until the world swallows its bones just to make its spine. What is life but never being able to go back, because this has a route. And I say why are you scared, he replies because going forward means nothing is ending and I finish his sentence with him 'even when you wish it could'. But moving means start and end become nothing but the same. The hair on my body stands like waving at his skin and I say but what is speed without knowing that flying isn't impossible. What is speed but knowing how to control it like a kite in an overbearing wind. What is the wind but something that helps us breathe enough that we can travel. What is travelling but knowing that nothing is ending and knowing that ending isn't a final destination. What is a final destination because I believe it is myth. He sniffs and turns his head with an inquisitive face of my own. I say what is myth but thinking home is one place but finding out is wherever your feet take you. We both look at my nikes and we twirl our ankles as if preparing for take off. He holds my hand, what is a transition but movement knowing that nothing is ending. Only beginning again. What is movement but knowing you are alive enough to feel it.

Josephine Reich

Back
Back and reverse
Into fresh quiet sheets
Alone
Moroccan spices in my nose
Whispers of love in my ears
Hot red wine in my throat
My spit
Tastes of hope
Excitement lifting my toenails
From beaten flesh

Looking back
Is running away
On a beaten, boring track
Dust
But peace of mind.

9th March 2018 / 6th July 2018

#atayoun Palili

Sorry I'm not masc enough

A trans bo^s rejection of toxic masculinity and manhood

Sorry that I sent you a message after our hook up just to make sure you're alright

Sorry I'm not masc enough

Sorry that I'm under 5 foot tall so when I made out with you in the sex club you felt like you had to whisper in my ear "I need to go find a man"

Sorry that when you kissed me and felt my chest and breasts tissues on your chest , you forgot I was a boy and you said to me "I had never kissed a woman before"

Sorry that my face was soft and my voice was even softer , and I touched you softly and cared for you by wishing you a good day and you weren't used to men being nice to you, which I'm actually sorry about, I'm sorry you've been treated badly by men, and felt like I was too good for you, and it scared you so you just blocked me after I felt like i might be in love.

Sorry I'm not masc enough

Sorry that you wanted to punch me and beat me up in the chicken shop, but there was something feminine about me that stopped you from beating me up because we all know "never hit a woman".

But still there was something masculine about me that threatened you even tho you were a 7 foot tall man, and I could barely reach your elbows, but there was something threatening you, and you said "I would kick your head in, but I won't" because I wasn't just masc. enough

Sorry I'm not masc enough

Sorry that when I said hi to you in the dark room and you looked at me and realised my hair was long and I had breasts and you just turned away from me, sorry I wasn't masc enough in that moment, but then soon after when you saw me dom someone you came back to me with a condom in your hand, sorry I'm not masc enough

Sorry I'm not Masc enough to be your boyfriend and not femme enough to be your girlfriend and that I confuse you , eventho you're trans as well and bisexual, but something isn't sitting right, maybe it's because I have big nipples, or that I have great cheekbones, maybe it's because I'm pretty or maybe because I'm too short, so I don't look like a woman or a man that you're used to seeing in magazines and on red carpets, but I'm something in between , and our understanding of non-binary bodies is a tall handsome (not pretty) white body, someone who goes out running every morning like a freak! And I'm not even non-binary enough, but at least if I was masc you could just call me a boy, but I'm not even that, and you just rather cut me out instead of cutting out the inherent hatred of unique bodies out of your head,

So sorry I'm not masc enough for you to swallow

I'm sorry but you don't deserve my load of emotions



Kate Aries

The female body is increasingly represented to us through digital mediation. Devices and digital technologies provide new ways of seeing, as well as being seen, changing the way we relate to the image and, ultimately, each other. Feminism and female solidarity have become an important part of my practice, as well as the adverse effects of isolation and helplessness. I explore perception through experimentation with the camera, question my identity in the contemporary world as a woman physically, sexually, virtually and digitally. Self-protection is to interrogate societal expectations and to create works that challenge and confront.



Katya Kan, Younger Heart.

Katya Kan

Self-protection for me means having a strong aura and being able to control influences, which enter inside your body of energy. I'm now exploring theories of Jason Silva about how to enhance one's self-empowerment on an energetic level. My ultimate aim in improving my own self-protection is to reach the same states of intense euphoria, melancholy and other emotional states experienced in childhood.

Hylie Chung

Self protection to me is the ability to inhabit a space where my existence is defined by me and not as a lack of whiteness; and from that allow for an authentic experience of self love through protecting myself.

Leon Omondi

The company I keep, keeps me safe
Convert every 'L' (loss) into a 'W' (win).

Lisa Lux

Self-protection is about preserving and maintaining the size of your spirit. At all costs.

Lois Moodie

Positive Minds will elevate you to do the best you can.

Lula Kousson

We protect ourselves by being merciless.
By being selfish, which is in our nature of survival.
We fill our emptiness by feeding on the weak.
We hide under our skin and avoid exposing too much of what is beneath

Marie-Glaire Awolaja

I creep silently into Ayesha's south London studio, arriving just a few minutes into a guided meditation they are leading. I am out of breath and near tears. Ayesha acknowledges my entrance and shoots me a concerned look as I walk over to join the group of people sitting cross legged in a circle on yoga mats. I give them a quick nod of reassurance and find an empty space on the mats, closing my eyes and joining in the meditation. After the meditation, I explain on Ayesha's prompt that I had been rushing to the class and had left my bag on the tube. After a round of suggestions to contact TfL (Transport for London), Ayesha suggests that we conduct a group visualisation of the bag being returned safely to my possession. I describe the bag and its contents: a cobalt blue tote bag with humpback whales all over it; and inside it, my journal, hairbrush, make-up bag, a copy of Kool A.D.'s novel, *OK*, and so so much more. We all then take a minute to imagine the bag being safely recovered and returned. This is a typical start to a 3-hour long Shadow Sistxrs' Fight Club (SSFC) session.

Learning jiu jitsu for self-defence is about sensing and counteracting an aggressor's energy using basic techniques in intuitive ways. In agility and intuition training sports such as jiu jitsu, the body in response to an opponent's advances, is rapidly bent and moulded into forms that give it the character of a shield. It works in the sense of cultivating and then using the body's instinctive movements in combination with an opponent's own movements as leverage to alter the dynamics of an aggressor-victim situation. Thereby discovering one's capacity for and mastering these moves can kick start the process of transforming understandings of their – technically fragile – outer form as a weapon against oppressive external forces. SSFC enables a coming to terms with your body as a natural shield containing protective energies that can be developed. Jiu jitsu techniques and their uses inform the user of their own intrinsic power and capacity for amplifying this energy to avoid or counter threatening situations.

"I guess when we talk about herbalism, for me I'm thinking or drawing from like a Pagan, Wiccan tradition. As a witch I don't identify with any religion," Ayesha says. "I do draw from Wicca but I don't follow the Wiccan path in a direct way." Monique interjects, "I do like how you make it about the herbs that you have like around you." "Yeah exactly, that's from the pagan path. I try as much as possible to use herbs that may be native to, or grow in the UK, because you'll see when we cleanse the space, we like to cleanse with things like rosemary because it's more ethical to burn these things that are local to

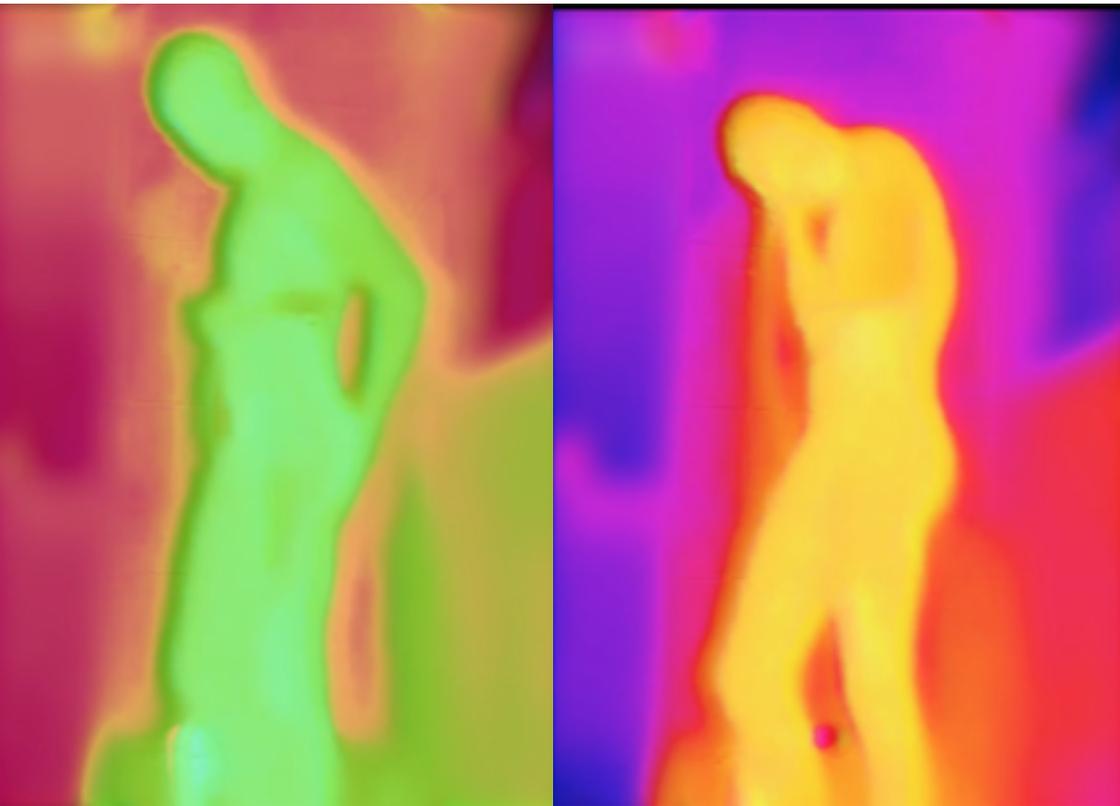


our environment, rather than like imported from California and like reliant on airmiles to get to you,” Ayesha declares emphatically. An environmentalist through and through, their spiritual practice is also saturated in a practical avoidance of environmentally damning substances. Nodding her agreement, Monique says, “It’s also really nice because London is really multicultural and because Shadow Sistxrs is focused on especially brown bodies and queer bodies, we’re making the environment ourselves.

We’re adapting all of our cultures and histories and using the practices of our ancestors but like really making it urban.” Ayesha adds on, “so it’s decolonising our own nature, recognising that yeah we’re brown, we’re queer, but we were born here so these herbs are just as much ours.

Obviously, for example, the chakras are based in Ayurveda, which originated in India. We draw from that because we think it’s a practice with knowledge that should be shared universally. It’s not so much being all “we’re doing an Indian thing,” and commodifying cultures, we’re sharing knowledge that can benefit all people and already does reside within all of us- just giving awareness to it and that’s really important.”

Ayesha and Monique seemingly complete each other’s already complete sentences, adding on layer after layer of nuance to already nuanced thoughts. You can sense the depth of their connection with the SSFC project. Monique continues, “and it gives us a place as well, because that’s a thing I think so many of us are kind of like ‘what is our culture?’ Because there might be certain aspects of our cultures that actually stigmatise our identity, or that we can’t necessarily connect to, so it’s a relief when you create a space where you can share and find the things that you connect to and you like and actually vibe with.”



Maximilian Wasinski, Salted With Fire

Maximilian Wasinski

Lonesomeness in London can be hard to deal with for anyone but for queer people, a sense of community is fundamental to spiritual wellbeing and pain can manifest in more ways than physical. I use my work to form, through the separation of spirituality from institutionalised religions, to develop a self realised queer spirituality to heal from and protect against the normative restrictions felt towards our queer community and celebrate our unique perspective as a divination for change. By acknowledging the othering by harmful groups and washing these negativities away from our souls we can celebrate through our communion beauty.

Miele Borgia

~ Sea Salt in a ramekin in the South Corner of every room.

Salt is a natural preservative, in magick it translates into energetic preservation. Natural barrier.

~ Dry Garlic and Dry Chilli crowns at kitchens doors. Italian Stegoneria, it protects the family from evil eye and allows misunderstandings to be "cooked in the kitchen" (To be sorted out). Both Garlic and Chilli are protective and cleansing ingredients in many traditions.

~ In a closed jar (To be made on a New Moon): Vinegar of choice, Sea salt, dry chilli seeds/crushed chilli, 11 Rowan/Hawthorn/Holly berries crushed.

~ Mix and let it sit overnight next to the witches bed. Then place in the same room where the most magickal practice happens.

This mixture can be used for Hexing, it absorbs low, unconditional and unconscious (environmental) energies from the maker.

To be released and used in hexing when needed.

Miranda Yates

Self-protection is the marriage of hard earned facets of a psyche. It's bundling up the crippling self-awareness, measures of exterior danger, and a proactive desire to make change and take CONTROL. Garnering a true sense of what endangers you is often only achieved when it's too late, that's certainly my experience, along with thousands of young women taught to not fight an act they never wanted, and never deserved. Protecting yourself does not mean hiding deep within a barren hole of inactivity, it does not concern limits or abandoning your purpose, it is to provide an immediate ricochet of force.

Monique Gienne

The Universe consists of micro- and macro- cosms. It is alive with representations of itself, resolving itself infinitely into sentient entities (sentientities hehe) that are born, live, and die, regressing back into the void that once again fills itself with fractalic expressions, stars, solar systems, and the essence of its own expansion. The Cosmos is an entity of and within itself.

The micro-cosm that is the living human body is a vessel of remarkable qualities. All are differently abled, differently coloured, differently gendered. All are capable of processing at least some kind of sensation and thought, all are instinctive. The human body is, like other micro-cosms, a representation of the universe. It begins small, grows and expands, pulsing with gas as it does so. It adorns itself with colours, planetary garb and constellations in its hair and round its waist. It dances with, makes love, desires and fights with other cosms- though it can never totally comprehend, other cosms, and friendships, feuds and cultures are born. Eventually it dies, regressing back into a state of non-existence, or Oneness, or, some might say, into a Divine Realm.

It is in this vein of thinking that, when looking at Self-Protection and defending your vessel, it is important to be able to look at your Universe in two ways: 1) your body as micro-cosm and 2) your body in macro-cosm. Everything that touches you affects you, and everything you touch you affect. It is all very well to say "protect your space" or "be aware at all times." But we have to be realistic. Avoiding all negative contact is impossible. Sometimes a meteor comes crashing into your world unexpectedly. Then what? Then protection becomes not about putting up a meteor-proof roof or hiding in a bunker waiting for the next one, because then you wouldn't be living. Then you wouldn't see the Sun. Self-Protection is about healing, a process that can be defined as learning how to understand and accept yourself despite history and circumstance. Healing is not an arrival, but a rewarding journey of deserving to exist, and therefore a greater ability to live a rich and fulfilling life- even though the meteor may have made a huge hole where there was once green valleys, maybe, when the rains come, for there is always rain, you will have a lake.

Regarding our bodies as cosms, we can come to the conclusion that, like planets and atoms, the entity of the human body is one that requires boundaries and discipline- Independence if you will. We must protect and be aware of our space, regarding ourselves as sacred structures that require specific attention through our own hands-only we, as cosms, can ever truly attempt to know, understand, and therefore uplift ourselves as individuals.

And yet on the other hand, an atom cannot thrive and be a 'thing' by itself. It cannot be a house, or a car, or a satellite as a single atom. Planets, too, are not static things- they can be struck by meteors, or the climate manipulated in some way. We humans exhibit the same malleability to outside forces. Even those who claim to be the most self-sufficient, the most independent, those who claim they did it all on

their own- can this ever be entirely true? Was there no inspiration, a complete removal from the influence of others, whether good or bad? We all have different impulses, energies and forces that spur us. We must be grateful for the good that has helped us on our path, and, though it often seems impossible, grateful also for the bad- for there is not a single thing that has happened to us that has not made us who we are, and in order to love ourselves completely as we stand, we must be grateful, too, that we are here and existing despite our trauma.

Our powers of Self-Protection lie not only in our abilities to build indestructible roofs or being independent particles. Self-Protection is about understanding our micro- cosms, being aware of its influences and of how it, too, influences the macro-cosm and other micro-cosms. Self-Protection is both reinforcing our structures, healing them, and re-establishing ourselves as influential individuals in a complex Universe. These are important processes to understanding, appreciating and honouring our micro-cosms. Self-Protection is understanding that life is an incredible journey of joy and suffering, of undescrivable happiness and undescrivable sorrow, that, whatever the weather, is always beautiful to the Universe at large, observing itself.

Mabihah Iqbal

I resist negativity by staying focused on my work, and always trying my best.

Nicolette Geo

Self-protection means not allow oneself to be sucked into the negative thoughts and states that the mind can conjure. It means to rethink one's situation and to keep reminding oneself that even though it may be tough at that moment of time, there needs to be a strength for self-preservation. If we allow ourselves to be sucked into the vortex of negativity, it makes it harder to get out and to see the other side.

Nina Coulson

We protect ourselves by being merciless. By being selfish, which is in our nature of survival. We fill our emptiness by feeding on the weak. We hide under our skin and avoid exposing too much of what is beneath. -

Noa Weinstein

Moving to London before two years ago was an act of self-defence. I was just after finishing two years of compulsory service in the Israeli army, which I am strongly against to. Leaving Israel, at that time, was like a kick in the villain's stomach - I needed to detach myself from the country I was born in. Since I moved, my way of resistance had change. In order to protect myself I want to know, to see and to understand; kicking the villain means to reveal it face. I try to document and capture the normalization of military, the use of weapons and their presence in our lives. I use video in order to frame actual situations I would like to put under observation.



Pacheanne Anderson and Charles J. Goodhall, *A Woman in a Room* being watched by man.

Pacheanne Anderson

Self-protection to me, is the ability to recognise, analyse and challenge societal problems that directly affects me on a daily basis as a black woman. Through understanding the often hyperbolic, stereotypical representation and perverse fetishisation of the black female body in various mainstream media, in addition to the destructive white male gaze, self-protection for me is rejecting the above, by taking control of my own representation through moving image. This performative film aims to represent this act of self-protection through a hyper-surrealist personification of the male gaze.



Pixie Tan, Dual

Pixie Tan

What do you call a Practice that often amounts to nothing without a tight network of collaborators?

A network built upon trust, care and mutual support. Network - Community

Collaborators who look out for you when anxiety takes over and reminds you that you're exactly where you need to be.

Collaborators - Friends

By working with and alongside like-minded creatives who share similar values and creating a close knit of community which supports and cares for each other, PRACTICE becomes a powerful tool to inspire change, collective action and self-care.

Self-Care - Network

Network- Community Community - Friends Friends - Practice Practice - Self Care

Red Deer

This is for all of those from broken or damaged, no, demolished homes, with irreparable ruins that couldn't provide shelter or warmth to even a baby mouse.

Seek shelter under your shade, the shadow of which is made up of the darkness and light found within, as one can't exist without the other. You'll know what makes up both of these contrasting shades. My own darkness is through a fractured foundation and abandonment. My light is optimism through sisterly love and imaginative joy. I first felt both when I had no choice but to finally yield to my overwhelming capacity to feel. I used to run around in circles, never standing still, trying to lose my shadow in the process. Now I stand under my own shade and let these shadows, which are sometimes heavy as iron chains and light as paper aeroplanes, dance all over me, and in this way acceptance allows me to release their hold and embrace all that I am made up of. The reasons for why I am me. What a waste it is to be ashamed when you can't change what has been. Be careful about what you constantly dwell upon, thoughts can act as either your anchor or your wings. Burn the victim card, then throw blame into the flames instead of to the wind. Carry both of these around long enough and finally they'll poison you and transform into their cousin - self-pity. It is so important to acknowledge and move on. The world will not stop turning or stand still for anyone. This is a golden lesson.

We are as pure and whole as we are broken and flawed.
We are proof that it is more than possible to exist with these contradictions and that is a beautiful thing.

Mafaela de Ascario

I'd wake up in the morning to the tinny tones of my I-phone Cuckooing the dawn of a new day. The ritual of enslavement to a virtual reality begun: Scroll e-mails, Instagram and WhatsApp messages. Anxiety. Insecurity. FOMO.

The administrative tasks and phone calls to complete Noted in my vulnerable mind. Comparisons and envy of the lives of others Bubbling in a routine of self-loathing. Opportunities of missed fun and nepotism Marked as misplaced regret.

I choose Life and Reality. Duende.

My mind had been whittled down to a substandard model. Computing small, bite-sized mouthfuls of Predominantly useless information, Enough for a false sense of connection.

I'd consult Apple Weather what the sky looked like Trusting the 'fact' it said rain clouds Rather than open my window and Believe my eyes the day was blue and clear.

Cheap headlines, celebrity opinions, Acquaintance's Facebook rants Became the basis of my knowledge On current affairs, marital affairs. Gossip.

I choose Life and Reality. Duende.

I remembered the Real World. Finding a nearby street based on My internal navigation, Using visual landmarks, Noting beautiful architectural cityscapes; Thejourney as adventure.

The Library: An alternative Temple To the religion of Apple. Hard copy books, where centuries of knowledge Are constructed on strong foundations. A tantalising maze of endless stories and counterstories Conflicting, colluding, corroborating A wealth of multifaceted enlightenment To feed my capable and hungry mind.

Writing and painting. Sketching the outlines of my inner fantasies. Relating their hopes and fears Into a vibrant canvas of life reflected. I began to experience Duende. My soul appeared in brief moments. Walking in the sunshine. Physically filling my body from head to toe tip Waking up each part in a synchronisation of Effort and unity.

Dancing. My soul howled with joy. I watched others dance And we praised the moon together. Expressing our sexual desires, Beating out our conflicts, Until they were nothing but a Sweating collection of limbs Flexed and flung To the rhythm of Life.

I choose Life and Reality. Duende.

Saffron Mustafa

Transubstantiation/ temperance (3): Nettle (Histamine, acetylcholine, serotonin)
Protection. (There am I ((narrative thief)); “silky warm body”, There am I; “in the fridge stroking a nettle, that’s what I want”).

Historically nettles were used to treat often female orientated pain for example treating UTI’s, soothing, hastening labor or stimulating lactation. e

Transubstantiation/ temperance (3): Nettle (Histamine, acetylcholine, serotonin)

honey and nettles have been inserted vaginally as a contraceptive.

Protection. (There am I ((narrative thief)); “silky warm body”

In spells nettles are used to stimulate lust, to remove or break curses or other spells,

Tiny hollow hairs in the stems and undersides of the leaves contain Histamine, acetylcholine, serotonin, formic acid).

(Formic acid is the same acid that ants have in their saliva glands.)

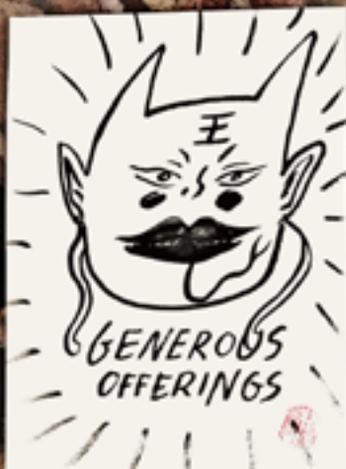
Soldiers sewed nettle seeds, to grow. so that if their limbs got cold. they could rub the stems and leaves on their skin to get warm

ingredients that cause the heated raised rash from touching the tiny hollow hairs on the stems or under side of nettle leaves (Histamine, acetylcholine, serotonin, formic acid).

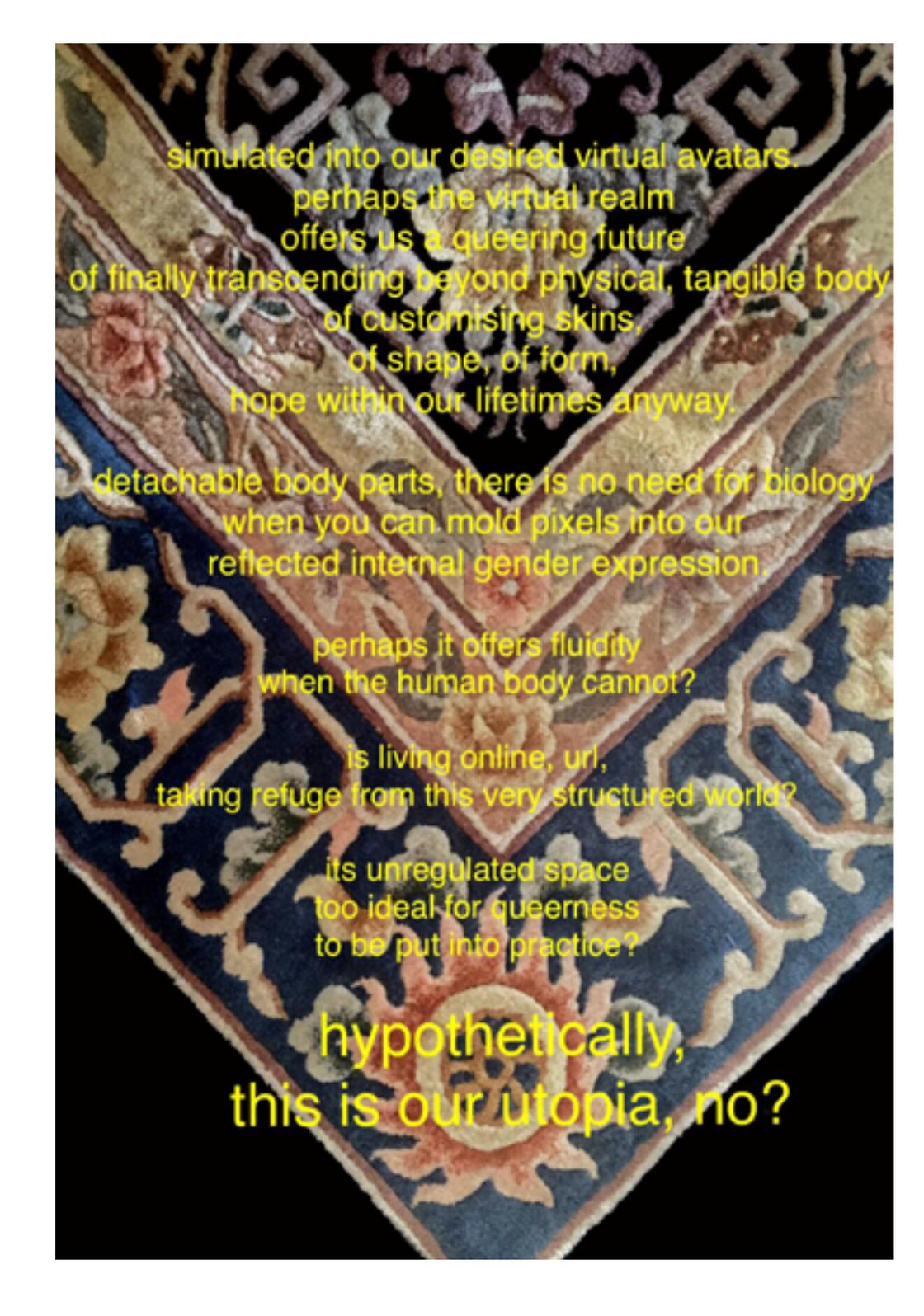
Transubstantiation/ temperance (3): Nettle (Histamine, acetylcholine, serotonin) Protection. (There am I ((narrative thief)); “silky warm body”, There am I; “in the fridge stroking a nettle, that’s what I want”).

Tiffany Chan

I've been thinking a lot about cyber spiritual protection,
and STDs (spiritually transmitted demons),
not in an "early phases of 'internet safety'"
kinda way, not of basic spam email,
in cyber street smart,
phishing virus hyperlink,
but a cautious-about-virtual-spirit-transference kinda way,
and within the virtual landscape we have 'set up camp' in (colonised)
/taken refuge in,
we have begun to "mirror" ourselves into



*please note that mirror
is not always direct, literal reflection,
mirrors render illusions,
and illusions can manipulate image and 'reality',
that is not to say that mirrors 'lie',
rather they allow us to express
our internal, metaphysical thoughts
and forms
more clearly*-



simulated into our desired virtual avatars.
perhaps the virtual realm
offers us a queering future
of finally transcending beyond physical, tangible body
of customising skins,
of shape, of form,
hope within our lifetimes anyway.

detachable body parts, there is no need for biology
when you can mold pixels into our
reflected internal gender expression,

perhaps it offers fluidity
when the human body cannot?

is living online, url,
taking refuge from this very structured world?

its unregulated space
too ideal for queerness
to be put into practice?

hypothetically,
this is our utopia, no?

Sam Jones

Playing with me like I'm a dog or a child, something much more subservient than both of those things. But I'm not responding, maybe playing along a little bit. Doing what you say, but not really feeling what you want me to do. Everything has its place

I wiggle my fingers. I crawl back up onto my only two legs. I peer down at him now; I am higher and more powerful. I tell myself my fear is unfounded as he glares savagely back at me. Dogs can kill. I move cautiously towards the door and shut him out.

Shakti Joy Fairchild

A brief warmth
I felt the sun on my back and for a moment I thought I was alive
A plant in the never ending winter
Yearning for spring
Let me bloom
Knock me back knock me down
Mornings carry false hope
Like maybe if I tried hard enough I could remember what your touch felt like
But we're living in the twilight hours
A state of perpetual dusk
Romantic they say, yet I am just afraid
Wait, weighted, waiting still
Reach up reach out
This can't last forever
Bury me in soil,
rip apart my skin,
uncurl- wash away my sins. This is a new beginning.
The equinox has been and gone
My rituals are getting tired
Draw your protective circle
The dark has past now, the cold will too
Stay in your safe place and soon
The walls will start to crumble and we will dance in the breeze again'

Self protection for me comes in various shapes and sizes, depending on what I am protecting myself from. Sometimes it is quiet and it is laying low and sometimes it is being loud and seen and fighting back and more often than not it is reminding yourself to trust yourself and your boundaries and to keep yourself safe accordingly.

Sophie Hoobnaein

Self-protection for me runs in cycles with self-learning. I am continually discovering that aspects of my self-protection are not for me, they are for someone else or a version of myself that moves out of sync with who I really am. Through my art practice I often feel I am unpacking an inner corrosion of subjectivity that has occurred with growing up in a society with an investment in a specific positioning of minority groups. I try self-protect by resisting limiting forms, avoiding polarising views, letting myself feel things, provoking an authorial male rationale and checking myself when I'm compromising my individuality.

Steph Francis

Self protection is the ability for the arts to be a constant cathartic therapy, working on both personal and political issues. Each project/work aims to push myself toward a closer sense of contentment and a quiet strength. The acceptance of an unstable world and mind is an acknowledgement of perpetual change, the self becomes protected in knowing this. Looking toward the strength of nature and the ability to weather any storm is of huge importance to me as a person and my creative outlets.

Venetia Galanaki

Stand on your ground. You have walked a long way. Claimed this territory.
You crossed seas and crushed mountains. Do not let anyone step all over it.
Defend your ground. Protect the peace of your land.
It has been a hard earned one. Etc etc

How can I protect the ones I love in this hostile environment?



Wingshan Smith

A new global disorder has left many feeling numb and unsettled. In the aftermath of the American Presidential election, Brexit, the dissolution of Hong Kong's Umbrella Revolution as well as an on-going world refugee crisis, dreams of progression seem less achievable than ever.

Self-protection is a way to navigate our world's increasingly hostile environment. To me, self-protection also means reclaiming identities and histories lost or forgotten. It also implicitly denotes a mode of nurturance and mutual support.

Psychic Cards for Uncertain Terrain: Hong Kong is one half of a two-part interactive project that invites anxious viewers to have their futures read by a very specific deck of tarot cards. The deck is formed of instant photographs taken in 2018 around and within Hong Kong featuring street life, private life, and the people who live there. This work explores the mystic aura of the object and the indexicality of an image as it seeks to challenge notions of regional identity, city planning, and personal destiny.

I ask the deck: How can I protect the ones I love in this hostile environment?

Wunmi Olorunke

It's ridiculously easy to hate yourself
to be angry with yourself all the time and to constantly
Chastise
Nitpick
And
there are parts of yourself that
will irritate
and frustrate
and it's easy to be lazy with yourself.
to forget to care about
look after
forgive
Affirm
Support
Encourage
it's easy to give up on trying to keep yourself
afloat
because to be completely honest
you're high maintenance
and you are always going to be high maintenance
you are the most high maintenance person you will ever have to deal with in your entire life
because you are the only person that you will have to deal with for your entire life
but
you're also the only person you will always have with you your entire life
it's easy to forget that you are always there for you
to forget that you are as important as the beings that keep you company and
you do not need to be with
anybody
you are
you are with yourself
say it out loud
I am with myself
because you are
not just a structural composition of matter
but a being inside a being that can understand and comprehend and communicate with
itself
and
it's hard it's a lot of work
it's really fucking exhausting
but you can maintain yourself
you can love yourself
you don't have to completely understand yourself
but you will always be with yourself
as you are



Zethu Zizwe Ruby Maseko, Afro Safety Net

Zethu Zizwe Ruby Maseko

Resisting negativity by desensitising myself from other people's insensitivities, trusting my body and it's instincts, losing my self in the process of making music and art

Hindi Hou

Self-protection for me is a very passive content, is a conflictive desire of self-expression under constrained exotic culture invasion, male gaze, moral norm.



SCN.

The Self-Protection Manifesto was co-produced by Ayesha Tan Jones from the Shadow Sistxrs Fight Club with Ruth Hayden-Wason, Laurie Martin, Lamar Ita, Rosie Eckmire-Mills and Moyin Sakar from the ICA Social Creative Network.

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