

Ellen Lapper is a British visual anthropologist, artist and researcher exploring different mediums to move away from traditional text-based research. Ellen largely engages in participatory projects; currently she is pursuing two research projects. One is committed to telling stories with the aim of widening the discussion on colonised peoples and challenge homogenised and radicalised ideologies of British identity. This research is formed of a long-term ethnography and has been made into an ongoing film. The second is on the digital afterlife, which currently only exists in written form, published by transcript/Columbia University Press and will travel to the DORS#5 in Copenhagen 2020. Both research projects will be presented at the EASA 2020 conference in Lisbon. Her films have been shown in various locations (UN Geneva, Chicago Ethnographic Film Festival, FACA Lisbon) with her work on post-colonialism contributing to the 2019 RAI Film Festival (Bristol) and Forecast Forum (Berlin) 2019. She is currently participating in seminars at the New Centre for Research and Practice under a scholarship and holds a master's degree in Visual and Media Anthropology from the Freie Universität Berlin, a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art (International) from the University of Leeds and a Foundation Diploma in Art & Design from Wimbledon College of Art. Ellen has professional gallery experience from previous long-term employment at Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin, and has worked on various exhibitions in Germany, Poland and the UK. She is also a freelance writer and translator in the fields of contemporary art and anthropology.

Last Round of Jaldi Five – Extended

2019 | 31 mins | London

In line with ethnographic filmmaking methodology, the original 2017 film ‘Last Round of Jaldi Five’ (see page 4 of portfolio) is extended by a five minute revisiting in 2019, during which the film was screened to members at the South London Anglo-Indian Association. The extended footage hears from familiar faces and pieces together their reactions, comments and questions that the film raised.



See ‘Last Round of Jaldi Five – Extended’ via this Vimeo link:

<https://vimeo.com/369842012>

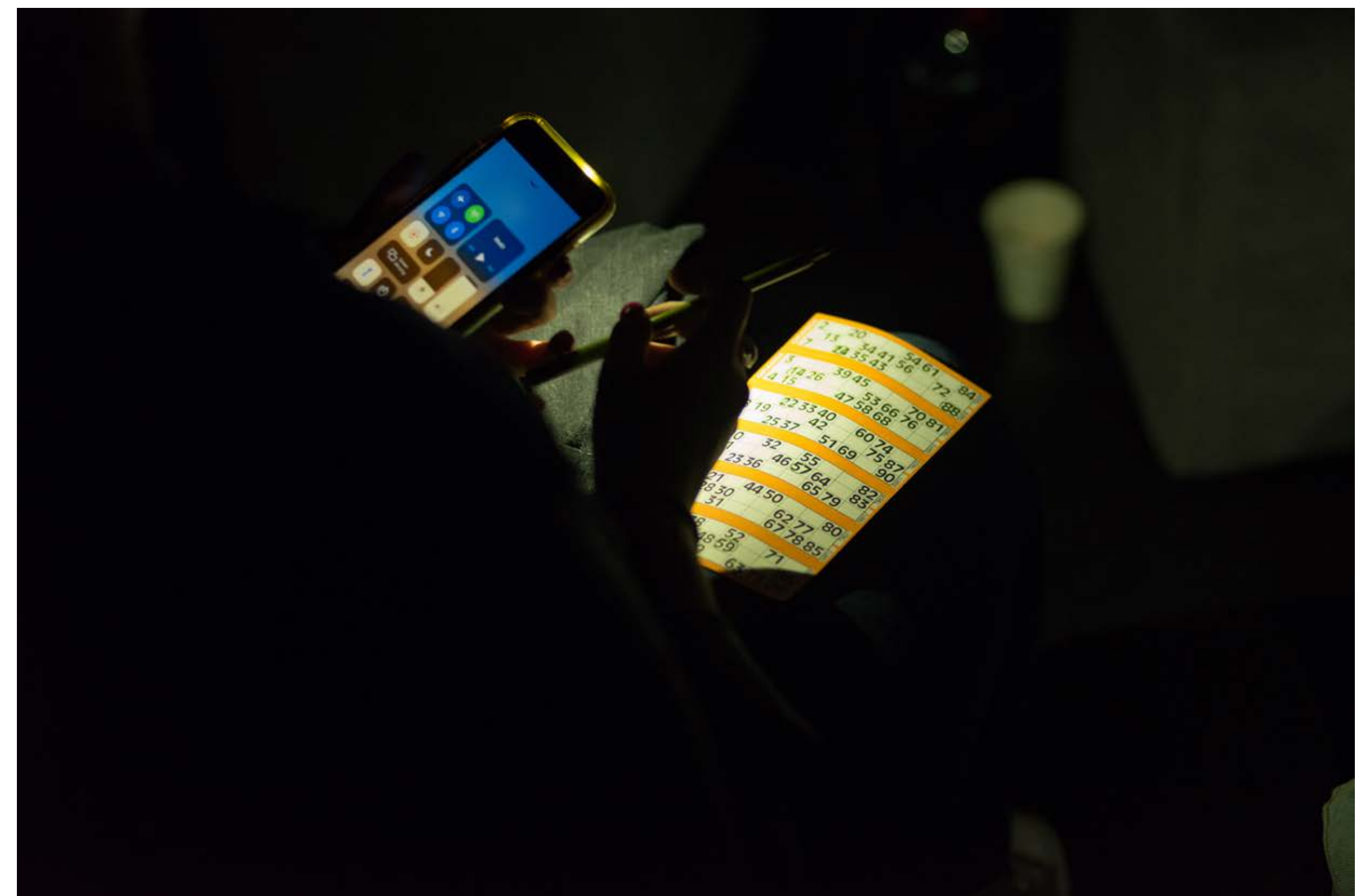
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‘Last Round of Jaldi Five’ was selected for Forecast Forum 2019 – an annual international mentorship program held at the Radialsystem in Berlin, Germany – under the category of Moving Images mentored by artist Candice Breitz. Over the course of the week, artist and mentees worked together, and I adapted my research into the form of a lecture-performance, with audience interaction in the form of a live bingo game, which was presented to the public on the 6th July.

Where are you from? No, where are you really from? Visual anthropologist Ellen Lapper researches the Anglo-Indian community in South London. The group, to which her maternal grandparents belong, describes people of mixed descent hailing from the Indian subcontinent during British colonial rule. Many left India after independence, as their affiliation to Britain was stronger. ‘Last Round of Jaldi Five’ seeks to challenge our stereotypical nature and widen the discussion surrounding people who find themselves confronted with the legacy of colonial rule.



Last Round of Jaldi Five

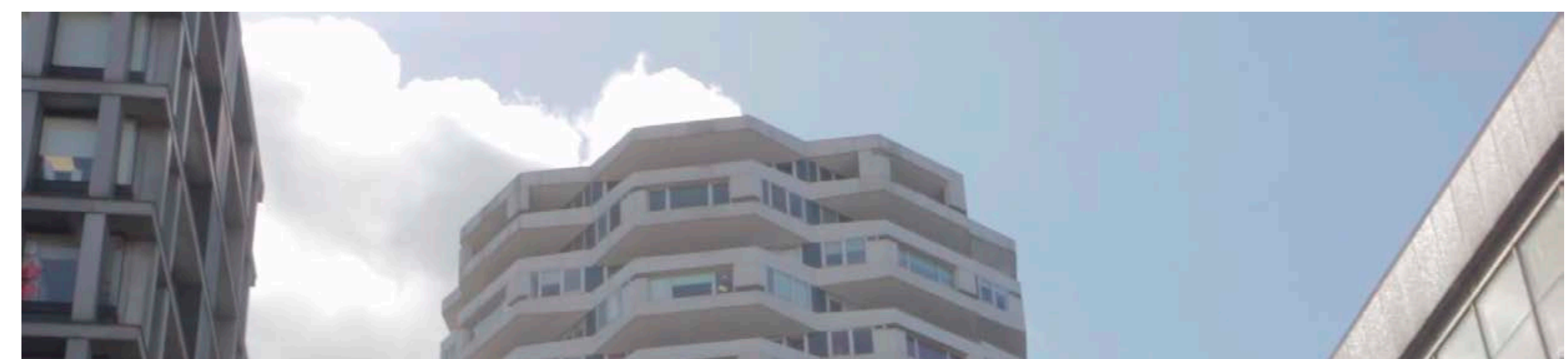
2017 | 26 mins | London

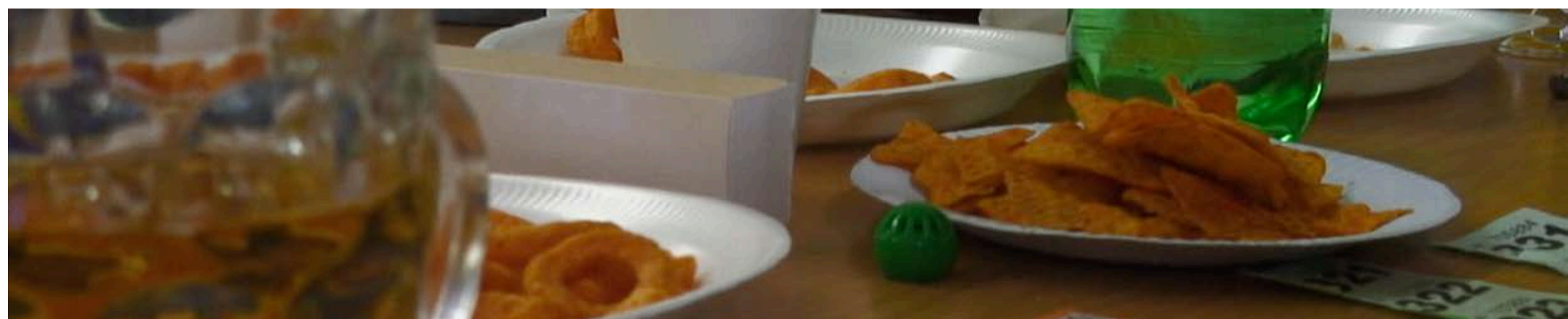
2017 marked seventy years since the decolonisation and Partition of India, sparking one of the largest mass migrations in history. One particular community uprooted by this event were the Anglo-Indians. Hailing from the Indian subcontinent during the British colonial rule of India, the term came to describe those of mixed European (predominantly British in the paternal line) and Indian (largely maternal) descent. Anglo-Indian loyalty was towards their European upbringing; they were given Western names, dressed in Western clothes, were mostly faithful Christians and grew up with English as their mother tongue. Therefore, upon the dissolution of the British Raj, many Anglo-Indians chose to leave for the UK, yet their reception was not wholly what they expected. This film joins a group of retired British Anglo-Indians congregating at St Chad's Catholic Church Hall in South London. The community upholds a dual-identity within a country they were closely affiliated with, yet had never visited. The film explores Anglo-Indian place-making amidst a chaos of bingo, eating and a lot of dancing.

See 'Last Round of Jaldi Five' via this vimeo link:

<https://vimeo.com/258525924>

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Film stills from 'Last Round of Jaldi Five'



How Has Social Media Changed the Way We Grieve?

Ellen Lapper

It was 1:30 a.m. My family had been trying for hours to contact me and a point had been reached where our social media ties prevented them from informing others. “I don’t want her to find out over *Facebook*,” said my Mum. The dilemma being, the more people were told of the news—close family even—the greater the risk would be of one of them posting online. Today, those privileged with online access rarely log out. As our offline selves become increasingly dictated by our online presence and our lifestyles rely on mobile devices and social media, it becomes all the more pressing to investigate the impact of this phenomena on the inevitable accompaniment to our existence: death. Our social media platforms alert us of a death before traditional forms of media such as newspapers, radio or television have the chance (Carroll & Landry 2010). This phenomenon was clearly demonstrated by frenetic activity on UK social media sites following the passing of David Bowie and Alan Rickman at the beginning of 2016. The news of both deaths became ‘*Trending Topics*’ on *Facebook*. Media coverage was dominated by now familiar announcements stating that thousands of tributes were pouring in via *Twitter*. One user posts a photo, another shares a video and the *hashtag* ‘#RIP[insert celebrity’s name]’ goes viral.

what I understood from everyone to be most comforting. As these memories are shared within their networks, others can comment, ‘Like’ and attempt to share the experience.



Facebook post from Natasha, one user in my network, on the day of her brother’s funeral. December 2015.

For Arendt, whatever is experienced internally is valueless unless shared with another. “Pain [...] is so subjective and removed from the world of things and men that it cannot assume an appearance at all” (1970: 51). She expands her view on physical pain within our body as being the only thing that you cannot share, however, I would argue that grieving is physical pain. The bereavement posts on *Facebook* could be a result of our struggle to share this physical, internal pain by using the alternative forms that social media offers to us. Texts and words aside, users can share videos, post photos or use emoticons; all these options endeavor to express something where vocalization fails. The process of *posting* offers users opportunities to connect with others who may share similar experiences or offers messages of support, as illustrated in Image 3. The emoticons replace text. Some 87 people ‘Liked’ the post and 97 comments were made—many of which stated: “so sorry to hear that”, indicating it was the first time they learned of this news. Somewhat ironically within this context, though

Die Unterkunft

2016 | Kate Blackmore, Ellen Lapper, Ursula Sommer, and Maren Wickwire |
7 mins | Germany

Die Unterkunft / The Accommodation

This documentary short presents an intimate portrayal of Orly in her role at one of the largest and most well-known emergency shelters in Berlin, highlighting the way in which the traditional boundaries between life and work, religious beliefs, and even languages are fluid and take on a new transparency in the emergency shelter.



See 'Die Unterkunft' via this Vimeo link:
<https://vimeo.com/163726133/9367988736>





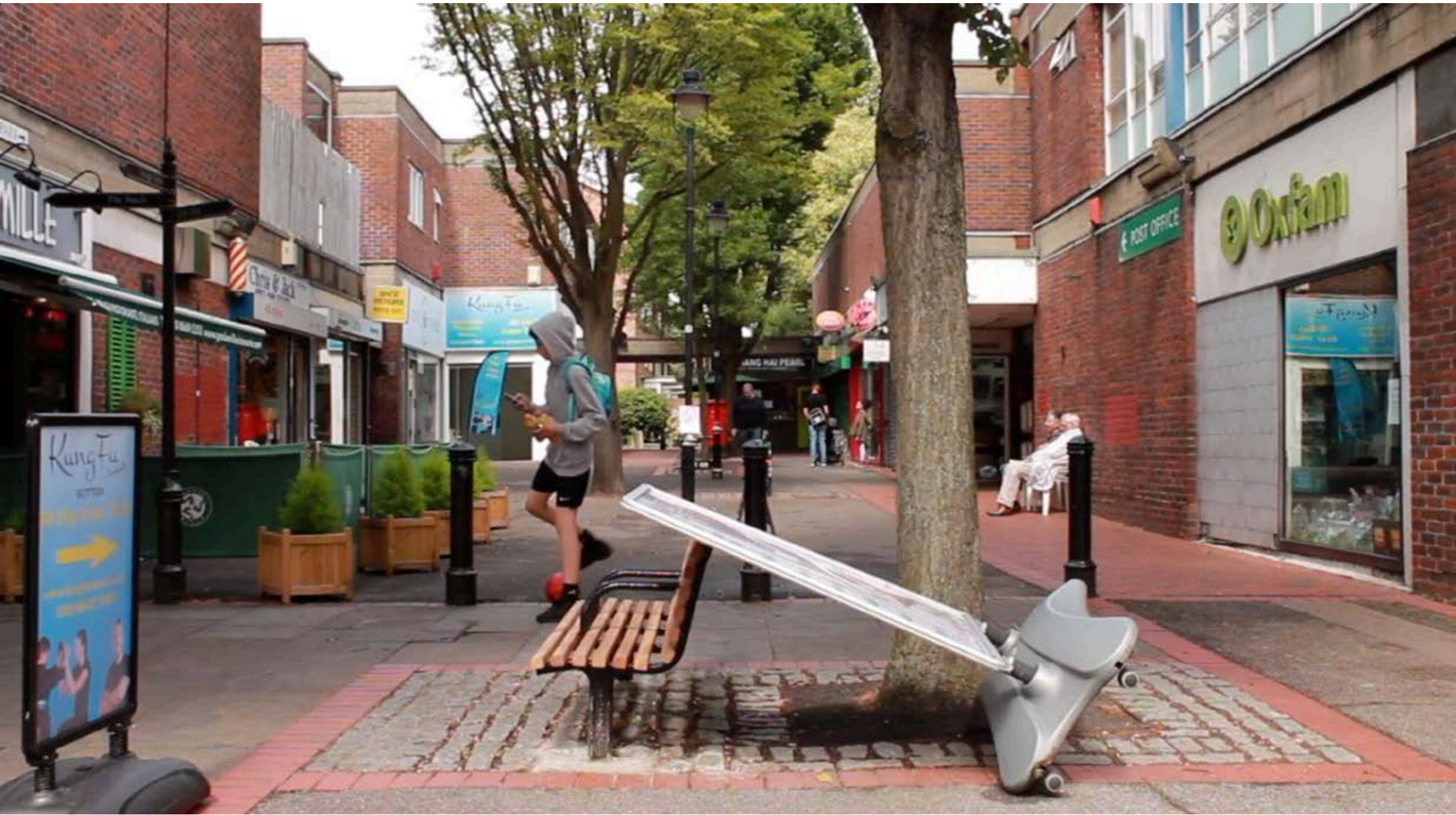
Film stills from 'Die Unterkunft'

As Britain voted to leave the EU on the 23rd June 2016, the non-material place of the Leave campaign’s rhetoric: “Vote Leave – Take Control” was further fuelled by ally UKIP’s (United Kingdom Independence Party) “we want our country back” poster campaign. The British public were encouraged to dream of a Britain who could manage her borders, restore her sovereignty and strengthen the Great in Great Britain. “The nation-state at best is based on the social contract that is also an emotional contract, stamped by the charisma of the past.” (Boym 2011: 15)¹ An inflatable T-Rex dances at the anti-Brexit protest in London in July 2016 warning to save Britain from extinction whilst Erasure’s A little respect blasts out - “I’m so in love with you...” It was emotional.

What is this sense of country that the Leave campaign wishes Britons to return to? What is this place?

The film joins Bill, the Chairman of UKIP Sutton (London). Purporting UKIP’s views, keen to meet and an active campaigner, Bill sheds light on what kind of country he wants Britain to become.

¹ Boym, Svetlana, 2001: The Future of Nostalgia, New York: Basic Books.





Film stills from 'We want our country back'

God Save the Queen

2013 | 15 mins | split screen film installation, tumbutu screen print, written text
and colour photographs

The film is presented in part as a documentary. Unknowingly filmed, Coral and Neville Hine provide an insight into their lives growing up in British India and the Partition of India. Despite striving at every point to retain their “Britishness”, there are clearly obvious influences of Indian lifestyle filtering through. These stories are shown here alongside a portrayal of London Road in West Croydon (where the Hines moved to upon coming to England in 1959). West Croydon in particular is extremely culturally diverse, and this video attempts to question the role of being British in today’s multicultural society.

The video goes along with the text ‘who do you think you are?’
Find two excerpts from it below.

Where are you from?

A Standard question. Often most people have a standard answer. However, the amount of times I have successfully answered this question in my lifetime is zero. And I feel this has come to a point in my life where I have kind of become fed up of giving a sort-of, pathetic answer. It came to a height whilst living in Portugal¹, where upon meeting so many people it naturally becomes a frequent question; both asked and answered. Being one of only two British people (that I met) in Lisbon and the two of us looking, physically, extremely different, people were confused.

‘Yeah, I can guess she’s from Britain, but you’re not... are you?’

No, I guess, in a physical sense, I don’t fit into most people’s preconceptions of stereotypical ‘Britishness’, but then so many are from mixed backgrounds in Britain, that few do anymore.

Following this explanation of Britain being extremely multicultural, people want to know more.

‘Ok, so your parents, where are they from?’

The dead-ends and drawn-out explanations begin here².

¹ I studied abroad at Faculdade de Belas da Universidade de Lisboa between September 2011 and July 2012 through the Erasmus programme and thus met a lot of people from different nationalities.

² ‘Recent studies have shown that the process of self-definition, in relation to others, can be lengthy and exhausting for many mixed people, requiring a whole geography and history of explanation. For example Minelle Mahtani observes, “The burden of hyphenation, where one is seen as not solely ‘Canadian’ but ‘Canadian and–fill-in-your-ethnic-background’ is especially heavy for women of ‘mixed race’.” Minelle Mahtani, ‘Interrogating the Hyphen-nation: Canadian Multicultural Policy and “Mixed Race” identities’, CERIS Working Paper Series, 20 (2002), p.19, cited in Miri Song, Choosing Ethnic Identity (Cambridge: Polity, 2003), p.73





Who is to say 'you don't look English?'

Preconceived ideologies surrounding the notion of 'Britishness' (and other cultures for that matter) dominate our society. But what is being 'British'? Does 'Britishness' equal 'Whiteness'? No. Definitely not anymore at least. However, for a lot of people, particularly those from outside of Britain, this is the case. It's not the individual's fault but more the media. Abroad more is publicised about Kate and Wills' Royal Wedding (and their life to follow) than the kind of people that really live here.

Primarily based on a first impression, appearance is the only factor we have so far to 'judge'. And no matter how much we'd like to deny it, we all do it. But we are currently living in a society where race and aesthetics are as separate as they've ever been. Who were the faces of the London Olympics 2012? Jessica Ennis and Mo Farah. Are they white? No. If we're really going to insist on judging then other aspects need to be considered; to look deeper into our upbringings, surrounding influences and traditional procedures.

The notion of cultural identity is a complex one. Primarily for the reasons outlined above but also due to its sensitivity. Identity and identification carries with it the concept of belonging; something that many may struggle to hold onto, especially as mass globalisation continues to take effect. In particular popular migration to Britain has created an extremely diverse ethnic population. I simply believe as time goes on and globalisation takes a greater effect, we will no longer be able to stereotype based on appearance and place of birth.

Take Time magazine's 'Face of the Future'¹ as an example. Using a generated image, the USA presented to us their prediction of what we will look like in the future; that is, mixed race. So twenty years down the line, are we any further along in this process?



Film stills from 'God Save the Queen'

¹ Time magazine's 'Face of the Future' cover from 1993.

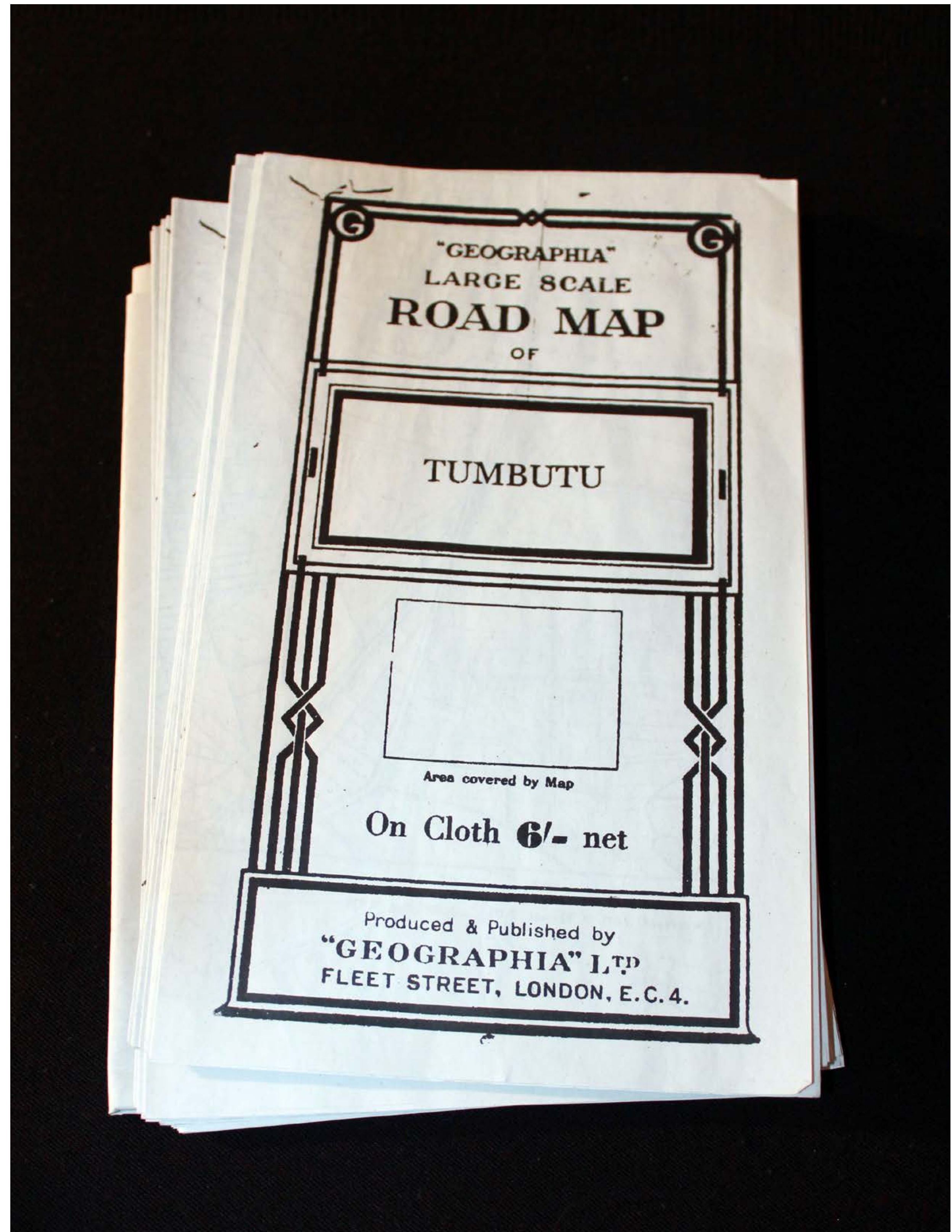


Installation shots of 'God Save the Queen' at £383,911.73, University of Leeds, 2013.

Tumbutu

2013, Hand-drawn screenprint on newsprint paper, 24 x 15 cm folded,
(58 x 47.5 cm open), edition of 100.

Tumbutu is a fictional place, a non-place and a site conjured out of assumptions. A map is a guidance tool for when we are lost. The quickly repetitive nature of its printing process mimics the driving pace at which we subconsciously apply stereotypes and its temporal nature reflects on the constant fluctuation of individual belonging to a fixed site. Take one home with you, or throw it away, it can always be reprinted.



British

2013 | 1 min 47 s | filmed performance piece DVD |
Leeds, U.K.

Filmed performance piece with Phoebe Eustance questioning the notion of what it means to “look” British.

Film stills from ‘British’



CURRICULUM VITAE

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Artist and freelancer living between London and Switzerland.



Relevant Work Experience

Freelance Visual Ethnographer, Ipsos MORI, London, U.K. **September 2016 - present**
Fieldwork - conducting ethnographic interviews face-to-face, video camera and audio operation; market research; writing up of field-notes to aid wider report; analysis; post-field editing of footage into short films.

Freelance Writer, Health Ethics & Policy Lab, ETH Zurich, Switzerland **June 2019 - present**
Communications & content writing for the development of an ethical research platform.

Julian Rosefeldt Berlin, Germany **October 2017 - present**
Writer
Writing original, descriptive and critical texts about his work to assist with the archive. Research and translation (DE > EN). See https://www.julianrosefeldt.com/film-and-video-works/the_swap-_2015/

Barbara Wien Berlin, Germany **July 2015 - April 2019**
Gallery Assistant
Assistance in all areas of gallery maintenance (and bookshop); artist liaison; updating the tomas schmit archive; curatorial support and hands-on installation assistance (notably for the Emmett Williams, Ay-O & Yo-Yo Ma exhibition, 2015); portfolio design; overseeing the English language texts - proofreading and translation from German to English; social media management; front of house and gallery representation at events such as Frieze London 2015 (installation, sales and client interaction).

Emmett Williams & Ann Noël Collection Berlin, Germany **Feb 2014 - May 2016**
Artist Assistant
Assistant to Ann Noël, managing the library, documenting and archiving the collection, providing logistical and creative support, catalogue layout and creation for forthcoming exhibitions.

Pepe Burton Ltd. Berlin, Germany **Jan 2014 - March 2015**
Account Executive & later Account Manager
Head of internal & external communications - direct client liaison; accounting and budgeting; PR & Marketing - design, branding, copywriting, press releases; market research for key accounts; PA to the CEO & assistance at international events e.g. company affiliation with Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide - representation at Cannes Lions 2014. Account Executive for partnered Sports Reputation company FC Talent and Executive Assistant for Mike Forde Performance/Ingenio Management (HQ in New York).

Freies Museum Berlin Berlin, Germany **Sept 2013 - Jan 2014**
Exhibition Coordinator / Leonardo da Vinci Programme (internship was extended)
Coordinator for the **Zero Years** exhibition - research (concept and funding); adaption; curation; complete press material; advertising; design; translation; event management; direct artist liaison and point of contact.

Bold Tendencies London, U.K. **June 2010 - Sept 2011**
Exhibition Assistant at Bold Tendencies 5, Warden at Bold Tendencies 6
Installation of the sculpture exhibition, welcome desk and tours, hospitality, event management.

Ellen Lapper

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Exhibitions, festivals, awards & publications

2019 Dieter Roth, Collected Interviews, Hansjörg Mayer & Thames & Hudson, London
2019 Forecast Forum, Berlin, Germany
2019 Royal Anthropological Film Festival, Bristol, U.K.
2018 48 Stunden Neukölln, Berlin, Germany
2017 (Published research) “How has social media changed the way we grieve?” In: Digital Environments: Ethnographic Perspectives across Global Online and Offline Spaces, transcript Verlag, Germany and Colombia University Press, New York
2016 FACA: Festa de Antropologica Cinema e Arte, Lisbon, Portugal
2016 Collected Voices: Chicago Ethnographic Film Festival, Chicago, USA
2016 World Humanitarian Day Geneva, United Nations HQ, Geneva, CH
2016 Emmett Williams: Projects with Ay-O & Yo Yo Ma (curatorial assistance), Barbara Wien, Berlin
2014 Berlin Heist - as part of the Mediations Biennale (Press Officer), Poznan, Poland
2013 Leonardo da Vinci Scholarship, Berlin, Germany
2013 Zero Years (Exhibition Coordinator), Freies Museum Berlin, Berlin, Germany
2013 FUAM Graduate Art Prize, Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery, Leeds, U.K.
2013 £383,911.73, Old Mining Building, Leeds University Degree Show, Leeds, U.K.
2013 16th International Artists' Book Fair, Parkinson Court, Leeds, U.K.
2013 Student Ambassador – School of Fine Art & Study Abroad, University of Leeds, U.K.
2012 Winner of the Leeds University Study Abroad Photography Competition, Leeds, U.K.
2012 Pop Up Exposição at São Lázaro, Lisbon, Portugal
2011 LIVING, Stanley House, Leeds, U.K.
2011 14th International Artists' Book Fair, Parkinson Court, Leeds, U.K.

Education

2015 - 2017 Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
MA Visual & Media Anthropology

2009 - 2013 University of Leeds, U.K.
BA Hons Fine Art (International)

2011 - 2012 Faculdade de Belas Artes da Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal
International 3rd Year Abroad / Fine Art

2008 - 2009 University of the Arts London
Foundation Diploma in Art & Design

2007 - 2009 Wallington High School for Girls, London, U.K.
A-Level
Art, English Literature & Language, History

Other skills

- Native British English speaker
- Professionally conversant in German.
- Translating DE > EN
- Copyediting and proofreading for publications.
- Windows & Mac literate, touch-typing, confident in using all Microsoft Office & Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Premiere & Final Cut.
- Screen printing, book binding and darkroom photography development skills.
- Full UK Driving Licence
- Grade 5 Cello
- English Teacher in Salzburg, Austria, 2014
- Keen interest in sport: Member & Fixtures Secretary for the University of Leeds Netball Club; Novice Girls 8 - University of Leeds Boat Club (Rowing); long distance cycling - 2013 Rotterdam to Hannover (350 miles) for charity.