

BLACK FOLIAGE

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The preservation process of botanicals in the human-nature experience

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A thesis document and exhibition presented to OCAD University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts in Interdisciplinary Art, Media and Design

Toronto, Ontario, Canada
2024

Abstract

Reflecting on my Jamaican ethnicity, Black Foliage proposes an embodied knowledge that calls on black bodies to remember where we came from, and how to transform plant materials from those territories into new forms. Black Foliage asks black bodies to view and “see themselves in nature” and to explore those materials that make us, shape us, and recognize us in return. This research is a celebration of blackness and creates spaces that are rooted in the black gaze. Hogarth states, “These objects do not aim to solve questions of the colonial project. They, instead, bear material witnesses to how a diasporic material can reimagine the world beyond accepted, official multicultural narratives”. Black Foliage recognizes who we are through the Indigenous plant materials and the roles they play in our respective culture(s).

Keywords: memory, new material, preservation, culture, labour, experience, flower cycling.



Figure 1. Botanical waste image, 2020.

Acknowledgements

This thesis and exhibition are dedicated to my family, especially my mother, Angela and grandmother, Ioline; your immense endless support and upbringing will forever be instilled in my heart.

My husband Jr, your hands of support, I couldn't complete this work without your endless love and support. Thank you for being a part of this journey. My girls Amayah and Ava thank you for your patience, I know it has been rough with late nights, and a lot of back and forth, but you girls are my core motivation and you both are the reason why I do it.

To the donors of the project, Becky the owner of Blush & Bloom, Margarett Walter Head of the City of Brampton horticulture department and Steve Wiersma Supervisor of the City of Oakville Horticulture Department. Your generous amount of plant waste material donations would not have made this project possible. Thank you for your trust and for sharing your experience and thoughts on the environmental sustainability of plant waste.

Special thanks to my supervisors, I am extremely grateful for my team, Michael Lee Poy, Peter Morin, Natalie Waldburger, Janelle Guthrie, and Ashok Mathur. Thank you for your guidance, patience, humble teachings, and care towards this project.



Figure 2. Photograph of my mother Angela, hugging my grandmother Ioline from behind, 1980.

Author's note

Dear Readers, this is what I learned from working with foraged botanicals from Jamaica and food waste bought from local West Indian markets in Toronto. I would recommend viewing this document in a two-page scrolling format to access the included imagery and the narratives. Throughout this document, I reflect on my process with these plant materials and offer personal memories and connections. It is a true honour and gift to share this with you. It is a true honour and a gift to make a space that allows you to be immersed in colour, texture, smell, taste and laughter.

I want to acknowledge leaders and thinkers who have had such a strong influence on my work. This project benefits from their words and their lives, words from Marcus Garvey, Beverly Manley, Bell Hooks, and Robin Wall Kimmerer. I look to these Historians, Artists, Authors, Freedom Fighters, Political Activists and leaders for guidance and support with my research and making. Their presence and words are very important to my upbringing and childhood.

Land acknowledgement

Glory and praise to the highest Creator of the Universe, Heavens, and the Earth.

To the Earth-the land bearing seed.

Heavenly spiritual beings, thank you for your humble gifts.

Planting your seeds

The land that continuously and relentlessly gives us an abundance for free,
only asking us to protect it.



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Introduction

Our Land is a short writing/poem is based on the “black” experience of being born in a land that I am not originally from. Yes, born here. My ancestors are not born here. In the first section of the writing, I am describing land that is tropical. I reminisce on its beauty and its beings. Knowing that I belong to that ancestral connection. The second part of the writing reflects on my experience of being born in Canada and relates my relationship with the current place that I only know as home. Where I am able to foster the interconnection of its precious resources and foster my practice as an artist to the teaching of its land and people.

OUR LAND

Memories of Our Land

Born on this land, nurtured by another Mother.

In our land;

Turquoise waters, salted beaches, glistening sands.

The sun's rays illuminate our skin, sending electric energy to our hair.

Palm trees and tropical fruit send sensational visuals of colour.

The land is always teaching us.

The fiery Red Snapper, the unforgettable taste on the tongue with a touch of scotch bonnet peppers.

The hummingbird- tiny iridescent luck that it brings to our land.

In our land;

Baby blue creeks, and living rivers flowing.

Flowing like the salmon, surviving in their calm wade.

Our Seasons change, allowing for growth, cultivation and rest.

The land is always teaching us.

The fiery lobster, the unforgettable taste on the tongue of tender meat.

Luscious greens and strong mountains display the strength of our people.

Everest, white ash and maple trees, leaves reflecting our veins- feed from the ground like our roots.

But it is the Same Land, Different Story

This land is a gift, a creation of beauty,

Introduce ourselves, respect it to make it our home.

OUR LAND.

The announcement of my MFA exhibition (2022) **Black Foliage: The Preservation Process of Botanical in human-nature Experience** was a feeling of relief. Surprised by the turnout of many new viewers, viewers' interest in my work, their questions and positive feedback gave an instant fulfillment of my practice. The love and support during the exhibition was one of the most fulfilling and successful journeys to date. Creating from raw matter has taught me an act of embodiment. It is like approaching the process as a ritual where my hands and soul are the essence of life.

Black Foliage, research and exhibition, is informed by my transforming harvested plants, from Jamaica, into new fibrous material forms. For this research, I use plant materials as a lens through which to consider how objects of a commodity become imbued with multiple meanings. This repositioning of 'material culture' aims towards examining the black body as a space for renegotiating geographies and the self, Black Foliage exhibition, which took place at the OCADU graduate exhibition of March 2022, generated a visual language that shaped these ideas and helped to define a space for my experience as a Black woman in the Caribbean diaspora.

My research method is informed and shaped by memory through the practices of preserving natural materials in technical papermaking and textile design. The visual work, that makes up the exhibition Black Foliage, centers on notions of Jamaican identity and my experience as a first-generation, Canadian-Jamaican. My research questions for the period of my MFA studies, that shaped my investigations are:

- How do we relate to the things we get rid of?
- Can the aging process be prolonged, or paused?
- Are our cultures tied to materials?

Black Foliage, ultimately, is about the gesture of what has come long before us and how that gesture has become frozen in time. The human hand guides and forms the structures. The environment allows for a breakdown or transformation. Black Foliage allows creation to be manipulated. New structures can be discovered by pressing plant material into found shapes, this allows for a breakdown of plant matter and the liquid resin to meet. This meeting of materials is where the movement of all life is cut off and temporality trapped. This research honours a new balance and a timeless state. From this research, I have learned that life relies on a commitment to time, and care, and is informed by the habitat in which an item is placed. The making of these artworks that became the exhibition Black Foliage allowed for a transformation because of touch, pressure, drying, temperature, shrinkage, and expansion. In this way, I am building a relationship between the intimate/personal/meditative process and the act of continuous and repetitive labour. The ephemeral is fleeting, it is meant for us to engage with on sight. This is also a consideration. In so doing, the final artwork, and writing in support of this graduate degree, becomes agile, outshining the politics of the world. The application of the ephemeral highlights our collective past, present and future by reconstructing memories that were once silenced.

Chapter One: Historical Framework

Flora has played a prominent role in how we look at our lives. Flora is a gaze that inspires. Flora can draw our attention to their chemical composition, evolutionary history, modes of adaptation, environmental concerns along with their impact of human intervention. Often, we do not think about the complexities of what these plants are doing for us. Robin Wall Kimmerer writes, in Chapter 4 of *Braiding Sweetgrass*,

Know the ways of the ones that take care of you, so that you may take care of them. Introduce yourself. Be accountable as the one who comes asking for life. Ask permission before taking. Abide by the answer. Never take the first. Never take that last. Take only that which is given. Never take more than half. Leave some for others. Harvest in a way that minimizes harm. Use it respectfully. Never waste what you have taken. Share. Give thanks for what you have been given. Gift a gift, in reciprocity for what you have taken. Sustain the ones who sustain you and the earth will last forever (183).

I love the way this statement shares such great gratitude, love, and compassion. I liken this to the kind of love that pertains to a mother and her child; A mother taking care of her child is rewarding, and when you indulge in it you are indulging in the highest accomplishment of wealth and health. The connections that our bodies and the beauty of nature are not just a coincidence but have a purpose. This MFA thesis, and my exhibition *Black Foliage*, explore my Caribbean heritage and Culture about my work and process with plant materials that are found and have roots in Jamaica. Jamaican activist Marcus Garvey tells the community, “A people without the knowledge of their history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots” (1922). Garvey is saying that the roots are the foundation and the main important structure for growth. This is especially important when considering my story of being a first-generation Jamaican Canadian. Family members have told me that my past relatives were foragers and farmers and that these family members used those foraged/farmed goods as a source of income. This is my familial history of cultural ties

to the land, and our love of food and farming allowed blacks to carry on with survival traditions through the injustice of colonial times.



Figure 5. Pile of collected botanical waste image on table, 2020.

Chapter Two: Ital Connections to nature

Being of Jamaican descent, food has been a huge part of my life. In the 1930s Jamaicans were introduced to an "*Ital*" lifestyle from the *Rastafarian* traditions. The diet for these religious groups was based on a high alkaline diet of fruits and vegetables (Fig. 6). This diet is based on harvesting food items that are strictly from the earth. There were no processed 'foods foods'. Everything is completely fresh and raw. This Rastafariconcept is called "*ital vital*", or "livity" the belief that an energy force granted by the *Almighty Jah* (GOD) continuously flows through all living things. Most of these followers of the religion follow an ital diet to eat clean, natural and earth-bound food. They believe that the body is truly in its strongest and purest form and when maintaining a liveliness to the planet and connection to Jah. When I was a child, growing up I heard of this lifestyle and was familiar with the political movement. I grew up eating ackee, callaloo, yam, dasheen, dumplings, plantains and so much more. I dislike hearty foods because they are 'tuff' and always taste so heavy. I remember my parents saying, '*Eat it! Dis is trong people food*'. This means that the food would keep you full, and the dishes would build a strong healthy body. Now that I am older, this natural way of eating continues to have a huge impact on my own family's lives. *Ital* isn't just a new trend like veganism. It has been here for many years. *Ital* strengthens the connection that your body makes when you consume natural foods. *Ital* changes your perspective of nature. You want to be around it and consumed in it. Nature transforms and ignites your spirit. This personal history helps me come to my work with plant materials in the most respectful way.



Figure 6. Image of Jamaican vibrant fruit and vegetables on a table, 2020.

Chapter Three: Childhood

As a child, the influence of nature was an important strategy for well-being in our home. Mom used to tell us: *'When we leave this world, we need to perform good deeds, have hope, faith, and love and we must respect nature around us.'* Hinting to my siblings that whatever you put into this world you would be awarded abundance to live (Fig. 7). Mom constantly reminded us: *'To know the ways of the ones that take care of us and know the ways of our ancestors that came before us....'* and she would say, *'Faith is the hope of tomorrow.'*

Even in the harshest of lands life will always sprout through. For me, my mom's connection to nature illuminated both her physical and spiritual mind. Her subtle and loving humming of song melodies would let us know that she was in a zone of connection with the land, garden, flowers, and even the meals that she made. She often told us the Earth is our natural healer, that it nourishes our wellbeing and bodies that allow us to make our electric connections. Robin Wall Kimmerer writes, "We now turn to the Creator, or Great Spirit, and send greetings and thanks for all the gifts of Creation. Everything we need to live a good life is here on Mother Earth. For all the love that is still around us, we gather our minds together as one and send our choicest words of greetings and thanks to the Creator. Now our minds are one (109)."

My mom teaches us that we need to cherish, love, learn and understand their existence. Nature doesn't want anything from us except for us to nurture it. The connection between our respective culture(s) and how our ancestors paved the way for generational practices with natural plant materials reminds us that plants and herbs are our deepest nourishment, and they are an important guide to a long-lasting life.



Figure 7. Photograph of my siblings and myself climbing a tree, spending time in nature, 1996.

Chapter Four: My mother Angela's memory of Jamaica (in her own words):

I have asked my mother, Angela, to contribute to this document. I asked her to write a part of her story to share with the reader. As I love Jamaica, it is still mostly unfamiliar territory that I wish that I could explore. With permission from my mom, I've included these images to sit alongside her words. These images are also useful to see alongside my story of making and reconnection to the territories. My mom's stories of growing up on the island seem to be the dream of peace and power. Her words, and her being, are important here for the reader of this document, and for the future readers of my thesis and exhibition *Black Foliage*.



Figure 8. Photograph of my mother in Jamaica holding a large palm leaf, 1989.

Angela writes:

Since I was a little girl, I've had the most awesome thoughts of Jamaica. Jamaica has flooded my mind, it has flooded my thoughts, flooded my memories and the tranquility and the peace that I remember of Jamaica have rested in my thoughts. As I was growing up, it has not left my thoughts at all. 1988 I returned to Jamaica and while standing in the hero's block and hero's square of Montego Bay, I leaned into the statue of Paul Bogle, Samuel Sharp, Alexander Bustamonte, and several other heroes of Jamaica. Including Daniel, the maroon Samuel Sharp, and several other prime ministers elected to hero's block. I fell in love with Jamaica in 1988, during the time of my honeymoon with your dad, Altamont Singh. I am so blessed to be a Jamaican and so happy to know that I was able to put my feet on the soil that my mother and my dad had come out of. My forefathers carried with them a power and a strength that gave me the courage to do as much as I've done in my lifetime. I cannot say I would sell out Jamaica for anything in the world.

Jamaica may not be the most decadent country it may not have the greatest ambiance in the modern world; it may not have shopping centers, and it may not have them on every corner, but they have them. Jamaica may not have sophisticated five-star restaurants on every corner, on every street, in every district, as you may see in Canada the United States and England. We may not have French pastries and all the things you want to buy, but the woman or the young girl or the young man make what they have sufficient. You may not see them in abundance, but they are here.

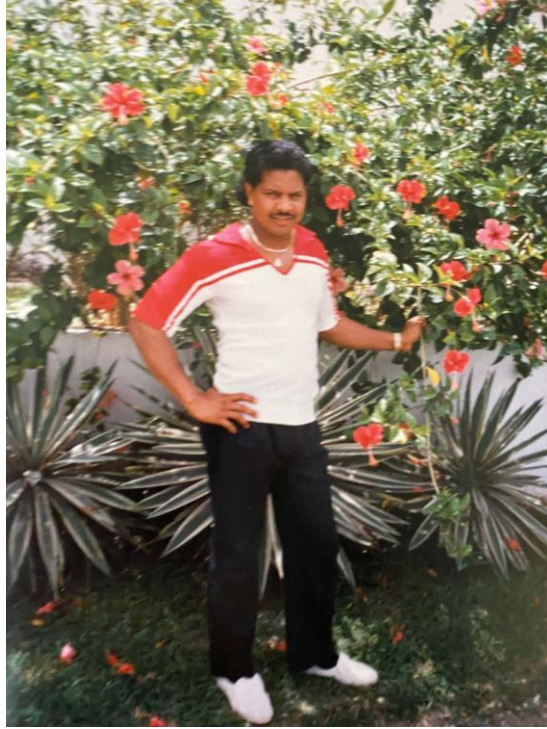


Figure 9. Photograph of my father surrounded by hibiscus flowers in Jamaica, 1989.



Figure 10. Photograph of my parents' paying under the waterfall for their honeymoon at Duns River Falls Jamaica, 1989.

Jamaica may not have shopping centers with little dresses, the latest styles, or the latest fashions in every district, you may find a store, but you may not have that. Jamaica does have its Kingston, its new Kingston, Samuel Sharp squares. Jamaica does have its Montego Bay, Jamaica does have its hotels, and many sorts of investors who come here, around the world and invest in money, and build hotels. It may not have the fanciest health clinics or the fanciest schools, but Jamaica has schools. Made of concrete, little boys' and girls' children enter school in their beautiful uniforms as the circulation of the island. You will notice that Jamaica will have characteristics and beauty that Canada and so many other countries could never have. It has sunshine 24 hours a day, sunshine overcast skies always lasting for half of the day. Yes! It is like one of your great days in Clarendon. You can still see it has a degree of flowers, many diverse types of bushes and medicinal herbs growing on this island. It has birds and goats and cows and pigs and domesticated animals like dogs and agricultural livestock, different types in Jamaica as sun-kissed burned skin people, whose faces are beautiful because the sun has burned them, and their accents are dragging. Their accent is somewhat, so you don't understand what they are saying. Yes, they speak so fast you cannot catch their words. Many of them do have that kind of characteristic, during it all you do have your wonderful police force that does work with the law and does work under the law. They show mercy to whom they choose, and they show an iron fist. You do have some people in Jamaica in the workplaces that will always buy under the table, they will never consider not buying under the table, and they will always want to work with money as money will appear to them, it is Jamaica.



Figure 11. Photograph of my mother in Jamaica, 1989.



Figure 12. Photograph of my mother Angela, handwashing laundry in a bucket and pail while sitting beside a motorcycle in Jamaica, 1989.



Figure 13. Photograph of my mother standing beside statues in Jamaica, 1989.



Figure 14. Photograph of my mother on my uncles farm land in Jamaica, 1989.

Jamaica is a place of incongruence and at the same time civilized. Jamaica is a place where people can speak their minds and people that liberate their thoughts. But in the fight against COVID, you see how Jamaica works together for the common good of its people. So, Jamaica I chose it to be home. I have chosen to come back to Jamaica, the house where I am living has trees of all different sorts, soursop, and pears, at least 10 pear trees are on this property. All abundantly full, avocados, in all assorted sizes of different quality diverse types. In all this property that I am living on, it has mangos of so many diverse types this one property, the house is a large piece of property. There are humble people farming, living a life on the farm. Rent is expensive here I would say, and the gas is also costly. This is Jamaica, everybody is coming together all around the world to live here, to settle down and find their niche to make a living, trying to hustle and they say Jamaican hustle. Out of many, one person is trying to make a hustle. They are not doing too badly, the crime rate is up, and children are riding their motorcycles at 14 years old, on busy, busy roads at 80-90 km (about 55.92 mi) per hour. On small two-lane roads, there are dogs and animals of all diverse types, sharing the same road. People share the same two lanes on the road and people get killed. Just sun-kissed; flip flops, slippers of various kinds of rubber. Manufactured materials that make their shoes and running shoes, Converse, Nikes, whatever they were wearing. Usually no shirt on, an exceedingly small amount of clothing, a very skinny little T-shirt. That is how they live. That is how we live. Simple.

In thinking back, I've realize that my mother Angela focused on only the little things that mattered. The simple things. Everything that she wanted was already on the island and it was nature that kept her humble, grounded and respectful. She always shares with us that these are the things that made you rich. It's so funny that in Canada her lifestyle can be a bit bougie, but back home in Jamaica she lives with the mindset of not needing much. I love her humble spirit.



Figure 15. Photograph of my mother looking at the water, sitting on rocks in Jamaica, 1989.

Chapter Five: My memories of Jamaica

I love the true authenticity of Bob Marley and his statement 'Possessions make you rich?' It is such a raw statement. It has me thinking that money doesn't make you rich, but the experiences that we can have with each other lead to longevity in life. I remember going to Jamaica once a year up until the age of 12. The feeling of belonging once the plane landed. Once I got off the plane, and onto the tarmac, the intense smell of humidity. I love the warmth. The sun glowed on my skin and an incredible electric energy bounced off my curls. I love the continuous rolls of lush green hills and mountains, and the first 50 palm trees always reminded me of endless possibilities. My heart always pumps faster at the sight of the beautiful turquoise salt water, it's so tranquil.

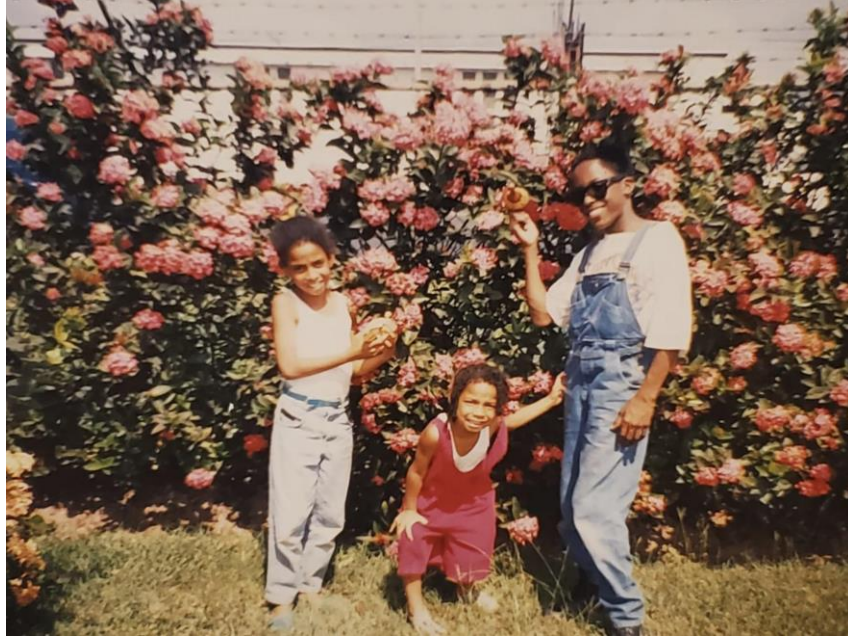


Figure 16. Photograph of my siblings and I posing in front of a rose bush in Jamaica, 1996.

Being in Jamaica is being in a paradise. Imagine waking up to hot humid weather, fresh fruit, saltwater beaches, hot springs, and the aroma of freshly cooked food along the roadside. It really sounds like a lavish life. However, really and truly, life in Jamaica is something that is so simple and humble. I remember waking up in the morning to the vibrant colour of fruits and spices walking along the shores. Visiting my uncle's farm and home in *Red Hills*, in Kingston. They are not called *Red Hills* for nothing; the soil is red or a rosy colour. The wind would be blowing in my hair while riding in the back of my granduncle's white pickup truck. I remember watching all the greenery on his 20-acre farm while we drove by. The farmland never ended. The hills just kept extending. Even the little memories of fishing, and the fishermen when they caught a blowup fish. It was white like the seashells and it puffed up like a 7-inch bouncy ball. The memory of my brother placing a soursop leaf in its mouth for the puffer fish to bite. It was also the first time I laid eyes on a stick insect. It was a stick with legs. I always wanted to have my shoes off, whether it was in the hot tan sands or rolls of green grass. I wanted to be grounded and forever connected with the land. Robin Wall Kimmerer writes, "Knowing that you love the earth changes you and activates you to defend and protect and celebrate. But when you feel that the earth loves you in return, that feeling transforms the relationship from a one-way street into a sacred bond" (109). This statement helps me to understand and

share the nature of the human bond with our environment, and that once you see the strength of this bond you start to understand how the bond is difficult to break. My known land is Jamaica. This has been a land of rebels, troublemakers, fire starters, and shit starters. We love trouble, we love to defend and fight, and we are unruly. We don't follow rules. This is what I always thought. We are a people of strength. Black. Order. Power. Jamaican activist Marcus Garvey states, 'God and Nature first made us what we are, and then out of our own created genius we make ourselves what we want to be. Follow always that great law. Let the sky and God be our limit and Eternity our measurement. This statement is crucial. Our connections have always coincided with nature and nature's capabilities. Marcus Garvey reminds us that Black is the originator when he says, 'Black feeds in the depths of all colours, it is their intimate abode". Black is the originator'.



Figure 20. Photograph taken by James Van Der Zee of Marcus Garvey, Harlem, NY, 1922.



Figure 17. Photograph of my mother, siblings and myself (first time in Jamaica), 1989.



Figure 18. Photograph of my father and sister swimming in the sea in Jamaica, 2003.



Figure 19. Photograph of my mother and sisters posing in bathing suits in Jamaica, 2003.

Figure 24. George Negus Interview Video of Bob Marley, Kingston JA, 1979.

Chapter Six: Methodology: Foraging

With the recognition of the Anthropocene as a new era for humanity and the earth, these environmental issues demand new perspectives concerning our future. I believe the new role for art can be focused on creating work where the beauty and the meaning of the images work harmoniously. Art provides a visual experience that can be used to provoke conversations. This can draw artists, scientists, governments and activists together to address our relationship to land, and the future actions connected to nurturing our shared environment. My artwork for Black Foliage began small, and prioritized experiments with plant materials that led to creating mixed media eco-resin and foraged/donated botanicals



Figure 21. Photograph of myself holding donated botanicals, 2022

While researching for this thesis, it became very clear that there was a massive disconnect of humans from the natural world. Foraging as a method, in support of my research, became a source of meditation, a connection with the process of my creative thinking.

When foraging, eyes and ears must be opened. As a culture, we seem unable to extend these good manners to the natural world. You must explore your internal and external landscapes. There are so many materials available, and you must always take note of where and what you are gathering. When we wander, it becomes our research. You can find a great deal of material in small patches on land or even parts of your garden. Paying attention to all of nature's details is making; the weeds, the litter, the habitats, the cracks, the vines are all making meaningful reaches toward us. Most of the time I try to gather only what I need for what I want to make, like focusing on specific plants that will make dye colours I need, but foraging is addictive. When I come across other plants, blooms or rocks, the rush of returning home and emptying everything on the table sends a rush into my mind. This human relationship to plants, botanicals, and nature is a part of our collective identity. The aspect(s) of nature emotionally affects us. It's a way where we can feel happy, safe, anxious and even fearful. Nature doesn't only play the role of being a subject matter, it also produces art and human beings. It is important to feel a connection to the natural world, it is vital to our survival.



Figure 23. Photograph of myself foraging botanicals, 2022.

A note about Plant and botanical waste materials

This section of the document acknowledges foraging in the city by harvesting botanical waste from commercial and personal events. The main contribution of the botanical waste used for this project by CEO Becky DeOliveira at Blush & Bloom Floral Services. Becky was gracious even to donate flowers from her clients' weddings. Instead of throwing them away, she was able to think cyclically about the cycle of throwing away. While harvesting from this botanical waster, I found that thee energy from the florals was electric, bringing in good vibrations after their use during these celebrations of love, like marriage. During this research, there was a need for new determining factors for harvesting plant materials such as foraging the lands, along with visits made to compost facilities. These emergent methods also made this project possible.



Figure 25. Image of myself at compost facility, Oakville, 2020.



Figure 26. Image of the botanical waste pile at the compost facility, Oakville, 2020.



Figure 27. Image of gathered botanicals in Hamilton, 2022.



Figure 28. Image of botanicals immersed in resin, Hamilton, 2022.



Figure 29. Image cut resin slabs from bird's eye view, Hamilton, 2022.



Figure 30. Image of resin waste, Hamilton, 2022.

Chapter Seven: Making Paper

Making art is personal and profound. For me this means, it isn't always easy or pleasant. There is strife and friction. It's demanding and a commitment to renewing it over and over again. Yet, in challenges, there might arise the strongest of bonds. These considerations of Art make me wonder if there are truly things that belong to us at all on Earth. Making art is a perpetual experience of loss. Not sad, and not necessarily painful either. Art feels close to life, very raw, and real, even though the fantasy and all the beauty. My discovery of botanical pigments was the start of my art practice and process. I didn't connect with synthetic materials, and with natural materials, I experienced the incredible sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that came from creating something with nature with my hands. This shift started a few years ago. This was when I first embarked on a journey with natural dyes and pigment.

I seek to create art that exists in warm, intimate spaces that encourage the viewer to develop a connection to nature. I believe we can learn to appreciate and embrace our impermanence and fragility in the same way we revere them in the natural world. This research helps me to understand how we are so used to cycles and phases, and I love to imagine that my collectors could experience personal and spiritual growth with their pieces because of my working process with plant materials. Humans and artwork gracefully aging and gain wisdom as the botanicals in each piece shift over time. Something is compelling about a piece of art that is alive in this way. I love thinking about the delicacy of botanicals made into paper pulp or protected in resin along with the delicacy of our bodies, the strength of a stem and the strength of our minds. All these ideas are woven into the narrative of my work, a narrative that ties the materials to the message. My research, and artwork, seek ways to dive deeper into this, like making my own paper forms and recycling materials. When I think about it, it was my connection to my personal need for independence and self-reliance. In the reading *Nights of Attraction*, Nightingale states, 'Whatever you plant in your subconscious mind and nourish with repetition and emotion will one day become your reality'. This statement on the practice of repetition, reminds us that the more you practice the more that you progress

in the pattern. Once we progress on practice, we will be able to take full advantage of control of technique and perfection of skills.



Figure 31. Samples of Fruit and vegetable papyrus, 2021.

Instructions

STEP 1:

Find a great space that is dry. If the space is not dry this can lead to your paper mold. Gather materials. (Fig. 32)

STEP 2:

Weigh out your materials and slice them into 1/4" slices. (Fig. 33)

STEP 3:

Place your material in a boiling pot of water. Continuously watching and stirring. With the softer fruit of Vegetables like strawberries or kiwi, prick the material to know if it is ready. Not much boiling is needed. (3-5 minutes) Harder materials such as carrots or zucchini may require up to 10-15 minutes. (Fig. 34)

STEP 4:

Once the material is ready blot them on a paper towel and allow them to cool for 5 minutes. Place the material on pellon sheets, overlapping the ends 1/4" on top of each other. Cover with felts to help drain excess water. (Fig. 55)

STEP 5:

Place on the post and begin to press the papers. Change pellon and felts every 15-30 minutes.

STEP 6:

Remove the papers until completely dry, having weight on the papers keeps them flat. Air drying your papers will form wavy, chip-like sheets. (Fig. 36)



Figure 32. Collecting Callaloo materials, 2021



Figure 33. Weighing Callaloo, 2021.



Figure 34. Stirring callaloo in boiling water, 2021.



Figure 55. Placing Callaloo on a post on top of pelion, 2021.



Figure 36. Pressed sheet of fresh callaloo papyrus, 2021.

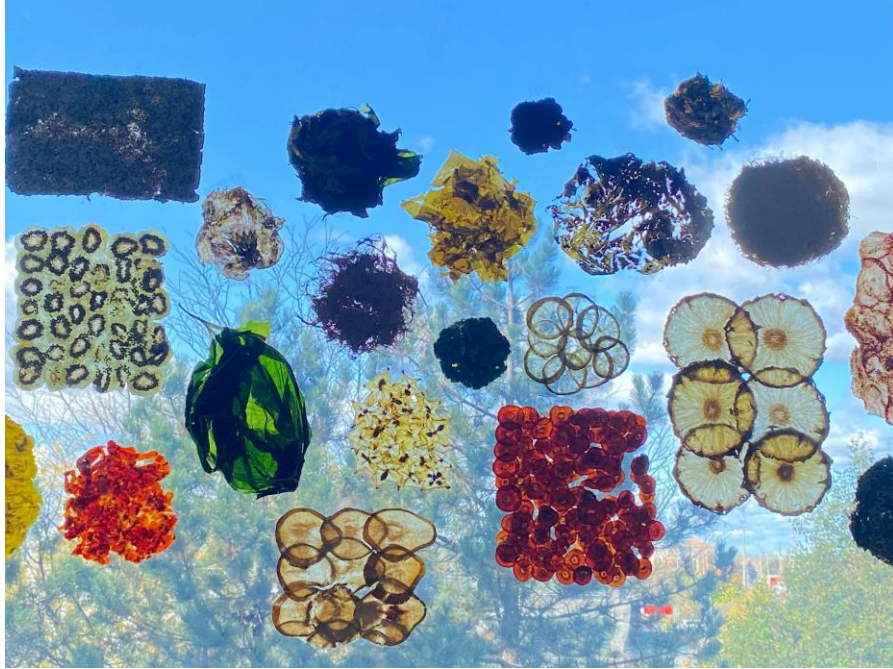


Figure 37. Botanical, fruit, vegetable papyrus, illuminated by sun on window, 2021.



Figure 38. Semester critiques samples of resin, fruit and vegetable papyrus, 2021

Figure 39. Video placement of final samples, 2021. <https://youtu.be/GlusQKJMb7o>

Chapter Eight: The use of resin in some of the artworks

The choice of resin is also more than a choice of material, it honours that Trees produce their own organic resin in response to injury. Resin is one of nature's ways of creating a self-healing balm. Black

Foliage and the use of resin within some of the artworks represents my execution of concept and process. The materiality of my work, foraged plant materials embedded within an eco-resin, relates a contemporary culture, based on the connection of science, culture, and art, to human experience. This process of preservation runs parallel to my work of harvesting plant fiber into paper and shapes for this project. For me, Resin, and the use of resin, explores a variety of theories such as preservation, decay, loss, time, and human emotional connections. Whether the textural element or dimensional application, I think reinventing and reimagining the use of these specific materials allows the past and present to become one while moving towards the future.

The concept of preservation has emerged while doing the research and making for Black Foliage. The development of this project has been momentous. For someone who feels confident in their time management abilities, this year has really thrown everything it could at me. This challenged and questioned my confidence; however, I know facing adversity and stepping back with grace creates energy to fuel change. As a maker, it matters to jump right into creating. This action has been truly the most informative and transformative. I believe that many of the elements of my project have been successful because I have learned how to consider the development, the beginning stage ideas of theory, (and read more books than I ever have in the first semester of my graduate work). I learned how to adjust, played with scale, colour, and style to see how these resin sample explorations can start to create a connection to the human experience.

The completed series of resin artworks offers a finish that is rich, glossy, and seductive. This element interjects a social reality to the work, signifying the dynamics of consumption, wealth, and cultural surplus. It also implied a transition from ugliness, decay, and the eventual plant death, to beauty. The combination of the organic and decayed materials interlaced with the plasticity of the resin created a tension between the temporal and the permanent. This is also a reflection of the complexity of our current values with the environmental issues. During my process, I experimented with a non-toxic eco resin. This resulted in clarity and helped to shape the depth of vibrant, detailed, striking, and enhanced colours. I have tried

various techniques to capture the intense range of colour intensity of botanicals. At the beginning of the research, I started with small 2"x 4" x 1/2" tiles. Each experiment explored different blossoms and ranges of colour. (Fig. 40) There were also explorations of fruit and veggie papers that were placed in the resin for variation of style.

I decided to execute a larger-scale artwork and complete a spherical disc that embodied the cycle of life and the cyclical nature of a circle that never ends. The larger format was more effective in evoking an emotional response because of the imposing need to touch. The size seemed more intimidating, by scale and cost. I began with this experimental style, a style that combined the expressive physicality of gestural abstraction with conceptual materiality. This work, and the intentions of this work, were informed by my memories of Jamaica. The nature of the colour black became my focus here. Being a woman of colour, I wanted to use the negative stigma of black to showcase Black's true beauty. The colours and materials were chosen to attract and seduce, and they were chosen to visually represent the influences of consumerist values that have left scars in our wake. This process also contextualized the sense of time and history representing negative systematic oppression in a progressive world and the sense that plastic could become a fossil of the future. This piece could potentially invoke thoughts of future ramifications (Fig. 24).

Reversing the negative black stigma today:

Funeral =Black

Death= Black

BLACKlist

BLACKball

BLACK magic

BLACKmail

Black= dark, ugly, empty, less value



Figure 40. Exploration of resin samples in various sizes, 2021.



Figure 41. Exploration of resin on fresh plants, 15" x 15", 2020.

Figure 42. Video process of resin on fresh botanicals, 2020.



Figure 43. Final image of resin wall hanging, 24" x 24", 2020.

Figure 44. Video of resin process, 2020. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CZxF1hJNLW/>

Chapter Nine: Paper experimentation

My investigations with paper making began with the vision of my work, for Black Foliage, being a sense of visual medicine. This comes from a practice of using botanical in traditional paper-making

techniques that allow viewers to have an emotional healing response. The papers I created were a juxtaposition of nature being a one-time use. Fragility and strength were the main inner qualities I cultivated while in the studio, and these were the two leading forces that drove me to cross the finish line while allowing myself to be vulnerable, and hold space for any physical or mental discomfort that arose. My aim was for viewers to have a healing experience. My aim was to create visual pieces that captured abstract beauty that contradicted the horrific reality of destruction due to the result of overall human waste. This work is seen beside the resin works. By depicting a seductive beauty from something so devastating, it opened up more awareness of what my mom was talking about concerning being humble within the land. This fiber work made more awareness of the unuseful things around us. The papers I created were in direct opposition of the idea that nature is a one-time use. These artworks show my tenacity and resilience when working primarily by hand with rigid materials and slow methods.

In this written thesis, all materials have brought back memories of being at home in Jamaica and in the kitchen. Bryant Terry the author of *Black Food* states, 'Black food is a common shrine to sharing the culinary histories of the African diaspora. All of the sustaining ingredients offer a great chain of nourished, humble, and grateful traditions. The recipes are a collective reminder of our ancestors' traditions and the strength of their resilient pasts. Bryant Terry states, The materials used in this work draw on history and memory of experiences and carry a meaningful story. During the making process, I want to create a form for the materials so that we can see ourselves. The creation of a material map that depicts history, culture and the land (Fig. 47). The collection of the material allows the viewer to stop, think and explore the material in another state and deeply dive into the politics of pleasure and touch.

Each of the materials used in these fiber artworks reflect my experience with the paper-making. The recipes that appear in the appendix share a portal of the beloved communities of the plant, flower, and or food. We can learn how to make sacred materials and bring them into our intimate spaces. Inland liberation, along with food justice, we are capable of cherishing traditional truth-tellers such as; Elijah Muhammad, Coretta Scott King, Bob Marley, Marcus Garvey and Peter Tosh. This artwork, and research,

are helping to teach me the ways out of toxic food traditions, slavery, colonialism, and industrialized food systems. Black Foliage is built from harvest and foraged materials, these are the materials that are the way black folk fought for life, land, freedom and delicious food. These materials are made to expand our repertoire and traditions. Let's share and celebrate (Fig. 46 and 47).



Figure 45. Photograph of lignum vitae blooms in Jamaica, 1989



Figure 46. Exploration of Jamaican material samples 3" x 3"; orka, hibiscus, ackee, amaranth, sorrel, scotch bonnet, red sweet grass, sugar cane, lignum vitae, aloe vera, lime, coconut husk, cerasee, oxalis, 2021.



Figure 47. Digital rendering of samples placed in parishes of Jamaica, 2021.

Chapter Ten: 2-Dimensional to 3-Dimensional Form

In my initial analysis, I constructed and explored the 2D paper samples to create 3D forms. I found myself exploring ceramic building techniques with the pulp of organic shapes which were successful, but didn't develop the research. I was able to start over with the material and place it in water to reuse the same pulp. While my optimistic internal voice clung to the hope that I would find visual reference of organic shapes, I found instead simple forms that resonated with each material. The deconstruction and reconstruction of the material aimed at displacing any fixed definition of the materials in the Caribbean and diasporic context. The five of the materials, coconut husk, ligum vitae, marijuana, sorrel, and sugar cane resonated with me and my experience with botanicals.



Figure 63. Exploration of organic forms made in 3D with botanical pulp, sugarcane, sorrel, marijuana, and coconut husk, 2021.

Through studying natural materials, I have come to the conclusion that the valued temporary object can still decay. In an intense relationship with a short perishable object, we can still lose interest (Fig.63). I

think it's important to be a stranger in the places you love. Coming back to Jamaica for the first time since I was a teenager was like playing a tourist. I was such an embarrassing tourist, but I wasn't embarrassed. I haven't been back in a decade. This place is my grandparents' county, my parents' childhood and my inspiration. It's so important to listen more when you travel to the people, to the everyday noise of the place, and to yourself in a new location. I learn a lot when I am there, especially since I haven't been there in a while. I love the taste of fruit and herbs. Like really tasting the fruit. It's better here, I think everything is better on the island (Fig 62). The changes that occur when we become in balance with the nature of our lives can become a wise transformation. The significance of this slow work was that it redefined the accumulation of papermaking into a new experience, a critique of consumer material culture. The labour produced the paper that became a cultural symbol of freedom. This also has the possibility of becoming a contemporary disruption of the multiple meanings embedded in that symbol. Labour is then redefined in its rhythm and shifted visual significance. While working through the abstract nature of deconstructing the pulp fibres, I envisioned mapping the Caribbean diaspora and its understanding of migration in a way that was expressive of embedded emotions and experiences. The usage of my likeness as an object of inscribing this visual language took a few different forms (Fig. 64)



Figure 64. Photograph of myself with five forms, taken by Tatiyana Williams, 2022.



Figure 65. Complete digital rendering of material samples placed in the map of Jamaica, 2021.



Figure 65. Image of myself embedded botanicals in pulp, 2021.



Figure 66. Soaking coconut husk in water, 2021.



Figure 67. Pressing coconut husk pulp onto glass mould, 2021.

Conclusion: Innovate from tradition

To my love Jamaica,

I find myself in awe of your presence and your beauty. Captivated by your essence and heritage. You are not artifacts, but your effortless stories span and are woven into generations. You are not just an object, you are the true embodiment of prosperous roots, diversity, resilience love and creativity of a people. Every fibre, colour, texture and experience makes me fall in love with you more and more. With each touch, and smell I capture your spirit and the ones who came before.

Your admiration for nature makes me humble, you are my muse for my creativity and your tune of reggae vibrates through every fibre to every forming vessel. Humbly listening, your tones start to ground me to your ancestral roots. Your art isn't just seen, it has embedded itself into my heart, and courses through my veins as it has become a part of me. Through you, I can learn the symbolism of your language and the power it holds where stories and experiences are made. Your existence of radiant colours tells stories of people who are not afraid to be seen but heard. Not afraid to show emotions but to express their existence. I am beginning to find myself using bolder and brighter hues, that allow me to embrace your ray of colours.

I am authentically humbled by your spirit; it teaches me the way of staying connected to you. I strive to preserve and embody your ways and bring new light to share with others. It has been an honour to create art that reflects outstanding your beauty and soul of the island, I hope that my work can be shared with others through your rich influential culture and experience that I love and call home.

-Stephanie - 2023

As I reflect on my graduate studies, the experience of presenting Black Foliage has been nothing but transformative. The final days, the countless hours of exploration, experimentation and self-discovery. The opportunity to showcase my work, culture, and the ideas spinning inside my brain, has changed my life. The pinnacle of this journey is my dedication to transcend cultural boundaries. Each piece, that makes up my exhibition Black Foliage, represents, not only moments in time, it also represents a piece of my soul laid out for the world to see. I realized, without actually seeing my face, they could see me through the material. At one point I was speaking so much that my voice began to crack. For my graduate exhibition, thoughts came up of giving up speaking to every single viewer, but I could see the amazement in their eyes. Their reactions gave me the energy to tell me story of each piece. The energy exchange fueled experiences and conversation. They could see me, they could see the materials of Jamaica that I was working with, and they could see the teachings of my mom. The pinnacle of this journey is just getting started. As a part of my graduate school experience, I had the profound honour of having Black Foliage displayed at the Royal Ontario Museum. I'll never forget stepping into the Royal Ontario Museum, and seeing my creations alongside the artifacts, the infamous Batcave and gentle giants fossils was a surreal moment of validation.

In conclusion, when thinking of new material to work with, the making of blended handmade and indestructible material that happens by combining natural and synthetic constructs is a new and expansive process. Marcus Garvey States, "A people without the knowledge of their history, origin, and culture are like a tree without roots". Made by hand, yet hand-led with machines, these artworks created gestural movements that reshaped the material's being. Biophilia, throughout human existence and human biology, is interwoven in the natural environment. Biophilia refers to those who can smell where the water is, find the plants, follow the animals, and recognize the available havens. These are biophilic survival advantages. All people possess innate biophilia. It is the nature and sustainability techniques that can be introduced into a design for renewable energy, and recycled material, in an air-controlled space. This method can utilize nature to help the interior functionality. Using nature in the advantage of the design is another benefit to link in with the environment. Robin Wall Kimmermer writes, in Chapter 1 of Braiding Sweetgrass, 'How, in our

modern world, can we find our way to understand the earth as a gift again, to make our relations with the world sacred again?’ (31) Robin’s quote asks me/us a question of identity. Her statement shares that we gravitate towards researching and honouring the relationship that we have with nature. Going forward, we need to search for the originality of nurture. The modern world has people who generalize depending on “*them*” tasks and this can instill fear within us. Fear is a destroyer. Fear can disconnect individuals from a natural and higher power connection. Your mind is the most powerful thing, and it is important to wake up the mind and go back to nature. It's like Bob Marley said, in that interview About richness and money, ‘my richness is life forever’.



Figure 68. Photograph of myself with resin collection, taken by Tatiyana Williams, 2022.



Figure 69. Photograph of botanical vases, taken by Tatiyana Williams, 2022.



Figure 70. Photo of marijuana form, taken by Tatiyana William, 2022.

Appendix: Recipes and stories

ACKEE: Bligh Sapida

The national dish of Jamaica, mainly served at breakfast, this irresistible fruit is like no other. Its vibrant yellow colour and rich and delicate texture have been my favourite breakfast food. Although its beauty is a little weird, this fruit can be very deadly, or at least make you very sick. The ackee fruit is a tree-bearing fruit that needs to fully open when it is ripe. You will know when it is ripe when three black seeds that resemble eyes are looking at you from above. It is so weird how some of these fruits develop. No matter your ethnicity you can always taste the new level of freedom when you flavors of those who came before you. Ackee and saltfish Jamaica's national dish are some of my favourite examples. The slave trade brought cod fish and paired the ackee fruit. You got an inexpensive high-protein meal that was given to enslaved people on sugar plantations. Fast forward it's the same dish that fueled Bolt, the fastest man on the planet, a symbol of being unbound. Only eating and making it now feels like gratitude, practice and a reality check of how we have come to feel free (Fig. 48).



Figure 48. Image sample of ackee, 3" x3" , 2021.

ACKEE PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 10 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the ackee on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the ackee from the wet pellon and felt and place the new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the ackee flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the ackee from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Earthy Aroma, Yellow, Tender, mushy, leather-like texture.

ALOE VERA: Aloe Barbadensis Miller

Single bible aka aloe vera has mainly been known as a cleansing source in my household. Known for its cleansing properties when eaten or as a drink. Its slimy texture and bitter taste are known for its miracle properties. My parents used to tell me stories about my grandparents washing their face and hair with the slimy plant. Using it as soap and conditioner. It also was used to heal and soothe their skin from the hot sun (Fig. 49).



Figure 49. Image sample of aloe vera, 3" x 3", 2021.

ALOE VERA PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 17 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the aloe vera on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the ackee from the wet pellon and felt and place the new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the aloe vera flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the aloe vera from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

No aroma, green to brown, rubber texture.

AMARANTH: *Amaranthus cruentus*

Amaranth was usually served at breakfast. You got an inexpensive high-protein meal. Related to the callaloo family, amaranth is used as a high-intake vegetable and is very rich in iron. Often served up with strong hearty ground-rooted vegetables, served with boiled or fried dumplings. Amaranth was a meal favourite with more scotch bonnet pepper on the tongue (Fig. 50)



Figure 50. Image sample of amaranth, 3" x 3", 2021.

AMARANTH PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 15 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the amaranth on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the amaranth from the wet pellon and felt and place the new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the amaranth flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the amaranth from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Earthy Aroma, rich green to sadden olive, soft, delicate texture.

CALLALOO: Amaranthus Vridits

Callaloo is a vibrant green leaf plant with amazing benefits and a high source of iron. I remember when not being in Jamaica, my parents would grow these large leaf greens in a backyard. I remember the callaloo would grow so high that when laying down it looked like it was touching the sky. My parents always had me go out in the backyard to harvest Sunday morning breakfast. Just use my little hands to break the leaves off of the stems. Gardening these plants brings back so many childhood memories (Fig. 51).



Figure 51. Image sample of callaloo, 3" x 3", 2021.

CALLALOO PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.

2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 15 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the callaloo on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the callaloo from the wet pellon and felt and place the new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the callaloo flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the callaloo from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

No aroma, green, soft and delicate texture.

CERASEE: Momordica Charmanta

“You need a washout”, are the dreaded words in a Jamaican household. My parents, specifically my mom, was the one to make the cerasee concoction. Not that the washout is a bad thing, it is just a very

distasteful taste. The bitter remains on my taste buds will never leave my tongue and lips. Jamaican cerasee is like a bush similar to the leaves of the bitter melon. The cause of cleaning your blood and body detox. I remember my mom giving us the remedy monthly or on her visuals of our health. You may have a skin breakout, acne, yellowing eyes, or a bloated tummy. Nonetheless, now realize that cerasee benefited our health and well-being. A part of the culture that teaches us to heal and take care of ourselves (Fig.52).



Figure 52. Image sample of cerasee, 3" x 3", 2021.

CERASEE PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 15 minutes.

5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the cerasee on pellow sheets
9. In between each layer place pellow and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the cerasee from the wet pellow and felt and place the new fresh dried pellow.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the cerasee flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the cerasee from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

No aroma, green, soft and brittle texture.

COCONUT HUSK: Cocos Nucifera

We have coconut oil, rum, grater cake, gizada and Jamaica meets many. Bring the European tart with the richness of caramelized coconut and a kick of island spices. This dessert embodies how the Caribbean has mastered the art of interdependence. A home to multiple backgrounds with a culture that acknowledges them all. No place or person is perfect, but I feel the blueprint the world would benefit from learning. In the meantime, we have this sweet reminder of what happens when we do (Fig.53).



Figure 53. Image sample of coconut husk, 3" x 3", 2021.

COCONUT HUSK PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 90 minutes.

5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the coconut husk on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the coconut husk from the wet pellon and felt and place a new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the coconut husk flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the coconut husk from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Sweet aroma, light brown to sadden brown, brittle, hair and hard texture.

HIBISCUS: Hibiscus Rosa Sinersis

Hibiscus plants are always pleasant to be around. I remember when coming off the plane in Jamaica and heading to Red Hills, in Kingston, my grand uncle's farm and house was filled with an array of colours. Pinks, white, purples, reds, yellow and oranges. They are so beautiful. My mom always told me that they were calm species and that angels were around when you saw them. She always would tell us if you're not in a good mood to be in the presence of these blossoms. They will always make you feel better (Fig. 54).

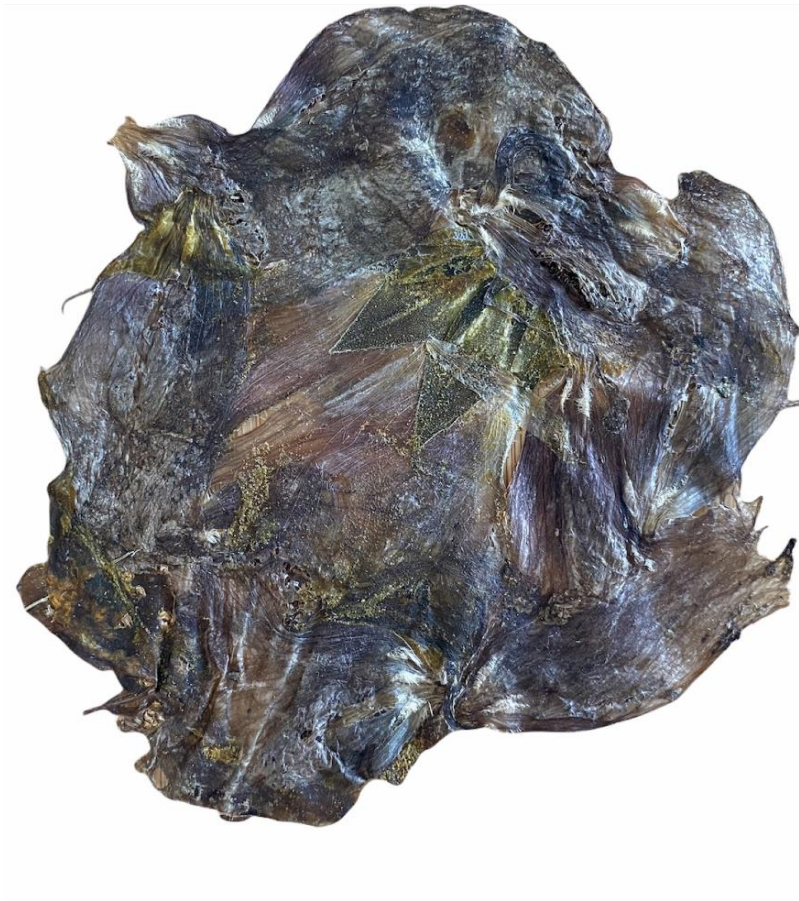


Figure 54. Image sample of hibiscus, 3" x 3", 2021.

HIBISCUS PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 10 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the hibiscus on pellon sheets

9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the hibiscus from the wet pellon and felt and place the new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the hibiscus flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the hibiscus from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Floral aroma, pink to the purple-brown, soft, delicate texture and transparent when illuminated.

LIME: Citrus Aurantifolia

Lime is known as the cut and clear. Lime is a very active material in our home. Known for its cleaning and disinfectant capabilities. It was also used to break spiritual ties around your life. Placing a lime under your pillow when you sleep to get rid of negative dreams. It was also used to clean cuts, scratch bruises and kill bacteria (Fig.55).



Figure 55. Image sample of lime, 3" x 3", 2021.

LIME PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.

3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 18 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the lime on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the lime from the wet pellon and felt and place a new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the lime flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the lime from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Citrus aroma, green to sadden olive, rubber, soft, delicate texture, and transparent when illuminated.

LIGNUM VITAE: Guaiacum Officinales

Jamaica is known for being the land of wood and water. The main source is Lignum Vitae, the main wood source that bears a blue-purple blossom. Although the flower is undermined by the more popular hibiscus flower. The small blossom holds up to its name " Wood of life" as it is all over the island. This little

blossom holds up to its hype. Its components of the body, gum, bark, fruit, fruit, leaves and blossoms serve a useful purpose. The tree is very popular for its medicinal purposes (Fig. 56).



Figure 56. Image sample of lignum vitae, 3" x 3", 2021.

LIGNUM VITAE PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.

4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 18 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the lignum vitae on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the lignum vitae from the wet pellon and felt and place the new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the lignum vitae flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the lignum vitae from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Floral aroma, blue to blue-brown colour, soft, delicate texture.

MARIJUANA (GANJA): Cannabis Sativa

The herb marijuana, commonly known as "Ganja" or "herb", is very important in Jamaican culture and culture. Rastafarians use this plant to smoke and get closer to the spiritual divine. Although it might not be legal in many countries, marijuana shares and is packed with many medicinal properties. This plant is very versatile when it connects to the human body. As a child, I used it as a shampoo and conditioner.

The hemp fibres are great for the skin. Even to this day, I steep the leaves to make “ganja” tea which is get for reducing stress, and anxiety and relieving pain and inflammation. (Fig. 57).



Figure 57. Image sample of marijuana, 3" x 6", 2021.

MARIJUANA PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.

3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 25 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the marijuana on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the marijuana from the wet pellon and felt and place a new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the marijuana flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the marijuana from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Earthy aroma, green to sadden olive colour, rubber, soft, prickly delicate texture, and strong scent.

OKRA: *Abelmoschus Esculentus*

Okra was not my favourite vegetable growing up. Jamaicans called them “lady fingers” as they resembled long crooked fingers. These vegetables had a fuzzy texture on the outside, but when boiled there was a very slimy and sticky consistency. Slimy textured food was not my favourite. However, in terms of beauty, the slime from the okra makes an amazing hair conditioner and mask. This was often used in our

household, we all had a lot of hair and hair products were very expensive to keep up with 4 curly-haired children. My parents would resort back to their childhood and use the inexpensive and natural products that they were used to. (Fig. 58).



Figure 58. Image sample of okra, 3" x 3", 2021.

OKRA PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 25 minutes.

5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the okra on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the okra from the wet pellon and felt and place a new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the okra flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the okra from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Earthy aroma, green to sadden olive colour, slimy soft, sticky delicate texture.

SORREL: Rumex Acetosa

Sorrel Jamaica festive, rum-tinged hibiscus drink is the flavor of my holidays growing up and a reminder of hope. Across the globe, it has many names It has many names from Agua de Jamaica, Sobolo to Bissap but its seeds were brought over by the enslaved to Jamaica as an act of hope. By carrying them you are connected to your roots. We all need our own version of this record-keeping good days. The memories that matter carry us through the unfamiliar of the new year with more ease and joy (Fig. 59)



Figure 59. Image sample of sorrel, 3" x 3", 2021.

SORREL PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.

4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 15 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the sorrel on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the sorrel from the wet pellon and felt and place a new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the sorrel flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the sorrel from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Sweet floral aroma, red to wine colour, rubber, soft, delicate texture, and opaque with illuminated.

SUGAR CANE: Scharum Officinarum

Eating sugar cane is an act of sweet rebellion, my mom and dad grew up with it. Eating it gives me the sense of restarting and cleansing, another act to assimilate. Then I woke up to the fact that normal is a construct that exists to make you digestible to everyone but yourself. So, I left the table that requires me to eat and be in a one-size-fits-all all way and got interested in all the ways I didn't. Because feeling like you

belong should come with a side of inflammation from swallowing the truth of who you are. When what comes naturally is to serve our unique identities, as is (Fig.60)



Figure 60. Image sample of sugarcane, 3" x 3", 2021.

SUGARCANE PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 120 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.

6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.
8. Once cooled, place the sugarcane on pellon sheets
9. In between each layer place pellon and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the sugarcane from the wet pellon and felt and place the new fresh dried pellon.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the sugarcane flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the sugarcane from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Sweet aroma, white to beige colour, strong, soft, delicate texture, and opaque with illuminated.

SCOTCH BONNET: Capsicum Scotch Bonnet

The scotch bonnet pepper, the kick of heat in every meal. Jamaica scotch bonnet is the small vibrant pepper from yellows, greens, orange, and red. This vegetable is small but packs a big bite. I remember just the slightest touch, and if you rub your eye, nose or lips you are done for. Most of Jamaica's main dinner and some breakfast dishes have to include a slice of whole pepper. No wonder why jerk seasonings are so popular (Fig. 61).



Figure 61. Image sample of scotch bonnet, 3" x 3", 2021.

SCOTCH BONNET PROCESS

STEPS:

1. Heat stove top on medium heat.
2. When the water is boiling add 2 TB of soda ash to the heated water.
3. Measure 200 grams of material.
4. Place the material into a boiling pot, and boil for 15 minutes.
5. Continuously stir, making sure the material is covered.
6. Remove material from heat and strain.
7. Allow the material to cool.

8. Once cooled, place the scotch bonnet on pellow sheets
9. In between each layer place pellow and felt to absorb excess water.
10. Place the material on the post and begin to press.
11. Remove the scotch bonnet from the wet pellow and felt and place the new fresh dried pellow.
12. Place back on the post and place a heavy stone or stack of books on top to keep the scotch bonnet flat.
13. Turn on the fan and allow it to dry for 24 hours.
14. Remove the scotch bonnet from the post once completely dried.

OBSERVATIONS:

Strong pepper aroma, red colour, rubber, soft, delicate texture, powerful burning scent, and transparent with illuminated. BE CAREFUL, and wear PPE. Can cause coughing, eye-watering and burning.

Journal Notes: Summer Study 2021

Week One:

Let's take a look at materials that represent me, and my culture. Plants, herbs, flowers and even fruit. Ideas of making vases, forms and collections of pieces. No access to the school. How the hell is this going to work? I want to make furniture and prototype my own forms. What can I do?

Week Two:

Gathering materials from Jamaica, how will I get that and where will I get them? Caribbean grocery stores? Bring materials from Jamaica? How, COVID? Is travelling an option? Maybe Mom can bring me some items or get them shipped from my family.

Week Three:

Finding materials from Jamaica to make. Herbs, plants, flowers and fruit. Headed to Gems, Niceys, Danforth to some material.

There are so many things to choose from. okra, hibiscus, ackee, amaranth, sorrel, scotch bonnet, red sweet grass, sugar cane, lignum vitae, aloe vera, lime, coconut husk, cerasee, oxalis, yam, ginger, dasheen and so many more to choose from.

Week Four:

Reading Helen Hieberts, figuring out how to make these materials into papers. Purchasing additives to break down the fibres. Maybe a mandolin to slice the material.

Week Five:

Starting to make papyrus, easier than I thought it would be. The aromatic scents of fruits run through my studio. It has really been helpful with the memories of childhood when my parents would cook in the kitchen. Cooking and breaking down the herbal and plant materials gave me instant nostalgia for bitter teas that have my taste buds salivating with discussion. Crazy how the distinct taste is still memorable to this present day. Success with callaloo, cerasee, ackee, lime, marijuana, lignum vitae, sorrel, aloe vera, and oxalis.

Week Six:

This week I am trying more fibrous materials, such as sugarcane, and coconut husk. These materials took a long time to break down with soda ash and blend. I tried to break down really hard skins of yam and dasheen. They were unsuccessful, and I was getting annoyed at this point. I will circle back and try again at a later time.

Week Seven:

Tackling the scotch bonnet pepper. ALL PPE IS NEEDED!!! A respiratory, gloves and goggles are a must! Let me tell you, I have never coughed so much in my life with the scent of pepper in the air. Making this paper was like making my pepper spray. The studio air was filled with heat. The process was tricky, but I was able to get the job done. This paper took a couple of hours to make, just because of the scent of these little vegetable packs! of hours to make, just because of the scent of these little vegetable packs! My mom was in Jamaica, I asked her to bring back any and as many flowers from Yawd. She told me she dried them in the sun for days. She made this project so much more enjoyable. She was able to bring back Lignum

Vitae blossoms and bougainvillea. I was able to source ganja leaves and stems locally in Canada made from seeds carried over from Jamaica.

Week Eight:

Without any access to school facilities during COVID-19, I needed to find moulds that could shape my pieces. I ended up using what was accessible to me and was already here and existing. 5 vases were used to make pieces. Still unsure of the shapes I tried to make more organic shapes.

Week Nine:

Reset, rebuild, rewind, step back. Doused back into the water. I really wasn't feeling the shapes. Although they were organic and molecular the shape wasn't working with the material.

Week Ten:

Let's go back to simple forms, vases that hold memory, can hold things and can be functional, yet beautiful. Display the beauty of the material.

Week Eleven:

I honestly have had such a difficult time when shape and time are being tested. These 5 forms are pieces of my memories that I can really say I recognize. They have really formed my childhood and instilled a culture that will never be forgotten. I am so proud of the forms and proud of the labour of my hands.

Week Twelve:

Completion of 5 of 14 material vases. The pieces are very vibrant with days of drying. It is so interesting that as the forms continue to dry, they change. Not dramatically, just a simple change in form and tone. Fibers are naturally grabbing and hooking onto each other. There is something really special here.

Glossary

PAPERMAKING TERM:

BEATING PULP: Breaking down the fibre.

BUST FIBRE: Fiber that is within the inner bark.

CELLULOSE: Long-chain polymer sugars, from plants.

COUCHING: Transfer a freshly made sheet of paper from the mould onto the felt.

DRY BOX: Area for drying paper.

FELT: A woven fabric with a smooth and absorbent surface.

FIBRE: Cells that impact elasticity, the strength of the plant.

JACK PRESS: Machine that releases water from freshly made sheets of paper.

PELLON: synthetic fabric that prevents materials from sticking to each other.

POST: Wooden boards that help keep papers flat when pressing.

PULP: Fibres that have been processed and broken down from plant material.

PATOIS TERMS:

TUFF: hard

TRONG: strong

WASH OUT: detox or cleanse

ALKALINE: Have a PH greater than 7

ITAL: Strict plant-based diet

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