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**Home and Away: Home, Migrancy, and Belonging Through
Landscape Photographic Practice
Pollard, I.**

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Home and Away:
**Home, Migrancy, and Belonging Through Landscape Photographic
Practice**

Ingrid Pollard – collected works (2005-2015)

A commentary partial submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the
University of Westminster for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy publication.
2016

Abstract:

Home and Away: Home, Migrancy, and Belonging Through Landscape Photographic Practice

The thesis consists of six bodies of photographic visual works: the exhibitions **Self Evident, Regarding the Frame**, and **Oceans Apart**, the publication **Hidden in a Public Place**, an artist-curator project, **TradeWinds-LandFall** and the video **Belonging in Britain**. The works are primarily lens-based practice and have been published and exhibited during the last ten years. The overall field of enquiry across the six works is concerned with the issues of Place, situated within the key themes of *Home, Migrancy, and Belonging*. The accompanying text details the development of the works through multiple readings of the relationship between material practices and ideas of landscape, Britishness and race. By taking a historical, but not chronological examination of the works the chapters examine aspects of the visual politics of landscape aligned with cultural experience and explore how these are expressed across a range of media and theoretical strands.

The vital discussion of visual and material practice within the commentary is indicated and accompanied by extensive Supplementary Evidence, Appendix A (page 99). This appendix includes exhibition catalogues, research publications, and audio, music CD and DVD video extracts. This evidence positions the theoretical concepts within the parameters of the practice based research.

The thesis also assigns authority to 'other voices' for a more nuanced response to the complexity of archive work. The thesis challenges and complicates ideas of rootedness to examine the possibilities of meaningful immersions and interactions within communities related to personal biography, history and diaspora as a practice method. In this sense the work locates ways, through practice, which have challenged conventional thinking about identity that limit the discourse and communication around race with the historical classification of 'black arts'.

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'Place' is one of the trickiest words in the English language,
a suitcase so overfilled one can never shut the lid.'
*Dolores Hayden*¹

INTRODUCTION

This thesis consists of six bodies of visual works, primarily composed of lens-based practice, which have been published and exhibited during the last ten years (2005-2015). The overall field of enquiry across the six works is concerned with the issues of place and the visual and cultural tropes of journeying, belonging, and transformation. These overarching interests include three major themes, *Home, Migrancy and Belonging*, which are broadened to include the visual politics of landscape and the means of expression within the different areas of my practice.

This enquiry explores my own practice; a practice that cuts across settled and established divisions between artist, curator and artist residency on the one hand. On the other hand my practice disturbs distinctions between media such as photography and video, craft and installation - media that I consider to be in dialogue with each other.

My process destabilises established divisions and discrete media to highlight gaps in knowledge that my practice brings to the fore.

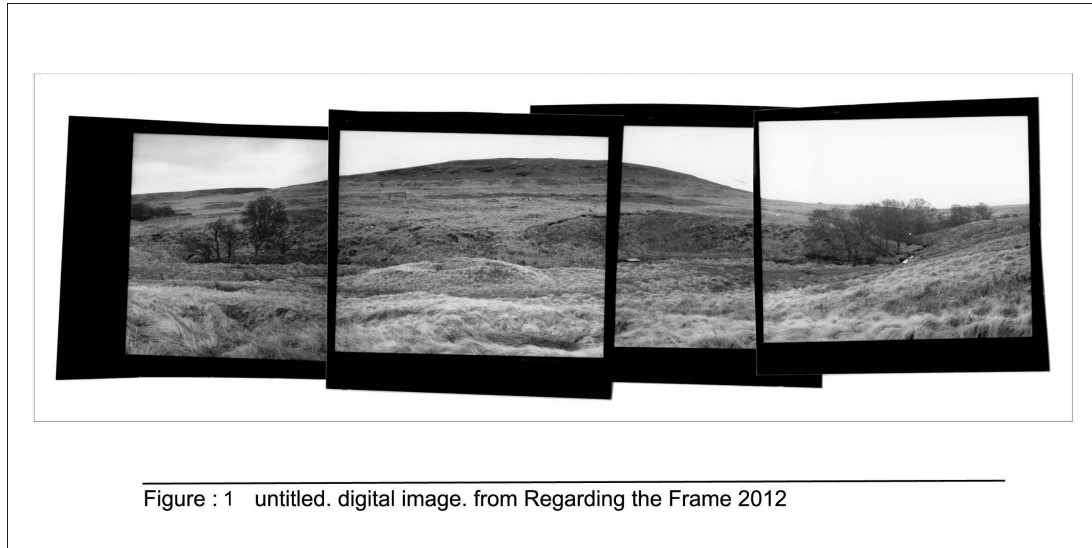
Combining and interweaving the areas of geography, sociology, cultural

¹ Hayden, Dolores, 1995. *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*. Mass: MIT Press, 14.

studies and material practices allows for a sophisticated visual vocabulary to emerge and develop across the works cited.

The six works presented, cited and discussed in this thesis under the theme of *Home* are: **Self Evident** (1995/2015) and **Hidden in a Public Place** (2009). These works are considered through ideas of the 'figure in the landscape', both as photographic documents and through a viewing of the landscape which implies separation and observation. Paired together under the theme of *Migrancy* are the two works **TradeWind-LandFall** (2009) and **Oceans Apart** (1989/2012). These works consider the Atlantic Ocean in relation to European colonialism and migration and evolve in dialogue within a discourse on race and nation.² Finally, examined through the theme of *Belonging* are **Regarding the Frame** (2013) and **Belonging in Britain** (2009), an examination of localised English landscapes and their relationship to groups of socially negotiated norms and ideas (Figure 1).

² Baucom, Ian, 1999. *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, page 166. Hall, Stuart et al, 1992. *Modernity and its Futures*. Milton Keynes. Open University Press, 273.



Some of these works were shown earlier (before 2005-2015), but I am interested in the trajectory of the works from their original exhibition sites to their subsequent locations and the effects their new positions have for their audiences. This includes the processes involved in dialogue with the works that are in constant re-negotiation with the *not knowing of art*.³ The works are not presented chronologically. I am not looking back at the works, but re-examining the working processes and re-thinking the works after many years within the structured academic parameters of the PhD by Publication.

I have chosen a range of sources, references and theoretical concepts as themselves materials for my practice, which is a strategy that enables a more multi-centred approach to the reading of these works and an attempt at a deep mapping of the issues and concerns that I am exploring. A critical review of the art works in some cases has also

³ Greenhill, Joanne et al., 2001, *Conversations in Speaking and Making*, London: Central St. Martins College of Art, 7

become a tool that broadens existing theoretical structures and amplifies the discordant voices of new writing and reviews.⁴

My approach to my artistic practice is to maintain a resistance to a historic linear positioning of my work. This positioning places work into restrictive categories of an essentialist reading of race and identity politics.

Whilst I maintain a productive but critical dialogue with art historians and geographers, it is amongst documentary photographers and through landscape issues that I work to widen the parameters of these discourses. This enables the works to resist the rigid framing of the images into a type of sociological text or 'photo essay' that undermines its relation to art practices, in ways that act to exclude it from a photographic historical context and aesthetics.⁵ A limited framing also occurs from a forced arts/political alignment through the historical 1980's 'black art movement'. The analysis and re-writing of this period has produced what has been called, a 'self-ghettoisation of black and Asian artists into identity politics'⁶. The scope of my practice enables me to break through some of the limiting conventional art history and sociological framing of my works.

⁴ Smith Lou, 2013 *Beyond the Horizon, Out at Sea. A New Day Breaks: Memory and Identity in Ingrid Pollards's The Boy Who Watches Ships Go By*. ENTERTEXT. 14
http://www.brunel.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/345520/SpecialIssue_2013.pdf

And see the critical review of the black arts movement of the 1980's. Quaintance, Morgan, 2013. *Post-Racialism*. London: Art Monthly, no 370. October.

⁵ Caroline Bressey in her otherwise insightful essay refers to my image-text words as 'photo essays', 'captions' and 'text'. Bressey Caroline, 2009. *Cultural Archaeology and Historical Geographies of the Black Presence in Rural England*, London: The Journal of Rural Studies, 286-395

⁶ Jean Fisher for Radical Philosophy, part of the Guardian Comment Network Tuesday 20 May 2014
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/may/20/stuart-hall-artist-black-intellectuals>

The involvement of my practice in this thesis is therefore an act of re-inscribing a history to provide a more open-ended and speculative narrative from the perspective of practice-based research. The value of the research dissertation can be seen as an examination of working methods and an act of closure without the limiting of historical and cultural frameworks.

MAJOR THEMES

By linking *home*, *migrancy*, and *belonging* I aim to challenge the sense of certainty within the ideas of 'rootedness and fixity'. To open oppositions that include those who are journeying: the migrant, the stranger from elsewhere, those neither from here nor there. Arguing that the idea of 'yearning for the home' has been affixed to those from elsewhere.⁷ But the yearning can also be an activating principle that enables groups linked by a sense of 'lack of fixity' to create a new community; 'a community of strangers'.⁸

HOME

I have positioned the theme of *Home* within studies of place and social geography.⁹ Each of the works cited grapples with the idea of landscape in a variety of ways. Stuart Cosgrove maintains that a spatial arrangement

⁷ Chambers, Iain, 1995. *Migrancy, Culture, Identity*. London: Routledge 1995, 336.

⁸ Ahmed, Sara, 1999. *Home and Away: Narratives of Migration and Estrangement*. London: *International Journal of Cultural Studies*: no 2, 329

⁹ Massey, Doreen and Jess, Pat. 1995 *A Place in the World: Places Cultures and Globalisation*. Milton Keynes: The Open University, 87. Hayden, Dolores, 1995. *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*. Mass: MIT Press, 168

of space is a 'way of seeing' the world, or culture, or of an environment.¹⁰ These are part of my wider, overarching concerns of 'journeying, belonging, and transformation'. In considering landscape we ought to be aware of our attempting to confine landscape, to resolve contradictions; rather we should relish its multiplicity.¹¹

Within the discourses of geography the idea of flow includes, for example, the flow of currency, commerce, industrial development, and of exchange and expansion. This, together with the movements of people within the immense variety of societies and cultures, makes the use of geography and cultural studies essential in this study.

The range of theoretical concepts and material sources I explore during research and experimentation run parallel with the investigation of the materiality of the works. These are both about the act of 'making', as is this commentary. I also want to align my photographic practice within art practice as well as photographic theories and histories. The works are a form of communication in which the audience is key. The audience forms part of the flow of ideas, materials and objects.¹² The works are part of a dialogue with audiences, which further places this commentary outside of general critical review of the works cited. This is to stop a reductive

¹⁰ Cosgrove quoted in: Women and Geography Study Group 1997. *Feminist Geographies: Explorations in Diversity and Difference*. Harlow: Longmans, 159. From Cosgrove and Daniels, 1988. *Iconography of Landscape*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹¹ Here I am particularly stressing geography as part of the development of ways of seeing including linear techniques, perspective control, also developments in astronomy, surveying & mapping and geometry rules. And its relationship to painting as part of the ways to create realistic imaging. These innovations run parallel to the development of 19th century photographic use within criminal, medical and anthropology studies. (Tagg, John 1988. *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*. London: Macmillan 60).

¹² Ingold, Tim, 2010. *Bring Things to Life: Creative Entanglement in the World of the Material*. Aberdeen: ESRC Research papers. NCRM Working Papers, volume 5 no 10, 3.

textual analysis of the works, which can cause a restrictive closing down of new expansive intentions and flow.

Journeys, as part of the artist residency, include elements of the micro and the epic, as part an active process that I inhabit physically, in time and place. There is an aspect of self-reflective transformation caused by changes of location. Additionally, disruption to the local is brought about by my agency and inclusion, however temporal, in that community. I become both subject and object.

MIGRANCY

The specificity of iconic locations in this study includes National Parks, London metropolitan zones, coast regions, the Caribbean, Africa, the USA, and the photographer's studio. These different places establish the importance of positioning, sites, and maps; connecting the idea of the diaspora and the local and of offering ways to understand global cartography.¹³ Challenging the certainties of mapping, borders and historic placements can allow room for the multiple voices of 'others'. These 'others' play a part in the migratory patterns of interlocking, flowing routes where points of history meet and are layered. Doreen Massey and Stuart Hall has argued that cultural diversity, as a response to migrancy is no longer a question of others in distant lands.¹⁴ It is here and now in every society and individual places where cultural diversity is found.

¹³ I am using the definition: 'Diaspora is an informative framework to analyse notions of identity and belonging that have emerged from the effects of slavery, displacement, colonialism and migration. It has evolved in dialogue with the dominant discourse about race and nation'. Quote by Lynnee Denise: *Archives Matter Conference: Queer, Feminist and Decolonial Encounters*, June 2016. Goldsmiths, University of London.

¹⁴ Hall, Stuart. 1990. 'Culture, Identity and Diaspora', in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. Editor Rutherford, Jonathan. London: Routledge. 178

Caroline Knowles also offers a challenge to the idea of the ease of flow and mobility. Knowles cites the problematic 'bumps, tangles, and clashes' that occur along the paths of migrancy's economic and cultural meetings.¹⁵

BELONGING

The theme of belonging is addressed through ideas of rootedness, the porousness of borders and the tensions of being immersed within a community. The idea of arrivals, flows and trails are tackled through my engagement with artists' residencies. My journeys move away from a centralised viewpoint towards a fragmented complication of many pathways, places, and voices. Through research I begin to hint at a series of oppositions where blackness and Englishness may *not* be mutually exclusive. Ian Baucom argues that,

"Englishness" has consistently been identified through the appeals to the identity and enduring properties of place.¹⁶

For example, my work **Wordsworth's Heritage** (1992) claims a national belonging through reimagining the Lake District; placing of correctly attired black hikers claiming their place amongst the hills of a centrally identified, Wordsworthian, Lakeland postcard. Nassey-Brown further extends this to idea to include the english garden and the english oak, in her discussions

¹⁵ Knowles, Caroline, 2014. *Flip Flop: A Journey through Globalisation's Backroads*. London: Pluto, 7

¹⁶ Baucom, Ian, 1994 *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Location of Identity*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 4

of 'black Liverpoolians' whose identity as English is fixed by their city.¹⁷

She states:

'Black's sense of place is inspirable from their sense of race.'

The range of works in this commentary is not limited by a linear chronological presentation. I am able to elaborate on the strategies within the choice of media at different periods of time. The choice of practical photographic methods is directly related to the history of the representation of the landscape. For example I favour the figures within my landscapes image as centrally placed, rather than occupying liminal spaces in the frame and or subservient roles. This is a deliberate tactic to dominate the composition, to counter historic paintings which were commissioned by privileged land owners and represented control of the natural elements.

My continuing selection of the residencies (both as artist and as curator) is a process of 'deep mapping' of subjects and sites. This has developed into an intentional strategy that echoes the seeming non-linear but cyclical trajectory of pathways and trails across sites I encounter. This is a practice that brings a reliance on a multiplicity of factors, on multi-centeredness.¹⁸

Stuart Hall pinpoints the shifts in identity that are part of the struggle not simply to recover ourselves in past histories, but to project ourselves as subjects for the future:

¹⁷ Nassey Brown, Jacqueline, 2000, *Enslaving history: narratives on whiteness in a black Atlantic port*. American Ethnologist, Santa Cruz, 27.2 340

¹⁸ Lippard, Lucy 1997 *The Lure of the Local*, New York: The New Press, 5

'I felt out of place in Jamaica, and when I came to England I felt out of place in Merton College, Oxford, and I feel out of place even now. I feel out of place in relation to the British, which might sound a very strange thing because I've lived here for 50-something years. I know the different kinds of English, the British people, I know how the society works from the inside. I love parts of the landscape. I feel at one with it. It is my home in a certain kind of way. But I will never be English - never. I can't be, because traces in my life, and the traces in my memory and the traces in my history of another place are just ineradicable. So being displaced, or out of place, is a characteristic experience of mine.'¹⁹

My work has been positioned within the wider spheres of cultural studies, diaspora studies, and sociology.²⁰ I align my work with artists working within the broader area of the 'black diaspora'.²¹ My photographic works have been situated in the wider context of the 'black arts movement' of the 1980s in the UK. There was a convergence of the work by black cultural practitioners, artists, filmmakers and performers who were identified as politically 'black'. In hindsight, through the rewriting of significant moments of histories, these ad hoc groupings become part of a 'heterogeneous collectivity'.²² Problematically, in some cases they were not seen principally as artists in terms of aesthetic concerns, but were

¹⁹ Hall, Stuart and Back, Les. 2009. *At Home and Not At Home: Stuart Hall in conversation with Les Back*. *Cultural Studies*, volume 23 no4, 658.

²⁰ Daniels, Stephen, 1993. *Fields of Visions: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
Ahmed, Sara, 1999. *Home and Away: Narratives of Migration and Estrangement*. London. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*. Issue 2, 329
Massey, Doreen, 2005. *For Space*, London: Sage Publications 2005.
Nassey-Brown, J. 2005. *Dropping Anchor Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool*. London. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Sibley, David, 1995. *Geographies of Exclusion*. London: Routledge, 108.

²¹ Piper, Keith, 1991. *A Ship Called Jesus*. Birmingham: IKON Gallery.
Sulter, Maud, 1989. *Zabat: Poetics of a Family Tree*. Hebden Bridge: Urban Fox Press.
Himid, Lubaina, 1992. *Revenge*: Rochdale: Rochdale Art Gallery..
Bailey, David, 1987. *Cultural Production within Photographic Practices*. Sheffield: Mappin Art Gallery .
Fani-Kayode, Rotimi, 1988. *Black Male/White Male*. London: GMP.

²² Gilroy, Paul. 1988/89. 'Cruciality and the Frogs Perspective: An Agenda of Difficulties for the Black Arts Movement in Britain', London: *Third Text*, 5, Winter, 33.

seen as producing works of social commentary, as a form of activism; politicised tools that confirmed symbolic, essentialist truths.²³ So changes in the trajectory of the works that were formerly viewed as a form of social activism have now been revised through their placement within UK National Art Collections that present a narrative of art history. These changes hint at the effects of 'internationalism' within the wider art world, but further discussion of this is beyond the scope of this thesis²⁴

BACKGROUND HISTORY

During the 1980s and 1990s I produced photographic artworks that challenged ideas of the British landscape as a romantic rural idyll of timeless, unchanging nostalgia. This was done through an interrogation of photographic aesthetics and British landscape histories.²⁵ My works have been featured across a range of national and international discourses and platforms including feminist writings, academic and photographic journals, and citations in critical reviews of black photographic practices.²⁶

²³ Further discussion of the 'black arts movement' of the 1980s is beyond the scope of this thesis. See, *Critical Decade Ten.8*, 1992, vol 2 no 3. Bailey David, et al. 2005. *Shades of Black*, Duke University Press. Areen, Rasheed 1989. *The Other Story*, London: Hayward Gallery, *Transforming the Crown*. 1998. New York: Caribbean Cultural Centre, Mercer, Kobena, 2016. *Travel and See: Black Diaspora Art Practices since the 1980s*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Kinsman, Phil, 1995. *Landscape, Race and National Identity: The Photography of Ingrid Pollard*. Nottingham. Area 24 September, 300.

²⁴ Further discussion of this important topic is beyond the scope of this thesis. But see for example; *We Face Forward: Art from West Africa* Manchester: Manchester Art Gallery 2012, *Beyond Desire*, MoMu Fashion Museum, Antwerp, 2005.

²⁵ For example *Pastoral Interludes*. Part of the DMax exhibition, 1987, Birmingham: IKON Gallery. Wells, Liz, 1994. *Viewfinder: Women Photographers: 'Landscape' and Environment*. Tiverton: Available Press Light, 45-62.

²⁶ Jones, Kellie, 1992. *Re-Creation. Ten:8 Critical Decade*, Birmingham, 96. Liz, Wells. *Photography: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge, 1997, 289. Pollard, Ingrid. 1993. *Another View*. London: *Feminist Review*, autumn volume 45:46. Smith, Lou. 2013 *Beyond the Horizon, Out at Sea, A New Day Breaks: Memory and Identity in Ingrid Pollard's The Boy Who Watches Ships Go By*. ENTERTEXT. Special Issue on Caribbean Literature and Culture.10, 6. Women and Geography Study Group, 1997. *Feminist Geographies: Explorations in Diversity and Difference*, London: Longmans, 184

In addition to these contexts, the work has been primarily addressed through certain notions of 'Britishness', including race, identity, and exclusion. **Pastoral Interlude** (1987), **Oceans Apart** (1989), **Seaside Series** (1989), **Wordsworth Heritage** (1992), and **Self Evident** (2005) address these themes through a localised exploration of particular contested sites in the UK. By 'contested sites' I mean locations that contend with the ideas of historic invasions and resistance, which have been revisited and revised through the language of the heritage and tourism industries.²⁷ These sites include Cumbrian and Northumberland National Parks, coastal regions and border areas of the UK that act as boundary points. This is evidenced by the inclusion of my work in the galleries of 'British Art in Focus 1500-2011' on display at Tate Britain (2011), as one of nation's canonical fine art museums. This was after some of these works being 'discounted' by the national collections for over twenty years, even though my work **Pastoral Interludes** (1987) is one of the most popular loans from the Victoria and Albert museum collection.²⁸ The catalogue for the 'Thin Black Lines' (2012) (Appendix 1.3) exhibition documents some of the curatorial issues, principles, and strategies that were present in the Tate show and past exhibitions from the point of view of the curator.²⁹

²⁷ For example see my works: *Seaside Series* 1989, recalls the languages of tourism in Hastings; seen as the site of the 1066 invasion by the Normans, and the so-called last stand of the Anglo-Saxons and *The Cost of the English Countryside*, 1989, exhibition which explored the tourism industry, the nuclear power industry in the region, and the landscape of the Cumbrian National Park.

²⁸ *Pastoral Interludes* was acquired for the permanent collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1999. Personal conversation with Mark Hayward-Booth, former Senior Curator of Photographs at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

²⁹ *Oceans Apart* and *Seaside Series* were exhibited in *Thin Black Line/s* 2012, curated by Lubaina Himid within the British Arts in Focus Display150002011. These were acquired by Tate Britain after the exhibition, and *Self Evident* was acquired in 2012.

The series of works act as a destabilising and challenging, oppositional voice to major ideas of Britishness. They do this through critiques of the complex matrix of institutions and photographic practices which link ideas of Britishness with a particular type of nostalgia, linked to the heritage industry, where landscape becomes a material embodiment of the English nation.³⁰

CONTEXT

The systemised collecting and analysis of the historic black presence in the UK, although traditionally limited, has recently been subjected to archival re-interpretation.³¹ The re-evaluation of these historic records builds on and illustrates the connections running between the 'tainted splendour' of the grand country homes of England, to the colonies and plantations of the Caribbean and Africa, and back.³²

The works included in this thesis have been quoted and cited extensively within reports by statutory organisations and within cultural media. They have been used as a 'tool' to explore issues of race, identity, and

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- ³⁰ Bressey, Caroline, 2009. *Cultural Archaeology and Historical Geographies of The Black Presence in Rural England*, London: The Journal of Rural Studies, 286
Williams, Charlotte, 2002. *Sugar and Slate*. Wales, Planet Press. And see the measured self reflective response to her own previous book. Williams, Charlotte, 2007. *Revisiting the Rural/Race Debates: a View from the Welsh Countryside*. London: *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30.5, 741.
- ³¹ *Spaces of Black Modernism*. 2015. Equiano Centre & Tate Britain, part of *Drawing Over the Colour Line* project. <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/equiano/centre/events>.
The Staying Power Projects, 2015. Black Cultural Archives Victoria & Albert Museum. Black and Asian Studies Association. <http://www.blackandasianstudies.org.uk>.
Legacies of British Slave-Ownership: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/>
Chanter, Kathleen, 2011. *Untold Histories: Manchester*. Manchester University Press.
- ³² Gilroy, Paul, 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London: Verso, 14.
Baum, Joan, 1994. *Mind-Forg'd Manacles: Slavery and the Romantic Poets*. Connecticut: Shoe String Press Ltd, 9.
Costa, Graham, 1991. The *Guardian* newspaper report on rural racism in early 1980s in which I was interviewed and quoted from my images, particularly *Pastoral Interlude*.
Corner, John, 1991. *Enterprise and Heritage: Cross Currents of National Culture*. London: Routledge, 79.
Bacon, Ian, 1999. *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and the Location of Identity*. New Jersey, Princeton: 10

exclusion. An example is of the use of **Pastoral Interlude** (1987) in a report by Commission for Racial Equality which specifically focused on the invisibility of 'minorities' in rural areas as a problem stemming from race.³³ Other reports have incorporated aspects of race and women's experiences as part of their arguments, for example the Alliance of Women's Organisation's report 'Staring at Invisible Women'.³⁴

Neil Chakraborti's report on rural racism traces governmental and statutory organisations' quantitative reports and initiatives, using my works as examples of the scarcity of debates of 'racial purity and Identity'.³⁵ Similarly BBC's South West regional programme, 'No Problem Here', interviewed me and featured my work as part of the programme's examination of racism within Devon's tourism industry.³⁶ My images have been featured in several publications by Dr Julian Ageyman across a range of his cultural and educational outputs and films.³⁷ We were part of the group that co-founded the Black Environment Network, which was featured in the BBC 1 Countryfile programme in 1994 (Figure 3).

In examining the history and trajectory of my works I note that they have been part of a range of discourses and have been cited by scholars and commentators beyond the ten years of this thesis. I have used these

³³ Jay, Eric, 1992. 'Keep them in Birmingham', *Challenging Racism in South West England* (The Jay Report), London: Commission for Racial Equality, 23.

³⁴ Goldsmiths, Jane, 1988. *Staring at Invisible Women: Black and Minority Ethnic Women in Rural Areas*. London: National Alliance of Women Organisations.

³⁵ Chakraborti, Neil & Garland, John, 2004. *Rural Racism*. Devon: Willan Publishing, 87.

³⁶ No Problem Here. 1992. Western Approach. BBC South West: Director: Laura Fish Producer: Howard Perks.

³⁷ Neal, Sean & Ageyman, Julian, 2006. *The New Countryside? Ethnicity, Nation and Exclusion in Contemporary Rural Britain*. Bristol: Policy Press. Ageyman, Julian, 1993. *Alien Species*. London: *Museums Journal*, 22 Ageyman & Hare Production, 1992. *Black People - White Landscape*. Director & Producer Celia Tate. London: Crow Television Services.

dialogues as a strategy for my commentary, drawing on the ideas within cultural studies, sociology, and geography, as well as discussions of photography and art forms in relation to my material practices.

My work has been exhibited at Tate Britain and acquired for the collection in 2012. These examples are indications of the changes in the way the works are positioned. The platforms that my works can occupy include: ideas of identity, race, and nationhood that have become central under the umbrella of internationalism within the art world.³⁸

PLAN OF COMMENTARY

The commentary is an examination of my photographic practice. I will draw on definitions by artists and scholars who have included my work within their enquiries to challenge and sustain their findings. The works cited in this commentary have maintained a relevancy and responsiveness for recent cultural commentators and critics that continue to challenge the original representations and ideas of my findings. I will detail how the arguments exemplify ways of thinking about these issues through a survey, and analysis of art practice, that is centred upon investigation and uncovering as a contribution of new knowledge. I will detail how a new understanding of place emerges through a survey and analysis of an art practice that is centred upon the complexities of 'layering' and 'revealing'

³⁸ For an internationalism indicator, see survey exhibit see Barson, Tanya and Gorschluter, Peter, 2010. *Afro-Modern: Journeys through the Black Atlantic*. Liverpool: Tate Liverpool.
Muholi, Zanele, 2014. *Faces + Phases, 2006-2014*. Gottingen: Steidl
For a smaller scale group initiative of a zine, *One Of My Kind: Collecting*, 2016, OOMK.net.5

as its method. The main themes I employ are: *Home, Migrancy, and Belonging*.

When we enter the terrain of ideas of *Home*, notions of the 'homing desire', rather than a desire for a 'homeland', becomes an important distinction. In considering these notions we are within a discourse of the 'politics of location', in the realms of the contentious terms of diaspora, borders, location, and displacement.³⁹ Each of these terms, particularly diaspora with its emphasis on dispersal/scattering, implies a central point of departure. An awareness of interrelations as part of the formation of relationships is, in my work, mediated through elements of self-reflective autobiography.⁴⁰

The issue of the politics of location are a central aspect of my practice, as I work to unravel these terms, drawing on geographical, poetical, psychical, bodily and physical spaces (Figure 2).

³⁹ Brah, Avtar, 1996. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge, 183.

⁴⁰ See self-portraits in my works *Seaside Series*, 1990; the inclusion of friends I have hiked with as subjects in my work *Wordsworth's Heritage*, 2000. Also aspects of sexuality in my image-text work for *Stolen Glances*, 1991, Fraser, Jean and Boffin, Tessa, London: Pandora Press, 210



Figure: 2 TradeWinds -LandFall exhibition logo 2008
Vonetta Berry bodypaint.

MATERIAL PRACTICE

The materiality of the lens-based photographic image is a consistent focus within my practice. Additionally, some works are developed through media such as ceramics, audio, video, and performance. These are a means to reveal and realise gaps, omissions, and elisions that operate within differing representational modes. The use of archival materials, such as biographical writing, photography and artefacts, offers opportunities to counter the authoritative historical voices with an oppositional variant, counter narrative. My research evolves through a method of practice that is centred upon processes of material investigation, and uncovering, creating new perspectives and formulations of new knowledge. Through an interrogation of practices and theories I present versions and narratives that demonstrate and counter what is left out of accounts, what is missing, repressed and suppressed.⁴¹

⁴¹ Works by artists which address these themes through historical narratives include:

OTHER DEFINITIONS

Recent research and debate on landscape and representation within geography studies have expanded and shifted to include initiatives that throw a focus beyond the racialized problem of binary oppositions. Even through discussions the 'post-race' politics of representation continually adjust in the shifting terrain of re-evaluations of inclusive and divisive groupings.⁴² This has developed debates into a more nuanced, theoretical, and discursive register. In doing so, this reveals a cultural understanding within the geography of race as a social construction within wider questions of representation and difference. These include inter-ethnic interactions, stories of travellers, and different sexualities that operate within the scope and the spaces of privilege, whiteness, and Englishness.⁴³ In the critical terrain of black visual art practice, ideas of 'intercultural spaces' and 'hybridity' of new ethnicities have shifted the debate from subjective problem solving and essentialist viewpoints to include 'doubts, questions, silences' and journeys into an uncertain future.⁴⁴

Keith Piper, 1991, *A Ship Called Jesus*; Lubaina Himid, 1993, *Hannibal's Sister*; Ajamu, 1994 *Black Bodyscapes*, and *Anti-bodies*, 1999; Maud Sulter; *Hysteria*, 1991.

⁴² Quaintance, Morgan, 2013. *Post-Racialism*. London: Art Monthly, no 370. October.

Bressey, Caroline. 2009. *Cultural Archaeology and Historical Geographies of the Black Presence in Rural England*, London: *The Journal of Rural Studies*, 386-395.

Bressey, Caroline, 2003. *Looking for Blackness: A Researcher's Dilemma*, London: *Ethics, Places and Environments*, Issue 6, 3.

⁴³ Dyer, Claire, Bressey, Caroline, 2008. *New Geographies of Race and Racism*, Hampshire: Ashgate. Gilroy, Paul, 1993. *The Black Atlantic*, London: Verso. 32.

⁴⁴ Mercer, Kobena 2016. *Travel & See: Black Diaspora Art Practices since the 1980s*. Durham: Duke University Press, 'hybridity' - page 77, 'intercultural spaces', 100.

My chapter in the publication *New Geographies of Race and Racism*,⁴⁵ 'Belonging in Britain, Fathers Hands', is a visual exploration of the theme of migration. The chapter uses memory, anecdotes and personal archives of airmail letters and photo-album images of a newly arrived Caribbean migrant in 1950's London. The image-text visual work explores the discursive voice over place and time. This was further developed through additional audio and animation into the final DVD video **Belonging in Britain** (2009) (appendix 3.3).⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Dywer, Claire & Bressey, Caroline, 2008. *New Geographies of Race and Racism*. Hampshire: Ashgate, 41.

⁴⁶ *Black Diaspora Visual Arts*, 2009 National Art Gallery Committee, National Museum of Barbados.



Figure 3: a Countryfile, January 1994
BBC 1

b: Postcards From Paradise, 1995
Border Television

Figure 3: c: First Sex, 1994
Channel 4

d: Countryfile, 1994
BBC1

RELEVANT RESPONSES

The themes and concerns of my works have positioned me frequently as the artist who linked race with countryside issues. I was a judge for the annual photography competitions on the BBC programme Countryfile.⁴⁷

This was in contrast to the previously mentioned BBC South West programme, where I commented upon racism and tourism in Devon.⁴⁸

The BBC Countryfile programme predominately focuses on countryside and rural issues, and I was, at the time, one of the very few 'black' people to appear on the programme (Figure 3). The first episode included images from my works **Pastoral Interlude** (1987) and **Oceans Apart** (1989) in an interview. I was also shown walking in the Devon countryside with the programme's presenter, talking about photographic opportunities in various sites and how best to control the camera, landscape elements, and aesthetics to produce a better photograph. In the subsequent programme I was one of the judges for the photographic entries for the programme's competition. The day following the televised judging, I was approached by a 'black' member of the public who commented on how refreshing it was to see a black person contributing to a television programme that was not about 'race issues', but taking part in the programme as a skilled contributor.

My practice challenges existing authoritative narratives of 'periphery and centre', through the use of multiple strategies. These include curatorial

⁴⁷ BBC Countryfile 1994. Photography Competition Judge. BBC Pebble Mill Director: David Leighton. Producer: Sarah Rowlands, Alan Miler, Janice Houghton-Wallace. Executive Producer: Tony Miller.

⁴⁸ *No Problem Here*. 1992. Western Approach. BBC South West. Director: Laura Fish. Producer: Howard Perks

practice, multiple media material production, engagement and dialogue, and exhibition strategies.

In this way the work exemplifies both the visual practice and the politics of representation. The contribution that my work has made to visual and cultural practice and debates in the UK and internationally - as evidenced by the outputs - demonstrates a vital additional contribution of new knowledge.

'If Englishness doesn't define me, redefine Englishness.'
Andrea Levy⁴⁹

Chapter 1 - HOME

The theme of *Home* continues to be a subject of much academic interest and discourse within cultural studies, sociology, diaspora studies, and geography.⁵⁰ It has been a potent theme for artists and filmmakers of the Black African diaspora in the UK.⁵¹ This chapter discusses two works, **Self Evident** (1995/2015) and **Hidden in a Public Place** (2009) (Appendix 1.1) in relation to notions of home. The landscapes and the subjects explored and documented in these two works deflect an essentialist idea of black people as being primarily associated with urban areas.⁵² The images also explore the English countryside as the romantic idyll, its histories alluding to

⁴⁹ Alibhai-Brown, Y, 2001. *Mixed Feelings: The Complex Lives of Mixed-Race Britons*. London: The Women's Press. Quote from Andrea Levy, 258.

⁵⁰ Gilroy, Paul, 2007. *Black Britain: A Photographic History*. London: Saqi Books.
Nassey-Brown, J. 2005 *Dropping Anchor Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 8.
Massey, Doreen, 2005. *For Space*, London: Sage Publications, 130
Eastrope, Hazel, 2004. *A Place Called Home*. London: *Housing Theory and Society*, volume 21:3 128.
Brah, Avtar 1989. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge, 21.
Ahmed, Sara, 1999. *Home and Away: Narratives of Migration and Estrangement*. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, volume 2, 329
Daniels, Stephen. 1993. *Fields of Visions: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States*. Cambridge: Polity.

⁵¹ For example see; Piper, Keith, 1991. *A Ship Called Jesus* Birmingham: Ikon Gallery; 1997, *Relocating the Remains*. London: Institute of International Visual Arts.
Sulter, Maud, 1989. *Zabat: Poetics of A Family Tree*. Hebden Bridge: Urban Fox Press.
Boyce, Sonia, paintings: *Race and Peas* 1982, *The Pose* 1986.
Atillee, Martina Director, 1988. *Dreaming Rivers.*, London. Producers Sankofa Film and Video.

⁵² Neal, Sarah & Agyeman, Julian 2008. *The New Countryside*. London: Policy Press, 9.

exclusions, contradictions, and collusions whilst recognising the attraction of the pastoral tradition within the context of contemporary British heritage industries.⁵³ My link between the concepts of place and home goes beyond the definition of the latter as simply being a house - a meeting place, of emotional familial social relations. I offer a counter to Sara Ahmed's idea of the migrant's dislocation from home as a 'lack of fixity'.⁵⁴ I am interested in how the differences within a community of strangers are articulated and represented and what part the representation of landscape plays in this.

Self Evident (1995/2015) consists of eight colour prints shown at the Black Cultural Archives, London (2014-15) as part of the *Staying Power* exhibition.⁵⁵ (Figure 4, Appendix 1.3)

'The prints are a series of photographic images of unidentified single figures, placed centrally within a number of iconic British seascapes and landscapes. The work offers a means to explore issues of landscape, race, and ideas of Englishness. The images offer a challenge that undermines the certainties of the populist, traditional, and political constructs of the rural as problem free, aesthetically and socially idyllic, culturally homogenous zone, signifying essentialist and familiar notions of nation.'⁵⁶

The images present a challenge to the notion of the 'rural idyll'. To re-colonise and appropriate the representations of landscape that the figures are in is to suggest a reading of 'transgressive constituents in rural

⁵³ Little, Jo, 2005. *The Politics of Heritage, The Legacies of Race*. London: Routledge, 23.

⁵⁴ Ahmed, Sara, 1999. *Home and Away: Narratives of migration and estrangement*. International Journal of Cultural Studies volume 2, 329

⁵⁵ *Staying Power* exhibit at The Black Cultural Archives, Brixton, London, January-July 2015. The prints shown in *Self Evident* were originally presented as light-boxes, commissioned for Africa '95, shown at Ikon gallery, Birmingham 1995.

⁵⁶ Neal, Sarah & Agyeman Julian, 2006. *The New Countryside*, Bristol: Policy Press, 5.

spaces' through the *mise-en-scène* of gestures, carefully considered clothing, and their locations.⁵⁷

For example, a woman in an evening gown stands on a pebbled beach holding a large tropical conch shell at her ear (Figure 4); in a shaded bluebell wood, a man appears to be performing a ritual; a leather clad young man stands near a field holding a box of fried chicken (Figure 4); a suited man, holding the *Financial Times* and sugar cane, stands in a field (Figure 4) and a woman leans against a tree in a coppiced wood, where a tropical plant appears to be growing. Additionally the audience is allowed close scrutiny of the subjects, to visually navigate between the elements of the images (subject, object, landscape) to create their own meaning. While the eyes of the subjects are directed out of the frame, or are closed. Chika Okeke maintains in his review of the work:

'There is in their countenance a serenity that surpasses that suggested by their environment, a calmness possible only through hypnotic trances. Pollard locates the eyes as the point of negotiation between the subject and the photographer whose project is to seek acquaintance, a knowing of her subject through the process of picture making.'⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Neal, Sarah & Agyeman Julian, 2006. *The New Countryside*, Bristol: Policy Press, 8.

⁵⁸ Okeke, Chika, 1996 *Evidencing Selfhood*. *NKA Journal of Contemporary African Art* New York, 4.



Figure : 4 untitled. Four images from Self Evident series. digital print 500mmx500mm (2015)

Lisa Henry highlights the relationship between audience and individual subjects:

'The placement of each figure in the environment is haunting... Pollard is not only concerned with the historical association of particular landscape, but with dialectic between broad cultural assumptions about place and the unique quality of an individual personal experience.'⁵⁹

The construction of these images relies on a complexity of details:

a) the subjects in precise locations, b) holding particular items, c) dressed in precise attire. These images work to destabilise the easy assumptions of black people being in a white landscape that results in producing feelings of alienation in them. This notion has been a persistent notion directed by critics and art historians toward my work for some time:

'... photographic journeys across the urban/rural divide, which continues in an on-going exploration of the highly ambivalent place of black people in the English countryside.'⁶⁰

'As a black women Pollard articulates in *Pastoral Interlude* several levels of her alienation and otherness.'⁶¹

The imperialist gaze (implied through the construction of the idyllic landscape) is reversed, through the use of a cultural critique of British tourist sites.⁶² The common sense notion that black subjects are alienated or uncomfortable in the rural location is challenged as the subjects claim the space through their actions; places are changed according to *who*

⁵⁹ Henry, Lisa, 2003. *Ingrid Pollard MIRA!* New York: FOTOFILM volume 45, 6.

⁶⁰ Mercer, Kobena, 1995. *Self Evident* catalogue Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 10.

⁶¹ Bertrand, Mathilde, 2014. *The Politics of Representation and The Subversion of Landscape in Ingrid Pollard's Pastoral Interlude*. Paris: Editions du CRINI, no 7, 8.

⁶² For example see my works about the tourist gaze and landscape: see **Seaside Series**, 1988 which is about Hastings; **Bursting Stone**, 1997, which about the Lake District; and **Near and Far**, 2009, about the Northumberland Farne Islands.

comes to occupy them and what they do there. And the *subjects* change as a consequence of the places they are in, while they exhibit a quiet confidence within these real geographic locations; and through the potentialities that they introduce:

'...the dissonance between image (and text) in Pollard's essay marks her refusal of an easy settlement, of a compromise or composite identification with a white English aesthetic or its 'universal' cultural appeal.'⁶³

At the same time the figures are uneasy viewing for the audience who are asked to, look closer, make sense of what they see, read the image itself - and as they look into the scene to situate themselves in relation to it as they gaze on the figures in the landscape:

'The photographic portrait goes to the core of what we long for from representation: an impossible desire to see oneself as one is. Instead, we are faced with the fascinating recognition of oneself as 'other' than one's self for as long as we are held, enthralled by the images.'⁶⁴

The documentation and historical framing of the publication **Hidden in a Public Place** (2009) is an important dimension of my working method, which entails archival research, documentation, and construction of images from historical visual material. **Hidden in a Public Place** (2009) is a research publication that draws out a veiled history of connections through an

⁶³ Kaplan Cora, 1998. *Black Hero's /White Writers: Toussaint l'Ouverture and the Literary Imagination*. London: *History Workshop Journal*, 4, 33.

⁶⁴ Trangmar, Susan, 2001. *Transitional Spaces*. In: Greenhill, Joanne et al, 2001 *Conversations in Speaking and Making*, London: Central St. Martins, 80

investigation of public house signs around the UK, that are named variously as 'black boy', 'black-a-moor head', and 'blacks head', and which depict a person of African descent (Figure 5).⁶⁵ I have found seventy-eight black boy public houses, the earliest being from the seventeenth century and the most recent being from the nineteen fifties.⁶⁶ The public house signs both expose and confuse the process of naming and the figures represented on the painted signs.

The signs reveal evidence of a multiplicity of meanings within the frames that echo a British history of colonial commerce, popular culture, portraiture, and narrative. There are extensive studies of the history of inns, taverns, and public houses, and their relationships to their locations, their association with the church, breweries, and landowners. The connection between inns and coffee houses as places of political dissent and rebellious attitudes indicates that naming is an important part of cultural history. For example the suggested secret code name for the exiled Kings Charles II was 'the black boy'. But this was the same King who suppressed the selling of coffee, chocolate, and sherbet at coffee houses as they produced very 'evil and dangerous effects' and were seen as places of 'idle & disaffected persons'.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Hidden in a Public Place* was published by IMP Press and London South Bank University's Department of Arts and Human Sciences and the Public Relations Department. It was part of my AHRC Fellowship in Creative and Performing Arts 2002-2005.

⁶⁶ Habib, Imtiaz, 2008. *Black Lives in the English Archives, 1500-1677: Imprints of the Invisible*. Hampshire: Ashgate. 226.

⁶⁷ Ellis, Markham, 2004. *The Coffee House: A Cultural History*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. Corbalis, Paul. 1988. *Pub Signs*. Luton: Lennard Publishing. Larwood, John & Camden Hotten, John, 1868. *The History of Signboards*. London: Camden-Hotten Heal, Ambrose 1957. *The Signboards of London Shops*. London: Portman Books. The Inn Sign Society: <http://www.innsignsociety.com>



**Figure 5: Untitled, images from Hidden in a Public Place, 2008, iv
Untitled, research materials from Hidden in Public Place, 2008**

Situating the practice within a historical framework of research is a means of anchoring the work in an evidence-based approach. However, it is important to stress that this is not necessarily a completely factually based history of documentation, archives, and records. But rather a sort of free association and anecdotes from pub goers; audiences whose stories indicate a popular forgetting and remembering through the trope of a lost object and a line of sight, meaning the pub signs and the landscape it inhabits.

The pub signs represented in **Hidden in a Public Place** (2009) suggest a hidden history within their public display. The pub signs are repainted approximately every ten years, due to weathering. As Caroline Bressey suggests, through the repainting of the pub signs '*they can be culturally re-cast*'.⁶⁸ There is also, she suggests, '*excavation*' required to see through the layers or representational change on these signs. Bressey proposes to attach a particular localised interpretation of the figures in their contemporary representations, whereas the signs draw on a range of aesthetic choices and styles of illustrations, from racist caricatures to the sympathetic representations of real individuals. This reflects a material embodiment of the narratives of history and culture, such as images of King Charles II, whose representation as the black boy sign counters an obviously racialized reading (Figure 6).⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Bressey, Caroline, 2009. *Review of Pollard, Ingrid, Hidden in a Public Place*. London: *Black and Asian Studies Association Newsletter*, 53, 24.

⁶⁹ King Charles II was said to be of a 'dark' skin, and the name 'black boy' which referred to him by a code name, whilst he was in hiding from Cromwell.
See Keith, Mike, 2009. From the Black Boy Series London Goldsmith. Street Signs, issue autumn.

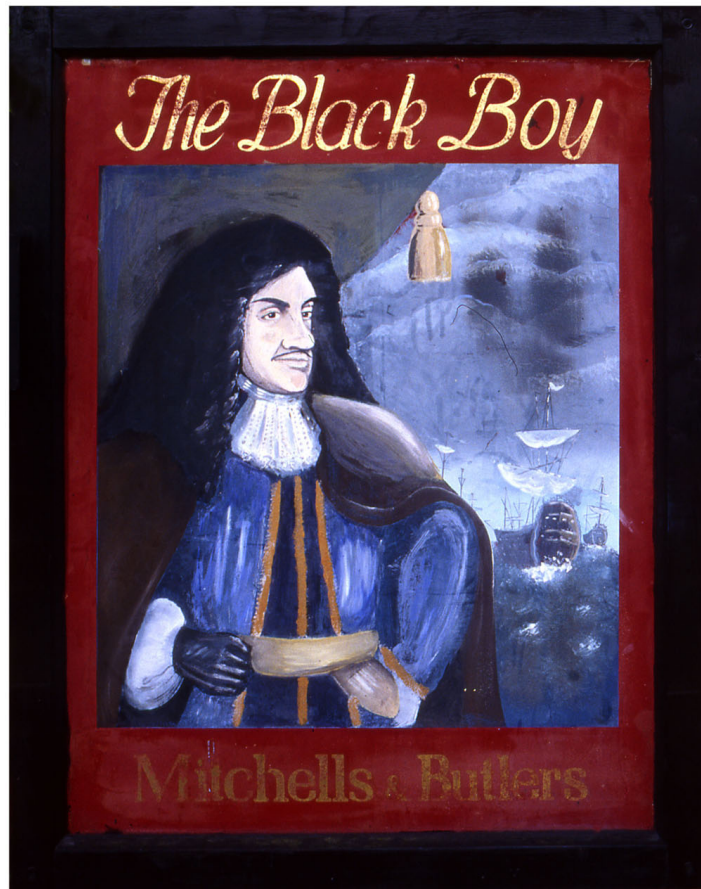


Figure 6: **Untitled, digital image from Hidden in a Public Place, page 16**

When exploring 'hidden heritage' within the landscape, ideas of haunting and spectral traces began to feed into the practice. Something has taken place at each site at some point in history that continues to affect individual or social behaviour. The architectural details of the public houses act as traces and remembrances of the figure that I imagined I just seemed to keep missing on my excursions to the pubs.⁷⁰

Portraiture, in painting and from the earliest days of photography, has provided access to representations of the very ordinariness of lives. And it is this very 'ordinariness' that I both aligned myself with, and pushed against, in the two works in this chapter. The everydayness of visits to the local pub, both as part of my own research and also where I, as part of a BBC radio program, took part in interviews about the 'black boy' signs. At one pub an interviewee detailed his story of a black eighteenth century 'runaway slave' boy who the pub was (supposedly) named after (Appendix 1.2). The boy had found refuge with a kindly landlord in the pub.⁷¹ At a different pub another local refused to acknowledge any connections to race or local 18th century black people. This was even though the pub has numerous signs on display that refer to a 'runaway slave' (Figure 7) and it is located close to Hull's Wilberforce Museum.⁷²

⁷⁰ Morrison, Toni, 1987. *Beloved*. New York: Alfred A Knopf, 36. Morrison uses the term 're-memory' to describe a sense of presence of an event which haunts a location, even after it is demolished.

⁷¹ BBC Radio4, 1998. *Invisible Histories* part 4. Producer Fran Aceson.

⁷² Pollard, Ingrid, 2009. *Hidden in a Public Place*, London: IMP Press, 8.



Figure 7: Untitled. Research materials for Hidden in a Public Place.

To conclude, the representations within the two works counter an essentialist idea of black people being associated solely with 'urban' areas, through the use of a narrative within the images. The audience is led to new readings of the black figures with the rural landscape through both photography and illustration.

The illustrated black figures in **Self Evident** (1995/2015) are linked to the idea of landscape as an essentially observable space – managed and built. The sites which are connected through in their similarities (on main streets, near churches and markets) and their differences; (they are located within seascapes, in rural areas, in cities). Similarly the architectural details within the pubs and in the backgrounds of the pub signs are the ways of framing land as an observable landscape, literally through the framing of the signs. The significance of addressing the way in which we see landscape is through our relation to memory, culture, and history. Something has taken place at each of the sites at some point in history that continues to affect behavior; with the signs acting as prompts.

'The time I spent was a jigsaw, a series of disparate moments split through distance.' Faisal Abdu'Allah ⁷³

Chapter 2 - MIGRANCY

This chapter introduces the exhibitions **Trade Winds-Landfall** (2009) and **Oceans Apart**, (1989/2012) artworks that contribute towards an understanding of the theme of *Migrancy*.

In addressing Migrancy the experiences of migration as a transformative action suggest an enquiry that is an act of rewriting a history to provide a more open ended and speculative narrative that makes other perspectives visible. Such an approach allows space for the multiple alternative voices of those who are not typically incorporated within 'official' migratory stories.⁷⁴ Migrancy is founded upon movement, and is an action of social grouping, involving cultural transmission and inheritance.⁷⁵

The works **Trade Winds-Landfall** (2009) and **Oceans Apart** (1989/2012) are exhibitions that address the idea and experience of migration and transformation. Through individual and group-based research as well as through creative practices, these exhibitions challenge our understanding of place and the longing for a return to a place of origin and are critical of the idea of essential essence. In the two works, place is explored through multiple

⁷³ Abdu'Allah, Faisal 2009 LandFall catalogue, 15.

⁷⁴ Autograph ABP archive project has drawn the family album as a missing element in the narrative of post 1950s Caribbean migration to the UK: In a Different Light: <http://autograph-abp.co.uk/news/in-a-different-light>. This archive includes extracts from my own parent's family photo albums.

⁷⁵ Chambers, Iain 1995 *Migrancy, Culture, Identity*. London: Routledge 9.

readings and stories, through geology, geography, pictorial representation, psychic identification, poetics, and conversational dialogue. The works investigate the ways place can be bound up with time, in cultural memory and history as well as being entailed in the construction of my practice.

The **TradeWinds-LandFall** (2009) project has at its centre the circular motion of the Atlantic Ocean, the gulf-stream and its associated meteorological systems. These relate to the themes of departure, return, loss, and transcendence. The work addresses the geographical and historical actions of European imperialist explorers; commercial expansionism and colonisation as part of the circling and crossing of the Atlantic Ocean.

The works in the exhibition articulate the on-going reverberations of trade, migrancy, and imperial colonialism and the ways they have shaped modern Europe and affected the lives of peoples of the African diaspora. The artists in **TradeWinds-LandFall** (2009) all originated from areas that border on the Atlantic Ocean: West Africa, the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe. The artists produced new images, sounds, and texts, in different locations, to develop a shared language of the landscape they were engaging with.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Each artist was presented with information on climate, oceans, and wind patterns and an indicator of their part in the formation of the earth's geology and landscape. (The artists are Faisal Abdu'Alah, Godfried Donkor, Jamal Cyrus, Beth Secor, Dorothea Smartt and Dominique Le Gendre.)

I was artist-curator for the **TradeWinds-LandFall** (2009)⁷⁷ project that consisted of three group shows over a three year period. The divisions between curating and art practice were blurred within the project. The academic and analytical inquiry that is integral to curating as a practice enabled me to approach the research in different ways and develop new understandings through the development of the project, underpinned by an agreed notion of critical inquiry with the other artists. For me as curator, the connecting metaphor and the focal point of the project was the idea of flow, connections, and exchange, as embodied by the Gulf Stream. At the centre of these works is the metaphorical swirling Sargasso Sea and the literal and symbol of the vessel, the boat. Gilroy in his study of the Black Atlantic, states:

“...ships were the living means by which the points within the Atlantic world were joined. They were mobile elements that stood for the shifting spaces in between the fixed places that they connected.”⁷⁸

Partners

The project partners were organisations that were attentive to the issues of migrancy, but addressed them through different tools, methods, strategies, and time scales. **TradeWinds-LandFall** (2009) was an Artist-Curator led project, in which three exhibitions, one at Project Row Houses (PRH) in Houston, Texas (Figure 10) and two at the Museum of London,

⁷⁷ TradeWinds exhibit took place in 2008 and LandFall took place in 2009, both at Museum of London, Docklands.

⁷⁸ Gilroy, Paul 1993 *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London: Verso,16.

Docklands (Figure11).⁷⁹ My curating strategy for the exhibitions and events included dialogues between the partners, who addressed their constituencies in ways that allowed participation between artists, communities, and audiences through negotiation and evolving practices (Appendix 2.5).

The six artists' residences took place in London and Houston (four based in London, and two in Houston, Texas). The artists explored connections between the lived actualities of artists' residencies in the two cities using the idea of home and questioning how stories are transmitted and made public within their practices (Appendix 2.1).

⁷⁹ The exhibition followed my own artist's residency at Project Row Houses in 2004. Artist Rounds: <http://projectrowhouses.org/past-artist-rounds/?offset=1245598200000>
Review of LandFall exhibition at Museum of London, Docklands. See Appendix 3.4.
Also: http://artdaily.com/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=28558#.UsXPiCizcts.



Figure:10 Artists exhibition houses, Project Row Houses, 2004



Figure :11 Installation image of Sugar and Slavery galleries Museum of London, Docklands 2008.
TradeWinds exhibit in background leftside.

Artists

During their residencies Houston based artists Beth Secor and Jamal Cyrus worked with etching at the London Print Studio.⁸⁰ Secor researched her own family's history and their threaded connections to southern slavery, producing etched and sewn portraits (Figure 12). Using star constellations that guide mariners, Cyrus explored a range of migrancy stories focusing upon the physiological attributes which migrate with journeying to integrate and transform the communities they relate with (Figure 13).

⁸⁰ London Print Studio: <http://www.londonprintstudio.org.uk>

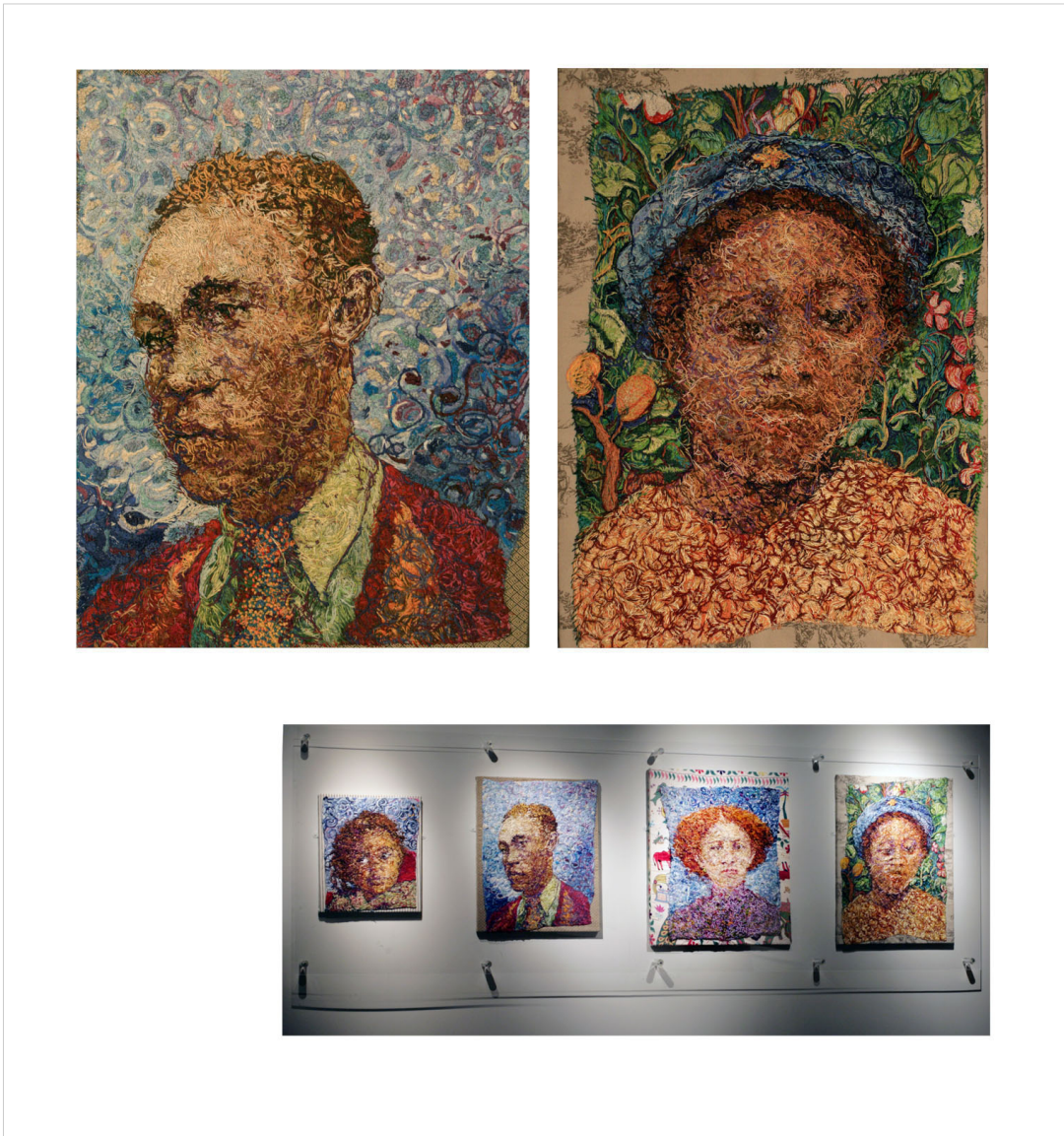


Figure 12: Beth Secor: *Man in a Photo Booth*, 2009. Embroidery on textile 296x310mm.
Beth Secor: *Untitled*, 2009. Embroidery on textile, installation image.

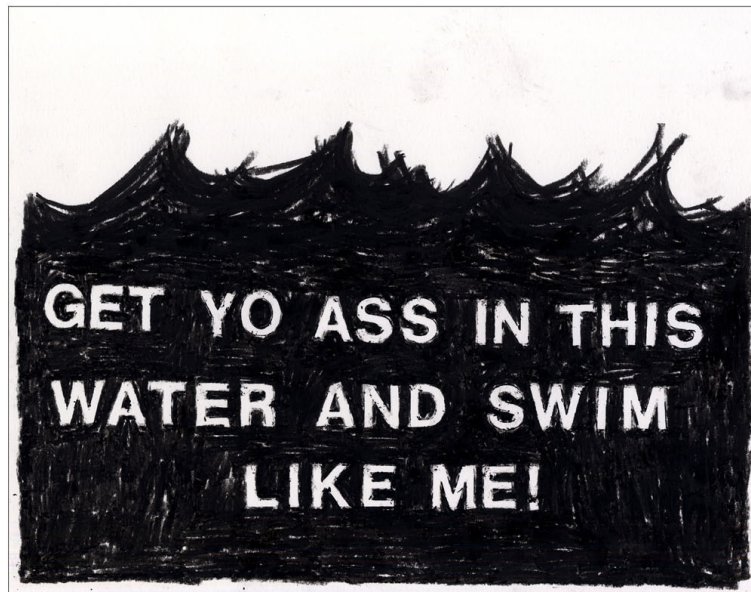
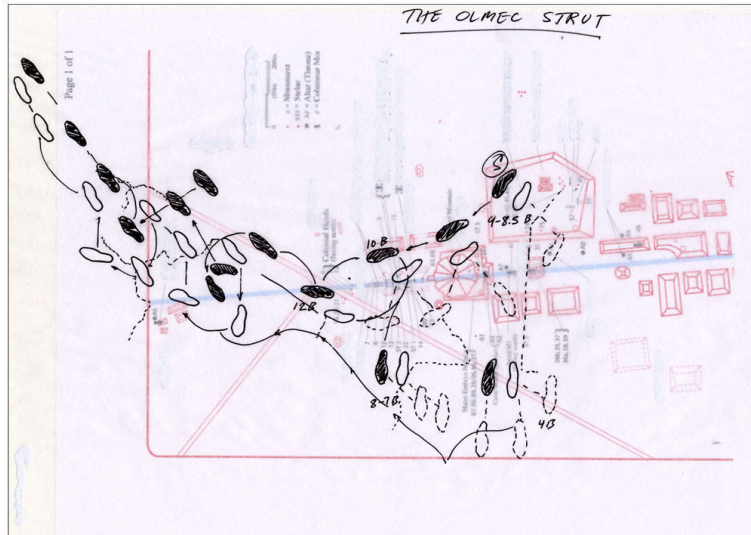


Figure:13 Jamal Cyrus. the Olmec Strut. 2009. ink drawing on paper 210x297mm
Jamal Cyrus. TK - 03 2009. crayon drawing on paper. 240x



Figure 14: Faisal Abdu'Allah. Untitled. 2009, digital print 201x201mm

Faisal Abdu'Allah. Untitled. 2009, screen-print on MDF 502x701mm

The artists' residencies for the UK artists took place shortly after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans displaced thousands of its former inhabitants to Houston. During their residencies Godfried Donkor and Faisal Abdu'Allah visited New Orleans. Their works contain images of the city's citizens and the dilapidated landscape of crushed wooden buildings.

Abdu'Allah's response to the architecture and its destruction were large portraits of the local young people at Project Row Houses, printed on plywood (Figure 14). Donkor's images included collages that incorporate logos from Vanity Fair and Vogue magazines, replacing the typical cover models with ethnographic images of traditionally dressed 'tribal African women' (Appendix 2.2). Donkor's collaged images feature the 'haloed' Madonna and Child icon transformed into the isolated figures of an African tribal woman and child, to critique Western European ideals of beauty and religious purity and to introduce, as Donkor comments, an 'Africanisation' of the covers of popular western fashion magazines (Figure 15).

In the final exhibition, **LandFall** (2009), at the Museum of London, Docklands, I exhibited ceramic origami boats, placed in a flowing flotilla pattern across the gallery floor, echoing the brittle frailty and danger inherent in the historic Atlantic Slavery Triangle crossings, 'in a paradoxical fusion of weight and lightness' (Figure 16).⁸¹

⁸¹ Exhibition catalogue. Pollard, Ingrid 2009 *LandFall*. London: IMP Press, 7.

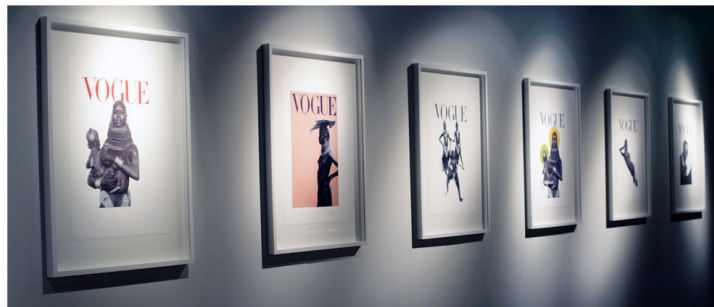


Figure: 15 Godfried Donkor: from Southern Vogue series 2008.collage 300x501mm.
 Godfried Donkor: from Southern Vogue series 2008.collage 300x501mm
 installation image.



Figure:16 Paper boats and canvases..Installation 2009
ceramic porcelaine paper boats 78x101x206mm.

'Dreamwinds', a classical, operatic composition for chamber orchestra by London based composer, Dominique Le Gendre, evolved out of music workshops with young people at a Project Row Houses after-school project. The resulting chamber orchestra opera composition was premiered at the Museum of London, Docklands at the opening events of the **TradeWinds-LandFall** (2009) exhibition (Appendix 2.3). The libretto, which originated in the writings of young members of the after-school club, speaks of their dreams and aspirations.⁸²



Figure 17: Gweneth-Ann Jeffers and members of the Manning Camerata Orchestra perform at premiere of Dreamwinds at Museum of London, Docklands, February 2009.

⁸² See Catalogue for *TradeWinds-LandFall 2009*. Libretto featured in music CD.

The chamber orchestra, Manning Camerata and opera soprano Gweneth-Ann Jeffers gave a depth and gravitas to the lyrical ambitions of a child's desires⁸³ (Figure 17). The work has been 'refined and refined' over time, by the composer, to realise the composition as memory distilled through sounds (Appendix 2.2).

Dorothea Smartt's installation connects video, prints, and poetry (Figure 18). The poetry was developed through a series of writing workshops with Project Row House's Young Mothers' Programme.⁸⁴ Smartt developed a poetic character, 'Bilal', loosely based on the story of an 18th century enslaved child, who is buried at the 'Sambo's grave' at Sunderland Point on the coast of East Lancashire UK.⁸⁵

Smartt's use of this character during her writing workshops with the mothers and children at PRH relate to Pauline O'Connell's discussions of a 'third space' that describes these connections as:

'Providing a meeting ground, a site of hybridity, a space which connects the past with the present and the future too.'⁸⁶

⁸³ Jeffers, Gweneth-Ann: <http://www.quartzmusic.com/artistdetail.php113> and Manning Camerata <http://www.manningcamerata.com>.

⁸⁴ Single Mothers Program : <http://projectrowhouses.org/social-safety-nets/>

⁸⁵ Smartt, Dorothea, 2008. *Ship Shape*. Leeds: Peepal Tree Press.
Price, Alan. 2010 *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 42.

⁸⁶ Pauline O'Connell. Third Space. <https://geographicalturn.wordpress.com/2015/10/30/guest-blog-1-pauline-oconnell-rural-lifeworlds-an-artistic-practice-of-scratching-the-surface-tilting-mirrors-and-place-making-in-rural-contexts/>

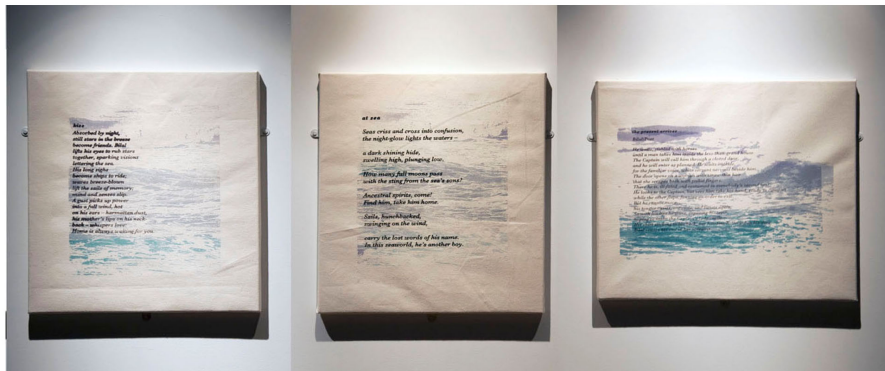
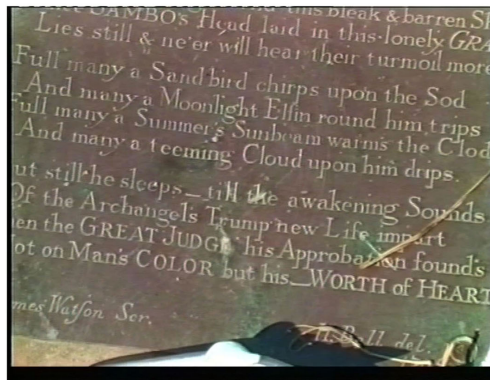


Figure 18: Dorothea Smartt. Video still from *Dreamwinds*, 2008

Dorothea Smartt. Poetry on screen-printed canvas (30x30cm),
installation image 2009

Discursive practice outcomes were realised by Smartt and Le Gendre through social groupings and participation in workshops. Drawing lines of connection through stories, archives and research, they developed an inclusive approach to the construction of social memories within their chosen practice.

Images from my work **Oceans Apart** (1989/2012) were shown at Tate Britain in 2012, and acquired for their collection shortly thereafter⁸⁷ (Appendix 2.6). The work in **Oceans Apart** explores aspects of memories, a flow back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean as a transporter of narratives, of enforced migrations and journeying. Mary-Louise Pratt defines these as areas of interconnections, 'contact zones' - zones that allow the intermingling of two or more cultures. Pratt argues that 'contact zones' are social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other.⁸⁸ The work uses visual archival materials, photographs and texts to produce alternative types of evidence. The works are a means to reveal and complicate the many connections between the stories of European imperialist 'heroic' maritime figures and the ways that their actions played a part in the enslavement of others. The actions reveal those 'enslaved', whose ghostly presence have become positioned within the legacy of England's heritage and its involvement in the transatlantic 'triangle slave trade'.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Thin Black Lines. Tate Britain. 2012 <http://makinghistoriesvisible.com/curations/thin-black-lines/>. The work was originally exhibited as part of a group show, Intimate Distance, shown at the Photographers Gallery, London in 1989.

⁸⁸ Pratt, Mary-Louise 1991 *Arts of the Contact Zone*. Profession 91 (1991): 33. http://learning.writing101.net/wpcontent/readings/pratt_arts_of_the_contact_zone.pdf

⁸⁹ Rutherford, J, 2005 *Ghosts: Heritage and the shape of things to come*. In Little, Jo & Naidon, Roshini. *The Politics of Heritage, The Legacies of Race*. London Routledge. 5.7.

The imagery within **Oceans Apart** (1989/2012) explores journeys back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean at key moments during the last six hundred years.⁹⁰ The work uses certain European maritime 'heroic' figures as examples to explore their travels *west* across the Atlantic between the sixteenth and eighteenth century and the repercussions of those exploratory ventures.

The work also incorporates the re-use of historical etchings and illustrations combined together with the reworking of archival documentation of images of post-world war Caribbean migration (Figure 19). The images depict the families that travelled *west* and *east* across the Atlantic and whose diasporic migratory patterns can be said to be a consequence of those earlier, historic maritime contacts.

The images in **Oceans Apart** address the complexity of mobility, of multiple travel accounts of the historical Black Atlantic, of both the western and eastern coastal areas, and connections to the colonial and imperial commercial Atlantic 'triangle trade'. In elevating the family photo album as a form of archive and incorporating these with colloquial phrases of the many voices from family letters, they became the central voice of history and as such they shift the narrative from the official versions of this history.

Pearson, Andrew et al. 2011 *Infernal Traffic: Excavation of a Liberated Africans Graveyard in Ruperts Valley, St Helena*. York. CBA Report 169, 9.

⁹⁰ I would suggest that mapping, exploration and commerce mark the exploits maritime of 'heros': for example; a) Christopher Columbus's so-called discovery of the 'new world; b) Walter Raleigh's circumnavigation of the earth; c) James Cook's claims on land alongside the status of his voyages as scientific exploration; d) Francis Drake's search for the fabled gold of Eldorado in the area of modern day Guyana. <https://yesterday.uktv.co.uk/blogs/article/famous-captains/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Columbus

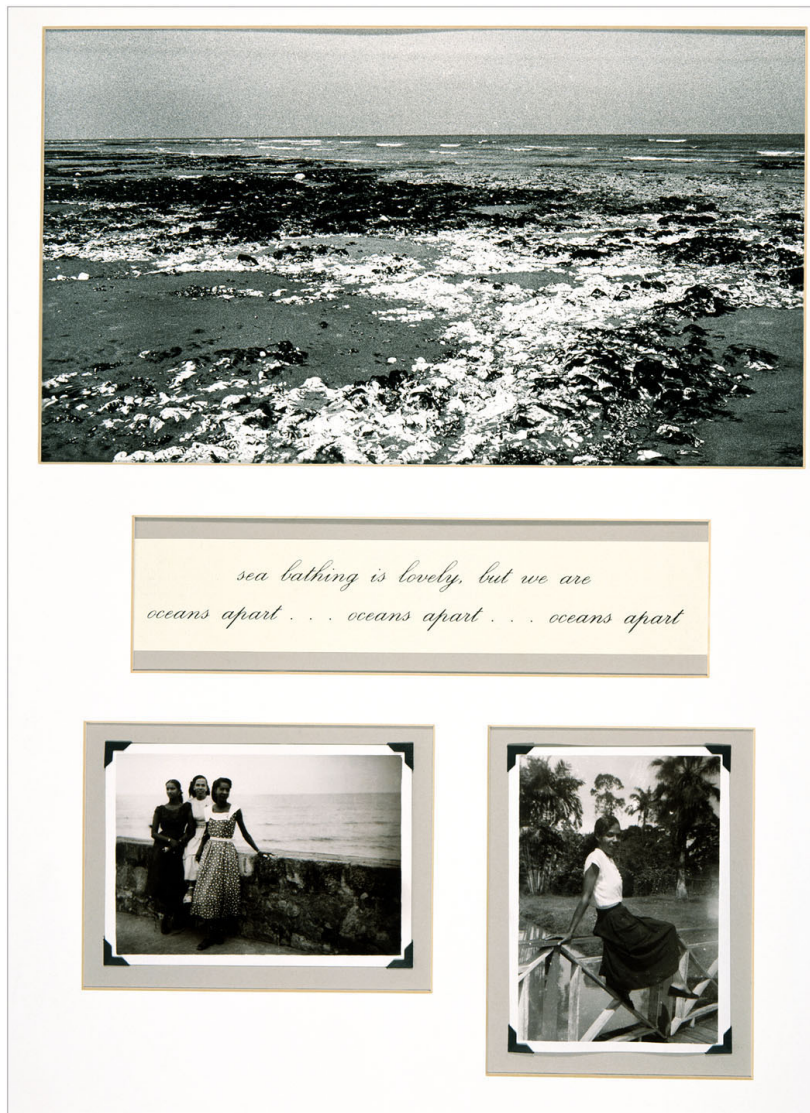


Figure 19: *Untitled*, from *Ocean Apart*. Tinted analogue print 206x402mm

The many '*crossings*' (of peoples, boats, letters, stories) are a central aspect of the work in relation to discourses of power and knowledge, and the question of who has the authority to expose their own truth.

I have previously used material from personal letters, family photo albums, and the language of postcards, as a way to comment on official versions of history; be those state sanctioned or promoted by the heritage industry.⁹¹ These materials are a layering tool that complicates the narrative, destabilising, contradicting, and interjecting many more voices into the discourse. The images from **Oceans Apart** (1989/2012) feature text and images from family photo albums (Figure 20) featuring repeated phrasing: 'Oceans Apart, Ocean Apart', and 'Love to the Family, Love to the Family'.

⁹¹ Pollard Ingrid, 2004 *Postcards Home*. Pastorarolineal Interludes page18, Seaside Series, 46, Belonging Britain, 41 Dyer, Claire. Bressey, C, 2008 *New Geographies of Race and Racism*, Hampshire: Ashgate



**Figure 20: *Untitled*. Tinted analogue print with text, archive images.
2012/1989. 301x503mm**

Lou Smith refers to this method as 'tidalectic engagement', with reference to my use of textual repetitive phrasing this is an echo of the waves as they move back and forth from the shore, from the centre and back again.

Smith argues that the works offer an investigation of the:

'...complex relationship between land and sea. Specifically, the exploration of a diasporic historiography of the sea suggests a multiplicity of identities. Images of the sea and shorelines of England are metaphors for Caribbean diasporic migration experiences, both forced and chosen.'⁹²

The production of the new works during the artists' residencies was realised through a range of media, echoing the multiple points of transatlantic international connections. Contacts and associations were made from Barbados to Paris, Houston to Accra, and Accra to London, through technologies, information, generational voices, and cross cultural cosmopolitanism. Migrancy was made material through layering of music, audio, and the languages of many visual art forms that represent the experiences of movement, transition, and inheritance.

⁹² Smith, Lou. 2013 *Beyond the Horizon, Out at sea, A New Day Breaks: Memory and Identity in Ingrid Pollard's The Boy Who Watches Ships go By*. ENTERTEXT Special issue on Caribbean Literature and Culture editors: S Courtman and W. Knepper. 10, 6.

'You'll have to see London to believe it. Immense, giddy, confusing, a complication of traffic, transport and geography.'⁹³

CHAPTER 3 - BELONGING

This final chapter introduces two works, the **Regarding the Frame** (2013) exhibition and the video **Belonging in Britain** (2009) which relate to the theme of *Belonging*. The major concerns within this chapter are aspects of artists' residencies and the possibilities of practice that relates to being embedded within a community, both as a new arrival and over an extended period of time.

Artists' Residencies have been a principal means to position my photographic practice within unfamiliar communities and landscapes. There are aspects of residencies which produce a sense of a shared intimacy with geography, and of simultaneously being both an insider and an outsider. Through being part of the 'co-production' of a landscape and a community for a period of time, in a sense people 'are' where they go. The lived experience of being 'there' is part of an evolving research practice reliant on a multiplicity of factors; of class, economics, place,

⁹³ Pollard, Ingrid, 2009 *Belonging in Britain*. DVD video.

gender, ethnicity, which counters the conservative notion of 'rootedness'.⁹⁴

The experience of the artists' residency has a value and power attached to it through engagement in and being part of the scattered complexity of many voices, through a willingness to be immersed, to be part of interaction and exchange.

The term 'place' within this study is used not as a fixed definition or a physical space, but it encompasses a sense of suggested movements from *here to there*, from *then till now*, from *north to south*. Rather, a transition which uses the physical, the emotional, and historical to make sense of the here and now, through my practice.

The theme of **Belonging** (2009) is a research area I have explored while taking part in other artists' residencies and explored through the issues of localism, borders, and the demands of being embedded within a community.⁹⁵ The body of work **Regarding the Frame** (2013) was the culminating exhibition of my Visual Artist in Rural Communities, Artist in Residence (VARC).⁹⁶ The residency and exhibition took place in the grounds of a Manor Estate, Highgreen, and farm that were originally partially financed by capital derived from the nineteenth century coal mining industry (Appendix 3.1).

⁹⁴ Lippard, Lucy, 1997 *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*. New York: New Press, 5.

⁹⁵ See my one year residency at Chenderit Visual Arts College 2008-2009, internationally at Project Row Houses in Houston Texas, as part of Houston's Fotofest 2004. In addition as curator/artist for TradeWinds exhibition in 2008 at the Museum of London, Docklands.

⁹⁶ Visual Arts in Rural Communities. VARC An annual year-long residency in Tarsset, in Northumberland. I was Artist in Residence 2012-2013.

My research focused on the economy, geology, history, rural industries, and pastoral life of a remote rural area, Tarsset, in the Northumberland National Park. Tarsset is located in the most under populated area of the least populated county in England.

The county of Northumberland has been referred to as a '*large uninhabited and desolate area*' by Conservative energy secretary Lord Howell.⁹⁷ The area is mainly dependent on tourism, forestry, both pastoral and arable farming, and small-scale creative enterprise. The local and the global were also research concerns, realised through the history of the local Northumberland area, centring on coal mining, farming, new settlements, historic rural economies, and cultural activities. My interest was in revealing the effects of historic global industry and commerce on these cultural and economic activities.⁹⁸

My concerns drew on explorations and understandings of belonging and 'home' in relation to land ownership, aspects of border wars, the political histories of succeeding invasions, and re-settlement within the porous landscape of Northumberland and the Scottish Border area.⁹⁹

The **Regarding the Frame** (2013) exhibition included photo blind-embossed prints (Figure 23), photo-works on fabric, a series of flick books (Figure 24), a large-scale multi-print panoramic image, a concertina landscape book (Figure 25) a cyanotype image and other digital

⁹⁷ Lord Howell, who was the Conservation Energy Secretary at the time of this comment, was considering Northumberland as a site for fracking in the UK. July 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-23505723>.

⁹⁸ Freese, Barbara. 2003 *Coal: A Human Story*. London: Arrowbooks, 106.

⁹⁹ Robson, Eric 2007, *The Borderline: the Story of the Anglo-Scotland Border*. Newcastle: Francis Lincoln. Crofton, Ian 2014. *Walking the Border: A Journey Between Scotland and England*. Edinburgh: Birlinn Ltd.

photographic images (Figure 26). The geological and climatic elements have shaped the use and development of the regional and local environment. The form and materials of the exhibition provide a connection for the geology and landscape that is reflected through the installation sites of the works. These sites include disused woodsheds, kennels, pig sheds, and a garden shed. The connection to the landscape is also apparent through the use of embossed prints, whose indented impressions created through the use of photo 'blind' embossing, metaphorically reflects the pressurised carboniferous fossils found throughout the area.¹⁰⁰ The embossed images are layered with relief prints of the instructions and diagrams from the manual used by nineteenth and twentieth century apprentice coal miners, with the addition of texts from coal mining songs and extracts of testimony given by nineteenth century child miners.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Freese, Barbara. 2003 *Coal: A Human Story*. London: Arrowbooks, 17.

¹⁰¹ The Mines Act in 1842 reduced and standardised the age for child colliery workers to 10 years which was based on testimony by child miners. Also see local folk band, The Unthanks, their song *The Testimony of Patience Kershaw*, from *Here's the Tender Coming*, 2009. Newcastle: Rabble Rouser Music, track 5. The song includes extracts from the testimony of the child miners from the 1842 report as part of the song's lyrics.



Figure 23: untitled from Regarding the Frame. Photo embossed print with relief. 420x625mm



Figure 24 : untitled. Two page extract from flick book, digital print.



Figure: 25 untitled installation image from Regarding the Frame. digital concertina book.
240cmx2.5mt

Figure: 26 untitled installation image from Regarding the Frame. Analogue multimimage collage
1x3mt

The recurring ideas of routes, pathways, sheep-trails, and sign-posted paths within the landscapes are echoed throughout the exhibition. The audience is required to trail through the farm grounds to reach the buildings that house the exhibitions, linking the topographies, architecture, and the working lives that the works highlight. The use of the flick books is a staccato representation of movements through landscapes; movements by flocks of sheep and people involved in local activities such as dances in the village hall (Figure 24). These repeated movements, such as shepherds who 'walk the land', are expressive indicators of attachments that provide a sense of community and are indicative of a community's imagined and enacted sense of belonging. They seek to become rooted, or to borrow a local expression, 'hefted', to that particular landscape.¹⁰² This can become a conservative position with which to identify with. This position can neglect issues of class and economic privilege, through the pressure to learn and abide by the local customs of the small social networks.¹⁰³ As an artist my response to the concept of place in this situation is the challenge to see from both the inside and outside. A place observed from the *outside*, and as a place of lived emotional responses, realised and experienced from *within*.

¹⁰² A term used to describe the way sheep attached in one area will return constantly to it, raising their descendants to continue inhabiting that area. See Kathryn Tickell, 2011 Northumberland Voices track 8; '*You know the hefted flocks they have their particular place on the hills, their heft, and those sheep know the ground, they go with the ground, they know their areas. On the big hill there may be three different hefts, and the 'yauws' knows its heft and teaches its daughter to go back there. If you were to buy stock in they would just go anywhere. But the hefted sheep they know the good ground, the sweet grass, the burns, the drains, the wet holes*'.

¹⁰³ For a wider discussions of nostalgia and Englishness see; Wright, Patrick 1985 *On Living in an Old Country*. London: Verso. For discussions of whiteness, race and landscape. see Ware, Vron and Back, Les. 2002 *Out of Whiteness*. Chicago: University of Chicago. Discussions of race and the rural in UK see; Gardland John and Chakraborti, Neil. 2004 *Rural Racism*. Devon: Willan Publishing, 122.

The residency experience has an aspect of the unknown, of being 'thrown together' in a way that Massey states is 'the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here and now'.¹⁰⁴ The make-up of the local community revealed a sizeable majority to be originally from 'somewhere else' (such as London) but they still appear to enact the 'typical' experience of village life (as I did) by participating in choirs, ceildhs, bake offs (Figure 27), the village ceildh band, and country dancing. These exist alongside, what could be considered, recently introduced urban activities: the cinema club, pilates, mindfulness classes, and the arrival of a large Buddhist settlement.

The idea of mobility is inherent in the formation of community. In the local area it is perceived as both a problem and a solution; the arrival of new younger settlers, whose appearance can be perceived to hasten a loss of traditions.

This can be seen to challenge the idea of easy 'flows' that link people on the move from place to place. The multiple trails and journeys can become abrasive, as Knowles maintains:

'Rather than flow, people and objects bump awkwardly along pathways, they create as they go. They grate against each other, dodge, stop and go, negotiate obstacles, back track, move off in new directions, propelled by different intersecting logics.'¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Massey, Doreen 2005 *For Space*, London: Sage Publications, 140.

¹⁰⁵ Knowles, Caroline 2014 *Flip-Flop: A Journey through Globalisation's Back Roads*. London: Pluto, 7.

Materially the exhibition demonstrated clashes and investigates through the use of cross-disciplinary practice modes. Many of the works were installations offering uneasy viewing by the audience through windows and doorways of the farm buildings. Also black and white portraits of people from the local community stare out, unsmiling, from windows (Figure 31). The portraits are suspended in time and space, seeming to observe the passing audiences, looking out onto their landscape, forming a link through lives and topographies. This is an expression of the intersection of differing involvements and the problems of a time-constrained residency. The artist can experience a certain sense of 'looking in' on the community as she dwells amongst the inhabitants and at the same time as she is also observed by that community.



Figure 27: Photographer's badge from Taste Tarset 2, bake off competition



Figure 31: Portraits at window. Installation image.



Figure: 32 installtion of audience observing works from Regrading the Frame exhibition August 2013
32 installtion of video Beloning in Britain. Projection in barn from Regrading the Frame exhibition August 2013.

The video '**Belonging in Britain**' (2009) was part of the VARC exhibition.¹⁰⁶ The video incorporates images from family albums from London and the Caribbean. It includes letters sent from London to the Caribbean and contains audio of the life of a newly arrived migrant family from the Caribbean to 1950s London. The video developed from performative presentations and was subsequently an image-text chapter in 'New Geographies of Race and Racism'¹⁰⁷ (Appendix 3.2). The video is an echo across the Atlantic Ocean through text, sound, and images that evoke memories, emotions, and historic spaces. The biographical nature of the images are a way of weaving in my personal biography, experience, and practice into the broader historical narrative of photography and post war black settlement¹⁰⁸ (Appendix 3.3).

As part of the **Regarding the Frame** (2009) exhibition the video was projected in a small storeroom next to the hay barn (Figure 32). The letters voice the aspirations, hopes, and intentions of the migrant for his new life in London, the excitement of work, of socialising and local interactions with the people of the metropolitan city. The 'everyday' experience of difference for the newly arrived migrant balances the formation of new

¹⁰⁶ This video was shown as part of the Regarding the Frame. The exhibition period 10th-29 August 2013 at Highgreen estate, Northumberland.

¹⁰⁷ Dyer, Claire and Bressey, Caroline. *New Geographies of Race and Racism*. 2010 London: Ashgate, 43. The completion of the DVD video was commissioned by Autograph ABP and Barbados National Museum as a DVD video which was shown at the Barbados 1st Biennale and Conference (Black Diaspora and Visual Arts and touring to exhibition at *Vous Ete Ici* exhibition in Martinique.

¹⁰⁸ <https://vimeo.com/8215669>. Presentation at Plymouth University symposium Belonging in Britain. Hall, Stuart 1984/1992 'Reconstruction Work: Images of Black Postwar Settlement', *TEN.8: Critical Decade*, Birmingham, 15.

communities, while maintaining connections to 'back home' (Figure 34). The formations establish links between other migrants, new work colleagues, and developing networks, pathways, and trails. The trails explore the ordinary, as it becomes a mesh of connections, of transnational journeys, which reflect the equal importance of the routines and routes of everyday life.

In the **Belonging in Britain** (2009) video the written extracts from airmail letters feature anecdotes, which express the barely disguised thrill of being in the metropolitan city. I recall Raymond Williams's key text, *The Country and the City*, where he evokes his journeys from rural Wales to cosmopolitan London. He writes of his ways of making sense of the contrasts between being newly arrived in the city and his connections to the former historic rootedness of his home.

'I have felt the chaos of the Metro and the traffic jams, the monotony of the ranks of houses, the aching press of strange crowds. Indeed this sense of possibility, meeting and of movement, is a permanent element of my sense of cities, as permanent a feeling as those other feelings, when I look from the mountains of the great coloured patchwork of fields that generations of my own people have cleared and set in hedges.'¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Williams, Raymond. 1985. *The Country and The City*. London: Hogarth Press, 5.

Many days though the sun comes out bright and cold. Yes cold, it's strange to see the brilliant sunshine without any heat, but that's how it is. It isn't bad though. The alarming tales we hear back home of winter are wildly exaggerated, the only extra clothing I wear is sweater, wrap and coat. Gloves are a nuisance; coats pockets are the best gloves for sticking ones hands in. the worst part of the climate is the strong, cold breeze that lifts my coat tails and searches all over me - brrrrr.



My pal Mitch was here to meet me and I was glad to see him. You'll have to see London to believe it. Immense, giddy, confusing, a complication of traffic, transport and geography.

Figure 33: Ingrid Pollard, Untitled digital images and text from *New Geographies of Race and Racism*. Chapter 4.

By linking the extracts from the airmail letters in the video **Belonging in Britain** with William's text, I bring to the foreground their similar recollections of the city: densely packed bodies, historic buildings, and reflections of 'back home'. Which together articulate a similar strategy for mapping, dispersal and diasporic spaces. The unity of the texts and images lies not in their origins but in their destinations. The continual movement of the still images and text in the video raise issues of movements; who is allowed to go where and with what repercussions and political consequences.

Space and place emerge through the social connections that formed part of the residency and are realised through active material practices that made up the exhibition. The connections I make as artist in residence are realised through united mapping of the sites I work in. The medium specificity of the practical work I (print-making, flick books, installations) are animated by the connected topographies I cross. The use of audio and archival images in **Belonging in Britain** (2009) becomes an important means to reconfigure aspects of historical visualisation and the imaging of black people living in Britain (Figure 35).



Figure 34: Still images from video *Belonging in Britain*. 2009, DVD

In conclusion the immersion in and formation of a new community is expressed through the twinning of the migrants' arrival from the Caribbean with their integration into 1950s London, which is part of the development of people's sense of themselves as urbanites. This, aligned with my own *temporary* immersion into rural life, (during an artists' residency) suggests that as we enter each new place we form part of the hybridity of that place. So Knowles states the journeys we make: '...are temporally defined episodic and continuous sequences of movement.'¹¹⁰ This leads to possibilities of shared understandings of different ways of being in the world. Home therefore is where you *are*, rather than where you are from.

¹¹⁰ Knowles, Caroline 2014 *Flip-Flop: A Journey Through Globalisation's Backroads*. London Pluto Press, 8.

CHAPTER 4 - Conclusion

In plotting a course through the major themes of Home, Migrancy, and Belonging, I have examined six photographic bodies of work as a claim for a contribution of new knowledge. Using the relationship between material practices, ideas of place, concepts of displacement, connection and transformation, to add voice to the exclusions, contradictions and hidden histories within the politics of landscape, representation and ways of seeing the world.

Adding further excavations to areas of Britishness and landscape practices, I assigned authority to the voice of others, through the use of the everyday, the family albums, letters, memories, and anecdotes.

Using these sites excavated in the text means to simultaneously move through many stories and to add a more nuanced response to the complexities of the archive and the representations of landscapes.

The commentary highlights research and practice that lies at the crossroads of a number of disciplines: history, geography, popular culture studies, fine art practice, literature, and music. Through my use of a range of practices, such as portraiture, landscape, printmaking, video, and through working with groupings of artists and communities, I maintain a practice that explores ideas of movement and transnational communication.

The works explored here challenge and complicate ideas of rootedness in order to locate a means of breaking up the 'fixity' of concepts and to

strengthen possibilities of meaningful interactions related to personal biography, history and diaspora.

Ahmed's idea of a 'community of strangers' challenges the notion of fixity through the refusal of the 'very desire for home, for a common heritage' which attempts to link all migrants under a common desire. The community of strangers can travel beyond the fixity of borders and cultural constructedness of their identity as migrants. Ahmed maintains that the crossing of boundaries and borders offers opportunity for expanded vision; to see more. ¹¹¹

The artists' residency within my practice echoes this through the formation of common bonds and shared experiences when embedded in an unfamiliar community. As my work spans cultures, communities and sites, my practice is situated as an interface between the changing academic relationships with personal and the cultural.

A similar idea of expanded vision and common bonds is present in my practice though the use of biographical sources that call on biographical history, personal memory, and anecdotes. I have used methodologies of geography as a reference, but I also problematise this discipline whose analysis of the 'work of art' is traditionally based on the aesthetics of 17th century landscape painting¹¹² As an example, my work **Self Evident** (1995/2015) addresses these themes citing the black figure within iconic sites and amongst culturally informed geographies.

¹¹¹ Ahmed, Sara. 1999. *Home and away: Narratives of migration and estrangement*. London International Journal of Cultural Studies, Sage 336

¹¹² Tolia-Kelly, Divya. 2016. *The geographies of cultural geography II: Visual Culture*, London, Progress in Human Geography, SAGE publisher. Volume 3,135.

The development of practices and work containing multiple readings counters the easy attempts to reduce the black subject; both as subject and practitioner to any essentialist definition. The works continue to redefine as well as challenge conventional thinking about identity which limits the discourse and communication around race and by the art historical classification of 'black arts and artists'.

The continuing relevance of my practice is evident through varied forms of publication and exhibition as well as dissemination in critical art discourse, and across a wide range of academic subjects. The continued inclusion of my historic and recent works remains a present force within the discourses of landscape, history and race.

In addition my continuing participation in artists' residencies, both nationally and internationally demonstrates a unique and original methodological practice. For example, this practice has shared connections within the recent discourses and exhibitions of contemporary modernism, abstraction imagery and craft both in the UK and USA.¹¹³

Additionally I also received critical establishment recognition through the receipt of an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society in 2016, in recognition of my photographic practice.¹¹⁴ This might be seen as ironic coming from an institution which represents a canon of photography, which historically represented the black subject within the

¹¹³ My abstract work **Landscape Trauma** 2001 is part of University of the Arts, London and inIVA research project and Black Arts and Modernism September 2016.

My Toile de Jouy wallpaper will be exhibited at Compton Verney landscape exhibition November 2016. Parts of my recent work, 'There was much Interruption' November 2015 will be Exhibited in TURN at the Museum of African Diaspora (San Francisco October 2016). This non-figurative show that explores the experience of place & boundaries and race by black artists.

¹¹⁴ Honorary Fellowship, September 2016, at Royal Society Buildings, London.

colonial gaze. However such recognition is also a testament to the persistence and continued development of my practice and the body of work it has produced. That body of work has brought into view a previously unexamined set of relationships between history, the subject and landscape, and as such is an original contribution to photographic knowledge. It expands what can be seen and how we see, and consequently extends shared cultural knowledge of identity formation.

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420x625mm.

Figure 24. *Untitled*. From **Regarding the Frame**, 2013, two page extract from flick books,
297x420mm.

Figure 25. *Untitled*. Installation image from **Regarding the Frame**, concertina book 2013,
240x2.5mt

Figure 26. *Untitled*. From **Regarding the Frame**, 2013, Installation images, analogue multi-
image collage in barn. 1x3mt

Figure 27. Photographer's badge from Taste Tarsset2 Bake off in Tarsset Village Hall,
Northumberland.

Figure 31. *Untitled*. From **Regarding the Frame** Installation.
Portraits in VARC office windows at Highgreen Manor, 2013.

Figure 32. Installation of audience observing works in former dog-kennel, from **Regarding
the Frame**, 2013. Image credit Jane Standing.

Figure 33. Installation of video project of **Belonging in Britain**, 2013, in barn at Highgreen
Manor.

Figure 34. Untitled digital image and text from 'New Geographies of Race and Racism'
2008. Chapter 4, page 44.

Figure 35. Still image from DVD video, **Belonging in Britain**, 2011.

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Appendix 1 - SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE:

HIDDEN IN A PUBLIC PLACE

- 1.1 Research Publication - Hidden in Public Place. 2008 Ingrid Pollard
ISBN: 978-0-9559672-0-7
- 1.2 Street Signs: Centre of Urban and Community Studies magazine
Mike Keith interview with Ingrid Pollard 2009, page 32-35

SELF EVIDENT

- 1.3 Black Cultural Archives events booklets, January 2015
Information on Staying Power Project exhibitions 2015

TRADEWINDS-LANDFALL 2009

- 2.1 Exhibition notes from Project Row Houses exhibition, Houston Texas US.
- 2.2 DVD video 'LandFall', interviews with the Artists in exhibition 2008
- 2.3 TradeWinds-LandFall 2009 Catalogue, includes music CD recorded at
exhibition opening at Museum of London, Docklands. Producer Ingrid
Pollard
- 2.5 Letter from – Lynda Agard, former Collaboration Programme
Manager of Museum of London, Docklands

OCEANS APART

- 2.6 Thin Black Line/s catalogue including selection from Oceans
Apart. Tate Britain September 2011 isbn:978-0-9571579-0-3

REGARDING THE FRAME

- 3.1 Regarding the Frame exhibition catalogue 2013

BELONGING IN BRITAIN

- 3.2 Belonging in Britain–Fathers Hands. Chapter in:
New Geographies of Race and Racism. Hampshire: Ashgate
2008.Editors Caroline Bressey and Claire Dyer Pages 41-50. (*copy*)
isbn: 978-0-7546-7085-8
- 3.3 Belonging in Britain. 2009 video DVD. Extract 2.30 minutes
(original 8.15 minutes).