

gabrielle davis

Quarantine Diaries Submission

perspectives

this project began as a continuation of a briefly explored intersection between portraiture, photojournalism, and transcribed audio. it detailed the experiences of black individuals found along Auburn Avenue and multicultural Atlanta are explored through their faces and their thoughts on the changing city and social structures around them. due to recent changes in socio-cultural life, I have shifted gears. this new vein is continuous with the portraiture on Auburn Avenue as it relies on the experiences of those around me—simply taken in a socially distanced way. My project shifts from full portraiture to FaceTime and iPhone portraiture to still capture the feeling of individuals. instead of commenting on how Auburn Avenue has changed around them, they now speak broadly. they now speak about the world and its contemporary issues. these contemporary issues are the content of this portfolio.

on **COVID-19** shot on FaceTime for iPad and iPhone



suli

18. Born in Dubai. Lives in Decatur, GA. Student at Emory University. (2020).

“Actually I’ve been thinking about writing a poem about this. But basically it’s just been really interesting to see how a generation that’s so consumed by technology now only wants to hang out with people. That’s what everybody’s concern is right now – people. You hear a bunch of stuff about millennials only caring about technology. You even see people on their phone when they’re with their friends. If an alien came down it would really seem that humans don’t care about each other, but it’s the complete opposite. When we have literally only technology to bond us together, we still want human interaction. Technology can never really replace what humans give humans. I’ve found that really beautiful.

Into the upsetting part, you know you have a lot of idiocy regarding the information that circulating around the virus, especially a lot that’s propagating from our president. You literally see other countries who are actually recovering from this because people are listening to their government. I am very fortunate to not be directly impacted by this—I have a house, I’m not homeless. I am in a perspective where I can see the problems and as an African-American you kind of have to see the problems—you’re kind of exposed to them whether you like it or not. You’re starting to notice—and black people been noticed—but it’s starting to catch on that systematic oppression is an issue in terms of who is being the most impacted by this virus, and that is the African-American community. A lot of us [African Americans] are living in very low income areas that are very close, we have to work. All the stuff that had been 400 years ago is still impacting us today because we still don’t have the resources to live or to get healthcare. And that’s just crazy to me. At the end of the day can’t tell yourself that racism doesn’t exist and that black people have all the resources that white people do. Disease does not discriminate, but healthcare does. People are still ignoring really big issues here that are being brought [to light] by the pandemic.

Thinking from the perspective of other students, with everything going on, getting a 4.0 is not at the top of your to-do list. People are being judged off of tests and how well they can perform without accounting for everything else that they have to deal with. Everything needs to be accounted for when you’re looking at how successful person is. Contacts is everything at a time like this.”

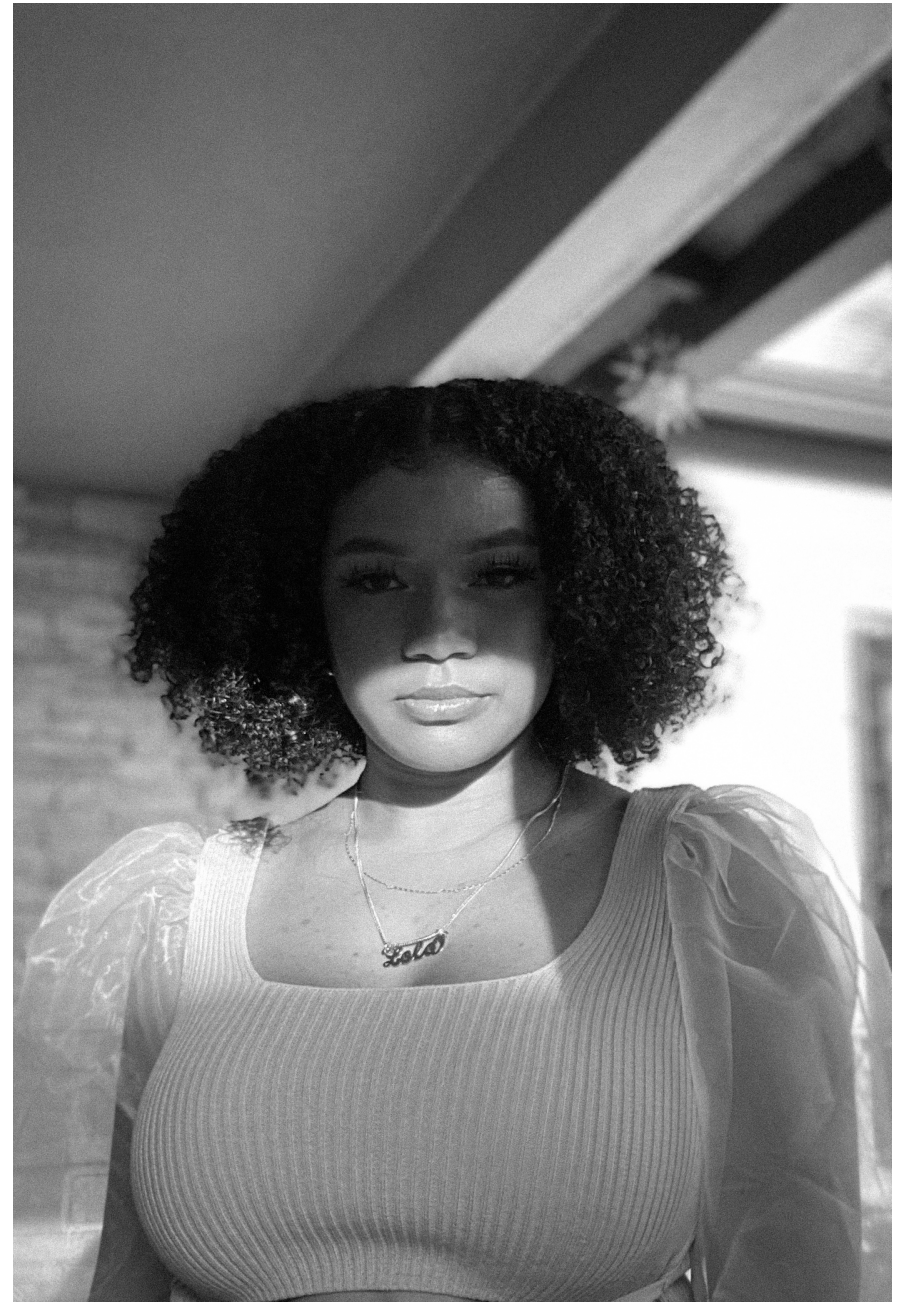
lauren

20. From Inglewood, CA. Student at Northeastern University. (2020).

“I think some thing that I am really grateful to see is how much this virus has caused us to test our emotional intelligence and our emotional awareness of other people. I think what that looks like for me is how quickly people develop and disperse spreadsheets saying here’s what people need and here’s what I can offer to help. The selflessness is really astonishing especially in American society. I know that I have benefited a lot from the mutual aid spreadsheets, being that I have no income. People are really using their privilege to help other people and that’s not something I’ve ever experienced in all my 20 years of living. So seeing schools have emergency grants and stuff like that in kind of an online system, no questions asked type of thing is really amazing. It’s also been a really cool reflection period. People are really aware now, when they now have the time to forge deeper relationships. I think a lot of parents are understanding who their children actually are because they have to see them every day and they can’t leave the house. It intensifies all the relationships that you already have. Obviously it’s scary for people who are less fortunate and have different family dynamics that probably aren’t the best, but at least this moment has forced us to become a little more intimate. Being in a long-distance relationship now—it’s forced us [me and my boyfriend] to be more transparent about what we want to say and how we can act. It’s also very liberating too. We never thought that phone calls could be so personal and have so much weight, but now it’s the only form of communication we can really have right now.

For some of my friends, it took quarantine for some of them to come talk to me. I’m seeing that there’s probably a lot going on in a lot of peoples lives and it can feel like a lot of things are important, then I will come to get shut down you realize what is important. It’s like does this test the limits of my friendships? Some of them [my friends] were forced to assess what’s important to them and the fact that they still made calls to reach out to me after it made me feel like I still was important to them.

I think people did need to take a hard look at themselves and internalize what they’ve been doing and how they’ve been acting. They’ve been hitting the ground running for a long time and didn’t have moments to take breaks. Granted, millions of people are dying, but it’s forcing us to take a look at ourselves, others and even corporations and systemic institutional responses.”





susan (my mother)

61. From Chicago, IL and Boston, MA. Lived in Atlanta since 1992. Optometrist. (2020).

“The challenge is that there’s so much unknown which is why we’re in this predicament. We don’t know how it’s truly transmitted. We know that it’s respiratory but we think that it may be in the tears and other bodily fluids. But, hopefully we’ll have a vaccine very shortly as well as a treatment to help management. But, we just don’t know and that’s the tragedy to it.

It’s also a tragedy as well, I think because our younger generations have to live through something like this and it is probably not gonna be the last time it occurs. But, hopefully it makes people—the younger generations realize that there’s more to life than being out and about and material things. Having to be stuck at home in quarantine with family, typically. It helps them because they and the family and hopefully have more appreciation for each other and all that we gain from freedom of movement.

Problem is that it’s now affecting people with less access to healthcare and those who have co-morbidities like diabetes and high blood pressure. So it’s unfortunately affecting the underserved and vulnerable populations and that predominately consists of African-Americans and other ethnic minorities that are medically vulnerable because of lack of insurance lack of proper healthcare resources and access.”

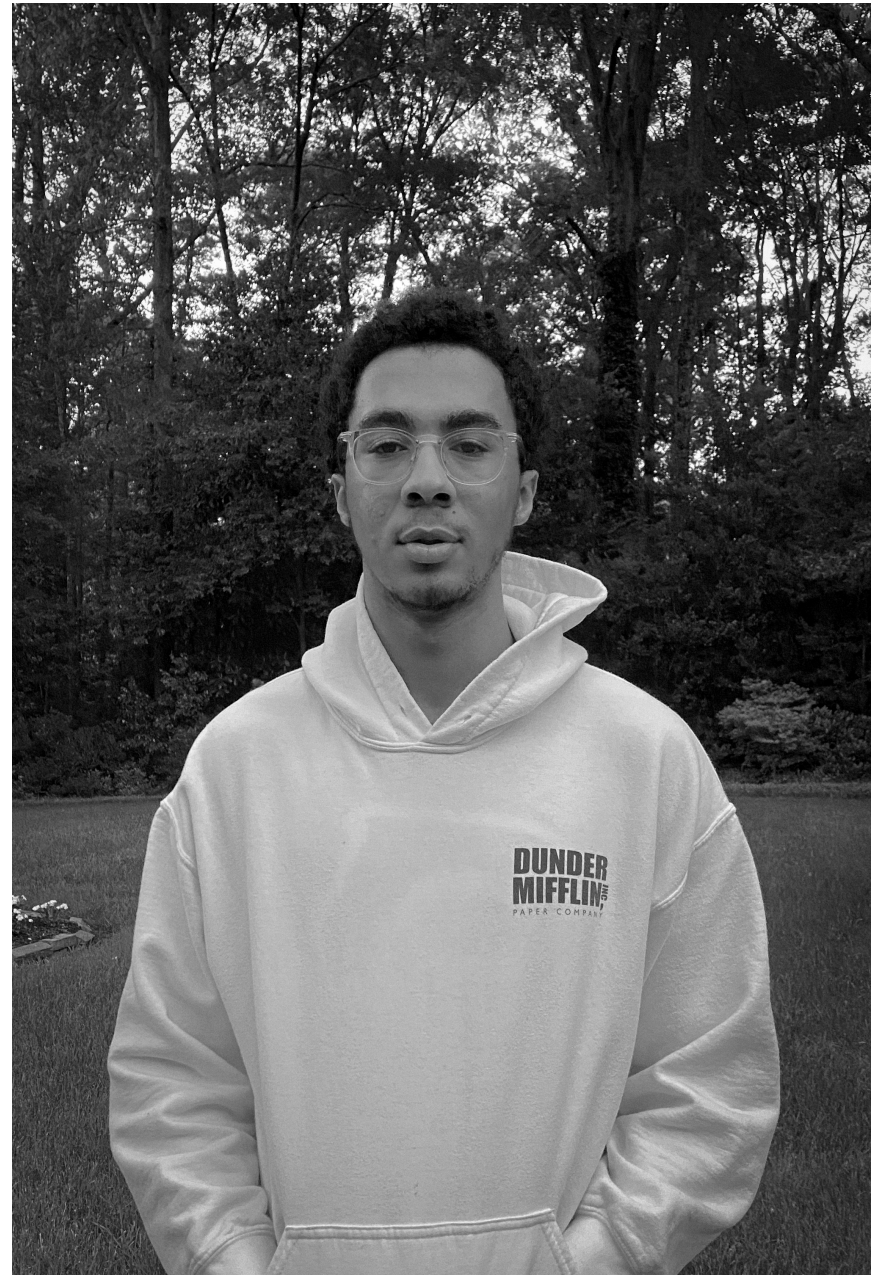
tommy (my brother)

18. From Decatur, GA. Student at Emory University. (2020).

“This coronavirus pandemic has taught me that nothing in life is guaranteed.

I used to think that my future would be in a certain place, and consist of certain accomplishments. But at the end of the day, those are only guesses. This year, I had a lot of goals and things I wanted to do for the track season at Emory. But due to the coronavirus pandemic, those things never came to fruition. Sitting at home in quarantine really taught me to value my time. I realize that time brings us joy and happiness, but also brings us hardships.

Time doesn't wait for anybody. It literally controls our lives we would be nothing without it. COVID-19 has literally taken our time and things have come to a standstill. Before this pandemic, I would look out and see many cars in the street, and to me that would represent life moving. Now I literally see nothing. So although the world has stopped, we are still forced to move on with our lives. This is weird for me because I want time to go faster so I can be done with quarantine and return to college, but also I want time to go slower so I can enjoy being young. There are a lot of people in the world right now who would prefer the world to stop because they do not have the resources to maintain themselves that would allow them to push through this stand still. Essentially, people are dying through a stopped world, which is weird to say, but it's true.”





roosevelt (my father)

59. From Columbus, GA. Lived in Atlanta since 1984. Staff Pharmacist. (2020).

“COVID-19 affected me in the worst way. It made me realize how delicate and fleeting life can be. I realize that how much I have doesn’t mean as much. I realized how much I could miss my brother who was in the hospital for almost 2 weeks. He always tells me he loves me on the phone before he hangs up. It really meant something more this time when he said I love you because we didn’t know when it would be the last time I would hear from him. Fortunately, he recovered.

What’s important is not just living, it’s how you are living and why. COVID-19 can affect your family your extended family—it has no regard for anyone and it can hit anyone anytime. So it’s a good thing and a bad thing [COVID-19] because it hurts a lot of people but it also helps people to realize what’s important. What’s important is how you treat other people while they’re here, how you let people know that you love them while they’re here. We’re [society as a whole] still trying to learn from this pandemic.”