The second show in home school’s curatorial residency, *The shape of memory* includes works by Star Feliz, Deborah-Joyce Holman, Dozie Kanu, Nkhensani Mkhari, Portland Backyard Art Group, and MODUS. Exploring the slippage between symbol and sigil, the works in the show comprise still and moving image, sculpture, and installation.

In *From the ashes (a chiasmus)* and *Untitled 1–4* from the series *Floor Maps*, Star Feliz acts as a decolonial experimental archaeologist. Interested in destabilizing the Romantic’s legacy of conquest that reverberates within Land Art, they create a world where the rebellious cartographies of the 17th Century Caribbean come alive with small gestures using the iconographies of Dominican Vodú and contemporary aesthetics of countercultural resistance. As a medicine person trained in various healing arts, Feliz is continually tracing their ancestral knowledge systems that evade the Archive. With painted stonelore and collective prophecies, this interdimensional portal ignites our understanding of humanity’s shared fate with the earth.

In *The Songs They Sing* (2021), Johannesburg-based artist Nkhensani Mkhari knits together an ongoing audiovisual collage documenting civil unrest in post-apartheid South Africa and its intersections with the coloniality of meaning. The video explores themes surrounding inherited oppression and renegotiated spaces. Here the anarchic noise of revolt becomes a silent melody sounded by the viewer. Dozie Kanu, born in Houston and currently living and working in Portugal, demonstrates the flickering kinship of form and feeling—poetic objects and the ways they activate our imagination—in his sculpture *Abject Twin* (2021). Resting gently against the wall, the repurposed bed headboard invites us to wonder: who is the version of us that walks in our dreams?

MODUS presents, in interactive installation rather than workshop form, the third iteration of his proposal exploring the overlap between layered graffiti writing and asemic gesture (writing without semantic content). The audience is invited to contribute to the living palimpsest by means of water-based spray paint, and as layers of meaning pile on closer toward illegibility, the line between visuality and letterform blurs ever more.

On your swirl around the world you accumulate yourself. You turn your senses inward, catch glimpses of the palimpsest, the erasures, the edits, the propensity for layering, for drawing connections, the endless depths. You find your way, building gradually like candy floss. In your search for meaning, memory is held in moments, bound or braided together, sometimes caught and beaded in shimmering tangles. In these moments the gaze

continued
Explodes. The motion is full of promises—kept, broken, hidden, forgotten, et cetera. The artists provide the chance to stand among their offerings-up to our shared world, to contemplate where you fit in, how to activate your benevolent enmeshment. In bringing these works together we hope to give you clues to the future.

People see who they know in the faces of others
And in their words
They hear the words they’ve heard

You’ve tasted this knitted shadow before
Its pain halo tattooed on your skin
The pain of the shadow shows up in the face of the other
Look harder so you don’t just see
The old selves you saw in others’ faces before

I met the ghost of Brautigan
At the Seattle Greyhound station
He called me “sucka fish” repeatedly
Like he wanted to hurt me

He rode the Kong train of shadows sewn into old light
He rode the sucker fish train into the night
I says with the voice of a crow in me
You can do more than hurt me.

Statement from Nkhensani Mkhari

What does it mean to be born free?
Bourne free?
We were scorned, see?
Left it all on the table for diplomacy
A ceremonious national lobotomy
We can’t even see the bottom
They say this shouldn’t bother me

A serendipitous series of tower moments
Power moments, become sour moments
Cower moments, drown our moments
Trying to found our moment
Took the land say they bound to own it
Proud proponents so they not attoning
Our loss is one worth noting

A composition of difference and repetition
Refused to listen to those who christen
Back covered in lesions, incisions
Traces of our collective indecision
Lost traditions, blown to smithereens
This is our only means for sedition
So tell me, what does it mean to be born free?
Works in the exhibition

A
Portland Backyard Art Group
windchimes  2019–2023
Dimensions variable
Copper, wood, string

B
Portland Backyard Art Group
pact rag  2020–2023
Dimensions variable
Maple branch, polyester, weather

C
Portland Backyard Art Group
somethings can’t be released alone  2019–2023
Dimensions variable
19th century English wardrobe, maple leaves, tarp, weather, metabolisms.

D
Star Feliz
(Untitled Floor Maps)  2022
Dimensions variable
Concrete, acrylic paint, serpent oil

E
Portland Backyard Art Group
rendezvous / Eghosasere  2021–2023
Dimensions variable
Peppermint oil, egg, glue, charcoal, rainwater, custard, bone, wire, tap water (boiled), organic matter on unstretched canvas, maple branch

F
Dozie Kanu
Headboard (Abject Twin)  2021
42.3 x 71.4 x 11.4 inches
Found headboard frame, found lighting panel, steel, alligator skin

G
Portland Backyard Art Group
kanga book  2021
Library discard book, nails, dust

continued
Works in the exhibition
continued from previous

H
MODUS
Asemic Graffiti #3 2023
Aluminum, hardware, cling film

I
Portland Backyard Art Group
some stories weave together 2023
72 x 48 inches
Digital print on gatorboard

J
Star Feliz
(Untitled Floor Maps) 2022
Dimensions variable
Concrete, acrylic paint, serpent oil

K-O
Deborah-Joyce Holman
Untitled (in refusal) 2021
5.7 x 8.1 inches each
Oil pastel on paper

P
Portland Backyard Art Group
soma 2021–2023
Dimensions variable
Acrylic, oil, rainwater, tap water, ink, organic
matter on unstretched canvas, maple branch

Q
Portland Backyard Art Group
Untitled 2021–2023
30.5 x 24 inches
Acrylic, oil, wine, coffee, egg, sumi ink, weather on
unstretched canvas, nails.

R
Star Feliz
(Untitled Floor Maps) 2022
Dimensions variable
Concrete, acrylic paint, serpent oil

S
Nkhensani Mkhari
The Songs They Sing 2021
00:02:15
Digital video
About the participants

Star Feliz

Star Feliz (b. 1992, New York, NY, Lenapehoking) is an interdisciplinary artist and medicine person with roots in Ayiti, a.k.a. Dominican Republic. Entangled across the mediums of sculptural installation, time-based media, and book forms, their work explores earth-based pathways for disarming apparatuses of violence and their cycles of trauma. They are currently an MFA candidate at the University of California, Los Angeles department of Interdisciplinary Studio. After almost 10 years of studying and practicing community-based herbalism, Star is currently sharing their ancestral medicine under the self-started project of Botánica Cimarrón. Under the moniker of Priestusssy they create experimental devotional music.

Deborah-Joyce Holman

Deborah-Joyce Holman is a multidisciplinary artist based between London, UK, and Basel, Switzerland. Their work has recently been shown at Istituto Svizzerro, Palermo; schwarzescafé, Luma Westbau, Zurich; Sentiment, Zurich; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris; Last Tango, Zurich (all 2022); Unfinished Live, The Shed, New York City & House of Electronic Arts, Basel; 7th Athens Biennial; TransBona-Halle, Basel; Kiefer Hablitzel Prize nomination exhibition, Basel; Conceptual Fine Arts Live, Milano; Cherish, Geneva; Yaby, Madrid; Centre d’Art Contemporain, Geneva (all 2021); La Quadriennale di Roma (2020); Material Art Fair, Mexico City (2020); A Soft Spiral (solo), Mikro, Zurich (2019); Fondation Entreprise Ricard, Paris (2019); Auto Italia, London (2019); Live In Your Head, Geneva (2018); Alienze, Lausanne (2018); OSLO10, Basel (2017); Locale Due, Bologna (2016), among others. From 2020–22 they worked at the East London arts organization Auto Italia, first as Associate Director, then as Associate Curator. They are the founding director of 1.1, a platform for early-career practitioners in arts, music and text-based practices, with an exhibition space in Basel, Switzerland, which ran 2015–20. Holman has curated the 2018 and 2019 annual group exhibitions for the arts and music festival Les Urbaines, Lausanne, titled ... and their tooth, finest gold and Cinders, sinuous and supple respectively, presenting newly commissioned works by over 15 international artists.

Nkhensani Mkharı

Nkhensani Mkharı (b. 1994) describes their work as a queer meditation on transience, aesthetic sociology and redemptive futurologies; an abstract machine nomadically migrating through contemporary culture. Exploring what individuality is, what collectivity is and what it means to share space, their broad praxis spans photography, painting, performance art, sound design and new media. Their curatorial projects and artworks function as multi-modal material-semiotic metaphors in the application of Bantu Kongo cosmogonies as contemporary interfaces for new materialities. Nkhensani continues expanding in their praxis, synthesizing mediums to evoke new passages of materiality in expanding public consciousness towards indigenous interfaces. Their research is a study on migration, myth and cultural practices of (re)memory, rooted in counteractive ways of seeing and modes of hearing.
About the participants
continued from previous

Dozie Kanu

Dozie Kanu (b. 1993, Houston, TX) is an artist based in Santarem, Portugal. He has mounted solo exhibitions with Galerie Francesca Pia (Zurich, CH), Neuer Essener Kunstverein (Essen, DE), Project Native Informant (London, UK), Performance Space New York (NY, NY), Manual Arts (Los Angeles, CA), Galleria Madragoa (Lisbon, PT), The Studio Museum in Harlem (NY, NY) and elsewhere.

MODUS

MODUS (b. Bronx, NY) is a graffiti writer. His mentors are legendary writers Wane, Rime, and Meres. MODUS is a member of the following crews: Letters First (L1ST), the Seventh Letter family, the Writer’s Bench, and OTM.

The Portland Backyard Art Group

The Portland Backyard Art Group uses found materials and the outdoors to make space for the reclamation of memory, childhood, and more. They present a number of pieces from their NE Portland home, where they have worked for 3 years.

home school

home school is a free pop-up art school and space of sacred duty co-run by Victoria Anne Reis andmanuel arturo abreu. Since 2015, home school has offered genre-nonconforming edutainment, critical care, and contexts for contemplation, all free or sliding scale for local and remote publics.

home school is a free pop-up art school and space of sacred duty co-run by Victoria Anne Reis andmanuel arturo abreu. Since 2015, home school has offered genre-nonconforming edutainment, critical care, and contexts for contemplation, all free or sliding scale for local and remote publics.